



# Sustainability kit for partnerships

*After a fruitful Comenius/Grundtvig partnership where experiences have been exchanged, new friendships been tied, new ideas been found – where do you go without new funding? How can you achieve sustainability for this partnership and how can you pursue international activities at your organisation?*

*There are basically two ways of looking at sustainability after the funded project period and these are:*

- I. Consolidation & development – how to pursue and further develop the good work at your own organisation and/or in the local community (pages 3–7)*
- II. Continuity – how to continue the collaboration with your partner organisations on a European level (pages 8–19)*

*In the following pages you will find ideas of how to proceed, whether you choose consolidation & development and/or continuity.*

## I. Consolidation & development within your organisation and/or in the local community

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### I a. Identify efficient strategies to maintain activities on a national level

Although the European dimension is in focus in a Partnership and you have obtained a multicultural view on certain fields of interest during your Partnership, there is still a possibility to maintain activities on a national level. A Swedish nursery school (Romstad Förskola, Karlstad) very much enjoyed the multicultural aspects from the Partnership on the themes addressed and on the mutual activities such as exchanging drawings and photos, singing songs and counting in other languages etc. They therefore decided to continue with multicultural aspects in daily work and contacted a more multicultural nursery in the city. Together these two nurseries exchange children with each other (half a group at a time) to make them understand and learn about each others' cultures.

Parallels could easily be drawn e.g. in school subjects or courses such as home economics, civic science, history, music etc. If no other educational organisations can provide the multicultural aspects, there are probably associations or organisations based on different national origins that could be contacted in the local community.

Use your local, regional and national networks!

#### I b. Agree on the future working plan to implement findings

Your Partnership is probably the result of needs in your own organisation to develop your international dimension and certain more specific methodological or educational needs. When the Partnership is over, you have most likely achieved important results that you should profit of for a long time. Do not work alone on this - take the chance to compare your plans for implementation within the Partnership. Together you can achieve more than if you try to be creative by yourselves. Once you have agreed on how to proceed, make a mutual future working plan and also consider establishing a written long-term contract for future commitment by all parties.

#### I c. Agree on the future working plan for international cooperation

Your Partnership might be your first step into international cooperation and your chance to show decision makers the importance of this kind of activity. Don't miss this chance! What you need is a kind of insurance that international cooperation is a natural part of your activities in your organisation. A written and signed long-term agreement with the partners will be very helpful, and don't hesitate to ask your partners for good examples of documents that can be used. The Swedish adult education organisation "Centre for Flexible Learning" in Söderhamn is very successful in international cooperation funded by EU. They have a clear plan and financial strategies, including a budget for international cooperation. Even if an application is turned down, their opinion is that the discussions in the partnership before applying are valuable. For instance they use their continuously growing network to arrange study visits and other kinds of exchanges if no funding can be obtained.

Both written plans and a reasonable budget for international cooperation work as a signal system for staff, parents and learners. And so do activities where learners take active part in international activities; cooperation and competitions. In a situation of competition between schools or adult education providers this might be a useful promotion tool!

#### I d. Establish an international coordinator/project manager

Together with a plan for your long-term international cooperation and activities, you will probably need to establish an international coordinator/project manager. This function needs to be confirmed not only in a plan but also to be granted sufficient resources as regards time and budget. A serious commitment from the organisation has the effect of signalling that new ideas and initiatives are welcome and will be anchored in the organisation.

#### I e. Elaborate a staff manual for future use

Often when Partnerships work on pedagogical/didactical issues or also directly with methodological aspects of teaching certain subjects, many good ideas are found and elaborated together. These should all be gathered in a manual for future use for two reasons: firstly, so as not to lose track of good ideas and secondly to extend the lifecycle of the outcomes and findings from European cooperation. This is what a Swedish nursery school has done, (Tusenskönan förskola, Landskrona). In addition, thanks to the Comenius Partnership, they also developed a manual for staff on how to introduce new pupils in a carefully prepared way. The introduction of newcomers, especially from other countries, is tricky and the more you know

about other cultures, the easier the introduction will be. All the partner organisations in the Partnership contributed to the manual with their different cultural aspects as to traditions and customs, but such a manual can naturally be elaborated further by using associations or organisations based on different national origins that exist in the local community.

