

SCOPE

Survey of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of Comenius 2.2 in-service training programmes in Europe

Edited by Manuel Megias Rosa



with the financial support of the European Commission
in the framework of the Socrates programme

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Introduction

Since 1996 hundreds of Comenius in-service training courses have been organised. Firstly within the framework of the then Comenius 3.2 courses and, since 2001, under the current Comenius 2.2 system. The main objective of these courses was and is to contribute to the diffusion of quality in school education, both in specific and non-specific areas, as well as promoting a European dimension in schools.

The in-set courses focussed on one specific discipline or on cross-curricular topics or were addressed to specific target groups, yet all of them were, or should have been 'European' as far as the content matter, the training team and the participants were concerned. Carrying out such courses has certainly implied facing difficulties at different levels: in candidate selection, in the organisation stage and, not least, in the management of European courses which present substantial differences in comparison with national courses.

Several challenges have been faced and overcome over the past years such as didactic organisation, problems related to the knowledge of the target language which may differ from participant to participant as well as the advisability of including preparatory or follow-up assignments to the course. Yet very often these solutions have not been shared with other course organisers to facilitate a better organisation of future courses.

Why this project?

The main objective of the present project has been to carry out a survey of all issues related to the characterizing aspects of a European course in order to improve the quality of Comenius 2.2 courses pointing out strengths and weaknesses, competences acquired, problems and challenges organisers have met and the way in which they have solved them and to provide facilitators who can improve the organization and the implementation of such courses.

The field of research was defined during the course of two years 2001 and 2002 and involved everyone concerned: course organisers, national agencies, those responsible for the selection and funding of participants, and, of course, the participants themselves. The survey is based on case studies, interviews and questionnaires sent to the above and highlights:

- obstacles and problems met by course organisers during the preparation, the implementation and the follow-up of Comenius 2.2 courses
- solutions and strategies which have enabled them to solve some of those problems
- examples of good practice and practical suggestions to improve the quality in planning and running European courses
- training needs of course organisers

What is this report about?

The aim of this report is to present useful remarks and to be a practical point of reference for the organisation of future Comenius 2.2 courses. Key issues related to the organization of Comenius 2.2 courses have been taken into consideration from the very first contact with participants through to the evaluation and course follow-up.

What does each part cover?

Each chapter describes in detail each of the tasks that will need to be considered in the organisation of a 'good' European course.

- Chapter 1 looks in detail at the methodology used in the development of the project.
- Chapter 2 provides the basic information on mobility in Europe and the definition of a Comenius 2.2 course.
- Chapter 3 reflects on innovation in education through Comenius partnerships.
- Chapter 4 is about European networking and its contribution to the knowledge society.
- Chapter 5 enters the core issues focusing on examples of good procedural practice for the setting up and running of successful European courses. The essential point of reference is the exploitation of those factors which proved to be of crucial and particularly positive value. In paying attention to the aspects, approaches, attitudes and procedures, even the simplest and apparently least significant may turn out to be of primary importance for the success of a course. Chapter 5 focuses also on creating, running and follow-up to a Comenius 2.2 course from the development of the programme to the dissemination and valorisation of the results.
- Chapter 6 presents the data collected with the questionnaires and the course participants evaluation.
- Chapter 7 presents some case studies.

Who is this report for?

The output of this report will be particularly useful to:

- future and potential Comenius 2.2 organisers, in that its purpose is to facilitate the development of European courses whilst avoiding the most common weaknesses
- participants, as it provides better learning opportunities
- National Agencies, as it will enable them to support and give better advice to potential course organisers as well as provide suggestions for improving the selection of courses and participants
- Senior Officers in Ministries, in that they might have a better idea of what Comenius 2.2 courses are about and how the quality can be improved. It also provides elements to promote a national policy regarding a European identity in education
- the Commission, as it supplies an updated panorama of the impact of Comenius 2.2 courses from different perspectives.

1. Project methodology

Introduction

In order to provide a holistic vision of the state of the art for Comenius 2.2 courses, the first decision taken by the SCOPE project team was to involve all of the stakeholders directly: course organisers, participants or beneficiaries of courses and the National Agencies, who play an important role in the selection of courses and participants.

In order to collect information and achieve the aims of the survey some instruments were developed:

1. Questionnaire for Comenius 2.2. organisers
2. Questionnaire for National Agencies
3. Interview protocol for experienced course organisers
4. Case studies format

In addition, some 20 participants' reports provided by National Agencies were analysed.

The workplan of the SCOPE project was structured around 3 plenary meetings. The first meeting of the project was devoted to compiling the 2 questionnaires: the first for course organisers or project co-ordinators, the second for National Agencies. The other two meetings were devoted to the analysis of materials collected so far and to the development of further instruments for collecting the information: the interview protocol and the case studies format.

Questionnaires for Comenius 2.2 organisers and Socrates National Agencies

The first questionnaire was drafted to ask for information from Comenius 2.2 course organisers (2002 and 2003). It focused on strengths, weaknesses and problems encountered during the implementation of such courses. Specific attention was given to key issues such as accreditation, recognition, validation, the use of ICT, preparation and follow-up of such courses and pedagogical methods used during the courses.

A second questionnaire was drafted specifically to inquire about the experiences of National Agencies in relation to the quality of Comenius 2.2 courses. The agencies receive the evaluation forms which are sent in by participants after the course; they also have direct contacts both with participants and course organisers. The agencies are also involved in deciding which courses should go into the catalogue.

The questionnaire for course organisers was prepared in two languages, English and French, while the questionnaire for National Agencies was written only in English (see annexes 1 and 2 in the annexes section). Both of the questionnaires were accompanied by letters from the

project team coordinator explaining the meaning of this request (see annexes 3 and 4 in the annexes section). National Agencies were also asked to send some 10 Comenius 2.2 course participants' reports either by ordinary mail or by fax.

Research work on the list of recipients prior to sending out the questionnaires

The first problem met with was the selection of recipients for the questionnaires. After research on the Socrates Programme website it was decided to send the questionnaire for course organisers to 132 individuals who were responsible for organising Comenius 2.2 courses and Grundtvig courses in 2002 and 2003 (see annex 5 in the annexes section).

Regarding the National Agencies, all 32 were taken into account when planning for their contribution to the project (see annexes 6, 7 and 8 in the annexes section).

The questionnaires were sent to course organisers and National Agencies on 12 October 2003 requesting the end of October as a deadline for their responses. On 31 October a reminder was sent out to all the course organisers and the National Agencies that had not yet answered.

Quantitative analysis of the questionnaires received

Course organisers

The number of questionnaires received was lower than the number expected. On the one hand 18 questionnaires (13,63%) were not delivered as the addresses on the site were wrong or no longer existed. On the other hand 10 course organisers (7,57%) answered in a negative way as they had never or not yet organised a Comenius course.

The questionnaires received were 25 (19,69%): 1 in French, 1 in Italian and 23 in English. Some of the respondents who returned the questionnaire complained that they had to devote considerable time to fill in the questionnaire properly which may be one of the main reasons for the low number of answers.

As for the course co-ordinators' countries, the questionnaires received where from the following countries: 2 from Austria, 2 from Belgium, 1 from Denmark, 1 from Germany, 2 from Hungary, 5 from Italy, 1 from Lithuania, 2 from Netherlands, 1 from Norway, 2 from Portugal, 1 from Spain, 2 from Sweden, 4 from the UK that is from most of European countries.

National Agencies

The questionnaires received were 9 (28,12%) from Austria, Belgium (F), Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden. Three National Agencies (9,37%) answered that they were not involved in Comenius projects.

As the number of questionnaires received both from course organisers and National Agencies was not very relevant we decided not to encode them. Nevertheless, a careful analysis of the questionnaires was carried out to obtain the information reflected in this survey (see sections 6.1 for course organisers questionnaires report and 6.2 for National Agencies questionnaires report).

Interview protocol for experienced course organisers

The aim for interviewing some experienced course organisers (for the pattern of the interview, see annexes 9 and 10 in the annexes section) was to analyse more deeply some crucial issues related to the organisation and running of Comenius 2.2 courses.

The key questions covered the following areas:

- Benefits derived
- Preparation
- Follow up
- Recognitions and accreditation
- Evaluation
- Dissemination

Participants' reports

The 20 participants' reports received, sent by UK (10), Hungary (5) and The Netherlands (5) National Agencies, were analysed and commented. The analysis was enriched with data collected from some 80 other reports of participants, made between 1997-1999 (see section 6.3).

Case studies

The reason for including case studies was to collect some complete and detailed examples related to course experiences, for which a full set of materials was provided. For the format of the case studies, it was decided to follow the manual index but a certain freedom was left in order to develop the more characteristic aspects of the courses themselves. It was decided to include 3 examples (see chapter 7).

The guidelines

The final version of the present guidelines was prepared in our third meeting in order to underline:

- obstacles and solutions to course planning and organisation
- a set of examples of good practice
- some suggestions to facilitate the organisation and management of courses
- a needs analysis defining the training needs of course organisers

Stress was put on a socio-constructivist approach in terms of the implementation of European in-set courses. Indeed the project partners are convinced that the prior experience of the participants is a major component of every course and has to be incorporated in an explicit way.

Thus an active learning model was stressed which focused on knowledge acquisition by the participants as active learners with the trainers acting as coaches or learning facilitators. This has, so far, been shown to be the most effective way of organising and running Comenius 2.2 courses which have a lasting impact. This socio-constructivist pedagogical approach is also the basis for enhancing networking between those who have attended such courses.

2. Schoolteacher mobility programmes funded by the European Union: an overview

1. Introduction

Comenius 2.2 courses are an important part of mobility of school teachers in the European Union and in the other eligible countries under the Socrates programme, however these are not the only mobility activity for school teachers, heads of schools or other educational staff. The Comenius 2.2 courses mobility programme has evolved under Socrates 1 initially as the Comenius 3.2 mobility and the expectation is for further development in the next EU programme on education and training up from 2007. This chapter gives an overview on school teacher mobility mostly funded by the European Union with a short section on other funders.

Schoolteacher mobility is regarded as an important element in the professional development and training of schoolteachers. On the one hand it enhances the quality of education and on the other hand it opens up school education to the wider world. It also helps the teachers who observe other systems to be aware of the importance of access for all to education. Thus, teacher mobility in schools contributes towards reinforcing the three objectives of the Detailed Work Programme of the Commission of the European Union¹ which is the keystone of the educational strategy of the Commission and of the European Union towards 2010.

Since the World War II, international teacher mobility for the purposes of professional development has been developed in several European countries and within the major European structures. It was the Council of Europe that took the first initiative for schoolteacher mobility in the 1950s followed by several domestic programmes of teacher mobility which were planned in order to reinforce the links between the nations. Thus, France and Germany have established several kinds of co-operation within the framework of the OFAJE (Office Franco-Allemand pour la Jeunesse/ Youth Office for Cooperation between France and Germany). In the same way Great Britain has implemented cooperation programmes through the British Council with France, Germany, Spain, Russia and China (amongst others).

Mobility has been considered by the European Union to be an important strategic element in the field of education from the first action programme that was convened in 1976 onwards. The oldest action within the framework of the European Union is probably the ARION; its objective was to enable the political decision makers and the people then in

¹ See the conclusion in chapter 3 for more information.

charge at the ministries of education to participate in study visits in order to understand the educational systems of other countries better. In 2003 the 25th anniversary of ARION study-visits was celebrated at a conference held under the auspices of the Greek presidency. The European Union started developing mobility programmes for schoolteachers from 1989 with the TEX-programme. Mobility for pupils (from 15 till 18) also came about in 1989 thanks to the new Lingua Action IV programme. From these small beginnings schoolteacher mobility has become an important and vital element in European co-operation.

This section aims to focus on the development of these actions and initiatives of the European Commission to promote teacher mobility in schools. The text does not attempt to cover teacher mobility in higher education, however there are occasional references to the mobility of teacher trainers insofar as they are relevant to understand the context of schoolteacher mobility.

2. The European Union and schoolteacher mobility

Education was not one of the areas mentioned in the Treaty of Rome in 1957. It was only in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 that one specific Article of the Treaty of the European Union (Article 129) dealt with education. The Article has been renumbered in the Treaty of Amsterdam and it is now Article 149 (ex 129) that deals with education. However, the Commission in collaboration with the Member States did not wait for this Article in order to take initiatives to promote teacher mobility and co-operation between schools. These two activities developed virtually at the same time and were closely linked.

First step: the 1988 Resolution on the European Dimension in Education

In 1988 the Council of Ministers adopted a resolution on the European Dimension in Education. Starting from this resolution different initiatives were developed that contributed to the mobility of schoolteachers. The first initiative was TEX – The Teacher Exchange Programme – launched with the aim of helping teachers in secondary education to meet through mobility activities, to exchange information about their respective educational systems and about their educational activities. The objective of possible co-operation between these teachers was present but there was as yet no community programme or action to finance such activities. After two years of this modest programme teacher mobility was also made accessible for teachers of primary education and later it was also opened-up for teachers in pre-primary education.

Although TEX was the first official initiative that explicitly referred to schoolteacher mobility, it is important to recall that schoolteachers were also mobile within the framework of Lingua Action IV, approved in 1989 with the objective to develop bilateral co-operation between schools (higher secondary schools, especially technical or vocational). Within the framework of these Lingua IV projects – later called Joint Educational Projects (PECs) and under Socrates 2 called Comenius Language Projects – teachers were in the first instance able to accompany pupils who were participating in two-week exchanges between pupils, developed to enhance their linguistic competences.

From 1992 until 1994 another initiative was launched parallel with the TEX initiative namely the MSPs – Multilateral School Partnerships – between four schools in each of the then 12 Member States of the European Union. Within the framework of these MSPs,

teachers had the opportunity to meet in shared work meetings in order to prepare projects together. It was also during this period that the Teacher Placement Scheme (TPS) was implemented. This action allowed teachers to undertake short-term work placement in companies in order to help them to be further acquainted with the world of work.

At the same time initiatives were implemented for teacher trainers. Since 1987 future teachers have had the opportunity to be mobile within the framework of ERASMUS, the action programme for co-operation between universities and other Higher Education Institutions. In 1989 the Commission launched a special initiative for teacher training, the RIF - Réseau d'Institutions de Formation (Network for Teacher Training Institutions) which aimed to intensify and diversify co-operation in the field of initial teacher training and to reinforce the introduction of the European dimension in initial teacher training. The RIF was different from co-operation projects under ERASMUS because the partners were not only departments for initial teacher training but also institutions that were in charge of in-service teacher training. Between 1989 and 1995 the Commission also organised five summer universities for teacher trainers. These summer universities were regarded as in-service training in the field of the European dimension. One of these summer universities was even an itinerant one, thus focusing on the importance of mobility amongst educational professionals in Europe.

Therefore between 1988 and 1994 there was a proliferation (although step by step) of possibilities for teachers and teacher trainers to take advantage of initiatives that involved mobility. By 1994 the basic elements for the creation of Socrates I were present and a new community action, called Comenius, especially designed for school education and initial and in-service teacher training, was included in the Socrates I programme. All of the above-mentioned initiatives were also integrated into Socrates I with the exception of the RIF networks. These were dissolved but many of its member organisations went on to develop projects within the framework of Erasmus or Comenius 3.1 (later 2.1) of Socrates.

Socrates I and the mobility of schoolteachers or educational staff within Comenius and Lingua (1955-1999)

The Comenius action under Socrates I consisted of three actions: Comenius 1 gave the opportunity to create school partnerships where different types of mobility were possible. Thus, teachers could be mobile through preparatory visits, project meetings where they were working together or managing the project, teacher exchanges where teachers could (alone or together) teach for a number of weeks in a host school and lastly through study visits for heads of schools. Preparatory visits could also take the shape of Contact Seminars as these had previously proven to be very effective within the framework of the Lingua IV Joint Educational Projects.

These JEPs were not at first integrated into Comenius but continued as Action E of the Lingua Action of Socrates I. In addition the in-service training programme for languages and the mobility grants for teachers to take part in language courses were not integrated within Comenius in the first years of the programme. These actions continued separately and outside Comenius although they were dealing with schoolteachers. An additional activity also introduced under Lingua was the Language Assistantships for future language teachers. These already existed, and continue to exist, within the bilateral agreements between a number of European countries.

Within Socrates I, Comenius 2, dealt with the creation of cross-cultural projects. Although the main objective was the creation and the implementation of European projects to develop innovative materials in the field of cross-cultural education, some of these projects introduced more or less openly teacher mobility and even pupil mobility (in some rare cases).

Within the framework of Comenius 3 under Socrates I, there were two sub-actions. Projects introduced under Action 3.1 led to the creation of European projects leading to in-service training courses with a European dimension possible. Comenius 3.2 made mobility grants available for teachers and other educational personnel (pedagogical consultants, inspectors etc.) to enable them to take part in training courses that were developed under Comenius 3.1.

The ARION action continued to develop further and was integrated in Socrates I. Although ARION was mainly focused on decision makers and people in charge in the educational systems, it was possible during the implementation of Socrates I that teachers or heads of school could also participate in the study visits. In most cases the school staff involved in these study visits are members of personnel who have key responsibilities in schools at the level of administrative or pedagogical management.

Socrates II and mobility of schoolteachers and/or educational personnel under Comenius

Within Socrates II the existing actions were restructured under Comenius. All activities in connection with school partnerships such as the European educational projects (EEPs) and the Joint Educational Projects (JEPs) of Lingua E were integrated into Comenius 1 and are now called School Projects and Language Projects. Moreover a third possibility was introduced with the launch of School Development Projects. This means that within the framework of Comenius 1 three types of partnerships are now possible.

The Comenius 2 action on intercultural education was dissolved and all the Comenius projects were invited to reflect on how to work on the integration of the intercultural dimension within the Comenius projects. Under Socrates II Comenius Action 2 is subdivided into two important sub-actions and deals on the one hand with the creation and implementation of European projects under Comenius 2.1. and on the other hand with mobility grants under Comenius 2.2. Moreover the Language Assistantships, the development of in-service training courses in the field of languages and grants to participate in training courses were all integrated within Comenius 2. Thus all the actions concerning training courses of educational personnel in schools were regrouped within Comenius.

Comenius 2.1, which replaced 3.1, dealt with the development of modules for initial teacher training courses and for in-service teacher training and materials or strategies to be used for teacher training. Moreover, teacher training institutions can create mobility projects for future teachers in order to allow them to do observation placements in schools abroad.

Comenius action 2.2. is subdivided into three parts dealing with mobility grants:

1. Grants for future teachers to participate in initiatives for mobility within the framework of their initial teachers training (Comenius 2.2.a)

2. Grants for language assistants that are intended for students who are going to become language teachers (Comenius 2.2.b grants)
3. Grants for in-service training for teachers (Comenius 2.2.c grants); these training courses can also be general training courses as well as specific courses or language courses

Comenius Action 3 has become the new action for Comenius Networks. These new networks are based on subjects of common interest with the objective of promoting European co-operation and innovation in school education in all possible thematic fields. These networks constitute:

- A platform, allowing people and schools participating in Comenius to strengthen their co-operation and to maintain and reinforce their European collaboration beyond the period where they receive community support for their specific projects.
- A forum for reflection and joint co-operation with the aim of reviewing and encouraging innovation and best practices within the thematic field concerned. Mobility is promoted within the framework of these networks through participation of the partners in working meetings on the one hand and on the other through participation of educational staff of schools in European initiatives organised by these Comenius networks.

Within the framework of Socrates II, Arion has now been integrated into Action 6 (Observation and Innovation).

Leonardo da Vinci and teacher mobility in technical and vocational education

As Leonardo does not constitute a principal subject of this chapter, information on the latter programme will be limited. Leonardo da Vinci has developed since 1995 (and before that, similar actions existed under other names such as PETRA and COMETT) and deals mainly with mobility actions and project pilots. Proposals for mobility within this framework must concern transnational actions for mobility of people in training, especially youngsters who are being trained or who are entering the labour market, young workers or unemployed workers, youngsters who have recently graduated or students in higher education institutions. These projects are called 'placements'. There are also projects targeted at occupational guidance specialists, human resource managers, trainers and mentors in the area of language competencies as well as social partners. These projects are called 'transnational exchange projects'.

As far as technical and vocational schools are concerned, the placements are relevant to this chapter. Sometimes teachers accompany the pupils and also participate in tutoring. The latter can often be regarded as an excellent in-service training for the teachers of the technical and vocational schools involved.

Finally it is also important to note that many technical and vocational schools also participate in the above mentioned Comenius 1 and 2 actions.

3. Conclusions

There are several possibilities for teachers and other educational staff of schools to be mobile within the framework of the European educational programme Socrates and

especially under Comenius. All teachers can be involved in these mobility actions. Limited mobility is also possible for teachers and members of vocational educational staff within the framework of the European action programme Leonardo da Vinci.

Mobility within the framework of European Community programmes is complemented by other possibilities for mobility either within the framework of bilateral or multilateral agreements between two or more countries or within other programmes such as that offered by the Council of Europe. Multilateral agreements often cover mobility between several countries in a specific region such as the mobility within the framework of the Nordic Council. Bilateral agreements cover mobility between two countries and are often targeting professional development of certain groups like language teachers. All European countries participate in mobility initiatives within the framework of the Council of Europe.

3. Innovations in education through Comenius partnerships: reality or fiction?

1. Introduction

Comenius in-service training courses under action Comenius 2.2 have three main objectives:

1. to improve the competencies and the skills of the teachers involved
2. to promote networking and exchange
3. to enhance the European dimension in education by creating Comenius 1 partnerships.

The school partnerships have great potential to contribute to innovation in education which is the constant challenge of every education system. Each system has to adapt to changes in society, environment and context. Schools and educational systems have difficulties in coping with those changes and with the speed at which changes have to happen. One of the elements which can facilitate and enhance innovation is definitely European and international co-operation between schools. European Comenius 2.2 in-service courses contribute to enhancing networking and partnerships and thus contribute to innovation. Let's look more closely at the partnerships and the ways in which they are catalysts for innovation.

The school partnerships within Comenius 1 of the Socrates programme of the EU started officially in 1995 with the first Socrates programme. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this official introduction had been preceded by a pilot phase from 1992 to 1994 called the Multilateral School Partnerships pilot project. Within this pilot 40 partnerships, each four schools tested out the potential for partnerships involving schools from the then 12 member states of the European Union. The larger debate about co-operation between schools to promote the European dimension and quality in education started in 1988 with the then resolution on the European dimension in education.

Over the last 15 years school partnerships have been developed and refined especially within the framework of the Comenius 1 action so that at the moment there are the School Projects, the Language Projects and the School Development Projects. All are said to contribute to quality in education and all are said to contribute to innovation in education. But do they contribute? Do we have clear indicators that partnerships across Europe between schools enhance the quality of the learning and the teaching and contribute to innovation? Needless to say these are very difficult concepts to address as notions such

as 'quality in education' and 'innovation' are contextual and dynamic with different connotations according to which country or region one refers to.

We strongly believe that Comenius partnerships (as all partnerships in education) are networks of education contributing to better schooling and education for tomorrow. European (and global) school partnerships contribute to promoting and disseminating innovation and also help develop new models for organising education and for managing schools to the benefit of the pupils and their education and training².

If the European Union is to *become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*, as stated at the Lisbon European Council of 2000, Education has to contribute to it in a concrete way by enhancing quality in education and training. Schools therefore have to stimulate knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes which foster both personal development and contribute to employability. It has to be seen that education is beneficial to all the members of the school community and the local community: pupils, staff, parents, heads, the civil society in the local community, companies etc. It has to stimulate lifelong learning by motivating for learning and training. It has to educate better citizens who are willing to contribute to the welfare and well-being of the 'community' be it local, regional, national, European or global. A vast agenda which can only be reached progressively but to which the involvement in European Comenius partnerships contributes greatly.

2. The innovating school

But what is an innovating school? Which can be said to be the key characteristics of an innovating school?³ They are schools which create an innovative learning environment for pupils and all staff and members of the school community. They are schools that are developing a caring environment built on trust and belief in the potential of every child and member of the school community. They are schools which take professional development of all its staff members - teachers, head and administrative staff and others - very seriously and invest in it. They are schools that promote active citizenship through concrete civic action within and outside the school. They are schools that promote networking at European and international level. And finally they are schools that link up and co-operate very closely with the local community in which they are embedded. A more detailed analysis of each of these characteristics is expanded upon below.

Innovative learning environments are created by developing different approaches to learning: co-operative learning, peer learning, intergenerational learning, learning through project work etc., approaches that promote the acquisition of knowledge in an active way by the pupils themselves. Joint European project work within the framework of Comenius partnerships uses such interdisciplinary and cross-curricular approaches and stimulates the creation of innovative learning environments where pupils become responsible for their learning and for that of their fellow pupils. Such environments enhance motivation for learning and for lifelong learning as they are contextual and create real life environments

² Major references for this chapter are two OECD publications: 'Innovating schools' (1999) and 'Schooling for tomorrow: Networks of innovation; Towards new models for managing schools and systems' (2003).

³ To answer these questions reference can be made to the OECD publication of 1999 'Innovating Schools'.

and situations in which knowledge, competencies and skills and attitudes are embedded in.

Research has shown that Comenius partnerships and other European or international projects contribute to enhancing the following skills: communication (with particular stress on ICT), problem-solving, decision-making, organisation, presentation, entrepreneurship, language skills, intercultural skills, conflict management, time management teamwork and teambuilding and pro-active behaviour. Research also shows that involvement in European or international projects stimulates the value of co-operation ('live and work together' - The Delors report) through team building and team work both at the level of the pupils and the staff. Finally research also shows that European and international project work promotes learning versus teaching. The pupil becomes an active agent for his/her learning and the teacher becomes a coach or learning facilitator.

The caring school is enhanced by European Comenius project work as it changes the relationship between pupils and staff. Such changes in relationship develop more trust and confidence and facilitate guidance and counselling at all levels. They also contribute to tackle more efficiently violence in all of its forms in schools. Relationships built on trust, confidence and co-operation lead to more inclusion of all pupils (and staff) in the school community and thus avoid exclusion which is the beginning of drops-out and loss of motivation for learning. The caring school is a school which cares for each member of the school community at whichever level. This belief in the unique value of each member of the school community and the belief that each member has a contribution to make based on his personality is a key in the role of education to enhance personal development and society-building.

Professional staff development is also greatly enhanced through involvement in European and international projects. There is clear evidence that mobility and co-operation with colleagues across Europe has a major impact on professional and personal development. It is an excellent form of in-service training as, during the European project activities, teachers and staff become familiar with each other's pedagogical and didactical practices, with other ways for working with pupils, for enhancing learning and organising school and classroom activities. It facilitates the integration of the European dimension in the curriculum especially as it enables teachers and pupils to develop jointly materials to be used in their respective classrooms. This again has an impact on motivation for learning. European peer teaching, team teaching, shadowing and European benchmarking across the schools of a Comenius partnership also strengthen the professional development of the schools involved and thus contribute to the quality of education and training. The School Development Projects in Comenius make a major contribution in this area of professional development for staff and heads and should be further stimulated. All of this contributes to turning the school into a real learning organisation within which organisational learning gets a strong focus. Organisational learning combined with individual learning are leading factors in regional development as shown clearly in the OECD study 2003 'Cities and regions in the new learning economy'.

Active citizenship is promoted through Comenius partnerships as pupils (and staff) come into contact with other pupils, co-operate and work with them for a common goal within the project. In this way they put their intercultural skills into practice and learn to respect others' opinions and beliefs. They learn to manage conflicts in a positive way and learn and experience the joy of sharing the responsibility for a European projects and all the activities related to it. Comenius partnerships promote citizenship by the fact that they

make pupils aware of complex realities all across Europe and the world and thus contribute to *cognitive citizenship*. Partnerships can also continue to *pragmatic citizenship* by enabling pupils to set up social or political action at the level of the local community within the project. They thus learn 'hands on' what it means to be an active citizen. Finally projects also contribute to *affective citizenship* as pupils have the opportunity to feel part of a project, to be respected and valued for the work they put into it. Affective citizenship is a key element to avoid exclusion and promote inclusion which in its turn has an impact on motivation for learning and on the caring school mentioned earlier. Clear participative structures (e.g. pupils' councils) within the school can also strengthen active citizenship. Cognitive, affective and pragmatic citizenship have been largely described in many Council of Europe and EU publications.

European and international networking is promoted through Comenius partnerships as this is the key characteristic of Comenius 1 Networks and of innovating schools. The OECD 2003 publication 'Networks of innovation' stresses the *four key functions* of networks. Networks have a *political function* as they empower like-minded people with a common or similar objective. Cooperation leads to greater political force and input than they can have individually. Networks are thus lobby groups for innovative ideas. Networks have an *information function* as they allow for rapid exchange of information relevant for individual and organisational development processes avoiding the obstacles of administration and hierarchy. Networks have a *psychological function*; innovators are often isolated within their schools and networks provide them with opportunities for collaboration and exchange; in this way networks empower strongly innovative individuals. Finally networks have a *skills function* as innovative work requires a range of skills which are not necessarily offered by traditional training schemes but can be learned from colleagues within networks. Those functions of networking contribute greatly to enhance professional development of staff in Comenius projects as a key element to create innovative schools. Comenius 3 Networks, networks by European and international educational associations (EU Schoolnet, AEDE, ATEE, ESHA, EPA, EFIL etc.) are all major contributors to networking.

Links with the local community are enhanced through European Comenius projects. Schools try to find partners and sponsors for their projects. They co-operate with parents' organisations, with social and cultural organisations or NGO's (key members of the civil society), with local and regional authorities, with companies, with social and professional partners. Interaction with the local community has an impact on many elements: it embeds education into the local community, it creates new opportunities for professional development for teachers and new learning opportunities for pupils through placements. It creates opportunities to enhance active citizenship and may stimulate entrepreneurship of pupils and staff. It brings reality into the classroom and strengthens motivation for learning by building on the local economic, social and cultural development. The school thus becomes a true partner in local development promoting individual and organisation learning, promoting the development of social capital (values, beliefs and norms shared in social networks) and civic social capital based on social networks and normative structures that support strongly regional development as mentioned in the OECD 2003 study 'Cities and regions in the new learning economy' mentioned above.

3. Conclusion

Comenius projects do contribute to innovation in education as they contribute to the three strategic objectives of *the 2002 Detailed Work Programme of the concrete future objectives of education and training*:

1. improve quality and effectiveness of education and training
2. facilitate access of all to education and training
3. open up education and training to the wider world.

Strategic Objective 1, the quality and effectiveness of education and training, is improved as through Comenius partnerships and projects the education and training – the professional development – of teachers and trainers is improved. Projects also help to develop and put at use in concrete contexts the skills they need for the knowledge society in general and ICT in particular. Many Comenius projects (Comenius 1 and Comenius 2) increase the interest in scientific and technical studies. Comenius projects contribute to make the best use of resources by sharing resources with partners across Europe. These elements were clearly highlighted in the sections above: innovative learning environments, professional development of staff and European and international networking.

Strategic objective 2, facilitating access of all to education and training, is promoted through Comenius projects and partnerships as projects create open (and motivating) learning environments, they make learning more attractive and they support active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion. This was made clear in the sections above focusing on the caring environment and active citizenship.

Strategic objective 3, opening up education and training to the wider world, is enhanced by Comenius partnerships as it strengthens in many cases links with working life (companies, enterprises), with research (by involving universities into projects) and with the society at large (NGOs, civil society, local authorities etc.). Comenius projects develop the spirit of enterprise in both pupils and staff. They definitely contribute to improve active foreign language skills. They increase, without any doubt, mobility and exchanges of pupils and staff. Through all of this they strengthen European co-operation.

In this way European Comenius partnerships and projects contribute to the three strategic objectives and the 13 sub-objectives of the Detailed Work Programme on the concrete future objectives of education and training to which all the Member states and the acceding countries have agreed. This will lead towards a future where it is predicted that the European Union will become *the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*. Comenius projects help to contribute in their way to bring about a European society based on welfare and well-being for as many as possible within a spirit of global co-operation and development.

4. Innovating through networking⁴

1. Introduction

Before 1980 schools were mainly working on their own to fulfil their roles of education and training. In the more distant past the school was further isolated from society and it was even thought that it had to be a sanctuary (un sanctuaire as the French say). Gradually it became apparent that the school has a major contribution to make to society and therefore cannot stand on its own but has to be embedded in that society. As innovation in education as a contribution to development became a key element, it was thought that schools should co-operate with all the stakeholders of the school and first of all with parents.

Schools were individual and individualistic entities working on their own and inside them were individual or individualistic teachers who also tended to work on their own. It is only recently (over the past 20 years) that the concept of teamwork has received more attention inside the school. Teamworking can be seen as networking inside the school through interdisciplinary or cross-curricular initiatives and actions. Thus networking inside the school has gradually been strengthened by networking outside the school with the immediate stakeholders in the education system. Gradually this idea of networking has also spread to a European and international level. This is a spiralling movement that has great impact on innovation in education.

Networking has come a long way since the 1980s but still needs more attention and more focus. Heads of schools and teachers are not yet fully aware of the potential of networking and its power to constantly innovate education. This chapter will try to highlight some of the key elements of networking to innovate⁵.

Networking can contribute to innovation in education and training and this idea will be developed later. Bringing together teachers, inspectors, heads of schools, councillors etc. in the framework of Comenius 2.2 in-service training courses is a unique opportunity to promote networking. Thus every Comenius 2.2 in-service training course brings with it the opportunity to integrate explicitly in itself elements which can enhance networking. Educational staff attending a European in-service training course should be aware that

⁴ This chapter cannot provide more than an introduction to all the aspects of networks and networking. The topic is very large but this chapter aims to highlight some elements which can be useful for Comenius 2 course organisers when setting up and running a course with the hope that the course will also enhance lasting networking between some of the participants.

⁵ This chapter is largely based on experience of the development in education and training in the European Union through the initiatives set up by the Commission since 1988. Furthermore the text refers to the 2003 publication of OECD 'Schooling for tomorrow: networks of innovation'.

they can network together and that this activity may have a lasting impact on their professional development, on the innovation in their school and even on their educational system.

2. European Networks as a contribution to the knowledge society

It is clear that education has a contribution to make to the knowledge society. At the Lisbon European Council in March 2000 it was acknowledged that 'the European Union is confronted with a quantum shift resulting from globalisation and the challenges of a new knowledge-driven economy'. As said in the previous chapter, the Union set a major strategic goal for 2010 'to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion'. It was stressed that this would require a 'radical transformation of the European economy', but also a 'challenging programme for the modernisation of social welfare and education systems.'

