

# **NON FORMAL EDUCATION THROUGH OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES FOR DISABLE PEOPLE**

## **HANDBOOK**

# **NON- FORMAL LEARNING THROUGH OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE**

**Authors:** Partnership of "Breaking Barriers Networking" Project N° PT-4.3-11-2009-R1  
Youth in Action Programme – Action4.3 Networking

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**Dr. José Mendes Barros**

President of the Board

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## **Preamble**

Since its foundation, the Cerebral Palsy Association of Coimbra (Portugal), in addition to their main activity, has sought to enrich and diversify their activities to ensure successful integration of people with special needs, promoting learning opportunities and personal enrichment for all its clients.

In 1985 APCC held the 1st National Camp for disabled people, at Quinta da Conraria - Coimbra, has participated in numerous sports championships, national and international meetings and international exchanges, and more recently created the Educational Farm and Adventure Farm, also directed to the school and urban community. Has developed different Youth in Action transnational projects.

We can state that has been a constant concern of our organization the promotion and skills development through the activities of non - formal learning.

We understand that: all forms of learning are valid and complementary to each other; all have their place in people's lives from the perspective of lifelong learning, all are important to fill the multitude of skills, abilities and knowledge that characterize human beings and their needs for full integration into society.

The growing need for a greater appreciation / valorisation and recognition of educational strategies outside of school context or professional has always been advocated by us.

The EU 2020 strategy clearly states in its objectives the recognition of non-formal and informal education, as one of the goals for education, training and lifelong learning for smart growth, sustainable and inclusive.

Throughout its history, the APCC has proven to be a dynamic agent of social policies, implementing on the ground with clients in the day to day, these measures, creating a network of diverse and multidisciplinary partnerships, seeking to improve the quality of services provided.

In addition, through its projects, has tested practices and innovative solutions to answer the needs of their target audiences, through exemplary practices , recognized by society, geared towards the full integration of disabled people in society

The Youth Network 4.3 project "Breaking Barriers ", with the support of the Youth in Action Programme, which allowed for about a year, the consortium established and the various professionals who work with him, to work together on development of skills in facilitation non-formal education for people with disabilities through outdoor activities.

This Guide is the result of the partnership work and active involvement of all and aims to be a useful tool for those interested in the subject and may want to implement this kind of activities.

Coimbra 15<sup>th</sup> January 2011

## About Breaking Barriers Project

Non-formal education has been a fairly developed subject and strengthened in the Union States over the last years. It has revealed itself as fertile ground for promotion of enriching and privileged contexts amongst the target population. It's an area that has had remarkable developments and with great potential, with largely proven results in several organizations all over Europe.

The organizations here represented have, along the years, developed together activities in non-formal education and experimental learning. However, the need felt by the partner organizations (Portugal, United Kingdom, Germany, Czech Republic, Poland and Slovenia) of a deepening and a bigger systematization of the developed work in an organized manner and relatively to the matter in hand, have led to the construction of this formal partnership to take forward what we believe is strategic area in this field.

This line of work has revealed to have great potential for the technicians of these organizations that develop their work in the rehabilitation and integration of the disabled field from their results to the improvement in the quality of services.

In this context, the main goals of this 4.3 Networking project are the creation of an informal network of organizations that devote themselves in a structured and organized way to the development of this common theme – non-formal education and outdoor activities for the disabled. Another essential objective is the development of competences in facilitating outdoor activities for technicians, teachers and others that work in their day to day with people with disabilities.

The common ground to approach in this project is non-formal education through outdoor activities for the disabled.

As main objective of this project, we highlight the elaboration of a guide of best practice in the field of the Non Formal Education in the participating countries and also the results of the project; the construction of an online

based work platform as a privileged instrument of communication between the working partners of the activities and dissemination of the results of the project and their results; the undergoing of Transnational Encounters to present and discuss the developed work by the network and the approach to a specific subject (multiculturalism, gender equality, discrimination, intercultural dialogue) and, as a final objective, the construction of a working network of organizations that dedicate themselves to the Non Formal Education and the methodology of experiential learning outdoor based activities in their work with young people.

To the fulfilling of these objectives and to keep the scheduled results we defined the duration of 14 months for this project. The partnership is composed by different and complementary organizations active in the field of non formal education working with young disabled people. Some of them have specific competences in the practical work with young disabled people and integration. In the other hand, there are other partners with academics and scientific competences that will act as supervisors in activities related with the non formal education research.

The quality and evaluation is a main concern of the partnership. In this ambit we will assure the implementation of an internal evaluation plan and methodology that allow us in each moment of the project to have a clear perspective of the progress of the project ( giving the possibility to readapt and adjust objectives and activities) in order to achieve successfully our goals.

## Information about partner organisations

Details of partner organisations (half page)-ALL PARTNERS

Consortium of “Breaking Barriers Network”



**Cerebral Palsy Coimbra's Association - APCC – Portugal**

APCC is a private institution of social solidarity and a non profit making organization, created to face the needs of the people with special needs.

