

Christos' interview

(the video was shot in Greece)

Hello. I have come here so as to take an interview for our school programme Erasmus+ which is about immigrants (it's also called "Europe on the move").

What's your name?

Hello everybody .My name is Christos Pavlidis. I'm Greek and I live in Italy.

Why did you choose to go to this country instead of somewhere else?

Because when I finished university, I had the opportunity to do an internship in a factory in Italy.

Who did you go with and who did you leave behind?

I went by myself because the programme was just for one person, so I left my family in Greece and I took a suitcase and went by myself to Italy.

What was the most difficult part about leaving?

The most difficult part was leaving all my friends from the university, the friends I grew up with, my family and just being by myself in another country for the first time in my life.

What was the most difficult part of going there?

Arriving in Italy the most difficult part was the one with the language because I had only studied Italian for six months, so I had the difficulty of communicating in the beginning.

What was it like when you first arrived?

I was very excited to see this new country because North Italy is completely different from the place I grew up. I grew up in a small town, so seeing Milan and Turin and all these big towns with all the factories and the industrial culture they have, I felt shocked and excited at the same time.

What did you miss the most about the country you came from?

I just missed the beaches because I come from here, New Moudania, where we have these beautiful beaches and just the fact of being outside all the time enjoying the sun and having fun without having to go to the factory all day.

Is the weather rainy there?

It's very rainy in the north of Italy, yeah.

Who was the most helpful with getting you settled?

I got very much help from the people I was working with, my manager at FIAT, where I did the internship, was very helpful and he helped me with the bureaucracy documents, with settlement, in finding a house for me because he was speaking English as not all Italians do so, he was doing the translation and he was coming with me every afternoon after work to help me get settled.

What do you find encouraging in difficult times?

The fact that I went there for a purpose, I was there to chase my dreams of becoming a car designer and every time I had difficulties I was just focusing there, that's the target I have to reach, I have to try hard, study hard in order to reach it.

And how do you think migration has changed you?

Migration changes you because when you meet new countries, different cultures, you become more open minded, you accept more things and it makes you a better person in the end.

As the time has passed, how does your experience compares to what you expected?

It exceeds my expectations because I went there just for six months to see the country and then go away but then I found a job, I integrated myself to the new

country and now I have been living there for fifteen years and I'm so happy about it.

What have your biggest challenges been?

The biggest challenge was actually to integrate in the beginning when I had the language barrier and the plan to communicate with people tends to get far from you, so I had to try hard to get closer to them and integrate which was the most difficult part.

What have your greatest sources of joy been?

Reaching the target I had in my mind. I wanted to achieve the maximum in my profession, so now that I manage to work at FERRARI, that is the maximum for a car designer and this brings me so much joy.

And what are you hoping to accomplish in the future?

I just hope to create a family in that country so they can help me to integrate even more, to become a citizen of the world, of the two countries at the same time without feeling an immigrant, just being a part of the two countries.

What do you think may get in the way of these dreams?

I don't think there's anything that's gonna get between me and those dreams because it depends only on me and my strength to become part of something, not being kept far from my dream realization. I just have to be open minded and brace all the things that can get in front of me.

How do you think migration has made you a stronger person?

Just the way that you act when you're alone and you find some difficult moments; you just have to find the inner strength to go on so it makes you a stronger person, you believe more in yourself and obviously you see more things, new cultures and you also get more open minded.

If someone you knew were planning to come to this country, what would you tell them to expect?

I would tell them to expect a beautiful country and that the 90% of the population are very welcoming and very warm but obviously like all the countries there are some people who are hostile to the immigrants. So you have to find the strength not to look at them and just look at the 90% that are welcoming and try to communicate and cooperate with them.

What advice would you give them about whether or not they should come?

If they must leave, obviously because it's difficult to leave your own country, Italy is a nice and friendly country to go (if you have to choose) and it is a nice destination for migrating.

What do you wish more people knew about immigrants?

That, this small part of people who are racists about immigrants they should know that we're all humans, we're all the same human beings and that we're all citizens of the world. There's nothing different between us because we come from a different country, we are all the same and just live together everywhere.

What are the 2 or 3 most important things that people could do to make the process of coming to a new country better?

They just have to learn the language of the country they are going to because communication makes things better and easier.

Is there anything you would like to add that has not been said?

Just that in conclusion, if you have to change country just do it and be open and receptive to the new culture and don't be afraid of the new and unknown; just go for it and that will make you a better person and a stronger character.