The modernisation or innovation of education systems is a major challenge for the future development of Europe. Educational organisations have to be turned into learning organisations which are characterised by knowledge building and knowledge management. One of the key means to bring about innovation is networking. Many of the efforts of the European Union related to innovation and modernisation of education are also linked to networking and partnerships across Europe. This is done through the different European co-operation activities in the framework of programmes such as Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci.

Innovation more and more takes place in networks as opposed to hierarchies. Very few organisations can innovate by themselves and most innovations involve many types of organisations. Learning in European or international networks is a very productive way of knowledge production for different reasons - because it opens access to various sources of information, it offers a large range of learning opportunities, it creates flexible interactive (experiential) learning and it creates mechanics to create and access tacit knowledge.

All European Union initiatives since the 1980s have focused on the creation of networks sharing knowledge and expertise. Those networks concentrated not only on the sharing of knowledge and information but also on the creation of new knowledge as in the Erasmus Curriculum Development Projects or the Comenius School Development Projects. The Leonardo da Vinci Pilot projects are also known as laboratories for innovation in vocational training. All mobility activities are also integrated in the co-operation programmes in such a way that they contribute to strengthen knowledge creation.

European networking is so important because much knowledge cannot be captured in written forms such as academic reports or best practice descriptions. Much knowledge is in fact integrated in social structures within organisations. It is tacit knowledge which is not always easy to be made explicit. Research cannot give all the answers either because the quality of educational research is very different or because the mechanisms to transfer the results of research into education are very often missing. Also written information is poorly used. For all those reasons it is important and vital to promote European networking so as to make tacit knowledge become the yeast of innovation in education.

3. Defining Networking and its key elements

The OECD publication on Networking refers to 'the systematic establishment and use (management) of internal and external links (communication, interaction and co-ordination) between people, teams or organisations (nodes) in order to improve performance'.

Key elements of this definition are the following:

- Networks require systematic management
- Networks possess Nodes composed of experts, teams and institutions
- Networks are built on Links: communications, interactions and co-ordination between nodes
- Networks have to work at performance improvement

Networks require systematic management. As it is clear that while networking is highly innovating it also requires systematic management. This means that it must be integrated fully and openly into the pedagogical plan of the school. It has to be recognised by all stakeholders as a key element contributing to innovation. If it has this key place in the pedagogical plan (in the vision and the goals of the school), it must also be given the financial and pedagogical means. This means it must be given funds to be operational and it must be built on a pedagogical approach which sees to it that networking is exploited deliberately and that its results are integrated and are valorised into the educational system in an explicit way.

Networks are NODES composed of experts, teams and institutions. Networks are nodes in the true sense of the word. According to the dictionary a node is joint or knob on a stem from which leaves grow. This is an excellent analogy for networking. Networking has the potential to let education blossom and bloom. Furthermore each branch has several nodes and in the same way a school should base its innovative work on several sub-networks or nodes which together form its overall networking or educational web. To enable the full blossoming of education, nodes have to be created composed of specific experts, specific teams and specific institutions. The problems met or the innovations which schools want to bring about will be at the basis of the composition of the nodes or networks.

However, it is important to stress that such nodes should always have a variety of partners such as schools, research institutions, universities, companies, members of the local community and/or the civil society. The composition of the node may differ according to the issues or problems to be addressed. Schools should learn to create networks composed of different nodes which can be supportive to their innovative work and build on the potential which is available first of all in their immediate surroundings. Creating such complex innovative structures requires investments in time and also in financial support. Such investment is sure to pay off both in the short term and in the long term.

Networks are built on links: communications, interactions and co-ordination between nodes. It is important that schools develop innovative nodes, sub-networks working on different innovative areas as mentioned above. It is vital that links and communications are created between the different nodes or sub-networks within the same schools and possibly across schools. Creating communication and interaction thus enhancing the co-ordination between the different nodes is a major challenge.

Nodes or sub-networks which exist by themselves are doomed to disappear. Nodes which interact with other nodes and sub-networks within the same school and within networks of schools at local, regional, national, European and international level will revitalise themselves constantly. The key characteristic of innovation is that it is starting over again and again so that innovative actions by definition cannot flourish fully in isolation but bloom better in interaction with other similar actions.

Networks have to work at performance improvement. This is the normal consequence of what is said above. Networks always have to work at improving their performance and this is at two levels. The composition of the network will have to be regularly improved; partners disappear or new partners have to be found who can better contribute to the objectives of the network. Simultaneously efforts have to be made to improve the functioning of the network. This means that staff involved in the running and management of the networks on the one hand and those who are involved in the networks as agents on the other, will have to be trained to make the networks as efficient and as effective as possible.

4. Types of networks

The OECD study 2003 'Networks of innovation' mentions three types of network:

- The community of practice
- The networked organisation
- The virtual community

A fourth was added to the list of the OECD study: the network of networks.

The community of practice. This is a network driven by practitioners who join together to find solutions to practical problems and to exchange the ways in which issues and problems are tackled and solved. Communities of practice do not necessarily codify their knowledge but it would be good that communities of practice make more efforts to do so. By codifying their shared knowledge they can make it available to other network. The OECD study stresses that such communities of practice combine the 'know-what' and the 'know-how' with the 'know-who' and the 'know where'.

The networked organisation. According to the OECD study such an organisation implies explicit or implicit co-operation between autonomous organisations built on semi-stable relations. In such an organisation each partner stays autonomous and strengthens its own competences through networking and the co-operation. Such a networked organisation is a good example of what is meant by creation of added value to a partnership of a network.

The virtual community. According to the OECD study this is a term covering a wide variety of communities that make use of ICT to exchange information to achieve specific results.

The network of networks. This kind of network maybe implicit in the types which have been mentioned above but it is useful to stress that very often networks are composed of other smaller or larger networks. Smaller networks working on similar issues can join together in larger umbrella networks which can enhance synergy between the smaller networks and which can enhance dissemination and valorisation to the educational

community at large. The Comenius 3 Networks are good examples of such networks of networks.

For example, Comenius 1 School Partnerships – especially the School Development Projects - are very often communities of practice as they share their practice to find solutions to practical problems. They are also networked organisations as Comenius 1 networks involve explicit co-operation between autonomous organisations. The schools involved strengthen their innovative activities by exchanging with one another, by setting up joint initiatives and by promoting different forms of mobility. Comenius 1 networks can also be virtual communities since they make use of ICT to exchange information to help teachers and pupils work together.

Types of networks can also be distinguished through characteristics other than the ones mentioned above. Networks vary in size and geographic scope. Some networks may be local, regional, national, European, or international. Some may be official initiatives of the Ministries of Education, for example the pilot networks which exist in most European countries. Other networks may be private initiatives or initiatives of Foundations. Some may be temporary in nature and purpose or may have a more permanent character. Networks may also take the form of associations and have an NGO status. The Commission of the EU has produced a directory of such European NGOs in education which is accessible on the European Commission website.

5. Characteristics of exemplar school networks

A key element of a good school network is that it is integrated into the overall policy of the school as reflected in the mission statement or in the pedagogical plan. Being integrated into the mission statement of the school usually indicates that they will also get the resources to function and to improve. This means that in-service training of staff in relation with project management and network management are possible and scheduled. Networks which are not integrated in the mission statement and which do not have the means to function (management, in-service training of staff) have little chance of surviving for very long.

Networks of schools which are truly innovative try to integrate their activities (at different levels) into the regional policy or the national policy of innovation in education. Bearing in mind that regional or national education policies are more and more in line with European policies, efficient networks try to integrate their activities in the Detailed Work Programme of the concrete future objectives for education and training (for 2010 in the EU). To this extent they reflect regularly how the activities of the network contribute to the programme and they keep themselves informed about EU actions related to this Detailed Work Programme.

They are truly interactive and beneficial to all parties. Good networks must be interactive in every sense of the word. Interactive means that there is a constant action both ways: giving and taking between all the partners involved. All partners have to contribute to it and all partners have to benefit from it. All partners also have to contribute an equal and even share of the work. Networks with sleeping or inactive partners do not survive for very long if they do not exclude those unproductive partners.

However this does not mean that networks have to be composed of equally strong partners. In some cases partnerships may be composed of strong and weak partners but it should be clear that the so-called weak or inexperienced partners are part of the project in order to gain expertise to improve their situation. Networks must be a 'win-win' operation for all partners involved.

They share a common purpose translated into concrete activities. The purpose of the networks must be clearly agreed by all partners. The best plan is that gradually some sort of agreement is made between the members of the network on their objectives and activities. Part of this agreement is an evaluation of their activities and of the functioning and management of the network. Many networks sign up to a charter of co-operation which is designed to put on paper the mission and vision of the network.

The common purpose will best be translated into concrete activities which are beneficial to all the partners. Activities can take varied forms from joint projects involving pupils and teachers to joint in-service training activities. Activities can also include the development of different forms of mobility such as peer teaching or shadowing or acting as an external examiner or trainer. Mobility can also be study visits or peer review activities for heads of the schools.

They have a limited lifetime and vary regularly in both composition or structure. Networks are by nature limited in their lifetime as most of them tend to evolve to another form or composition after some time. In some cases they just disappear when particular activities are finished. Partners may be dropping out and new partners may be joining. Stable networks are not necessarily those who keep the same partners for many years.

Several Comenius networks exist where co-ordinators link up with a large number of schools across Europe and develop projects with sub-groups of the network. Sometimes mechanisms are set up to see to it that all partners to the large network benefit from the outcomes of the smaller projects.

They use ICT for effective communication and coordination. Effective and regular communication between the members of a network is the key to good functioning. Networks which do not take every opportunity to exchange information and to share the activities implemented amongst the different partners, have a very limited reason for existing.

They also go to great extent to find the latest information on educational developments and keep each other informed about such developments. They pay great attention to the information made available by the Commission DGEAC in general and Eurydice in particular. They also pay attention to the activities of the Council of Europe, of OECD and of UNESCO.

They document and codify their activities. It is important that networks document and codify their activities. If they document their activities by describing what they do and how they do it and also mention who is involved, which are the facilitators and the obstacles, then they enhance reflection within each partner organisation and within the network. In addition they produce materials which will be of use to other networks.

It is thus important that networks agree on regular publication of consolidated reports of activities, on minutes of meetings and of events organised within the networks. Such

publication should not only describe the results but also the way in which those results have been achieved; both process and product are important. Keeping a logbook or a network diary describing the development of the network can also be strongly recommended.

They have evaluation and dissemination mechanisms to support their work. Efficient networking takes evaluation and dissemination seriously and even envisages the issue of valorisation. Evaluation is taken on board by networks in different ways: either through self-evaluation (internal evaluation) or through external evaluation. In the latter case use is made of a critical friend, an expert in networks preferably, who takes part in some of the activities of the network and evaluates the way in which the network is operating. Evaluation has to be seen at different levels ranging from the respect (or the updating) of the vision, the mission and the goals of the networks to its activities, communication and dissemination.

In some cases cross-evaluation is used, by which one network can become the evaluator of another network and vice versa. It is important to evaluate the process and the products and also the consistency of the activities and running of the network compared to its mission statement and objectives.

Dissemination can be seen as taking the form of a spiral starting with dissemination within the partnership, then moving outward towards the local educational community and gradually beyond. Dissemination may also pay special attention to other similar networks as the interaction with those can be beneficial to all the persons and partners involved.

Valorisation is an issue which has been addressed (so far) by very few networks. It is a recent concept which has been developed by DG EAC, the valorisation unit of Leonardo da Vinci programme. Valorisation may have different meanings; one is that it is the activities which are contributing to the mainstreaming of the innovations set up by separate networks; another one is the way in which products developed by networks can be put at use in other contexts and environments.

In the first case explicit efforts are made to see how the outcomes of networks can have an impact on policies and policy development at regional or national level. In the second case the possibilities are looked into in which products developed by networks can be put at use in other contexts by adapting them to those new contexts. In both cases valorisation is a process which is composed of clear steps and which enables others to build on outcomes and products of networks in a concrete way.

They make efforts to be sustainable. The more efficient and the more effective the network is, the more efforts they make to be sustainable and to find resources (human and financial) to be fully operational. Successful networks (which generate innovations for all the partners) try to be sustainable in different ways: funds generated through membership, involvement in national or European education programmes or even external sponsoring are all possible means of support.

They are networks open to other networks. Good networks are open to communication and cooperation with other networks as this contributes to constant revitalisation of the network itself. Networks that close themselves are doomed to become sterile and disappear and may even inhibit change or become conservative instead of innovative. They also set up, as mentioned earlier, constructive forms of cooperation with other

networks, they share knowledge and information with them and they involve other networks perhaps through being external evaluators.

Special attention will have to be given in the future to the processes by which some networks will be valorising the products of other networks. It was explained earlier that valorisation had to do with mainstreaming the outcomes or results of networks or with adapting results and products to new contexts.

They focus on good management. Good networks pay attention to human resources and efficient financial management. They are aware that such efficient management is only possible by training the people who are in charge in management practices. Principles of financial accountability and of the empowerment of people who are working in the network are characteristic of good networks. An external evaluator may be invited to look at those elements and come up with suggestions for improvement.

In conclusion, it is clear that not respecting those good characteristics leads to inefficient and unstable situations for networks. Sometimes a network may itself inhibit change and become a conservative force if, for example, it is no longer open to other networks. A network may move away from its original interests and vision that leads to some participants losing their motivation and involvement. In some networks some sub-groups become too dominant which also leads to other partners moving away or losing interest. Regular external evaluation of the network and its activities linked to internal evaluation can avoid several of these risks.

6. Functions of networks

It is useful to end this chapter with some information on the functions of networks. In the OECD 2003 study on Networks of Innovation Anne Sliwska of the University of Erfurt (DE) stresses that networks may have the following four functions:

- **A political function.** Networking allows individuals pursuing a particular aim to meet with like-minded people. Their co-operation can lead to greater political force and input than they would individually have. Networks can thus serve as lobby groups for innovative ideas.
- **An information function.** Networking allows for the rapid exchange of information relevant for individual and organizational development processes, bypassing red tape and hierarchies.
- **A psychological function.** Innovators are often isolated within their organisations. Networking provides them with opportunities for collaboration and exchange and thus can empower innovative individuals.
- **A skills function.** Innovative work requires a range of new skills which are not necessarily offered by traditional training schemes. Networking provides innovators with opportunities for learning skills from their colleagues.

It is helpful that educational staff that are involved in European networks are aware of these functions as they can be used to motivate staff to get involved in such networks.

7. Overall conclusion: key competences through networking

If education is to contribute to the development of the knowledge-based economy and to ensure that every human being can develop his or her full potential and all their talents to the benefit of the society as a whole, it is important that education is innovating itself constantly.

One of the key elements to enhance innovation is networking. In networks professionals join together to think about education, to look for creative solutions and to implement those solutions to the benefit of pupils and students. Innovation in education towards 2010 can only be seen in a lifelong learning perspective to which all education can contribute.

The working group on the key competencies of all youngsters has defined 8 key competencies which every young person should acquire in education and which can all be enhanced through networks⁶. It is an interesting challenge to invite teachers and teacher educator at a Comenius 2.2 in-service training course to discuss how networking can enhance these 8 key competences.

⁶ The list of key competencies is annexed in the following page

Overview of key competences defined by the Working Group on Basic Skills, Foreign Language Teaching and Entrepreneurship

1. Communication in the mother tongue

Communication is the ability to express and interpret thoughts, feelings and facts in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact linguistically in an appropriate way in the full range of societal contexts - work, home and leisure.

2. Communication in a foreign language

Communication skills in foreign languages were considered to have the same four skill dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) as communication skills in the mother tongue. However, the level of mastery is not necessarily the same for all four dimensions, and there can be differences between languages.

3. Mathematical literacy and basic competences in science and technology

Mathematical literacy is the ability to use addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and ratios in mental and written computation to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. The emphasis is on process rather than output, on activity rather than knowledge. Science refers to the body of knowledge and methodology employed to explain the natural world. Technology is viewed as the application of that knowledge in order to modify the natural environment in response to perceived human wants or needs.

4. ICT skills

ICT skills comprise the use of multi-media technology to retrieve, store, create, present, sort and exchange information.

5. 'Learning-to-learn' is defined as a foundation skill in 'Making a European Area of Knowledge'

The working group agreed upon the following definition: 'the disposition and ability to organise and regulate one's own learning, to manage one's time effectively; to solve problems; to acquire, process, evaluate and assimilate new knowledge; and to apply new knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts - at home and at work, in education and training.'

6. Interpersonal and civic competences

Interpersonal competences comprise all forms of behaviour that must be mastered in order that an individual is able to participate in an efficient and constructive way in social life, and to resolve conflict where necessary. Interpersonal skills are necessary for effective interaction on a one-to-one basis or in groups, and are deployed in both the public and private domains.

7. Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has a passive and an active component: it comprises both the propensity to induce changes oneself and the ability to welcome, support and adapt to innovation brought about by external factors. Entrepreneurship involves taking responsibility for one's actions, positive or negative, developing a strategic vision, setting objectives and meeting them, and being motivated to succeed.

8. Cultural awareness

The term 'cultural awareness' comprises an appreciation of popular culture and general social mores, as well as the ability to appreciate literature, art, music and other forms of creative expression.

5. Creating, running and the follow-up to a Comenius 2.2 course

5.1 Developing the programme and the course contents

1. Introduction

Since many Comenius 2.2 courses are derived from Comenius 2.1 projects, the courses should reflect, totally or partially, the methodologies and the contents of the projects from which they have emerged. In fact, the majority of the respondents to our questionnaires declared that the objectives of the project from which this course has been derived were reflected in the course contents, and that course organisers used a product from the project and/or methodologies which were developed by the project.

However, when developing a course programme and organising the course contents there are many variables that need to be taken into consideration and that can lead to a 'mixed' product that takes into account all of the constraints and the new elements that have arisen since the end of the project. This chapter deals with some of the issues a course/team organiser has to face when planning a Comenius 2.2 course.

2. From the Comenius project to the Comenius course

Most Comenius projects include work which leads towards a first draft of the course methodologies and contents. The conceptual framework, the detailed contents, the materials to be used and the kind of activities to be organised can then be considered as the basis for future courses, even if other variables have to be considered before the final planning can take place.

The pilot course is a very good opportunity that can be exploited within the lifetime of a project. Methodologies, contents and materials can be piloted in the partner's national contexts and feedback can be collected, in order to provide some information about course organisation. Pilot courses are usually aimed at validating the comprehensibility of selected contents and working out the kind of debates that might result from the course. After the pilot or pilot courses have taken place the course starts to be seen as a more holistic event which has been solidly grounded in theory. Organisers also have to take into

account various organisational issues in order to create the best possible conditions to welcome participants from different countries and provide them with an interesting international learning environment.

This kind of reflection leads to a truly European product which is entirely attuned to a European audience. The relationship between the pilot course and the project is not only in one direction. The course, if run during the project, can influence the further development of the project itself. In fact new findings, ideas and perspectives derived from the course can lead to new developments, especially taking advantage of the skills and knowledge of experts and participants. Our questionnaires also revealed that some courses led to the creation of Comenius 3 networks as well.

The materials produced within a project can be a sound basis for the course. The variety of materials created by most projects can facilitate the implementation of the different phases of the course, from the participants' preparation to the follow up. These materials can include:

- project websites and the websites of project partners
- an on-line library of documents which have been created or used by the project team. Reactions to these documents gathered during pilots can also be taken into consideration so that they could reflect a good balance between rigour and practical realism
- grids and check lists which can promote the discussion of crucial topics in the context of dissemination, help to undertake field observation, and aid the presentation of programmes and tools
- collections of real data with guidelines to help their use in simulation activities
- collection of documentation from different projects
- questionnaires and evaluation tools
- a bibliography and list of related web pages.

Planning a course is a demanding process. Although contents and activities may have already been roughly identified in the first phase, it is still important to implement a pilot, to prepare materials and instruments, to gather and process new information, to design the succession of events establishing priorities and links and to take care of the various organisational matters.

3. The course contents

The course contents should reflect the objectives of the project from which it has been derived, and therefore be the result of reflections, trying out materials and the pilot experience in general. However, there are other elements that have to be considered. The course contents should:

- be based on the work on the project and adapted after evaluation
- take into consideration any new developments in the field
- consider feed back from previous courses which can offer new insights and developments to the course contents (i.e. through feedback on the implementation of new knowledge in different contexts)
- gather and process new information
- consider course participants' needs and expertise
- be organised in a flexible way but be designed by establishing priorities.

Annexes 1 and 2 at the end of this section present two different course programmes as examples. These give an opportunity to compare the results of planning and organising courses derived from different projects.

4. Construction of the course programme

If the course is the main outcome of a Comenius 2.1 project, the programme is usually constructed during all the lifetime of the project.

In case of a course proposed after the contractual period of the project has ended, different conditions may occur. Since there is no longer the formal framework of the project the programme may be constructed in different ways:

- the entire project team continue to work together even though the project has ended
- some members of the original team work together on the planning phase and the course itself. In this case it is important to have partners from different nationalities in order to guarantee the European dimension of the course
- members of the original project and external experts plan and expedite the course. This is in order to update the programme and offer wider perspectives. The experts can also contribute extensively to the professional development of the course organisers and team members.

The construction of the programme should also take into consideration:

- the programme of previous courses and the feedback obtained both by trainers and participants
- the survey of participants' needs before the course
- the background and expertise of participants on the course topic in order that they may benefit from it, both during workshops and presentations
- new ideas and new developments around the course topic that may have occurred in the meantime
- requests and information from in-service teacher training institutions in various countries reflecting the most recent European developments in education.

According to the analysis of participants' reports (see chapter 6, section 3), the most successful course programmes were the ones which proposed a varied programme using different pedagogical forms⁷ and involving the participants actively at different stages. Course organisers are therefore recommended to construct a programme which provides the participants with a mixture of contents plus a variety of pedagogical and didactical approaches. Flexibility and variation appear to lead to more effective courses which are better received by the participants.

In the construction of the course programme the evaluation phase should also be foreseen and organised. It's a time consuming activity, therefore specific tools and time should be identified in order to take advantages from it, so that the course could better fit into the course requirements themselves and into the participants' needs.

⁷ See section 6 in this chapter for suggestions on pedagogical and didactical work forms

A course can be evaluated in different ways, according to the course characteristics. Here are some examples:

- on a daily basis. It can be everyday small discussion (in this case it implies that elements revealed during this evaluation are taken on board during the next part of the course) or a course diary or logbook in which participants reflect about everyday learning.
- as final evaluation, through an open discussion or, more common, a written questionnaire (or both of them)
- by an external evaluator
- by course tutors and organisers.

An example of course learning log is annexed at the end of this section (annex 3). For more details, see section 5.9 “Evaluation, accreditation and recognition”.

5. The pedagogical methodology

Any methodological choice should consider how to exploit the extraordinary opportunities presented by the learning environment of European courses and the rich forum established by the presence of representatives of several European countries. The choice of pedagogy is also strictly connected with the course topic and contents but some elements may be highlighted which can be common to all courses:

- the approach which seems better to benefit from the context is the constructivist one, in which teachers are learning from and with other teachers and building together new knowledge and skills. Learning by doing is also a part of this methodology
- the comparative dimension and the comparison of the pedagogical approaches of different countries – both methods and formats
- the balance between individual and group work, interaction, theoretical inputs and exchange of experiences.

The analysis of some participants’ reports indicates that the following points are also appreciated:

A multicultural approach. Participants are also aware that it must be difficult for organisers to cope with the variety of teachers (and thus of educational cultures) present in a Comenius 2.2 course. Some participants stated that they appreciated that organisers actually drew their attention to the fact that there are different cultures in Europe and these were represented on the course. This explains why participants like to be given ample time of dedicated time to share their pedagogical background in small groups.

Clear information about the approaches which will be used. Generally speaking participants of Latin countries are still more used to and even expect more theoretical keynote speeches, while participants from central and northern Europe appreciate more practical approaches built on autonomous learning, experiential learning and collaborative learning. It is not yet possible to claim that all teachers from across Europe have yet heard of or have implemented constructivist approaches to their work by which they have to construct themselves new and individual practices based on their previous knowledge,

competencies and experience. Hence it is important that course organisers who use a constructivist approach explain it very clearly at the beginning of the course.

6. The teaching team

A teaching team made up of professionals from different countries contributes by offering a more international view with respect to the course topics. The presence of trainers from several countries, either for the whole course or for a large part of it, is important as their presence adds a valuable contribution to the development of the European dimension. It is not always possible to have all of the project members present all the time, but it is important to have the presence of some of the project team or at least a key link person.

The guarantee of the participation of as many trainers as possible gives participants a sense of being part of a European forum conducted by a European team of professionals. A useful plan is to have a trainer from the hosting country present all the time in order to facilitate the relationship with the local community as well as taking maximum advantage of local initiatives and contacts. If the course has been run several times, or in any context in which a specific expertise is required, it is useful to invite external experts to present updated contents and materials. Among the experts it is important to include teachers and schools that can be used as expert sources of good practice.

Comenius Freshwater Network - In-service Training Seminar

Wednesday June 19th – Tuesday 25th June 2002

Newton Rigg Campus, Penrith, UK

Wednesday June 19th

Arrival from 1200 onwards

Minibus shuttle or taxi from Penrith Station

- 1400 Accommodation available
- 1730 Registration (foyer of Conference Centre)
- 1830 Dinner (College restaurant)
- 2000 Introductory activities (Carousel Workshop)

Thursday June 20th

- 0800 Breakfast
- 0930 Introduction to the project, the project partners and the course
- 1000 Introductions by the course participants
- 1030 Coffee
- 1045 The CFN powerpoint presentation and video
- 1200 Collect packed lunch & departure from college by minibus
- 1330 The Ennerdale Water Treatment Plant (until 1600)
- 1730 Return to College
- 1830 Dinner in College

Friday June 21st

- 0800 Breakfast
- 0900 Minibus to Melmerby
- 1000 Introduction to fieldwork
- 1030 Fieldwork in Melmerby Beck
 - Chemical testing (Josef Grober)
 - Physical testing (Richard Smith, ICT Trainer in Education)
- 1300 Lunch at the Village Bakery
- 1400 Travel to Alston – free time in Alston
- 1600 Return to College
- 1800 Dinner in College
- 1930 Minifair (display of school and project resources)
Contact Seminar activities plus advice on Comenius project funding

Saturday June 22nd

- 0800 Breakfast
- 0900 The Little Frog and other projects as example of good practice (Coffee 1030)
(Vassilis Psallidas and colleague)
- 1130 Introduction to BISEL fieldwork
- 1200 Minibus to Patterdale
- 1300 Packed lunch at Patterdale
 - Simple biological water quality assessment (Danny Vanderveken)
 - Mind mapping (Ray Kirtley)
- 1730 Free time and dinner in Keswick
- 2100 Return to College

Sunday June 23rd

- 0800 Breakfast
- 0900 Collect packed lunch & departure from college by minibus
- 1000 The National Park Centre:
Working with Andrew Turney (Lake District National Park, Education Service) to 1200
- 1230 Lunch
- 1400 Return to College
- 1600 Evaluating your freshwater project
- 1800 Dinner in College

Monday June 24th

- 0800 Breakfast
- 0900 Collect packed lunch & departure from college by minibus
- 1030 Arrive at Settle High School and Community College
 - School Tour
 - Input from an experience practitioner (a local freshwater project)
 - Student Debate (Year 12)
- Whole course evaluation
- 1500 Return to College (optional free time in Penrith)
- 2000 Farewell Dinner

Tuesday June 25th

- 0800 Breakfast

Departures

School Self Evaluation in Primary Education

**Hotel Astor, Viareggio
1-8 October 2000**

UNIT 1	<i>Introduction to the course and presentation of course participants</i> Giovanna Barzanò, discussion Francesc Pedrò
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Plenary and round table</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Informative presentation of the course: objectives, contents and activities; key issues, rationale and proposed methods of working</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>Organisational matters, the history of the course, the intended architecture of the course, dealing with the topic: background readings, lectures, simulations, guided discussion, field work, reports, exchange of information, course evaluation: means and contents.</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>Presentation of participants: personal introduction and professional framework</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>3 ½ hours</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Presentation in Power Point, course programme</i>
UNIT 2	<i>Self evaluation and external evaluation: an international perspective</i> Francesc Pedrò, discussion Carol Donoghue
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Plenary and round table</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Lecture and guided discussion</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>A description of the broader context and principles guiding self-evaluation and external evaluation programmes, aimed at providing suggestions for reflection. It covered the following points:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Historical background</i> • <i>The popularity of evaluation</i> • <i>Why has evaluation become so fashionable?</i> • <i>Orientation and programmes</i> • <i>Opportunities and risks inherent in the self-evaluation culture</i> • <i>Future expectations</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>Questions to the audience:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When and why did the emphasis on school self-evaluation begin in your country?</i> • <i>Is there any form of external evaluation? If so, specify who operates it and what kind of information is sent back to each school by the external evaluation body.</i> • <i>Is self-evaluation legally required? If so, specify what the requirements are</i> • <i>Is self-evaluation a common practice?</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>2 ½ hours</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Presentation in Power Point, written text of the lecture, quick written questionnaire</i>
<i>Notes</i>	<i>Participants notes were collected, processed and summarised comparatively</i>
UNIT 3	<i>School self evaluation : origins, definitions, approaches, methods and implementation issues</i> Jaap Scheerens, discussion Carol Donoghue
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Plenary and round table</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Lecture and guided discussion</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>Definition of school self-evaluation on the basis of an analysis of the evaluation concept and the structural context of the school within educational systems. It covered the following points:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Origins</i> • <i>External and internal evaluation</i>

<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of organisational effectiveness • An extended taxonomy of basic types of school evaluation approaches • Methods and instruments • Implementation issues <p>Questions to the audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which aspects of school self evaluation do you find important? • Which aspects would you like to develop further? • Mention opportunities and obstacles for implementing school self evaluation in your context
<i>Time</i>	3 hours
<i>Materials</i>	Presentation in Power Point, written text of the lecture

UNIT 4	Presentation of a range of instruments Giovanna Barzanò and Silvana Mosca, discussion FrancescPedrò
<i>Methodology</i>	Plenary and round table
<i>Activities</i>	Lecture and debate
<i>Content</i>	<p>Practical examples supported by the theoretical background taken from an ongoing experience on school self-evaluation undertaken in Bergamo.</p> <p>The instruments presented were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire for parents • Questionnaire for pupils • Questionnaire on school functioning • Checklist for the monitoring of the process. <p>Each instrument was presented providing detailed information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims • Source • Adaptation • Data collection • Data gathered • Structure/content • Examples of questions • Use of information
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	Questions concerning the examples presented
<i>Time</i>	4 hours
<i>Materials</i>	Presentation in Power Point, photocopies

UNIT 5	Data analysis and introduction to the group work Raimondo Bolletta, discussion Carol Donoughue
<i>Methodology</i>	Plenary and group work
<i>Activities</i>	Presentation and simulations in small groups
<i>Content</i>	<p>Presentation of data gathered by means of a parents' questionnaire used in the Italian project. Some data was presented related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • level of parental agreement with respect to school services • comparison between 3 school networks analysing the key factors emerged • "unhappy parents" in schools • families' socio-cultural status <p>Some suggestions for data reading and guidance on analysis and interpretation were offered by means of practical examples on data collected in Italian schools.</p> <p>Simulation in groups: each group had a full set of real data from a school participating in a self evaluation project. Using the data, groups were asked to define a school profile, underlining issues of concerns and proposing strategies for improvement.</p>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	
<i>Time</i>	4 hours and a half
<i>Materials</i>	Presentation in Power Point, brochure with sets of data

UNIT 6	Use of the information gathered Carol Donoughue, discussion Jaap Scheerens
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Plenary and round table</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Lecture and debate</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>When school self-evaluation is a part of the process of school improvement, two aspects have to be considered: how to collect information about what is happening but also what use will be made of the information once it has been collected.</i> <i>In fact, if the information is not used properly, the collection done previously become a waste of time and energy. A headteacher reported on the self-evaluation process in her own school.</i> <i>Some questions need to be considered carefully since the beginning of the process, such as:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who receives the information which has been collected?</i> • <i>Who shares the information?</i> • <i>Who decides what to do next?</i> • <i>Does everybody agree about what has to be done?</i> • <i>How is the decision implemented?</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>How do you know that the change has been effective?</i> <i>Questions concerning the examples presented</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>2 hours</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Presentation in Power Point, written text of the lecture</i>

UNIT 7	Presentation of key aspects of the Italian educational system Giovanna Barzanò and Silvana Mosca
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Plenary and group work</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Presentation and group work</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>Primary school in Italy: grades, timing, teachers, headteachers, school system reform, special national projects, general evaluation practice in primary education.</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>When visiting the schools you can see yourself in the role of an evaluator engaged by the school to carry out school self evaluation</i> <i>Decide what aspect you would like to concentrate on, make a plan for observation including the choice of method and instruments suitable to the school context, draw some evaluative conclusions. Also decide on how to report the information to the rest of participants and on the feed back of what you have observed to the school itself</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>4 hours</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Presentation in Power Point, booklet on the Italian school system, schools' profiles</i>
<i>Note</i>	<i>The file about schools to be visited was very useful as it provided helpful information for the preparation of the visit itself. It contained (for each of the seven schools visited): location of the visits (a map) and address, the programme of the day agreed with the host headteachers, the school profile and information on school functioning, the head teacher profile. Furthermore, participants met the hosting headteachers a couple of times before visiting their schools</i>

UNIT 8	Field work in school visits Participants on their own
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Visit and group work</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Observations and interviews</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>Analysis of the school context, collection of information, comparison of experiences</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>Each group prepared a different project</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>7 hours</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Schools documents</i>

UNIT 9	Preparation for final “consortium” Participants on their own
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Group work</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Discussion on the data collected</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>School visit experience</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>To prepare a report on the self-evaluation project to suggest in the school visited</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>4 hours</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Notes</i>

UNIT 10	Course evaluation Giovanna Barzanò and Francesc Pedrò
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Group work and individual work</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Discussion</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>The course experience: choice of the place and logistics, working with participants from other nationalities, lectures, group work, consideration on the experience as a whole, its impact and its benefits.</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>To compare opinions and to fill in the form as feedback to project team and personal documentation.</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>1 ½ hours</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Evaluation form</i>

UNIT 11	Final “consortium” Jaap Scheerens, discussion Carol Donoughue
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Plenary chaired</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Participants’ presentation of school visits reports</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>Report on observations and data collected during the visits</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>To compare the results of the field work undertaken</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>2 ½ hours</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Evaluation form</i>

UNIT 12	Poster session Participants on their own
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Informal meetings of small groups</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Presentation of experiences undertaken by participants in their countries</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>Programmes’ outlines, instruments, outcomes of self-evaluation</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>Questions and answers</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>Flexible appointments between participants at the end of the main sessions</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Posters prepared by participants and displayed in the meeting room</i>

Each partner of the project took care of the detailed organisation of a unit; in addition, the co-ordinators were in charge of all the logistics. All partners were expected to be present during the entire course, so that discussions and workshops could benefit from their expert chairing.