I f. Establish new contents for school subjects/curricula for the organisation

Thanks to the input of new knowledge and new ideas during the Partnership, there is sometimes sufficient ground for starting a completely new module or course at the organisation. At the Swedish upper secondary school of St. Eskil, Eskilstuna, a new 100-hour course of advanced English has been established including a class exchange with their former Dutch partner school Meergronden, Almere. The themes for this course can differ, but for the school year 06/07, the learners studied and compared each country's view on various ethical matters such as prostitution, drugs, welfare system while working merely in English.

I g. Develop a bank of themes treated during the project, to be re-used in future years

Instead of dropping all the interesting themes that you have touched or worked on during the Partnership, you could keep them in a data bank or a data base at your organisation. This way you could, like the Swedish upper secondary school, Vadsbogymnasiet in Mariestad, bring up the subject again during, for example, an English class. Remember to store, not only the theme itself, but also more concretely the way in which you worked with the theme. This will ensure you are prepared whenever you want to use resources again in the future.

I h. Continue and extend the use of ICT

Take the chance to invite everyone involved in the Partnership locally to try new ways of using ICT. Communication by e-mail, web cams, platforms and so on will strengthen everyone's feeling of involvement in the Partnership and will also have spin off effects. Many teachers and students have come to know each other on a more personal level and even visit each other on holidays. The communication enhances their ICT-skills.

I i. Continue the communication in foreign languages in different educational contexts

You will probably have noticed it already – as soon as you drop your fears of speaking a foreign language you will be open to using it in new contexts. Often foreign languages are only used in language classes, but there is no reason to limit yourself to that. Why not challenge the learners to use one of a foreign language in subjects like home economics when preparing food from other countries or like history when treating events in other countries. Do something out of the ordinary!

#### I j. Continue the integration of subjects

In some countries, it is quite common for staff teaching different subjects to cooperate. A teacher of Mother Tongue easily cooperates with a teacher of History for example. Several countries have established the work of staff teams that are mutually responsible for a certain class, although for different subjects. However, even if you haven't implemented this way of working, you will have most likely experienced this way of working during your Partnership. Therefore it should be an easy task to continue doing so even afterwards. Evaluations carried out within learner groups clearly state their appreciation of a more global view of a certain theme following input from different subjects on a certain theme.

#### I k. Continue the elaboration of training modules

When a Partnership has focused on creating training modules for staff and/or learners, it is quite natural to continue developing these after the funding period. The French "Association du CFP Aquitaine" in Bordeaux has pursued their work by evaluating thoroughly all the training modules and especially how they have been interpreted in the different countries/ cultures/communities in order to improve them and extend their field of application within the organisation after the project period.

#### I l. Continue the in-service training of staff in an international context

In-service training funded by the EU is often used both in Comenius and in Grundtvig. Training courses, attending seminars and conferences as well as job shadowing are valuable instruments for all organisations with an ambition to work in a more internationally-oriented way. In many countries there are national programmes as well as EU programmes.

In one Grundtvig Partnership, the Swedish partner Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan in Stockholm was asked to organise a training course in the partner institution Hellenic Institute of Sign Language in Greece. In another Grundtvig project, the participation of a Swedish partner was not funded. A representative from the organisation, Kommunledningskontoret in Karlstad, managed to join the partnerships meetings anyway and held a course for the colleagues. Afterwards he acted as a coach for his colleagues.

Be open to invitations as well as to going abroad for a course or a conference, and be prepared to be the expert and not only the learner!

