



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

**Project: LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME**

**Funder: GRUNDTVIG**

**Project Title: Immersion of Immigrant Families Into Everyday School Life**

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**Partner Organisation :**



1. Cambridge Chinese Community Centre - England
  2. Syllogos Goneon kai Kidemonon 61ou dim sholeiou Thessalonikis - Greece
  3. Associação de Pais e Encarregados de Educação dos alunos do Agrupamento Vertical de Escolas de Avelar - Portugal
  4. Aurinkolahden peruskoulu – Finland
  5. Aurinkolahden Peruskoulun Vanhempainyhdistys ry – Finland
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## **SUMMARY OF PROJECT**

The main objective of this project is to strengthen cooperation between the school and the parents, especially in terms of immigrant families and families at risk of social exclusion. We aim at designing materials and activities which will make it easier for parents of the immigrant families to adapt to the new environment, to the school and its procedures.

It has been agreed that Finland will coordinate project, Greece will collect feedback and evaluate progress throughout the project and Portugal will design a schedule for all the activities based on suggestions from other partners. England will keep all partners aware of project activities. During the project the activities to be carried out will be adapted to the specific needs of each partner institution even though the framework remains the same for everybody. This is owing to the fact that special events and celebrations vary from one country to the other and the immigrant population of each institution is very different.

All partners are required to be able to communicate effectively via computers in English and the Pas/Community will make sure that necessary skills will be taught to all participating parents as well. To ensure active involvement the coordinator will contact all partners at regular intervals

and the secretaries of Pas/Community will send monthly progress reports to one another. Furthermore, a web page will be designed so that the entire school/community can follow the progress of the project as well as enjoy photos and videos of different activities.

The participants in the Project were as follows:

Ages 16-19 yrs = 4  
Ages 20-26 yrs = 5  
Ages 27-65 yrs = 36

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## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVE ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **a. What Was Expected**

We expected this project to be a new way of motivating members and management of the Pas/Community. It has made all the partners to work in a systematic and organized manner and to communicate more effectively. Individual members have been learning about partner organizations and countries and this has broaden their perspective and given them alternative ways of approaching various issues. Furthermore, by comparing each others practices we are able to do benchmarking during the last period of our project. For each participating individual the project has offered a great chance to improve language and IT as well as negotiating skills.

### **b. Targeted Goals For Project**

Target goals for the project were as follows in a nutshell:

Introduction Guidebook

Web-pages linked to each other and added skills and competencies in ICT infrastructure

Planned joint actions during the school year: teachers and parents joint meetings, multicultural activities (seminars,cooking actions, handicraft actions, church year actions) at least four joint actions during school year

All partners have been active within this project and have done the activities agreed in project programme. It has taken quite a lot of time to get acquainted with each others and create effective cooperation between the partners.

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## **COMMUNICATION AND CO-OPERATION**

One of the greatest problems in the implementation of the partnership has been the communication in between the partners. There has been an issue about the tasks of the coordinator of the project, which is the Parents' Association of Finland. The expectations towards the coordinator and coordinating organization were not probably clear and it was difficult to keep in touch to each others. Unfortunately, there have been problems with keeping in touch with the partners in between Project Meetings, too. As a coordinator in the beginning we were not aware of the expectations for the role of the coordinator.

During the second Project meeting it was decided that the coordinator of the project creates a Facebook profile where all partners can join in and share and access information about the progress of the project in their own and other partners' countries. Another big problem in the implementation of the Partnership has been how to active parents to participate in the events

and seminars. During the past year it has become particularly clear that seminars, classes and lectures are not highly attractive for parents. In comparison, the more festive events with e.g. food have been more successful to draw parents and pupils together. Therefore, it has been discussed that during the second year of the project such events will be planned which combine food and fun with more serious issues such as seminars or IT-skills classes. Also people learn in many ways: by listening, reading, doing, seeing which we have to consider more seriously.

It has been quite challenging to get together parents from different ethnic or religion groups. We have to consider these aspects when designing e.g. cooking activities and to whom in the family should the invitation to activities address.

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## **PROGRESS MONITORING**

### **a. Partnership Level Evaluation:**

Evaluations were made during the partnership meetings in all partners' country and the overall rating is very high due to the excellent planning and schedules made by the host country on each visit. But due to the fact that it involved many different nations who speak different languages (most of the immigrant families can not speak English), communication between partners was very difficult when there is a need for interpretation. Conclusion- Improvement on interpretation is needed to avoid the idle time spent during the meeting.