Comenius 2.2 Course

**Supporting freshwater projects in school
through the Comenius Freshwater Network**

19 June – 25 June 2002

LEARNING LOG

NAME: _____

AIMS

This **LEARNING LOG** has the following aims:

- To raise your awareness of what you have achieved by coming on the course and participating in the activities
- To encourage everyone to expand on their achievements by transferring some of the ideas and techniques experienced on the course into the international programme of their school

All of the activities of this Comenius 2.2 course are being carried out alongside teachers and project partners from other countries. The learning contexts of the course have been planned to enable you to understand more completely how teachers teach freshwater and how pupils learn about this topic in other education systems. The course activities may help to remove misconceptions about teaching and learning in other European countries. By giving **you** the experience of being students in fieldwork and other learning situations we hope you will come to a wider understanding of the pedagogy and methodology of other countries and that this wider understanding will be reflected in the success of your European partnerships and projects.

This is an individual document, it will not be collected in as part of the course.

Please complete the sections of the diary at the end of each day.

Date _____

ACTIVITIES

What did you notice about the pedagogy and methodologies used by the group?

How might it influence work with European partners in a multilateral project?

What support might you need to use any of the techniques you have experienced today in your own classroom or fieldwork locations?

ACHIEVEMENTS

Today I have observed

Today I have tried

Today I have learned

I was surprised by

5.2 The European dimension

The past 20 years or so have seen a wide range of co-operative European initiatives put into practice by working teams in most areas of society. Apart from economic, political and more recently constitutional matters, many of these initiatives have been in the field of education. Documents have been produced aimed at creating guidelines and many research projects and courses have been run in order to bring together participants of every European nationality. On the one hand are documents such as the White Paper on Education, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, the European Language Portfolio⁸, amongst others, reflecting the need to create the foundations of a common educative and linguistic policy. On the other hand, the European Commission has created actions such as Socrates that have resulted in a network of students, teachers and researchers that now involves thousands of different European citizens and institutions.

Attending a Comenius 2.2 course is within this second group of initiatives and provides a clear example for the development of the European dimension through the involvement of participants and organisers in a European team.

The team of European trainers in which each partner brings in their expertise is greatly appreciated by participants of Comenius 2.2 courses. From the project point of view, partners from different countries can contribute a more 'international' view with respect to the course topics. The presence of trainers from several countries either for the whole course or for a large part of it is essential as it adds to the course an important international dimension

Secondly, through Comenius courses, participants can discover the meaning of collaborating and working together themselves on a common topic with their own reality as the starting point. They can benefit from a 'European' learning context contributing at the same time with their own experience. Participants from different countries provide an immediate and rich forum and also experience directly the meaning of being a citizen of a European country. However some course organisers believe there is a need for greater attention to be paid to the comparative framework and this should not be neglected. One important condition for developing the European dimension should be to share a common terminology and to be able to understand each other in spite of the various meanings attributed to the same words in different national contexts. Another important condition is to foster the intercultural learning which arises from talking about other systems and other countries' experiences in different fields of education. Co-operation in any task is an effective instrument to enhance tolerance and understanding and courses provide a forum for such co-operation.

Thirdly, the duration of a course allows sufficient time for meaningful learning to take place and also space for promoting the development of the personal dimension by means of personal relationships and plans for future contacts or partnerships in European projects.

⁸ See annex at the end of section 8 in this chapter

An important advantage derived from running this type of course is the opportunity to meet professionals from all over Europe and to create a network of real experts to exchange information, expertise and experiences both at the course and in the future. An effective course organiser might, for example, create an electronic data base that could encourage prospective projects, linguistic exchanges, etc.

Comenius 2.2 courses can only contribute to enhancing a collaborative dimension among participants by both careful planning and reflection on the part of course organisers, and by regulation on the part of National Agencies. It is the selection policies, criteria and processes of the agencies which ensures the initial suitability of the applicants for the course and clearly this is beyond the reach of the course organisers.

Sometimes the opportunity to meet other like-minded teachers leads to tangible activity after the course and this is a potentially great benefit of Comenius 2.2 courses. Together participants can construct pedagogical materials which can be disseminated (on websites, for example) and used by other teachers. Courses involve teachers learning from and with teachers and building together their new knowledge and skills. When participants know 'the others' they can ask themselves questions such as:

- what they we do together?
- how they we construct this new Europe?
- what the advantages of working together?
- what kind of Europe do we want?

Comenius 2.2 courses contribute to increasing awareness of the concepts of 'European consciousness' and 'European responsibility' as, for example, both organisers and participants may have the possibility of joining various European forums such as, for instance, university and teacher training associations. In general, thanks to these courses, participants get more involved and interested both in European news and other institutions (the Council of Europe, for example).

According to course organisers the programme can contribute to the raising of quality in education in different ways:

- by promoting multi-culturalism
- through the concept of the multiplier in education
- by focusing on the needs of the participants and helping to develop their skills
- by helping education administration to support training centres
- by exposing teachers to new ideas and each other
- by broadening horizons through professional development with spin-off for pupils
- by helping to bring pupils into multi-nationals projects which can be highly motivational
- by using new education tools.

A final conclusion of this project is that course accreditation should be reconsidered by official bodies⁹. Most course organisers consider that course diplomas should be validated by European Ministries of Education, universities, or professional organisations, and not only by local authorities, educational boards or the teacher training department at the organising institution. This would be a way to recognise officially the role of the European teacher and many training courses.

⁹ See section 9 part B in this chapter for more information on accreditation

5.3 Publicising the course

1. Introduction

Many course organisers are aware of the problems associated with devoting time to planning Comenius 2.2 courses only to find that the course has insufficient applicants to be viable and has to be cancelled. This situation becomes of paramount importance once the course has left the protected period of the originating project. During the project it may be possible to run a course which would not normally be commercially viable. In any event most project promoters will have included a trial in-service course in the outputs of their project and will tend to go ahead with a very low number of participants. In addition the project itself may have involved teachers who can subsequently be encouraged to apply for the pilot training course.

Once the project is over the project team will need to make a decision to offer the course outside the period of the project contract and once again place an outline on the Comenius catalogue. This first course will be test of the commercial viability of the course theme and it will inevitably draw some applicants from the course catalogue. However it may also be necessary to devise some means of publicising the course apart from on the Comenius catalogue. The following paragraphs give some examples:

2. A Publicity leaflet

The course publicity leaflet is relatively easy to design and need not be expensive to print. Most of the content will have been generated by the project team and a leaflet may already have been produced for the trial courses – possibly in several languages. The following key elements might be included:

- the project logo
- a clear title that summarises the objectives of the course
- dates and locations
- an indication of how the project was originally funded and an acknowledgement of the involvement of the European Commission
- a project website should one exist
- a summary of what the course is about
- a list of all the partners who are still willing to be contacted to give information about the course
- a key partner who will handle applications
- an application form or other means of applying

The example annexed at the end of this section shows the front cover and the inside page of the leaflet used for the course 'European Project Management: A survival course for project co-ordinators'. This leaflet was distributed to:

- National Agencies
- course facilitators in training institutions known to the partners
- conferences and training which the partners happened to be attending
- institutions which had assisted with the project
- Comenius promotion sessions.

2. A course video

The Comenius 2.1 Project – The Freshwater Network produced a short video about the training course using a small fraction of the material captured by one of the project partners. The video was chiefly used as publicity tool for the Training Course but it also acted as a dissemination tool for the project as a whole. The video featured activities from the course plus clear examples of practical work. Teachers also spoke about their experiences during the course – usually these shots were taken on the final day. This product was produced in English, German and Dutch versions with appropriate covers and labels. The script was short but professionally written and conveyed a very clear impression of the course using comparatively few words.

The video was used to inform intending participants in subsequent courses about the course content and requirements. It was sent out when participants had been successful in obtaining a grant but it was also used by the partnership in a wider context with audiences who might be receptive to the course. Once the video had been produced it was not expensive to copy.

The Comenius Freshwater Course is a practical course in a real sense – participants are expected to spend an appreciable time in water carrying out sampling techniques and in the laboratory analysing samples. It was important to the team that everyone was prepared to take part in such activities and also that they brought suitable clothing to the course. The video was immensely better than written instructions in these respects.

3. Websites

Many institutions will also use their website as a means of publicity for forthcoming courses. They can also be used to show previous programmes, evaluations of previous participants and photo galleries. Examples of course publicity on an institutional website can usually be found at: www.alden-biesen.be .

4. Professional Associations and NGOs

A course with a particular theme may be disseminated by a third party which itself can gain some publicity. Course organisers should consider possible outlets for their publicity in all of the countries of the project partnership. Many subject areas have professional associations – the Geographical Association, Association for Science Education and the Centre for Information on Language Teaching are three relatively well know ones from the UK.

Frontspiece:

European Project Management

A course for Coordinators of Educational Projects

This new course is based on the successful Survival Kit project



www.socrates.at/survivalkit

22 - 28 November 2003, in Hull, UK
1 - 8 May 2004 in Vienna, Austria

The Survival Kit project team

The Survival Kit project brought together the experience of co-ordinators of European projects and Socrates programme managers working in National Agencies. Since the publication of the Survival Kit the project team have run a number of short training sessions at the request of the European Commission. The idea of a training course arose from these sessions. Members of the original project team will act as facilitators for both training courses.



The original project was funded by the European Commission, DG Education and Culture. Grants for participation in either course can be obtained from the European Commission under the Comenius 2.2 and Grundtvig 3 Actions of the Socrates programme.

Inside:

The Survival Kit course:

The aim of the course is to enhance the management skills of co-ordinators who are involved in European projects. The course will involve all of the participants in both didactic sessions and workshops. Course participants should end the course with a more positive view of their own abilities in this field and have the confidence to use a number of project management tools in their own European project. Key components of the course are:

Teambuilding Financial Management Project Evaluation
Running Project Meetings Project planning and organisation Dissemination

Participants will be awarded a certificate on completion of the course. The working language of both courses is English.

APPLICATION FORM

Please indicate the course which you would like to attend. Please note that you cannot be funded by the European Commission to attend a course in your own country.

22 – 28 November 2003 at the University of Hull, UK (€ 1015)
1 – 8 May 2004 in Vienna, Austria (€ 1267)

Name _____ Forename(s) _____

Name Of Institution _____

Address _____

Town. _____ Country _____

Postcode _____ Email _____

Tel _____ Fax _____

YOUR CURRENT PROJECT(S) – title and programme (not essential)

Important Instructions To apply for a place on the course:

- 1 Return this completed application form to Ray Kirtley (Hull) or Silvia Wiesinger (Vienna). You can do this by fax or post or send an email with the necessary information.
- 2 Once we have sent you written approval that you have been accepted you must then approach your **National Agency for Socrates** to ask for a grant. Their addresses can be found at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates.html> The grant may cover your travel and accommodation costs and the course fee up to 1500 euro. Accommodation is in single rooms.
The APPLICATION DEADLINE is 1st March but many agencies will consider later applications
- 3 You will have to pay for both the travel and accommodation at the course or in advance. You can then reclaim these amounts from your agency.

University of Hull, UK	Vienna
Ray Kirtley, European Resource Centre, University of Hull, Hull, HU6 7RX, UK Tel: + 44 1482 305150 Fax: + 44 1482 302402 Email: R.Kirtley@hull.ac.uk	Silvia Wiesinger, Pädagogisches Institut, der Stadt Wien-Abt AHS, Burgasse 14-16, A-1070, Vienna, Austria Tel: + 43 1 5236222 93214 Fax: +43 1 5236222 99 93210 Email: silvia.wiesinger@aon.at

Do not make your travel arrangements until you have written confirmation from your National Agency.

5.4 Information and preparation

1. Introduction

This section aims to offer an overview on the possible ways to deal with the supply of information and with the participants' preparation prior to the course. Both phases are important as they contribute to the establishment of the course climate: sense of care, first virtual contacts with tutors and other participants, familiarisation with the course contents and materials. Generally most of the courses use a website as the main means of contact enabling participants to access the basic course materials during the preparatory phase.

2. Information

In general basic information both about programme and organisation can be found in the course description published in the catalogue. In addition some projects are described in leaflets, with the dual purpose of publicising the course and providing more detailed information to potential participants.

The information which can be provided before the course should include:

- the draft programme of the course
- details about the pedagogical approach which will be used during the course (participants may choose/have chosen the course also because of the pedagogical methods used)
- travel instructions
- tourist information
- profile form to be filled in by participants with personal details, school information and experience in the subject matter of the Comenius 2.2 course
- pre-course activities and tasks.

In the annexes at the end of this section some examples of contact letters and e-mails containing the above mentioned information are provided.

3. Preparation

This is the basis of the course itself. In this phase the first 'learning' contacts are established and the choices are made for organising the preparatory activities, sharing the course methodology and the course working styles. Research for this project shows that websites (both specifically designed for the course or already used as website of the

project from which the course is derived) and ICT play an essential role in this phase. Some suggestions of activities for the preparation phase follow.

4. Information about participants and tutors

Participants are interested to find out in advance about the course, the tutors and the other participants. In this way a powerful European forum can be set up before the course begins. Participants and tutors can contribute and share knowledge and skills and become aware of their intercultural differences.

To help organisers to know more about participants course co-ordinators can either ask for specific information or set up ad hoc questionnaires. All the information collected can have the purpose of getting to know each other but also help organisers to adapt the course programme, according to the participants' experiences.

Some ideas for finding out about the others are:

- Ask participants to send in a short CV
- Ask participants to send in a few lines declaring their motivation for the participation/selection of the course
- Set up a newsgroup for all participants and invite them to contact one another before the course
- Invite participants to write something about the cultural heritage in their region and share it with everyone over the internet before they meet
- Send each participant a short questionnaire asking for specific information about the professional context and the expertise in the target topic of the course. Be clear that it is not compulsory to have any expertise (if it is the case) in order to avoid embarrassment

Participants' profile could be reported in a comparative table; in any case if the information collected is going to be sent to other participants it is convenient to prepare everyone. All the information collected can also be put into the course website so that everybody can find out about the other people. The information derived from the participants' expertise and motivation can also be useful for the course organisers because it can help when planning group-work activities or participants' presentations. Information about the course tutors should also be provided at the same time.

5. Preparatory activities and tasks

These will differ according to the course topic and typology and range from organisers requiring no preparation at all to some specific tasks to be accomplished that are also foreseen in the course programme. As general recommendation, it would be a missed opportunity not to exploit the participants' background and expertise in order to take advantage from the European forum.

Here is a list of possible tasks or preparatory activities which could be accomplished before the course begins:

- provide some preparatory documentation or background reading (i.e. through the web)
- ask the participants to prepare a poster presenting their own experience so that it could be effectively discussed with colleagues
- provide addresses of websites to be consulted
- ask the participants to write about an experience in their own school – a problem they have dealt with related to the topic of the course
- ask the participants to prepare a presentation on their school Comenius 1 project (if applicable)
- ask the participants to prepare a presentation of their education system
- invite the participants to collect materials about their school/region and bring them along to the course
- invite participants to prepare a PowerPoint presentation on an interesting project (local, national or even European) they are involved in or have been involved in. It is important to give them strict instructions on how to prepare this presentation as to the contents and the number of slides, in order to keep the time presentation under control
- invite participants to present an example of good practice concerning the theme of the course and in which they or their school is involved. These examples of good practice could be a good starting point for introducing the course topics, especially if the courses are built on a constructivist philosophy by which the participants together create new knowledge and acquire new skills and competences
- invite the participants to prepare a sort of European exhibition with information about their school and their project. This exhibition is kept open all through the course with the idea that the participants take with them at the end of the course leaflets about potential future partners to show their fellow teachers at home
- invite the participants to bring with them some specialities of their countries in order to prepare an European aperitif.

Whatever the tasks and the proposed activities could be, it is important to reflect carefully about it; in fact any request made to participants that needs to be accomplished during the course must lead to a suitable amount of time being planned into the programme for this task. It does not make sense for the participants to prepare materials which nobody intends to use or even to ask about.

INTRODUCTORY LETTER (OR E-MAIL)

To all applicants

X/X/2002

Dear Colleague

SUPPORTING FRESHWATER PROJECTS IN SCHOOL THROUGH THE COMENIUS FRESHWATER NETWORK Wednesday 19th June – Tuesday 25th June, Penrith, UK

Thank you for your application for the above training course. This has been successful and I am now writing to you with some preliminary information.

Course Programme and preparation

I attach a provisional course programme. You will see that several sessions take place outdoors. Please make sure that you are equipped with warm waterproof clothing. You may also find it useful to bring some rubber boots that enable you to work in a stream or lake comfortably. It will also be useful to bring a clipboard to use when collecting data. Please also bring some general information about your school and region. If your school is currently working on a project that involves freshwater then please bring information about this project. I would also be grateful if you could complete the School Profile and return this by fax or email to me, (there is no need for a photograph). This constitutes your Pre-course Task.

A Course Certificate will be issued, this gives details of the numbers of hours of tuition.

Accommodation

The course is being run from:

The University of Central Lancashire
Cumbria Campus
Newton Rigg
Penrith
Cumbria

tel + 44 1768 863 791
fax + 44 1768 867249

We will be using the Conference Centre and staying in fairly basic en-suite rooms on the campus. We will also be using the catering facilities of the campus so please make sure to let me know on the Enrolment Form if you have any special dietary requirements. The college is about 2kms outside Penrith in a pleasant rural location, a pub is within walking distance. The accommodation will be available from 1400 on the 19th June up to 1000 on the 25th. It may also be useful for you to know that we will provide access to the college computer network (email and internet) during library opening hours.

Travel arrangements via Manchester Airport

We advise that where possible you fly into Manchester Airport. From the airport there are two possibilities. The first is to take a train from the airport station itself and make one change for Penrith. The station at which you change varies but the most frequent is Preston. The second is to take one of the regular trains into Manchester Piccadilly Station (about 15 minutes) and to take a direct train from Manchester Picadilly to Penrith.

Manchester Airport to Penrith (via Lancaster)

Manchester Airport	1349
Lancaster arrive	1514
Lancaster Depart	1523
Penrith	1606

Manchester Airport to Penrith (via Preston)

Manchester Airport	1449	1549	1635	1752	1935	2049
Preston arrive	1556	1657	1734	1903	2032	2204
Preston depart	1616	1707	1754	1920	2113	2232
Penrith	1716	1808	1858	2001	2214	2332

Manchester Picadilly to Penrith (airport shuttle first)

Manchester Picadilly	1521	1904
Penrith	1716	2102

When purchasing a ticket you should ask for a 'Saver Return'. This will cost 34.20 GBP. You need to retain the tickets in order to reclaim the money from your National Agency.

You may need to know some return times for the 25th June. Please ask about the details of the changes during the course.

Penrith	0549	0837	1003
Manchester Airport	0847	1118	1238

Travel arrangements via London

If you are arriving at one of the London airports the departure station is London Euston.

London Euston	1230	1430	1530	1630	1830	1925
Penrith	1606	1808	1936	2021	2214	2332

When purchasing a ticket you should ask for a 'Saver Return'. This will cost 61.90 GBP. You need to retain the tickets in order to reclaim the money from your National Agency.

You may need to know some return times for the 25th June.

Penrith	0549	0656	0758	0856
London Euston	1003	1120	1221	1303

All train times can be checked on <http://www.railtrack.co.uk>

Please complete the details of your travel on the Enrolment Form and email or fax this to R.Kirtley@hull.ac.uk (+44 1482 466843).

Once at Penrith Station you can take a taxi to Newton Rigg for about £3. We will also meet some trains - look out for a waiting minibus.

Payment for the course

The course fee is 965 euro. The course fee includes all accommodation costs except drinks and telephone calls (680 euro). It also includes the tuition fee (285 euro) and the cost of any materials and local transport. The fee is currently 603 GBP. You may pay this amount by cash or by credit card at the venue. Please indicate your choice on the Enrolment Form. Please let us know before the course if there are any problems regarding payments. We will provide you with a receipt to enable the fee to be reclaimed from your National Agency. They will provide you with a form for this purpose.

Please do not hesitate to email, fax or telephone if you have any questions. I look forward to meeting you on the 19th June.

Yours sincerely

RAY KIRTLEY
PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

Encs:

Provisional Programme ¹⁰

School Profile – to be returned as soon as possible

Enrolment Form – to be returned as soon as possible

CC:

Project partners

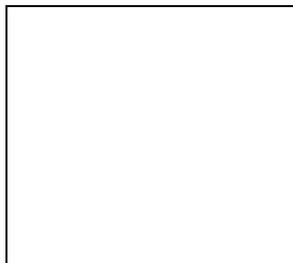
Project evaluator

¹⁰ See annex 2 at the end of section 1 in this chapter.

PROFILE FORM

**Supporting Freshwater Projects through the Comenius Freshwater Network
University of Central Lancashire, Cumbria Campus, United Kingdom
19th June – 25th June**

PHOTO



PARTICIPANT	SCHOOL
-------------	--------

Name: _____	Name: _____
Function: _____	e-mail: _____
School Address: _____ _____	Head: _____
Tel: _____ Fax: _____	
Languages active: _____	
Languages passive: _____	

SCHOOL

1. Number of pupils: _____
 Mixed: Yes/No/ _____% Boys, _____% Girls

2. Region: _____

3. Specific characteristics of the school: _____

EXISTING INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS

1. Experience with international contacts? Yes/No, Countries of the partner school(s) _____

2. Project Involvement? (e.g. Comenius) _____

3. Possible Themes for a Freshwater Project _____

Please return to:

Ray Kirtley, Project Co-ordinator, European Resource Centre, University of Hull, Brynmor Jones Library, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX, United Kingdom

Tel: (44) 1482 466843 - Fax: (44) 1482 466843 or by Email: R.Kirtley@hull.ac.uk

ENROLMENT FORM

**Comenius 2.2 Course UK—007-2002-03
Supporting Freshwater Projects in School through the
Comenius Freshwater Network
University of Central Lancashire, Cumbria Campus, United Kingdom
19th June – 25th June 2002**

Name: _____

Address: _____

I will be participating in the above event at the University of Central Lancashire, Cumbria Campus, Newton Rigg, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 0AH, United Kingdom, from 19th June– 25th June 2002.

I will arrive at _____ airport _____ (time) on _____ (date)

I expect to arrive by train at Penrith station _____ (time) on _____ (date)

Special dietary requirements (vegetarian etc.) _____

Payment: cash credit card (please tick as appropriate)

Date _____

Signature:

Please return to:

RAY KIRTLEY, CFN Project Co-ordinator, European Resource Centre, University of Hull, Brynmor Jones Library, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX, United Kingdom
Tel: (44) 1482 466843 - Fax: (44) 1482 466843 or by Email:
R.Kirtley@hull.ac.uk

FIRST E-MAIL TO PARTICIPANTS

Comenius course IT-2004-016 “Teachers as learners for learning schools” Viareggio, 10 to 16 May 2003

GENERAL INFORMATION

a) LOCATION

The course will take place at: Astor Hotel
Lungomare Carducci, 54
55049 VIAREGGIO

your booking is from 10 May (arrival) until 16 May (departure).

Viareggio is easily reachable from Pisa (bus and train about 1 hour 15 minutes to railway station), from Florence by train (about 2 hours) and also from Rome by train (about 3 hours and a half). The Viareggio railway station is at about 1,5 km from the Astor Hotel. We will provide train timetables later on.

For further information about the place and the area, please visit the website www.viareggio.it

b) THE COURSE

The course will start on 10 May at 17.00 and will end on 16 May at 13.00

It will include different activities. There will be some workshops, group discussions, school visit, lectures on the following topics:

- Schools as learning organizations
- Key players in a learning organization
- The learning society/How do we know we are learning
- Educational leadership in a learning organization
- Peer learning from peer observations
- Introduction to the Italian school system

Please have a look at the course leaflet in the project website www.progettodeslo.it; please note that the project website is still under construction: it will be updated in the next few days.

As for preparatory activities: you are invited to have a look at the documents published in the website. At the moment the documents are organised according to the following headings:

- The project
- Key issues
- The course

In the KEY ISSUES section the more theoretical papers are collected under the ‘Basics concepts on the learning organisation’ heading while the more practical experiences are described in the ‘Organisational learning: ideas and experiences’ and ‘Instruments and tools’ headings.

Please find attached an acceptance form + a questionnaire. Could you please fill it in and send it back at the following e-mail rosangela1@telefonica.net ?

Information about how to pay the course and the accommodation & subsistence fees will be provided next week.

Best regards

Rosangela Baggio (Course director assistant)

SECOND E-MAIL TO PARTICIPANTS

Comenius course IT-2004-016
“Teachers as learners for learning schools”

Viareggio, 10 to 16 May 2003

Dear Course Participants,
Here is the second selection of information related to our course and its organisation.

In the meantime we hope you had the opportunity to visit the provisional project website at the address www.progettodeslo.it. The website structure has been slightly changed in the last few days as we are updating it in order to offer a more useful tool for the course.

Please find below some information related to organisational issues.

1. HOW TO PAY

The fees for the course and the accommodation and subsistence is 1250 Euro (500 Euro for the course fee and 750 for full board accommodation and subsistence), as detailed in the Comenius course catalogue. The whole amount of money should be paid as soon as possible (and anyway no later than 28 April) into the bank account of Direzione Didattica di Spirano (the bank details are provided in the annex).

As you know, the transferring of money could take some time; **YOU ARE KINDLY REQUESTED TO SEND US A FAX WITH THE RECEIPT OF PAYMENT AT THE FOLLOWING FAX NUMBER : +39 035 360012.**

We thank you for your co-operation!

2. USEFUL INFORMATION

How to reach Viareggio:

- **If you arrive at Pisa airport:** In the airport there is a railway station. To get to Viareggio you have to change train at Pisa Centrale railway station, which is 5 minutes from Pisa airport railway station.
- **If you arrive at Florence airport:** There is a bus service from the airport to Florence Santa Maria Novella railway station, from where you can get to Viareggio
- **If you arrive at Rome airport:** In the airport there is a railway station from which you can get to Rome Termini railway station and from there to Viareggio.

The Viareggio railway station is at about 1,5 km from the Astor Hotel.
For finding out about trains timetables, please have a look at the following website: www.trenitalia.it

Free time activities

During the course there is sometimes a long break between the morning and the afternoon activities in order to offer you the chance to visit the surroundings, to take part in some sports or just for relaxing when it is still light:

- In the hotel there is an indoor heated swimming pool, a small gym and a solarium available for the guests
- In Viareggio it is possible to rent bicycles which are a very popular means of transport here so that you can admire the beautiful landscape (the sea on one side and the mountain on the other one) from another 'angle'
- If you are interested in jogging, just behind the hotel there is a big park

Do you want to learn some basic Italian or to improve the Italian you know before coming to the course?

Visit the BBC website at www.bbc.co.uk/learning/library/italian.shtml .

Here you can find links to some Italian websites which offer you the opportunity to learn or practice some Italian.

Do you want to know more about Italy?

Select the country profile at the following address: www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/default.stm

In this page there is also a link to BBC weather so that you can find out about it as well.

Best regards

Rosangela Baggio (Course director assistant)

QUESTIONNAIRE

A. ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

1. Name and address of your school

..... Country

2. Type of school

3. Number of pupils

4. Age of pupils

5. Number of classes

6. Number of teachers

7. Do you teach?

a) number of hours per week

b) subject you teach

c) age of your pupils

8. Are you involved in the school management? In which way?

(only if you are NOT a headteacher)

.....

.....

10. Describe the social context of your school

.....

.....

.....

.....

B. ABOUT YOU

1. How long have you been a teacher/headteacher?

2. What kind of training (if any) in the course topics have you received ?

.....

a) Who has given you the training?

.....

3. Give a brief description of your experience related to the course topics

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

THANKS FOR YOUR COLLABORATION!

5.5 Follow-up

Follow-up appears to be the least 'controlled' aspect of most Comenius 2.2 courses. In fact in the documentation which was analysed for this project there was little evidence of structured activities. Course coordinators agreed that follow-up is a powerful tool for professional development both at course coordinator level and at participant level; however what seems to be lacking is the time and the resources necessary for any commitment to follow-up and arranging any structured follow-up activities.

Most National Agencies do not see it within their capacity to organise follow-up activities. This is despite the fact that the mechanisms they have put in place to assess the participant's application do focus on the participant's future contribution to the development of the European dimension whether by means of the impact of the course contents on the school, the contribution that the course has made to the growth of professionalism, follow-up activities, dissemination plans, further involvement in Socrates projects, benefits for pupils and school and thematic relevance concerning national priorities.

National Agencies which do organise some kind of follow-up activities achieve this in different ways, from the evaluation of the teacher final reports to participation of teachers as speakers at meetings organised by the National Agencies themselves.

There are no clear criteria to carry out this important part of Comenius 2.2 courses and additional effort is needed to improve this element of course follow-up.

On the other hand, a distinction needs to be made between follow-up and merely keeping in contact with the participants. This is a less controlled activity but it can play an important role in terms of establishing European partnerships. These be very useful both from the personal and professional point of view and can contribute to the development of the European dimension. Keeping in touch may amount to just an exchange of information but within a data base of participants, tutors, coordinators or experts it can be a powerful instrument for facilitating the circulation of information and the basis for the development of the European dimension.

Follow-up implies that some further course objectives remain to be accomplished. These might include:

- feedback from the experiences undertaken
- a comparison of course reports
- the development of new teaching practices
- reports on post-course interviews
- the impact of the teacher attending the course on the school itself at a professional level.

Possible post-course developments can be listed. They range from an informal or occasional contact after the course to the setting up of a learning environment for participants' use:

- informal or occasional contacts afterwards according to the free decision of participants. In some cases the former participants may be in contact with the course organisers; in some instances former participants have been invited to participate in further sessions of the same course with the role of tutors
- suggestions for post-course tasks are given at the end of the course and a feedback is requested
- suggestion for dissemination in the school of participants is prepared at the course and a feedback is requested
- the course reports drafted by participants is disseminated after the course
- the organiser sends updated materials on the course contents to the participants
- follow-up assignments are foreseen within the course and recognised as part of the course itself
- one or more Comenius 1 projects are created during the Comenius 2.2 course. There are some courses in which, according to the programme, a session is devoted to the creation of Comenius projects. What it is interesting to note is that in many cases future Comenius 1 projects are 'foreseen' spontaneously by a group of participants. In the course context there is usually the possibility to become quite knowledgeable about the participants and some professional links (but also personal) can be easily established
- creation of newsgroup/ mailing lists on the Internet. Internet is obviously the most useful tool for future contacts. It is used in different ways according to the time and the resources that can be devoted to follow-up. Participants are encouraged to communicate with one another
- use of intranet, forum or learning platforms. Experience shows that these are usually used for a limited period of time (from two to some six months, but not longer). It is very difficult to continue a follow-up of the participants and find out what has been the impact of the course one year after the course. The main reason is lack of time and of funds. Both within newsgroups or learning platforms are usually dominated by activities concerned with the evaluation phase of the course

An example of a follow-up assignment is provided in the following page.



Barcelona 7th November 2003

According with the course programme to obtain the final Certificate participants must accomplish with the homework proposed.

It is expected from every participant at least one contribution to forum and the realisation of two activities. The activities can be choose from the five proposed related to every session of the course.

- Introduction Self-evaluation Philosophy - Mr. Jorge Coelho
- Introduction to Self-evaluation Class/Pupils Dimension – Mr. Egil Eide and Mr. Bjorn Meling
- Self-evaluation: Test, Tools and Methodology – Mrs. Wilma Bain
- Self-evaluation: Internal School Policy – Mr. Josep Gómez and Mrs. M. Cristina Pujol
- Internal and External Evaluation – Mr. Rudy Rydant

Remember that you must send your activities to the trainers responsible for that theme.

Dead line 31st December 2003



- **Introduction Self-evaluation Philosophy - Mr. Jorge Coelho**

jorgecs@ese.ipp.pt

Participants must answer the following questions:

1. What words come into your mind when you hear the word evaluation? (give a order of priority to those words)
2. What is the meaning of evaluation in your own country or context?
3. Taking into account what you have said about the evolution of top-down reforms to a down-top model (plus top-down) what are the main barriers and facilities you think you have in your own country or context to make evaluation of the schools possible?

- **Self-evaluation: Test, Tools and Methodology – Mrs. Wilma Bain**

wilma.bain@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Question based on Scotland's Presentation

Part A

If you were going to evaluate teaching and learning within a school, what evidence would you collect?

Part B

If you were going to undertake a classroom observation exercise, what evidence would you look for in the classroom to be able to make a judgement about the standard of teaching and learning which was taking place?



• **Introduction to Self-evaluation Class/Pupils Dimension –
Mr. Egil Eide and Mr. Bjorn Meling**

egil.eide@hsh.no

bjorn.meling@hsh.no

Participants are to write a proposal for criteria for what could be said to be good educational principles, class-room practices and teaching methods in the context of the culture and country they come from.

How would you in your context illustrate/put in words what you consider to be

- Quality pedagogical philosophy
- Quality classroom practices
- Quality teaching methods
- Quality learning strategies
- Quality climate and communication between teacher and pupil
- Quality learning-aids and pedagogical equipment/technology
- Quality organisation and furnishing of the class-room
- Quality care of pupils

The assignment can be done as group-work if there are two or more participants from one country, otherwise individually.

Hopefully your contribution here may come to use later in the context where you live and work.

You are expected to write about three sentences in relation to each of the points listed above.

• **Self-evaluation: Internal School Policy –
Mr. Josep Gómez and Mrs. M. Cristina Pujol**

jogomez@pie.xtec.es
mpujolm@uoc.edu

Participants must answer the following questions:

- Which are the external elements that have a stronger or weaker influence in the design of Internal School Evaluation Policy in your country? Give details
- Which are the internal elements that have a stronger or weaker influence in the design of Internal School Evaluation Policy in your country? Give details.

The assignment can be done as group-work if there are two or more participants from one country, otherwise individually.

