

Intermediate evaluation report of the Teachers International Competences as Keystones for Learning in Europe (TICKLE) project

Pertti Kansanen & Matti Meri

The actual start of the TICKLE project took place with the first meeting in Frankfurt (Germany) from 22.–25.11.2007. The national task groups had prepared a report about the “state of the art“ of intercultural diversities in schools, teacher education institutions and the national education systems. The participating countries have each a particular viewpoint to the common problem area. The background reports were meant to build a common framework for work in the project aiming at 42 keystone tools or methodological approaches, which can be used to enlarge intercultural competences. Each partner has to develop six keystones and these will be presented in the project meetings. This is going to happen in close relation to the theoretical viewpoints in the area of multicultural education. So far three project meetings after Frankfurt have taken place: 21.2.–24.2.2008 in Arnhem (Netherlands), 29.5.–1.6.2008 in Tallinn (Estonia), and 18.9.–21.9.2008 in Eger (Hungary).

We as external evaluators have been present as observers both in Tallinn and Eger; in Tallinn each of us also had a key note speech. According to our plan we intend to visit every partner institute either during the project meeting or visit them separately. The meetings have been well organised and the time schedules have worked without problems. The participants have presented their keystones in groups, discussions have been lively and enthusiastic; this indicates a high level of motivation to promote the aims of the project. The working has also been characterised by a good atmosphere with sociability and cooperation.

So far we have made two visits, the first to Tallinn and the second to Eger. In both of the institutes the discussions during two days have been fruitful and the climate of the discussions has been friendly and competent. The team members have offered a lot of their time to clarify the national circumstances and explained their educational and teacher education systems. During these visits we have also participated as observers in the morning sessions of the project meetings. Both of the project meetings connected to these visits were organised excellently.

The project has also published a flyer for the TICKLE project, which can be used for national purposes. It contains relevant information and is recommended to be translated into national languages. For the time being we do not know how the partners have reacted to this proposition. It is also meant that all information from the meetings, e.g. the minutes, will be published at the project website. So far only the minutes of the Frankfurt meeting have been published, apparently there have been problems to keep the website up to date. The design of the website, however, is clear and informative and easy to follow.

The activities of the first year of the TICKLE project have been especially promising and all indicates that the project will continue successfully and will achieve its aims. Also the lead of the project, Dr. Bernd Hainmüller and director Ute Leoni, legal representative, as well as the external consultant Dr. Wolfgang Looss seem all to be highly committed to the work of the project. Taken all together these are good signs for productive continuation.