We are an organization with more than 40 years, mainly concerned with social issues, APCC is based in Coimbra, in the centre of Portugal bathed by the Mondego river and surrounded by several mountains.

From the beginning our first priority is to promote the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups with special emphasis on the disabled, which have now become increasingly relevant with national and transnational policies.

Our organization has a qualified and recognised work in the areas of medical rehabilitation and functional education, Education, vocational training, socio-professional integration, music, hipoterapy, hydrotherapy, sports, outdoor adventure education.

Our adventure activities give young people and adults the opportunity to confront challenging situations while at the same time creating special moments for cooperation, teamwork and dynamic communication.

We organize play, educational, and vocational programmes, conducted by highly specialized professionals in an absolute safe environment.



We offer the following types of activities; all terrain biking, canoeing and orientation hiking, paintball, climbing and others



Buckinghamshire New University, Faculty of Enterprise and Innovation – United Kingdom

The organisation is a university and is involved in teaching , research and development in the area of outdoor education.It also works with teachign, research concerned with disability(9000students).

Prof Humberstone is also currently chair of the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning (EOE) which has a membership of over 200 organisations and individuals in Europe. ([www.eoe-network.org](http://www.eoe-network.org))



**Bsj – Marburg - Deutschland**

Bsj: Organisation in Marburg/Germany, working in different non-profit-projects with young people of different social fields, especially with those, who have difficulties concerning their family and living circumstances. Mainly the methods, that are used, deal with activities, that have something to do with “body and movement” in experiential adventurous learning fields (for example outdoor activities, like canoeing and climbing).

The bsj runs three informal educational centres in Hessa and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Zerum).

Zerum: One of the main fields of the work at Zerum are activities for youngsters with special needs. The institution is situated in the north-eastern part of

Germany, near the Polish border. Activities for example: sailing, canoeing, environmental learning, ropes-course-climbing. The Zerum has got a lot of experiences in offering seminars and meetings for social workers and other employees working in the field of “social work” and “pedagogy” – especially for those who deal with the theme “people with special needs and social inclusion”.



**Centrum Edukacji Nieformalnej “FRAJDA”  
(Non-Formal Education Centre “FRAJDA”) – Poland**



Non-Formal Education Centre “FRAJDA” – Association For Human Development is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation working in the field of outdoor education and experiential learning. The members of the association consists mostly of experienced teachers, trainers, therapists, sociologists, educators and enthusiastic people who seek for new and more effective methods in their work. Our aim is to promote the idea of non-formal education and creating a Europe-wide network of partners. We cooperate with many national and international organizations.

Our Centre is situated in the north-western part of Poland in a small village of Czarnocin on The Szczecin Bay (Zalew Szczeciński) surrounded by beautiful nature. We have a building with 100 beds, a canteen, a classroom for regular

classes, and a small gymnasium for therapeutic classes. There is also a big hall with a fireplace. We have excellent grounds for outdoor activities. There are sports fields for volleyball, basketball, football, a climbing wall, beach with shallow water and water-sports equipment, and many other things for having fun and joy. Local natural resources, clean water, unspoiled nature and our experienced and enthusiastic staff are our advantages.

In summer season we provide different thematic two-weeks long programmes for children and youth of age from 7 up to 18. During spring and autumn we offer integration stays for schools and other organised groups. Besides that we provide workshops, courses, trainings and therapeutic camps. All the programmes are based on the outdoor activities with educational elements (games, plays, competitions, etc.). Every year we have about 1000 youngsters from schools on the short-term integration stays and about 300 on the two-weeks summer camps.

We are a non-governmental and non-profit organisation working in the field of outdoor education and adventure therapy. The members of the association consists mostly of experienced teachers, trainers, therapists, sociologists, educators and enthusiastic people who seek for new and effective methods in their work. We provide workshops, courses, trainings and therapeutic camps.



### **Department of Outdoor Sports**

#### **Faculty Physical Education and Sport of Charles University Prague – CZ**

Department of Outdoor Sports is part of Charles University Prague.

The Department of Outdoor Sports is responsible for study programmes in outdoor sports for all faculty students- teachers, managers and physiotherapists. Specially focused in study programme in outdoor activities with application for schools, leisure and for people with disabilities. Dr. Hruša is leader of Centre of

Charles University for outdoor sports of handicapped students. Ass. Prof. Neuman prepares lectures and courses in branch of study Outdoor Activities, some courses are organised also for students who will work with handicapped people. Some students now are working on thesis in area outdoor education for disabled people



### **HUMAN REFORM FOUNDATION – Romania**

The HUMAN REFORM FOUNDATION is a Non-For Profit organisation – founded in 1993 – active at regional level and specialised in developing human resources through vocational courses in the central region of Romania.

