



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



Innovative strategies for the prevention of the re-offending 2nd Coordinating Meeting, Paris, January 24-25 2008

The second coordination meeting in the project “Innovative Strategies for the Prevention of Re-offending” took place in Paris on 18-19 September 2008.

The main objectives were to

- Have an interim evaluation of the project – evaluate the first year activities
- Discuss in further details the pilot projects: opportunities, limits, difficulties
- Agree on a proposed work agenda for the following 6 months
- Discuss on internal and external communication: project’s website
- Decide on the main lines of the project report: chart of recommendations, technical part.
- Share responsibilities in terms of content (leadership of work packages) and finance
- Define the calendar agenda

List of participants

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Agenda of the meeting

Thursday September 18th

10:00 – 11:00 Intermediate report: collection of reporting documents

11:00 – 12:00 Internal evaluation

12:00 – 12:30 Communication (Web site- online conferences)

14:00 – 17:30 Pilot projects discussion : research results, envisaged partnerships

Friday September 18th

10:00 – 13:00 Pilot projects discussion: recommendations, financing opportunities, project sustainability
Timetable / structure for next meetings

1. Interim report

Considering the fact that we have to hand out the interim report no later than October 30th, all partners were required to produce the necessary documents that can prove that each of us spent at least 70% of the first payment. I daresay that this was the case for most of us.

The main documents concerned

1. Staff sheets: they should cover all the period from December 2007, the official starting date of our contract with the Commission, up to September is possible, otherwise august the latest. By now I am still missing staff sheets from Valencia, all the other partners have sent or handed in theirs.
2. Justifying documents for the expenses incurred during the study visits. These include bills for accommodation, catering, interpretation, but also all the reimbursement that each of us did for the participation of the partners in the respective study visits. Up to now I have
 - detailed list of expenses plus copies of the bills from Gottingen
 - detailed list of expenses plus copy of the bills from Valencia. Still missing the individual reimbursements.
 - detailed list of expenses from Torino. Still missing: copies of the documents.

A general conclusion could be drawn from this: none of the four organizers of study visits spent all the money for the travelling or interpretation. Since there is some money left, and considering the flexibility given by the Commission's amendment that you will find here attached, it has been decided that part of this amount will have to be allowed to pay the website, which was a cost that we did not foresee in the project's budget, but which the Commission imposed on us in the grant agreement. The cost of the website amounts to 5800 €. This cost will be paid from the money that the EFUS had to spend on the organization of the various meetings in Paris.

The question of the money left within the budget of Gottingen, Valencia Local Police and S.R.F. was still not completely solved. The main idea circulating during the meeting was to spend this money on extra days of work for the pilot cities. That means an adjustment of all budgets. It is a feasible option, considering the above mentioned amendment.

Another idea occurred to me that can be another option: considering the difficulty of local authorities to reimburse individuals, and also the fact that we wanted to have all the partners represented in the next visits, Gottingen, Valencia and S.R.F. might use the remaining sums to pay for their own travelling expenses to Brasov and le Havre at least – since more problematic on the issue of reimbursements, and to Opava as well is there is still money left. If it's not clear enough, please contact me individually, I will

try to make myself clearer. Since the pilot cities will not spend any money on the travelling of these four partners (EFUS included), they will use their envelope to pay some additional work days, and we do not have to sign additional clauses to our partnership contracts.

Could you please get back to me on that, to see if it seems ok for everybody or not at all?

As far as evaluation is concerned, you have all received the interim evaluation form that you are kindly requested to fill in at your earliest convenience and send back to us , the EFUS team, and to Pal, at baanpal60@t-online.hu.

Still concerning the budget, there were some additional questions, please refer to the agenda of project's second year.

2. Internal evaluation

A questionnaire related to the 4 study visits was administered before the 2nd coordination meeting.

The main findings were presented by Fanny Mothré, responsible of the Evaluation WP.

The general trend of evaluation was rather positive. All partners consider that this is a good and functional partnership that managed to create certain group cohesion.

Communication among partners seems to be efficient, no other tools were required (propositions of on-line conference were not seen as necessary, except for bilateral relations further on in the implementation process of the pilot projects.

There were few questions on the project as a whole, since the aim was to evaluate the study visits.

Positive aspects

- variety of presentations
- interesting interlocutors
- good interaction between speakers and participants
- good organisation

Negative aspects

- too long (since one after the other)
- too detailed
- sent a bit too late in relation to the actual timing of the visits, some of the partner needed a memory effort to recall all the sessions
- too little time for detailed projects presentation and few documents available.
- not enough time left to debate
- in some cases projects were not focused enough on the issue of re-offending

For the interim evaluation, Nils suggested a more pragmatic questionnaire that contains the following data :

- What do the pilot cities need?
- Which kind of researches and practices are important to answer to the requirements of the pilots cities?
- What is the role of the others partners?

3. Communication

Carla presented the structure of the projects website. No major opposition to it.

All the research material has been translated form the partners' native languages into French and English, the project's official languages and is ready to be uploaded on the website. All articles or documents available in other languages could be published on the web site.

