

The Project Sample Which Provides Personal Development's Sustainability in Lifelong Learning

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Abstract: People have to sacrifice from their budget in order to provide their personal sustainable development. This causes to decrease their life standards. However the institutions of the people used to cover this shortcoming with in-service training. Those in-service trainings are not for personal sustainable development thus they are made for covering institutional shortcoming.

Whereas the people can provide their personal sustainable development without expending from their own budget by applying their projects to EU Education and Youth Programs so they provide donation. Barely many people have no information about such a program.

The Lifelong learning program (LLP) which is included in EU Education and Youth Program donates these kinds of projects. Especially General Education and VET experts and managers study visit program has the quality to provide personal sustainable development. Therefore the project named "The VET in the Dimension of Europe" performed in October 2008 was approached as applied project sample.

Keywords: Lifelong Learning, EU, Project, Application, Vocational Education, Study Visit

Introduction

It was participated to the studying visits called "European Dimensions in Vocational Education" realized in Kielce, Poland in the dates between 13th and 17th October 2008 in the extent of "Studying Visits of the Transversal Programmes in the field of Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) of the European Union Education & Youth Center Administration, in the name of the Chairman of the Vocational School of Kütahya, Dumlupınar University, Turkey. There were 6 participants of various countries of the studying visits in the topics of "European Dimensions of Vocational Education and Training; Attractiveness of Vocational Education and Training; Accommodation and food service activities". The manager countries of the visits were; Holland, Turkey, Portuguese, England, Scotland and Bulgaria. Participating a studying visit is both an important tool of learning in the Life Long Education and an exciting experience for the participants. The main objective of a studying visit is sharing the best applications and experiences of both the visitors and the landlord.

At the end of the visits the participants are invited to prepare a group report useful for summarizing the participants' experiments and useful for Cedefop's convincing what was taught to the non-participants. (Cedefop is the European Agency that promotes the development of vocational education and training (VET) in the European Union).

According to the demand of the European Commission, these centres, which are known as National Recourses Centres for Vocational Guidance or shortly European Guidance Centre, are composed of 27 European Union member countries, 4 EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries, and Turkey as a candidate country for EU membership. Euroguidance aims to contribute to improve the European dimension of General Education and Vocational Guidance and Consulting, to support the European dimension in the field of education, to provide cooperation among the consulting services in different countries, and to contribute to travel around countries in the field of education. It also significantly contributes the exchanges of information among the different countries in the field of Vocational Education and Guidance systems.

The main purpose of European Guidance Centre is to contribute to support the European dimension and to prepare the ground for the dissemination of the circulation around Europe by disseminating the information concerning education, career, profession, and guidance. These activities have been carried out by the Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes; namely, Turkish National Agency since 2005. That is to say, Euroguidance is carried out by Turkish National Agency Lifelong Learning Programme.

The study visits programme for education and vocational training specialists, part of the lifelong learning programme 2007-13 (Lifelong Learning Programme), is an initiative of the European Commission's

Directorate-General for Education and Culture. Its objective is to support policy development and cooperation at European level in lifelong learning. In terms of the study visits programme for education and vocational training specialists, short-term visit of 5 days, from 13th to 17th October, 2008, is conducted. This study visit is entitled as “ The Vet in the Dimension of Europe”, which is hosted by Kuratorium Oswiaty Association in Kielce, Poland. A particular aspect of lifelong learning, that is the Vet in the Dimension of Europe, is examined. These small group of specialists and decision-makers representing various groups of education and vocational training are from Holland, Turkey, England, Scotland, Portugal, and Bulgaria. They are stakeholders who want to examine a particular aspect of lifelong learning in another Member State. The profile of a participant corresponds mainly to directors of education and vocational training institutions, centres or providers, educational and vocational training inspectors.

Study visits are organised locally or regionally and coordinated by the National Agency. They provide a forum for discussion, exchange and learning on themes of common interest and on European and national priorities. By exchanging innovative ideas and practices, participants promote the quality and transparency of their education and training systems.

General Education and Study Visits For Education and Vocational Training Specialists

The aim of the study visits is to facilitate the exchanges of knowledge and experience among the vocational training specialists around Europe. By exchanging innovative ideas and practices, participants promote the quality and transparency of their education and training systems. Study visits for education and vocational training specialists and decision makers support European cooperation to develop policies for lifelong learning and are part of the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-13 (LLP). Cedefop coordinates the programme at European level for the European Commission since the 1 January 2008. At national level study visits are coordinated by the National Agencies located in the participating countries. Participants are selected by National Agencies of participating countries based on their eligibility, relevance and expected impact. After national agencies have selected participants and communicated the results, Cedefop draws up groups trying to assign participants to groups of their choice, ensuring that the groups consist of representatives of various geographical regions, professional backgrounds and genders. Participants receive a grant from the LLP that contributes to their travel and subsistence expenses. Each group consists of 10 to 15 participants from different countries who represent different education and training systems. They also have different mother tongues and their level of skill in the group's working language often differs significantly.

To become a knowledge society, Europe needs more economic growth, more and better employment and a society that is socially cohesive. To achieve these aims, Europe needs to improve its performance in education and training. This means that all Europeans need to have the opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills and competences throughout their lives. This has made education and training an important policy lever.

