

**STUDY VISITS FOR EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING SPECIALISTS
AND DECISION MAKERS**

**PROGRAMME ANNOUNCEMENT
FOR STUDY VISITS IN THE 2010 - 2011 ACADEMIC YEAR**

Applicants should also refer to the Lifelong Learning Programme guide at http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/doc848_en.htm (to check link)

GENERAL FRAMEWORK

1. On 5 November 2006, the European Parliament and the Council adopted their Decision 1720/2006/EC, establishing the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). Study visits for education and vocational training specialists are one of the key actions of the transversal programme, the objective of which is to support policy development and cooperation at European level in lifelong learning. It is addressed to those who are responsible for the development of education and vocational training policies at local, regional or national levels.
2. The study visits programme priorities follow the priorities of education and training policy including those identified at European level and by the participating countries. A new thematic structure has been developed to closer link the programme to the Lisbon process and the education and training agenda 2020, as well as the Bologna and Copenhagen processes and their successors (see Annex II).
3. As a transversal programme, the study visits offer an excellent opportunity for creating links with the sectoral programmes: Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig and Leonardo da Vinci. This can be done in different ways: by including visits to local or regional projects of the sectoral programmes as appropriate in the study visits programme; by making outcomes of the study visit programmes available to the managers of the sectoral programmes and other interested experts in general education, vocational training and lifelong learning; by partner finding for new projects during the study visits; finally, by enabling partners from the sectoral programmes in the study visits..
4. The programme provides a forum for discussion, exchange and mutual learning on themes of common interest at EU level and serves the following objectives:
 - enabling those exercising important responsibilities at local, regional or national levels to better understand specific aspects of education and vocational training policies and themes of common interest in other countries;

- continuing exchange of advice, ideas and information between all those participating in the programme, including both visitors and hosts;
 - enriching the flow of information between the participating countries and at European level, including the policy making level.
5. The programme is open to nationals or those working or living in any of the 27 EU Member States, EFTA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) and candidate countries (Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia).
 6. To date, over 50.000 education and vocational training specialists have taken part in the study visits programme. In 2009 – 2010, the programme awarded some 2544 individual mobility grants.
 7. This call applies to the study visits that will take place between September 2010 and June 2011.

STUDY VISITS CATALOGUE SEPTEMBER 2010 – JUNE 2011

8. The catalogue will be available at the end of January and will comprise the study visits that will take place between September 2010 and June 2011.
9. The study visits priorities are linked to the updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training. The four strategic challenges which should form the basis for policy cooperation at European level until 2020 are taken account of. These are:
 - Make lifelong learning and learner mobility a reality;
 - Improve the quality and efficiency of provision and outcomes;
 - Promote equity and active citizenship;
 - Enhance innovation and creativity, including entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training
10. Considering the above the study visits will be grouped within the framework of the following 8 thematic categories. Each thematic category includes a list of topics for study visits.
 1. Key competences for all, including creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship
 - Increasing literacy and numeracy levels
 - Language teaching and learning
 - Use of ICT in learning
 - Developing entrepreneurship

- Strengthening intercultural education
 - Education for active citizenship and sustainable development
 - Developing creativity in learning and teaching
2. Improving access, equity, quality and efficiency in education and training
 - Early learning opportunities
 - Personalised learning approaches
 - Measures to prevent early school leaving
 - Equal opportunities for disadvantaged groups
 - Quality assurance mechanisms in schools and training institutions
 - Measures to improve efficiency in education and training institutions
 3. Keeping teaching and training attractive and improving leadership
 - Teachers' and trainers' initial training, recruitment and evaluation
 - Teachers' and trainers' continuing professional development and career opportunities
 - Leadership and management in schools and training providers
 4. Education and training for employability
 - Transition from education and training to the world of work
 - Workplace learning
 - Integration of disadvantaged groups into the labour market
 - Increasing attractiveness of VET
 - Social partners contribution to lifelong learning
 - New skills for new jobs
 5. Implementing common European tools, principles and frameworks for lifelong learning including lifelong guidance.
 - National and sectoral qualifications frameworks linked to EQF
 - Tools to promote transparency of qualifications and mobility of citizens
 - Quality assurance systems, frameworks and approaches
 - Credit transfer between different contexts
 - Validation of non-formal and informal learning
 - Guidance for lifelong learning and career management
 6. Trends and challenges in lifelong learning strategies
 - Reforms in national education and training systems
 - Developing links between VET and higher education
 - Implementation of flexible learning pathways
 - Increasing adult participation in education and training
 7. Development of learning communities, involving all actors in education and training
 - Cooperation between education and training institutions and local communities
 - Parents and social partners roles in governance
 - Schools and communities roles to prevent violence
 8. Promoting cross border mobility in lifelong learning
 - Learning mobility in education and training