#### I m. Continued dissemination of results

Taking advantage of a finished Partnership could also mean continuing the dissemination of results, especially if these are products, such as handbooks, manuals, calendars or films to mention a few. Not only does this lead to increased knowledge or your organisation within the local community or even the region and the country as a marketing tool, but if you can actually **sell** the product, you could even end up with a funding resource for a new future collaboration!

I n. Be open to new partnerships, new projects, new partners

New contacts, new knowledge, new needs. The more you work with new people and in new contexts, the more you come across new challenges and opportunities. Ask your partners in the Partnership for tips and ideas and try to be open for other EU programmes than the one you have experience from!

I o. Build a local network for each partner region with public and private actors

A French organisation called DEVMED in Nancy, whose Grundtvig Partnership aim was to develop relationships between Mediterranean countries, started a local network in their region as a means to maintain activities initiated during the Partnership period. One regional institution is responsible for hosting and for providing information, orientation, training as well as monitoring. The network created a platform where project ideas could be developed while focusing on e.g. communication strategies, dissemination, evaluation and experiments with different target groups. Another example from the world of schools is Munkebergsskolan, Luleå, Sweden, where their associated partner (a technical organisation) has assisted them in building a network with a focus on technique. This network includes a few schools as well as organisations and associations from the region and thanks to the network, the above mentioned school has been provided with new ideas for the classroom and with possibilities for interesting study visits.

## II. Continuity within the partnership

There is a considerable amount of possibilities to pursue the collaboration within the partnership and the suggestions are therefore divided into four areas: Virtual communication, Joint ventures, Mobility and Miscellaneous.

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## II.A. Virtual communication

### II.A.a. eTwinning for schools

A tremendous tool for collaboration on the Internet between schools that really involve the learners is eTwinning, the main action of the European Union's eLearning programme: <http://www.etwinning.net/ww/en/pub/etwinning/index2006.htm> . It gives you the opportunity to carry out a pedagogically relevant activity and it can change the working form in the traditional classroom and contribute to pedagogical innovation. If you need inspiration for a theme or a project, there is an impressive well of ideas on their website. It's easy to start an eTwinning project: you simply register, find a partner (or in the case of sustainability - make sure that your "old" partner registers!) and then register your project through the eTwinning Portal. On top of this, all over Europe there are eTwinning activities and events that take place all year round. A monthly eTwinning winner is rewarded in many countries and one great example of such a winner is the collaboration between schools in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Sweden where the learners produced "A global fairy-tale book", <http://www2.skolor.pedc.se/ku/NyaWeb/Fairy%20Tale%2006/index.html>

### II.A.b. "Eggietalk" for schools

A team in the Netherlands, in co-operation with the European Commission for internet Communication, developed "Eggietalk", <http://www.eggietalk.com/>. Its purpose is to facilitate the communication between young European school children, as lack of knowledge of other languages no longer is a barrier with this tool. The pupils will learn more about other cultures and ways of life by interacting with other children across Europe, while having fun communicating this way at the same time. There is a small yearly fee (50€ in 2007) to be paid when you register, but once the registration is made, you can use the complete School list. The School list is the starting point to communicate with other users and the schools are listed by school, country, language etc. For sustainability purposes, naturally all partners have to register their school and their pupils before you can go on communicating with your friends! There are up to 25 European languages available and the best thing to do is to visit the website and watch the demo.

### II.A.c. Develop or create websites for the Partnership

Many, not to say most Partnerships often have a website created especially for the Partnership. There the organisations publish and share their work, exchange ideas, disseminate results etc. If you have actually made the effort and spent much time creating such a website, it would be a shame not to ensure its survival. You could take turns in having the responsibility for keeping it up-to-date or even developing it. You could for example continue publishing material on it when working with the learners on different issues. If you are one of the few that haven't created a website during the Partnership, now could be the time to do so and thereby create an easy way of staying in touch with your ex-partners.

