

MINUTES FROM KICK OFF MEETING

7-8 December 2006

Country: **Slovenia**

Venue: **Slovenian Institute for Adult Education in Ljubljana**

Participating countries and participants: **Germany** (Monika Troester - project coordinator), **Ireland** (Helen Murphy), **Cyprus** (Klitos Symeonides), **France** (Elly Mouron), **Slovenia** (Natalija Zalec and Estera Mozina), **Switzerland** (Bernhard Grämiger).

Day 1st, 7th December 2006

I. Open session for invited Slovenian audience

Meeting started with a 2-hours open session which was organised with to basic aims:

- to present the project aims and objectives to experts in Slovenia,
- to present the partners and their expectations towards the project,
- to start a process of dissemination of the project in Slovenia.

The programme of the event was as follows:

- Welcome and introduction to SIAE, *Ester Mozina, SIAE (10 min)*
- Introduction of the Project, *Monika Tröster, DIE (10 min)*
- Introduction of the participating institutions and short overview of the professionalization of teachers in the field of literacy in each country:
Monika Tröster, DIE, Germany(10 min)
Elie Maroun,ANLCI, France (10 min)
Klitos Symeonides, CAEA, Cyprus (10 min)
Bernhard Grämiger, SVEB, Switzerland (10 min)
Natalija Zalec , SIAE, Slovenia (10 min)
- The Case of Ireland: - *Helen Murphy, WIT(25 min) (done on Friday 8 Dec.)*
- Discussion

Open session was attended by 7 experts from the field of adult literacy and teacher training. SIAE will also publish an article in monthly bulletin Novicke

about the project and open session. All the presentations will be available from the project website.

II. Report from the EU project's co-ordinator meeting in Brussels

Monika Troester, project coordinator, gave some general information as well as some information about the financial and reporting guidelines (in paper as well) to the partners for Gruntvig 1 projects. There were also some guidelines given to enhance the efficiency of the project such as:

- Make a dissemination plan at the start.
- Communication structure needs to be set up.
- All of the documents have to have a reference number of the TRAIN project.
- Follow the survival kit for the EU projects (a concise guides how to manage EU projects).

III. Financial issues and reporting

1. **Contracts:** DIE received the contract from EU Commission just before the meeting, partner contracts will be sent to partners in a week after the meeting (each will receive 2 signed copies). There will be annexes with the contract (work plan, budget, forms for financial reporting)
2. **Approved budget:** There were no cuts in the budget, just some minor corrections.
3. DIE informed the partners that in the project planning no money has been allocated in the project budget for the Handbook (by mistake).

Task for project coordinator:

DIE will check if there are any possibilities to reallocate some money in the budget or get even extra money.

4. DIE got detailed **financial guidelines** from the Commission (see the instructions prepared by DIE for the kick off meeting!)

Task for project coordinator:

DIE send financial guidelines to the partners, if possible DIE will prepare a summary of basic guidelines.

5. Maleen Janus is **financial manager** of the project.

Task for partners:

All partners send the bank details to Maleen Janus immediately after the meeting so that contract can be finalised.

6. **Reporting periods:** DIE proposes to partners according to their experiences more cash flows from the project coordinator to partners enables efficient financial management, therefore there will be 5 cash flows from DIE to partners (on the basis of expenditure) which corresponds the work plan as follows:

- a. March 2007 (financial report and time sheets)
- b. June 2007 (progress financial report and time sheets)
- c. November 2007 (financial report and time sheets)
- d. March 2008 (financial report and time sheets)
- e. September 2008 (final report)

7. **Time sheets** are to be send with the financial reports (keep it simple is the rule of the thumb).

8. Each partners will have to enclose a piece of **evidence of actual daily salary** (signed pay slip of the persons for example), it needs to be clarified which amount of daily salary to be used (brutto, netto),

9. **Staff cost** cannot be changed during the project.

10. **Taxi:** is limited within EU projects, partners shall consider the EU rules on using the taxi.

