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SKUPINOVÁ MOBILITA: 6° Gymnasio Kavalas, Kavala, Řecko

TERMÍN: 24. 11. 2024 – 30. 11. 2024

PROJEKT: Our Planet, Our Responsibility: Learning from the Earth's Ecosystems for a Sustainable Future

## REPORT: GROUP MOBILITY OF PUPILS KAVALA, GREECE

WEDNESDAY 27<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2024

Filip Karas 9.D

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024 - afternoon

### Aggitis river cave

On Wednesday morning, we were greeted by sunny weather with a pleasant temperature of around 13°C. Right from the start of the day, the atmosphere was cheerful, partly thanks to the beautiful surroundings.

We set off by bus from Kavala and headed toward town of Philippi, where we made our first stop. After that, we continued to the caves. We learned some basic information about this place. The cave was discovered only in 1978, making it a relatively recent discovery. Until then, no one knew about it, and there were no facilities or infrastructure in the area.



Aggitis River Cave is unique because it is **the only water cave in Greece**. It is the source of the Aggitis River, one of the main natural resources in the region. The cave is **25 kilometres long**, although only part of it is open to the public. In the spring, it is flooded due to rising water levels. **The water in the cave has a temperature of 13°C**, which I could feel as soon as I dipped my hand into it.

Inside, we saw a unique combination of sand, clay, and mud, which created unusual colours on the stalactites and stalagmites. We also learned that the cave is home to **37 species of organisms**, including **five species of bats** that live here in their natural habitat. **The water in the cave reaches depths of up to 78 meters in some places**, which was fascinating to imagine as we stood above it. We also learned about the history of the area, including Neolithic finds discovered nearby.



Photography was not allowed in the cave because previous visitors used flash, which harmed the microorganisms living there. The sudden light caused them to die, creating a green layer on the walls. Even so, I managed to take a few photos.

ŠKOLA: ZŠ BRNO, HERČÍKOVA 19, PŘÍSPĚVKOVÁ ORGANIZACE

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I enjoyed the trip to the cave. What impressed me most was the idea that until 1978, no one knew about this cave. I was also fascinated by how cold and clear the water in the cave was. Thanks to the beautiful weather, we had a great time during the day. After that we went to a restaurant for lunch.

### Saint Lydia monastery

On the way back from lunch at Grill “Christos” in Monastiraki, the bus stopped for another time.

This time, we got off at another landmark – **the Orthodox Church of Saint Lydia of Philippi**, where we spent about an hour. The weather was clear and sunny, and for November, it was relatively warm – I was comfortable wearing just a T-shirt, and there was a light breeze.



The church was built as a tribute to **the missionary journey of Apostle Paul – Saint Paul of Tarsus – who baptized the first woman, Lydia**, on the European continent around the year 50 AD. Saint Paul is one of the founders of Christianity, and his journey to Philippi is mentioned in the Bible.



The church itself was constructed relatively recently, in 1974, making it a modern building. Its exterior features an intricate architectural design, while the interior is richly decorated. At the entrance to the church, **two plaques commemorate the patron saints – Paul and Lydia**. The interior is made entirely of marble, with a fountain of holy water in the centre. The ceilings are adorned with elaborate biblical frescoes, and the walls are lined with paintings of saints. The windows showcase beautifully coloured stained glass with religious motives.

The church grounds also include **an open-air baptistry by the river**, which is a popular site for baptism ceremonies, accommodating large numbers of guests. Near the church, there is (likely a recently opened) museum displaying an exhibition of archaeological finds from Philippi, focusing on the early days of Christianity in Europe. The interior of the church was stunning, and I managed to take some beautiful photos.