

SLS report: Perspectives gained, lessons learned – The Netherlands

Meeting	What new perspectives did the meeting give us? What did we learn? What will we use in our work?
1. Reims, France , October 2010 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> project planning 	<p>During this meeting we formed the core group of coordinators, created mutual trust and made the basis for continuity during the rest of the project. It was good to see the meaning of learning from the perspective of the clients of the French host.</p> <p>A good decision we made was to write a 'country report' before every workshop. This helped us to focus on the progress of the project and to have a 'state-of-the-art' concerning the specific issue in our country.</p>
2. Dublin, Ireland , February 2011 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> workshop on 'Volunteer involvement in learning campaigns' attending the Adult Learners' Festival 	<p>Another confirmation of the importance of voluntary work for the individual and society, and more specific for the ALW. The notion that if you ask a person to volunteer in something very concrete 60% will happily accept is very useful. To assist to the Award Winners Ceremony with involvement of my related persons was useful for us.</p> <p>In Ireland (and also in the other SLS meetings) we met the 'voluntary' regional ALW coordinators from Slovenia and Estonia. Their enthusiasm and stories make us consider to create a regional network in NL.</p>
3. Ljubljana, Žalec, Prebold, Slovenia , May 2011 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> workshop on 'Media engagement in ALW/LLWs and how to use new media' attending the Lifelong Learning Week 	<p>A stimulus to reconsider our relation with the traditional media in order to get out of it the most possible. A big stimulus to start working with social media in our organization: it is not the question if we will use social media, but how we will use them (and which one of them).</p> <p>The use of video with learners' stories was excellent. It brings impressing life stories alive and it is so useful to show the benefits of learning. For the learners themselves it is a big recognition of their efforts.</p>
4. Tallinn, Estonia , October 2011 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> workshop on 'Involving outstanding learners in learning promotion' attending the Adult Learners' Week 	<p>There is an enormous potential of learners to become real ambassadors who promote adult learning to their peers. By sharing their own Learning Path they can make a big difference in other peoples life. Therefore it is key to be aware of the conditions and support these learners need to be able to work as an ambassador and to contribute to a learning campaign. This is important if you want to involve learner/ambassadors in a more structural and effective way.</p>
5. Kahramanmaras, Turkey , March 2012 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> workshop on 'Engaging target groups in adult education' 	<p>A stimulus to pay extra attention to reach special target groups in order to stimulate life long learning. Special attention was paid to involve handicapped people in various stages of their (adult) life.</p>
6. Haarlem, The Netherlands , May/June	<p>All SLS issues came together during this last project meeting. It was useful to share good practices from partner</p>

	2012 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> seminar on 'Networks and partnerships promoting adult education' concluding activities 	countries with a broader Dutch audience (e.g. Learning Tram, use of social media, work with volunteers, study circles etc.). The Dutch speakers illustrated the huge potential of local ALW partnerships. It was challenging to involve the French delegation in the programme in spite of the language problem and handicaps. We will use this experience of 'meaningful inclusion' in next meetings.
7.	General conclusions for the Dutch partners Bureau Lidwien Vos de Wael and Learn for Life – new perspectives and ideas, what can we use in our work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Other things we learned from the ALW in other countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IE: campaigning is a verb... SI: the involvement of more ministries in the ALW is a plus. In Slovenia adult learning campaigns are an integral part of the national education policy EE: ALW activities related to culture, handicraft and cultural heritage are powerful. They involve other sectors of society in learning. The Tram was an exciting experience worth to be copied. SLS has been a big stimulus and inspiration to continue with the ALW in The Netherlands, in spite of the decision of the department of education to stop with their national support. In effect, during the SLS project period Learn for Life decided to take over the Festival, because it was in danger to disappear completely due to budget cuts. As a brand new national coordinator we will certainly make use of the expertise of the partner countries. SLS led to new contacts and cooperation with local ALW organizers in our country, amongst others cooperation several public libraries, a voluntary service center and a center for disabled persons. SLS was a stimulus for the learners / local organizers we brought to the international meeting: after there SLS study trip they participated in the SLS meeting in our country and in local ALW activities. Having said this, we observe that it is still a challenge to work in local ALW partnerships. In times of budget reduction organisations tend to work alone. The great force of broader local educational networks needs to be stressed and sometimes needs support from an 'impartial outsider' (regional or national level). Writing the country overviews helped to reflect again about our own practice and history with the ALW, we reviewed our expertise and existing materials. The project made us reflect about the way we organize the event of the International Award Ceremony (gala dinner in Ireland, festivity in Slovenia and Estonia). We are considering several adjustments. The example of the Slovenian learners' video has already been used in Dronten where they made a video about volunteers. The exchange of ALW promotion and ALW publicity materials was very useful for us.
8.	Contribution to the general conclusions for all partners	<p>So there are many positive things to mention, but there is also a remark:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> We learned that in every country the structural basis of the ALW is fragile: financing depends for a great part on external money (ESF and/or national ministries). There is no structural funding. Every year you have to

		<p>work really hard to organize the ALW in the countries. It does not come from the ground by itself nor without national support.</p> <p>2. Related to this point, the effect measurement of ALW activities and ALW as a whole is also fragile. This was not an explicit issue for the SLS project, but the concern is of course always there. However, for the future of ALW and other learning campaigns we do need innovative tools to make the results of learning campaigns visible.</p>
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