



Study visit group report

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| Group No | 246 |
| Title of the visit | Challenges in Implementing Long-lasting Lifelong Learning Policies |
| Topic | Reforms in National Education and Training Systems |
| City, country | Goteborg, Sweden |
| Type of visit | Mixed |
| Dates of visit | 30/11/2009 – 4/12/2009 |
| Group reporter | Tim Wallace Hilary Galbraith |

Findings

This section summarises the findings of the group while visiting host institutions, discussing issues with the hosts and within the group. You will be reflecting on what you learnt every day. But to put them together and give an overall picture, you need to devote a special session to prepare the final report on the last day of the visit.

In this section, it is important that you describe not only things you learnt about the host country but also what you learnt about the countries represented by group members.

1. One of the objectives of the study visits programme is to exchange examples of good practice among hosts and participants. Cedefop will select well-described projects/programmes/initiatives and disseminate them to former participants and a wider public, including potential partners for future projects. Therefore it is important that you identify and describe all aspects that, in your view, make these projects/programmes/initiatives successful and worth exploring.

Describe each of the good practices you learnt about during the visit (both from the hosts and from one another) indicating the following:

| title of the project/programme/initiative | country | name of the institution that implements it (if possible, provide a website) | contact person (if possible) who presented the programme to the group | whom the project/programme/initiative addresses | what features of the project/programme/initiative make it an example of good practice |
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| Continuing Professional Development | Sweden | Whole country | | Further training and pedagogical/curriculum | Teachers have an additional 112 hours for further training and pedagogical/curriculum development which was |

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| | | | | development for teachers | contracted between the state and teaching union. This ensures that quality learning and teaching is at the heart of the role of the teacher in Sweden. |
| Supporting the mother tongue language | Sweden | Whole country | | Continuing development of mother tongue language for Sami and immigrants | Immigrants are offered 5 hours of weekly tuition in their mother tongue – this is not compulsory. Sami school provision is part of Swedish school system. The mother tongue language is respected and individuals are encouraged to further the development of this language. |
| Information and Communication Technology Integration | Sweden | Burasskola Compulsory School | Mr Anders Samuelsson Ms Ritva Ailomaa, Principals | ICT provision within pre-school and years 1 & 2 | Children have free access to use ICT provision and log in themselves to the school intranet. ICT is seen very much as a tool for learning rather than a discrete subject |
| Pedagogy within pre-school | Sweden | Burasskola Pre-School | Ms Pia Kraus Ms Carina Wikstrom, Principals | Focus of pedagogy on holistic development of the child | The whole ethos of pre-school including planning and pedagogy is firmly based in theory from Reggio Emilia (Italy) and Lev Vygotsky (Russia). This holistic approach to learning is firmly based around the individual child and ensures that they can access learning as appropriate to their needs. |
| Involvement of Partner Agencies/ Professionals to support health development of learners | Sweden | Burasskola Compulsory School | Mr Anders Samuelsson Ms Ritva Ailomaa, Principals | School/ Partner Agencies meet weekly to support the health development of each child | Team for Students' Health (school / social worker / nurse / psychologist / special needs teacher) meet weekly to discuss any specific issues around individual children and to plan/find solutions/strategies to support the identified difficulties. Team also meets regularly with Friends Supporters from each class (trained pupil representatives) to discuss any specific bullying/friendship concerns within their classes and then possible actions to counter this. |
| Maths Section Class | Sweden | Hvitfeldtska Gymnasiet | Asa Jouper Jaan | Further develops the mathematical abilities of pupils who are talented at maths. | Children who have self identified their own talent in maths were able to join the Maths Section Class and receive double the number of maths lessons each week. The focus of the class is to develop creative problem solving and to both harness and develop the talent in maths, often working at a faster pace to their peers in other upper secondary schools. |
| Curriculum for Excellence | Scotland | Whole Country | Tim Wallace | Development of a new national curriculum | The curriculum has been developed along with practitioners and will be cohesive from 3 -18 years of |

