



SCHOOL STAFF EXPLORED INCLUSIVE EDUCATION EXPERIENCE IN ITALY

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Inclusive education is one of the most discussed topics in Lithuania today, involving parents, schools, and the entire education system. From September 2024, amendments to the Lithuanian Education Law will come into effect, establishing a universal obligation for all schools providing compulsory and general education to ensure that every individual has the opportunity to learn, develop their abilities and skills, receive necessary support, and not be discriminated against due to diverse learning needs or requirements for educational assistance. The attitudes of the school community are crucial for the development of inclusive education, influencing decisions and shaping practices; however, inclusion can only be effectively developed through collegial decision-making, creating a school environment that accommodates every learner.



To successfully implement inclusive education, develop and test new practices, share experiences, and foster collaboration within and beyond the school community, seven vocational teachers and administrative staff members of

Daugai Technology and Business School participated in a week-long workplace observation visit in Milan, Italy, from June 3 to 7, 2024. The visit was organized as part of the Erasmus+ mobility project No. 2023-1-LT01-KA121-VET-000146758.



Italy has over 40 years of experience in inclusive education. During the visit, participants learned about the Italian education system, school practices for monitoring student progress across educational levels, and the implementation of inclusive education. Five vocational institutions were visited: IIS Severi Correnti / ITT Ettore Conti (mechanical specialization); IIS Bertarelli-Ferraris (Web design, mechanics, electronics, electrotechnics); ITCG "Achille Mapelli" (administration, finance, tourism, and agricultural sciences); IIS Maxwell (logistics, mechanics, electronics, aeronautics, and mechatronics); IIS Luigi Castiglioni (agricultural sciences).

Participants explored different inclusive education strategies, discussed experiences, methods, and best practices for implementing inclusive education. The visits highlighted key elements of creating an inclusive school: students with special educational needs are educated alongside their peers; inter-institutional collaboration is actively implemented; individual learning plans are



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tailored to the child's needs, and only 3% of students are placed in rehabilitation centers instead of schools.

The visit also showcased the abundance of elements that create a positive psychological climate and promote values in schools: relaxation spaces for students, reading areas, numerous drawings and signs promoting tolerance, politeness, friendliness, and other values, as well as warm relationships between students, teachers, and other school staff.

In conclusion, the participants noted that inclusion in education is an ongoing process—no country has achieved 100% inclusion. It is impossible and unnecessary to predict in advance the needs of every child entering school. Most educational decisions are made once specific information about the child, their needs, and abilities is available. The most important thing is that all staff are ready to embrace new challenges and turn them into success stories for the students.



The observation visit was enriching in every sense. Italy is renowned for its cuisine, fashion, design, clothing industry, architecture, art, music, and as a prime tourist destination. During their free time, participants visited the stunning Gothic Milan Cathedral (Duomo di Milano), the

largest Catholic cathedral in Italy and the second largest in the world; Sforza Castle and its historical-museum complex; Milan Centrale, one of Europe's largest train stations; and the Vittorio Emanuele II Gallery, one of the oldest shopping centers in Europe. They also admired Lake Como, one of the most popular destinations in Northern Italy.

To ensure that the skills and experience gained during the visit are recognized across the EU, each participant received a Europass Mobility Document.

Daugai Technology and Business School received Erasmus+ accreditation (No. 2021-1-LT01-KA120-VET-000047366) in 2022, valid until December 31, 2027, and will continue to conduct mobility activities abroad for both staff and students until the end of 2027. The Erasmus+ program is an excellent opportunity for vocational school staff and students to gain knowledge, experience, theoretical and practical skills abroad, improve foreign language proficiency, and learn about life and culture in another country. We encourage the school community to follow news about our Erasmus+ projects and actively participate in ongoing activities.



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