



Results and Agreements from the Preparatory-Meeting in Berlin Dec. 8th – Dec. 12th 2004



JUGEND für Europa
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Bildung und Kultur

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All in all 5 pages

Frameconcept for a series of multilateral projects within the European YOUTH-Programme /Action 1 under the general topic **Participant-Empowerment**

Participating countries:

Greece (P.A.A.S.C.A.), Sweden (FUB- Stockholm), Malta (DAR IL KAPTAN), England (Malvern Social Education Centre), Poland (Polish Association for Persons with Mental Handicap- Dansk), Germany (German Red Cross, Chapter Berlin-Reinickendorf)

Standards:

- From the first step of having the idea, planning and carrying it out, the participants have to be involved in the decisions
This means, that the information about project-ideas and projects in planning have to be accessible for all interested persons in our organisations
- Nobody may be excluded because of his specific kind of disability
- The projects have to be open for all young people with disabilities, not only for those, who have rich parents or live in rich welfare-states like Sweden
- participants with disabilities have to be involved in all the pre-meetings, which means that the preparation-group has to consist of 2 persons from each participating The country: One with disability and one without.

It means too, that the pre-meetings have to take more than 2 days:
The duration has to depend on the dimension of the participant's intellectual abilities
– those whose way of thinking and learning is very slow may not be excluded
because of the lack of time!

- The participants must have the chance to learn and to develop over a longer period, which means, it must be possible to participate in several projects in series.
To give new people a chance, the groups should be composed of 2/3 experienced and 1/3 new participants
- The participants should be also involved in the choice of the place, where the project will be held
- The accomodation requires special standards (which are mostly not necessary in the projects for young people without disability):
The rooms must be accessible for people with physical handicaps.
Sanitary facilities have to be there in a sufficient manner, and it must be possible to maintain privacy, because some participants may need some help in using the toilet or taking a shower.
Enough rooms for the daily evaluation-conference have to be there.
The arrangement of rooms must allow, that the assistants sleep closed to the young people for whom they are responsible (reasons may be epilepsy, psychotic episodes, tendencies to get in trouble with people and others)
Choices in the every day routine must be possible.
- Participation in decisions means that the participants have to be informed periodically and extensively about all occurrences and proceedings.
Because of this we need daily conferences in a project and the information-material must be simple and easy to understand ("Easy to Read"-language, symbols, drawings)
- The theme of the project should be chosen by the participants of the host-country

Obstacles, which have to be overcome:

- Several decisionmakers in offices, institutions and national agencies of the YOUTH-programme don't understand, why one should work with people with learning disabilities and spend money to give them the chance to participate in the European process of growing together.
- Supporting people with learning disabilities in the process of participation is very time-consuming. Mostly this time is not available for the assistants, and in the responsible organisations and institutions the money for offering sufficient assistance is lacking.
- It is difficult to find people in the organisations and institutions who are willing to work as assistants in the projects, especially in those countries where they have to pay 30% of the travel-costs from their private income.
But also in those institutions where the organisation pays it, it is difficult, because the people who go abroad with a project, are missing for the assistance in the institution and their colleagues have to take over their job too, which creates an unpleasant atmosphere in many cases.

And not very rarely it happens that the responsible person in an institution does not agree if employees want to travel as assistants with participants.

Anyway we all agreed not to be discouraged, but start immediately with the realisation of our goals, including the participants from the beginning of our next multilateral project in Greece!

Timescale for the projects:

Because the YOUTH-programme will be changed in 2007, we agreed about a timescale from the year 2005 to 2007.

The first Empowerment-project will take place in Greece 2005.

2006 England and Sweden will be responsible for one at a time,

2007 Poland, Germany and Malta.

Concerning, that it might not be possible to carry out our 3 projects in one year we'll have to talk about postponing one to the year 2008, considering the new programme with all it's changes.

Suggestions for the preparation:

One suggestion for an easy structure of project-planning came from Lennart (Sweden).

It is the "Five Finger Method", in which each finger is assigned to a particular colour:

Red means the goal (what will we do and why?),

Blue the timescale,

Green asks for Ressources (equipment, staff, financing, accomodation...),

Yellow is the organisation of the whole thing and

Black is used for the evaluation.