11. **Daily allowance:** partners have to include a certified copy of the amounts paid according to the country rules (not clear).

Task for project coordinator

DIE will clarify if daily allowance is eligible cost and which amount to use for daily salary.

12. **General costs:** 7% of the total budget / per partner.

13. There will be **extra partner meeting in Switzerland**; money is generously provided by the Swiss (silent) partner for travel and accommodation but no for staff costs. Partners agreed that less working days on other tasks might be used if possible.

IV. Work plan

14. Evaluation of the project proposal from EU evaluators

The EU evaluators stated that the partners shall rethink the number of the tasks promised in the project proposal and the budget. It is recommended to combine the tasks and rationalise the work during the project.

15. PHASE 1: Exploration: state of the art (end march 2007)

The main task within the first phase is to elaborate the state of the art of training of teachers in each country which will be presented in the report or compendium. The following structure of the compendium was proposed (it can be modified):

- a. introduction to the literacy problem in the country / the concept of teaching literacy in the country
- b. national strategy in the field of profesionalisation of literacy teachers training
- c. review of literacy teachers competences
- d. the evolution of the literacy training programmes and the present overview of literacy teachers training programmes
- e. description of best practice in the field of teacher training (contents and concepts)
- f. prevailing problems

The role of compendium:

- to collect the information on literacy teaching in selected countries and to justify the need of profesionalisation,
- an overview of competences that are thought in literacy teacher training in different countries,
- the reports in the compendium and the results of the focus group interviews will be used to as a rationale for the basic modules proposed.

There are some underlying questions the partnerships have to consider when preparing the country reports:

- Who are the literacy teachers?
- Why do we need professional teachers?
- What are the competencies they have to acquire to be able to teach literacy? What training do they need?

- What is meant by the term "the profesionalisation of teacher training" to each of the partners?
(QUALITY, STANDARDS, PROFILES)

Day 2nd, 8th December 2006

Topics and the content put forward by the project coordinator for the Friday session:

- a. agreement on the reports on other countries
- b. design of the questionnaires
- c. introduction of the focus group method
- d. further steps (work plan)
- e. web site
- f. dissemination
- g. communication structure of the project
- h. monitoring and evaluation
- i. commitment and setting dates

16. Questionnaires:

Two groups were formed to produce the questions for questionnaire covering 3 topics from the compendium structure: **C, E, F**.

Summary of 1st group:

Questions that were proposed (after the group discussion) are:

1. What are characteristics of a good teacher?
2. Can you compare your experiences with literacy teachers with your experiences with school teachers?
 - give 3 examples
3. Can you describe the most effective way of learning you have experienced in the literacy field?
4. What are the characteristics of a good literacy teacher?
5. Can you describe one innovative/novel/different experiences in the programme/project/course you have been involved in that was effective?
6. What are the main problems associated with literacy skills teaching and learning?
 - What would you change or do differently?
7. What kind of support do literacy teachers we need to address the issues?

Summary of 2nd group:

The group produced a grid / a model which will enable us to compare the competences and assist us in deciding about the crucial competences. It will be possible to include among the competences most of the competences in proposed modules.

The group posed the following questions / statements:

It is necessary to decide about the list of competencies beforehand?

What set of competences? - Literacy teachers

What method to find a common understanding within the country?

Standards ⇨

competencies	A must	Important	Less important
... enthusiasm	****	*	*
...			
	*	*****	*
	*	*	*****
Practitioners competences	All have it	Most have it	Do not have it

Agreement:

We will try to combine both proposals. We might use the first one to get a broader perspective. The second proposal can be used later as a result of a focus groups discussion.

But:

Task for Monika, Vera and Bernhard:

It is necessary to get an agreement on the list of competences. It is proposed that Monika, Vera and Bernhard work out on a proposal of set of competences and then send it to other partners to review.

23. Presentation of the focus group method (by Vera Mlinar, SIAE)

Vera Mlinar made a short presentation of the focus group method and its potential in the social dialogue. Partners expressed the need to have a summary of the method (short manual).