Therefore, in 2001, education ministers agreed for the first time on a common strategy for education and training. Making learning accessible for all Europeans at all ages and improving the quality and efficiency of education and training were considered top priority. It was also decided to open education and training systems to the wider world. For this purpose, a work programme until 2010 was developed in 2002 known as the **Education and training 2010 work programme**. Education and training in Europe was to become a quality reference for the whole world.

The Education and training 2010 work programme embraced a process which started in 1999 known as the **Bologna process**. It aimed at restructuring European higher education systems to make them more comparable and compatible. Lifelong learning was made one of the key objectives of the Bologna process in 2001. Recognising its value and important role in achieving the Lisbon objectives, the responsible ministers, the European social partners and the European Commission decided to cooperate closely in vocational education and training (VET). In the **Copenhagen declaration** (2002), they agreed to make VET more transparent and open and improve its quality. The Copenhagen process aims to make lifelong learning more easily accessible and promote educational, occupational and geographical mobility.

VET plays a key role in ensuring lifelong learning and supplying a skilled workforce necessary for a competitive and dynamic economy. With the goal to improve the quality and attractiveness of VET and raise its profile among other fields of education, the following priorities were defined:

- give VET a European dimension (improve cooperation between institutions and promote mobility);
- make VET more transparent and improve information and guidance (develop a credit system to make learning outcomes of VET portable, strengthen policies, systems and practices for lifelong guidance);
- promote recognition of qualifications and competences (develop a single framework to help translate qualifications and competences and make them more transparent, support deve -

development of qualifications and competences in economic sectors; develop common principles for validation of non-formal and informal learning);

- develop quality assurance in VET (including attention to learning needs of teachers and trainers).

In conclusion, a coherent framework for cooperation in education and vocational training has been put in place. As progress reports show, this framework has helped to support national reforms and develop several EU reference tools. Reaching out to all involved is crucial to progress in the areas where a lot remains to be done and to ensure that policy initiatives and tools are implemented across education and training systems. The study visits programme brings together a wide spectrum of education and training specialists and policy-makers to discuss, learn from one another and share experiences in implementing lifelong learning policies in their countries.

European Dimension in Vocational Education: The Attractiveness of Vocational Education

The study visit, entitled as “European Dimension in Vocational Education: The Attractiveness of Vocational Education”, was held in October 13 to 17 2008 in Kielce, Poland. During the visit, host institution states clearly the objectives of the visit, explains the logic and structure of the programme to the six participating countries; tells the group about the group report and invites the group to select a reporter; accompanies the group during the entire visit; provides opportunities for all partners to participate and share in discussions, make sure all participants are given room to contribute; issues attendance certificates to participants; exercises flexibility and tries to accommodate participants’ interests and needs into the content of the study visit, adapt the programme throughout the visit to ensure quality. In this manner, as a Turkish participant, education system in Turkey is explained; Dumlupinar University and Dumlupinar University Vocational High School are extensively introduced.

This study visit in Poland summarizes the practices of host institution. With the contribution of this study visit, it is possible to learn about current vocational education policy in Poland in general and especially in hotel and catering; to learn about examples of good practice; to exchange experiences on vocational education policy; to learn from experiences of organisation and management in hotel and catering.

European cooperation is a priority of the Polish educational system. Hotel and catering are dynamic sectors in Poland due to easy access to all European Union countries. Polish workforce is well qualified and is gaining more and more respect on the European market. Swietokrzyski Region with the capital city Kielce is situated in the heart of Poland and is a good example of problems and expectations of vocational education and training in Poland. Lifelong learning program and especially Leonardo da Vinci is a means to integrate the labour market in European Union.

Quality and efficiency of vocational education and training, which have been in the focus of our study visit, are also in the focus of the EU policy agenda for education and training. The findings and outcomes of study visit on the quality and efficiency of vocational education and training as presented in the group reports and further discussed during the study visit show that there is a wide participation in vocational training- 16-20 years. Poland appears very open-minded towards European Union and exchanging educational policy and practice. However there is a lack of awareness, knowledge and information among many practitioners of European funding opportunities. Polish education is also undergoing huge change, currently developing improvement. However, education policy is still traditional, planned, and centralised.

Outcomes

To sum up, Cedefop invites the participants to share the new ideas they acquired during the study visit with heads of their institutions, their colleagues and professional associations. It will be most beneficial if the outcomes of the seminar are communicated to decision-makers at higher levels, for example, to those setting policies at local/ regional or even national levels.

Teachers, trainers and school leaders and decision makers should benefit more from the multiple opportunities for sharing good practice and cooperation that the Lifelong Learning Programme presents. The study visits programme as well as Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci and Gruntvig programmes should be more used for information exchange and continuous professional development.

In this manner, the outcomes of the study visit will be presented as an academic article in several scientific and academic congress. In order to better disseminate the expected outcomes and results and create a larger network among policy makers and representative organizations, the web portal will be released as a cooperation tool between the partners and dissemination tool. Regarding the impressions and acquisition I got

during the study visit, lecturers at Dumlupinar University Vocational High School are encouraged to prepare projects particularly in the field of Lifelong Learning Programme. Project working groups have started preparing several projects in terms of Lifelong Learning Programme.

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