### **b. Local Activities Level Evaluation:**

Questionnaires were sent to all partners by our Greece partner and overall rating on all questions from all parents are in high good quality rating ranging 4 & 5 (considering 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest). From the feedback, it was noticed that seminars, classes and lectures are not highly attractive for parents. In comparison, the more festive events with e.g. food have been more successful to draw parents and pupils together. Most of them are only interested in IT-skill classes and relation between the school, teachers and their children

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## **RESULTS / PRODUCTS / OUTCOMES ACHIEVEMENT**

Our web-site were delayed and updated with common content of the project on the 1st quarter of 2010 but not linked to each of the partners. During the second partnership meeting in May, 2010 in Finland, it was agreed that the coordinator will create a Facebook profile to the project which was founded in June, 2010.

## **AIMS / OBJECTIVES ACHIEVEMENT**

Outcomes were almost achieved but due to the problem as stated in the consequences of the evaluation, the progress of advancement in this project was very slow and inefficient in the first year. It was only improved on the second year where more and more immigrant families were convinced to participate in the local activities held by the Community Centre. Due to the different working schedule of the individual parents, it was very hard to put them all together in one session but instead we need to arrange different sessions with different timing to suit all of them so as to maximize the attendance of each seminar/class. With the recent economic down turn, staffing is also a big problem to acquire volunteers or even part time workers to hold the activities. Overall aims/objectives were achieved but not to a great extent.

## **PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES**

There were 18 activities in all.

### ***ACTIVITY No. 1 26th November 2009 for 4 days***

Description: Partnership Project Meeting in Portugal  
Activity Type: Events: Conferences and Seminars (EVENT)

### ***ACTIVITY No. 2 18th December 2009 for 1 day***

Description: Multicultural Gathering to Celebrate the End of the Term  
Activity Type: Cultural events (EVENT03)

### ***ACTIVITY No. 3 14th February 2010 for 1 day***

Description: Cooking for Valentines Day  
Activity Type: Cultural events (EVENT03)

### ***ACTIVITY No. 4 19th March 2010 for 1 day***

Description: Parent's cafe, informal gathering  
Activity: Events: Conferences and Seminars (EVENT)

### ***ACTIVITY No. 5 8th April 2010 for 1 day***

Description: Children's Well Being and Need for Support  
Activity: Events: Conferences and Seminars (EVENT)

### ***ACTIVITY No. 6 24th April 2010 for 1 day***

Description: IT Skills for parents  
Activity: Events: Conferences and Seminars (EVENT)

### ***ACTIVITY No. 7 2nd May 2010 for 1 day***

Description: IT Skills for parents  
Activity: Events: Conferences and Seminars (EVENT)

### ***ACTIVITY No. 8 7th May 2010 for 4 days***

Description: Partnership Project Meeting in Finland  
Activity: Events: Conferences and Seminars (EVENT)

### ***ACTIVITY No. 9 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2010 for 1 day***

Description: Day trip to Great Yarmouth, United Kingdom  
Activity: Cultural events (EVENT03)

***ACTIVITY No. 10 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010 for 1 day***

Description: Parents Meeting

Activity: Exchange of ideas and good practice (METH04)

***ACTIVITY No. 11 22nd October 2010 for 1 day***

Description: Mama & Kids Club

Activity: Cultural events (EVENT03)

***ACTIVITY No. 12 6th November 2010 for 4 days***

Description: Partnership Project Meeting in Cambridge, United Kingdom

Activity: Events: Conferences and Seminars (EVENT)

***ACTIVITY No. 13 20th December 2010 for 1 day***

Description: Party Gathering to Celebrate Christmas (Multicultural Meeting)

Activity: Cultural events (EVENT03)

***ACTIVITY No. 14 24th January 2011 for 1 day***

Description: Meeting to Help Parents to Speak & Communicate With The School

Activity: Events: Conferences and Seminars (EVENT)

***ACTIVITY No. 15 31st January 2011 for 1 day***

Description: Chinese New Year Celebration

Activity: Cultural events (EVENT03)

