

Visit of the Windesheim University Delegation to Graz – A Focus on Diversity in Austrian Education

On Monday, May 12, 2025, the University of Education Steiermark (PH Steiermark) had the honor of welcoming a delegation from Windesheim University, consisting of 10 students and 2 professors. As part of their educational tour of Austria, the delegation visited Graz and had the opportunity to experience Austrian primary education at the Volksschule Waltendorf. The visit was a unique opportunity to observe firsthand the Austrian approach to diversity in schools and gain insights into the country's educational system.

Welcome by Principal Irmgard Ridißer

The delegation's visit began with a warm welcome from Irmgard Ridißer, the Principal of Volksschule Waltendorf. In her speech, Ms. Ridißer highlighted the school's ongoing diversity project, which serves as a key aspect of its educational philosophy. The project aims to foster an inclusive learning environment where students from various cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds can thrive together. The delegation was particularly interested in how these initiatives are implemented in practice and what impact they have on the school community.

Tour of Volksschule Waltendorf

Following the introductory remarks, the Windesheim delegation was taken on a tour of the school. Volksschule Waltendorf is a primary school located in the center of Graz. The school caters to children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, which presents both challenges and opportunities for fostering inclusion.

During the tour, the delegation had the chance to observe classes in action. Teachers at the school use a variety of methods to support diverse learners, from differentiated instruction to collaborative group work, ensuring that each student's individual needs are met. The delegation also observed the school's approach to integrating students with varying levels of proficiency in the German language, which is a critical aspect of the diversity project.

Insights into the Austrian Educational System

The visit to Volksschule Waltendorf was a rewarding and enriching experience for the Windesheim University delegation. They were able to observe a unique diversity project in action and gain a deeper understanding of how the Austrian education system addresses the

challenges and opportunities of a multicultural society. The delegation left with many valuable insights that will inform their future studies and practices, particularly in the field of inclusive education.

