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# ERASMUS VOICECRAFT

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## MAGAZINE

N. 9

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## HOW WE CELEBRATED ROMANIA'S NATIONAL DAY

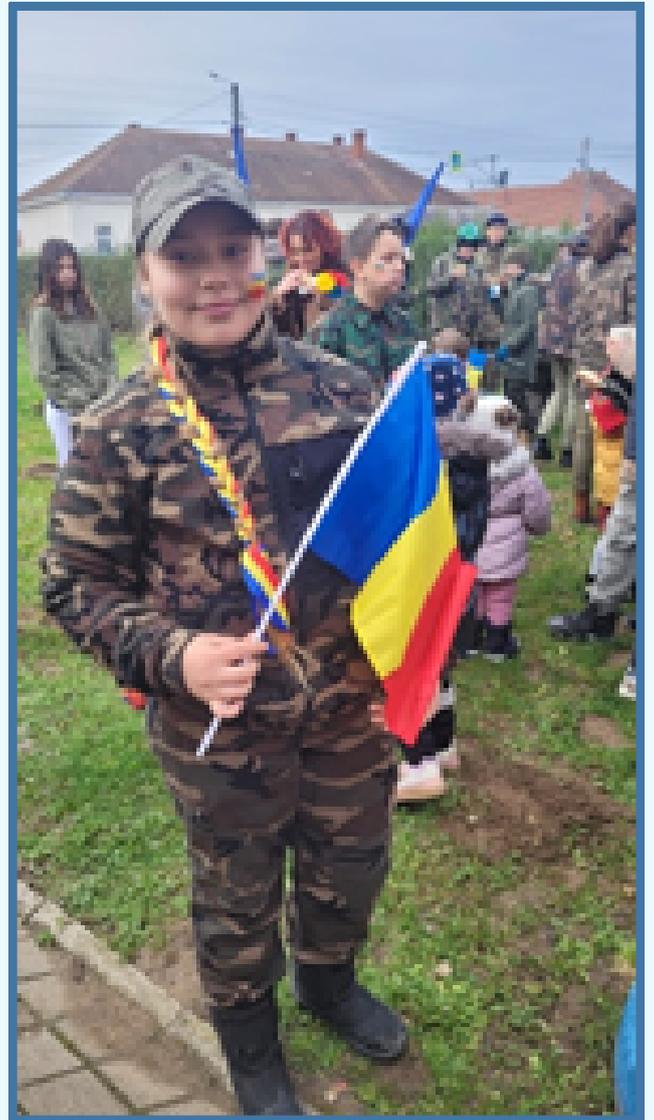
Participating in our Erasmus project, with partners from all over Europe, inspired us to look even more eagerly at Romania's National Day, December 1st. We wanted our school holiday to be a tribute to history and traditions, but also an opportunity to open our hearts to the local community.



For the participants, the whole day was an explosion of pride. We started with a skit that brought to life the pivotal moment of the Great Union of 1918; it was overwhelming to see colleagues playing those historical characters with such passion. A solemn and respectful moment followed when a "band of honor" made up of students paraded, evoking the courage of the ancestors.

The heart of the event was given by music and dance. The school choir filled the hall with the echo of patriotic songs, and the fast rhythm of Romanian folk dances made us all feel that we were part of something bigger.

The most beautiful aspect? Audience! Seeing how parents, grandparents and neighbors sincerely rejoiced, sang with us and applauded warmly, reminded us that the school is, in fact, the heart of the community. It was a unique feeling, proof that history, tradition and the spirit of unity unite us all, from the youngest student to the oldest member of the community. It was a living lesson about what it means to be Romanian and, at the same time, a European citizen proud of his roots.



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## ROMANIAN CHRISTMAS

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As a student participating in this wonderful Erasmus project, I'm thrilled to share a glimpse into how we celebrate Christmas in Romania. It's more than just a holiday; it's a deeply emotional experience rooted in ancient traditions and community spirit.

The anticipation begins long before Christmas Eve. My favorite part is the "Colindat" (caroling). Young people, children, and sometimes adults, go from house to house singing traditional carols that announce the birth of Jesus. We aren't just singing; we are spreading good wishes and receiving small treats or money in return—it's a true exchange of joy.