#### II.A.d. Create a forum for debate or similar accessible for learners and/or staff

Once the learners - and the staff for that matter - have obtained a good relationship with their equals in other countries, it often feels sad to lose it. An easy way to maintain the possibility of continued communication is to create a "Community" on the European School Net where only invited members have access, <http://community.eun.org/enter.cfm> The staff could probably themselves decide on how to use it, but for the learners you could try what Rekarne Upper Secondary School, Eskilstuna, in Sweden did: They organised a debate of a specific theme on a regular basis between the learners from several countries. This was done during class of course, such as during English, but if the learners are willing to spend more time, they can take advantage of the Community even when they're not in school.

#### II.A.e. Produce a newsletter or a magazine accessible on the web

The delight of exchanging news or debating issues through a regular newsletter or a magazine is unquestionable. You can read about a net magazine collaboration between organisations in Sweden, Italy and United Kingdom in the "Good Practice Brochure for Sustainability" (ECCE) on the QAS website. The idea of their net magazine, Freeway, was a way to let young people from the different countries write articles and exchange thoughts and ideas. It started in 1996 and goes on even today. The partners take turns in being "legally responsible" for the publication of the magazine, something that has given valuable insight into what you can and cannot write about in different cultures.

It is not always easy to master the technique yourselves, and therefore it could be interesting to use a ready-made tool! Magazine Factory, <http://www.edu.fi/magazinefactory/> is a free tool for staff and learners to make their own web-magazines, created by the Finnish National Board of Education. The teacher is the editor-in-chief, while the pupils are journalists. The tool is available for schools all over Europe and even though many use it within an eTwinning project, this is not a prerequisite. Once you have registered, there are 5 steps to take before giving the user initials to the pupils allowing them to start producing content to your magazine. There are manuals available both for the chief editor, the editor and the journalists and there are many languages available such as all the Nordic languages, English, German, French and several others.

Naturally, a newsletter or a net magazine should at least be disseminated to stakeholders and all other interested organisations in the local community!

#### II.A.f. The virtual environment (Messenger, Skype, video conference)

When the organisation's budget doesn't allow for a live person-to person communication between learners or staff, the advantage of living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is of course to communicate with the help of the computer. Using Windows Live Messenger, <http://windows-live-messenger.en.softonic.com/> , gives access to calls, send films or simply chat with listed members through the computer. Some organisations are probably sufficiently well equipped to arrange for their own video conferences through cyberspace, but the Messenger way is an easy-to-handle operation. For pure telephone chats, Skype provides a cheap and easy way: <http://www.skype.com/download/>

#### II.A.g. Create an exchange of digital photos

Especially for small children, drawings, pictures and photos are of utmost importance. The exchange of items of this kind, by ordinary mail, by e-mail or through a mutual web platform is often included in such a Partnership. Naturally this should continue! The task as such is often part of the daily work or the curricula when you work with small children. More mature learners could also enjoy such an exchange, particularly if they're working on a certain theme where photos from other countries could inspire new ideas to be used in the learning context.

#### II.A.h. Become a part of an existing network through iNet

Even if you want to pursue activity with your old partners from the Partnership, it could be a good thing to have something new added to it – like more partners. One way of achieving this is to become a part of an existing network and one good example is the iNet, <http://www.ssat-inet.net/Default.aspx?page=0>. The name stands for "International Networking for Educational Transformation" and is available for organisations, schools and individuals who are interested in sharing best practice and innovation. It has more than 3000 members in 20 different countries. The members are supported in ways like by events, courses and online conferences, by sharing case studies online and in print and by developing new ways for learners to interact internationally. For the present time, the member countries in Europe are England, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and Wales with Germany approaching. Once you register, you can choose between receiving newsletters and/or e-mails and also inform them about which themes you are interested in, e.g. mentoring/coaching, networking, leadership, innovation and many more.

#### II.A.i. Further exploitation of the possibilities within ICT

There are probably a lot of other ways to use ICT than the ones we have suggested above. One way of exploring these, at least for schools, is to visit the website of the European Schoolnet - <http://www.eun.org/portal/index.htm> . There you'll find even more links and suggestions of how to proceed! WHAT ABOUT GRUNDTVIG????