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| | | | | framework from age 3 - 18 | age. There will be a greater connectivity of learning across the curriculum including interdisciplinary topics. |
| 'Neighbours' maths project | Sweden | Gotenburg Local Authority | | Maths Role Play topic | Children were motivated to learn maths through an interactive topic where within groups, they took on individual characters and solved problems whilst in character role. This style of interactive maths was greatly enjoyed by the pupils and developed their learning through a real life context. It also reinforced the connectivity of learning across different curriculum areas. |
| Assessment through Moderation | Scotland | National | Tim Wallace | Moderation of standards across the curriculum | Practitioners work together locally, regionally and nationally to moderate standards in order to assess students learning consistently, removing a need for formal examinations in primary and early secondary. |
| Preparatory Studies Project | Sweden | City of Gothenburg | Karin Asplund | To support underachievers in gaining the Upper Secondary Exam Project involved 150 children | Focus was on using a variety of learning styles so that each individual could engage with learning, along with a group coaching system. Each individual wrote an individual learning development plan along with their teacher, mentor and learning support teacher if required. |
| Specialised Upper Secondary Education | Sweden | Burgarden Learning Centre | Tomas Landahl | To provide Natural and Social Science upper secondary education for under-achievers Involving 140 children annually | Students plan their individual learning plan every 6 months, along with their teacher and mentor. Students are taught on an individual and/or small group basis. Teachers and mentors meet weekly to discuss any concerns around individual students. Team meeting every 2 nd week including principal, counsellor, psychologist, school nurse and learning support teacher to discuss necessary supports for individuals in order for them to continue to achieve. The school mission includes the statement that although you may have underachieved in the past, this centre will not allow you to underachieve in the future. |
| Range of programmes at college of further education | Sweden | KYAkademin vid Studium | Ola Olanders | Programmes of study in engineering reflect the needs of the local economy | The engineering courses were designed with input from local employers so that they were immediately adapted to future employment needs within the area. |
| Study Grant | Sweden | Nationwide | | To provide | The grant was reduced or |

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| scheme | | | | financial support to parents whilst their child received an upper secondary education | withdrawn if the student did not regularly attend their programmes. This put a greater emphasis on parental involvement and support to ensure that students maximise their potential. |
| Peace Prize for Youth | Sweden/ Norway | Gothenburg and Oslo | | Environmental and Community awareness within the cities of Gothenburg and Oslo | The initiatives undertaken by a variety of schools led to a better understanding of environmental and community issues, both locally and globally, whilst also fostering personal development and an enthusiasm for lifelong learning. |
| HjarnTorget | Sweden | City of Gothenburg | Ing-Marie Christenson | Learning Management System | Easy to use and access web platform for students, teachers, principals and parents. Forum for sharing homework, good practice, individual development plans, attendance, portfolios with documents, opportunities to chat and email/personal instant messaging. Almost all data/information held in schools is public and transparent. |

* You can describe as many good practices as you find necessary. You can add rows to the table.

2. The study visits programme aims to promote and support policy development and cooperation in lifelong learning. That is why it is important to know what you learnt about such policies and their implementation during your visit. You are invited to describe your findings concerning the following:

2.1. Approaches taken by participating countries (both host and participants') regarding the theme of the visit. Are there any similar approaches/measures in participating countries? What aspects are similar and why? What aspects are different and why?

A number of different approaches to foster lifelong learning were highlighted throughout the study visit. Many were common to some of the participating countries and these included,

- active learning and other interactive teaching strategies (methods) are integral to learning from pre-school and throughout compulsory education so that there is a seamless progression throughout and it supports children to become independent learners
- teaching is planned to provide opportunities for all students to engage in learning using a variety of learning styles, including visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile
- students are coached in order for them to identify both development needs and opportunities to further their learning.
- children and young people are encouraged from an early age to become bilingual which in turn provides greater opportunity to access further lifelong learning opportunities across Europe.
- Principals and Head Teachers are regularly (annually) monitored against shared criteria to ensure that schools have quality leadership that provides a high standard of learning. Self evaluation is also important for school leaders.
- Principals and Head Teachers are provided with quality professional development in

order that they will be able to fulfil both their leadership and management roles.

