

Workshop II

How to stimulate participants' involvement in a study visit

Practical issues

1. Difficulties

A) Presentations by participants

If not included participants want it
Better to spread it during the week or on one day?
When after a school visit participants heads aren't "empty" to listen
Be sure that every participant has "equal opportunities"

What can help:

Presentations should be focused on the theme, not on the educational system
Organisers can provide a template
Split the theme of the visit up into several topics and divide these among the participants on the forehand, so every group of 2-3 participants presents on this topic in his country
Ask participants that they make a one page paper to distribute

B) Communication with participants on the forehand

Get in touch early
Try several means: (mail, electronical platform, Olive, telephone)
Start discussion on wishes and interests

BUT bear in mind that participants are busy people, minimise the demands for preparation

C) Report writing

Make "air" in the programme
Arrange electronical aids: PC, electronic platform, uploads s for evaluation
Leave the group alone

D) Accommodation

The whole group together so they can go out together and have activities together
Look for a hotel with moderate prices

E) Logistical issues

Timing: avoid September and early October
Problems with Olive (for example firewall in own organisation)

F) Composition of the group

Sometime too diverse to fulfil all wishes
NA's have responsibility to match candidates with a visit which suits with their profession and area of expertise
The description of the visit in the catalogue should be clear
If there are only participants from 2 or 3 countries, split and mix

2. Practical issues

A) Late cancellations

What is the original group is large enough but on a short notice before the visit there are several cancellations?

The starting point is crucial, so maybe start with 9 or 10 as minimum

NA's must warn participants of their responsibility if they cancel

Their should be a clear deadline for changes (cancellation of extra participants)

NA's must have a good waiting list

B) Financial matters

The price of the hotel should be moderate

An analysis of the practice of calculating the grant for the subsistence by the NA's is needed, and it might be a good idea if an organiser could have this

NA's should grant enough to the candidates and not accept everybody with a lower grant

Cost of transport sometimes causes problems

Not all organisers get money (in the work group 50% did)

C) Language skills

What can you do if a participant's skills aren't enough?

The organiser can provide an interpreter (maybe a student or parent)

The group should be supportive and help

Advanced knowledge of other participant who can speak several languages: he can help

D) Group dynamics

Make a team, break the ice on the first evening

People are different, but mostly this doesn't cause problems

Most of the participants are active, dynamic and busy

E) Cultural differences

"I hope they won't disappear"

F) Accompanying persons

They can't participate; it gives a bad dynamic to the group, they should be excluded from the visit

NA's should put this in the contract with their participants

3. The Handbook for organisers

Is excellent.

What could be included is information on EFQ

Some deadlines are to tighten (for example send the draft programme 12 weeks in advance is not always possible)

4. Extra topics

Foresee enough visits to schools and pupils

Proposal: new theme for a next catalogue: “retraining of people” (in view of the financial crisis)

Organise a knowledge seminar with participants

Make it possible for new organisers to participate in another visit as an observer (but who will pay?)

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