

Joint staff training mobility

Intermediate report

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 German system in general and the Miniemeninstituut organization in particular to the situation in your country and your school.*

Comparison of school systems

The biggest difference between Norway and Belgium is that many schools in Belgium are “private” schools (they work independently and compete against each other). In Norway the most schools are public so that „enhetsskolen“ want to make sure that the schools offer the same quality. In Norway everybody has a right to go to school for 13 years. From the 10th class the students choose their way, either vocational or general subjects. In Belgium they choose earlier at the age of 12. The catholic schools seems to be quite popular and high standard schools.

In Norway grades are very important for the choice of school and for your future studies. It seems that it has not such big focus in Belgium.

One big difference is the possibilities in choice of schools the pupils have in Belgium. And everything is „close“. In Norway we have one upper secondary school in rural areas. So if the children in my region want to be a cook for instance. He/she would have to move away from home.

It would be interesting to study more about the school system, and compare. So I will ask more questions next time we meet! It was also very interesting to discuss the differences and similarities in the school systems in general and also when it comes to PISA-results.

I also want to mention, that all of the staff in Belgium seem very professional and dedicated. Learning and the meaning of education seem as important as food and drinks. In Norway it sometimes seem like we have to convince the students the importance of knowledge, skills and attitude. I think that it is more difficult to get a job in Belgium, and maybe that’s one reason why.

Strip to Identity

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

Your activities

I attended German lessons and lessons in tourism. I also was asked to present Norway in two different classes.

I went to every activity which was possible to see as much as possible.

We also visited three different institutions. The Irish center in Leuven, the language center in Leuven and we visited the administration center of some of the private primary schools in Leuven. We also had a visit by Microsoft and a lecture/workshop about the Finnish school system which was very interesting.

We also meet with the coordinators and other colleagues in the evening.

The coordinator in Leuven made a wonderful job planning the training for us!

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

Most useful activities

Most useful was to visit the different classes, and to experience the everyday life at school. It was good to meet the headmaster and different members of the staff for informal conversations and to ask questions about „how“ and „why“. It was also very interesting to see how teachers interact as colleagues and towards the students. I also liked the visits to other institutions, because I in general am interested in organization and administration of learning institutions.

I was surprised by the rules in the school, but I also think they were positive. For instance; no mobile phones were allowed. And the students have to leave their classrooms in the break. So, they get fresh air and talk to each other. In Norway students sit in their classroom in the break and press the buttons on their Iphone...

The most useful session was the lecture of the Finnish school system and about PISA. We had a lot of good discussions about the good and bad sides, - the difference in the schools system in many countries. I would like to learn more and work with this subject more!

Strip to Identity

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

Least useful activities

I think the diversity in activities made the stay at Miniemeninstituut so exciting!

Just to see a different country from „the inside“ was such a inspiration form me as a professional!

Well, the meeting with Microsoft was maybe a bit too long, but I also got some new ideas because your IT-manager had made some good forms for the school. In form of using a computer and different software, I think Norway has made a big leap. In Norway every teacher and every student has their own laptop. Bur I think that we can also learn from other countries - maybe we are too attached to our computers? There are many possibilities by using the software of Office 365. So we have to do some more work on this in Norway, I think.

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

Recommendations

In Norway we complain a lot about facilities at the school and other things. In Belgium I heard no complaints although the facilities were not as good as in Norway. In Belgium: no desks or phones for the teachers, very few computers, few meeting rooms, old buildings. In Norway we are far better off, and we still complain.

The teachers in Belgium seem very dedicated and professional. Many teachers work many hours. The work on the pedagogical mainly and they are very autonomous. The secretary office do a lot of the rest (substitute teachers, information, copying). Maybe there is a connection there?

In Norway we have a lot of meetings. In Belgium the headmaster meet the staff three times a year, send a newsletter quite often and the teachers organize themselves and find their way of cooperation. Well, both ways can maybe learn from each other?

I like that the school has some basic rules, for instance about mobile phones not accepted. In Norway the rights of the individuals and the students are very strong. But I think mobile phones steal a lot of time in Norwegian schools, and we need to see what we can do about it.

Strip to Identity

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



Obstacles and solutions

4 weeks of job shadowing was too long to be away from work. There was also little money for substitute teachers. But my colleague and I shared one mobility, which was accepted by our national agency. It was a good solution for us.

One other obstacle was the bad conditions for Wi-Fi - where we stayed. It was a problem to check mail and do the work I had planned to do. I didn't know how to solve this.

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?*



Expectations

I got good information before I came to Leuven, and the training corresponded well with my expectations. I would have liked to job shadow one of the school-leaders for a whole day. Maybe it also would be a good idea to shadow one teacher also for a whole school day.

The organization of the programme each week was good, and we were able to make individual plans.

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?*



Link with different project levels

For me it is mostly about learning and teaching perspectives. My colleague Eli Ringkjøb will share our experiences with the pedagogical staff at our school and we plan to write an article for the homepage and the local newspaper.

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Personal assessment

I want to share my experience from Leuven with my students and my colleagues.

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

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



Comments and suggestions