Main aims of our Foundation:

Regional human resource development

Contribution to the social integration of dezadvantaged people by Life Long Learning specific methods in the middle of Romania

We realise the aims by courses, trainings, outdoor non-formal education, consulting, assistance, coordination

We have 6 permanent members of staff and 12 associated members who work for us on a part-time basis. We train or retrain some 320 students per year using traditional teaching methods as well as VLE for distance learning courses. We have been involved as partners in a multitude of projects at national and European level and are recognised by the National Accreditation Council as a Vocational Education Centre. We have twelve years experience in providing education to students who live in remote areas and in rural regions of the country. This being a bilingual community we have a good expertise in overcoming communication barriers between the educational institution and the student.



### **Mühlenkraft - D as a partner of Wichernhaus Altdorf, RDB**

Mühlenkraft e.V. Brückenbau an der Harnbacher Mühle - D - as a partner of Wichernhaus Altdorf, RDB, Millcraft-Project “([www.muehlenkraft.de](http://www.muehlenkraft.de)) (non-governmental, non-profit association founded in 2007 to improve the encountering of people with or without disabilities in education, work or challenging leisure programmes.

(please mention: still 1 year of plannings, 2 years of building) will be a tree with five branches:

20 pupils from 16 to 20 years will have one or two years of pre-professional school at the mill, variously in cooperation with pupils from professional trainings from Nuremberg, building up tree-houses or earth-houses or walls of the old barn or... There will be two different programmes, one for those interested in “green professions”, one for those interested in gastronomy.

10 persons with special needs will find a job there and their challenge – in the “Wirtshaus zur Mühlenkraft” (kitchen, service, rooms) or in green service: woodwork, gardening, keeping the whole in order.

These plus several volunteers will be living at the mill through the whole year.

“Adventure for all” which is offered to (mixed) groups that will come as visitors for a week or seven days and live in challenging places (like treehouses, earthhouses, Bauwägen) – they should mostly be groups in cooperation – building bridges, changing their minds by togethering in adventures, problem solving and having access to nature.

Naturally Inclusion is a programme offered for the students, professors, working groups, schoolclasses, offering occasions for experiencing inclusion: Harnbacher

Mühle as a place of permanently developing culture of inclusive living of all man in nature. Networking in every level will involve the place with steady improvement in all possible ways.



### **WERKENRODE SCHOOL – THE NETHERLANDS**

Werkenrode School is a school for secondary education for students from 12 up to the age of 20. It is a school for students who needs special education because of their physical and/or multiple limitation or long term illness.

There are 3 different levels:

Theoretical level, which leads to a diploma;

Practical level, which leads to a (sheltered) place to work;

Adapting level, which leads to daytime activities.

At the moment, the school has about 270 pupils. Approximately 1/3 of them lives during the week at “Werkenrode Jongeren”, a place of residence with training in a living situation. These living-houses are situated close to the school on the grounds of Werkenrode in Groesbeek. Most of the students stay during the weekdays, a small part stays 24/7. The other 2/3 stays at home.

There are lessons in social skills, general subjects (literacy and numeracy, orientation on the world around), physical education and swimming. There are practical lessons in different subjects like landscaping, catering, pet care and office working.

Every student gets his own plan which is developed through the years from their start at school until they leave the school. First they get their lessons at school. Later on, when it is clearer which route they will take, they can do a practicum.



## **Zveza Sonček (SL)**

SONČEK - the Cerebral Palsy Association of Slovenia is a nonprofit, nongovernmental and non-political organization for people with disabilities and their parents. It was established in 1983. The organization incorporates fifteen regional societies for cerebral palsy, the Society for prematurely born children and the Sport Society for cerebral palsy »Žarek«. The societies unite over 4.000 children, youth and adults with cerebral palsy and other disabilities, as well as their relatives, professionals and volunteers. As a national organization, Sonček presents the associations common standpoints. It also coordinates negotiations concerning matters of common interest with other organizations of disabled people in the national umbrella organization.

Sonček is a member of the International Cerebral Palsy Society and the European Association of Service providers for People with Disabilities.

### **Our Services**

- ▶ Service centers in Ljubljana, Maribor, Celje, Kranj, Slovenj Gradec, Koper, Ptuj, Murska Sobota, Novo mesto and Krško.
- ▶ Holiday and therapy centers in Elerji on the coast and the farm Vrtiče in the rural countryside.
- ▶ Support in group homes for adults with disabilities in Ljubljana, Maribor, Dravograd, Koper and Štore.
- ▶ Training and employment for adults with disabilities in sheltered workshops and enterprises.
- ▶ Transport for children, youth and adults with disabilities across the whole country, with headquarters in service centers.
- ▶ Counselling and educational service for children and their parents, youth and adults with disabilities.

- ▶ Education, supervision and counseling in schools for teachers and assistants who are responsible for the integration of children with special needs.
- ▶ Sensitization for inclusion in kindergartens and schools.
- ▶ Rehabilitation, therapy and vacation programs for children and their parents, youth and adults with disabilities.
- ▶ Informational system and publishing activities: The PET magazine, a quarterly newsletter called “Sončnik” and leaflets (giving general or specific subject information, brochures etc.), distributed to notice stands in post offices and clinics.
- ▶ Library with books, journals and videos.

