

Study visit group report

Group No	GR 74
Title of the visit	Environmental Education Centres: Supporting Actions Towards Sustainability
Topic	Theme 03 (Promoting acquisition of key competences throughout the education and training system)
City, country	Olympia, Greece
Type of visit	Mixed
Dates of visit	1-5/10/12
Group reporter	Patricia Twomey Ireland

Dear Participants,

The purpose of a study visit is to generate an exchange of experience and good practice between the country you visit and the countries you all come from. Thus, participating in a study visit can be an exciting experience and an important learning tool for you.

During the visit you are invited to prepare a group report summarising your discussions and learning. This will help Cedefop disseminate what you have learnt to others, who share your interest but did not participate in this particular study visit.

On the first day of the visit, you are to select a reporter who will be responsible for preparing the final report and submitting it to Cedefop. Everybody should contribute to the report by sharing their views, knowledge, and practices in their respective countries. Please start working on the report from the first day of the visit.

You will, of course, be taking your own notes during presentations and field visits; but the group report should highlight the result of the group's reflections on what was seen and learnt during the entire visit and the different perspectives brought by the different countries and participants. The report should **NOT** read as a travel diary, describing every day and every session or visit.

Cedefop will publish extracts of your reports on its website and make them available to experts in education and vocational training. When writing the report, please keep this readership in mind: make your report clear, interesting, and detailed enough to be useful to colleagues throughout Europe.

By attaching any photos to the report, you agree to Cedefop's right to use them in its publications on study visits and on its website.

Please prepare the report in the working language of the group.
Please do not include the programme or list of participants.

The reporter should submit the report to Cedefop (studyvisits@cedefop.europa.eu) within ONE month of the visit.

I FINDINGS

This section summarises the findings of the group while visiting host institutions, discussing issues with the hosts and within the group. You will be reflecting on what you learnt every day. But to put them together and give an overall picture, you need to devote a special session to prepare the final report on the last day of the visit.

In this section, it is important that you describe not only things you learnt about the host country but also what you learnt about the countries represented by group members.

1. One of the objectives of the study visits programme is to exchange examples of good practice among hosts and participants. Cedefop will select well-described projects/programmes/initiatives and disseminate them to former participants and a wider public, including potential partners for future projects. Therefore it is important that you identify and describe all aspects that, in your view, make these projects/programmes/initiatives successful and worth exploring.

Describe each of the good practices you learnt about during the visit (both from the hosts and from one another) indicating the following:

Title of the project/programme/initiative	Country	Name of the institution that implements it (if possible, provide a website)	Contact person (if possible) who presented the programme to the group	Whom the project/programme/initiative addresses	What features of the project/programme/initiative make it an example of good practice
Life Long Learning programme	Greece	Greece Study Visits Programmes	Georgia Sarri	All EU citizens	The importance of Life Long Learning
The promotion of Environmental Education through the regional Directorate of education in Western Greece	Greece	Greece primary education	Theodores Baris	Greek primary school children and the knock-on effect to the EU community at large	How Greece is promoting Environmental Education in the primary school system and the importance of environmental education for all our futures
Environmental sensitization: a central concept in the English language curriculum	Greece	English Language Teachers in the Prefecture of Ilia, Peloponnese	Marianthi Kitadaki	All Greek school students	How Greece combines the teaching of environmental education and the English language in the curriculum
Environmental Education in Greece the case of Environmental Education Centre of Krestena	Greece	Environmental Education Centre Krestena	Petros Gavras	The local and wider community around Krestena and the wider community being made aware of the centre's programmes together with the innovative	The programmes of environmental education in the centre for primary and secondary schools and the local adult community

				pedagogy used by the teachers at the centre (which now includes the group on this Study Visit)	
Network of Environmental Centres in Czech Republic	Czech republic	Ekocentrum Paleta	Jiri Bures	Schools and Environmental Education Centres in Czech Republic	The provision of programmes of environmental education in environmental education centres for schools.
The Danish Pedagogy of Education and Sustainability	Denmark	UCC Paedagoguddannelsen Froebel	Ole Wohlgemuth	University students training to be teachers	How we use experiments and hands-on education and the principles of constructivism in the education system of Denmark
CSR and Sustainable Business Solutions	Poland	Kozminski University, and Nyenrode University	Woyciech Przychodzen	Business Students and Businesses in Poland	This innovative project consists of visits to 25 different companies across Poland to give students the chance to discuss management approaches to corporate social responsibility, sustainability and future perspectives. All companies receive a written feed-back report.
The Municipality of Mora in the context of environmental education	Sweden	Fämäs Skola	Magnus Lantz	Primary school children and teachers in Mora	The Swedish presentation shortly described the town of Mora, Sweden, geographically, culturally and environmentally. Two smaller municipal primary schools were also presented and how the schools tried to use their advantaged situation near a forest and lake to involve the