• **Internal and External Evaluation – Mr. Rudy Rydant**

rudy.rydant@planetinternet.be

Participants are invited to write a proposal concerning one off the following statements. They can give their own meaning examining the pro's en con's

1. To make good self-evaluation it is necessary to use instruments made by the school or the team instead of using a standardised instruments.
2. The external evaluation made by Inspectorate id from the point of view of the society a better system to evaluate schools than ranking schools by test and central examinations.
3. Differences in quality (more value of a school) between schools can best be detected and improved by the school using indicators and techniques of self-evaluation.
4. To make a good self-evaluation it is necessary to begin with a small approach instead of beginning with a general measuring and inquiring
5. The external evaluation is regarded by the school as a free audit made by a well-experienced team.

5.6 Practical suggestions

1. Introduction

The complex procedures of Comenius 2.2 courses organisation imply that organisers should take into account various elements such as course contents, pedagogical methodology, the course team, multinational participation, the course location and accommodation, financial issues, etc. Due to the complex combination of these elements, a 'good' course is not easily attainable without a careful preparation from the organisers, who are responsible as well of general course organisation, group size, different National Agencies' deadlines and, in some cases, provisions for weaker language users.

Given the variety of responsibilities Comenius 2.2 course organisers must confront and building on the results of our study, this section is intended to provide some suggestions to help organisers to overcome the problems and difficulties that they need to take into consideration when organising a course.

2. Choice of the venue

In order to make the travelling easy and provide ease of access for as many participants as possible, the most common criteria to consider when choosing the course location are:

- distance from airports
- venue accessibility from public transportation
- access to the course venue for disabled people
- special dietary provisions (e.g. vegetarians)

Other criteria should relate to the opportunity to offer cultural and tourist experiences, the choice of the season in which the course will be run (in relation to the place), the choice between working and living in the same building, the possibility for free time activities, the availability of special provisions to make people feel at home and opportunities to attend religious services.

In addition, depending on the kind of course, further criteria may also be considered important. These include the choice of a venue for the availability of computers and the Internet, or the selection of a particular natural environment which involves practical observation and experiences. This last factor becomes most important when a course is related to the natural environment; the season chosen is also important for these courses.

3. Pre-registration and registration

Comenius 2.2 courses administrative tasks are generally time consuming. For this reason it is useful to have available secretarial assistance to deal with administrative matters related to both pre-registration and final registration.

Unfortunately only about one third of the requests for pre-registration end up with the final registration of a participant. This disparity leads to some problems: the uncertainty of the exact number of participants until the very last moment and the hotel/venue reservation which, in some cases, cannot be confirmed until just before the course. The reasons for this are:

- the different deadlines of National Agencies for applying for the courses and for communicating the candidates' selection. To facilitate the process some NAs use rolling deadlines for applications – this helps to facilitate the process. On the other hand, the absence of common deadlines in other NAs can create obstacles. The pre-registration system and subsequent participants' application for the grant could work better if all National Agencies shared similar approaches
- participants who apply for different courses and do not inform the course organisers of their final decision.

Organisers must be aware that for running a course and at least covering the course costs, the course must count on a minimum number of participants who may vary according to the type of programme (as an average the minimum number of participants should be 12-15). Participants should be recommended not to buy transportation tickets until the course has been definitely confirmed as the course might be cancelled. Pre-registered participants should be asked to keep course organisers informed of the development of the situation (i.e. the date of the publication of the participants' selection by the National Agencies), and organisers should keep participants informed of the development of the course situation (i.e. registration and information about the course).

According to our study, organisers should take the following points into account when registering enrolments for a course:

- potential participants are invited to contact their NA and to apply for a Comenius 2.2 grant after their pre-registrations are received and acknowledged by course organisers
- potential participants are contacted again to find out if they have already received approval of their application for the grant
- participants are sent final detailed information about the course as soon as they confirm their participation (provided there is a viable number).

Examples of pre-registration and registration forms are shown in the annexes at the end of this section.

4. Financial issues

Payment issues can be dealt with in different ways. The most common is to ask participants to make a bank transfer. This is not always feasible for all participants (i.e. participants from some eastern European countries have to leave their countries with an amount of money that proves that they can live for a limited period of time in the country to be visited). Alternatively cash payments make it easy for participants to cancel their place while bank transfers imply commitment.

The organisation of payment for accommodation (when provided by the organisers) and course fees can be done by:

- bank transfer
- payment in cash
- cheques
- credit cards.

One final financial difficulty is the time gap between the NAs' approval of the grant and its payment to the participants. If this payment is delayed, participants will not be able to attend the course. Some course organisers use a cancellation fee which must be paid when confirming the inscription in the course and that cannot be refunded in the case of cancellation.

5. Language problems

In some cases language can constitute a problem for the development of the course. In fact, poor linguistic competence can prevent full participation in all the course phases, especially if the course is only taught in one language. The following are some suggestions that have been proved effective to help overcome these kind of difficulties:

- provide participants with texts related to the presentations in advance, so that they can become familiar with the topic and the terminology
- use simultaneous translation
- choose two languages for the course and invite speakers to make slides in one of the languages, asking them to speak in the other language; this facilitates understanding
- allow the composition of monolingual groups for short periods to facilitate communication
- efforts should also be made to develop an inter-comprehensive language approach; this means offering participants the possibility of using different languages as long as the language used is simple and the rhythm is slow. This method works and is greatly appreciated if participants are trained beforehand but is not widely used

6. Other issues

When organising a course, there are a number of issues which may arise that do not relate to the course organisation itself but that may affect it. Being aware of these problems may help course organisers to find possible solutions.

Booking accommodation. It is important for most courses to have all the participants staying in the same place; this means that organisers have to book accommodation very much in advance without having the complete certainty that the course will take place with the minimum acceptable number of participants. If the course requires hotel accommodation, less flexibility is possible as, quite reasonably, the hotel needs to ensure that the rooms will be paid for. Participants are, sometimes, invited by organisers to pay part of the total amount in advance but, in most cases, an 'all in price' is charged: this means that the price includes both hotel accommodation and course fees. The fact that

participants are asked to pay the whole course at one time may create problems for the organisers. Sometimes the organisers risk having to pay some costs for people who do not turn up. Sometimes participants are given all the information about accommodation, they decide and book their hotel themselves. The disadvantage in this latter case can be that participants decide to book into different hotel or simply do not register.

Ensuring the minimum number of participants. Courses have frequently been cancelled due to the lack of participants. Some coordinators have solved this problem by admitting to the course either participants who receive funding from local authorities together with those who have received the grant from their National Agencies. This combination can be a good way for securing a suitable number of participants for the course. Another way of securing enough participants or enough funding is to combine the one week European course with a two day course in parallel for participants from the host country who pay a small course fee. Another and third possibility (which is used by many course organisers) is to organise a project meeting before or after the in-service training course. In this way the European team can travel to the venue and help organising and running the course. No extra funding is then necessary for the travel and the accommodation of the team of experts as it is covered by the project budget. This method is only viable while the project is in action.

Special provisions. In some cases organisers also have to deal with late arrivals, early leavers, medical problems or difficult participants. There is not a ready-made solution to these issues, but a way to solve the first two problems is to clarify with participants when they are expected to arrive and to leave. Sometimes difficult participants require a special effort as their attitudes can influence the course atmosphere. In these cases there is not a recipe either but a good dose of common sense is useful.

7. Recommendations for the European Commission

The need for training. There is an emerging need for training of course organisers in order to help them to handle the complex issue of Comenius 2.2 course organisation. Different respondents in our survey have clearly expressed the need for specific training courses in which experienced organisers could train colleagues. Elements of such training sessions could include:

- how to help participants to apply for a grant
- how to manage cultural differences in a group
- how to manage language problems
- how to take into account the diverse expectations of the participants
- how to improve participants' preparation and follow-up
- how to use evaluation methods for such courses
- which kind of certificate can be given
- how to use active working methodologies; how to enhance the active involvement of the participants during the course
- how the pre-registration and the final registration are organised
- which the responsibilities of course organisers are
- how a balanced programme can be built
- how payments for the courses can best be managed

It has also been suggested that once a year the European Commission could organise a meeting for course organisers. Such a meeting could be organised around thematic areas so that those professionals involved in similar areas could meet and exchange ideas. The meeting could also lead to useful forms of interaction and cross-fertilisation among different projects and course-organisers, as in most cases there are no regular contacts among courses and projects dealing with similar topics.

It would also be useful if course organisers could have access to the materials produced by other course organisers. A central website at EU level could make these materials available.

The Catalogue. According to the coordinators contacted, it appears that the mechanism for searching for courses does not work efficiently and that the course catalogue is neither sufficiently developed nor well enough structured to facilitate full commercialisation and marketing of the courses.

The key words which have to be used in searching for the courses require information about the contents of the course, which the potential applicant does not necessarily have. There are also several useless search functions such as project number, title, etc. which does not help a potential applicant. The catalogue needs to have search functions which enable potential participants to look for contents and themes and clear levels of education. Special efforts should also be made to create a user-friendly database with more relevant key words. Many participants, however, get information about the course through the different networks in which the coordinator is involved.

A final concern is that there is no guarantee whatsoever of the quality of the courses which are advertised. In this respect there appears to be a need to develop at European level, a system to check and measure courses quality. This idea would certainly require the use of course external evaluators and setting up a complex system. It could be useful to reflect on the development of a European quality label for European in-set courses. This label already exists for language projects. It would imply that National Agencies or national or regional bodies could be involved in assessing the quality of the in-service training course before attributing such a label. The courses to receive such an attribute would have to respond to specific criteria in relation to:

- preparatory work
- follow-up
- evaluation of the quality of the course
- tools and materials used
- course organisation and administration.

ACCEPTANCE E-MAILS

Example 1

Dear,
following your request I am glad to confirm your acceptance for a provisional place on the course IT-2004-016 "Teachers as learners for learning schools" which will be held in Viareggio from 10 to 16 May 2004.

In case your National Agency needs a paper copy of the confirmation letter, we will be pleased to mail it to you at the address you will indicate.

Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any enquiries.

Yours sincerely
Giovanna Barzanò (Course coordinator)

Example 2

Dear,
Please regard this email as your acceptance for a provisional place on the course; EUROPEAN PROJECT MANAGEMENT - "A SURVIVAL COURSE FOR EUROPEAN PROJECT MANAGERS" COURSE NUMBER: UK-2004-031

We also attach a letter of invitation to the course and an example Programme.
If you have any enquiries please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely
Clare Bean
Information and Project Assistant

NON ACCEPTANCE E-MAIL

Dear,
Thank you for your interest in the course. We have received many expressions of interest from Romania for probably only two places. So with regret we have to decline any further expressions of interest from Romania. I hope you have more luck with another course.

Yours sincerely

Clare Bean
Information and Project Assistant

EUROPEAN PROJECT MANAGEMENT- A SURVIVAL COURSE FOR PROJECT CO-ORDINATORS

OFFICIAL INVITATION AND CONFIRMATION OF AVAILABILITY OF A PLACE ON THE EU FUNDED COURSE:

**EUROPEAN PROJECT MANAGEMENT - "A SURVIVAL COURSE FOR EUROPEAN PROJECT MANAGERS"
COURSE NUMBER: UK-2004-031**

The University of Hull

International Resource Centre
27 Salmon Grove
Hull, HU6 7RX
United Kingdom
Tel + 44 1482 305150
Fax +44 1482 302402

Ray Kirtley (Course Organiser and Manager IRC)

We are pleased to confirm the place of, **NAME** in the training course "A Survival Kit for European Project Management" in the United Kingdom – Hull – The University of Hull, in the period 06.11. 2004 – 12. 11. 2004.

"A Survival Kit for European Project Managers" is a course for coordinators of Centralised Socrates Project with general aim to enhance the management skills specifically of those who are involved in European Projects. The structure of the course is closely related to the survival kit. It will include activities and inputs on planning, organization, team building, communications, project meetings, dissemination, evaluation, contractual and financial management. It will involve the participants in didactic sessions and workshops. It will enable them to share their own experiences of project of management and to benefit from the experience of project managers from a number of fields.

The financial support (travel, course fee, accommodation & subsistence) is a grant provided through the Socrates National Agency of **COUNTRY**.

The host institution will provide accommodation at The Endsleigh Centre, Cottingham Road, Hull, UK.

R.Kirtley

Date :

International Resource Centre
For Schools and Colleges

5.7 Pedagogical and didactical work forms

1. Introduction

This chapter aims to outline several of the pedagogical techniques which can be used as part of a Comenius 2.2 course. The techniques chosen by the course organisers should be:

- Appropriate to the theme and to the audience
- Within the capabilities of the facilitators
- Varied - so that the participants are constantly being stimulated by new teaching and learning styles

Apart from finding ways of simply getting across a body of knowledge the activities should still have the capacity to help participants to develop key skills:

- Communication
- Information Technology
- Debate
- Critical analysis
- Team working
- Problem solving

Remember that an audience of educators is not easily impressed!

2. Discussions

Discussions or debates are structured versions of activities that we engage in all the time. The structure exists in order to provide a reasonable set of conventions which allow participants to appreciate that all sides of an issue need to be given equal priority. Specifying time limits for speakers, providing some formality with respect to questioning and providing rules about who is to be selected to ask questions all enhance the discussion or debate. Participants appreciate that even apparently rule-free environments such as a chat show are actually tightly scripted and that the rules exist to everyone a fair hearing.

A debate is a more formal occasion for presenting an argument in which one side of the issue or policy is given an uninterrupted but time-controlled airing. This is the proposition and it is followed by an opposing view - the opposition. A further speaker might then support the proposition and attempt to answer criticism; this will be opposed again and so

on. The delivery of these inputs takes place in front of an audience who offer their opinions through individual speeches and possibly through a vote on whether the advocated policy should be adopted. A debate is less likely to feature in a course than a discussion but might be considered in some circumstances.

A formal discussion is generally less structured than a debate in that a more flexible approach to the initial presentation will be used. The discussion might start with a more open question to a panel followed by audience reaction to their individual replies. A discussion also needs an active moderator who will be capable of guiding the interchange so that opposing views are fairly aired.

Running discussions. A formal discussion of 40 minutes might require: four panellists, a moderator, an audience. The following issues should be considered in the planning process:

1. How much time should the moderator allow for each speaker to answer questions.
2. Will the audience be allowed to ask questions? If this is the case will a similar time limit be imposed? Should a questioner from the audience be expected to state their name before speaking?
3. Will the audience be allowed to make statements? If so the moderator must be able to represent the statement as a challenge to the views of one of the panellists.
4. Will the moderator be allowed to re-phrase questions in a shorter or more coherent form?
5. The moderator may be neutral (will attempt to have every possible view aired) or agenda-driven (will attempt to have a particular question answered). Will the panel members be 'experts' or simply have particular views. Experts can bring a fresh perspective to an issue.
6. Will there be a timekeeper for questions? Although the moderator should pay close attention to time it might be useful to ask an assistant to hold up cards with 'time remaining' messages to speakers or to the audience.

Preparing for a discussion. General preparation might include finding the major issues within the topic, researching who advocates these issues and why, finding those who oppose these views, and why they do so and researching the history of all these opinions. If participants are discussing a controversial educational issue this might take them into local, national or even world history as a starting point. In addition to this general preparation some specific preparation will be needed by the moderator:

1. The moderator will need to prepare open questions - those not characterised by a 'yes or no' answer.
2. Open questions need to be complemented by a set of focussed questions which can be answered by panellists.
3. The moderator might find it useful to have one or two paragraphs that summarise the views of a panellist.

All of the preparation for the moderator can be allocated to specific groups of participants. The audience too will need to prepare to ensure that a discussion really does take place!

3. Using the internet

Debates and discussions are frequently initiated on the internet. There are a few rules which will make this experience more rewarding for the participants involved:

1. Be polite and non-offensive. The internet reaches a diverse community where it is easy to (unintentionally) give offence.
2. Be honest and write your real opinions but remember how easily they can be passed to others who may not be on your address list!
3. Express yourself clearly and logically - your written word is the only way people have to get to know you at this stage.
4. Share your knowledge and research findings.
5. Do not believe everything you read - the internet is largely unregulated.
6. Think carefully before giving away personal details or passwords.
7. Be forgiving to people operating in a foreign language - it is sometime difficult for all but the expert linguist to be anything other than very direct in their written communications.

4. Other activities

There are a number of other activities which will help to vary the format being used to organise courses:

Case Studies. A Case Study helps to focus an audience by looking at an exemplar of activities which may help to highlight the issues involved. A favourite Case Study is the account of an experienced practitioner whose educational practices have benefited from a particular set of actions.

Card sorting exercises. These work best with small groups of 4-6 participants. Each are equipped with 12 cards on which are written statements or viewpoints. The participants must agree on a priority system for the cards with the most important at the top and the others arranged in rows beneath to form a pyramid. At the end of the activity a rapporteur should report back not just on the finished pattern but also on the discussion that accompanied its creation.

Dramatic scenario or role play. These short pieces are useful as 'scene setters'. They may be scripted or improvised from an idea but in neither case should they occupy more than about 5 minutes.

Statistical analysis. Presenting participants with a table or other statistics can help inform debates or discussions. However participants should be asked to look carefully at the authors of the material and also at the ways in which figures or graphs are arranged - perhaps to convey a particular viewpoint.

'Post-it' ideas storm. 'Post-its' are the adhesive pads now found in every office. They can be bought in several colours and lend themselves to visually appealing training activities. This exercise is good for generating lots of ideas and ensuring that participants feel valued. It can also be used to review an event or input. To run the activity requires the

organiser to arrange the participants into groups of 3 – 4. You also need a wall on which to post the notes! The sequence of activities is:

- Set a topic for discussion
- Give each group a different coloured post-it pad so each group can see their contribution
- Each group writes out their ideas
- Collect these and post them on the wall. Try to group them together when they are similar
- The finished product clearly shows each group where their ideas have ended-up. It also allows ideas that do not fit into a grouping to be identified with their authors

Carousel Workshop. This exercise is described in the Case Study of the Esco-ort course featured (*see chapter 7.2*).

5.8 Issues of foreign language competence

1. Introduction

Course organisers very often imagine that their work is limited to transmitting the course contents using appropriate methodologies. They forget that language is also an important issue in European in-service training courses. The reality is that the participants in European in-set courses do not all master English or French (as these are the two languages mostly used in such in-set courses except for language courses!) in the same way and that thus the degree of understanding may differ according to the participant. Even if the course organiser has clearly stressed in the course information that all participants have to have reasonable competence in the main language, the reality is such that 'reasonable competence' is a very flexible notion which is interpreted in different ways by the participants and even by the National Agencies which select the participants for a Comenius 2.2. in-service training course.

In some (rare) cases the problem is not with the participants but with the organiser(s) whose foreign language skills may also be limited. Sometimes the two cases are combined which turns the course into a difficult undertaking.

It must be emphasised that course organisers should master the language of the course very well; they must see to it that the course is run by someone who is completely fluent in the language of the course. If the organiser is not fluent, this will create confusion, misunderstandings and problems which could have been avoided.

2. Distinguishing levels of language competence

Course organisers should be able to distinguish between the different levels of language competence of the course participants. The first level of foreign language competence is the knowledge and the ability to carry out a the analysis of a simple text (reading skills) and to draft a short summary of it in one foreign language. The second level is the knowledge and ability to read and understand texts drafted in a foreign language and to make an oral presentation of them. The third level indicates that the participant can take part in a discussion on the topic in an active way using the foreign language. For the fourth level a participant should be able to act as an interpreter for colleagues who have language problems.

Course organisers should try to find methodologies which allow them to promote the use of more than one foreign language during the course. They should also be aware of methods to enhance passive language knowledge as opposed to active language learning. This will prove to be particularly useful in European and international seminars or in-service training sessions in which language knowledge is frequently a problem at least for some participants.

3. Active language knowledge versus passive language knowledge

Active language knowledge is of course a major asset for anyone involved in international and European in-service training courses or projects. Those who are co-ordinating or participating in projects or in-set activities should attempt to master the specialised language of that project appropriately. The same applies to teachers and staff who are involved in mobility such as teacher exchanges or participation in European or international in-service training activities. People attending courses or who are involved in projects and who do not master the language used in that project sufficiently well do not usually facilitate the work of the project. This does not mean that those who have not much foreign language competence have to be excluded from all meetings or activities but in this case ways have to be found which can enhance their active involvement.

Some improvement in language knowledge of the participants may be achieved through in-service training activities that can be organised within the school or outside the school before the teacher attends the course. Tandem learning of languages is one of the tools that can prove to be very useful in the context of transnational work. People involved in running courses or even those who intend to participate in in-set courses should be aware of the existence of such tools which are well known to language teachers. They should also be aware that they can self-assess their knowledge of a foreign language using tools that are on the Internet such as the DIALANG¹¹.

Schools involved in European and international projects should all have an active language promoting policy as part of their mission statement. Having such an active language policy for all their teachers, would facilitate the involvement of the teachers in European in-set activities. Financial means should be made available to those teachers involved in projects to attend in-service training courses to improve their language learning.

Teachers involved in international and European countries do not only need active language skills enabling them to speak and write one or several foreign languages and to use those skills in running meetings and projects. Those teachers also need passive language skills or skills which enable them to promote both active and passive language comprehension.

Organisers of in-set courses have to be able to promote the use of several languages within courses in such a way that those who do not speak the main foreign language well are given certain tools to help them. Simultaneously this requires the competence to be able to organise courses in which several languages are used within working sessions and also in documents. Partners to a Comenius 2.1 project who intend to organise European in-set courses, have to be trained or should train themselves in those skills.

¹¹ This tool will be explained in the annex at the end of this chapter.

The vocabulary chosen, the speed with which a language is spoken in working sessions and the drafting and distribution of glossaries related to the topic are all key elements to facilitate passive understanding of languages. Furthermore participants and organisers (or speakers) of in-set courses have to be invited to support the use of their own language with documents or transparencies or PowerPoint presentations drafted in other languages as well as the language of the speaker. Being skilled in such passive and active language promotion techniques is very important to enhance the use of several languages in international and European in-set courses (and of course also in projects).

The drafting of glossaries of small dictionaries to be used for specific thematic areas and situations should be promoted both at the level of the teachers and at the level of the organisers of courses. Teachers should be able to work with or to be aware of the existence of the Language Portfolio and The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of the Council of Europe. The first one enables pupils (and why not teachers!) to integrate the language skills acquired in the framework of transnational projects and placements abroad in their overall education and training activities. The second one facilitates a clear definition of teaching and learning objectives and methods and provides the necessary tools for assessment of proficiency¹².

3. Bilingual language learning, tandem language learning and bilingual or international schools

The language competencies of teachers involved in international or European in service courses (or projects) should not only be limited to active or passive language knowledge. They should also know about the possibilities to organise part of the curriculum in another languages within the framework of international, European or bilingual sections. Furthermore it is also useful for them to know something about early language learning. In addition knowledge about schools offering an international baccalaureate may also prove to be useful for teachers involved in certain courses (or projects).

Several countries have developed European or bilingual sections which enable pupils to take some subjects in the curriculum in another language other than their mother tongue. This is for instance the case in France and in Hessen in Germany. Others like the French Community of Belgium have also developed early language learning classes which have proved to be very successful.

Schools are also working with tandem learning schemes to promote foreign language learning. In this case two pupils in two different schools are linked to one another in a tandem to help learn the other's language. Major work has been done in the field of tandem language learning by several universities and schools.

¹² These documents will be explained further in the annex at the end of this charter.

4. Web sites, tools and texts from the European Union, The Council of Europe and others

a) The European Union and Languages

It is important to point out that the European Commission has been promoting language learning and teaching of all the official languages of the European Union for the past 15 years. Particular attention has been paid to the languages in the Lingua programme and since 1995 both in the Leonardo da Vinci programme and the Socrates programme.

At the end of 2002 the Commission has launched a Consultation on language learning and language diversity. To this effect a major document has been produced: *Commission staff working paper: promoting language Learning and Linguistic Diversity - consultation*. As a result of the consultation the commission has produced an Action Plan called *Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity* (document COM 2003 449 final of 24 July 2003) which sets out three broad areas in which action should be taken:

- extending the benefits of life-long language learning to all citizens,
- improving language teaching, and
- creating a more language-friendly environment.

It proposes a series of actions to be taken at European level in 2004 - 2006 with the aim of supporting actions taken by local, regional and national authorities. Taken together, actions proposed, and those taken by Member States, can secure a major step change in promoting language learning and linguistic diversity. The full action plan can be found on the following web site of the Commission:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lang/languages/actionplan_en.html

On the same web site one may find other documents which are very useful. The following documents are also highly recommended:

- Report from the Commission to the Council, the European parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: The implementation and Results of the European year of Languages 2001
- Foreign language teaching and learning: European community Action
- Europeans and Languages: a Eurobarometer Special survey

The European Day of Languages is an established annual event, born out of the enthusiasm with which it was celebrated in 2001 (the European Year of Languages) and the need to continue to develop language capability across Europe. The European Day of Languages aims to draw the public's attention to the importance of language learning, raise awareness of all the languages spoken in Europe and encourage lifelong language learning. Hundreds of activities celebrating language diversity and promoting language learning are being held throughout Europe on 26 September. The Day also provides an opportunity to continue to strengthen partnerships developed during the Year at local, regional, national and international levels. You can visit the Council of Europe's web site <http://www.ecml.at/edl/default.asp?t=info> where you will find ideas to celebrate the day and a database of events.

Other useful websites are the following:

LINGUA as an action of the Socrates programme:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/languages/actions/lingua2.html>

Language school projects in Comenius of the Socrates programme

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/comenius/activities/comenius1.htm#language%20projects>

Comenius Language Assistants

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/comenius/activities/comenius1.htm#Assistant>

Comenius 2 Projects focusing on specific migrant or refugee languages

See the compendia of Comenius 2 projects:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/comenius/projects.htm#compendia>

Leonardo da Vinci Language projects

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/leonardo/leonardo2/guides_en.html

In the Guide information is found under the heading Language competence

Promoting and safeguarding regional and minority languages and cultures

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/langmin.html>

European Bureau for the Lesser used Languages

<http://www.eblul.org/>

b) The COUNCIL of EUROPE and Languages

Language activities

http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/education/Languages/

In-service Training Programme for teachers

http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/education/Teacher_training/

Bilateral co-operation between countries enhancing language learning:

European Language Portfolio

<http://culture.coe.int/portfolio>

European Year of Languages

<http://culture.coe.int/AEL2004EYL>

European Centre for Modern Languages

<http://www.ecml.at>

c) Tandem Language Learning:

Tandem language learning partnerships for schools: a Lingua D project

<http://tandem.ac-rouen.fr/learning/lingua-d-eng.html>

This project has produced:

[Teacher guides for Tandem Language Learning in Schools](#) published as books or CD/book packages in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish (Spring 2001)

[Practical Help for school-aged tandem learners](#): Tasks and work pointers for e-Tandem and face-to-face tandem published in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish via the Internet (Spring 2001)

It also organises a tandem partner pairing service for school aged students realised by [Parvis](#) for the [Tandem Agency](#) of the *International Tandem Network* at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum

Tandem and e tandem handbooks and teachers guides:

<http://www.uni-leipzig.de/tandem/etandem/guides-en.html>

Suggestions for language learning in tandems:

http://www.wu-wien.ac.at/wwwu/institute/sprachlabor/tandem_tips_en.html

Tandem language learning via the net:

<http://www.language-learning.net/cgi-bin/show/US/misc/links-tandem.htm>

5. Tools to enhance the use of different languages in Comenius 2.2 in-service training courses

Learning other subjects through the medium of a foreign language (CLIL): a possibility to be used in Comenius in-service training courses. An excellent way of making progress in a foreign language is to use it for a purpose, so that the language becomes a tool rather than an end in itself. After all, that is the way we use our own language. CLIL or Content Language Integrated Learning is about teaching a subject in another language than the mother tongue; this approach could be used (following adaption) - in Comenius in-service training courses.

The Commission has contributed to developing a network, 'Euroclit', of teachers and other parties interested in the learning of other educational subjects through the use of a foreign language. This network produces regular bulletins, and has an Internet site at <http://www.euroclit.net>, including a materials bank and a "chat" facility for teachers.

Multilingual comprehension. It is usually much easier to learn to understand a foreign language than to speak it fluently. This is especially the case where languages are for historical reasons closely related, for example Dutch and German or Italian and Spanish. European and international communication can be greatly enhanced if more people can learn to understand each others' languages, so that participants in multilingual conversations or correspondence can speak or write their own language. Fluent understanding also tends to be a step on the way towards fluent speech. The Commission has supported the development of a Web site for the development and exchange of information in this area, at <http://www.lansa.org>¹³.

¹³ A seminar on multilingual comprehension in Europe was held under the auspices of the Commission in Brussels in 1997. A summary, aimed at academic readers, is available from the Centre de Recherche en Ingénierie Multilingue in Paris, 2 rue de Lille 75343 PARIS (E-mail: crim@inalco.fr)

DIALANG / Diagnostic testing of 14 languages on the internet

The aim of this project, developed out of the current DIALANG project 39441 -CP-1-1996-1-FI-LD), is to make publicly available on the Internet, valid and reliable tests to diagnose language proficiency in the 11 Community languages plus Irish, Icelandic and Norwegian. Clients are given feedback on their performance and advice on how to advance from their current level of proficiency. The system is available to any European citizen with access to the Internet who is interested in obtaining an independent assessment of proficiency in any of the fourteen languages. The development work has taken two years to complete.

The principle project activities were the completion of robust multi-lingual delivery and data-gathering tools, the development of a web site to host the system, an intensive programme of piloting and analysis, the construction of operational item banks for skill-specific tests for 14 languages and the design and implementation of a business plan for the system. Freie Universität Berlin: <http://www.dialang.org/english/index.html>

Language portfolio

The European Language Portfolio is a document in which those who are learning or have learned a language - whether at school or outside school - can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences. The portfolio contains a language passport which its owner regularly updates. A grid is provided where his/her language competencies can be described according to common criteria accepted throughout Europe and which can serve as a complement to customary certificates. The document also contains a detailed language biography describing the owner's experiences in each language and which is designed to guide the learner in planning and assessing progress. Finally, there is a dossier where examples of personal work can be kept to illustrate one's language competencies.

<http://culture.coe.int/portfolio>. The Portfolio and Teacher's Guide are also freely downloadable from the NACELL website: <http://www.nacell.org.uk/eljp.htm>

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Developed through a process of scientific research and wide consultation, this document provides a practical tool for setting clear standards to be attained at successive stages of learning and for evaluating outcomes in an internationally comparable manner. The Framework provides a basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications, thus facilitating educational and occupational mobility. It is increasingly used in the reform of national curricula and by international consortia for the comparison of language certificates. A recent European Union Council Resolution (November 2001) recommended the use of this Council of Europe instrument in setting up systems of validation of language competences.

The Framework is a document which describes in a comprehensive manner:

- The competences necessary for communication
- The related knowledge and skills
- The situations and domains of communication

The Framework is of particular interest to course designers, textbook writers, testers, teachers and teacher trainers -in fact to all who are directly involved in language teaching and testing.

The Framework is published in English by Cambridge University Press.

ISBN: Hardback 0521803136 Paperback: 0521005310.

[Http://www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

The French version is published by the Editions Didier : Cadre européen commun de référence: apprendre, enseigner, évaluer

ISBN 227805075-3

<http://www.didierfle.com>

5.9 Evaluation, accreditation and recognition

PART A

1. Evaluation

Evaluation is at the core of the quality assurance set up both within the framework of the Comenius 2.1 projects and the subsequent Comenius 2.2. in-service training courses. The information given in this chapter is at a general level and is intended to be of use both in the evaluation of the Comenius 2.1 projects and later on during the implementation of the Comenius 2.2. in-service training courses. Although evaluation is the responsibility of the whole project team, it is better that specific responsibility for evaluation is given to one or two persons within the projects. In some cases projects will decide to take on board an external evaluator who can be involved both in the Comenius 2.1 project and in the subsequent Comenius 2.2. courses. It is important that the person or team has the necessary competences to be an evaluator. This chapter emphasises how competence in evaluation is acquired or shown during the evaluation exercises.

The evaluator should have gradually acquired the competences to help the project set up an evaluation strategy both at the level of the processes during the project implementation and at the level of the products or outcomes (the Comenius 2.2. in-service training course). In the course of the development of such an evaluation strategy the evaluator should draw the attention of the project promoter and the partners to the fact that they may chose between self-evaluation or internal evaluation, external evaluation or cross-evaluation. He/she should also stress very strongly the need to focus on process evaluation or formative evaluation and on product or summative evaluation.

The key element which should be embedded into the working practices of the project is that evaluation - whatever it is for - should be integrated from the very beginning. Furthermore evaluation is based on data and that it is important that each project collects data regularly through reports, minutes and possibly the logbook of a project kept by the co-ordinators (an electronic logbook has the advantage that all partners may, whenever they feel like it, add remarks, suggestions and recommendations that can be integrated into the evaluation). Finally, partners have to be made very clearly aware of the fact that evaluation should have an impact on the future development of the project. Projects which focus on innovation but do not take evaluation seriously have no possibility of keeping track of the impact of the innovation they are trying to implement.

2. Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation or internal evaluation will be conducted by the co-ordinators and the partners themselves in the project and also by the participants of the in-service training course. It can be very formal or very informal. It can range from the joint reflection of the group at the end of a meeting or activity on what they have achieved, to the filling in of questionnaires they draw up themselves and answer regularly (annexes 1 and 2 at the end of this section are two examples of forms for collecting data about participants' final evaluation of the course). The outcomes of such questionnaires may even be made available to an external evaluator.

Any evaluator who wants to find practical information on evaluation of Comenius 1 and projects can make use of the materials of the MICE (EEPEE) project (Model Instruments for a Common Evaluation) available on the web site <http://www.alden-biesen.be>. They can also make use of the materials of the Comenius 3 thematic network I PROBE web site <http://i-probenet.net>. It is also useful to visit the web site of another Comenius network, 'The Treasure Within', which focuses on the school as learning organisation; its web site is <http://www.treasurewithin.com>. Although not directly related to self-evaluation of projects, it may also prove to be useful to consult the information of the Commission DG EAC on the topic 'Indicators and benchmarks of quality in school education' available on the web site of DG EAC at the following address: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/indic/backen.html>.

Self evaluation or internal evaluation has to focus on the following elements of the process and the products:

- are the objectives outlined in the application met within the deadline or time scheduled?
- how can the activities (and their eventual outputs) be improved in terms of quality?
- how does the evaluation have an impact on the work plan and on possible changes in the activities of the project?
- who is involved in evaluating or assessing the quality of the products or outputs such as the in-service training course?