### Mission

Sonček advocates conditions that will ensure equal opportunities for all residents of Slovenia, regardless of their physical or intellectual abilities, for a life of their own vision in accordance with all other inhabitants.

### Vision

Sonček strives to create a cultural environment that will except the differences in physical and intellectual abilities without prejudice.

### Goals

1. Create a public opinion and culture that will be tolerant towards differences.
2. Create legal conditions and a system of help that will ensure equal opportunities for people with different intellectual or physical abilities.
3. Remove communication barriers for people that are physical, sensorially or verbally deprived.
4. Enable people with abilities to represent their own interests by themselves or with help of representatives that they choose.
5. Organize services for people with special needs.



## **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - concern for human rights

Changing Attitudes, Breaking Barriers - Living the UN-Convention on the Rights of the Disabled with Hands, Hearts and Heads to Alter the Perception of Living With All Abilities

Jochen Riehl

For us – the members of BB-network - based on longterm experiences inside the practical work for enabling people with all abilities / disabilities - and based on a longterm cooperation with colleagues from all over Europe., for us the UN-convention on the rights of the Disabled, of course, is a great affirmation of our attitudes towards non-formal education as an instrument of empowerment, of enabling all persons.

Here is the link to the document from the United Nations, translated to many languages:

[\(UN Enable - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities\)](#)

The Convention marks a “paradigm shift” in attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. It takes to a new height the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as “objects” of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as “subjects” with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.

The Convention is intended as a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. It adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It clarifies and qualifies

how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced.

The convention was postponed by the UN on the 13th of december 2006, it entered into force on 3May 2008, and it was ratified by many states in the meanwhile. Also most of the members of EU signed their acknowledgement, thereby declaring their responsibility for changing national right and to give guarantee to develop their societies towards inclusion of all persons – those with mental or physical handicaps as well as those with learning disabilities, problems with behavior, those of all religions, those with migration background, those with ...

In Germany we have a highly diversified system of support for formal education for youngsters with all kinds of special needs. As there is a serious discussion between governments and educational experts concerning the best conclusions, in some Bundesländern the public school system is going to face a big change: special schools in Bremen, Niedersachsen, ... will mostly be closed so their youngsters must be included within public schools in their home-streets. On the other hand: In Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, the southern states, the estimation of the administration is different: They assume that the very specialized system of schools for students with very special needs is the summit of inclusion – the assumption that every student receives the very special educational programme they need – it is easy to argue in both directions. The parents should have the right to decide what they think is the best way. But still, the right of choice is depending on the estimation of school administration. In the meanwhile, the mainstream of regular schools is not really interested in the discussion about Inclusion of children with special needs; they appear to have problems enough in everyday school life.

Some might expect this convention to mainly empower people in weakly developed countries to get their human rights reserved – and they might be right that in Europe it is not a matter of surviving pregnancy, birth, an incident or an accident; but even in the richest countries it is still a matter of dignity if you are enabled or disabled, if you are strengthened or kept weak, if you find

assistance to cover the sanitary basics or to provide assistance for personal growth even if that means to go strange ways – alternative ways, maybe breaking barriers, hopefully building bridges.

### Breaking Barriers – building bridges

Children of human beings nowadays are born into a highly complex society. They have a right on inclusion and participation, no matter what gender, no matter what personal physical, mental, socioeconomic, ethnical ... conditions they have got from their beginnings. Their parents must take care of their development at least from a medical point of view, and the children will develop the skills necessary for being successful in formal education best before the first schooldays.

Children have the duty to take part and engage in programmes of formal education – at least attending school. But it depends on certain things if they will be successful: on learning ability in relation with support of parents, on sensory, physical, mental abilities – or impairments, and on the access to education – which is a matter of distance, of architecture, of public transport as well as of educational methods that ought to achieve to the (special) needs of children.

Education must enable children, must encourage them and empower those who need it – to play a role, to find their place, to develop their abilities, to feel free and to feel responsible enough to accept the challenges of a grown up member in society.

Being different is normal. Being different, joining in: It's normal if you feel self-confident enough. Confidence is one of the keys to lifelong learning: by examples of behaviour, by imitation, by trial and error, by experiencing, by getting accustomed or acquainted, by feedbacks from serious situations.

You may be confident enough but have no access to cultural techniques like reading and writing, so that abstract learning in formal arrangements is not possible; you may in spite be able to learn a lot in a non-formal way by autodidactic and personal interest, by experience, by developing in good circumstances, by having passed a crisis – you may feel the ability to change of what you have been before: This is learning. Being aware of this possibility opens spaces for personal growth and personal luck, personal status and the

state of mind of society. “In what kind of society do you want to live?” - this is a question put by a German charity, Aktion Mensch, in their initiative [dieGesellschafter.de](http://dieGesellschafter.de) ([dieGesellschafter.de](http://dieGesellschafter.de)). Each of us must find the answer for her- and himself.