Beyond carols, you'll encounter unique theatrical customs. "Steaua" (The Star) involves children carrying a large, brightly decorated star, singing religious songs, symbolizing the Star of Bethlehem. More complex is the "Viflaim" (Bethlehem), a traditional play performed by masked villagers reenacting the Nativity scene, often with humorous folk elements.



A captivating element of our tradition is the clothing. During these events, especially in rural areas, people proudly wear the "Port Popular" (traditional folk costumes). The vibrant colors and intricate embroideries make the celebrations visually spectacular and connect us directly to our ancestors.

Christmas in Romania is about the warmth of the family, the smell of cozonac (sweet bread), and a powerful sense of unity, making it truly the most magical time of the year.

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# ITALY

## OUR SCHOOL ORCHESTRA MUSIC THAT BRINGS US TOGETHER



At Michele Purrello School, music is a very important part of our life. Our school orchestra is a special place where students learn, grow, and share emotions through music.

In the afternoon, many students stay at school to take music lessons. They study instruments like piano and cello, and they also take singing lessons. Another important activity is ensemble music, where students learn how to play and sing together. This helps them listen to each other and harmonize voices and instruments.

Our orchestra is open to everyone. It also includes students with disabilities, who are followed with great care by our music teachers. They are very talented and some of them are among the best musicians in the orchestra. This makes us very proud, because our orchestra is a true example of inclusion, respect, and teamwork.



At Christmas time, our music teachers organized a beautiful concert. All the students of the orchestra played and sang with love and passion. It was a special moment for families, teachers, and students, and it showed how music can unite hearts.



The orchestra keeps our school united. There are students of different ages and from different school levels, but music makes everyone feel part of the same group. Our orchestra also has a long tradition, and every year it grows stronger and better.



We are very proud of our school orchestra, because it combines skills, inclusion, friendship, and passion for music. It is not just an orchestra: it is a big musical family.



# CHRISTMAS MAGIC AT PURRELLO SCHOOL

From the 1st of December, Christmas magic fills our school. When we enter the building, we see a big Christmas tree at the entrance and we hear happy Christmas music. It makes everyone smile and feel warm inside.

All the classrooms are full of colourful decorations. We made them together with our Technology teacher, using paper and a lot of imagination. Every class looks different and special.



Even our school staff become part of the magic! Every day they dress up like Santa's elves and, during break time, they give candies to all the students. It is a beautiful surprise for everyone.

In our class, with our French teacher, we drew Christmas symbols and played bingo using French words. It was fun and we learned while playing.



**Everything is magical at Purrello School in December!**

**1 D Class**



# SPAIN

## LIVING TOGETHER FAIR

The first Living Together Fair: a journey in Valencia through diversity at the Concha Espina School

December 18 and 19, Concha Espina School celebrated for the first time the “Living Together Fair”, an initiative developed in the subject of Service Learning Project (SLP) with the aim of highlighting the cultural diversity present in our educational community.

During these days, the school became a meeting place between cultures thanks to a multicultural exhibition. It showed different aspects that build the identity of each country represented by our students. Elements such as the following could be observed: currency, the literature, the flags, photographs of our students connected with these countries, as well as references to the typical gastronomy. This exhibition allowed us to learn more about the customs and traditions of different places around the world.



One of the most special moments was the participation of the students of Primary School, who enthusiastically painted the flags of the 19 nationalities that currently coexist in our school. These flags filled the hallways with color and symbolized respect, unity, and coexistence between cultures, demonstrating that diversity is a richness that is learned and celebrated from an early age.



In addition to the exhibition, the Living Together Fair featured a charity market, which was very well received by the school community. Several products handcrafted by the students themselves were put on sale, such as bookmarks, Christmas decorations and personalized school supplies. This market not only fostered creativity and teamwork, but also solidarity and social commitment.

All the money raised will be used to support different projects of NOG. Foundations with which the Service Learning Project (SLP) students are working this term, like “Jesuits for Migrants”, “Caritas”, “ACCEM”, “CEPAIM” and others. These organizations perform essential work by helping migrant people who arrive in our country to start a new life offering support, accompaniment and integration.

The Living Together Fair has been an educational, supportive, and deeply enriching experience that has allowed us to reflect on essential values such as respect, empathy, equality and social justice. This first edition has marked an important step in building a more united, aware, and committed school community.