***ACTIVITY No. 16 15th March 2011 for 1 day***

Description: Botanic Garden Visit

Activity: Integration Activities Supporting Special Needs (INTGR)

***ACTIVITY No. 17 14th April 2011 for 1 day***

Description: Handicraft activities - Chinese Kites Making

Activity: Cultural events (EVENT03)

***ACTIVITY No. 18 5th May 2011 for 4 days***

Description: Partnership Project Meeting in Greece

Activity: Events: Conferences and Seminars (EVENT)

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## **IMPACT ON PARTNERSHIP**

Our Community Centre holds English & Chinese classes during school terms on weekly basis and majority of the pupils are adult learners (immigrant parents) while their kids will attend to their schools on daily basis. Since there is no Chinese school in the city, the parents will send their kids to study Chinese in our Centre at every weekend. With the impact of the partnership project, pupils are getting more aggressive in learning English since all activities were being held and spoken in English. It led to a substantially high level in their English study with the increased languages skills. ICT and social skills were also increased due to seminars/classes being held during the 2 years project. The success of this project also led to high motivation and self-confidence due to the increased communications between partners and parents with other European countries which also led to the increased knowledge about partner countries and cultures.

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## **TEACHERS AND STAFF**

Due to the fact that all the staffs/teachers know how to speak and write English fluently as well as their knowledge in ICT skills are in high level, there is not much impact for them to increase their language skills but still they have tried their best to learn other countries language like Finnish, Portuguese and Greece during the visit to their countries. The most significant impact for the teachers/staff in this project are pedagogical skills, increased motivation, increased project management skills as well as increased knowledge about partner countries and cultures. During the visits to other countries, our host partners always arrange visits to their schools from pre-school, nursery school, primary to secondary school which all the teachers/staffs can gain experience on and learn from different educational systems as well as cultures.

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## **ORGANISATION**

As a result of the partnership and the meetings in different countries, we have learnt and gained knowledge from our partners in their curriculum/training programme which we can follow and use in our Community Centre but due to the fact that our organisation structure (Community Centre) is quite different from our partners (Parent Associations), there are not much changes to organisational arrangement. As a result of this project, more awareness and support were increased by the board of our Centre both financially and morally so as to achieve the aims and objectives of the partnership project as well as our Centre which aims are also to help our members settle down in a foreign country United Kingdom. Also significant increase in cooperation among staffs were also observed as all of them are deeply impressed on what we have contributed to the immigrant families on such a meaningful project.

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## **LOCAL COMMUNITY**

As a result of the partnership, there was an significant increase of support and participation of families member, not only to the immigrant families but also to the members of our Community Centre. In some of our local activities, even the non-immigrant families would like to take part in especially on multi-cultural events like Chinese New Year celebration, Christmas party, Valentine's day celebration etc as our door is open to all members of our Centre. During the

local activities, local organisations like our local councils, other community centres, other charitable organisations were also been invited to participate with their fantastic cultural performances. There was not much impact with local companies as our Centre only deals with individuals and not on companies, but still donations were received from some of the local companies as lucky draw for the audiences. Huge support and participation of other local actors were observed as they were also being invited to join in our local activities especially on multi-cultural performances.

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## **DISSEMINATION**

Being the biggest local community centre in Cambridge, our name is widely spread and well-known to every public with over 500 members mostly 90% Chinese nationality. We distributed newsletter every month to all members regarding any activities in within our Centre together with all updated local information which is beneficial to all immigrant families such as news from NHS and other government departments/local councils. At the same time, our web site is always updated with information which involves local activities. Grundtvig partnership is included as one of our activities and can be easily retrieved from our web site. According to the statistic from our web page, there are more than 10,000 clicks onto our web site every month and we receive many phone enquiries during the day asking for all sorts of questions as the Chinese population in Cambridge is now gradually increasing. Needless to say, there are over 2,000 Chinese students studying in Cambridge every year who also acquire our care and support every as we are closely related to the Chinese Student Scholar Association (CSSA). With the words of mouth in within Cambridge, we do feel that this is the best and the most effective way for dissemination activities to be carried out.