Stages of the self-evaluation

- Plan and foresee the self-evaluation at every stage of the project or the in-service training; this is possibly at every meeting or activity and at the end of every day in the in-service training
- develop the tools you will need to do self-evaluation, this is a useful exercise in itself; also collecting information on existing tools from other Comenius 2.1 projects and organisers of Comenius 2.2. courses may be useful
- collect data and information: reports, minutes of meetings, questionnaires and a project (electronic) logbook may prove useful
- take time to interpret the data either collectively or through one of the partners who may be assigned this specific job
- draw the conclusions of the evaluation and decide together the steps forward and changes to be made
- implement the changes and evaluate again

- see to it that the evaluation activities are described and are integrated into and added to the final reports of the project.

3. External evaluation

Some projects or courses may choose to take on board an external evaluator who will take care of the evaluation of the processes and possibly of the products. This is not either self-evaluation or external evaluation but the two can be very well combined. Some projects have self-evaluation in the first year of the project and combine it with external evaluation in the second and/or third year. Some Comenius 2.2 courses have an external evaluator and choose to invite him or her also to evaluate the in-service training course once it is running. Sometimes self-evaluation and external evaluation can even be combined with cross-evaluation (this is mentioned later in this chapter)

An external evaluator is a 'critical friend' who will follow up the project or the in-service training course in different ways and who will feed back useful evaluation information to the project to bring about change for the better. He or she should have most of the 14 basic competence elements of the evaluator mentioned in the EVACO manual¹⁴ but should also have special expertise in European project evaluation and in European project management. Hence it is quite normal that the external evaluator would be someone who has been involved for quite some time in European education projects, who may have assisted the National Agency or the Commission or the TAO in evaluating applications or final reports or who may have acted as a Comenius promoter at national or regional level.

The person involved as an external evaluator does not necessarily have to be a specialist in the specific topic or discipline addressed by the project or course, but should be someone who, when speaking of Comenius projects, can demonstrate a thorough knowledge of school education and teacher education (initial, induction and in-service) and who is working or has worked as a teacher, teacher trainer or inspector and has had links with teaching practice. One possibility is to have as an external evaluator an administrator or a university professor who is an academic specialist in one particular area or discipline.

In some cases the best practice is to form a small external evaluation team (especially for Comenius 2.1 projects) with one person being the more general evaluation specialist in European projects while another may have more expertise in the evaluation of the specific area or discipline. The former could thus be more involved in the process evaluation parts and the latter could be focusing more on the discipline or specialised contents of the project.

Stages in implementing external evaluation

The project coordinator/course organizers should:

- discuss the possibility of having an external evaluator with the partnership
- agree on the possibility and integrate this idea into the budget of the project
- invite all partners to come up with suggestions as to who could be the external evaluator; set the criteria (experience, previous work as external evaluator...)

¹⁴ This manual can be consulted on the web site of KAUNAS University of Technology: http://www.education.ktu.lt/evaco/products/Manual/C_Content_of_the_manual.htm. It was produced by Prof. Palmira Juceviciene in close cooperation with Yves Beernaert, KHLeuven / EDUCONSULT

- choose two or three persons and invite them to make a proposal for an external evaluation
- decide with the partnership on the proposal which seems best; decide who to select and why; write the decision down in the minutes. The proposal of the external evaluator is then approved and can be seen as the basis for a contract
- contact the person chosen and discuss final details
- invite the external evaluator to a first meeting where he or she should explain in detail the proposed structure of the external evaluation.

The external evaluator should:

- gather information by studying documents, attending meetings, interviewing people and by looking at products or self-evaluation reports
- analyse all the data and materials which lead to the drafting of a provisional evaluation report
- present it to all partners who will have an open discussion with feedback.

The feedback is then integrated into the report. A draft of the final report is presented to the partnership with suggestions and recommendations for exchanges of information and the way forward towards the future for this and other projects. The whole process of external evaluation should then be described and together with the report of the external evaluator included in the final report to the Commission.

Allocation of time and budgetary resources

To be able to do effective and efficient work the minimum involvement of an external evaluator should be spread over two years. For an external evaluator on an in-service training course this would be much simplified focusing on some preparation of his or her work, attending the course, drafting the report and discussing it with the organisers.

For example, for a Comenius 2.1 project, time can be organised as follows:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| • preparatory work to come up with a consistent proposal of external evaluation to a project | 2 days |
| • attending at least three meetings over two (average meetings last 2/3 days) | 6 days |
| • collecting, studying and analysing all data | 3 days |
| • drafting the provisional report | 2 days |
| • presenting the provisional report and writing the final report | 2 days |

This means that 15 days will have to be paid to an external evaluator plus the cost of travel and accommodation. On average the cost for an external evaluator (e.g. a teacher trainer in one of the EU member states) would be in between € 250 to € 300 per day. The total cost would therefore be between € 3000 and € 4500. This is the minimum not including travel and accommodation.

For an external evaluator of an in-service training course the price would probably be: 6 to 8 days at € 250 or € 1500 to € 2000 plus travel and accommodation.

Limits of the task of the external evaluator

One of the dangers of an external evaluator is that he or she may become too involved in the project (or course) and begins to try and solve problems in the partnership (or in the

running of the course). In such a case the partnership and the evaluator have to come to an agreement to take on this role. It is important that the partners of the project agree that this change in role will clearly be limited in time and possibly related only to certain issues.

It is the task of an external evaluator of European projects or courses not only to be an external observer but to assist in case of difficulties and problems. This may be thought to create some confusion regarding roles but practical experience shows that this is infrequent.

Tools and elements of an external evaluation report

An evaluation report of a project can be based on the following tools or elements:

- an analysis of the application and the expert's evaluation report (if available)
- an analysis of the final report and the evaluation of this report (if available)
- an analysis of the products and outcomes of the project
- a questionnaire filled in by the co-ordinator and the partners
- an interview with the co-ordinator and /or the partners
- attendance of a meeting or several meetings of the project
- visiting and analysing the web site of the project (if appropriate)

The evaluation report of an in-service training course can be based on the following tools or elements:

- the programme
- the preparatory work done by partners
- the preparatory work done by participants
- the follow-up both by participants and partners
- the evaluation done by the organisers and the participants
- the running and management of the course (perhaps only possible when the evaluator has attended the whole course)
- the structure of an external evaluation report.

The evaluation report to be drafted by the external evaluator should consist of:

- an executive summary
- an introduction expressing thanks to all those who have contributed to make the external evaluation possible
- a description of the original assignment and what had to be covered by the external evaluation
- a description of the limits of the evaluation
- a description of the data which has been collected by interviewing, reading and analysing documents, and attending meetings or the in-set training course
- a description of the findings resulting from the analysis of all the data
- suggestions and recommendations
- recommendations of the way forward for the project or for future courses
- conclusions.

Attending a meeting or a in-set course as an external evaluator

Within the framework of his or her activities, an external evaluator may be invited or may propose to attend one or several meetings of the project team. He/she may also be invited

to attend the in-set course. Attending a meeting or a course and subsequently writing a report can be one of the strategies of external evaluation. There are a number of others:

- the co-ordinator and the partners complete a questionnaire
- the co-ordinator and the partners or participants take part in a structured interview either face to face or on the telephone
- the external evaluator analyses documents associated with the project such as the minutes of meetings, the application itself and the intermediary or final report, the course programme and the preparatory work of the participants
- the external evaluator analyses the products and outcomes of the project.

The following guidance should help with the external evaluation of either a course or other elements of a project:

Preparation for attending a project meeting or an in-set course

- Read both the project application and the programme
- read the minutes of the previous or preparatory project meetings
- read the agenda of the meeting (or programme of the course) and compare it with the minutes of the previous meeting and with the workplan of the project
- check whether the agenda and all supportive documents have been sent out well in advance
- visit the web site
- prepare an interview for the co-ordinator and for a selection of the participants
- request the co-ordinator to allow for some dedicated time at the meeting
- ask for additional time to explain the evaluation process and prepare some professional information about yourself to present you to the participants
- if it is the case, ask participants if you can actively participate in the debate, not just as a passive listener and observer
- ask questions to clarify what is happening when you don't understand.

Some suggestions for activities during the meeting

- Observe the interactions between participants or between organisers and participants:
 - do they listen to one another?
 - do they truly interact constructively building on other viewpoints?
 - do they stick to the items to be discussed?
 - is the information added useful to the points discussed?
 - are they willing to make compromises?
 - do they explicitly agree on the work to be done?
 - are the partners aware that language knowledge may be a problem for some partners and are they helping out those with problems?
- Observe the co-ordinator/organisers in particular:
 - is there a clear agenda with periods of work and breaks in between?
 - is he/she following the agenda and sticking to it?
 - is it clear who is making the minutes of the meeting?
 - is there good time keeping?
 - does the approval of the minutes include checking if what was agreed upon has been carried out?

- is the co-ordinator supportive and positive for the work done and does he or she, when appropriate, point out that the work was not up to the quality standards required?
 - is the co-ordinator aware of possible language problems which some partners may have if a non-mother tongue is used?
 - is there a balanced use of the time in the meeting?
 - does he/she see to it that all participants are invited to speak and are allocated enough and equal time to do so?
 - if preparations or contributions have been made, is there (enough) time to expand on them and to react appropriately?
 - does the co-ordinator make regularly syntheses of what has been said or agreed upon to clarify agreements and the sharing of the work?
 - does the co-ordinator clearly point out what has been agreed and which are the steps to be set forward plus the responsibilities of each partner; does everybody know clearly what has to be done?
 - is all of this clearly reflected in the minutes?
 - is the co-ordinator promoting compromises?
 - is the co-ordinator imposing his or her opinion or does he or she have pre-conceived ideas?
 - does the co-ordinator set reasonable deadlines bearing in mind the workload of all?
- Pay particular attention to the following elements:
 - the meeting/conference room offers all facilities: flipchart, blackboard, overhead projector, beamer, computer, etc.
 - coffee and maybe soft drinks etc. are available
 - the head of department or the president or vice-chancellor together with the organiser welcomes participants
 - ample documentation such as information about the educational system of the country visited and also tourist information is made available
 - the invitation to the meeting already contained some of this information through addresses of web sites
 - there is a social or cultural programme as well as the academic work programme.

Some elements which can strengthen the quality of meetings

- Some in-service training is integrated into each meeting (only for project meetings):
 - there is time given to expand upon recent policy developments in the countries involved
 - there is time given to expand upon interesting activities developed by partners or the co-ordinator
- Linked to the project meeting (or course) one afternoon or evening is turned into an in-service training session for colleagues of the host institution or other institutions in the local or the regional community. The partners of the project can then present their expertise to those invited by the home institution to attend this seminar. This may also be an opportunity to disseminate the activities of the project and raise the awareness for the outcomes:
 - a colleague of the host institution is invited to present some of the research work or project work he or she is involved in and which may be useful to the participants

- the project meetings or in-set course is also linked to a staff meeting or to special events or celebrations in the host institution so as to make wider contacts possible for all participants
- the president, vice-chancellor or head of department is invited to participate in one of the lunches or dinners
- a drink is organised with colleagues and students of the host institution together with the visitors
- a visit may also be planned to another institution or school working on the same topic.

4. Cross-evaluation

Cross-evaluation is an evaluation carried out by the co-ordinator or the partner of a similar project in the same action of a programme. It is a full cross-evaluation if the two projects involved act respectively as evaluators for the other project: one person from each of the two projects thus acts as an external evaluator for the other project. Cross-evaluation does not exclude self-evaluation but is probably complementary to it.

The advantage of cross-evaluation is that the person involved receives direct feedback in terms of how to run meetings differently, how to organise or run a project differently and how to evaluate and disseminate. The beneficial impact on the projects involved in the cross evaluation is much more rapid than in the case of a standard external evaluation.

Some community programmes foresee this kind of evaluation more or less explicitly. This is the case with the EQUAL programme of DG Employment and Social affairs where each trans-national project is invited to make links with other projects in the same field to construct 'Development partnerships'. More information about EQUAL can be found on the web site: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equal/index_en.html

PART B

1. Accreditation and certification

Accreditation is an evaluation process that determines the quality of an institution or program using predetermined standards. Accreditation is normally carried out on a peer review basis by competent, nongovernmental agencies such as national, regional, and/or local associations. It is, in essence, a collegial activity conducted by institutions that have voluntarily organised to form and to support an accrediting association.

Certification is the process by which a nongovernmental agency or association bestows professional recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications specified by that agency or association. It can be described as peer approbation, similar to board certification among medical doctors.

2. Accreditation or certification in the framework of Comenius 2.2 courses

Neither accreditation nor certification currently occurs in the framework of Comenius 2.2 courses; accreditation is limited to a few countries such as Spain and Portugal where teachers involved in Comenius 2.2 in-service training activities receive credits for their

participation in the in-service training, if they produce evidence that they have attended the course. To give this evidence they have to produce a certificate issued by the course organisers. Portuguese teachers can only get credits if the course has been recognised before it takes place. In some Spanish autonomous regions courses are recognised in the same way as regional courses of the same level.

Most course organisers give a certificate at the end of the course (see annexes 3 and 4 at the end of this section). This certificate is issued by the course organisers and/or his/her institution and maybe signed by all participating institutions. This is not an official recognition of the quality of the course. It merely states that a teacher or other member of staff has taken part in an in-service training and that he or she has invested a certain amount of time in the course. Such certificates do sometimes mention the number of hours invested but they do not refer to assignments carried out and the marks obtained on such assignments. The certificates issued thus have no legal ground and cannot be used for any progression in the professional career, except possibly for the two countries mentioned earlier - Spain and Portugal. Teachers, however, very often add to their CV that they have attended such a European in-set course.

3. European accreditation (ECTS) or Master's Degrees through Comenius 2.2

So far there have been only two courses in the framework of Comenius 2.2 which have attempted to give credits in the framework of ECTS to the participants or which have tried to use the European in-set courses as a key elements in getting a supplementary degree.

A Comenius 3.1 project (now 2.1) organised by the University of Hull developed a Master's degree through in-service training. Students were involved in it for two years and it was composed of several modules. In the course of each of the two years there was a European seminar in which the students from the participating countries were involved. In between the two European seminars, students were in touch with one another.

Another example is the EMISTE project set up by ATEE, the Association of Teacher Education in Europe. The objective of the EMISTE, European Master's Degree through In-service Training, was similar to the one of the University of Hull. Students were involved in a two year programme leading to a master's degree. This two year course was composed of 8 modules in the different countries, one of which was personal work. Another module was a joint in-service training activity with students of the different countries working together. The qualification was expressed in ECTS credits. The project was only partly successful and 15 students obtained the Master's degree in the European dimension of the KTU, Kaunas Technological University. Some students subsequently started working on a PhD. The diploma which was awarded to the students was officially recognised by all the universities involved in this project.

4. Conclusion

There is still a long way to go for accreditation and certification. European accreditation or certification of Comenius 2.2 courses does not exist in any formal sense. It is however important that organisers reflect on the way in which their courses can be integrated into degrees and how their participants can get credits for their work. It is important that Comenius 2.2 courses are not seen as minor separate courses: some should be considered as legitimate parts of a degree. Much work still has to be done to accredit courses in the framework of Comenius 2.2.

Comenius Freshwater Network – In-service Training Seminar
Wednesday June 19th – Tuesday June 25th, Newton Rigg Campus, Penrith, UK

COURSE EVALUATION

1 What were your expectations of this course?

2 To what extent have these expectations been met?

3 Please award the following sessions a rating on a **1 to 10 scale** where 10 is the highest rating.
Please also include a short comment if you wish

Wednesday, June 19th

Introductory Session and activity: Carousel workshop

RATING

Thursday June 20th

Introduction to the course and the project

RATING

Presentation of the Good Practice Guidelines

RATING

The Ennerdale Water Treatment Plant

RATING

Friday June 21st

Chemical methods for water testing

RATING

Physical methods for water testing

RATING

Display of school and project resources

RATING

Saturday June 22nd

The Little Frog and other projects as examples of good practice

RATING

Introduction to BISEL fieldwork

RATING

BISEL fieldwork

RATING

.....

4 Please comment on the course organisation and accommodation

5 Please add any additional comments here:

NAME _____

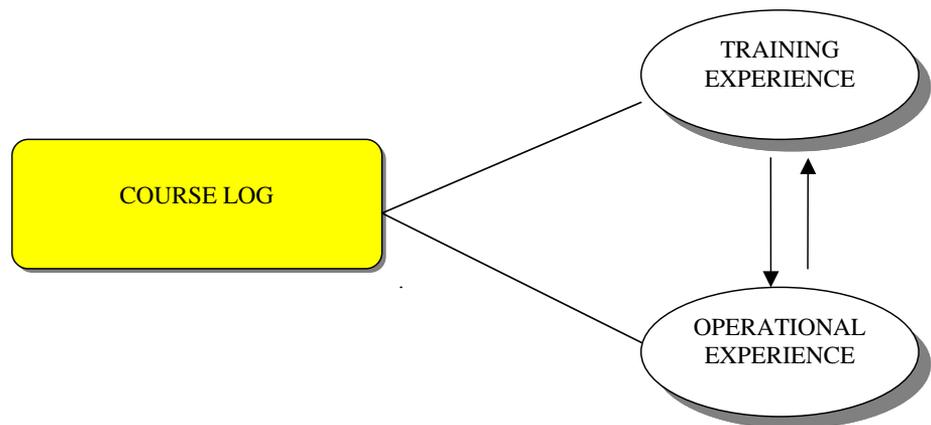
PLEASE RETURN THE FORM AT THE END OF THE COURSE

Thank you



COURSE LOG

Of: _____



Section a – LEARNING

(A1) What have I learnt, experienced and understood during the course?
(A2) What has facilitated my learning? How did I make it meaningful?
(A3) Will there be from now on new opportunities in the way I teach?
(A4) What can I do in my daily work to be able to put into practice what I learnt?

Section B – CARE OF MYSELF AS A LEARNER

(B1) What did I discover about myself during this course?
(B2) What am I going to do to consolidate the new inputs of the course and to go on my own learning process? (interactions, activities, projects...)
(B3) What risks could I meet to put into practice my projects?



COMENIUS 87042-CP-1-2000-1-C31

This is to certify that

has attended the COMENIUS 2.2 Course n. IT-2004-016 held in Viareggio (Italy) on 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th May 2004 "TEACHERS AS LEARNERS" that comprised the following topics:

- Introduction to the learning society: how we know we are learning
 - Leadership issues
 - Peer Observation
 - learning Organisation
 - International competencies
 - "Ways of learning Ways of teaching"
 - The Italian School System
 - Learning with the orchestra
- and a visit to an Italian school in Lucca.

Viareggio, 16 May 2004

The project Co-ordinator
(Isp. Giovanna Barzanò)

COURSE TUTORS

Daniele Agiman
Rosangela Baggio
Giovanna Barzanò
Emanuela Brumana
Maria Do Carmo Climaco
Jane Jones
Palmira Juceviciene

CERTIFICATE

Pere Solà Montserrat, *Director General d'Ordenació i Innovació Educativa, Departament d'Ensenyament of Catalonia; Spain* certify that

Headteacher from _____, _____, _____,
has participated in the Socrates/COMENIUS 2.2 course:

**A EUROPEAN RAINBOW OF SELF EVALUATION.
IMPROVING QUALITY EDUCATION THROUGH SELF EVALUATION**

in Catalonia, Spain, 1st November – 9th November 2003

Barcelona, November 2003



With the support of the European Commission within the
Framework of the Socrates – Comenius programme

5.10 Dissemination and valorisation: developing a dissemination strategy

PART A

1. Dissemination

Dissemination is at the heart of every European trans-national project and European activity. Dissemination also has to be considered for mobility activities such as attending a Comenius 2.2 course. If there is no dissemination, one could argue that it is not worthwhile setting up and implementing a project or attending an in-service training session. Although much of the information below focuses on dissemination in relation with projects, it can easily be adapted to focus on dissemination of mobility activities such as attending in-service training courses.

Dissemination has to be seen at different levels and at different timescales. A project should organise dissemination throughout its whole lifecycle, based on the activities of the project and on the processes which are being developed. This means that dissemination has to take place from the very beginning. This can be best done through a web site showing development of the project up from its inception. Dissemination will also take place at institutional, local, regional, national, European and or global level and this through a variety of methods and means ranging from publications, newsletters and articles to participation in workshops or conferences. Particular focus will have to be given to the dissemination of the outcomes at the end of the project which might imply the involvement of a publisher.

It is important that a project is given advice on how to set up dissemination strategy levels at different times in the project lifecycle, and that the project can not only be advised on when to disseminate but also on what to disseminate. Project promoters have difficulty in pinpointing the innovations within their projects, which should be disseminated. For example project teams might think of disseminating the product (a publication or a course) but they will usually not think of disseminating the way in which they have organised within their project formative and summative evaluation of their activities. It is the task of the coordinator to point out the different possibilities for dissemination.

2. Levels of competence in dissemination

The minimum level of competence in terms of dissemination is to be able to pinpoint the key elements of a dissemination strategy:

- dissemination of the processes of the implementation of the project activities
- dissemination of the outcomes and products and all the agents which can be involved
- dissemination channels: radio, TV, newsletters, publishers, internet
- dissemination at institutional, local, regional, national, European or even global level
- dissemination problems such as copyright, ISBN numbering, co-operation with publishing houses.

A second level of competence should be that the project coordinator is able to analyse the dissemination strategies of a number of European projects, describe them and come up with suggestions for improvements. As a result of this the coordinator should be able to find the best (or a better) dissemination strategy for his/her project taking into account also the financial implications of such dissemination activities. He/she should also be aware of the ways in which the impact of dissemination can be measured.

The next level of competence would be that the project co-ordinator is able to integrate a session on dissemination into an in-service training course to train project coordinators to improve their dissemination at different levels and different moments in a project. The coordinator should also be able to integrate into the session such training the tools which can be used to measure the impact of dissemination at different levels and on different groups.

The fourth level of this competence is that the coordinator is able to analyse the dissemination strategy set up at regional or national level by the National Agency and to make the links there may be with the dissemination strategy of project on the one hand and the dissemination strategy set up and implemented by the Commission.

The final and fifth level of the competence is that the coordinator should be able to advise national agencies (and possibly the Commission) on how to set up dissemination strategies which strengthen dissemination by the projects, dissemination by the National Agencies and dissemination by the Commission. The coordinator should also be able to stress ways in which different actors can co-operate so as to come to more cost efficient dissemination. At this level it is also supposed that the coordinator is able to compare dissemination strategies for Comenius projects with dissemination within another EU programme such as Leonardo da Vinci.

3. Dissemination is a spiral strategy

Dissemination is a key issue in international and European projects. It should also be one of the key objectives of any project to disseminate the outcomes, results, products or processes which have been achieved.

Dissemination of the outcomes of a school partnership have to be organised in different ways at school level, in the local community, at the level of the region or at national level and even at the level of the EU or the whole of Europe. Thus, dissemination will start by informing all the colleagues and staff of the school and the parents about the projects and their outcomes. This is basic; if this is not happening it is no use organising any other dissemination.

A dissemination strategy is a spiral strategy: first inside the school and the partnership, then towards the local communities of all the schools involved. Later on (or simultaneously) dissemination at regional or national level and finally dissemination at European level. Such a spiral strategy is built on the conviction that the dissemination at the bottom or grassroots level - in the schools of the partnership - is the foundation for further dissemination. The objective of all dissemination is to value what has been achieved, to celebrate all the work done, and to describe in which way the trans-national, European or international project has enabled the promotion of innovation.

First of all, there must be dissemination inside the school and inside the partnership. It is of the utmost importance that the schools of the partnership disseminate within their teams the outcomes of the project. This means that the core of every dissemination is the dissemination in the schools involved in the project. Of the utmost importance is that the schools and partnership do not only disseminate what they have achieved each of them separately but that they also disseminate the outcomes of all schools and in particular on the outcomes resulting from joint work. To this effect it is important that the partnership agrees in advance on the type of dissemination which will be organised, on the strategy to be implemented in relation to dissemination and on the steps to be taken to achieve this strategy.

In the dissemination at school, local, regional and national level there are key target audiences that should not be overlooked. In the school there are the other pupils not directly involved in the project; there are also the teachers and other staff members and the board of governors. There are also the parents of the children involved and of the others. It is also important that the local authorities are informed about the outcomes (they should have been informed from the beginning of the project). It is also very important to inform educational authorities at local or regional level such as inspectors or pedagogical advisors or other local or regional support structures.

European dissemination can take place in different ways. Teachers can create with their pupils a web site to showcase what has been achieved. They can participate in Comenius contact seminars or Comenius 2.2 in-service training courses as speakers to present their project as an example of good practice. They can attend European conferences of Comenius 3 networks to present their work and their project. They can also be involved in special activities during Comenius week (a European event to celebrate what has been achieved in Comenius 1 partnerships). Teachers and pupils can become Comenius ambassadors or promoters at local, regional or national level. To this effect they can also be involved in monitoring meetings for new project promoters. Experienced project promoters can also disseminate their expertise by training themselves to be Comenius coordinators.

4. Disseminating the products or outputs of projects¹⁵

The persons interviewed for the Deloitte & Touche report for the Evaluation of Comenius 1 and Lingua E projects stressed that the partnership produces a project report. It is not clear whether this is done jointly but experience shows that in several cases each of the partners makes a report at the level of the school which later on is incorporated into the

¹⁵ Drawn from material produced by Yves Beernaert for the Evaluation of Comenius 1 and Lingua E projects carried out in June 2000 for Deloitte & Touche on behalf of the Commission.

overall trans-national report. This methodology for producing a trans-national report should itself be more widely disseminated as it represents an output of the transnational partnership.

In the future it might be useful to collect those reports, to analyse the structure and the contents, to see how one can learn from them and which elements can be made available to future project co-ordinators. Such reports should also focus on the processes and contain elements and outcomes of the evaluation at the level of the pupils, the teachers and the schools involved on the one hand but that it would also contain element about the evaluation of the partnership; the evaluation of the partnership and its activities has to be a joint exercise and is very important as to the life of the partnership itself.

One of the concrete outputs of these partnerships is the production of trans-national teaching and learning materials. It shows clearly that trans-national projects lead to joint curriculum development and to the joint production of materials which can be used in the different schools of the partnership.

Another important element is the production of trans-national information and promotion materials as it proves that the partnership team work jointly. It is important for the partnership to be perceived as a living entity and as an active network. When disseminating results, schools should not only focus on what they have done within the project but also refer to what their partners have done, giving a reference to common activities or events such as joint curriculum or joint performances.

Two major lessons can be drawn from the information given by the respondents to the question in the Deloitte & Touche study about the tangible outputs of the trans-national projects.

The first one is that partnerships are really jointly developing curriculum materials or as it was put in the questionnaire 'learning and teaching materials'. Joint curriculum development and integration of the activities into the curriculum of the schools is indeed one of the key issues in trans-national projects; it has to be looked into much more closely in terms of the quality of the learning and teaching materials produced. The second major lesson is that attention will have to be paid to the process within a partnership. Project reports tend to focus mainly on the outputs and pay less attention to the process the partnership and the individual partner school have gone through while implementing the project.

There follows a list of products which all the projects interviewed for the Deloitte & Touche in 2000 claim to have produced during the activities of their project. It is impressive and varied and it show the enormous work which has been put into the trans-national products concerned. It also shows the great potential for dissemination and outreach towards schools not yet involved.

- Illustrated catalogues
- magazines (on paper and electronic magazines)
- leaflets about school and projects
- videos about schools and project
- displays about school and project
- writing letters to penpals
- performance/orchestra/ choir/play: music, dance, theatre

- drafting reports
- making interviews
- writing newspaper articles
- making slide shows
- making an exhibition about the project
- mural paintings
- organising a competition
- photo exhibition on topic
- field visits and reports
- creating a homepage or web site
- developing pedagogical materials
- preparing food: a banquet
- making a calendar
- developing games
- producing a bilingual book
- writing stories
- students give lessons
- students make articles
- PowerPoint presentations

The list is not exhaustive; it illustrates the richness and variety of products.

Bearing in mind that the schools which are funded within Comenius can be considered as being part of a select group, they should all be invited to disseminate what they have learned starting from those immediately concerned, such as the partners in the project, moving gradually to the whole school, to other actors, then further to other schools in the community or region and finally to other schools in other countries. Disseminating to other schools should be seen as a community activity and an expression of citizenship.

5. Dissemination through common tools and key content

It is also important that common tools of dissemination are developed as the basis for a dissemination strategy. All the tools listed above can be used but special attention can also be given to joint tools such as joint PowerPoint presentation, articles, exhibitions or press releases in different languages. Any PowerPoint presentation or press release or articles reflect the work of all the partners and not just of the co-ordinating school. The best is to create the PowerPoint presentations together and to make them available afterwards in the different languages of the project partners; this may be part of the language learning promotion within the project and partnership.

Whichever information produced concerning the project should reflect the following elements for the whole partnership:

- title of the project: partners type of school, age level of pupils
- objectives of project
- activities in the curriculum
- trans-disciplinary and cross-curricular activities
- outcomes, products, results
- description of the forms of mobility of pupils and/or teachers

- organisation and financial management
- difficulties and obstacles met
- facilitators and solutions found
- evaluation and the tools used
- dissemination strategy at local, regional, European level
- pedagogical innovations brought about by the project
- useful advice to potential project co-ordinators

Those who draft materials should be invited to pay special attention to the following elements:

- the concrete curriculum activities within or directly linked to the school curriculum
- all the activities jointly developed and implemented by all the partners of the project; the presentation or products should not just reflect the work of the co-ordinator
- the material should be available in all the languages of the partnership
- all those involved in the project should be named
- pupils should play an active role in dissemination
- all schools should be aware of dissemination which is happening in the partner schools
- all dissemination should be documented in a logbook or portfolio of the project
- dissemination should involve professionals of dissemination or marketing such as journalists, publishers, stage directors, marketing specialist etc.
- designing mechanisms to enhance knowledge of the supply of innovative projects/products
- developing a multimedia tool to allow the supply and demand sides to meet online
- organising promotional activities for innovations (conferences, publications — including electronic publication)
- analysing the contribution and impact of projects at community level

PART B

1. Valorisation

‘Valorisation’ (according to a definition given on the web site of the Commission under the information concerning the Leonardo da Vinci programme) can be described as a process of exploiting project learning and outcomes (training products and processes, methodology, course materials) with a view to optimising their value and impact in existing and new contexts (target groups, companies, sectors, training institutions and systems). To be effective, the process requires:

- a focus on end user/target group needs from project inception
- dissemination of innovative training products and results
- selection and analysis of their suitability for transfer to meet identified new needs
- translation and adaptation to targeted new contexts
- piloting and experimentation leading to full integration into the new context.

This process can take place at the micro project level or on a macro level, with the aim of achieving full and sustainable integration into local, regional, national and/or European training systems and practices, including through the formal certification of qualifications.

It is important to reflect on how the outcomes of having attended an in-service training course of Comenius 2.2 can be valorised.

2. A strategy for valorisation

Valorisation is a new concept. It would be useful in Comenius 2.2 courses reflect on valorisation and on how the participation in a Comenius 2.2 course could be valorised once the teacher is back in school.

The steps suggested for valorisation of a Leonardo da Vinci products by the EARALL association, which implemented an important valorisation project in eight regions in Europe, are as follows:

- the selection of the projects to be valorised
- the evaluation of the selected projects and of the ways in which they can be used
- adaptation of the products to the context and the environment in which they are to be used
- trialling the products that have been adapted
- a reflection on the process of valorisation in the global framework of the project

Based on the steps suggested by EARLALL one could think of a valorisation strategy in relation with Comenius 2.2 courses with the following elements:

- a team of teachers studies the catalogue with the offer of Comenius 2.2 courses and decided which course could be useful in the framework of the pedagogical plan of the school
- one or two courses are selected which fit the pedagogical plan and the needs of the school
- contacts can be made with the Comenius 2.1 project co-ordinator to ask for further information; this could create a useful link possibly to further monitoring and follow-up
- the whole team of the school is informed that one or two colleagues will attend a course; information is given why it will be attended and where it fits into the pedagogical plan
- one or two members of the staff attend the course
- he/she or they write a report on the course highlighting the benefits for their school and for themselves
- the report is presented to the team of colleagues
- ways are sought to introduce outcomes in the school
- after some time an evaluation is made of the direct benefits (innovations in the curriculum) and the indirect spin offs (such as new contacts, partnerships and European projects).

Every Comenius 2.2 course should focus on aspects of dissemination at one or other point of the course. Especially, information should be given on how such courses can be valorised in the overall pedagogical plan of the school. Attending a Comenius 2.2 course doesn't make any sense if there is no explicit effort to disseminate and valorise the outcomes in the school and its activities.

6. Reports

6.1. Report of course organisers questionnaires

Question 1 – Definition of a Comenius 2.2 course

According to course organisers, courses should:

- 18 contribute to quality in education
- 18 include teachers from several countries
- 15 update knowledge/competence/skills in one area or field
- 12 be run by an international team
- 15 promote the European dimension and European citizenship
- 16 facilitate intercultural understanding
- 10 promote the creation of Comenius 1 projects
- 10 promote linguistic diversity

Question 1.2 – Number of courses organised

- 6 one course
- 5 two courses
- 3 three courses
- 3 four courses
- 1 six courses
- 1 seven courses
- 1 eight courses
- 1 sixty (*sic!*) courses

- 2 are still organising the first course

Question 2 – Background and preparation

- 20 Respondents stated that the objectives of the project from which this course has been derived are reflected in the course contents
- 2 said no
- 4 did not answer

- 17 by the use of a product from the project
- 19 by the use of methodologies developed by the project
- 15 have been able to build upon new developments

- 2 have not been able
- 1 said the question is not applicable
- 11 by changing or updating materials

- 9 by introducing new sessions in the course programme
- 7 by removing sessions from the course programme

Final comments/questions

- This course did not arise directly from a Comenius project but is a result of both some developments carried out on the product and methodologies of the project and the evaluation of the Comenius courses done in the second and third years of the project.

- After reading the last ten years of IT literature we would like to introduce 2 new sections for teachers who aim to improve their competence in related grammar.

- The first course (2001) of the 3 with this title was initiated from results in a Minerva project. Thereafter the courses of 2002 and 2003 related to a new 2.1 initiative bearing the same name as the course.