11. Cedefop in close cooperation with the European Commission has produced short descriptions on each of the main categories of themes. Each of the short description sets the European framework, includes the reference to the Lisbon strategy, the "New Strategic Framework for Education and Training 2020" and identifies the areas of interest of the study visits concerned (for the full text descriptions see Annex II, also available at <http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu>).
12. Study visits will examine themes from:
 - a general education perspective (in the catalogue - the general education type),
 - a vocational education and training perspective (the VET type),
 - a comprehensive lifelong learning perspective (the mixed type).
13. Special attention is drawn to study visits N° 62, 66, 78 and 214 which have been designed as pilot actions. These visits will be organised by the host institutions in cooperation with the European Commission and will target specifically policy- and decision-makers in education and training to transfer and share experience.

PARTICIPANTS

14. At national level the programme is coordinated by national agencies located in the participating countries. It is their responsibility to provide information and promote the programme at national level, to select beneficiaries and award grants, to ensure the organisation and monitoring of study visits and to disseminate results at national level.
15. The National Agencies should address this call to those responsible for education and vocational training in their countries as well as to representatives of the social partners (employers' organisations and trade unions).
16. Participants should represent all parts of the education and training system and should be able to act as 'multipliers' of the knowledge gained. They should be persons who exercise responsibility at local, regional or national levels and whose expertise can be used to increase the awareness of others about policy and practice in other participating countries and contribute to policy innovation and exchange.
17. The profile of participants should correspond to one of the following: representatives of local, regional and national authorities; directors of education and vocational training establishments, guidance centres or validation or accreditation centres; heads of departments; head teachers and teacher trainers; educational and vocational training inspectors; representatives of education and training networks and associations; pedagogical or guidance advisers; representatives of educational services, labour offices or guidance centres; human resource managers; company training managers; representatives of chambers of commerce/industry/crafts; representatives of employers' organisations and representatives of trade unions; owners or managers of small and medium-sized enterprises; researchers.

18. The National Agency should make sure that proposed candidates are able to communicate in at least one Community language other than their own. Applicants should have a good command of the working language of the study visit to participate actively in discussions.
19. Participants should also represent different geographical regions and parts of countries.

APPLYING FOR STUDY VISITS

20. The National Agencies should explicitly state all relevant requirements in the national announcements and on their website. This specifically refers to:
 - deadlines for submitting online application;
 - deadlines for submitting signed originals of the applications;
 - the need to submit applications also in the language of the country;
 - additional documents needed for the national selection, etc.

21. As from 2010-2011, there will be two application rounds as follows:

First application round: study visits from September 2010 to February 2011:

Start application round:	8 February 2010
End application round:	31 March 2010
Selection procedure ends at:	7 May 2010

Second application round: study visits from March 2011 to June 2011:

Start application round:	19 July 2010
End application round:	15 October 2010
Selection procedure ends at:	19 November 2010

22. Applicants wishing to participate in a study visit should complete the application form online at Cedefop's website. The online application will be available at: <http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu> Applicants should apply only for study visits within one single application round. Instructions for filling out the application form will be provided with the form online. ***Only applications submitted online until 12:00 (Central European Time) at noon are eligible.***
23. After submitting their online application, applicants should print the completed application form, **sign it and send the original** to their respective National Agency by the deadline given by the National Agency.
24. On submitting the application, the applicants will receive by e-mail a username and password that they need to keep in order to modify data in the application form before the deadline and, in case they are selected, to access the group details afterwards.

SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS AND COMPOSITION OF GROUPS

25. The selection procedure is defined by each participating country, considering the agreed procedures and criteria for selecting participants for the Lifelong Learning Programme. The National Agencies should make the selection criteria explicit in the national announcements and on their website. The general guidelines for selection are provided in the LLP Guide 2010: Part II - Explanations by Action (available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/doc/call10/fiches_en.pdf).
26. The National Agencies should complete their selection, input the selection results into the management information system and send the lists of approved and waiting list applicants to Cedefop (see point 21 above). The National Agencies should also send signed lists of approved and waiting list applicants to the European Commission and to Cedefop by regular mail.
27. Based on the results of national selection, Cedefop will compose groups (matching procedure). Cedefop will invite some representatives of the National Agencies to participate in the matching meeting. The following parameters (by order of priority) will be taken into account when composing the groups:
 - the theme of the study visit,
 - participants' linguistic abilities,
 - the country to be visited,
 - the period of the study visit.
28. Cedefop will ensure that groups are balanced in terms of professional background, different roles in education and vocational training, geographical diversity and gender.
29. When groups are composed, Cedefop will inform the National Agencies of the results. The National Agencies will then inform the approved applicants of their allocation during the matching. By the deadline indicated by Cedefop, the National Agencies should confirm the availability of the applicants for the assigned visits or inform Cedefop about requests to search for alternative allocation.
30. After the deadline, the matching results will be considered finalised. The National Agencies will then inform all the applicants on the results of the selection and send formal invitation letters to the nominated participants.