Since we are held to engage for a complex but inclusive society going for inclusion and solidarity, we know that education needs to offer not only formal but also non-formal challenges. Some might find that in a different manner and meaning by learning illegal things: how to open and start a car without key, how to organize drugs, how to download thoughts/music/programmes that belong to somebody.

Some will develop their senses in traffic, some will learn to use modern media – in a creative way. Some will learn to collect mushrooms, to differ and use plants, others will learn to enjoy activities in the outdoors, more or less in the context of risk and hard skills or in regeneration.

In the European Network “Breaking Barriers” we were discussing a lot about the state of art in our different countries. We see huge diversity of different dimensions. We see big differences in development, and we see challenges for our work that need a common response. This is: Everywhere in Europe there is a big need of settings offering good practice of non-formal education for all persons, in all ages and with all abilities in order to complement the educational intentions of society. The societies are obliged to develop skills of inclusion; their institutions for formal education must develop attitudes and skills that can achieve to this expectation. They must get aware that there is a chance of improving by working with means of non-formal education – better than in formal settings. High estimation and bright perception through society would support the economical situation of centres or institutions who offer “adventure-for-all” and might help to improve staff, equipment and localities.

To improve the awareness of and the ability for inclusion is a matter of big efforts for both: formal and non-formal education. The seed of thoughts must be spread very distinctly in schools, targeted and didactically well prepared. Identifying and personally breaking the barriers is a matter of learning by doing, by getting in contact and solving problems together. There is a lot that needs to be done to achieve the aim – by the way: breaking barriers and building bridges: between youth and nature, disabled and abled ones,

girlish/boyish and reflected human behavior, old knowledge and young curiosity, adventure and sustainability, risk/fun and responsibility, renewable energies and revolutionary technologies...

In the end: Children of human beings nowadays still have to have the chance to improve mankind if they will have learnt to handle barriers and if they are experienced in building bridges.

But- how to “Break Barriers”? We must compile methods and criteria of Best Practice. We hope you will be able to find some within this booklet. We are sure: Yes, we can offer a range of methods in addition to formal education, a range of methods for lifelong learning and for sustainable personal development: Breaking Barriers by non formal learning, by learning through experience and adventure, especially esteeming work in the outdoors.

Adventure education might offer a chance for everyone who have to or are interested in living, teaching, working with persons with all kinds of special needs, with all abilities, and who are not yet sure about what is possible. Breaking Barriers network might help for compiling experiences with methods to become more (self)conscious of life, of myself: my (special) gifts and my (special) needs. We might help to re-opening the frontier crossing-points between formal and non-formal education. “Adventure” in it’s substantial meaning is: a person reaches a never seen point putting in all his or her strength and willingness, thus arriving at the aimed point. (lat.: advenire – to arrive). In that meaning, adventurous (non-fomal) education helps us to get where we want to get:

consciousness of human abilities, of dignity and self estimation developping freely,

strengthening respect of our human rights, the basic rights and human diversity;

unfold completely the personality, gifts and creativity, cognitive and physical abilities of my person

enable persons with disabilities to real participation in a free society.

We are never aware of everyone’s knowledge about the answer to the following question: “What Size of World Needs One Human Life?” We can only assume some answers what the responsibilities of human beings are:

Saving Life (the medical point of view) – Arranging Life (basic human rights) – Improving Life (filling with sense, enabling, empowering) – here we find the motivation for Breaking Barriers!

Our network would be interested to go ahead and to really establish a profound place of exchanging these experiences. As we all had to learn and to accept that everyday life and its demands brings much more efforts to be carried out than ever expected, we all might be a little disappointed of the outcome of our networking meetings. But, in the end, we know, that we are on the very right way, that we have to offer a lot, but that we really needed more personal time and space to make it an everyday part of our lives to work on European level.

***Jochen Riehl (June/September 2010)***

## Non-formal-experiential theory

Non-formal learning as an educational approach

Note: This was first published in the Non-formal Education through outdoor Activities Guide (2006)

What does non-formal learning mean in European educational practice?

Typology of learning contexts according to their institutional setting and pedagogical orientation

What is non-formal learning?

Searching for the criteria

Types of learning inter-relate

How is non-formal learning linked to formal education?

Why do we need non-formal learning?

Lasse Siurala, PhD

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When the participants of the Marburg meeting (September 2005) on Outdoor Adventure Education were asked what 'non-formal learning' meant in their countries, there were very different understandings of it and many said that the term was not simply known. This confusion is also shared by teachers and researchers of the education field. Phil Hodgkinson from the University of Leeds (UK)

argues that the literature on formal, informal and non-formal learning is not very clear on what the terms mean: many texts use one or more of the terms without clearly defining them, while many others cannot reach any agreement on how the terms should be defined and used. Another source of differing interpretations is the definitions of international organisations like European Union and Council of Europe. Their political definition of non-formal learning does not always coincide, for example, with those of the research community and are not well known to the practitioners in the field.