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## **MOBILITY PARTICIPATION**

### **1 PORTUGAL - AVELAR**

**Host Organisation:** Associação de Pais e Encarregados de Educação dos alunos do Agrupamento Vertical de Escolas de Avelar

Partnership Project Meeting: Avelar is a small town 200 km from the airport. We arrived at Lisbon on the first day and we stayed in a comfortable hotel while the host partner brought us to their city on the second day which took us 2 hours to arrive at Avelar. Upon arrival, we were being greeted by the principal and the pupils of the school. Short visit was made and our meeting started in the afternoon. During the meeting, we have introduced to each other as this was the first meeting that we ever had. We continued by sharing our experience and exchange ideas about our schools and their schools.

On the third day, we were scheduled to visit their nursery school, primary school and secondary school. In the afternoon, we continued our meeting to plan for our future activities and we have concluded in a very nice atmosphere even though there was a serious problem on language barrier as the host country and the parents does not speak English very well. Welcome dinner was served by the host in Avelar. On the fourth day, we were taken to Coimbra, the nearest city, 40km away from Avelar where we were able to see a lot of Portugal tradition and interest places with an old university city like Cambridge. We returned to Lisbon city that night which every body

took a good rest. On the fourth day, we have visited the famous Aquarium in Lisbon city and got ready to fly back home on the next day.

## **2 FINLAND – HELSINKI**

**Host Organisation:** Aurinkolahden Peruskoulun Vanhempainyhdistys ry

Partnership Project Meeting: Helsinki is the capital of Finland where the schools and parent association was located. On the first day of arrival in Helsinki, we were being fetched by the host partner at the airport. All partners arrived on the same day. Therefore, we were planned to meet each other in the evening for a get together dinner. On the second day after lunch, we started our partnership meeting inside a restaurant hosted by the organiser. Every partner was asked to make a presentation on what has been done for the past six months and we took turn to brief the local activities which were being held in our country.

From the presentations, we noticed that the result and feedback from the activities were not so attractive and successful to all partners. Continuation of the meeting was set on the fourth day after visit to the school. On the third day, we were brought by the host partner for sightseeing in Helsinki where we have visited the museums and other famous places. On the fourth day, we were being offered lunch in their school and straight after lunch, we had a tour around the whole school for nearly 2 hours. From the principal's speech, we were surprised to hear that there were more than 40 different nationalities of pupils studying in the same school. Therefore language classes are very important and vital to the new immigrant families.

We found out that the school was very well equipped and comprehensive with lots of well qualified and experienced teachers. After the visit, we continued with our project meeting inside the school. During the meeting, conclusion and overall results by all the partners were evaluated. Good ideas and suggestions by all partners were made to improve the future activities. All partners were asked to make plans for the events and meetings for the upcoming and last year of the project. The meeting ended with good atmosphere though all of us feel very tired and exhausted. On the fourth day of our visit, we were being offered by the host partner to take a tour around Helsinki and prepared for our next day departure.

## **3 GREECE – THESSALONIKI**

**Host Organisation:** Syllogos Goneon kai Kidemonon 61ou dim sholeiou Thessalonikis

Partnership Project Meeting: Thessaloniki is the second biggest city in Greece other than the capital Athens. On arrival at the airport of Thessaloniki, we were being fetched by the host partner and were taken to the hotel inside the city. We were being invited to a dinner hosted by the host partner for a get together party at a traditional Greece restaurant. On the second day of the visit, we were being scheduled to go for a out of town trip to an island which is the most famous island in Greece. From the island, we met the native Greece and experienced a lot of Greece traditional food and everyone of us took many pictures as we have never been to such a wonderful place.

On the third day, we were planned to visit the school and was offered a free lunch by the parents of the parent association. After lunch, we started our project meeting. As usual we took turn to brief our past 6 months activities and evaluation as a result of all the activities that we have



taken. From the meeting, we noticed that all partners have achieved improvement on their activities rather than the first year of operation. As all of us agreed, Final evaluation of the project will be done by our Greece partner and the deadline was set on 31st May, 2011 as the schools and teachers will be getting very busy towards the end of the school term which is June. After the meeting, we were being invited to join with all the pupils from the school for a dancing party with their parents. As this was our last meeting in the project, nearly every body left the school with tears hoping that one day, we can get back together again for similar project. On the fourth day, when we were preparing for sightseeing inside the city, unexpected rally started at noon time in Thessaloniki as well as the whole country because of the economic crisis in the country. For security reason we all stayed inside the hotel and got ready for the next day departure.

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