## II.B. Joint ventures

### II.B.a. Travelling mascot

Especially in Comenius Partnerships that include small children, there is often some kind of mascot, teddy bear or similar who acts as the messenger of information from one partner to another. This mascot tells stories, brings photos, candy or art work, thereby giving the children an insight in the life of others. This activity is almost free of charge, if we disregard the postage, and should definitely be possible to maintain! Often the children almost fall in love with the mascot who becomes an important part of their lives, like e.g. in Bäckby Förskola in Västerås, Sweden. Their mascot, Björn (= Teddy Bear) Bäckby, has even brought films from the different partner schools and has also been to the European Parliament thanks to a Swedish EU Commissioner! Today, two years after that the Partnership funding period ended, he keeps on travelling.

### II.B.b. Travelling suitcase

For both young and more mature learners, there is a great delight in receiving items from a partner in another country. The items can be various – from items produced by the learners themselves, to handicraft, brochures and edibles. Such a delivery tends however to be somewhat one-sided if there is no feed-back given from the receiving partner. This exchange of suitcases, boxes or similar *and* feed-back provides an easy way for learners to keep in touch. The multitude of things to send is infinite and could be connected to traditions, holidays, sports, or any theme studied at the organisation!

### II.B.c. Travelling exhibition

If you want to maintain ties with your former partners, but do not feel like exchanging items indefinitely, there is the possibility of making an exhibition or performance on a certain theme or a local phenomenon. There are basically three options:

1. You make one exhibition per organisation and send it to the partners
2. You make a mutual exhibition by asking the partner organisations to send you appropriate items for it. Once it's ready, it can start travelling.
3. One organisation starts the exhibition and the partners add to it it comes to their organisation. It will become more and more complete as it travels around Europe.

### II.B.d. Organise events, thematic seminars etc and invite ex-partners

During the Partnership, you will most likely have organized at least one project meeting with all your partners, something that has turned you into a good organiser! Use this capacity to continue organising events or thematic seminars with an international angle. In this context, your former partners are naturally valuable resources. They will probably be more than willing to make a presentation or to lead a workshop if you ask them. Or just invite them as guests to your event. If you show your former partners that they are important people they will treat you in the same way. You can probably count on invitations to their events in return!

II.B.e. Continue (or start) with mutual happenings and compare/analyze results

Within the work of a Partnership, particularly within Comenius and schools, there are sometimes mutual activities like e.g. Olympic Games or Health Week that take place at the same time (more or less) in all schools. Often school share and compare results and perhaps exploit them further during class. A school called Renforsskolan, in Sweden, organised something called "Run for Life" during the Partnership period. It was part of a solidarity project where money was raised with the purpose to send it to a country in the third world. The entire local community was invited to run – and pay! – and all the partnership countries, Germany, Ireland, Latvia and Sweden, organised this the very same day. This was such a success that the running course project has continued even now when the funding period is over and has given the former partners a good platform for staying in touch.

II.B.f. Continue (or start) with nature or laboratory experiments within natural science

Some Partnerships cover natural science and/or include different natural science subjects from the curricula. A popular form of collaboration then is the mutual planning, realization and shared evaluation/analysis of nature or laboratory experiments of different kinds. Vaggaskolan in Karlshamn, Sweden, has chosen this as their new angle when pursuing the activities with the former partners. But whether experiments were or were not included from the start, there is an infinite source of possibilities within this field. It doesn't have to cost more than it normally does and there is no real need for costly class exchanges.

