

The Guidance Publication

In the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme a very diverse spectrum of organisations and institutions has been supported with the aim to promote European cooperation in the field of adult education, training and lifelong learning and to develop the European dimension of adult education issues. This cooperation has always been and is subjected to very specific conditions such as:

- the need to understand differences in adult education provision in different partner countries
- the complexity of intercultural team building
- the need to work in an intercultural team mainly through ICT
- a limited time frame
- high financial risk to the partnership in case of failure

The content of the **Guidance Publication**, which will be developed in the framework of the INTERtool project will be based on the results of a basic needs survey amongst project coordinators and partners.

When asked about some of the intercultural experiences in project work at a European level, many project coordinators state the diversity of the partnership as one of the greatest challenges. Amongst others are mentioned:

- differences in managing contents and relationships by email
- differences in discussion styles (both on a content and a relationship level)
- differences in meeting styles and in the sense of punctuality and time
- differences in what it means to reach a 'result' in a meeting

Definitions and understandings of culture in the adult education field and how intercultural communication works are central elements to European team work. An understanding and awareness of the differences of working and communication styles, differences of institutional cultures, including the dimension of time and dealing with different levels of commitment can therefore help a lot in coping with the challenge of diversity.

Aims of the Guidance Publication

The Guidance Publication serves for information and reference purposes on intercultural issues relevant to European project work. It is based on practical experience of organisations and individuals involved in European projects. It seeks to support project teams in identifying the intercultural challenges of European project work and using efficient and effective tools to bring out the best in multicultural teams.

Who is the Guidance Publication for?

The Guidance Publication is targeted mainly at coordinators and partners of European projects in adult education and other educational sectors, who do not necessarily have the time to engage in extensive learning or training activities.

The Content of the Guidance Publication

The Guidance Publication will be very practice oriented, focussing on intercultural key competencies needed in European projects with all their diversity.

A special chapter will be dedicated to **virtual communication solely**, because it is the condition under which European projects work and because this poses especially high demands concerning communication competencies of the team members and leadership of the project manager. Some problems can turn up in a virtual environment that are not relevant in a face to face situation such as for example: being alone, not seeing the group, information overkill, no visual feedback, avoiding confrontation, constant reachability.

The Guidance Publication will be available in English, German and French