Study visit group report

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| **Group No** | ***208*** |
| **Title of the visit** | Networking for Europe - Designing a European  curriculum for young citizens |
| **Topic** | Education for Active Citizenship and Sustainable Development |
| **City, country** | Essen, Germany |
| **Type of visit** | **Mixed** |
| **Dates of visit** | **19/5/2014-23/5/2014** |
| **Group reporter** | Grondin Rene-Pierre |

Dear participants,

The purpose of a study visit is to generate an exchange of experience and good practice between the country you visit and the countries you all come from. Thus, participating in a study visit can be an exciting experience and an important learning tool for you.

During the visit you are invited to prepare a group report summarising your discussions and learning. This will help Cedefop disseminate what you have learnt to others, who share your interest but did not participate in this particular study visit.

On the first day of the visit, you are to select a reporter who will be responsible for preparing the final report and submitting it to Cedefop. Everybody should contribute to the report by sharing their views, knowledge, and practices in their respective countries. Please start working on the report from the first day of the visit.

You will, of course, be taking your own notes during presentations and field visits; but the group report should highlight the result of the group’s reflections on what was seen and learnt during the entire visit and the different perspectives brought by the different countries and participants. The report should **NOT** read as a travel diary, describing every day and every session or visit.

Cedefop will publish extracts of your reports on its website and make them available to experts in education and vocational training. When writing the report, please keep this readership in mind: make your report clear, interesting, and detailed enough to be useful to colleagues throughout Europe.

By attaching any photos to the report, you agree to Cedefop’s right to use them in its publications on study visits and on its website.

Please prepare the report in the working language of the group.

Please do not include the programme or list of participants.

The reporter should submit the report to Cedefop ([studyvisits@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:studyvisits@cedefop.europa.eu)) within ONE month of the visit.

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| I 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:

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| 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 |
| Europaschule | Germany | MSW  [www.schulministerium.nrw.de](http://www.schulministerium.nrw.de) | Joachim Keferstein | All types of schools | Schools have to fulfil 5 criteria in order to obtain Europaschule certification |
| European Business Baccalaureate Diploma | Germany | Rudolf-Rempel-Berufskolleg in Bielefed  [www.eurobacdiploma.eu](http://www.eurobacdiploma.eu) | Herr Heyd | EBBD Network (Denmark, Hungary, Romania, Germany, Finland, Austria, Nederland) | This certificate allows to work on 3 standard competences : business competence, soft skills and technical requirements. It’s an accreditation valuable for companies and for the labour market. |
| Apprenticeship | Germany | MSW -  Berufsschule –  [www.schulministerium.nrw.de](http://www.schulministerium.nrw.de) | Joachim Keferstein | Students want to work and follow lessons at school | Student can learn a job and at the same time they can improve their knowledge, skills and competences. The goal is to achieve a diploma. Sometimes, they can be employed in the company. |
| Parents involvement | Portugal | Agrupamento de Escolas Gomes Teixeira, Armamar | Christina Leitao | Student’s parents | Promote better knowledge of school activities and increase parents responsibility |
| Vocational (music, visual arts, architecture) public education | Romania | Carmen Sylva Art High School - Ploiesti  [licartph@yahoo.com](mailto:licartph@yahoo.com) | Corina Cristescu  [cristescu\_corina@yahoo.com](mailto:cristescu_corina@yahoo.com) | Minister of Romania | Open access; students are certified in artistic fields besides general education; European dimension. |
| Students’ self-management Day on the Day of Europe  Competitions on themes about sustainable development | Bulgaria | Hristo Botev Secondary School, Kubrat  [www.soukubrat.com](http://www.soukubrat.com) | Mayya Radeva  [may.radeva@gmail.com](mailto:may.radeva@gmail.com) | All types of school | One more way to improve students’ key competences |
| European coordination | Belgium | The Autonomous Company of the Municipal education of Antwerp ( AGSO)  [www.stedelijkonderwijs.be](http://www.stedelijkonderwijs.be) | Nadine Delannoy | All types of schools | Several schools are grouped in a community. An international coordinator supports them to set up an international network and to initiate European projects. |

\* *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:**

* 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?**

In the other countries, there are no similar experiences, because in many countries there is a State Educational system which doesn't allow isolate experimentation. There are many European oriented projects but they are isolated inside the schools, without a network connecting these projects, as in Germany.

* 1. **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 presented their experiences about improving student’s competences in Vocational Schools and Primary, Secondary, High Schools and Universities. Providing work place experiences to students and bringing schools and companies together seemed to be a problem across most countries. Another common problem was the unemployment of the young graduates. It is problematic to compare students’ abilities and competencies across European countries. There are common examples of good practices to express pupils themselves: competitions, art exhibitions, performances, intellectual games, apprenticeship, and educational development plan. Participants found common challenges in their teaching practice such as lack of motivation of students and parents’ involvement, aggression and bullying.