This tries to clarify this confusion through (1) a description of the use of the term across Europe, (2) a proposal to define formal education, non-formal and informal learning, (3) a discussion of the nature of these learning contexts, (4) a presentation of the inter-relationships between formal and non-formal learning and (5) providing reasons for the need of non-formal learning.

What does non-formal learning mean in European educational practice?

The most striking difference between the various understandings of non-formal learning is that between former Soviet countries and other European countries. In Russia and the post-communist countries non-formal learning is generally understood as state organized out-of-class education. It is linked to the pedagogical practices and physical premises of the Soviet times. It is an integral part of formal education and it is often practiced in the old pioneer premises. Non-formal education is institutionalised and often centralised. Typically the network of local palaces for youth and children is coordinated by a central palace. The aims of these institutions are often the promotion of national identity, history, culture and tradition, regional folk customs, patriotism – and sometimes values related to the affiliation of European Community. The curriculum includes culture and art, natural science, technical creativity, sport and fitness, scout, local lore and patriotism. Also, they organise national and international competitions and festivals like “Young Poets Contest”, “Dance Competition”, “Folklore Festival”, “Choir Competition”, “meeting of young patriots”, etc.

In Russia non-formal education is referred to as “an institution of additional education” which is supervised by the Ministry of Education and Science. “Nowadays, additional education in Russia is an integral part of the general education” (Kiselef, Basina and Shubina 2005, 90). The system includes both municipal and governmental institutions of additional education, typically a ‘Palace (or



House) of Youth Creativity'. There are 18 000 institutions of additional education with 500 000 pedagogues, coaches and methodologists in Russia. The St. Petersburg City Palace of Youth Creativity alone has 1000 creative groups and clubs, 350 educational programmes and more than 16 000 children participating in them. In Belarus non-formal education is called "the system of nonschool education". The education is carried out in specialised institutions like the Minsk State Palace of Children and Youth. As the reference to 'State' in the name of the institution implies, "institutions of nonschool education and training are the constituent parts of the national education system" (Shklyar and Shappo 2005, 12). In Bulgaria "out-of-school activities" are carried out in 140 'extra-scholastic pedagogical institutions (EPI)'. Under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Science the National Palace of Children in Sofia functions as the methodological assistant and co-ordinator to the local Palaces. The main fields of activities are science and technology; arts; sports and tourism. In similar, in Moldova non-formal learning is called "out-of-school education" and is carried out in institutional establishments; Children's Palaces and Houses, Centres of Creativity for Children and Youngsters and different Sports Clubs. In Poland "extracurricular education" is carried out in schools and (251) institutions of extracurricular education (Youth Palaces, Youth Cultural Houses and extracurricular work centres). These institutions function as a part of the national educational system. Their work and pedagogy is regulated and supervised by Ministry of National Education and Sports. "Law of Ukraine about out-of-school education" lays the basis for the 1497 out-of-school educational institutions which function "as a component part of the continuous education system" (Svriska 2005, 112). The coordinating centre of all out-of-school educational institutions is the Kiev Palace for Youth and Children.

In the Czech Republic the state takes the responsibility of education of youth and children through its institutions. They include (in the order of their popularity) school clubs and extended-day groups and 294 centres for free time activities. Also non-governmental organisations organise activities for children and young people but their members are not registered. In Lithuania the law on education (2003) recognises non-formal education and its institutions as integral parts of formal education to run programmes "to fulfil children and youth's educational needs, improve qualifications and acquire additional competences" (Zautraite and Navikiene 2005, 57). The Lithuanian concept of non-formal education is also linked to the implementation of state youth policy and to the activities of non-governmental youth organisations. However, the concept of non-formal is not well known: "Even the institutions,

organising non-formal education, do not perfectly realize what the result of non-formal education is, what the pedagogue's aims are in training of children's competencies, and what the uses of these competencies will be for the children in the future" (opus citatus, 58). According to a recent research (2003) on non-formal education "even the people directly working with non-formal education have not found out what it is". The same applies to Slovakia where the term 'non-formal education' is not well known. Often it is understood to cover both the structured out-of-school education and all types of learning taking place in leisure time. The Slovakian discourse on non-formal education not only includes school clubs and leisure centres, but also non-governmental youth organisations and their voluntary work.