## II.C. Mobility

### II.C.a. Develop a learner exchange program

During a Partnership, learners become very motivated to work on an international project if they have the opportunity to visit each other. For sustainability reasons, it is therefore interesting to strive for continuous exchanges between the learners. This is what Vasaskolan (upper secondary) in Gävle, Sweden, has done in a version they call "Comenius light". The learners are mature enough to travel on their own, which means that the organisation doesn't have to cover for staff accompanying them and being away from their classes. The exchange is arranged between the ex-partners in Denmark, Germany and Romania from the Partnership and comprises a week's visit and they take turns in visiting each other. When away, the learners stay in host families to reduce costs and are offered meals etc and it works vice-versa when welcoming guests in your own country. The only real cost is the trip and if the organisation cannot sponsor such a cost (in spite of low-rate air ticket being available for almost every destination in Europe), one can always look for sponsors (see section II.D. Miscellaneous). When nominating learners for the exchanges, the learners who intend to pursue their foreign language studies the next year are prioritized. During the exchanges, that last 1-2 weeks, the learners participate in daily school work as any homebound learner.

### II.C.b. Develop a learner vocational training exchange program

Although not all Partnerships involve learners undertaking vocational studies, there is no reason why a continued relationship with your partners couldn't involve them! An upper secondary school in Eskilstuna, Sweden, "St. Eskil" have ex-partner schools in Germany, Hungary and Spain. They all have learners within vocational training (not previously involved in the Partnership) who train for the service/tourist sector. For this line of business, it is even more important to have knowledge about other cultures and languages and the ex-partners therefore agreed to exchange practical vocational training places with each other in a "Leonardo da Vinci light version" for a number of learners. The training places had to be found anyway, as the vocational training is included in the curricula, so there is no extra work involved for the organisations or their staff. Just as in II.C.a. the only costs involved are the ones for the air ticket, as host families provide for accommodation and meals. Within Leonardo, there are also more ways to participate in Mobility actions in Europe within the field of vocational training and skills development as schools can apply for sending their pupils on work place training abroad. Look at the web-page for your National Agency for more information.

### II.C.c. Develop a staff exchange program

As much as the learners enjoy the possibility of visiting other countries, staff are normally equally or even more happy doing so. Therefore this possibility is something that many often want to maintain. A Partnership coordinated by a school for blind learners, Resurs- skolan Örebro, Sweden, not only created a network after the funding period, but also initiated a staff exchange program. You can read about it in the "Good Practice Brochure for Sustainability" (From School to Resource Center) on the QAS website.

The aim of the exchange program is to develop and share good practice throughout Europe and it has been decided that *all* staff should be allowed to participate. The visiting staff mainly work alongside their host colleagues, but may challenge and debate issues with their hosts in order to share good practice and to avoid a pure observational experience. The costs are shared in that the visitors' home institution pay for travel expenses and the host institution assume responsibility for all costs during the visit, but the costs are kept low by e.g. organising accommodation in their own homes. At the end of a visit, a short report is produced and disseminated to all other partners, thereby sharing new good practice and also giving the network a possibility to improve the exchange program even more!

#### II.C.d. Collaborate with the local authorities and create e.g. an "International Exchange Week for staff"

Some organisations are already lucky enough to have the interest and/or the support for international cooperation from their local authorities. Some have to struggle for it and it could be worth doing so especially *after* the Partnership period. Organisations in Gothenburg, Sweden's second largest city, do have this advantage! There the local Education Authority and the Department of Social Welfare Allocation cooperate in organising an "International Teachers' Exchange Week" every year. All organisations in Gothenburg are welcome to invite colleagues from other countries (not only Europe!). Organisations that previously were involved in a Partnership often take profit of this possibility to invite their former colleagues. Participants in the Exchange Week do come from other contexts as well, however!

The idea is that every guest teacher has a host teacher in Gothenburg and the guest teacher shadows him/her during the week. Alongside with this job-shadowing, the city of Gothenburg arranges cultural visits, seminars and official dinners. There is no conference fee involved; only a small registration fee, but the travel expenses are naturally to be covered by the participants. The host teachers often accommodate the guest teachers, so there is normally no cost for accommodation. Still, the European participants are informed about the possibility to apply for an in-service grant at their National Agencies.