The participants memorize it and by this way even those who cannot read and write are have an orientation for the planning-process.

Programmes, reports, the daily planning and all information have to be made in a scriptfree form, for example by using symbols or drawings (Ken braught a big wallpaper from Malvern to show us how it works).

Actually, in our communication scriptfree methods like symbols, drawings and pantomime have to become natural.

Additional supporting activities:

For supporting the preparation and evaluation of the projects with the participants in the several countries we want to use **Action 3/E.2** of the YOUTH-programm.

Each partner has to apply for it at home.

Medium-term we intend to develop a network with the participants supported by internet-communication.

The Maltesian partners will apply for it under **Action 3/E.3** of the YOUTH-programme.

The Swedish partner will organize a seminar for young people with learning disabilities and their assistants under **Action 5** of the YOUTH/programme.

The objective should be the developing of standards for an adequate assistance for the participants of multilateral projects.

The first empowerment-project taking place in Greece

Project-Planning:

The **application** will be made by April, 1st 2005, the **pre-meeting** will be 3 days (excluded the two travel-days) in the end of July and the **project** will take place in September. By Dec. 22nd 2004 all partners will be informed about the definite dates.

Till the end of January the partner groups in the several countries will develop **ideas and wishes** for the project in Greece and send them to Athens.

What we already know is, that there is a big interest in language courses in all countries, so this should be provided.

February and March is the time for **interactive work** between the groups:

This means that pictures, photos and ideas go back and fourth, specific characteristics of the particular countries will be figured out and by time the hosting group finds a name for the project and works out a draft programme.

This will be send to the partners, discussed and completed in the groups and in the end it will find it's place in the application.

As soon as they will have agreed about the **activities** being provided in the project, the Greek partners will send a list to the partner groups for taking their choice in advance. Because some of those activities like sailing or diving have to be reserved, it is important for the planning.

Before the project starts –which means before the pre-meeting- , the participants should **get to know each other** by the way of internet-communication .

One reason is, that experiences have shown us, it takes a lot of time and is very tiring, to introduce everybody to everybody in the beginning of a project..

The other is that it is important to adjust in advance if –for example- people with severe disabilities and/or other specific problems, which one have never experienced before are expected to come.

Knowing the **composition of the group** we can talk about it by the pre-meeting and agree about some **rules of living and working together**.

Daily staff-conferences and **dayly conferences** of all participants are necessary (look under “standards”).

For the **evaluation** the partner groups should develop criteria on which we can measure the success of the project.



Themes which have been discussed besides

Financial aspects:

For some participants it is a problem, that only 70% of the travel-costs are covered by the YOUTH-programme:

For the people with disabilities this means that only those, whose parents have a lot of money or who live in solvent welfare-countries, can participate in the multilateral projects.

For the staff it means, that the most of them have to pay 30% travel-costs from their private pockets.

Therefore it is our demand that the YOUTH-Programme should cover 100% of the travel-costs!

For the activities of the multilateral projects is intended a fix amount for the whole time and a daily flat-rate.

If there are special reasons, ***exceptionell costs*** may be accepted.

In our case it is foreseeable, that none of our empowerment-projects can be carried out without laying claim to the whole spectrum of this exceptionell funding.

The reason is, that ***young people with learning disabilities have special needs*** according more or less all kinds of activities:

Special standards for accomodation have to be noted, many of them need assistance and support in their daily-life-routine and/or in getting along with other people in a group (which means more staff then in the other YOUTH-projects), and all need a lot of assistance and support in understanding the order of events, in understanding of and participating in decision-processes.

Nearly all of them are not able to think abstractly. Everything has to happen in very small steps and as plainly as possible in an audiovisual way. This takes a lot of time!

If the YOUTH-programme seriously wants to include young people with extraordinary problems, like disadvantaged people or people with learning disabilities, the national agencies of all European countries have to be ready to accept the exceptionell costs!

Otherwise the demand in this particular connection is nothing but a paper tiger, and we can forget about it.