

International Week in the Netherlands

15.5.2024

International Week in the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences (Zwolle)

The International Week is a concept that serves as a platform for educators from various fields and universities to come together. It fosters a global exchange of ideas, methodologies, and experiences, which can greatly enrich the educational field. The writer of this article attended The International Week in the Netherlands on the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences last spring. The article was somehow lost in the air but was found again later and is being published now.

During the week 23.4. – 8.4.23 the war between Russian and Ukraine was already going on and no matter who I met and talked with they were all interested in the history and the situation in Finland. They were also very interested about the decision of Finland´s going to the NATO. My chosen workshop topic for the week of *Erasmus teacher exchange* was “Individual and Global Health” so I think the discussions we went through were connected to my topic anyway. I was surrounded by the colleagues from all over the world (Pic 1.), so Dof Finland.



The International guests together (Pic: Sinikka Vainionpää).

The Program of the International Week

The program of the international week at *the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences* was full of keynote speakers, spotlight sessions, workshops, and guided campus tours. The first keynote speaker was *Candida Snow* who provided an interesting and engaging keynote on *Intercultural Competences* and their relevance for us, our students, and our societies. The next keynote speaker was *Uwe Brandenburg* who provided provoking keynote on *the Future of Higher Education* and the role of internationalization in this. The topics of keynote speaker Karim Amghar were *Poverty, Inequality and Education*. Keynote speaker Angella Nalwanga´s presentation was about *The Contextualizing poverty in Uganda*. After the inspiring keynotes the students and international guests could ask their questions under the guidance of a moderator. The themes were mostly about the *Impact of Migration and Poverty on Good Health and Wellbeing* and about *The Health Care and Social Work Education.* All the keynote presentations and discussion sessions afterwards were connected to the goals of sustainable development of the world (Pic. 2). The most important theme from the goals was seen to be the prevention of poverty. After that comes the fight to reach the others. The United Nations *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) are 17 goals that all 191 UN Member States have agreed to try to achieve by the year 2030. *Leave no one behind* (LNOB) is the central promise of the 2030 Agenda. (https://www.un.org/en/)



Goals of the Sustainable Development (Pic: Sinikaka Vinionpää).

The Department of Health Care and Social Work

The main program of the week was organized by the International Office of the Windesheim. The sessions I had registered were under the *Social and Health Care* faculty, but we were free to join any others suitable for the timing. The topic of my workshops was *Promoting Health Individually and Globally*. Other topics of the workshops going on were for example *Intercultural Collaborations: Different Languages, Worlds Apart?* by Silvana Tokic from Croatia and *Social Work Identity andgender-based violence* held by Master Students of South Africa with their teacher Marinei Herselman.

The groups I worked with were the first-year nursing students. At the department of *Health Care and Social Work* they had focused specially on their first- year students during the International Week, because they saw that it is very important to give them a taste of the international character of their future profession. With the students we worked together by my topic *Promoting Health Individually and Globally*. We started by comparing the preventive health care systems in the Netherlands and Finland. The main difference was that in the Netherlands the preventive care is more focused on the doctors meetings than in Finland. Next, we went through what are the health and wellbeing *challenges* of the young people in their country. According to the students' opinions the most important challenges are caused by the social media. The social media affects to their health on many ways like making them depressed and lazy – staying too much at home. The

challenges can be competed by limiting the social media time, exercising, and spending more time with their friends.

Besides the interesting keynote speakers and the workshops there was a session and poster- presentation about *Migration and Poverty: Families in Crisis.* The posters and their presentations were done in transnational teams of the international week student participants and Windesheim students (Pic.3). The students presented their innovative products or services to support the families in crisis due to migration and / or poverty. Afterwards we were able to ask questions about their products and discuss about them. The innovations of the students were interesting and well planned. Also, their presentations were done with great enthusiasm. Like the whole wonderful week at the Windesheim University of the Applied Sciences.



The transnational students after their poster- presentations (Pic: Sinikka Vainionpää).

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