					pupils in environmental education. The teachers at the schools aim to include most of the compulsory subjects in the outdoor learning.
Environmental Education in Ireland today	Ireland	St. Vincent de Paul, UCC and Cork Environmental Forum	Patricia Twomey	All citizens of Ireland and associated groups worldwide	The various NGOs in Ireland involved in promoting and teaching environmental education at all levels e.g. The Hollies, Seed Savers, Transition Towns, An Taisce, The Green Flag Programme, Coillte, Shell to Sea Campaign, Cork Environmental Forum, Slow Food Campaign, Muintir na Tíre, Grow it Yourself Ireland, No Fracking Campaign, campaign starting to propose that “The Law of Mother Earth” as passed in Bolivia be made law in Ireland.
The Municipality of Almansa in the context of Environmental Education	Spain	IE. S Herminio Almendros	Nuria ruiz Sanchez	The teachers, students, local authorities and residents of Almansa	The presentation showed the context of the landscape in Almansa and the way in which they work in the high school connecting all subjects in order to increase the knowledge about environmental education. It also explains how the local authorities contribute to the projects.
Environmental	England	University of	Michael Fullen	University Students	An overview of the University

Education at University of Wolverhampton		Wolverhampton		and cross-curricular courses to increase integrated knowledge and working	of Wolverhampton UK. Particular emphasis was placed on relationships between Environmental Education, Sustainability Issues and Soil Science.
Environmental Education in Sardinia context	Italy	Istituto di Istruzione Superiore "G Deledda" Cagliari	Maria Vittoria	Science teachers in Italy. Students and society in general	Organisation of events dedicated to science and its relationship with society. Improve science teaching skills and develop assessment methods in the teaching of environmental subjects.
Environmental education in the context of Kurikanaulma School	Finland	Pirkalan Kunta Department of Education Kurnikankulman Koulu	Mika-Matti Alasuvanto	Teachers, educationalists, policy makers in Finland	An overview of Environmental and Special Education in Finland
Environmental education in Italian Secondary Schools	Italy	ITCG Corinaldesi Senigallia	Daniele Sordoni	Teachers, policy makers, schools in Italy	An overview of the role of environmental education and sustainability in Italy in the growth of new generations to promote active citizenship. Now, because of the economic crisis and the new reforms of education, many of the programmes are now run privately. It is really important that the action of the actors in school networks (teachers, students etc.) co-operate to support environmental experimental projects such as

					“Green Flag” and learning by doing in natural places.
Life Long Learning towards achievement of environmental sustainability	Malta	Directorate of Lifelong Learning	Joseph Borg	Adult and lifelong learners in Malta	An overview of the role of Adult courses and scholarships aimed at assisting and increasing awareness regarding issues concerning environmental sustainability and solutions to such problems.
The natural and physical context of the holy landscape of ancient Olympia	Greece	Environmental education Centre at Krestena	Angeliki Tsoura	Teachers in Greece, the study visit group	How the three elements of culture, nature and the spirit (spirituality) is used to teach holistically the relevance and importance of environmental education.
The Holy Landscape of Ancient Olympia	Greece	Environmental education Centre at Krestena	Angeliki Tsoura and representative from Greek Department of Archaeology	The study visit group	A practical example of how the three elements of culture, nature and spirituality are integrated in teaching environment education.
The facilities of the Environmental Education centre of Krestena	Greece	Environmental education Centre at Krestena	K. Yanniris	The study visit group	An overview and tour of the facilities at Krestena
The shoreline of western Peloponnes: the case of Kaiafas	Greece	Environmental education Centre at Krestena	Maria Schoina	The study visit group	Practical Fieldwork at Kaiafas under the guidance of Maria Schoina (a practical example of what they do with the children)
Municipality of Krestena environmental	Greece	Mayor of Krestena town Hall Krestena	Dilonysios Mpalioukos	The study visit group	The vital importance of the work of the Environmental Education Centre at Krestena to