PREPARING FOR STUDY VISITS

31. Participating countries should organise information and coordination meetings for their participants and organisers.
32. Organisers should send details of the programme and precise information on places to be visited to participants in good time but not later than 6 weeks before the visit. Cedefop will provide organisers with a handbook on how to organise a successful study visit. The 'Handbook for organisers' is also available at http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu/assets/upload/study/Publication/2009_handbookEN.pdf.
33. Cedefop will make available background information on the theme of the study visits on its website. Participants should use it to prepare for their visit.

34. Participants are asked to bring a selection of documents illustrating how their country deals with the theme of the visit for other members of their group and host organisations. The 'Participants' companion' is provided to the participant by the national agency and is also available at http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/Information_resources/Bookshop/549/4070_en.pdf . It contains useful information to help participants preparing for their study visit.
35. Upon arrival of participants in the host country, the host organisation will explain the programme in detail and provide general information on the education or vocational training system of the host country.

REPORTS

36. During the visit, participants of each group should prepare a group report covering all the main aspects of the study visit and organisational aspects which will be used for continuous monitoring of study visits. This report should be written in the working language of the study visit.
37. All participants are expected to contribute to preparing the report (by taking notes, drafting summaries, etc). However, a *rapporteur* should be appointed at the start of each study visit. The hosting service in charge of the study visit will call for candidates on the first day and the rapporteur will be appointed on the same day. Based on exchanges of views and the group's assessment at the end of the study visit, rapporteurs will be asked to draw up a report. Rapporteurs will be eligible to participate in seminars, which Cedefop will organise on various themes.

IMPACT of STUDY VISITS

38. Cedefop records and valorises outputs, outcomes and impacts of the study visits. All participants will be invited to participate in an online survey within one year of their study visit, in order to assess the impact the visit has had on them and their institutions. Organisers of study visits will also be invited to participate in a survey within six months after their visit, providing feedback on their experiences and possible impact of the study visit on their institution.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

39. Grants will be distributed among Member States and participating countries, following a decision of the Lifelong Learning Programme Committee. A list of participating countries and distribution of grants is attached (see ANNEX I).
40. Grants will be paid in accordance with the arrangements notified by the National Agencies. The average grant will be 1.474 € for a five-day study visit. This amount may vary, depending on travel expenditure, the duration of the study visit and the cost of living in the visited country.
41. The National Agencies will sign grant agreements with the approved applicants after their allocation to a study visit is confirmed by Cedefop.

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

42. Cedefop website - <http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu> - will provide all relevant and updated information regarding study visits.
43. Cedefop provides an interactive management information system to support several management activities, such as online application for participants, selection and reporting tools for the National Agencies and others. It also ensures the system is compatible with LLP tools.
44. Participants, organisers and contact persons in the National Agencies will have access to the system in order to get or insert relevant information regarding their study visits.
45. Data protection regulations will be respected (Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000).

MISCELLANEOUS

46. Neither the Commission nor Cedefop provide any form of insurance for study visits. The National Agencies are therefore urged to advise participants to make their own arrangements. Participants are responsible for their own accident/health insurance during their study visit abroad. Organisers may refuse participants who do not declare having insurance cover or who, at the time of the visit, cannot furnish proof of such cover.
47. Where a grant is awarded to a named individual, it may not be shared between the participant and other individuals. Grant-holders are requested not to take members of their families with them as no special administrative arrangements can be made on their behalf and contact with participants from other countries might be impeded.

COORDINATION OF STUDY VISITS - CONTACTS

48. Cedefop coordinates at EU level the study visits programme for education and vocational training specialists, on behalf of the Commission. Some of its key activities is the preparation of the study visits catalogue, the coordination of the calls for candidates, the setting up of the groups, the assessment and dissemination of study visits results.
49. Contact information:
Study visits
Cedefop
(*European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training*)
Europe 123, GR-57001 Thessaloniki (Pylea)
Greece

Postal address:
PO Box 22427, Finikas
GR-55102 Thessaloniki
Greece

Team Phone: (30-2310) 490 154
Team Fax: (30-2310) 490 044
Team E-mail: studyvisits@cedefop.europa.eu

Contact person in the European Commission:

Guido Boel
Directorate General for Education and Culture
MADO 12/xxx
Wetstraat 200
B-1049 Brussel

Phone: +32 2 295.60.31
E-mail: guido.boel@ec.europa.eu

50. The list of contact persons responsible for the study visits programme in the National Agencies is available online at: <http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu>.

<p>More information regarding the related issues will be available at Cedefop website in due time. Please regularly consult http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu/</p>