Another common element of non-formal education in post-Soviet countries is their focus on two groups: the gifted and the disadvantaged children and youth. In Russia additional education (non-formal education) is clearly focused on both supporting 'gifted children' and combating youth problems, like juvenile drug addiction and criminality. The Government of Moldova approved (May, 7, 2005) the "Gifted Children" programme, which includes "Best Pupil" contest, different Olympiads and other competitions, publication of a special magazine dedicated to disseminating of students' best projects. Lithuanian non-formal education has as "one of its main tasks to offer social support for children with disabilities, orphans etc." The leisure time centres of the Czech Republic put strong emphasis on the screening and support of talented young people. In Poland the out-of-school activities are focused on two groups: "individual development of artistically gifted and 'sporty' children and teenagers...and towards difficult children and adolescents" (Grzesiak and Weyssenhoff 2005, 84). The authors conclude "The success of our instructors, both with gifted teenagers and those with limited abilities, makes up the success of the entire institution".

Because of the institutionalised form of out-of-school education, it is indicative that, whatever the term used, it is always "education" and never "learning". Apparently this is due to the closeness of non-formal learning to formal education and its pedagogy. In fact, in countries like Poland and Russia the pedagogues of the out-of-school education institutions are teachers working mostly on voluntary basis. Consequently, the participants of the non-formal education institutions, the Centres and Palaces of Creativity, are mostly called 'students' or 'pupils', not 'children' or 'young people'.

In contrast to many western European countries, in Russia the term non-formal primarily refers to the relatively centralised out-of-school education institutions closely linked to formal education, but not to the activities of the civil society existing outside formal educational institutions. However, during the period of Russia's transformation from communism to capitalism there existed a term and phenomena called 'neformaly' (non-formal) which did refer to the various activities of the rising Russian civil society. In 1987 Gorbachev suggested at the Plenum of Central Committee of the Communist Party that the question of internal party democracy and the balance of institutions in the national political sphere, like the state and the civil society, should be discussed. This was followed by a promotion of 'pluralism of opinions' and a sudden activation of non-governmental organisations, social movements and youth subcultures. These were called 'neformaly'.

The social reaction to 'neformaly' was very different among the various political and social actors. For Gorbachev 'neformaly', the activation of various civic groups, became a symbol of the attack on the one-party system, a symbol of the democratisation process. For the Komsomol (the communist youth organisation) 'neformaly' presented a threat to its legitimacy. According to a study commissioned by the Komsomol, 'neformaly' was classified to 'positive', 'neutral' and 'negative'. The 'positive neformaly' referred to organisations not against Komsomol. These the Komsomol tried, with considerable success, to incorporate into its own structures. The 'neutral neformaly' – punks, heavy metal fans, hiphop people etc – were to be mobilised into 'socially useful activities'. The 'negative neformaly' – anti-socialist movements, urban gangs, bikers, karate clubs etc – were defined as a threat to socialist democracy and a variety of control measures were proposed. For the public and the media most groups of the 'neformaly' became to mean 'marginalised youth', which then were labelled as 'outsiders' and put under the jurisdiction of social work and the police (for more details, see Pilkington 1994).

During Gorbachev's time the concept non-formal (neformaly) went through a dramatic series of versatile social definitions. Clearly, the meaning of 'non-formal' is dependent on its social context and the particular interests of the ones making the definitions.

In the western parts of Europe non-formal learning is not much better known than it is in the post-Soviet countries. Even if non-formal learning ranks high in the youth policy and education agendas of international organisations (EU, Council of Europe) and

government policies and programmes, the term is not very widely known and its meaning lacks shared understanding. For example in Finland ‘non-formal learning’ does not appear as an entry in “the Dictionary of Contemporary Finnish – words originating from other languages”, it is not mentioned in the Government’s proposal for youth law (2006) and it only features in publications as explanatory articles written by experts trying to explain the meaning of the concept to youth workers. An ordinary Finnish youth worker, whether working in youth organisations or in municipal youth work does not use the word non-formal learning, nor is well acquainted to it. Many European countries have their own expression for the more or less same type of learning, like for example the French use of the term Education populaire. In the worst case ‘non-formal learning’ is translated to other languages in a way to completely miss the original meaning: the official EU translation to Finnish language ‘epävirallinen oppiminen’ actually means, properly translated back to English, ‘unofficial learning’.

Furthermore, non-formal education in western European countries is not very institutionalised and the links to formal education are not very close. Non-formal learning is often understood to take place in the civic and community activities, where non-governmental organisations play a strong role. The role of the public sector is mainly supporting NGOs to organise activities, for example for children and young people. In some countries like Scandinavia and Austria the public sector takes a strong role in organising non-formal learning opportunities for young people. It has been estimated that about 50-60% of young people in these countries participate regularly at activities organised for them by the NGOs or the public youth services.