Undoubtedly, this has been the start of an initiative that we hope will be consolidated in the coming years and will continue to strengthen coexistence and shared learning at the *Concha Espina School*.

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# TÜRKİE

## FIGHTING ADDICTION AND CYBERBULLYING



At IBB Şehit Polis Mustafa Erdoğan Secondary School, informative seminars were organized for parents and students within the scope of the Parent Academies Program on December 4, 2025. The Seminars were held in the School Conference Hall and were delivered by Forensic Informatics Expert and Author Isa Altun. The main aim of the Seminars was to raise **awareness about important issues that affect students in today's digital world.**

The program addressed two main topics: fighting addiction for parents and cyberbullying for students.



In the seminar organized for parents, Isa Altun focused on different types of addiction, especially digital games, internet and social media addiction. He explained how excessive use of digital devices can negatively affect students' academic success, family relationships, social skills and emotional development. Parents were informed about common signs of addiction and were given practical advice on how to guide their children in a healthy and supportive way. The importance of communication, setting boundaries, and being a good role model was emphasized.

In the seminar organized for students, the topic of cyberbullying was discussed in a clear and understandable way. Students learned what cyberbullying is, how it can happen on social media, online games and messaging platforms and how it can affect individuals emotionally and socially.

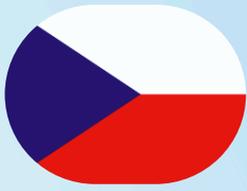
Isa Altun also explained what students should do if they experience or witness cyberbullying. Special attention was given to safe internet use, protecting personal information, respecting others online and responsible digital behavior.





The Seminars were followed with great interest by both parents and students. They contributed to increasing awareness about digital risks and helped participants gain important knowledge and skills for safer and healthier use of technology. We would like to thank Mr Isa Altun for his valuable contributions and for sharing his experience with our school community.

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# CZECH REPUBLIC

## CZECH ADVENT



Advent in the Czech Republic is the four-week period before Christmas, and it is a time of waiting, calm, and preparation. During Advent, people decorate their homes with wreaths and candles, visit Christmas markets, and slowly prepare gifts and food. We also bake traditional sweets, especially gingerbread (**perníčky**) and vanilla crescents (**rohlíčky**), which fill homes with a pleasant smell.



First, on December 5, children celebrate St. Nicholas Day, called **Mikuláš**, which has a long tradition.

In the evening, Mikuláš comes with an Angel and a Devil, and they visit children to ask if they were good or naughty. Good children recite a poem or sing a song and receive sweets; however, naughty children are playfully scared by the Devil, so they feel excited and a little afraid.



Then Advent continues until Christmas Eve, which is the most important day of Christmas. Families decorate the Christmas tree and have a festive dinner, which usually includes fried carp with potato salad, but many people also eat chicken schnitzel. After dinner, people believe that gifts are brought by Baby Jesus, called Ježíšek, who quietly comes to their homes. Finally, my favorite tradition is baking Christmas cookies because it brings the family together and creates a warm Christmas atmosphere.

**Aneta Ruda**



# CZECH ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS



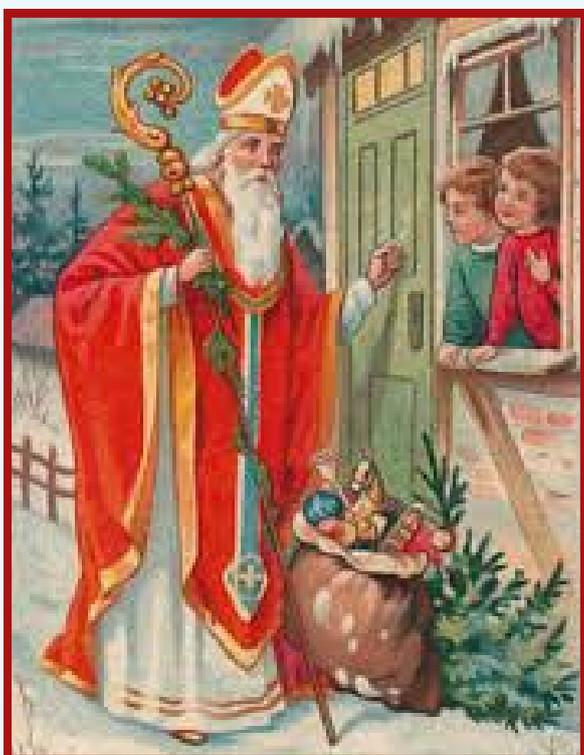
In the Czech Republic, Advent is a beautiful and quieter period of four weeks before Christmas. It always begins on the first Sunday of Advent, which falls at the end of November or the beginning of December. Advent is associated with anticipation, a family atmosphere, preparations for the holidays, and many traditional customs.