Relevant points for TRAIN:

- we shall consider the design of the group (it will not be good to have all three groups of respondents in one group),
- it is good to have two people involved in the group moderating actual moderator and the assistant,
- it is important that the moderator has good skills in moderating
- analysis is important part; all opinions are important, we shall find common points but also opinions that are different.
- It is important to take into account the three types of questions when designing questionnaires: introductory, transitional and closure question.

Partners agreed that in each country the interviews with the teachers, experts/researchers and learners will be carried out. It is believed that the competencies required for literacy teachers might not be very different in different countries and that on the basis of results we will be able to define common set of competencies of literacy teachers. It was also agreed among partners that the questionnaire can focus more on the set of competencies of teachers.

Partners stressed that it is important who will be the relevant respondents among the researchers, teachers and learners! Basic criteria for selection of experts shall be:

- they have to be involved in the field of literacy as programme and concept developers, researchers, policy makers or career developers.

Agreement:

Partners agreed to use a focus group method to confirm the competencies of the literacy teachers.

Task for Vera M.

Vera will prepare a short manual how to implement the focus group method.

17. National reports and reports from other countries

All partners will prepare a national report (20 pages) using the agreed structure and a report on one of the countries which are more advanced in the field of literacy (10-15 pages).

Deadline for the reports: **end of March 2007** (optional mid April 2007)

Task for project coordinator

DIE will prepare a proposal of a structure for other country reports.

Tasks for the partners:

Partners will prepare reports for the following countries alongside the report from their own countries:

Elli: Belgium, Helen:

England (option Scotland and Wales),

Bernard: Austria and Lichtenstein,

Natalia: Denmark,

Monika: Netherland and Scotland,

Klitossy: Wales.

18. Dissemination

We shall use opportunities to present the TRAIN project. Example is the ERDI conference in Belgium in the end of April 2007. Bernard will present the chart analysis as a summary of the state of art project national reports at that meeting.

Task for partners:

Each partner has to keep a record about the dissemination and attached in the end of the project to the final report.

19. Website - DIE

Die is responsible for the website; it will be designed within DIE website.

It is recommended by the Commission to make a leaflet with the information about the project.

We shall also consider making project logo (TRAIN). Partners consider to explore the idea of "a train" from the acronym of the project title.

20. Action plan

Next meeting will be held in Switzerland: 20 - 23rd May (budget is for 2 days and 3 nights, we book flights late Wednesday). Swiss organisation is inviting the partners and will cover all costs of travel and accommodation. The interest of the Switzerland is to test one module; it is not yet decided which module. It will be an open session and partners meeting. The topic is compendium and the state of the arts in different countries and the progress report.

There is one meeting more planned in September or October 2007 in Ireland, WIT Dublin. Helen will send us the dates by mail.

Task for project coordinator

DIE will prepare an action plan for the first year of the project with an emphasis on the first 6 months: tasks, responsibilities and deadlines.

21. Communication

Partners will communicate at least one a month via email. DIE has internal platform for communication that also TRAIN partners can reach and use it.

22. Monitoring and evaluation

Monika proposed to use a special evaluation and monitoring procedures that was developed by DIE and they find it useful. It is additional to the proposal but it will help us to monitor the progress of the project. It is a kind of a formative evaluation, which can be done for example in the end of each meeting. The idea is to evaluate the process and to detect possible strengths and weaknesses in time. Klitossy proposed that we use a form they developed in Cyprus for the final evaluation.

External evaluator was also planned in the project proposal.

Partners used the following questions to evaluate the kick off meeting:

Are you content with the information flow before the meeting?

Are the aims / your aims fulfilled?

Are you clear about your role and the tasks?

Was the communication sufficient between the partners and the coordinator (during the meeting)?

Were there enough opportunities to express your ideas?

What are your recommendations regarding further:

- procedure,
- communication?

Minutes prepared by Estera Mozina, SIAE
Ljubljana, 12.12.2006