In 2006, 69 people from 19 countries came to Gothenburg during the Exchange Week and the city's total budget for the event was approximately 30.000 €. There are many reasons to why a city or a municipality could take on such a large event, e.g.

- ✦ Good publicity for the city both for tourist and within education – good news travel fast
- ✦ Especially host organisations that work in a multicultural environment have learners who appreciate visits from other countries/cultures
- ✦ Extended collaboration between organisations from different levels and fields of education
- ✦ Creating long lasting networks that can be of use in various contexts

The website for the Exchange Week is in Swedish, but you could contact Ann-Marie Losenborg at the Education Authority for more information on the principles of the event: [ann-marie.losenborg@educ.goteborg.se](mailto:ann-marie.losenborg@educ.goteborg.se)

### II.C.e. Extended study visits

Once you have established contact between organisations in different countries you will have the opportunity to extend the contacts, not only between the partners, but also locally or regionally or between different types of organisations. As an effect of a Grundtvig project, TROG, a study visit was arranged in The Czech republic for a group from a Swedish training programme for folk high school heads.

### II.C.f. Apply for in-service training grants to the National Agency

Staff that participate in Partnerships often appreciate the fact that the collaboration, the project meetings and of course the exchanges often provide valuable in-service training for the future. There are all the reasons in the world to make this continue! Within the Lifelong Learning Programme, there are grants for in-service training and in this context, sustainability between ex-partner organisations, there are two options that are particularly interesting: job-shadowing and participation in conferences.

Job-shadowing means that you work alongside a colleague in another country and that both the receiving partner and the guest can exchange ideas on pedagogical and methodological issues during such a period. When applying for a grant by your National Agency, you will receive funding for a period of min. 1 and max. 6 weeks.

When it comes to participating in conferences in the sustainability context, the idea should of course be that both you and your colleague from the ex-partner organisation participate in the same conference. For conferences, the grant normally covers the conference fee as well as travel expenses and subsistence costs, and they can last shorter than 1 week.

Visit your country's National Agency website for further information on application procedures and forms.

## II.D. Miscellaneous

### II.D.a Collaborate with the local authorities and create an international meeting spot

Those of you who have included somewhat larger reunions with learners within the Partnership know the fantastic effects of such an encounter. Normally, a Partnership grant isn't large enough to allow groups of learners to travel to such reunions and you have probably been able to obtain other means. A good way to organise such a giant meeting between learners is to contact the local authorities and make them finance the biggest part of such a reunion. This can naturally just as well be done after a closed Partnership in order to allow learners (perhaps new ones) to experience an international meeting/conference.

The region of Romagna in Italy has taken upon them to celebrate the 9<sup>th</sup> of May, the European Day, in such a way. Even though this is an example of a gigantic event that many regions/local authorities couldn't possibly manage, you could see it as a source of inspiration. What they do is that they invite 8-10 learners and a few members of the staff from one organisation in each of 28 EU countries for a reunion for a couple of days. One organisation in Romagna is the host and organizes a "European Youth Parliament" where participants work with and discuss an issue that is presently debated in the EU. Last year 400 persons gathered and were accommodated in host families. The organisations that are invited have often collaborated with organisations in the region of Romagna in earlier years. The entire stay is free of charge and the participants only pay for their own trip.

### II.D.b. Persuade the management to provide funding for continued cooperation

If you have been wise enough to involve management in the Partnership, you probably have a lot of their goodwill and understanding for the benefits of international cooperation. In this case, you should try to influence the budget of the organisation as to provide for future investments in exchanges and project costs. They do not have to be of the same dimension as a European grant, of course, but anything is better than nothing!

If you can't reach this, another way of obtaining funds from the organisation could be like they have done in Lagmansskolan, a lower secondary school in Mjölby, Sweden. The teachers there took on the task to be mentors for teacher students (during their trainee period) at their schools. This leads to certain remuneration from the Teacher Training Institute that normally goes directly into the organisation's budget and not to the teachers. The management at Lagmansskolan however, agreed that the money could be used for visits to former partner schools in order to pursue collaboration. Perhaps there are other ways that you could try to do additional work or assume additional responsibility at the organisation and thus obtain new funding?

