Results of parallel working groups, 12 May 2021

European Online-Conference

»Pupil mobility in Europe – making inclusion a reality «
Results of the Parallel working groups

Working Group I: Include pupils with disabilities or health problems (physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, chronic diseases, severe illnesses …) in pupil mobility projects

Recommendations for schools / project practice:

- Find appealing activities, e.g. sports, music, circus, contests, like escape rooms, fun quizzes) that engage everyone.
- Build mixed teams, so that all can contribute to a successful inclusive project.
- The full support of the headmaster is fundamental.
- Most important and difficult task: To develop a good network and include teachers, pupils and parents in the whole process of setting up the project. (good communication helps a lot).
- It is important to organise everything to the smallest detail to avoid problems, so do not leave anything to chance.
- Prepare the students 1 year before the exchanges start
- The whole group, including students without special needs, stay in a hotel.
- Have a working group of a cohesive and motivated teachers in the host school.

Burning question/issue:

- How can the sustainability of projects that are mostly focused on activity by pupils be guaranteed?
- Who can help (regular) schools when it comes to mobilities with pupils with special needs (e. g. travels with pupils in wheelchairs…)?
Results of the Parallel working groups

Working Group II: Include pupils from diverse cultural, social and economic backgrounds in pupil mobility projects

Recommendations for schools / project practice:

- Ask students about their interest.
- Dialogue with parents is important to overcome prejudices
- Share experiences in order to break the cultural issue
- To overcome language barriers:
  - pupils always find a „common language“ with the help of language apps etc.
  - music can function as a universal language (jamming together etc.)
  - pupils whose language usually does not play a major role in everyday school life are now experiencing that their Turkish, Greek, Polish language skills etc. are very important for the project.
- Tell pupils, money is not a problem, when they are interested in the project, they are welcome.
- Benefit of having multicultural backgrounds in a class / benefits for natives as well / boost of intercultural competences
- Addressing migrants’ needs
- Involving the families in the preparation of the mobilities
- Plan digital events for students with breakout sessions, also teachers meet in a different events
- After the exchanges: Let teachers share their experiences, lessons learned.

Burning question/issue:

How do we encourage host families with a disadvantaged background to take students in and support them? Proposed solutions:

- Staying in a hostel is an alternative.
- Or some families might be willing to host 2 pupils, so that accommodation is provided for everybody – but the kid whose family cannot host anybody still has a partner from abroad and spends a lot of time with him /her.
Results of the Parallel working groups

Working Group III: Chances of virtual collaboration and blended mobility via the eTwinning platform to support inclusion and diversity

Recommendations for schools / project practice:

- Important that all pupils are involved no matter which backgrounds.
- Find students interests to exchange about them is a good starting activity. Later, topics can be more complex.
- Give them the necessary vocabulary is also a good starting point.
- Work in pairs, choose an exercise to let them introduce with an avatar or another role, e.g. a super hero.
- With regard to language barriers: Use a language that is not the mother tongue of any of the others, otherwise they could be intimidated. Problems are solved, when just doing it. You can see an incredible change, because they just have to practice the language.
- Use tools that every student can use. Recommendable tools are: e.g. jeopardylabs, kahoot, canva, voki.
- Projects should be integrated in the regular curriculum so the extra workload is reduced.
- Build a team of teachers in your school to cover different roles in a project, the school principal should be part of the team as well.
- The coordination of the team in school, but also with project partners is important.
- Brainstorming with partners – cooperation is the key!
- Replan activities – change/modify/adapt (but stick to the original plan if possible!).
- Give clear instructions and break down tasks into smaller steps.
- Organise your TwinSpace efficiently.
- Include a variety of tasks and allow more time (consider break times!)
- Use web tools and apps to transfer the real dimension into the virtual one (include elements of gamification, cultural «pills»)
- Make pupils interact as much as possible (social e-corners, chat box, eTwinning Forums, Padlet…).
- Be creative and take the most out of it!
- Take into account technical issues and always have a plan B ready.
- Analog activities are also possible in eTwinning projects, e.g. sending parcels with sweets to partner classes or sending real letters.
- Maintain the contact continuously also with external tools.
Results of the Parallel working groups

**Working Group III:** Chances of virtual collaboration and blended mobility via the eTwinning platform to support inclusion and diversity

- Make results visible via school website or TwinSpace.
- Supporting mechanisms: families in class. Pupils feel more confident when parents contribute.
- Inform parents regularly, e.g. in meetings, mails and through schools’ websites. Concerning data safety in virtual projects, an agreement can be helpful.
- International eTwinning face-to-face-seminars can help at the beginning.
- eTwinning can be combined with Erasmus+ mobility projects.

**Burning question/issue:**

How to find strategies to share responsibilities amongst colleagues and to get support from the head of the school?
Results of the Parallel working groups

**Working Group IV:** How to reach out to schools with a high number of disadvantaged students?

**Recommendations for National Agencies and School authorities:**

- Best-practice examples are more effective and motivating than school authority initiatives.
- Websites: low accessibility, simple language, simple information level.
- Programme guide: sometimes „administration talking to the field”
- School authorities know their schools:
  - networking
  - peer to peer
  - „project fair”
  - are able to give support in financial issues and help to organize
- School authority manages the application - school works on the content questions.

- Find motivating opportunities for teachers and students.
  Example:
  Mobility: face-to-face encounters: First Down Syndrome Spanish girl who engaged in an internship in a small village in Portugal, in a pharmacy. She had a tutor who helped her integrated. 3-phase model for mobility: Physical mobility needs more thorough preparation than virtual encounters: financial resources, support teachers, communication is very important.
  1\textsuperscript{st}: preparatory phase: questionnaire on expectations, fears, hopes, learning assistants (staff, other pupils); also in the classroom; use authentic documents (songs, website of host school): student-centered, host-country-centered.
  2\textsuperscript{nd}: Implementation of the mobility: learning journal, video, group discussions; social time together; project work.
  3\textsuperscript{rd}: follow-up = evaluation access materials, produce new student materials, trying to integrate everyone, use the same questionnaire as in the beginning for the „past tense”, make intercultural learning visible.

- Mental issues are more difficult to deal with than physical problems. What is being disadvantaged/fewer opportunities? We should let the schools decide. It is not always „that” visible”.
- The purpose is not to put people in boxes and moreover, the boxes are permeable ...
- Support teachers and parents: to connect them, to allow them to speak to each other; to allow a very thorough preparation of pupils, staff, parents, from both sending and host school, to share anxieties.
- Long-term-mobility-project could also be a problem, namely for pupils with anxiety: solution? Maybe to have virtual consultations with their own psychologists (help pay it with grant) and bring their teachers (familiar faces) to the host.

No doubt that showing examples of best practices „hit” the schools’ work much better than NA information.
Results of the Parallel working groups

**Working Group IV:** How to reach out to schools with a high number of disadvantaged students?

**Burning question/issue:**

- It can be scary for teachers. You need to communicate very well with your host schools partners.
- Always the same institutions apply: try to reach the schools with real practical examples.
- How do we convince schools of the value of participating in the programme?
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PHOTOS
PAD / photos from Erasmus+ projects