- Principals and Head Teachers are timetabled to teach classes on a weekly basis in order for them to keep abreast of classroom practice however, in some of the other participating countries, principals and head teachers do not have regular classroom commitment so that they are able to fulfil their management duties and this was seen as both acceptable and normal.

2.2. Challenges faced by participating countries (including host) in their efforts to implement policies related to the theme of the visit. What are the challenges? Are they common challenges? If so, why? If not, why not?

All participants were agreed about the increasing challenges to lifelong learning policies posed by the impact of

- reduced or in some instances, no funding to provide sufficient free pre-school educational opportunities so access to pre-school education therefore can be based on the ability to pay.
- reduced/insufficient funding to provide sufficient ICT equipment for both teachers and young people to engage fully with learning
- large number of students dropping out of mainstream education between 16 and 19.
- high levels of funding being channelled into specialist resources to counter the drop out of 16 – 19 year olds (eg. Burgarden Learning Centre in Gothenburg) – how can governments sustain a lifelong learning policy given the current financial demands?
- lack of support for teachers beginning their careers, particularly in the areas of pedagogy.
- raising the number of hours of in-service professional education of teachers in order for them to continually develop their skills and competences and the need at times to cover their classes whilst this is happening.

2.3. Name and describe effective and innovative solutions you have identified that participating countries (both host and participants) apply to address the challenges mentioned in question 2.2. Please mention specific country examples.

- in some countries represented, national government funds free access to pre-school education (some variation on number of years freely funded) so that all children have access to places, irrespective of parents ability to pay.
- in some countries represented, governments are prioritising the provision of sufficient ICT equipment including computers for every teacher and child/young person.
- in some countries such as Germany, there is a carefully planned programme of training for all teachers in the area of ICT pedagogy. This programme has begun for pre-school teachers.
- a real focus on the recognition and use of a variety of learning styles to fully engage students in learning.
- in Scotland and Northern Ireland, there is a structured programme of support for teachers in their early stages of their career. This includes mentoring, inservice training and professional dialogue.

- 2.4. Assessment of the transferability of policies and practices. Could any examples of good practice presented in this report be applied and transferred to other countries? If so, why? If not, why not?

The study group agreed that all areas of good practice identified above (section 1), could be implemented within their own countries. This however would depend on the following :

- the organisation and structure of the education system within the country
- the priorities for improving educational achievement within the country
- having the appropriate funding to ensure that projects/initiatives are fully funded

3. Creating networks of experts, building partnerships for future projects is another important objective of the study visit programme.

Please state whether and which ideas for future cooperation have evolved during meetings and discussions.

At the time of completing this report, there have been no firm agreements of collaboration however many members of the study visit have now subscribed to a shared networking site in order for them to remain in contact and to cooperate/collaborate in the future.

TO SUM UP:

4. What is the most interesting/useful information that the group believes should be communicated to others? To whom, do you think, this information will be of most interest?

- Education in Sweden is governed at local level by municipalities and this is a strength as individual student educational needs can directly be addressed and supported locally. There are equal conditions for all schools within a municipality.
- The school principal structure within Gothenburg Municipality, including the model that a school can have a number of principals working as a team to ensure that a high level of education is provided.
- There is an ethos of lifelong learning for teachers within Gothenburg Municipality where they see learning as a gift of which they take great pride in nurturing. This includes an agreed contracted 112 hours of continuing professional development in order for them to develop their skills and to improve practice. Teachers ask their principal to observe them teach so that teaching strengths and development needs can be identified.
- The pay structure for teachers was controlled by school principals. Following a yearly meeting to review current practice and plan further professional development, principals decide on the appropriate level of salary for each of their teachers

The group feel that the above would be of real interest to anybody involved in education however in particular, government agencies responsible for the training and development of teachers and school leaders.