A restricted area will be dedicated to the exchange of documents among partners.

All of us are invited to:

- write a presentation of your organization and its interest in preventing re-offending schemes (in English and also in your mother tongue)

- send us your logo and links (from the municipality and/or from the re-offending project , or office...)
- signal us important changes in national/international legal framework related to the subject of our project.
- indicate any interesting projects or experiences connected with our project.
- signal any interested web sites, research, documentation, books ;
- write articles on the topic of re-offending and prevention, or based on your experiences in order to animate the part of the web site dedicated to debates.

4. Pilot projects

Research results

This session was opened by Nils' presentation of the main research findings. It was quite difficult to make a comparison, considering that not all the partners respected the indicated framework, and reports varied a lot in terms of content, structure and size.

Yet, a classification of projects ranging from "standard" to "innovative" was carried out (see Nils' hand-out)

Many discussions were led on the meaning of the word "innovative". Pilot cities were more favourable to link this definition to the local context.

Envisaged partnerships and actions

All partners agreed that is not realistic to implement the same pilot project in the 3 pilot cities.

Each pilot city has already identified the main lines on which they want to focus in the pilot projects they will implement in their respective cities, as well as the main interlocutors that are going to work together in the field of prevention of re-offending.

Brasov: pilot projects will focus on awareness raising in high schools (in cooperation with ASUM NGO and Codlea penitentiary) and on assistance for employment (city hall and Codlea penitentiary)

Le Havre: pilot projects will be focused employment (alphabetisation, accompanying measures for people going out of prison or on conditional leave in partnership with unemployment agencies, NGOs, justice bodies), accommodation (difficult and costly), civil status papers (city hall official to ensure a one day work per month in prison).

Opava: a community safety board has been set up, including justice, police, health, NGO representatives. A strategy plan was elaborated and one full time social worker will be employed by the city in order to provide assistance to people coming out of prison.

In order to prepare the assessment visits, Brasov, Opava and Le Havre will carry out an local audit. They will focus on their needs with the intention of developing a local strategy and identify the key partners.

Financing and sustainability

The problem with this project is that it set up ambitious goals without providing the necessary means. Considering the pilot cities' commitment, activities will be carried out anyway. It is however unrealistic to expect concrete and countable results by the end of the project. What we can already start doing is to devise evaluation indicators for later on, when the projects are going to be implemented for at least a couple of years. Hence the necessity of finding further financing in order to ensure the project sustainability.

It has been agreed that we should use parts of the following meetings in order to define common project proposals in order to ensure the projects sustainability, through

- Lifelong learning : Grundtvig
- Youth in action and Citizenship
- Interreg IV. 3: city cooperation
- Structural funds for human resources training in Opava and Brasov

- National funding

Additional funding might be obtained via banking bodies with social responsibility (ex. Dexia, Societe Generale).

Agenda for 2008-2009

The initial project foreseen that only the 4 hosts of the study visits would make assessment visits in the 3 pilot cities. That can be done, but at the expense of the group's coherence.

Therefore a proposal was made that all partners would send only one representative in the 3 pilot cities, so that we can stick within the budget. Jarek mentioned that considering the low local prices, we might even send two representatives per partner in each pilot city.

Each should therefore estimate the travelling costs and communicate them as soon as possible to the 3 pilot cities in order to check the feasibility of that. Another accepted proposal was to cancel the 3rd coordination meeting and to use each of the next meetings to advance on the project internals.

Considering the amount of work, the state of preparation of each city, the fact that the 2nd payment is not likely to come before December, all factors that are relevant for the organization of the following visits, the proposed agenda is the following:

Opava : 11-12 December 2008

Le Havre: 29-30 January 2008

Brasov: 19-20 February 2008

Individual reimbursements being difficult or impossible for a city hall to make (since we are not officials of the respective city halls), all expenses have to be incurred by the organizers. One option would be to use the money left from the study visits for buying the tickets for Opava, Brasov and le Havre. This should proposal needs to be validated, since it came after the meeting.

So, next step, is validation of the Opava dates and check up of travelling fares.

The final evaluation visits are to be scheduled in September and October 2009, considering that the project's end date is November 30th 2009.

Reccommendations

The project is also meant to be ended with the printing of a tool kit of some 50 pages. The final report would include a first political part and a second technical part.

The EFUS made a proposal of content and introduction. The introduction, the political part would comprise a list of general principles or guiding lines (some kind of chart, name to be re-discussed and agreed on), and a part meant to highlight the role of cities in preventing re-offending.

Considering the extent of the report, the second part can be conceived as a small guidance with the general framework for action, addressing local officials who want to start project on the prevention of re-offending in their cities. The idea is to provide a structure of "musts" necessary for this kind of projects.

This is also something that we need to work on at each of the following meetings.

Each is of should contribute to the content of this report, so that the final result illustrates the experiences of all the partners in this project.

In case I have skipped anything from these minutes, do not hesitate to get back to me!

Roxana CALFA
Project manager