Question 3 - Preparation Work

Construction of the programme:

- The team all together
- Some of the team
- Use of experts
- We used an earlier programme
- Survey of participants before the course
- Feedback on previous courses
- New ideas from teacher trainers
- Requests from in-service teacher training institutes in various countries

Deciding on pedagogical methodology:

- By discussion of all project partners
- By discussion in the expert team
- By using methodologies from previous courses
- By using positive evaluations from previous courses
- By asking a working group of participants at the end of the previous course
- By comparing the pedagogical approaches of different countries – methods and formats
- By looking for a balance of individual and group work, interaction, theoretical inputs and exchange of experience
- By using the background and expertise of participants during workshops
- By including 'learning by doing' as part of the methodology since this is a practical course

Deciding on course contents:

- By discussion of all the project partners
- By asking the advice of external experts
- By surveying course participants before the course
- Based on the work on the project and adapted after evaluation
- According to the expectations of the target groups
- By the co-ordinator based on his own experiences of a recent course
- Derived from school practice
- Adapting a national course for wider European use
- Based on the tool developed by the original project with extra sections

Using external experts:

18 respondents invited external experts to deal with specific topics
4 did not invite external experts

Other comments:

- University teacher used here
- Used just for a specific topic
- A school used as an expert source
- Used once but never again!

Link with the Comenius 2.1 project:

- By using experiences and ideas from the project
- By using the results obtained from the project
- Not related at all
- By using the project product but since developed further

The course has influenced the further development of the project:

- Not applicable (most responses)
- The course was part of the project
- The course is important now as part of a Comenius 3 network
- The course has led to a new application for a network

The teaching team:

4 whole project team present all the time
13 some of the project team present all of the time
13 key link person
5 dual presenters

Other comments:

- Different elements of each course presented by different trainers to give a varied 2 week programme
- The project director is present all the time
- We have a key person in the country where the course is being presented
- The course was run jointly by all the team members/some of the team members
- We will have a day together as a team before the next course to help with planning

Final comments/questions:

No team teaching was involved

Question 4 – Recruitment of participants

Course organisers have been involved in recruitment:

18 Yes

8 No

13 through leaflet, asking teachers they know to apply

Expectations of knowledge/competences/skills:

- The course is for a specific target group but a range of expertise is anticipated
- To have heard about the theme before applying
- Interest in developing the topic with a basic knowledge
- Motivation
- Should be involved in an international programme (perhaps as co-ordinator) – or intending to become involved
- To have a mandate for school development – be able to make decisions
- They need to know the language
- They need to become familiar with course materials beforehand
- A desire to discover other cultures

Knowledge/competences/skills acquired from the course:

- They are stated in the course aims or objectives
- They are always individual
- Defined by discussion between the partners
- Language skills
- Skills related to the topic
- Skills in working individually
- Through tests at beginning, middle and end of the course
- We listed them in the catalogue
- We described in the other publicity material

They were defined:

- according to the contents of the course
- by work in the project
- in the course objectives

Recognition by official bodies:

8 Ministries of education

8 Universities

6 Professional organisations

Discussion of accreditation with partners/ministries/universities/others:

8 have discussed accreditation of the course

Other comments:

- The institution that recognises in-service training (eg The Scientific Pedagogical Council in Portugal to promote career development. There are similar situations in Spain, Hungary provided the course is registered beforehand)
- The European Commission
- The local authority

- Educational boards
- Scientific community in the field of teacher training
- The organising institution e.g. a university

How will new competences be recognised?

- 14 through attendance certificate only giving hours of tuition
 7 through attendance certificate listing acquired knowledge/skills/competences

Other comments:

- A certificate combining both hours and competences
- A final test

Knowledge/competences/skills assessed:

- There is no final assessment
- Through debates – workshops and discussions run by the participants
- By follow-up of participants months after the course EXPAND
- By work on-line
- By watching the progress of products (e.g. websites in the countries of participants)
- By final practical tests
- By specific tasks during training
- Pre and post course questionnaires
- By the wider European network of the institution
- By reading and evaluating the papers produced by the participants
- We exchange the effects the course had on classroom practice EXPAND
- Through diaries
- Through questionnaires
- Validation by the trainers who were involved
- We evaluate knowledge etc because the group intend to go on producing material later on in the project
- By a piece of reflective writing

Final comments/questions:

- How should the certificates be constructed to be useful to the participants when they get home?
- Unrealistic questions!

Question 5 - Preparation of participants

Course organisers send or require:

- 24 Draft Programme
 22 Travel instructions
 14 Pre-course task – expectations of the course and specific motivation for applying
 17 Profile form with personal details
 13 School details
 10 Experience in the subject matter of the Comenius 2.2.

They ask for:

- 13 sharing a task with colleagues of their school so the impact of the course is spread.
 16 reading documents, consulting websites, looking up speakers on the web

- 11 Writing-up an experience in their own school – a problem they have dealt with related to the topic of the course
- 14 preparing a presentation on their school Comenius 1 project (if applicable)
- 14 preparing a presentation on their education system
- 14 collecting materials about their school/region

Final comments/questions:

- The participant presentations can be time consuming
- What are the links between Comenius 1 and Comenius 2?

Question 6 - The Course

6.1 Time management

The course programme is constructed of these elements:

elements included in the course	percentage of time spent on each activity	rank of activities according to the importance given
1. Icebreaking activities	100%	3
2. Theoretical inputs	100%	1
3. Examples of good practice	92%	4
4. Exchanges of experience	88%	5
5. Contacts with the local community	60%	9
6. Social and cultural events	80%	7
7. Time for individual reflection	64%	8
8. Group work	92%	2
9. Visits to schools	72%	6
10. Exhibitions / European fair or European meal prepared by or brought by participants	44%	10

Other activities:

- Activities for personal development and activity planning
- Museum visits
- Practical training in the use a publishing tool

6.2 Flexibility of the programme

Many respondents indicated great flexibility both in the course and in the cultural programme. Respondents running their first course were inclined to be inflexible and want to trial the programme as planned.

Other comments:

The programme may be changed:

- Daily depending on the feedback of the participants
- Based on the composition and nature of the group

- Inside a given framework
- Lecture times can be varied
- Depending on group size
- Only in a very limited way

Planning of future projects (and what to do with those not involved):

- Not explicitly or formally included
- The participants organise themselves
- A workshop about Comenius projects – the ones not taking part worked on a simulation
- Teachers who have run Comenius projects share their experiences
- Through a poster and exhibition of materials from each institution
- Plan didactic activities
- Plan their own future training perhaps with the teachers of the course
- Their proposals are integrated into the programme
- Opportunities to make individual school action plans

6.3 Support tools used

7	Diary of the activities of participants
6	Learning log
16	Bibliography related to the field studied
16	Human resources with specific competences in specific fields
22	Hand-outs of presentations and examples of good practice
19	ICT facilities

6.4 Language methodologies

Respondents are familiar with the language competences/content of:

21	The participants
22	The speakers
23	Your team
24	The materials

They have you found out this information:

Speakers:

- Respondent had worked with speakers before

Materials:

- Respondent had worked on the creation of the materials

Participants:

- By communicating with the participants before the course
- Self assessment tool used by participants before the course
- By a test at the Goethe Institute in the participant's country
- Through a question on the registration form regarding language competence
- This information is only gathered as the course begins

Provisions for weaker language users:

- 9 respondents said yes – through:
- 8 producing the course materials in other languages (programme for example)
- 7 providing course texts in other languages
- 4 presentation hand-outs in other languages
- 7 providing of a specialised glossary according to the contents of the course

Other comments:

- One of the partners helped the weaker linguists

6.5 Intercultural learning and intercultural communications

Respondents have given clear instructions to speakers regarding:

- 25 the language to be used
- 13 the level of the language understanding of the participants
- 21 the duration of their intervention or speech
- 15 the need to prepare PowerPoint hand-outs
- 14 the contents of their input
- 20 the pedagogical methods to be used

6.6 Venue issues

The quality of the venue taken into account through:

- 23 Accessibility of the venue from public transport
- 14 Access to the course venues for people with disabilities
- 19 Provision of special diets (e.g. vegetarians)
- 10 Working and living in the same building
- 8 Special provisions to make people feel at home – newspapers, TV
- 10 Opportunity to attend religious services
- 22 Possibility for free-time activities
- 17 Possibility to take part in cultural or sports events

Other comments:

- It was seen as important for candidate country to host a course even though their venue was not the most accessible one in the partnership

6.7 Payment issues

Respondents organise payment for accommodation and fee through:

- 13 payments in cash
- 21 bank transfer
- 6 credit cards

Other comments:

- Cheques also accepted
- Cash payments are only acceptable for the fee
- Cash payments make it easier for participants to cancel – bank transfers imply commitment
- The Goethe Institute accepts the payments on our behalf by bank transfer
- We specify bank transfer but some always arrive with cash and credit cards

6.8 Special provisions made to deal with

- 6 difficult participants
- 16 late arrivals
- 18 early leavers
- 12 medical problems

Other comments:

- We have refused to give some difficult participants a certificate and this has helped
- We spend time with difficult participants and listen to their problems
- Late arrivals are given the materials they have missed
- We don't accept late arrivals
- Early departure is not seen as acceptable

6.9. Evaluation of the course

- 11 On a daily basis
- 10 On a group basis (or in sub-groups or on an individual basis)
- 14 Of specific elements of the course
- 19 For the whole event at the end of the course
- 18 Related to the course programme
- 14 Related to personal objectives and to the personal expectations

Completion of evaluation in other languages:

9 Respondents said yes 1 said no

External evaluation:

Only 5 respondents

Team self evaluation through:

- 12 daily course team meeting
- 13 post course meeting for the organisers (debriefing)

The evaluation is taken into account during the course:

- 9 It is discussed on a daily basis with all participants
- 11 The programme may be subsequently changed
- 8 The methodology may be subsequently changed

The evaluation is taken into account after the course:

- 5 It is sent to all participants
- 7 It is sent to all participants, to the Commission and/or to the NA
- 4 It is put on the web site of the project

Other comments:

- During or after the course by telephone or face to face
- It is discussed on a daily basis with all participants
- Used to plan the next phase of the project and future course programmes
- So far we have only had pleasant results
- Discussed regularly with all participants and programme and methodology changed accordingly

Question 7 - Follow-up work

Measures taken to promote follow-up:

- 6 Creation of newsgroup on the internet
- 7 Follow-up of Comenius 1 projects created during the Comenius 2.2 course
- 10 Suggestions for post course tasks are given at the end of the course
- 7 The participants prepare a dissemination session for their school while still at the course
- 8 Send updating materials on the course contents to the participants
- 9 Disseminate the course reports drafted by participants after the course
- 6 The organiser contacts participants for a post-course interview about the impact of the course on their professional competences as a teacher in their school

Other comments:

- We used the University of Hull Merlin Intranet to keep all the participants in contact. Some of them are now using it as a tool of their new Comenius projects
- In this course participants initiated a newsgroup
- The organisers created a mailing list for the participants
- Participants are invited to email the trainers to indicate how they are implementing the course contents

Question 8 - Other questions

8.1 Has the completion of this questionnaire stimulated new ideas

- The idea of self evaluation
- The collection of materials about the school and the region
- Publishing evaluations on the internet
- Introducing new sessions in the programme
- Different ways of preparing participants
- More emphasis on dissemination in the participants' schools
- To develop our skills in preparing the participants and follow-up work
- The questionnaire prompted thought on important issues
- Keeping in contact with participants after the course
- To be more reflective

8.2 Contacts with other organisers

- At regional level through teacher training events
- Through seminars and conferences we attend
- At European level at European Commission seminars for example
- Respondents would like to meet other course organisers to share experiences or have formal training

8.3 A future in-service training course for course organisers

- Not seen as necessary for everyone
- The target group would be very small
- Useful way of exchanging experience and also helping new co-ordinators

- How to improve course administration by sharing ideas
- A training event should follow the principle 'what you preach is what you teach'

8.4 References to the Socrates text and programme during the course

- Only if it is the subject area of the course
- Only in regard to practical questions concerning the grant
- By showing where the course fits in to the Commission framework
- In role play!

8.5 How does the programme contribute to the raising of quality in education

- By promoting multiculturalism
- Through the concept of the multiplier in education
- By focussing on the needs of the participants and helping to develop their skills
- By helping education administrations to support training centres
- By exposing teachers to new ideas and to each other
- By broadening horizons through professional development with a spin-off for pupils
- By helping to bring pupils into multi-national projects which can be highly motivational
- By using new educational tools

6.2 Report of Socrates National Agencies questionnaires

1. Critical factors for success of C2.2

Description and content

Most NAs consider relevant contents as the main factor for success of this type of courses. Good and precise information before the seminar, a flexible curriculum, an adequate response to the participants' needs, a well balanced programme are factors that must be taken into account when organising a C.2.2. On the other hand, it is not only content but daily programmes (detailed description of course activities) which can contribute to the success of a course. Social activities as school visits or excursions are also appreciated.

Course team

Structured leadership, competent, motivated, and flexible teachers capable to adjusting themselves to the needs of each participant have been aspects highly considered by NAs.

Multinational participation

The possibility for the participants of travelling abroad and meeting colleagues from other countries has been often mentioned.

Course location and accommodation

Course setting and participants' accommodation have also largely been mentioned.

Group discussions

The possibility of working in groups and the room for informal discussion (forums for possible future cooperation, for practising languages, for up-dating knowledge, for getting new impulse and ideas) are considered important factors for success.

Price and accreditation

Price of the course and accreditation for the participant teachers have been mentioned to some extent.

2. Main problems course organisers have been confronted with

Course cancellations

Most NAs have mentioned cancellations as one of the main problems organisers have to face, as many teachers do not inform course organisers if they do not get the grant. Course cancellation, when too late, prevent accepted participants from finding a new

course. So information about whether the participants have been given Comenius 2.2 grants in sufficient time is vital for course organisers and participants.

Group size

The size of the groups, too large/too small is also a problem: too many approved applications in one course leads to course rejections. Too few approved applications leads to course cancellations.

Different deadlines and multinational participation

Different deadlines in EU countries as well as the difficulty of recruiting multinational participation have also been considered a problem.

Language problems

Language problems have been extensively pointed out as a drawback as a certain number of participants do not master the working language or have problems when it comes to the more detailed subject related terminology.

General course organisation

Concerning course organisation the following aspects have also been mentioned:

- Too charged programmes, long sessions and long working days
- Lack of firm leadership.
- Distant lecturers.
- Too theoretical presentations with no elucidations on the subjects.
- Not enough time for socialisation.
- Lack of IT
- Disrespect of time schedule.
- Bad localities (acoustic, lack of fresh air, too cold/hot).
- Lack of excursions/no national distinctive stamp.
- Poor accommodation/uninteresting venue/long distances.

3. Main problems the NA have to cope with in relation with C2.2 courses

Administrative problems

The main problems pointed out are related to course cancellations and withdrawals. This issue has already been mentioned above (2). Other issues mentioned are:

- Lack of documents in the application.
- Complicated application procedures for applicants
- More than one application from the same applicant
- Great number of applications.
- Lack of funds to finance all the eligible applications
- Demands for extra funding after having attended the course
- In school level lack of funds for substitute teachers

Course catalogue

One of the main concerns is the lack of general in-service training courses in a variety of subjects as well as courses in Italian, Spanish or French. In contrast, a great number of language courses are offered (most of the grants are for these courses). On the other hand, the catalogue is not fully teacher friendly and course descriptions are not

professional and detailed (for instance, some courses are advertised as methodology courses with basically language programmes).

Course evaluation

One of the NAs has pointed out that assessors don't have enough information on the courses and there isn't any proof of course quality (except those ones in course catalogue).

4. Criteria used to assess the quality of course applications

NAs mainly use the criteria given by the Commission (a few of them only use this criteria). But other criteria have also been mentioned. These are:

- Contribution of the participation to the European dimension;
- The impact for the school
- Length of the course
- Fees acceptable and reasonable
- The description of the course content and programme
- Contribution of the course to the growth of professionalism
- Activities, and follow-up activities
- Further involvement in the Socrates programme

5. Criteria or mechanism used to assess applications

In general, the criteria used by NAs to assess applications is the one laid down in the Comenius operational handbook But also a large number of criteria have been mentioned:

- Overall quality of applications.
- Motivation. (training needs)
- Experience
- Preparation.
- Follow up and dissemination plans
- Suitability with the eligible group
- Benefits for pupils and school
- Running deadline.
- Diversity of school levels.
- Geographical diversity.
- Thematic relevance concerning national priorities.
- Applicants that haven't benefit from a CC2.2 course(for the last 3 years)
- Knowledge of course working language
- Number of applicants for the same school
- Functions of the applicants at the school and their individual needs.

6. Follow-up or evaluation activities in relation with C2.2 courses

Over the 50 per cent of NAs say they do not organise this type of activities. NAs which deal with some kind of follow-up activities or evaluation organise them in different ways:

- Teachers' written evaluation of the course

- Dissemination conferences for language teachers on new methodology skills gained. Intended publication of a Comenius “methodology handbook” for 2004
- Evaluation of final reports considering the results and follow-up activities the participants intend to do
- Feed back reports. Participation of teachers as speakers at meetings organised by the NA. Publication of their articles in newsletter and in teachers’ association periodicals

7. What NAs do with the evaluation of the reports sent by participants (at national – European level)

Every NA deals with this issue in a different way:

- Look for good examples and main problems that the teachers are confronted with, when they apply for a course.
- We evaluate the reports when we write the reports for the EC
- Feedback to applicants about the assessment of the evaluation. Publication in Socrates magazine. Other publication in educational magazines
- Read, summarize and report to the Commission. When necessary, contact the course organiser
- The required Report Form is checked and where needed a response is provided, it helps the NA to monitor the activities of the teachers and provides (mainly) statistical information which is being used in the annual reporting to Ministry and Commission. The more personal narrative reports are being kept for reference and occasionally one or two participants are invited to write an article for our magazine or to speak at meeting/workshops
- The reports are read and put into categories with respect to their quality. We extract information that can be useful in connection with future guidance, monitoring and presentation activities
- The reports and evaluation on the reports are registered in a database. The final results are then sent to the European Commission, in the form of final report, and published in the Web page
- Summarised into yearly reports also as reference to other teachers when courses get excellent evaluation. If we receive negative feedback on courses we notify the course organiser
- The evaluation of the participants are used as part of some bigger evaluation like the Intermediate Report on the Implementation of the Socrates Program in Finland

8. Suggestions as to the management of C2.2. courses

The 30 per cent of NAs do not give any suggestions. The rest can be group as follows:

Database and course organisation:

- A really effective Comenius database, not only in English
- Elimination of pre-registration
- Teachers could decide if they wanted to travel cheap and use the entire grant for an expensive course or the other way around
- Courses should be organised mostly in winter so that there would be enough time to transfer grants

- Ensure multinational participation if possible
- Reasonable pricing
- Suitable accommodation
- Cultural programs should be included
- Give the participants e-mail lists to keep in touch and follow up

Course organisers should:

- Be closer connected with applicants
- Be professional, experienced in-service training institutions/persons
- Send a detailed and professional programme with the registration cards
- Know the practical results of course participation

9. Courses which can be considered as examples of good practice

A number of courses have been suggested but not reasons for the selection have been provided. The courses selected are the following:

- Bell Teacher Training Course: language development and training techniques of the contemporary classroom SOT3
- Social and educational integration of adult immigrants
- AT-2004-003 Survival Kit
- AT- 2004-002 LIPPS
- Goethe Institut courses
- SE-2003-008
- NO-2003-01
- NO-2003-02
- AT-2003-09
- UK-103b-09
- UK 152c-2002-03
- NO-001-01-2002
- DK-06-01-002
- NO-002-2001-02

6.3 Report on course participants evaluation

A synopsis of the evaluation reports sent in by some National Agencies

1. Introduction

Three National Agencies submitted evaluation reports drafted by participants. In addition the UK, the Dutch and the Hungarian National Agencies sent in a total of 25 reports to those National Agencies. Furthermore some 80 reports of participants were analysed from the period 1997 to 1999. These reports were copies of reports previously sent to Yves Beernaert.

The contents of the reports concerned are all very different in nature. There is a great difference in quality in that some of the reports give only technical information, others give a day by day overview of the activities and some combine the former information with appreciative comments. Some are very detailed narrative reports that describe the course either activity by activity or day by day.

Based on the 1000 reports analysed by this project, it is difficult to imagine how the reports can be exploited by the National Agencies or how these agencies can form any idea of the quality of the course from reading the report. This is chiefly because the information is very vague and sometimes irrelevant. Evidence collected in the framework of another Comenius Accompanying Measures study on the Mobility of school teachers in the EU carried out by KHLeuven, shows that agencies also receive information about the quality of the courses through personal contacts with the participants in their countries. It would be useful in future if more attention is given by the National Agencies to in-depth interviews of teachers who have participated to Comenius 2.2 courses. This of course takes time and adds to the work of the agency but it does yield more useful information.

2. Lessons learnt from analysing the narrative reports

Lessons for the organisers

Narrative reports – describing day by day or activity by activity what happens, and sometimes adding comments - are particularly interesting. They show us that those courses which had a varied programme with small chunks or parts of work using very different pedagogical forms and involving at many stages the participants actively, were perceived by the participants as most successful.

The lesson to be learnt from all these reports is that course organisers should try to build a programme with a mixture of content and materials delivered to the participants in a variety of pedagogical and didactical approaches. The more variation and the more flexibility, the better the course is appreciated.

Participants are also aware that it must be difficult for organisers to cope with the variety of teachers (and thus of educational cultures) present in an average Comenius 2.2.C course. Some participants stated that they appreciated very much that organisers draw their attention to the fact that there are many different cultures in Europe. This explains why participants like to be given ample time (two hours) of explicit time to share their pedagogical background in small groups.

Participants of Latin countries are still more used to and even expect more theoretical keynote speeches while participants from Anglo-Saxon, Nordic countries and the Benelux (certainly including the Netherlands and the Flemish Community of Belgium) do appreciate more practical approaches built on autonomous learning, experiential learning and collaborative learning.

One cannot say that all teachers from across Europe have yet heard of or have implemented realistically the constructivist approaches adopted by many course organisers. This approach implies that they have to construct themselves a new knowledge base by building on their previous knowledge, competencies and experience. Hence it is important that course organisers who use this approach in their course, also explain this approach at the beginning of the course and do so very clearly. This is an important learning experience for participants.

Lessons for the participants and the organisers

Participants stressed that Comenius 2.2 courses should contribute to their professional development. Several participants mentioned that attending such a Comenius 2.2 course has contributed to their professional development in the following ways:

- it changed their ethnocentric behaviour by opening them up to other cultures in general and to other pedagogical cultures in particular
- It facilitated them sharing knowledge and ideas with colleagues which resulted in building and developing new knowledge built on the expertise of other colleagues
- teachers were for the first time confronted with sharing information with colleagues from other countries on their discipline or their topic of interest;
- motivation for teaching was strengthened through the contacts with teachers from other countries; being involved in a Comenius 2.2.course has a confidence building effect;
- motivation for further learning and further professional development was strengthened; sometimes this took the concrete shape of peer learning after the course by exchanging methodologies, approaches and materials over the internet for several months
- classroom practice and teaching ability was improved by exchanging pedagogical and didactical approaches and materials
- teachers became aware of new approaches to learning such as learning through project work, experiential learning, learning by doing, peer learning, collaborative learning and autonomous learning

- teachers' knowledge about the educational systems in Europe increased; not so much the theoretical knowledge as the very practical knowledge of what happens in a classroom and in a school
- participants also appreciated if there was a good balance between the topic of the course with theory and practice related to it and if on top of this there is information about other educational systems and about developments in education in the EU.
- teachers stressed that the course enables them to address European issues in their classroom situation which itself has an impact on the interest and motivation of the pupils for learning;
- courses also contributed to raise the interest of non language teachers for foreign language learning; many participants stressed that he or she picked up a language again after a course.

Participants were clear in what they liked and appreciated:

- participants appreciated being given pedagogical tools, methods and information they could use straight away when they were back in their school and in their classroom; this is why they did not like too many long theoretical speeches
- participants liked to be given handouts when presentations were made so that they could follow what was being said and so that they could take notes during the presentation
- participants appreciated being given a logbook or a diary in which they could make notes about the learning experience; they liked the trainers to look at their notes
- participants liked to be given assignments during the course that could be corrected by the trainers and they also liked it when sufficient time was taken out to discuss these assignments identifying the positive and negative elements
- participants liked to visit a school; but when a school is visited it should be during school hours so that they could meet fellow teachers; attend part of the lesson, speak to pupils and give some information themselves to those youngsters
- participants liked to have a heavy programme in which content is mixed with social contacts, with cultural visits to have a flavour of the country; they also liked some free time and to do some shopping (especially the ladies!)
- participants liked to be immersed as much as possible with local life and the local community
- participants wanted to receive clear information before the course about the location, how they could be contacted there by their families etc.; if the place was rather isolated they should know in advance!
- participants liked it when the organisers think of providing them with small extra services such as stamps (for letters and postcards), telephone cards (as not all teachers have mobile phones)
- participants liked to be in touch with the outside world during the course; hence it was appreciated when participants had at their disposal a television and newspapers of several countries in a room. These were small elements which can make all the difference to a course..

3. Language teachers comments

Participants to language course appreciated:

- that they had used the language they had studied as much as possible in a practical way during their stay abroad
- a variety of work forms which are well documented so that they can use the same materials and ideas with their pupils later on in the classroom; language teachers appreciate especially learning to teach languages in a realistic way for example by using games and real life situations
- their stay in families during the course and that the families have been given the task of talking to them as much as possible
- that they could meet native speakers during lunches and dinners who joined them at the table to enhance the conversation
- that they could meet other language teachers and attend a lesson given by another language teacher in a real school situation
- that they were invited to prepare a lesson during the course and moreover have the opportunity to give that lesson in a local school.

Participants to language courses did not like it when:

- the programme was not flexible and the organisers did not take into account suggestions made by groups of participants
- the programme did not address the core issues of the topic which had to be addressed by the course
- the trainers didn't take into account their expectations and needs;
- the trainers invited them to evaluate on a daily basis but did not take into account these evaluations
- the trainers did not use the preparatory work they had been invited to complete before the seminar
- the trainers did not use the materials and documentation they had brought with them to share with their colleagues
- the families they stay with didn't speak to them; especially when they were there to learn a language
- they visited schools where there were no pupils and teachers around or they did not have the opportunity to speak to fellow teachers and pupils
- they were cut off from the outside world for several days with no information about the news
- they were staying in separate hotels far way from the place where the course was organised
- the course organisers were not around in the evening or could not be contacted at night
- trainers and participants stayed in different hotels and especially when the quality of the hotel of the organisers was better
- they did not know who to turn to with their complaints if they had any.

7. Three case studies

7.1. Comenius 2.2. course “School self-evaluation Towards a European Dimension”

1. Developing the programme and contents

In the first year of the project the range of documents gathered -analysed and commented upon during plenary or sub-group meetings- had already led to a first draft of the course. In this first phase the conceptual framework, the contents, the materials and the kind of activities to be implemented were considered in a more theoretical perspective. The real planning took place in the second year, when there was also a pilot initiative with a group of Italian head teachers organised with the support of the Italian Ministry of Education, aimed at validating the comprehensibility of contents selected and working out the kind of debate it could elicit. During the following month, the course started to be seen in a more holistic perspective which had to be solidly grounded in theory, but also had to take into consideration various organisational issues, in order to create the best conditions for welcoming participants from many different countries and providing them with an interesting international learning environment.

Various kind of materials were produced, aimed at the INSET and also at different dissemination activities:

- 1) Theoretical documents which were progressively refined in order to create a set of background readings on school self evaluation. Reactions gathered during pilots were taken into consideration so that they could reflect a good balance between rigour and practical realism.
- 2) Grids and check lists to promote the discussion of crucial topics in the different contexts of dissemination, to undertake field observation, to present programmes and tools.
- 3) Collection of real data with guidelines to be used for simulation activities.
- 4) Collection of documentation from different project including instruments.
- 5) Questionnaires and evaluation tools.
- 6) Bibliographical references.

2. A European Team

From the project point of view, the partners from 4 different countries contribute to offer a more “international” view with respect to the topics. The course participants comprised 21 head teachers (or senior staff) from 12 different European countries providing an immediate and rich European forum. The first aspect of developing the European dimension was to share a common terminology and to be able to understand each other in spite of the various meanings attributed to the same words in different national contexts. The second aspect was the intercultural learning which arose from talking about other systems and other countries’ experiences in self-evaluation. The European dimension was developed also by means of personal relationships and plans for future contacts or partnerships in European projects. The strong benefit derived from being part of an international group was underlined by many participants in the final evaluation of the course although quite a few participants stressed the need for greater attention to be paid *to the comparative framework*.

Generally speaking, the course responded well to the expectations both of the trainers and of the participants. Overall, it is clear that the main benefit resulting from participating in the course was the opportunity to meet other head teachers, to know about their particular experiences and to perceive personally to what extent all European education systems are confronted with a similar range of problems and with a limited number of strategies and solutions in this field. The framework of self-evaluation offered an important opportunity to enhance the European exchange.

3. Commercialising the course

The course was published in the Comenius/Gruntvig catalogue but not further initiatives were taken to this respect. For future courses it would be a good idea to spread the information through other channels such as partners’ institutions

4. Information sent to the participants and speakers

The following information/materials were sent to participants:

1.a A questionnaire prepared to gather comparable information about participants’ schools and participation in self-evaluation projects. Headings included: school characteristics such as number of pupils and staff, budget, social background, participants’ career and responsibilities, experience and training in self-evaluation etc. Respondents were warned that the information provided was going to be disseminated among colleagues

1.b Participants’ profiles were reported in a table and fed back to everyone in a second pre-course message together with more detailed information on logistics, timetable and activities.

2. Some background readings on self-evaluation were selected aimed at allowing participants to start focusing on the topics they would be dealing with. They were also asked to prepare a poster presenting their own experience so that it could be effectively discussed with colleagues.

3. Tourist information: the location selected -Viareggio, a well-known seaside resort in Tuscany out of season - allowed lot interesting trips which enhanced the quality of the

learning atmosphere. It was considered important to offer everything that could contribute to the course, creating high expectations and fostering commitment.

These three “tasks” were explained in a first contact message, which was mailed some four months before the course together with some general information about the activities and the venue. Reactions were quite prompt and allowed for a better definition of the target audience, which appeared to be both qualified and motivated.

5. Preparation and follow-up

The variety of participants’ backgrounds and time constraints suggested that it was necessary to limit the topics and the assignments and to devote a lot of attention to materials in order to provide good documentation which could also be kept as a basis for consultation after the course.

It was decided to have four lectures followed by workshops with a guided discussion supported by a check-list, one workshop with a simulation on data interpretation and a consortium where people had to report on the results of assignments accomplished during school visits. Group work was placed in between the units when necessary. Each partner of the project took care of the detailed organisation of a unit; in addition, the co-ordinators were in charge of all the logistics. All partners were expected to be present during the entire course, so that discussions and workshops could benefit from expert chairing.

One full day was left for school visits. These were aimed at providing an opportunity for fieldwork in small groups with an assignment to interact with the head teachers and the senior staff to identify some significant needs of the school and to suggest a suitable self-evaluation activity. Participants were to report on their assignment in the final session of the course.

The schools had therefore to be selected carefully and prepared to deal with language diversity, to introduce themselves effectively and to be helpful for the purpose. In fact specific meetings were organised with the Italian head teachers who were also asked to prepare a school profile following some headings agreed and discussed with them.

Efforts were also invested in designing the evaluation of the course which was foreseen as a combination of the result of the rapporteur’s report, participants’ perceptions and comments collected by means of an open ended descriptive questionnaire and partners’ observations.

Planning the course was therefore a demanding process: although contents and activities had already been roughly identified in the first phase, it was important to implement a pilot, to prepare materials and instruments, to gather and process new information, to design the succession of events establishing priorities and links and to take care of the various organisational matters.

The course was organised in the following units:

1. Introduction to the course and presentation of course participants
2. Self evaluation and external evaluation: an international perspective

3. School self evaluation: origins, definitions, approaches, methods and implementation issues
4. Presentation of a range of instruments
5. Data analysis and introduction to the group work
6. Use of the information gathered
7. Presentation of key aspects of the Italian educational system
8. Field work in school visits
9. Preparation for final "consortium"
10. Course evaluation
11. Final "consortium"
12. Poster session

6. Practical implementation

The course was held in the hotel where all the participants and the staff were accommodated on a full board basis. This avoided any waste of time and allowed for a precious flexibility. A "creative agenda" was adopted, including six working hours and a half per day, in two tranches: 8.30-12.30 and 17.00-19.30. The long break at midday was intended to leave space for the various activities which were offered in the day light. These ranged from the beach to the bike to visits to interesting historical sites such as Pisa or Lucca, only half an hour by train from Viareggio. People could choose between an ordinary meal and a lunch bag to save time.

The quality of both the location and the accommodation and arrangements was a strategic choice which was indeed rewarded by the quality of participation, as it was generally observed in the evaluation: everybody was always very punctual and attentive, since the opportunities had enhanced their sense of duty and their motivation. Choosing a holiday place in low season also gave the possibility of a precious contact with the Municipality and the Tourist Authority, who contributed in the organisation offering a complimentary trip, a dinner as well as interesting publications.

Another important aspect of the organisation was the investment in secretarial support (two secretaries were present) which meant availability of technology (computers, projectors), the possibility of preparing documents, grids, transparencies quickly, prompt answers to the emerging needs, efficiency, and good quality information.

7. Pedagogical and didactical work forms

The units were organised according to the following scheme:

<i>UNIT</i>	<i>TITLE OF THE UNIT</i>
<i>Methodology</i>	
<i>Activities</i>	
<i>Content</i>	
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	
<i>Time</i>	
<i>Materials</i>	

Here is an example of a concrete unit:

<i>UNIT 6</i>	<i>Use of the information gathered</i> Carol Donoughue, discussion Jaap Scheerens
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Plenary and round table</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Lecture and debate</i>
<i>Content</i>	<i>When school self-evaluation is a part of the process of school improvement, two aspects have to be considered: how to collect information about what is happening but also what use will be made of the information once it has been collected.</i> <i>In fact, if the information is not used properly, the collection done previously become a waste of time and energy. A headteacher reported on the self-evaluation process in her own school. Some questions need to be considered carefully since the beginning of the process, such as:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who receives the information which has been collected?</i> • <i>Who shares the information?</i> • <i>Who decides what to do next?</i> • <i>Does everybody agree about what has to be done?</i> • <i>How is the decision implemented?</i>
<i>Discussion and tasks</i>	<i>How do you know that the change has been effective?</i> <i>Questions concerning the examples presented</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>2 hours</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>Presentation in Power Point, written text of the lecture</i>

Plenary and round table consisted on lectures and debates where participants could ask questions concerning the examples presented and were given a checklist of points to be covered during the debates in order to better focus on the topic.

