

SOFT SKILLS FOR STRONG TEACHERS

Malaga, 19th – 23th August 2024

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A week before the start of school, from 19 August 2024 to 23 August 2024, we attended a 5-day training named Soft Skills for Strong Teachers, organised by "idevelop" from Spain. The activity-packed training took place in the Spanish city of Málaga, where at the same time the Fiesta En Málaga was taking place, a feast for the eyes, ears and tastes.

Soft skills include communication, emotional intelligence, cooperation, problem solving, critical thinking, flexibility, creativity, time management, leadership, negotiation... All of these skills were taught through a variety of active methods and pedagogical approaches. The first day was dedicated to getting to know each other (different "ice-breaking activities"), as the group was made up of 14 teachers, coming from Portugal, Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia. Most of the learning took place in pairs or in groups; we were divided into two groups, which we called "The Power of Seven" and "For Ever Young". In addition to the "Ice-breaking" activity, we trained on cooperation, communication and critical thinking with the DiXit board game, and active listening with the "Listen - Think - Tell" activity, where we highlighted a problem at work. We learnt about the "Silent Floor Prompts for Soft Skills" method, where everyone expressed the importance of a soft skill in their own way (thought pattern, drawing, text) on shared posters. We also tried role-playing, where we presented celebrities with different personality traits and pantomimed different emotions. We took part in a treasure hunt where we explored Malaga and looked for the hidden treasures of the city through different activities (e.g. each team made a short funny film at the Roman theatre on the theme of lessons at school).

Malaga is a beautiful city on the Mediterranean Sea, in the Andalusia region in the south of Spain, just 100 km from Gibraltar and Africa. Between the old town and the sea rises a hill on which stands an ancient Moorish-style castle. Malaga is also the birthplace of the famous Cubist painter Pablo Picasso. One of the city's main attractions is its cathedral, which is notable for having one unfinished tower—a detail we discovered while exploring the city's landmarks on our treasure hunt activity. Most inspiring, however, was the festival that took place in the city centre during that week, with the colourful Spanish dresses worn by the female visitors, the different Spanish rhythms that rang out in the squares, the Spanish folklore groups and, of course, the sweet wine called Cartojal, distinguished by its pink and white label.

The training and communication were in English, which was quite a challenge for us on a daily basis. Improving English skills is a significant benefit of the mentioned course.



Photo 1, 2: Some photo highlights from the training