sustainability					the local and wider community and the importance and necessity of keeping and expanding this facility especially under the current economic difficulties. The area has already experienced positive changes as a result of the teaching at this centre.
Andritsena: Environmental path with emphasis at the region's traditional architecture and the village's library which dates from 1840	Greece	Environmental education Centre at Krestena	Panayota Ntaltagianni	The study visit group	Preparation for group visit to Andretsena and presentation of information about the village, library and museum
Library at Andretsena	Greece	Library at Andretsena	Librarian	The study visit group and staff from Krestena	A history and guided tour of the library where among the many items in this treasured and valuable collection, she showed us a number of items such as a first edition of a book by Rousseau containing notes in his handwriting, first editions of Homer, and other books printed on the original Guttenberg press.
The vast areas affected by the fire of 2007	Greece	The areas we drove through and could observe	Angeliki Tsoura and the staff of Krestena and Danai Kousouri	The study group	We were shown the widespread devastation caused by the fire of 2007 as well as the natural

		from the bus			recovery and also some areas where new olive trees had been planted.
Temple of Appollo	Greece	Greek Tourism and Information Office	Danai Kousouri	The study visit group	Danai provided us with a verbal history of Greece and the places through which we drove or could see whilst on the bus from Athens to Olympia. This set the country and its history in perspective for us and enriched our visit and learning. She also provided us with similar information when we visited various parts of the Peloponnese. She gave us a fully informed and engaging guided tour of the Temple of Appollo.

** You can describe as many good practices as you find necessary. You can add rows to the table.*

2. The study visits programme aims to promote and support policy development and cooperation in lifelong learning. That is why it is important to know what you learnt about such policies and their implementation during your visit. You are invited to describe your findings concerning the following:

2.1 APPROACHES TAKEN BY PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES (BOTH HOST AND PARTICIPANTS') REGARDING THE THEME OF THE VISIT. ARE THERE ANY SIMILAR APPROACHES/MEASURES IN PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES? WHAT ASPECTS ARE SIMILAR AND WHY? WHAT ASPECTS ARE DIFFERENT AND WHY?

Activities and aims very similar.

The difference in teaching, availability of access to environmental education centres in our countries is largely based on the financial aspect - lack of or cutting back of government funding. Most countries have privately owned centres, but some of these are cost prohibitive and some are not easily accessed by public transport.

Difference in approaches to teaching and engaging in environmental education but overall holistic approaches are common.

Lack of political will in providing support for environmental education (none of our countries has the Bolivian "The Law of Mother Nature" or anything approaching it).

2.2 CHALLENGES FACED BY PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES (INCLUDING HOST) IN THEIR EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT POLICIES RELATED TO THE THEME OF THE VISIT. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES? ARE THEY COMMON CHALLENGES? IF SO, WHY? IF NOT, WHY NOT?

Economy, funding and staff cut backs.

Lack of teachers qualified in environmental studies.

Lack of political will to ensure full and effective implementation of policies and laws already in place relating to education, environmental education, anti-pollution, environment protection and sustainability.

Lack of political will to promote and enforce protection of the environment as exists in Bolivia. (None of the participating countries has the Bolivian "The Law of Mother Nature" or anything approaching it)

Geographic situation of environmental education centres to ensure ready and easy access is a problem in some countries.

Some countries are able to fully fund field visits for teachers and/or students, others are not.

2.3 NAME AND DESCRIBE EFFECTIVE AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED THAT PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES (BOTH HOST AND PARTICIPANTS) APPLY TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES MENTIONED IN QUESTION 2.2. PLEASE MENTION SPECIFIC COUNTRY EXAMPLES.

The incorporation of history, culture, mythology and ancient spirituality into the teaching of the study of environment and sustainability (Greece).

University Business Studies Students visiting companies to research and advise the different companies on how the company could incorporate sustainability and environmental management into their work practice.(Poland)

A dense network of environmental centres encourages participation and collaboration between centres. Schools get choice of visiting centres outside their areas (Czech)

Vast network of NGOs co-operating and supporting each other on various aspects of environmental education, environment protection and sustainable development according to their areas of expertise (Ireland)

2.4 ASSESSMENT OF THE TRANSFERABILITY OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES. COULD ANY EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE PRESENTED IN THIS REPORT BE APPLIED AND TRANSFERRED TO OTHER COUNTRIES? IF SO, WHY? IF NOT, WHY NOT?

