

Joint staff training mobility

Intermediate report by Eli Ringkjøb, Sandnessjøen (Norway)

Based on <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Belgium-Flemish-Community:Overview> and your own experience during the 2 to 4-week job shadowing mobility, you must have a good understanding of the Belgian (Flemish) educational system in general and the one at Miniemeninstituut in particular.

1. Please compare the Flemish system in general and the Miniemeninstituut - secondary school for technical and vocational education - organization in particular to the situation in your country and your school.

I think there are several differences between our school systems:

- a) In Norway all subjects are graded. If I understand it correctly your school does not use graded subjects at all.*
- b) Some of the exams are made locally by the schools themselves, and some are made nationally by the central educational authorities. At Miniemeninstituut there are no national exams.*
- c) We do not have a school bell for start or end of lessons.*
- d) In our school the teachers do their own reports on absent pupils. At the Miniemeninstituut a man came every morning to the classrooms and made a list.*
- e) When a pupil left the classroom at the Miniemeninstituut, he or she had a place/room to go to. In our school we do not have a special room for those students who leave the classroom.*
- f) Our school building is quite new.*
- g) Our cleaning staff work in the daytime.*
- h) We have a canteen where pupils can buy food and drinks.*
- i) At our school all pupils and teachers are issued with their own computers.*
- j) We start school at 08.30 and end at 14.50. This is because some of our pupils have a long way to travel home, some by boat or bus. Our lunch break is just 20 minutes.*
- k) Your school has longer holidays. Our Christmas holiday varies every year, depending on when Christmas Eve is. Our Easter holiday is one week + one day.*
- l) The Miniemeninstituut has a lot more subjects than in technical/vocational programmes in Norway have. In Norway vocational programmes just have one foreign language (English). At the Miniemeninstituut you have English, French (in vocational) and German (in technical) as foreign languages, and subjects like history or geography (although integrated in a theme-based project in vocational directions).*

m) In Norway the pupils usually spend the breaks inside the school building, either in the canteen, in the corridors or in the classroom. They often play games on the computer and surf the internet. Your pupils get fresh air in the breaks :-). I like that.

But there are some similarities too:

a) In our vocational classes/programmes we also have small groups, maximum 15 pupils in each class.

b) The pupils in both countries are very similar, actually. Sometimes our pupils can be quite noisy too but in my opinion the pupils at the Miniemeninstituut didn't pay enough attention to the teachers during the lessons. They were very nice and kind to me, though.

c) Our pupils do also have a work placement, like your pupils have.

2. Please describe what your staff training mobility consisted of. Which activities did you do?

I followed several English teachers in different classes (Tourism, Trade and ICT). I was impressed with their language skills. I also attended some German lessons. I visited a school for immigrants with Martina, the SEN-teacher from Italy. And we listened to a teacher do her lesson with an autism-student. Martina and I discussed the SEN-teaching systems in our countries and compared similarities and differences.

I received some information about the Comic Strip.

I had several presentations about myself, my school, the education system of Norway and about my hometown. The students asked a lot of questions.

In our spare time we went to a concert and to the museum of Leuven. Very nice and interesting.

3. Which activities did you find most useful and why?

Everything was very interesting, but what I liked the most was the English lessons. In Norway we do not speak as much English as we should, so this was a good opportunity for me to speak more English.

4. Which activities did you find least useful and why?

I think everything was very useful, and I wouldn't have wanted to miss out on anything.

5. Which recommendations would you make to improve your school's infrastructure and organization?

Perhaps the immigrant school (OKAN, Haasrode) we visited. At home we don't have a school like that. I like the way they run the school.

6. What obstacles have you met during your mobility and how have they been solved?

I don't think I met any obstacles during my stay. There was a problem with the internet in my apartment, but that has nothing to do with the school.

7. To what extent did the training mobility correspond with your expectations? Have you been able to take initiative which contributed to reach the aims of the mobility?

The training mobility corresponded very well with my expectations. I had been told that the teachers at the Miniemeninstituut were fantastic, and about your hospitality. And it was all as I had been told.

8. Did you get a good look at the different project levels (comic book creation - use of SharePoint - learning and teaching mobilities - special educational needs teaching)? How will you inform your colleagues at your school about these levels?

I got a good look at most of the different projects, but I think I have to learn more about the comic book creation. I have already told a lot to my colleagues about my stay in Leuven, but after the Easter holiday, Margit and I will make a Power Point presentation to inform the rest of our school about these levels.

9. How would you assess your training mobility? Think of the combination pedagogical / social activities - communication - information - work load - timing etc.

My training mobility was a very good experience - in all ways. I am sorry I didn't spend a whole month there.

10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions for improvement of future staff training mobilities?

No, I don't.