

Thessaloniki, 3 March 2008

Dear participant,

Thank you for your interest in the study visits programme and willingness to learn and share your ideas on education and vocational training with other European colleagues.

The following information should help you to prepare and contribute to the study visit.

Before the visit

- You should confirm your participation by e-mail to the organiser with a copy to your National Agency (NA). Please do not send confirmation to Cedefop.
- If you are not able to participate in the visit you have been assigned to, please inform your NA and the organiser of your group **immediately**. You can either find an alternative visit or cancel your participation. Inform your NA of your decision.
- The organiser of the visit will contact you at least four weeks before the visit and provide you with information on the planned programme, hotel arrangements, meeting times, etc. At this point you can inform the organiser of your specific interests in the theme and make any other suggestions.
- Please prepare the following for discussions on the topic of the visit:
 - (a) some documents illustrating how your country deals with the theme of the visit to share with other members of the group and host organisations;

(b) read documentation provided by the organiser and Cedefop; Cedefop will provide information on several themes on its website starting in March. Please check the *Documentation door*.

(c) prepare material about your institution or organisation to distribute to other participants.

- You should only make your travel arrangements (reservation and payment of tickets) after your participation is confirmed by the NA and you have been contacted by the organiser.
- You should confirm in good time your reservation at the hotel arranged by the organiser.
- You should have accident/health insurance to cover you during the study visit.

During the visit

There are many people involved in preparing and running a visit, but your active participation and contribution to discussions will determine how strong the impact of the programme will be in the long term. It is not a training course; it is about common learning and exchange, so we advise you to:

- take part in all activities at the times scheduled in the programme;
- show interest in learning about other European education and training systems and ways of working;
- appreciate intercultural communication and improve your social and foreign language skills;
- present your country's experience in dealing with the topic. The organiser will allow time for participants' presentations. In your presentation, please try to be brief but informative;
- take advantage of opportunities to establish professional contacts for developing new projects and creating networks;
- not bring members of your family or other persons unconnected with the programme;

- be ready to cover costs, such as meals, accommodation and any local travel. You may be invited by the organiser for free meals or transport, but do not take it for granted;
- contribute to the preparation of the **group end-of-visit report** or volunteer to be a reporter. The report should cover all the main aspects of the study visit, organisational aspects as well as participants' impressions and opinions. It should be written in the working language of the study visit. The template for the end-of-visit report is being finalised and will be available in March. The organisers will provide you with the template.

After the visit

- If you are a group reporter, please send a final copy of the report to group participants, the organiser, your NA and Cedefop by e-mail no later than one month after your visit.
- Please submit your individual report to your NA.
- Inform your management, colleagues and students of the results of your visit. We advise you to use different media (press, websites) to promote the European dimension in education and training.
- Keep in touch with your group's participants, consider starting a European project or organise a study visit at your organisation.

Please consult your NA for any questions regarding placement, financial arrangements and reporting.

We wish you an interesting and stimulating stay abroad.

Yours sincerely,

Cedefop study visits team