## What is the tradition of Mikuláš (Nicholas), the Angel, and the Devil?

The tradition is based on the real Saint Nicholas of Myra, a bishop who lived in the 3rd–4th century in what is now Türkiye. He was known for his generosity, helping the poor, and protecting children. As a result, he became a symbol of charity.

In the Czech Republic, St. Mikuláš visits in the late afternoon and evening on the 5th of December. St. Mikuláš, the angel, and the devil walk through the streets, visit households, kindergartens, and schools, or take part in public events. In some cities, St. Mikuláš appears in the afternoon; in others, the tradition is more of an evening event—usually between 5 and 8 p.m. Sometimes organized St. Mikuláš parties are held on the weekend closest to this date, but the “proper” St. Mikuláš always takes place on the 5th of December.

When the trio meets a child, they ask the parents whether the child has been good or naughty. Usually, the child sings a song or recites a poem. If the child has been good, they receive either fruit, chocolate, or a small gift; however, if they've been naughty, they get coal or a potato. (That doesn't happen often, and it's more symbolic.)



Another version of St. Mikuláš is quite similar to Christmas, where St. Mikuláš leaves a bag of sweets for children if they've been good, or coal and potatoes if they've been naughty.

## What are some typical Czech Christmas customs?

Instead of Santa, Czech kids believe that Ježíšek (could be translated as “baby Jesus”) brings gifts. He arrives after dinner, rings a little bell, and suddenly presents appear under the tree.

Czech families bake tons of homemade cookies during December, so they can eat them all on Christmas. Favorites include - Vanilkové rohlíčky (vanilla crescents) Linecké cukroví (linzer-style cookies) Perníčky (gingerbread) Vosí hnízda (rum “wasp nests”).

Czech people traditionally decorate the tree on December 24th in the morning as a part of the magical Christmas Eve atmosphere. Some families decorate on December 23rd or earlier though. The tree is usually by hand made glass ornaments for example - Angels, shiny balls, icicles and a big Star on the top of the tree!

Another tradition is the dinner held before everyone opens their gifts. The meal is usually large and traditionally includes fish soup and fried carp served with mashed potatoes. Everyone is expected to remain at the table until everyone has finished their food. After that, and after the bell rings everyone can go open their gifts!



## My personal favorite Czech Christmas tradition?

My personal favorite is Christmas Eve, especially the dinner! I absolutely love the unique and cozy atmosphere of that evening, particularly when snow is falling outside. There's something magical about sitting around the table with family and friends, enjoying the warmth and festive spirit. I'm also a big fan of the traditional fish soup, we only have it at Christmas, which makes it feel even more special and delicious. It's a tradition I look forward to every year and one that always fills me with joy.



**Anna Máčková**

Hello, reader,

Today I prepared a short document about the Christmas and advent traditions in the Czech republic.

St. Nicholas, coming with an angel and a devil, will come to your doorstep on December 5th. They will reward you with sweets if you were an innocent child this year or take you to hell in the devil's bag if you were naughty. Little kids mostly freak out and hide, the older sing a carol to prove that they were and they are innocent.

One of the regular traditions is to crack open a walnut, place a candle in its empty shell, fill a basin with water, and send the "boats" out onto the water. The tradition is that the candle on the boat must not go out, so the boat must not sink, and the one whose boat is the last to survive wins.



Christmas Eve dinner, held on December 24th, is an important tradition during which all family members should gather at one table and eat together. The most common dishes served are fish soup, carp, schnitzel and potato salad.

After Christmas Eve dinner, children go to look for Jesus through the window. What they don't know is that in the meantime, he will sneak in through another window or the front door, put presents under the tree, ring the bell, and disappear before you can say Christmas.

You made it to the end, reader!

Thanks for reading. Merry Christmas!

**Krištof Čadil**