* 1. **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.**

Participants found effective and innovative practice to organize meetings between Human Resources specialists of the companies and potential employees studying at Vocational Schools. Apprenticeship model seemed to be effective in providing opportunity for students to develop their job competencies while pursuing their education.

As a solution to unemployment of young people Essen Economic Development Corporation funds 50 students to help practical training in other countries. This experience helps students to be better prepared for their future careers.

Developing common standards for competences in Vocational Training across Europe is important. EBBD Association developed European Business Baccalaureate Diploma program as an indication of high standards.

* 1. **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?**

Good practices presented during this visit could be easily introduced in most of the school systems of the participating countries, because they are related to the main "actors" of education: students, families, teachers and decision makers.

**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.

Through our presentations, we got to know each other and each national educational system. We noticed similarities, differences and challenges. Some countries have a huge experience with a European curriculum and projects; others don’t but have the intention to start working on a European level. Contacts were exchanged in order to develop further projects and to inspire each other. The coordinator of the study visit is the representative of NRW ministry and the one who took the initiative to create the Europaschule qualification label. He did very good work introducing the participants in his Europaschule network. Furthermore for some institutions involved in the study visit the company network of the schools in the Essen region will be important in future international apprenticeship programs.

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**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?**

The German Europaschule concept is unique for the participants except for the Romanian one. The established criteria, the European curriculum, the created network not only among schools themselves but also among schools and companies make this project very interesting for other countries. The Europaschule network has to be enlarged on national level as well as between the European countries. The coordinator of the study visit is willing to facilitate further contacts. It has to be institutionalized by the different European Education Departments.

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| II Organisation of the visit |

This part of the report will not be published but it will be made available to the organiser and will be used by national agencies and Cedefop to monitor and improve implementation of the study visits programme.

We recognise the value of ongoing feedback as a way of ensuring that the programme is at all times a responsive and dynamic initiative, meeting the needs of its various participants and target audiences. In this section you are invited to give us your feedback on several factors that, in our opinion, contribute to an effective visit.

**1. Discuss within the group and check if you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please mark only one box (🗹) that expresses most closely the opinion of the entire group. Please use Question 2 of this section to elaborate on your responses, if needed.**

|  |  | **All agree** | **Most agree** | **Most disagree** | **All disagree** | **Not applicable** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| e.g. | The size of the group was good. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.1. | The programme of the visit followed the description in the catalogue. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.2. | There was a balance between theoretical and practical sessions. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.3. | Presentations and field visits were linked in a coherent and complementary manner. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.4. | The topic was presented from the perspectives of the following actors of the education and training system in the host country: |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1.4.1. | government and policy-makers | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.4.2. | social partners | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.4.3. | heads of institutions | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.4.4. | teachers and trainers | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.4.5. | students/trainees | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.4.6. | users of services | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.5. | There was enough time allocated to participants’ presentations. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.6. | The background documentation on the theme provided before the visit helped to prepare for the visit. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.7. | Most of the group received a programme well in advance. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.8. | The information provided before the visit about transportation and accommodation was useful. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.9. | The organiser accompanied the group during the entire programme. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.10. | The size of the group was appropriate. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.11. | The group comprised a good mixture of participants with diverse professional backgrounds. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.12. | There were enough opportunities for interaction with representatives of the host organisations. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.13. | There was enough time allocated for discussion within the group. | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |
| 1.14. | The Cedefop study visits website provided information that helped to prepare for the visit. | 🞎 | 🗹 | 🞎 | 🞎 | 🞎 |

**2. If you have any comments on the items 1.1. – 1.14 above, please write them in the box below.**

All the participants want to thank the organizers of the study visit for their involvement, their passion, their welcoming and their effort to let us feel comfortable.

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| III Summary |

**1. Having summarised all your reflections and impressions, please indicate how satisfied you are with your participation in the study visit. Indicate the number of participants for each category, e.g.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Very satisfied | **11** | Satisfied |  | Somewhat satisfied |  | Not satisfied |  | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied |  |

**2. What elements and aspects of the study visits do you think could be changed or improved?**

It's a pity that study visits are no more present in Erasmus+. We strongly believe in the great opportunity given to decisions makers, teachers and headmasters to meet and learn good practice, share their experiences, introduce new models in their countries and organizations.

**3. If there is anything else you would like to write about that is not included in the above questions, please feel free to write below or attach a separate sheet.**

**THANK YOU!**

Please submit the report to Cedefop ([studyvisits@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:studyvisits@cedefop.europa.eu)) **within one month** of the visit.