Work groups were composed by the project team at the end of the first day of the course and progressively increased the relevance of their role within the development of the course, putting together people in accordance with the following criteria:

- * observation of groups spontaneously formed in informal occasions
- * different nationalities
- * different competencies in speaking English

The same groups were maintained for all the activities, including school visits. It was considered that staying in the same group could offer opportunities for a deeper level of discussion and understanding of each other's experience.

Anyway group work covered about half of the activities, the rest including round tables and plenary discussions where a broader exchange was possible.

School visits played an important role in the course. Based on observation and interviews they were useful for analysing the school context, collecting information and comparing experiences through the projects prepared by every group. School visits were considered a very positive experience for all the participants.

The practical dimension always plays an important role in this kind of course but it is difficult to find the right activities given the various constraints. For instance, school visits aroused a lot of interest and were a high point of the course but as an instructive event they were less effective. In fact, the practical exercise consisting in a visit with a task to be accomplished was good for it gave the participants the opportunity to interact quickly with actual teachers and head teachers in their natural working environment; however, it was not probably the best way to help the participants to feel embedded in a self-evaluation

process. The exercise gave more the feeling of the Italian primary school system than the opportunity to be really engaged in the operation of a self-evaluation process. For a future occasion, a narrower and better structured assignment should be given to participants.

Simulations in small groups was also a technique used during the course. Every group had a set of real data from a school participating in a self-evaluation project and were asked to define a school profile, underlying issues of concerns and proposing strategies for improvement. A final poster session where the participants presented experiences (in small groups) that they had undertaken in their own countries proved also to be effective.

Also the after lectures guided discussions worked well as they offered a rich European forum for comparisons. Lectures promoted a strong interaction within the group. However discussions could offer a suitable opportunity for raising some theoretical issues.

The course materials were probably one of the most valuable outcomes of the course, not only as course documentation but also as background readings for further professional development. They should be made accessible to a wider audience.

8. Language use

This was pointed out by some participants although not as a significant aspect. The few participants without a suitable language competence did not fully contribute to group discussions despite the fact that their comprehension was facilitated by the lecturers' handouts which were provided in advance. Even if it was made clear that the working language was English, it was observed that "a satisfactory competence in English" meant quite different levels across the countries.

9. Evaluation/Accreditation/Recognition

In order to capture participants' perceptions a descriptive methodology was chosen. A grid was set up with space available for comments under the following subheadings:

- a) A short description of the participant's experience of the course, which, together with a final question concerning "conclusions", was aimed at getting a first overall evaluation of the activity
- b) Observations and comments about the course and its organisation. This section included space for considerations of the organisation and logistics and of the different components of the module such as the international European dimension promoted by means of international comparisons, lectures, group work and school visits. Each subheading was split into two parts: positive aspects and weak aspects. There was then a specific request to mention negative aspects since it was considered that leaving an undefined space meant not reaching a sufficiently informative picture of what the perceptions were and what the possible improvements would have been.
- c) Specific questions about the experience as a whole i.e. which were the most effective elements of the course, possible follow up and suggestions for a future version of the same course.
- d) Brief conclusion.

The questionnaire was handed out at the end of the last morning of the course, before the final plenary and all the 21 participants completed the task although some said they would have liked more time. In some cases descriptions were extremely full; others were more

schematic although always quite informative. All the forms were immediately photocopied and the originals were returned to the participants for their own record.

Participants' impressions and comments on the course as a whole were very positive and gave the organisers clear proof of the success of the course. Most frequent comments were:

- the usefulness of the experience which provided a good balance between theory and practice;
- opportunities for sharing the experience with other participants from different countries, broadening personal and national context and providing suggestions for "possibly avoiding the pitfalls discovered by others";
- excellent organisation which had paid attention to every detail, providing pre-course materials, and a varied timetable of course activities, cultural visits and suggestions for the use of free time.

There were some weak aspects or suggestions for improvement to be taken into consideration:

- more time for discussions and group work
- more detailed information about the instruments presented as a way to gather data for the self-evaluation process
- more computers to use for group activities

All participants appreciated the location of the course, which is close to many places of interest. The daily timetable (8.30 to 12:30, 17.00 to 19.30) and the long break between morning and afternoon (12.30 to 17.00) were welcomed and considered an excellent idea as participants had enough time to organise their own activities. Only 2 out of 21 participants mentioned two weak aspects, i.e. the main lecture area was thought to be poorly lit and that there was background noise which sometimes disturbed the audience because the secretarial staff was working in another part of the same room.

There were very positive comments about the technical support and the availability of different kinds of resources (photocopies, transparencies, wall charts, even a small library with selected publications on self evaluation as well as on tourist aspects). This allowed participants to make the best use of their learning time since all "practical" concerns were avoided. It was very much appreciated that the staff contributed to the preparation of participants' handouts developed from activities. At the end of the course the amount of documentation produced and distributed was impressive, "heavy to take home" as someone observed.

The grids worked well. Participants filled them in accurately providing a helpful feed back on the course. However it might be a good idea to have a short session on the last day when participants tell each other whether what they have learned on the course will make them change or start some new initiatives. Writing about it does not have the same effect because they don't have the same opportunity to discuss and learn from others.

10. Dissemination and valorisation

All participants underlined some kind of learning both in the case of not very experienced head teachers or head teachers already facing self-evaluation issues in their schools. Furthermore, every participant said that they had learned something concrete which would help them when they were back in their own schools.

7.2 Comenius 3.2/2.2 ESCO-ORT (European School Co-ordinator Training)

1. Introduction

Frequency - the course has been run 15 times (1997 – 2003), there are usually 1-2 courses per year

Background

The idea for the project grew out of work carried out by the project co-ordinator for local teachers in the north of England. The new Socrates programme in 1995 offered an opportunity to internationalise this local initiative. A partnership was rapidly assembled using contacts made in a Contact Seminar with Flanders. The three partner institutions and their representatives in the project were:

Belgium: Landcommanderij Alden Biesen (Guy Tilkin)

France: Centre de Culture Européenne Saint Jacques de Compostelle (Alain Ohnenwald)

Spain: Col·legi Oficial de Doctors i Llicenciats en Filosofia i Lletres i en Ciències de Catalunya (Anna Ruiz)

The project was named Escos-ort (European School Co-ordinator Training). Two – three of the partners and the co-ordinator were present for all the courses.

Project rationale

The concept of the project and the subsequent courses was guided by the idea that the European dimension usually encompasses a number of diverse activities in any school and these need to be co-ordinated and managed. The task of co-ordination is particularly important for large secondary schools with subject departments and extra-curricular programmes. Therefore the identification and training of a co-ordinator is one of the success factors in introducing the European dimension.

2. Background to the courses - the Training Manual

The main objectives of the original project were to produce a Training Manual and a curriculum which could then be delivered through the medium of the new Comenius 3.2 training courses (now 2.2). The combined expertise of the partnership was coupled with the views of existing school co-ordinators from each country in the partnership to create a number of Training Units. The work of research and writing was divided between the partnership but each unit received a thorough evaluation at the project meetings. The final list of units spanned the range of expertise and information that the partnership considered

was required by a school European Co-ordinator. The unit on project evaluation was added after the first three courses had taken place. This reflected the growing importance of evaluative work and the emphasis of the European Commission on this aspect of project development. It also owed much to the work of Guy Tilkin in a related Complementary Measures project.

The units that finally constituted the manual were as follows:

1. Core Unit: The European Dimension in Education
2. Understanding and accessing EU funding programmes
3. Making the most of your Preparatory Visit
4. Modern communications in linking: applications and strategies
5. Europe in your curriculum: the audit and beyond
6. Creating a European resources centre in school
7. Working with a partner school on a joint project
8. Planning a pupil visit/exchange
9. Understanding other education systems
10. How to involve the local community in European activities
11. How to involve and motivate your colleagues
12. The role of languages in international projects
13. Managing and evaluating your European activities
14. Training Dialogues

The members of the partnership were clear that the manual should be illustrative and should also provide open learning tasks for the European Co-ordinator to carry out in school or with the schools in a European partnership following the course. Each unit incorporates a factual section but may also include some 'good ideas' gleaned from the experienced co-ordinators who were involved in the first two years of the project. We were also able to include a number of activities capable of being integrated into training sessions.

The manual was produced in English, Dutch, French and Spanish. All language versions are available for the Comenius 2.2 courses.

3. Background to the course - the Training Curriculum

The preparation of the Training Curriculum and of the associated training activities took place later in the project. To some extent the curriculum has remained relatively unchanged. However the experiences and subsequent evaluations of nearly 250 teachers who have taken part in the Comenius 3.2 and 2.2 Training Courses has enabled the partnership to modify the inputs and activities to a considerable extent. To successfully implement the European dimension requires a structural approach within the framework of the school administration. It may also need the support of a strategy and an action plan. The European co-ordinator not only requires vision and planning but also the ability to motivate others and to mobilise human and other resources. These are demanding requirements for any teacher and the overall aim of the Training Curriculum has been to offer concrete assistance and advice in all aspects of project planning, realisation and evaluation.

4. The Comenius 3.2/2.2 courses

The course is offered to teachers from primary, secondary and special schools plus advisers and inspectors.

Prior to the course and following an initial letter participants receive a Training Manual in one of the four languages on offer. They are also required to complete a 'Profile'. This document is distributed at the start of each course and enables participants to locate potential link schools or those with other common interests. The courses are delivered in English except for those offered at the Centre de Culture Européenne where we either offer some parallel sessions in French or arrange for an interpreter to assist French speaking participants within each session. Neither of these alternatives are totally satisfactory but the resources available do not allow for more sophisticated arrangements.

The programme has evolved considerably since the first course was offered at Alden Biesen in 1997. Naturally we have taken into account the course evaluations of participants but we have also been sensitive to changes in the backgrounds and experiences of many applicants to 3.2 courses and to the ongoing developments of the education programme. The style of the courses offered in 1997/98 was more didactic and less interactive than the current programme. Then participants began to tell us that above all they sought the chance to interact with each other - not exclusively as European Co-ordinators but simply as members of the same profession which (modern foreign languages teachers aside) does not have many such opportunities.

Following the welcome and introduction to course (and a fun activity called 'Find the person who') each session is closely related to a unit in the Training Manual. Sessions usually begin with a didactic input, perhaps from one of the project team or from an experienced facilitator. One session will always start with the role play described earlier but this deliberately has no introduction. The remainder of the allocated time for each session allows for interactivity and the exchange of experience. Wherever possible these interactive sessions are designed to widen the experience of the participants in working together in multi-national groups. There are two examples that illustrate this process. The less formal of the two is the carousel workshop in which groups of 4-6 participants are required to write down, or draw if they prefer, the key elements of an imaginary project under one of the Comenius headings (heritage, environment, etc). We equip each group with a ready titled sheet of flip chart paper for this purpose. However the work of each group is suspended after 5 minutes and all but one of the group is required to move on to the next title. The participant left behind must explain the emerging project to the three newcomers - that is once introductions and language issues have been explored. The process is repeated after a further 5 minutes but leaving a different teacher in charge. This carousel activity works well in a large room but we have most fun at Alden Biesen where the groups were located in separate rooms up in the tower of this medieval castle. The serious message of this activity concerns the relative instability of partnerships and the constant need to re-evaluate and re-focus project work. It also remains a highly enjoyable activity.

The activity concerned with project evaluation is more considered and more lengthy. We begin by placing the participants into groups of two - preferably from the same country. Their task is to select a realistic selection of objectives for an imagined project. We supply lists of potential objectives for pupils, teachers, the whole school and for the project itself. This process is indicative of the sort of thinking that might take place before a project meeting or preparatory visit. Next the pairs are brought together into working groups of 6 or 8 representing a multi-national partnership. Firstly they must agree on some common

objectives for their project. This can be a lengthy and animated discussion. Finally we introduce a range of evaluation tools and the group must decide which tools will best evaluate the effectiveness of their objectives. Complex though this activity can become it replicates very well the processes a partnership should experience and it has assisted many real project co-ordinators to effectively evaluate the work of their project and to report this process to their National Agency.

5. The profile of the course participants

The courses which we ran while the Comenius 3.1 project was still active also functioned as Contact Seminars. In this initial phase of the Socrates programme teachers on the whole were not involved with Comenius and were anxious to return home with a potential project as well as with some expertise in project management. Now perhaps 50-60% of participants will have already been involved in projects - usually Comenius School Projects. Nevertheless the programme always includes a 'School Fair' when participants have the opportunity to display details of their schools and pupils' project work alongside materials from their region. Although the focus of this event may have shifted from the location of partner schools to the exchange of experiences of project work, participants continue to value this session.

The profiles of the course participants reveal that the job title 'European or International Co-ordinator' increasingly finds a place in the personal details of the teachers who attend our courses. This reflects a gradual shift in the nature of the applicants and the course has changed to accommodate the needs of this newly designated group of practitioners. Clearly teachers are looking for recognition of this role and our impression is that the accreditation of the course is now especially important. Accreditation of the course is simply through a certificate. This gives a brief account of the course content plus total number of hours of tuition, it is signed by the course tutors.

A further area of development concerns the use of ICT in school projects. The place of ICT in the original courses was frequently confined to demonstrations of what might be possible. Now our sessions must reflect the increasing use of ICT in school projects and participants are keen to demonstrate their project websites and show other results of virtual project activity. The current programmes includes a demonstration of videoconferencing, perhaps with pupils and teachers in a school or college. This input is designed to explore the methodology of using this new technology with pupils as part of their project work, therefore we spend time on scenario construction and on coaching pupils to take part in discussion through this medium. Project co-ordinators also need access to IT tools to facilitate their work.

6. Additional activities and future prospects

The methodologies of the School European Co-ordinators training course have played a useful role in the construction of other training programmes that are offered by the co-ordinator or partners. These include other Comenius 3.2 and 2.2 courses but several of the activities have been adapted for use with single nationality training courses in the European dimension. The Training Manual itself is offered for sale and has also been distributed through a number of National Agencies. One significant development in a number of countries has been the evolution of the European Co-ordinator into a role with an International or Global focus. This worldwide view of school linking and curriculum planning is not yet reflected in either the manual or the course but its inclusion is surely only a matter of time.

7.3 Comenius 2.1

Using freshwater as a theme for European project work

Frequency - the course has been run 3 times (2001 – 2003)

Background

This course was organised in the United Kingdom in 2001 and 2002 as part of the EU-funded Comenius Freshwater Network project and in Belgium in 2003 alongside a youth event concerning water solidarity. The course has two main aims. One is to create a mechanism through which the participating teachers could get to know one another and to share their common interests as teachers but also in the specialist fields concerning water. The second aim was to provide teachers with the information they need to continue working together in the framework of a project where water is the theme. The course was orientated around the possibilities of a Comenius project but most of the ideas and methodologies could equally well be applied to other funding routes.

Participants

The participants on these courses were teachers from both the primary and secondary phases. They included science specialists and non-scientists. All the teachers were asked to complete a profile of their school (including any current projects) before the course. These were made available to everyone in the course folder.

The programme

The programme was constructed in line with the draft presented with the Comenius 2.2 application and featured in the Comenius Catalogue. The main facilitators were drawn from the original Comenius 2.1 project – up to 4 facilitators were used. All facilitators had considerable experience as in-service trainers for their own institutions.

Support materials

Each participant on the course received a file containing:

- Programme
- Course Evaluation Form
- Participant profiles
- Comenius 1 Application Form
- Comenius 1: basic guidance

- Comenius Freshwater Network Guidelines (this was used as a reference text throughout the course).

Other materials were available during the course and could be added to the file at the discretion of the participants.

Introduction – Getting to know other participants

The process of getting to know each other was achieved with a simple icebreaking activity. The aim was for each member of the group to speak to everyone else through a series of light-hearted questions. The activity was put together using material from the profiles. Organisers could also choose to include some general questions that several participants might answer.

The objectives and outputs

This input related to the Comenius 2.1 project which gave rise to the course outline in the first instance (the Comenius Freshwater Network). The key messages were that:

- Freshwater related topics are part of most curricula and are often studied by pupils several times during their time at school
- Freshwater topics are ideal as a subject for trans-national projects
- 'Freshwater' is a truly cross-curricular theme and is accessible to pupils of all abilities

This input also relied on the Case Studies which are included as appendices in the Comenius Freshwater Network Guidelines. An alternative strategy for this section would be to invite an experienced teacher or other educational professional to talk about their own freshwater project. In order to motivate others to get involved this input stressed the benefits of the project for both pupils and staff involved.

Carousel workshop – an activity to stimulate discussion around European projects

This interactive session was designed to widen the experience of the participants in working together in multi-national groups. To begin the participants were divided into groups of 4 – 6. These groups were mixed nationality although any participants experiencing difficulties with the working language might be paired with a more linguistically skilled partner. The activity took place in a large room equipped with 5 or 6 flip charts where one sheet on each chart has already been given a title. The titles used were:

- A freshwater project which will involve students with learning difficulties
- A freshwater project which will involve local partnerships between primary and secondary schools
- A freshwater project which will have a creative arts focus
- A freshwater project which requires extensive fieldwork (biotic and abiotic water sampling)
- A freshwater project where Information technology is important
- How to use a freshwater project to involve the local community

To start the process each group was asked to read the title and to ensure everyone had a common understanding of the terminology used. The participants were then asked to write

down the key elements of the suggested project or strategy. However the work of each group was suspended after 10 minutes and all but one of the group were required to move on to the next title. The teacher who was left behind must explain the emerging strategy to the newcomers who may then add further comments. After a shorter interval of 5 minutes the process was repeated leaving a different individual in charge. At the end of the session (which can take up to 50 minutes) the papers were detached and displayed around the room – this helps to set the atmosphere for the remainder of the course.

The serious message of this activity concerns the relative instability of partnerships and the constant need to re-evaluate and re-focus project work.

Management of an EU funded project – planning, organisation, evaluation

A freshwater project is like any other, it requires the co-ordinator and partners to possess or acquire a number of skills from the world of project management. The following OHP was used as a starting point to illustrate the **planning** process:

Comenius Freshwater Network

In-service Training Sessions

The role of planning in project management:

Ideally 80% of the time and energy in a project is spent on defining aims and planning and only 20% is spent on realisation:

- Planning preparatory visits
- Planning the first meeting
- Planning for changes and amendments
- Planning for evaluation
- Planning for dissemination
- Planning for the financial administration of the project

The following OHP was used as a starting point to illustrate the **organisation** of a project:

Comenius Freshwater Network

In-service Training Sessions

Organisation of a project is the realisation of the planning process

Main tasks:

- Managing contractual relations with the project partners
- Defining roles
- Building up a project culture
- Forming European and national teams
- Setting up and maintaining a communications system
- Setting up and maintaining an information and reporting system
- Managing critical phases in the life of the project

This section could be extended to cover the organisation of trans-national meetings which may not be familiar to many teachers.

The following OHPs were used to illustrate aspects of on-going project **evaluation**:

Comenius Freshwater Network

In-service Training Sessions

In the ideal project evaluation should:

Begin early in the project

Involve the whole partnership

Predict the development of the project

Assist in the process of quantifying results

Reduce the work of the final report

Involve others

Comenius Freshwater Network

In-service Training Sessions

Why is evaluation important:

To improve quality and raise standards

To provide a context for open discussion on content and project performance

To identify strengths as well as weaknesses

Comenius Freshwater Network

In-service Training Sessions

Stages in evaluation:

Planning for evaluation

Collecting and interpreting evidence

Using the evidence to implement changes

Incorporating data in to the final report

The Comenius Freshwater Network Guidelines provided a detailed chapter in support of this section which was used during the course. This chapter opens up the ideas of target groups for evaluation (the pupils, teachers, wider community etc) and also suggests many **evaluation tools** which have already been used successfully in a trans-national context.

Examples of good practice

All the courses have featured a variety of inputs concerning water testing, water quality and the use of rivers in education programmes.

At this point in the course exemplar projects were used from the Comenius Freshwater Network Guidelines. Facilitators used this time as an opportunity to include inputs from teachers, NGOs, conservation groups or to refer to the CFN Case Studies.

School Fair

This is an informal activity which gave the course participants opportunities to learn more about each others schools and regions. Well before the course each teacher was asked to bring with them some materials about their school, their home town and their country. They were also requested to bring pupil work and details of any current projects or activities involving freshwater. Each participant was given a table to display these materials plus access to a data projector, video and PCs if required. The result was a lively session as participants view the materials and take the opportunity to sample any characteristic delicacies – food or drink – which also occupied the displays.

Creating a Comenius School Project and applying for funding

This session was based around a presentation of the Comenius Actions of the Socrates Programme. Facilitators used a powerpoint presentation based on the guidance given in the Comenius Freshwater Network Guidelines. It was important to illustrate the funding programme with real examples of school partnerships based on freshwater projects.

Practical work in the field

All of these courses have featured some practical work using the local streams and rivers. The aim was to demonstrate some simple fieldwork activities which could be used by school partnerships as a means of collecting data from local rivers, streams or lakes. In a Comenius project participating schools have to find ways of comparing this data and evaluating each others fieldwork techniques. The techniques used in the courses were:

- Biotic assessment of water quality - this method used the invertebrates found in the water as indicators of water quality. Very little equipment was needed apart from nets, dishes for examining the catch, low power microscopes and identification charts
- Chemical assessment – this method used a variety of chemical tests for the same purpose using equipment that would be found in most secondary school science laboratories
- Electronic assessment – this method used a series of probes linked to a meter to measure temperature, pH, biological oxygen demand and flow rate

The practical work was carried out by different members of the project group – responsibility was allocated according to their experience and the other facilitators acted as assistants. All techniques were firmly based in the science curriculum but also demonstrated to participants how non-scientists can become involved in water sampling. For example looking at the contrasts in access to clean water in rich and poor countries and also to our daily use of water are further themes which pupils find interesting and motivating.

Working together on project ideas

This was small group work, supported by a facilitator and in the all the courses ended with the presentation of potential applications for the Comenius programme. The sessions were structured as follows:

1st Session

- Appointment of leader of discussion and rapporteur
- Introduction of the participants, their institutions and areas of interest
- Presentation of any project ideas
- Identification of common thematic areas
- Definition of project themes and main aims
- Documentation of intermediate results for this session

2nd Session

- Appointment of leader of discussion and rapporteur
- Design of the project's
 - aims
 - activities
 - target groups
 - results or
 - outcomes
- Documentation of intermediate results for this session

3rd Session

- Appointment of leader of discussion and rapporteur
- Work on the remaining parts of the application form
- Appointment of project co-ordinator
- Decisions:
 - Do we need or want:
 - More partners?
 - More countries involved?
 - Types of institution?
 - Particular expertise?
- Documentation of result on Project Description Form

Conclusion and evaluation of the course

The participants were asked to complete an evaluation form for the entire in-service training session. There was also an opportunity for an informal evaluation of the course through a group discussion.

ANNEXES



Education and Culture

Socrates



SOCRATES PROGRAMME

Accompanying Measures

SCOPE

**SURVEY OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES and OPPORTUNITIES OF
COMENIUS 2.2. IN-SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN EUROPE**

Project n. 2003-0537/001-001 SO2 81 AWC

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR 2.2 COURSE
CO-ORDINATORS**

1. Introduction to the questionnaire

The SCOPE project

*The objective of the project is to **make a survey on the strengths and weaknesses, the problems, obstacles and facilitators in relation with Comenius 2.2. courses.** The project has thus developed a questionnaire to be sent to Comenius 2.2. course organisers in 2001- 2002 and to national agencies to inquire about their experience in the field of Comenius 2.2. courses. Next to this the project will contact a certain number of successful course organisers to describe their activities in some 20 examples of good practice. National agencies will be contacted also to this effect. Furthermore the project will follow-up during 2003 TEN Comenius 2.2 courses from the information to be sent to the participants to the implementation of the course and its evaluation. A pre-course and post-course questionnaire has been developed to this effect.*

*All those activities, **the analysis of the questionnaire, the description of examples of good practice and the monitoring of ten courses, will lead to several products. A survey describing first strengths and weaknesses , problems and obstacles met by Comenius 2.2 course organisers. Secondly the survey will also focus on facilitators which have enabled to solve problems in a creative way. Thirdly stress will be given to key issues such recognition, validation, accreditation of such Comenius 2.2 courses,; the way in which those courses are evaluated by organisers and participants; the use of ICT for pedagogical purposes and the way in which the courses have an impact on the quality of school education etc.***

*Next **to the survey and the examples of good practice the project will also develop a set of suggestions in a checklist which will be of great use to course organisers. Finally the project will also result in a needs analysis stressing the needs of training there are for course organisers.** Thus the outputs will be useful to course organisers, to National agencies and to senior officials in ministries.*

It is very important for us to collect as many experiences as possible in order to have an overall view of the comments and perceptions of the course co-ordinators.

At the end of our research we will send you the results together with our comments and suggestions. We thank you in advance for your precious co-operation!

A part of the questionnaire is composed of closed questions to which you are asked to answer by ticking some cases and/or by adding some information. Another part of the questionnaire is composed of open questions to which you are invited to answer freely. Your suggestions and answers will enable us to draft a guide of good practice which will be useful to future Comenius 2.2. course organisers. Thanks again for your help.

The staff of the project

Gianfrancesco Musumeci – Italy
Rosangela Baggio – Italy
Gabriella Lazzeri – Italy
Carlo Zanesi – Italy
Yves Beernaert – Belgium
Ray Kirtley – United Kingdom
Manuel Megias - Spain

1.1 Definition of a Comenius 2.2 course

➤ A Comenius 2.2 course should: (tick boxes if you agree!)

- Contribute to quality in education
- Have teachers from several countries
- Update knowledge/competence/skills in one area field
- Be run by an international team
- Promote the ED and euro citizenship
- Facilitate intercultural understanding
- Promote the creation of Comenius 1 projects
- Promote linguistic diversity

1.2 How many courses have you organised?

➤ Please indicate:

- If you are preparing to organise your first course
- If you have organised a number of courses
How many

Please choose **ONE** course for which this questionnaire will apply:

Course Number: _____

Course Title: _____

2 Background to your course

➤ Are the objectives of the project from which this course has been derived reflected in the course contents?

- Yes No

If yes:

- By the use of a product from the project?
- By the use of methodologies developed by the project?

➤ If your Comenius 2.1 or 3.1 project has finished have you been able to build upon new developments in your field?

- Yes No

- ρ By changing or updating materials?
- ρ By introducing new sessions in the course programme?
- ρ By removing sessions from the course programme?
- ρ Other (please specify)

➤ Do you have any particular problems with any of the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

➤ Do you have any questions for which you would like an answer related to the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

3 Preparation work

3.1 Construction of the programme

➤ How was the programme constructed?

➤ How have you decided on the pedagogical methodology to be used in the course?

➤ How have you decided on the course contents?

➤ Have external experts been invited to deal with specific topics?

➤ How does the course link to the Comenius 2.1 project?

➤ If appropriate - How much will the course influence the further development of the project, perhaps in the final year?

3.2 The teaching team

➤ What measures have you taken to ensure that a team approach is followed?

ρ Whole project team was present all the time

ρ Some of the project team present all of the time

ρ Key link person was present

ρ Dual presenters: course was run jointly by two team members

ρ Other (please specify)

➤ Do you have any particular problems with any of the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

➤ Do you have any questions for which you would like an answer related to the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

4. Recruitment of participants

➤ Have you been involved in recruitment?

Yes No

If yes:

- ρ Leaflet, asking teachers you know to apply
- ρ Other (please specify)

➤ What are your expectations of the knowledge/competencies/skills that participants should have before attending?

➤ Have you defined the knowledge/competences/skills people will acquire from the course?

Yes No

If yes:

➤ How have you defined the knowledge/competences/skills people will acquire from the course?

➤ Do any official bodies recognise this course?

- ρ Ministries of education
- ρ Universities
- ρ Professional organisations
- ρ Other (please specify)

➤ If not have you discussed accreditation of the course with partners/ministries/universities/others?

Yes No

➤ How will you undertake accreditation/certification/recognition of these new competences?

- ρ Attendance certificate only giving hours of tuition
- ρ Attendance certificate listing acquired knowledge/skills/competences
- ρ Other (please specify)

➤ How will you assess the knowledge/skills/competences acquired by the participants?

➤ Do you have any particular problems with any of the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

➤ Do you have any questions for which you would like an answer related to the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

5. Preparation of participants

➤ Do you send or require any of the following?

- ρ Draft Programme
- ρ Travel instructions
- ρ Pre-course task – expectations of the course and specific motivation for applying
- ρ Profile form with personal details
- ρ Form with professional details
- ρ School details
- ρ Experience in the subject matter of the Comenius 2.2.

➤ Do you ask for any of the following of the participants?

- ρ Sharing a task with colleagues of their school so the impact of the course is spread.
- ρ Read documents, consult websites, look up speakers on the web
- ρ Write-up an experience in their own school – a problem they have dealt with related to the topic of the course
- ρ Prepare a presentation on their school Comenius 1 project (if applicable)
- ρ Prepare a presentation on their education system
- ρ Collect materials about their school/region
- ρ Other (please specify)

➤ Do you have any particular problems with any of the issues raised in this section?

- Yes No

If yes:

➤ Do you have any questions for which you would like an answer related to the issues raised in this section?

- Yes No

If yes:

6. The Course

6.1. Time management

➤ The course programme is constructed of several elements set out below.

Which of these elements are included in your course?

Please give an approximate percentage of time spent on each activity.

Rank the activities according to the importance given to them by the course organisers.

- ρ Icebreaking activities
- ρ Theoretical inputs
- ρ Examples of good practice
- ρ Exchanges of experience
- ρ Contacts with the local community
- ρ Social and cultural events
- ρ Time for individual reflection
- ρ Group work
- ρ Visits to schools
- ρ Exhibitions / European fair or European meal prepared by or brought by participants
- ρ Other (please specify)

6.2. Flexibility of the programme

- How much can the programme be changed in response to the nature of the group?
- Are there opportunities for the participants to plan their own future projects? If so how do you use the experiences of participants who already have projects (and what happens to those who do not want to develop a project)?

6.3. Support tools

- Do you use any of the following?
 - ρ Diary of the activities of participants
 - ρ Learning log
 - ρ Bibliography related to the field studied
 - ρ Human resources with specific competencies in specific fields
 - ρ Hand-outs of presentations and examples of good practice
 - ρ ICT facilities

6.4. Language methodologies

- Are you familiar with the language competences/content of:
 - ρ The participants
 - ρ The speakers
 - ρ Your team
 - ρ The materials
- How have you found out this information?
- Are there any provisions for weaker language users if the course is monolingual?
 - Yes
 - No

If yes:

- ρ Course materials in other languages (programme for example)
- ρ Course texts in other languages
- ρ Presentation hand-outs in other languages
- ρ Provision of a specialised glossary according to the contents of the course
- ρ Other (please specify)
- If the course is bilingual what methodologies have you adopted?
 - ρ All parallel sessions
 - ρ Some parallel sessions
 - ρ Consecutive translation to the whole group
 - ρ Simultaneous interpretation for the whole group
 - ρ Whispering translation to a small group
 - ρ Other (please specify)
- Multi-lingual workshops; these are workshops during which participants can use several languages
- Comments/suggestions

6.5. Intercultural learning and intercultural communications

- Do you give clear instructions to speakers regarding:
 - ρ The Language to be used
 - ρ The level of the language understanding of the participants
 - ρ The duration of their intervention or speech
 - ρ The need to prepare PowerPoint hand-outs
 - ρ The Contents of their input
 - ρ The pedagogical methods to be used
 - ρ Other (please specify)

6.6. Venue issues

- Do you take into account?
 - ρ Accessibility of the venue from public transport
 - ρ Access to the course venues for people with disabilities
 - ρ Special diets (e.g. vegetarians)
 - ρ Working and living in the same building
 - ρ Special provisions to make people feel at home – newspapers, TV
 - ρ Opportunity to attend religious services
 - ρ Possibility for free-time activities
 - ρ Possibility to take part in cultural or sports events

6.7. Payment issues

- How do you organise payment for accommodation and fee?
 - ρ Payments in cash
 - ρ Bank transfer
 - ρ Credit cards
 - ρ Other (please specify)

6.8. Special provisions

- Do you make any provisions to deal with:
 - ρ Difficult participants
 - ρ Late arrivals
 - ρ Early leavers
 - ρ Medical problems
 - ρ Other (please specify)

6.9. Evaluation of the course

- Do you organise evaluation?
 - ρ On a daily basis
 - ρ On a group basis (or in sub-groups or on an individual basis)
 - ρ Of specific elements of the course
 - ρ For the whole event at the end of the course
 - ρ Related to the course programme
 - ρ Related to personal objectives and to the personal expectations
 - ρ Other (please specify)

➤ Do you allow any of the evaluation processes to be completed in the participants' own language?

➤ Do you use an external evaluator?

Yes No

If yes:

➤ Has he/she made his methodology clear to the participants and before that to the organising team?

➤ How do you as a team self-evaluate the course?

ρ Daily course team meeting

ρ Post course meeting for the organisers (debriefing)

➤ How is the evaluation taken into account during or after the course? What do you do with the outcomes of the evaluation?

During the course

- It is discussed on a daily basis with all participants
- The programme may be subsequently changed
- The methodology may be subsequently changed

After the course

- It is sent to all participants
- It is sent to all participants, to the Commission and to the NA
- It is put on the web site of the project

➤ Do you have any particular problems with any of the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

Do you have any questions for which you would like an answer related to the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

7. Follow-up work

➤ Follow-up of participants

➤ What measures will you take to promote follow-up?

ρ Creation of newsgroup on the Internet

ρ Follow-up of Comenius 1 projects created during the Comenius 2.2. course

ρ Suggestions for post course tasks are given at the end of the course

ρ Dissemination in the school of participants is prepared at the course

ρ Send updating materials on the course contents to the participants

ρ Disseminate the course reports drafted by participants after the course

ρ Contact participants for a post-course interview on the impact of the course at the level of their professional functioning as a teacher in their school

ρ Other (please specify)

- Do you have any particular problems with any of the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

- Do you have any questions for which you would like an answer related to the issues raised in this section?