### II.D.c. Continue into a Multilateral Project or into a Multilateral Network

Within the Lifelong Learning Programme, there are a number of other possibilities for cooperation other than merely within a Partnership. Having completed a Partnership however, the acquired experience could lead you into a more advanced form of cooperation. The two most logical actions after a Partnership are the Multilateral Project and the Multilateral Network. It has to be emphasized, though, that these actions are so much more complex and demand a much higher investment of time and effort than the Partnerships. You really need to look into the guidelines of each action and carefully consider if you are up to it. The absolute best way to go about it is to contact a larger organisation with a lot of experience in this field and try to join them in their future project application. Within **Comenius**, schools are sometimes involved in Multilateral Projects thanks to a University that acts as the main partner, and are assigned a limited task. Within **Grundtvig** it is more common that organisations from a former Grundtvig Partnership continue their cooperation themselves and go for a Multilateral Project or Network. **Leonardo** partnerships can continue their cooperation in a Transfer of Innovation project. These projects are much bigger than the partnerships and require more work. However, if you have a good idea that you would like to develop it could definitely be worth to look into this possibility. Other types of multilateral cooperation in Leonardo are the Development of Innovation projects and Networks.

Please read all about it on the European Commission website, [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index_en.html) or contact your National Agency for more information. If you are interested in networks – and the difference between Multilateral Projects and Networks, a project called Euoweaving has produced a useful guide “The art of Networking – European Networks in Education”. It can be downloaded from the website: [www.euoweaving.com](http://www.euoweaving.com) .

A couple of organisations working with visually impaired learners, MDVI Euronet, have formed a network outside the EU programmes. They have managed both Comenius and Grundtvig Partnerships. By clearly defined roles and responsibilities, programmes for future cooperation, staff exchange programmes, newsletters and so on they have managed very well. Visit them at [www.mdvi-uronet.org](http://www.mdvi-uronet.org) and try to find good examples for sustainability that fits your own partnership.

### II.D.d. Search for new funding – sponsoring or sales

When talking about sustainability for a Partnership, most people tend to get hung up on the concept of money. Without money, no future possibilities. Even though we strongly oppose to this idea, there are of course a few possibilities to search for new funding and consequently make things easier.

You might not be used to marketing your organisation, your Partnership or yourself, but wonderful things could be achieved by doing so. The coordinator of a project called “Democrisis” that recently received second prize from the European Commission in the contest “Prize for lifelong learning award” has made this into an art. He regularly contacts enterprises, local authorities, other organisations, parents etc to ask them to sponsor the project. He doesn’t always receive solid cash, but the sponsorships range all the way from free give-aways that he uses to promote the project to free use of conference facilities and sometimes money.

Normally (with the exception of parents!), the sponsors want something in return and what you can offer as an educational organisation is of course limited. However, perhaps you have a website, a newsletter or something similar where you can give the sponsors the publicity they want in return. To look for sponsors is a demanding task, so you should create a team for sponsoring research. Both staff and learners can be involved and you might be surprised how cunning the learners are when it comes to persuasion!

Another way to raise money for future mobility within the ex-Partnership is to take profit of products produced during the Partnership. Sometimes the product is good enough for selling – a book, a calendar, a CD with music, but sometimes you will perhaps need to add something unique to the existing product so that others than next of kin are prepared to buy it. The marketing of such a product as well as finding good spots or events to sell it at are of utmost importance.

#### II.D.e. Start thinking of future economic and juridical relations

Just like the relations between sisters and brothers can change dramatically when their parents die and the estate distribution causes fights, you will have to prepare for a similar situation with your partners. A written contract is a kind of insurance for future good relations and a sound distribution of tasks, risk and profit – especially if you are going into some kind of business together in the future outside the frame of an EU programme