Minutes [Draft 1]

3. Equal Transnational Workshop: Networks

Date: 18 and 19 May 2006
Location Graz, Austria

Participants: Elke Beneke [Austria], Zoltan Bodnar [Hungary], Bronwen Jones [UK, minutes], Mirka Pibliova [Czech Republic], Alan Potts [UK], Gabor Vamos [Hunary], Perdita Wingerter [Germany, Chair].

Apologies: Petra Wiese [Germany]

1.   **Agenda** [* 2 items amended following group agreement]

- Introductions and feedback from each country
- The website of the "Networks" trans-national workshop
- Networks "Hints and Tips" *
- Existing networking tools
- Development of concept of networking within a conference *
- Shadowing visits
- Review and joint agreement of work plan.

2.   **Introductions and feedback from each country**

2.1   Group members introduced themselves. There was only one new member since the last workshop - Bronwen – which was felt to be helpful for consistency and achieving progress. Participants then provided feedback on developments since the last "Network" workshop in Hungary, March 2006.

2.2   Czech Republic: Mirka has reported on last "Networks" workshop to her team. The Czech EQUAL network is expanding but contracting has taken priority. Now looking to communicate more widely, including other DPs.

2.3   Hungary: Zoltan reported that EQUAL activity focused on 2 key networks: regional government and employers employing disabled people. One DP was concerned about the complexity of the database for networking as they were not used to ICT and recommend reducing the amount of information and making it simpler. The other DPs were more familiar with ICT and welcomed the approach.

2.4   Austria: Elke reported that networking was not the primary focus and some results from projects were needed to provide a basis for presentations. Problem with small NGOs losing out to big vocational training providers in contracting processes. EQUAL is to involve small NGOs who have innovative ideas, represented via 'umbrella' organisations. Limited range of "official" networks in Austria but lots of informal networks and "expert groups" who

advise the government. Approach is to find key actors and work face-to-face. Creating a database of contacts. No official "lifelong learning" papers in Austria.

2.5   UK: Alan reported that the Engage DP has several networks and working groups. Minutes of last Trans-national "Networks" workshop presented to DP in absence of relevant UK reps and some difficult discussions resulted. Important lessons have been learned about working trans-nationally:
- Don't rely just on minutes – speak to people who were at the meeting
- When people speak different languages, it is very easy to misunderstand each others meaning
- Individuals responsible for "networking" need to consider what level of feedback is appropriate.

2.6   Germany: Perdita reported that her DP discusses matters as a team and is looking for practical, simple results from the trans-national group, and to learn from others. Perdita compared her role to "the spider in the middle" – collecting and circulating information, having an overview, making connections.

2.7   Feedback from TMG:
In the TMG meeting it was agreed, that following activities could be implemented:
› What: Website/brochure/DVD: tips and tricks, bad and good practice
› Development of a concept of a networking conference, pilots in each country are possible, if wanted
› Research for existing database-tool for relevant partner information in a network, mainstream good practice or develop a new one (Financing/responsibilities: Germany, language: English)
› Working plan till the next workshop:
› collect case studies in each country and put it on the website
› UK give Germans the access to the transnational website
› Shadowing visits – demands of each DP need to be researched and agreed by participating DPs

3.   The website of the "Networks" transnational workshop

3.1   Perdita has bought the following website domain name:
www.networking-works.net/. The group liked the name and the website structure was agreed. As all the "Networks" workshop products will be on the website, Perdita had put some content on the site based on the results of the first two workshops. The group worked on the Introduction and other sections during the workshop - see attached PowerPoint pages. The site is "work in progress" and comments and contributions from all partners and colleagues are to be requested. It was agreed that the website will be in English.   **Action: all**

3.2   Contact details of partners are in a Word document on the website. All group members to check contact details for their country.   **Action: all**

3.3   The website currently has a statement of responsibility for the website, which is   **Action:**

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a legal requirement in Germany, but an English translation or equivalent is needed. Alan agreed to provide a suitable statement.

Alan

4. Networks "Hints and Tips"

4.1 Group members agreed this was not intended to be definitive guide or handbook. A common title was agreed: Networks "Hints and Tips. Draft to be taken to partners and feedback provided to Perdita.

Action: all

4.3 The possibility of a small "Hints and Tips" booklet was discussed, to be produced in 4 languages. Each country to be responsible for own translation and printing.

Action: all

4.2 Networks "Hints and Tips" will link to real life examples under 'Case Studies' on the website [see below]. A template has been provided to describe the networks and examples need to show both good and bad practice. It is recognised that case studies showing "bad practice" may need to be anonymous.

Action: all

Each country to provide a minimum of 3 examples of networks.

5. Existing network tools

5.1 <u>Austria:</u> NANO – 10 networks, e-mail sent, awaiting further information.
<u>UK:</u> contributed several guides to developing and evaluating networks, including online communities.
<u>Hungary:</u> www.linkedin.com – an online tool for linking people who have ideas and/or need information.

5.2 Group members acknowledge there are many more existing tools in which could be accessed through the website via links or as downloads. As these are to be freely available, copyright/intellectual property needs to be checked. It is also important that the tools are of good quality and proven value, so a number of questions were agreed to assess this - see "Useful tools and instruments for networking" in attached PowerPoint pages. Perdita has also developed a tailor-made database for networks which she is making available on the site.

Group members and colleagues/partners to identify free/open source tools and send to Perdita as links or downloads as appropriate.

Action: all

6. Development of concept of networking within a conference

6.1 There was some discussion to clarify the exact nature of this activity and achieve a common understanding. It was agreed that the group would focus on ways and ideas for networking within a conference [see also attached PowerPoint pages].

6.2 All group members participated in an exercise where ideas for maximising opportunities for networking within a conference were pinned on a board and grouped according to theme [see also attached PowerPoint pages]. Perdita agreed to continue to type up the ideas and circulate to the group for checking,

Action: Perdita,

with the minutes. On receiving the final list, each person is to write a short explanation of their activities - especially for the ice-breakers, games, methods and techniques. **all**

7.   Shadowing visits

7.1   Group members made requests for shadowing [see attached PowerPoint pages]. Some of these requests [and those of other delegates] may be accommodated during the 4th Trans-national workshop in the UK. **Action: all, TMG**

7.2   Opportunities for shadowing were extended to all the Trans-national delegates during the plenary sessions using a pin board and cards. Elke to collect all requests at the end of the conference. **Action: Elke**

"NETWORKS" TRANSNATIONAL WORKSHOP: WORK PLAN

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
1 a] Provide 3 case studies describing networks [in English]	UK, A, CR [3 examples each] H [update existing examples]	15 June 2006
1 b] Contribute additional case studies	Group members/All Trans-national Delegates	Ongoing
2 Networks "Hints and Tips"	Group members/All Trans-national Delegates	Ongoing
3 a] Website set up: add network tools + instruments	Perdita	31 May 2006
3 b] Contribute links and downloads e.g. tools and instruments	Group members/All Trans-national Delegates	Ongoing
4 a] Produce draft of ideas, methods and techniques for networking within a conference	Perdita, Bronwen [first draft]	31 May 2006
4 b] Explanation of methods etc. by workshop members	Group members	15 June 2006
4 c] Contribute further ideas for networking within a conference	All Trans-national Delegates	Ongoing
5 Work shadowing: collating initial requests from conference delegates	Elke	For next TMG

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Note: no significant costs have been identified for the above activities. Any additional expenses incurred by shadowing activity to be borne by individual partners as appropriate.