Yes No

If yes:

8. Other questions

- Has the completion of this questionnaire stimulated new ideas for the management of your next course?
Give some examples
- Have you had contacts with other course organisers at regional, national or European level so far? If such contacts would be institutionalised, which form would they best take, according to you?
- Would it be useful to organise an in-service training course for future (or present) Comenius 2.2. course organisers? If such a course would be organised, what would you suggest to be in it and which form should it take?
- Do you refer to the official texts of the Commission and to the Socrates programme as a whole during the course and how?
- How is your programme contributing to the raising of quality in education?
- All other suggestions and remarks are welcome !

***THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME
TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE***



Education and Culture

Socrates



SOCRATES PROGRAMME

Mesures d'Accompagnement

SCOPE

**Etude des Points forts et faibles et des possibilités des cours de
formation continue Comenius 2.2. en Europe**

Project n. 2003-0537/001-001 SO2 81 AWC

**QUESTIONNAIRE POUR LES COORDINATEURS DE COURS
COMENIUS 2.2.**

1. Introduction au questionnaire

Le projet SCOPE et ses objectifs

*L'objectif du projet est de **faire une analyse des points forts et des point faibles, des problèmes, des obstacles et des facilitateurs en ce qui concerne les cours Comenius 2.2.** Le projet a donc développé un questionnaire qui est envoyé aux organisateurs de cours Comenius 2.2. organisés en 2001- 2002 ; il sera aussi envoyé aux agences nationales afin de demander leur opinion sur leur expérience dans le domaine des cours Comenius 2.2. En plus le projet contactera un certain nombre d'organisateur de cours Comenius 2.2 ayant de l'expérience afin de décrire leurs expériences comme des exemples de bonne pratique(20 exemples). Les Agences nationales seront aussi contactées avec cet objectif. De plus le projet fera un suivi en 2003 de dix cours Comenius 2.2. à partir de l'information envoyée aux participants jusqu'à la mise en œuvre du cours et son évaluation. Un formulaire à envoyer avant le cours à des participants et un autre après le cours seront en plus développés à cet effet.*

*Toutes ces activités : l'analyse du questionnaire , la description des exemples de bonne pratique et le suivi de dix cours résulteront dans plusieurs produits. Premièrement **une étude analytique décrivant les points forts et les points faibles et les obstacles rencontrés par les organisateurs de cours Comenius 2.2.** De plus cette étude focalisera aussi **sur les facilitateurs qui ont permis de résoudre des problèmes d'une façon créative.** Une attention toute spéciale sera donnée à **des problèmes comme la reconnaissance, la validation et l'accréditation des cours Comenius 2.2.** . L'évaluation par les organisateurs et les participants, l'utilisation des NTICavec des objectifs pédagogiques et l'impact que les cours ont sur la qualité de l'éducation, seront tout particulièrement accentués dans cette étude descriptive. .*

A part cette étude analytique et descriptive et à part les exemples de bonne pratique , le projet développera un nombre de suggestions et de recommandations pour des organisateurs futures de cours Comenius 2.2. Ceci en partie sous forme de checklist. Finalement le projet résultera aussi dans une analyse des besoins en formation pour les organisateurs de cours Comenius 2.2. . Ainsi tous ces résultats seront utiles pour des organisateurs de cours Comenius 2.2., pour les Agences Nationales et pour des responsables au sein des ministères de l'éducation.

Nous vous remercions de bien vouloir remplir ce formulaire dûment comme il est très important pour nous d'obtenir autant d'informations possibles d'organisateur de cours Comenius 2.2.afin que notre étude soit représentative. Nous vous enverrons tous les résultats de notre étude dès qu'elle sera terminée.

Une partie du questionnaire concerne des questions fermées auxquelles il faut répondre en biffant des cases et/ou en rajoutant des informations. Une autre partie du questionnaire est composée de questions ouvertes auxquelles nous vous invitons à répondre librement. Vos suggestions et réponses permettront de rédiger un guide de bonne pratique –pour de futurs organisateurs.

L'équipe du projet

Gianfrancesco Musumeci – Italy

Rosangela Baggio – Italy

Gabriella Lazzeri – Italy

Carlo Zanasi – Italy

Yves Beernaert – Belgium

Ray Kirtley – United Kingdom

Manuel Megias – Spain

1.1 Définition d'un Cours Comenius 2.2

➤ Un cours Comenius 2.2 devrait :

- Contribuer à la qualité de l'éducation
- Avoir des participants de plusieurs pays européens
- Améliorer les connaissances et les compétences dans un domaine bien déterminé
- Etre organisé par une équipe internationale
- Promouvoir la dimension Européenne et la citoyenneté européenne
- Faciliter la compréhension interculturelle
- Promouvoir la création de projets Comenius 1
- Promouvoir la diversité linguistique

1.2 Combien de cours Comenius 2.2. avez-vous organisé ?

➤ Veuillez indiquer:

- Si vous êtes en train de préparer l'organisation de votre premier cours
- Si vous avez organisé déjà plusieurs cours Comenius 2.2.
Combien ?

Nous vous invitons à choisir un de vos cours, si vous en avez organisés plusieurs, comme référence spécifique pour remplir notre questionnaire.

Numéro du cours : _____

Titre du cours : _____

2 Toile de fonds de votre cours

➤ Les objectifs de votre projet Comenius 2.1 à partir duquel vous avez organisé le cours Comenius 2.2. , sont-ils reflétés dans les contenus de votre cours ?

- Oui Non

Si oui:

- En utilisant le produit résultant du projet Comenius 2.1.
- En utilisant les méthodologies développées dans le cadre du projet?

➤ Si votre projet Comenius 2.1 (anciennement 3.1.) a terminé ses activités , avez-vous pu prendre en compte de nouveaux développements dans le domaine du cours organisé ?

- Oui Non

- ρ En changeant ou en mettant à jour le matériel utilisé?
- ρ En introduisant de nouvelles sessions dans le programme de formation ?
- ρ En remplaçant certains éléments du programme par d'autres ?
- ρ D'autres (veuillez spécifier!)

- Est-ce que vous avez rencontré des problèmes avec les éléments mentionnés dans cette section du questionnaire lors de la mise en œuvre de votre Cours Comenius 2.2.?

Oui Non

Si oui:

- Avez-vous des questions précises auxquelles vous voulez obtenir une réponse concernant un des éléments mentionnés ci-dessus?

Oui Non

Si oui:

3 Préparation du Cours Comenius 2.2.

3.1 Construction du programme

- Comment le programme a été construit ?
- Comment avez-vous décidé de la méthodologie pédagogique à utiliser lors de ce cours ?
- Comment avez-vous décidé sur les contenus du cours ?
- Des experts externes ont-ils été invité pour intervenir sur des problèmes ou thèmes spécifiques ? Si oui, donnez un exemple !
- Quels sont les liens entre le cours Comenius 2.2 et le projet Comenius 2.1. ?
- Si cela s'applique – Le cours aura-t-il une incidence sur le développement futur de votre projet Comenius 2.1., éventuellement dans son année finale ?

3.2 L'équipe d'enseignants ou de formateurs

- Quelles mesures ont été prises afin de garantir que le cours sera créé, porté et mis en place véritablement par une équipe?

- ρ Toute l'équipe du projet sera présente tout le temps du cours
- ρ Quelques membres seront présents pendant toute la durée du cours
- ρ Il y aura une personne clé présentée
- ρ Le cours sera géré en binôme par deux membres du projet
- ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier !)

- Est-ce que vous avez rencontré des problèmes avec les éléments mentionnés dans cette section du questionnaire lors de la mise en œuvre de votre Cours Comenius 2.2.?

Oui Non

Si oui:

- Avez-vous des questions précises auxquelles vous voulez obtenir une réponse concernant un des éléments mentionnés ci-dessus?

Oui Non

Si oui:

4 Recrutement des participants

➤ Avez-vous participé au recrutement ?

Oui Non

Si oui:

ρ E,nvoi d'un dépliant invitant des enseignants que vous connaissez à poser leur candidature pour participer

ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

➤ Quelles sont vos attentes au niveau des connaissances et des compétences des participants avant leur participation au cours ?

➤ Avez-vous clairement défini les connaissances et les compétences que les participants acquerront lors du cours Comenius 2.2. ?

Oui Non

Si oui:

➤ Comment avez-vous défini les connaissances et compétences que les participants acquerront pendant le cours ?

Des organes officiels reconnaissent-ils le cours?

ρ Ministères de l'éducation

ρ Universités

ρ Organisations professionnelles

ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

➤ Si cela n'est pas le cas, avez-vous discuté de l'accréditation du cours avec les partenaires, le ministère, des universités ou d'autres instances officielles ?

Oui Non

➤ Comment allez-vous gérer l'accréditation / la certification/ la reconnaissance de ces nouvelles compétences?

ρ Attribuer aux participants un certificat mentionnant le nombre d'heures suivis

ρ Attribuer un certificat de participation mentionnant les compétences et connaissances acquises lors du cours Comenius 2.2. ?

ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

➤ Comment allez-vous évaluer les connaissances et les compétences acquises par les participants ?

➤ Est-ce que vous avez rencontré des problèmes avec les éléments mentionnés dans cette section du questionnaire lors de la mise en œuvre de votre Cours Comenius 2.2.?

Oui Non

Si oui:

➤ Avez-vous des questions précises auxquelles vous voulez obtenir une réponse concernant un des éléments mentionnés ci-dessus?

Oui Non

Si oui:

5 Préparation des participants

➤ Envoyez-vous aux participants ou demandez-vous aux participants les informations suivantes ? ?

- ρ Un Programme provisoire
- ρ Des informations ou instructions de voyage
- ρ Un travail à faire avant le cours p.ex. un court texte mentionnant leur motivation ou leurs attentes
- ρ Un formulaire avec tous leurs détails personnels
- ρ Un formulaire avec tous les détails professionnels
- ρ Des détails sur leur établissement scolaire
- ρ Leur expérience dans le domaine de la thématique du cours Comenius 2.2. auquel ils participeront

➤ Demandez-vous des participants une des tâches suivantes?

- ρ Partager une tâche avec des collègues de leur établissement scolaire afin d'accroître l'impact et la valorisation du cours?
- ρ Lire des documents, consulter des sites web, vérifier le CV d'intervenants
- ρ Décrire les expériences, les problèmes ou projets mis en œuvre dans leur établissement scolaire concernant la thématique adressée dans le cours
- ρ Préparer une présentation sur leur projet scolaire Comenius 1 projet (si cela s'applique)
- ρ Préparer une présentation sur leur système éducatif
- ρ Rassembler du matériel sur leur région et leur établissement scolaire
- ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

➤ Est-ce que vous avez rencontré des problèmes avec les éléments mentionnés dans cette section du questionnaire lors de la mise en œuvre de votre Cours Comenius 2.2.?

- Oui Non

Si oui:

➤ Avez-vous des questions précises auxquelles vous voulez obtenir une réponse concernant un des éléments mentionnés ci-dessus?

- Oui Non

Si oui:

6 Le cours

6.1. Gestion du temps

➤ Le programme du cours est composé de plusieurs éléments mentionnés ci-dessous. Lesquels de ces éléments incluez-vous dans votre cours? Veuillez donner approximativement le pourcentage de temps attribué à chaque activité!. Veuillez en plus classer les activités selon l'importance que vous leur donnez en tant qu'organisateur de cours !

- ρ Activités pour faciliter la connaissance réciproque des participants
- ρ Apports théoriques (conférences plénières)
- ρ Exemples de bonne pratique
- ρ Echanges d'expérience
- ρ Contacts avec la communauté locale
- ρ Événements culturels et sociaux
- ρ Temps de réflexion individuel
- ρ Travail en groupes
- ρ Visites d'établissements scolaires
- ρ Exposition européenne / repas (soirée) européen préparé ou apporté par les participants
- ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

6.2. Flexibilité du programme

- Combine le programme peut-être change tenant compte de la nature et de la composition du groupe de participants?
- Y a-t-il la possibilité pour les participants de planifier leur propres projets futures? Si cela est le cas, comment utilisez-vous les expériences des participants qui ont déjà mis en place des projets européens (et que faites-vous de ceux qui ne veulent pas mettre en place de projet)?

6.3. Outils de soutien

- Utilisez-vous un des outils suivants?
 - ρ Un journal de bord pour chaque participant
 - ρ Un cahier dans lequel sont noté les connaissances et compétences acquises
 - ρ Une bibliographie dans le domaine concerné
 - ρ Des ressources humaines compétentes dans un sous-domaine spécifique
 - ρ Des documents à distribuer des présentations ou interventions
 - ρ Des moyens audiovisuels ou autres dans le domaine des NTIC

6.4. Méthodologies concernant l'utilisation des langues

- Avez-vous une idée des compétences linguistiques ou du niveau linguistique des:
 - ρ Participants
 - ρ Intervenants
 - ρ De l'équipe d'organisation
 - ρ Matériaux qui seront distribués
- Comment obtenez-vous cette information sur les compétences linguistiques ?
- Prévoyez-vous des mesures de soutien pour aider ceux ou celles qui sont moins forts dans la langue du cours si ce cours est monolingue ?

Oui Non

If oui prévoyez-vous:

- ρ Des matériaux du cours dans d'autres langues (p.ex. le programme)
- ρ Des textes du cours dans d'autres langues
- ρ Des synthèses de textes en d'autres langues
- ρ Un glossaire spécialisé concernant le domaine thématique du cours
- ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)
- Si le cours Comenius 2.2. est bilingue, quelle méthodologie avez-vous adopté?
 - ρ Toutes les sessions en parallèle en deux langues
 - ρ Quelques sessions en parallèle
 - ρ Une traduction consécutive pour tout le groupe
 - ρ Une traduction simultanée avec interprètes
 - ρ Une traduction en chuchottage pour le groupe ayant des problèmes de compréhension
 - ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)
- Organisez-vous des ateliers multilingues, c'est-à-dire des ateliers durant lesquels plusieurs langues sont utilisées ?
- Commentaires et/ ou suggestions

6.5. Apprentissage et communication interculturelle

➤ Donnez-vous des instructions très claires aux intervenants quant à ou quant au :

- ρ La langue à utiliser et le niveau linguistique des participants
- ρ La durée de leur intervention
- ρ besoin de renforcer leur intervention orale avec une présentation PowerPoint
- ρ Contenus de leur intervention
- ρ Méthodes pédagogiques à utiliser
- ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

6.6. Éléments concernant le lieu du séminaire

➤ Tenez-vous compte?

- ρ De l'accessibilité du lieu au niveau des transports publics
- ρ De l'accessibilité du lieu pour des personnes handicapées
- ρ De besoins diététiques de certaines personnes (ex. végétariens)
- ρ Du fait de travailler et de riser dans le même lieu
- ρ De provisions spéciales : mise à la disposition des participants de journaux, télévision pour regarder les nouvelles, timbres-poste etc.
- ρ De la possibilité de participer à un service religieux
- ρ De la possibilité d'avoir des activités spécifiques de temps libre
- ρ De la possibilité de participer à des activités culturelles ou sportives

6.7. Éléments financiers et de paiement

➤ Comment organisé-vous le paiement des frais pour l'hôtel, les repas et le coût administratif du cours ?

- ρ Paiement en espèces
- ρ Transfert bancaire
- ρ Les cartes de crédits sont acceptées
- ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

6.8. Provisions Spéciales

➤ Prévoyez-vous des approches spéciales pour gérer:

- ρ Des participants difficiles
- ρ Des participants arrivant trop tard
- ρ Des participants partant avant la fin
- ρ Des problèmes médicaux
- ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

6.9. Evaluation du cours

➤ Organisez-vous l'évaluation?

- ρ Chaque jour
- ρ Pour le groupe entier (ou en sous-groupes ou individuellement)
- ρ D'éléments spécifiques du cours
- ρ Pour le cours entier seulement à la fin du cours
- ρ Au niveau des contenus du programme du cours
- ρ Au niveau des objectifs personnels et des attentes de chaque participants
- ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

➤ Les participants peuvent-ils compléter les formulaires ou participer aux activités d'évaluation dans leur propre langue ?

➤ Faites-vous appel à un évaluateur externe ?

Oui Non

Si oui:

➤ Cet évaluateur externe a-t-il clarifié sa méthodologie aux participants (et avant cela aux organisateurs) ?

➤ Comme évaluez-vous en équipe le cours vous-mêmes ?

ρ Une réunion chaque jour de l'équipe de coordination

ρ Une réunion après le cours pour les organisateurs (debriefing)

➤ Que faites-vous avec les résultats de l'évaluation pendant ou après le cours ?

Pendant le cours :

- l'évaluation est discuté régulièrement avec les participants
- le programme est changé en conséquence de l'évaluation
- la méthodologie est changée en conséquence de l'évaluation

Après le cours :

- les résultats de l'évaluation sont envoyés à tous les participants
- ils sont envoyés aux participants, à la Commission et aux AN
- ils sont publiés sur le site web de la Commission

➤ Est-ce que vous avez rencontré des problèmes avec les éléments mentionnés dans cette section du questionnaire lors de la mise en œuvre de votre Cours Comenius 2.2.?

Oui Non

Si oui:

➤ Avez-vous des questions précises auxquelles vous voulez obtenir une réponse concernant un des éléments mentionnés ci-dessus?

Oui Non

Si oui:

7 Travail de suivi au cours

➤ Suivi des participants

➤ Quelles mesures prenez-vous pour mettre en place un suivi?

ρ Création d'un newsgroup sur Internet

ρ Suivi de projets Comenius 1 créés lors du cours Comenius 2.2.

ρ Des suggestions sont faites pour des tâches à remplir après le cours

ρ Dissémination au sein de chaque établissement scolaire par chaque participant

ρ Envoi de nouveaux matériaux aux participants après le cours

ρ Dissémination des rapports rédigés par les participants après le cours

ρ Des contacts avec des participants pour un entretien quelque temps après le cours pour voir quel a été l'impact du cours sur ses activités d'enseignant

ρ Autres (veuillez spécifier)

- Est-ce que vous avez rencontré des problèmes avec les éléments mentionnés dans cette section du questionnaire lors de la mise en œuvre de votre Cours Comenius 2.2.?

Oui Non

Si oui:

- Avez-vous des questions précises auxquelles vous voulez obtenir une réponse concernant un des éléments mentionnés ci-dessus?

Oui Non

Si oui:

8 Autres questions

- Le fait de répondre à ce questionnaire, a-t-il engendré de nouvelles idées sur la gestion et l'organisation de votre prochain cours Comenius 2.2. ? Si cela est le cas, donnez quelques exemples !
- Vous référez-vous aux textes officiels de la commission pendant votre cours et aux objectifs généraux de Socrates?
- Avez-vous eu des contacts avec d'autres organisateurs de cours au niveau national, régional ou européen ? Si de tels contacts étaient officialisés quelle forme recommandez-vous pour une telle rencontre ?
- Serait-il utile d'organiser une formation continue pour former de futurs (ou présents) organisateurs de cours Comenius 2.2. ? Si une telle formation est organisée quelles suggestions avez-vous au niveau des contenus et de la forme d'une telle formation ?
- Comment les cours Comenius 2.2. que vous organisez, contribuent-ils concrètement à améliorer la qualité de l'éducation?
- Toutes autres remarques ou suggestions les bienvenues !

Nous vous remercions de tout cœur pour le temps que vous avez pris pour remplir ce questionnaire !

Annex 3 – letter to course organisers in English

EDUCATION AND CULTURE – SOCRATES
Accompanying Measures
Project n. 2003-0537/001-001 SO2 81 AWC

SCOPE

Bergamo (Italy), 12 October 2003

Dear colleagues,

Re: Request for help to fill in questionnaire related to Comenius Accompanying measures project SCOPE.

The Commission has approved the project SCOPE to make a survey of problems, obstacles, weaknesses and strengths of European in-service training courses organised in the framework of Comenius 2.2. This analytical survey will be complemented by examples of good practice and guidelines for course organisers.

We are sending herewith a questionnaire to you as Comenius 2.2 course organisers with the request to fill it in according to your precious experience in the field of the organisation and management of Comenius 2.2 courses.

We would appreciate it very much if you could return to us the questionnaire duly filled in by the end of October 2003 by e-mail, if possible, or by fax.

We thank you very much in advance for your co-operation and look forward to receiving the questionnaire.

The results will be sent to you by May 2004.

Yours sincerely,

Gianfrancesco Musumeci
Project co-ordinator

e-mail gf.musumeci@virgilio.it

fax +39 035 360012

Annex 4 – letter to course organisers in French

EDUCATION AND CULTURE – SOCRATES
Mesures d'Accompagnement
Projet n. 2003-0537/001-001 SO2 81 AWC

SCOPE

Bergamo (Italie), 12 Octobre 2003

Cher collègues,

Re : Demande d'aide en remplissant le questionnaire concernant le projet Comenius mesures d'Accompagnement SCOPE

La Commission a approuvé le projet SCOPE qui a comme objectif de faire une étude analytique des problèmes, des obstacles, des points forts et des points faibles des cours de formation continue organisés dans le cadre de Comenius 2.2. Cette étude analytique et descriptive sera complétée par des exemples de bonne pratique et par des lignes directrices pour de futurs organisateurs de cours Comenius 2.2.

Nous envoyons ci-joint un questionnaire à vous, comme organisateurs de cours de formation Comenius 2.2. en demandant de bien vouloir le remplir à partir de votre expérience concrète au niveau de la gestion et l'organisation de cours Comenius 2.2.

Nous vous en saurions gré de bien vouloir nous renvoyer le formulaire dûment rempli pour la fin d'octobre par courrier électronique ou par fax.

Nous vous remercions d'avance de votre coopération et nous espérons recevoir sous peu ce formulaire. Les résultats de ce projet vous seront envoyés au printemps de 2004.

Gianfrancesco Musumeci
(*Coordonnateur du projet*)

e-mail gf.musumeci@virgilio.it

fax +39 035 360012

Annex 5 – list of course organisers

LISTA DE DIRECCIONES ELECTRONICAS Y NOMBRES DEL PERSONAL DE CONTACTO CORRESPONDIENTE A LOS CURSOS COMENIUS-GRUNDTVIG ENTRE 2001-2004

DIRECCION ELECTRONICA	NOMBRE	COMIENZO DEL CURSO
a.g.m.koet@hetnet.nl ;	Tom Koet	12/10/03
a.oomen@aps.nl ;	Annemarie Oomen	19/10/03
AIFT.LYNNE-BENTLEY@WANADOO.FR ;	BENTLEY Lynne	2001/02
AKINTERKULTURELL@COMPUSERVE.DE ;	Beate Balliel	2001/02
ALMADATEJO@ALMADATEJO.COM ;	NATERCIA NEVES	2002/03
andras@andras.ee ;	Ene Käpp	2001/02
andrea.stangl@kulturundsprache.at ;	Andrea Stangl	2001/02
ANMELDUNG@BF-BONN.DE ;	Ms. Birgit Zinken	2002/03
anne.piponnier@iut.u-ordeaux3.fr ;	Anne Piponnier	08/09/03
annika.nittmar@ilu.uu.se ;	Annika Nittmar	2001/02
antje.neuhoff@call.tu-dresden.de ;	Ms. Antje Neuhoff	2002/03
anute@ut.ee ;	Anu Aavik	21/09/03
araceli@uniff.upc.es ;	ARACELI ADAM	2001/02
ARILD@NFA.SE ;	ULLA FIRATLI THORSÉN	2001/02
aserep@wanadoo.fr ;	Christian Raynal	24/10/03
aurikagulbe@navigator.lv ;	Aurika Gulbe	2002/03
Balsler.Hartmut@t-online.de ;	Hartmut Balsler	16/10/03
baltzer@goethe.de ;	Baltzer	2001/02
benthem@fsw.leidenuniv.nl ;	Ingrid Benthem	20/09/03
bm@eaue.de ;	Dr. Barbara Munse	12/12/03
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cappuccini@amalfinet.it ;	A. Aielli	2001/02
CCDBV@UNITBV.RO ;	EMÍLIA SINOV	2001/02
CE.IEN-POMPEY@AC-NANCY-METZ.FR ;	Mr. Marchal Jacques	16/11/03
cenman@cervantes.es ;	PAULA CHISHOLM	2002/03

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CHROF@ILU.LIU.SE ;	Marina Ettling	2001/02
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ciid@cidi.it ;	Grazia Orsati	17/12/2003
cilus@gugu.usal.es ;	JOSÉ LUIS HERRERO INGELMO	2001/02
confs.direct@cilt.org.uk ;	Alison Cutler	2002/03
congostautisme@autisme.com ;	Gloria Lligadas Penarrubia	25/06/03
congostautisme@autisme.com ;	LÍDIA FINA	2001/02
copsa@copsa.es ;	Miriam Diez Piñol	2001/02
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cristinam.canalejas@educ.mec.es ;	Cristina Marquez	23/02/04
daiva@sih.lt ;	richarm@hope.ac.uk	2002/03
dan.d.daatland@hum.his.no ;	Dan D Daatland	13/10/03
david.powell@arkitekturmuseet.se ;	David Powell	2002/03
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DESYPRIS@HELLASNET.GR ;	THALIA PITSOULI	2001/02
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DIRECTEUR@IUFM.UNIV-ROUEN.FR	Tach Catherine	24/03/03
Discover@International-Study-Programmes.org.uk ;	Wendy Howson	2001/02
dvecro@dialstart.net ;	Mr.Dave Cropp	29/09/03
educy@siol.net ;	Katja Getov	2001/02
eleonore.wagner@swipnet.se ;	Eleonore Wagner	2001/02
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EMERALD@ECLIE;	EITHNE KELLY	2001/02
escuelai@slm.eurart.es;	Laura Gonzalez Valiente	2001/02
espany@maptel.es;	Maria Espuny Ros	04/04/04
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gbarzano@uninetcom.it;	Giovanna Barzano	10/05/04
ggrigg@cornwall.gov.uk;	Geoff Grigg	2002/03
guidance@cytanet.com.cy;	Gorge Ioannou	30/10/03
h.uittenbogaard@maecon.nl;	Hanno Uittenbogaard	07/10/03
halldis.bornes@vox.no;	Halldis Bornes	24/09/03
hd@mta.mmsz.hu;	Anita Fodor	2001/02
I EPICE@CLUB-INTERNET.FR;	HOUGUENAGUE Aude	2002/03
icc_europe@csi.com;	Ms Sonja Hussong	24/08/03
ICC EUROPE@CSI.COM;	Anthony Fitzpatrick	2001/02
iceuah@uha.es;	ISABEL BRINCONES CALVO	2001/02
info@bell-centres.com;	Mike Donelan	2001/02
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Education and Culture

Socrates



SOCRATES PROGRAMME

Accompanying Measures

SCOPE

**Survey of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of
Comenius 2.2 in-service training programme in Europe**

Project n. 2003-0537/001-001 SO2 81 AWC

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NATIONAL AGENCIES

1. Introduction to the questionnaire

The SCOPE project

*The objective of the project is to **make a survey on the strengths and weaknesses, the problems, obstacles and facilitators in relation with Comenius 2.2. courses.** The project has thus developed a questionnaire to be sent to Comenius 2.2. course organisers in 2001- 2002 and to national agencies to inquire about their experience in the field of Comenius 2.2. courses. Next to this the project will contact a certain number of successful course organisers to describe their activities in some 20 examples of good practice. National agencies will be contacted also to this effect. Furthermore the project will follow-up during 2003 TEN Comenius 2.2 courses from the information to be sent to the participants to the implementation of the course and its evaluation. A pre-course and post-course questionnaire has been developed to this effect.*

*All those activities, **the analysis of the questionnaire, the description of examples of good practice and the monitoring of ten courses, will lead to several products. A survey describing first strengths and weaknesses , problems and obstacles met by Comenius 2.2 course organisers. Secondly the survey will also focus on facilitators which have enabled to solve problems in a creative way. Thirdly stress will be given to key issues such recognition, validation, accreditation of such Comenius 2.2 courses,; the way in which those courses are evaluated by organisers and participants; the use of ICT for pedagogical purposes and the way in which the courses have an impact on the quality of school education etc.***

*Next **to the survey and the examples of good practice the project will also develop a set of suggestions in a checklist which will be of great use to course organisers. Finally the project will also result in a needs analysis stressing the needs of training there are for course organisers.** Thus the outputs will be useful to course organisers, to National agencies and to senior officials in ministries.*

At the end of our research we will send you the results together with our comments and suggestions. We thank you in advance for your precious co-operation!

The staff of the project

Gianfrancesco Musumeci – Italy
Rosangela Baggio – Italy
Gabriella Lazzeri – Italy
Carlo Zanesi – Italy
Yves Beernaert – Belgium
Ray Kirtley – United Kingdom
Manuel Megias - Spain

SCOPE PROJECT

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SOCRATES NATIONAL AGENCIES

1. Which are the critical success factor of C2.2?
2. Which are the main problems course organisers have been confronted with?
3. Which are the main problems the NA have to cope with in relation with C2.2 courses?
4. Which criteria do you use to assess the quality of course applications?
5. Which criteria or mechanism do you use to assess applications?
6. Do you organise any follow-up or evaluation activities in relation with C2.2 courses?
7. What do you do with the evaluation of the reports sent by participants? (at national – European level)
8. Do you have any suggestions as to the management of C2.2. courses?
9. Do you know any courses which can be considered as examples of good practice?
10. Could you send us a selection of individual reports (5 – 10) and, if available, any synthesis report in relation with the outcomes of C2.2 courses the NA has made?
Please send them to:
Gianfrancesco Musumeci
Via Franzarola, 8
I 24124 BERGAMO

***THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME
TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE***

EDUCATION AND CULTURE - SOCRATES
Accompanying Measures
Project n. 2003-0537/001-001 SO2 81 AWC

SCOPE

Bergamo (Italy), 12 October 2003

Dear colleagues,

Re: Request for help to fill in a questionnaire related to Comenius Accompanying Measures project SCOPE.

The Commission has approved the SCOPE project aimed at making a survey of problems, obstacles, weaknesses and strengths of European in-service training courses organised in the framework of Comenius 2.2. programme. This analytical survey will be complemented by examples of good practice and guidelines for course organisers.

We have prepared 2 questionnaires:

1. for course organisers, already sent to 140 course co-ordinators (see annexed file questionCordsENGLISH)
2. for Socrates National Agencies (see annexed file QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SOCRATES NATIONAL AGENCIES).

Would you please fill in the questionnaire for Socrates National Agency according to your precious experience in the field of the management of Comenius 2.2 courses.

We would appreciate it very much if you could return the questionnaire to us duly filled in by the end of October 2003, by e-mail if possible, or by fax and if you could also send us some 10 Comenius 2.2 course participants' reports on their experience either by ordinary mail or by fax to the following address:

Gianfrancesco Musumeci
Via Franzarola, 8
I 24124 BERGAMO

We thank you very much in advance for your co-operation and look forward to receiving the questionnaire and the course reports. The results of the survey will be sent to you by May 2004.

Yours sincerely,

Gianfrancesco Musumeci
Project co-ordinator

e-mail gf.musumeci@virgilio.it

fax +39 035 360012

Annex 8 – list of Socrates National Agencies

AT wolfgang.eckel@socrates.at Directeur

BE(de) socrates@demetec.net Suzanne Kuchenberg

BE(fr) albert.renard@cfwb.be Directeur

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NL zwaga@europeesplatform.nl responsable Socrates

NO Egil.Eiene@siu.no pas de commentaire

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SE anna.gudmundsson@programkontoret.se responsable Comenius

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**QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW OF
COMENIUS 2.2.C COURSE ORGANISERS**

Introduction

Start explaining that you are calling them in the framework of the SCOPE project and explain what the study is about.

Questions

Benefits

a) for the participants

What were the main benefits resulting from attending the course for participants?
Could you see that the participants made progress during the course?
Did you write down in one way or another the progress they made?
Were Comenius 1 school partnerships created as a result of the course?

b) for you as an organiser

What were the main benefits for you as an organiser?
What did you get out of it as a course organiser?
Has it improved your professional development?
Has it created new possibilities for European co-operation for you and your institution or university?

Preparation

Have you asked participants to prepare themselves before coming on to the course?
In which way?
Have you asked them to check web sites or to write a text or make a PowerPoint Presentation?
If they were invited to make a PowerPoint presentation have you given them clear instructions about the contents you wanted on the PwP presentation?
How did you use the preparations of the participants actively during the course?

Follow-up

How do you keep in touch with the participants to the course?
Have you been in contact with them to find out how their attending the in-set course has had an impact on their professional work in their schools?
If a Comenius 1 project started during the in-set, have you followed it up or given any support later on? Why or why not?
How long have the participants kept communicating with one another after the course was over?

Work forms used during the course

Could you explain which pedagogical or didactical work forms you have used to make the course attractive to the participants?

Was there group work and in which form?

Was their individual work and in which form?

Did you do any role plays or simulations

Recognition and accreditation

a) for the participants

Have you given to the participants some form of recognition for the time invested in the course (in the preparatory work, the work during the course itself, the follow-up work?

Did they receive a certificate? Was it a certificate signed by the vice-chancellor of your university or institution or just signed by you?

Did some of your participants get credits in their national in-service training system for the time and work related to the Comenius 2.2.C?

Can you send us a copy of the certificate which was given to participants?

b) for you

Do you get as an organiser any recognition for organising this course from your institution or university?

In which way does organising a course contribute to the development of your career?

Evaluation

Can you explain briefly how you organise evaluation of the course by the participants?

Have you produced any evaluation tools such as questionnaires which had to be filled in by the participants?

What did you do with the with the evaluation report you wrote?

Can you send us a copy of this questionnaire?

Dissemination

Have you discussed at the end of the course with the participants how they would disseminate what they learned during the course?

Have you made with them a small dissemination plan?

Have you asked them to send their report to all the other participants and to you as the course organiser?

Problems and obstacles

What were the main obstacles or problems you met during the course?

Were the problems related to the level of the prior knowledge of the participants in the specific field?

Were the problems mainly language problems?

Were there intercultural comprehension problems?

Annex 10 – list of course organisers interviewed

1. Mireia Montanè, ES
2. Giovanna Barzano, IT
3. Christian Raynal , FR
4. Patrick Miramont, FR
5. Guy Tilkin, BE
6. Rudy Schollaert, BE
7. Teja Enoranta, FI
8. Ed Cousins, UK
9. Fokko Dijkstra
10. David Powell, UK
11. Rosangela Baggio, IT
12. Gianfrancesco Musumeci, IT
13. Ray Kirtley, UK
14. Silvana Mosca, IT
15. Jane Jones, UK
16. Cristina Pujol, ES
17. Josep Gomez, ES