

Making the most of marvellous Malta



DUNMORE East native Kieran Tumulty is currently living and working in Malta. Son of Jim and Janet Tumulty, Kieran attended De La Salle Secondary School, studied Law at University College Cork (UCC), and last June completed his studies for a Higher Diploma in English Literature. Through his work on the Mediterranean island, Kieran is following in the footsteps of his parents who run New Links Training Solutions, providing adult education and training.

“After I finished college I learned about the Grundtvig Assistantship programme, by chance. It’s a European programme for those working in adult education. It was too good an opportunity to pass up, so I applied for it and was accepted,” Kieran explained. “European programmes such as Grundtvig and Comenius provide fantastic ways of gaining valuable work experience, while also providing an opportunity to live and work in another European country,” he said. Before Kieran could submit an application for the programme, he had to seek out a suitable organisation in another European country which would accept him.

“I applied to the Directorate for Lifelong Learning in Malta for a number of reasons. Firstly, the tasks they had available for a prospective Grundtvig Assistant were in the areas I’m interested in working. Secondly, Malta is a bilingual country (Maltese and English) so there is no problem with the language. Finally, I was swayed by the beautiful landscape of the island and the lovely weather.” He believes his time in Malta has been very beneficial in furthering his understanding of the world of adult education. “I am enjoying the work, which involves teaching English as a foreign language and working in the Ministry of Education. Also, I have had the opportunity to visit a number of organisations involved in education and training, as well as attending several conferences and training seminars. I have learned a lot about adult education and how it operates in Malta,” he said.

When not working, Kieran enjoys visiting the many historical sites on the island as well as the many beautiful beaches. But although he has enjoyed a warm climate for the majority of his time in Malta, he has also experienced some unpleasant weather. “While the weather usually ranges from very hot and sunny to warm and sunny, there is occasionally rain – usually in one large amount every month,” he explained.

“Unlike Ireland, Malta is not well equipped to deal with the rain. In September, a couple of weeks after I first arrived, we had one day of heavy rainfall. When I left work, most of the roads were flooded. The bus journey home, which usually takes 10 to 15 minutes, lasted over two and a half hours. We were told in future to stay home on days like this. I get the feeling that they do not expect rain – to such an extent that there is no plan for when it actually happens.” He believes Ireland and Malta share many similarities, with both island nations having experienced a somewhat similar history.

“The people are friendly and welcoming, and enjoy having the craic. They are proud of their heritage, culture and in particular

their language,” he said. “We have some similarities in our history too as Malta is a predominantly Catholic country that was a British colony until 1964.” However, food is one area in which both countries differ as Kieran has discovered.



“What I’m missing most about Ireland (aside from the people obviously) is the food. While the food in Malta is not bad by any means, it is a lot more difficult to conveniently get fresh food. It’s not as simple as going to Centra for a chicken roll. The Maltese people tend to opt for pizza or pastizzi (similar to jambons with a different filling and extra grease) for lunch instead of sandwiches and wraps. Supermarkets are much harder to come by also. Instead there are a collection of small shops which close at odd and varying times in the afternoon and a truck that sells vegetables from the back.” Despite this, Kieran is clearly enjoying his time in Malta and determined to make the most of it.

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