Modify and adapt the mythological approach as appropriate to each individual country combined with the multi-sensory approach as used in Kretsena Greece. Use environmental education to incorporate a more holistic and integrated approach to the curriculum overall.

Promote local knowledge and active participation aimed at active citizenship. (All)

Promote locally produced environmental friendly products. (All)

3. Creating networks of experts, building partnerships for future projects is another important objective of the study visit programme.

Please state whether and which ideas for future cooperation have evolved during meetings and discussions.

- Facebook page with links to the organisations of participants in this study visit, statutory and non-statutory.
- Our page will list environmental education organisations and centres in our different countries and links thereto.
- This page will also include links to newspaper and journal articles and organisations which we find outside our countries.
- We will feed into this page any relevant courses/seminars/conferences/study visits of which we become aware which would be of interest to the study group.
- We will put up any presentations we may give related to this study visit as appropriate.
- We will stay in communication with each other, via email and Facebook to decide on our Facebook Page name and to keep up the momentum and enthusiasm which this visit has generated within us.

4. What is the most interesting/useful information that the group believes should be communicated to others? To whom, do you think, this information will be of most interest?

A holistic approach for the teaching of environmental education – history, culture, mythology and the ancient religions to show the importance of the environment. This would be done as appropriate to the culture and folklore of each country.

The findings and information should be aimed at policy makers, advisers and politicians in Government Education, Environment, Food, Fisheries, Planning, Health and Finance Departments – in fact, ALL government departments to show that environmental protection and education has to be approached in an holistic and inclusive way, to ensure a sustainable environment for the future generations as has been experienced by the human race for generations. It is only in the last few centuries that the planet is being put at risk for profit by a few to the detriment of many.

II Organisation of the visit

This part of the report will not be published but it will be made available to the organiser and will be used by national agencies and Cedefop to monitor and improve implementation of the study visits programme.

We recognise the value of on-going feedback as a way of ensuring that the programme is at all times a responsive and dynamic initiative, meeting the needs of its various participants and target audiences. In this section you are invited to give us your feedback on several factors that, in our opinion, contribute to an effective visit.

1. Discuss within the group and check if you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please mark only one box (☑) that expresses most closely the opinion of the entire group. Please use Question 2 of this section to elaborate on your responses, if needed.

		All agree	Most agree	Most disagree	All disagree	Not applicable
e.g.	The size of the group was good.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.	The programme of the visit followed the description in the catalogue.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.	There was a balance between theoretical and practical sessions.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3.	Presentations and field visits were linked in a coherent and complementary manner.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.	The topic was presented					

		All agree	Most agree	Most disagree	All disagree	Not applicable
	from the perspectives of the following actors of the education and training system in the host country:					
1.4.1.	government and policy-makers	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.2.	social partners	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.3.	heads of institutions	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.4.	teachers and trainers	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.5.	students/trainees	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.6.	users of services	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5.	There was enough time allocated to participants' presentations.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.6.	The background documentation on the theme provided before the visit helped to prepare for the visit.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.7.	Most of the group received a programme well in advance.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.8.	The information provided before the visit about transportation and accommodation was useful.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.9.	The organiser accompanied the group during the entire programme.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.10.	The size of the group was appropriate.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.11.	The group comprised a good mixture of participants with diverse professional backgrounds.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.12.	There were enough opportunities for interaction with representatives of the host organisations.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.13.	There was enough time allocated for discussion within the group.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.14.	The Cedefop study visits website provided information that helped to prepare for the visit.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. If you have any comments on the items 1.1. – 1.14 above, please write them in the box below

THE VISIT WAS WELL ORGANISED, THE CONTENT WAS EXCELLENT. THE ADVANCE INFORMATION ON VARIOUS LINKS SENT TO PARTICIPANTS AIMED AT HELPING US PREPARE FOR THE VISIT WAS MOST USEFUL.

III Summary

1. Having summarised all your reflections and impressions, please indicate how satisfied you are with your participation in the study visit. Indicate the number of participants for each category, e.g.

Very satisfied

Very satisfied Satisfied Somewhat satisfied Not satisfied Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

2. What elements and aspects of the study visits do you think could be changed or improved?

1 person suggested less time spent on lunch.

3. If there is anything else you would like to write about that is not included in the above questions, please feel free to write below or attach a separate sheet

No

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