In Western Europe increasing demands have been made to keep non-formal learning at arm’s length from the public sector. Much of the non-formal learning takes place in the civil society, typically as voluntary work carried out by non-governmental organisations. It is emphasised that a pluralistic democracy is essentially dependent on a vibrant and independent civil society and this is why non-formal learning should be provided a large degree of autonomy. At the same time there is increasing criticism that the lives of young people become “over-organised”. “Nowadays both psychologists and educators agree on the importance in allowing children and young people to have time to dream, and to have time to do nothing” says Gérard Castellani (2005) from the French education organisation CEMEA. Jan Van Gils (2005), a researcher from Belgium, maintains that “overall you can hear pleas for more real free

time for children, time they can assign to the activities they like at that moment, with the people they like, on the place they like, with the material they like, as long as they like it". This way of thinking also questions today's policies to better link non-formal and formal education. These include the 'integrated school-day' and validation of non-formal learning. The integrated school day – lengthening the school day through bringing non-formal actors in the school – is seen by many experts as a way to formalise the non-formal and to go too far in institutionalising the lives of children and young people. The validation of non-formal learning (for example in the form of civic activities study books) is also seen as an unwanted tendency to quantify and instrumentalise an activity which is expected to be spontaneous and voluntary.

The Western European interest in non-formal learning is also characterised by the diversity of actors which argue for the importance of non-formal learning. It is not only the emphasis on the work of youth organisations and the civil society, but also the idea that non-formal learning is an instrument in social integration (social youth work, counselling, mentoring, adventure education etc) and that non-formal learning is a complementary element to lifelong and lifewide learning. At the same time youth, education and media researchers have pointed out that unintended/informal learning takes place within the school. Young people also learn norms, values and behavioural codes informally in the peer groups and youth subcultures. Furthermore, globalised commercial cultures and the media do not leave young people's life views untouched. All this is related to the concepts of non-formal or informal learning. Thus, it is not easy to pinpoint a clear, shared understanding of what non-formal learning means.

As a first tentative effort to describe the different understandings of formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts in the variety of European contexts, a typology is presented (table 1). In a Pan-European scale, two dimensions of the non-formal learning context seem to stand out. On the other hand, the nature of institutional setting – whether learning takes place at the school/university, in other public or publicly funded premises, or within the third or the private sector (civil society, working life) – captures some of the key differences of understanding of the types of learning across Europe and across the public, private and third sectors. On the other hand, the nature of pedagogical orientation – a teacher centred, learner centred or a non conscious pedagogical approach – seem also to differentiate between what is understood by formal, non-formal and informal learning.

**Table 1: Typology of learning contexts according to their institutional setting and pedagogical orientation.**

| Pedagogical orientation      | INSTITUTIONAL SETTING                                    |   |   |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|
|                              | School/university  | Other public premise                                | Third/private sector  |
| <b>teacher- centred</b>      | school/ university/ vocational education curriculum      | “additional education”<br>“out-of-school education” |   |
|                              | intergrated school-day                                   | “engagement mentoring”                              |   |
|                              |  | educational activities in Youth Centres             | Non-governmental organisations                                    |
| <b>learner-centred</b>       | “Own Career”   | adventure education and experiential learning       |   |
|                              | alternative educationalists                              | social youth work,<br>cultural youth work           |   |
|                              |  |   | community projects  |
|                              |  |   | “natural mentoring”   |
|                              |  |   | rap music,<br>action croups,<br>cultural protests, demonstrations |
| <b>no conscious pedagogy</b> | “countercultural learning”,<br>“unconventional learning” | open doors activities at the Youth Centres          | learning from peers, parents, media, markets                      |

One may argue that the essential element of a learning type is the pedagogical orientation behind. (This, of course, is a theoretical assumption open to debate.) A teacher centred pedagogy implies learning which is structured, hierarchically and chronologically graded, emphasises objectivity of knowledge and memorizing, and aims at certification. We call this formal learning. It may be carried out in a specialised institutional setting (school, vocational institute, university), in a public out-of-school education premise (Youth Palace, Cultural house, Youth Centre, Sport Club), or in the third sector (premises of NGOs) or private sector (working place). Learner centred approach refers to learning which is anchored in the learner's own frame of understanding and his life situation, is an open-ended process emphasising voluntary involvement and intrinsic motivation, the usefulness of knowledge and critical thinking. We call this non-formal learning. It may take place in any type of institutional setting. Thirdly, any learning which does not involve conscious pedagogical intervention or which does not aim at certification is called informal learning - and occurs in a variety of learning contexts.

Another theoretical assumption is that it is not possible to draw clear demarcation lines between the different learning approaches. For example, the concept of the 'integrated school-day' or 'extended school-day' may bring genuinely non-formal, learner centred elements into the school curriculum, but it may also become another formalised, non-voluntary activity – or it may, depending on the case, include varying degrees of both. The out-of-school education in the East and Central European countries also comprises elements of formal and non-formal education. It is voluntary activity more concentrated on the learning process than its certification, while at the same time it is very structured and strongly linked to formal education. Currently these systems are also facing changes: in Slovakia and Poland the centralised state-run out-of-school activities are being decentralised to the local level and opened for NGOs and private sector actors to enter. In this sense there are indications that the Eastern and Central European understanding of 'non-formal education' is slowly moving towards its Western European counterpart. This could exemplify the change depicted by Dorin Festau and Barbara Humberstone (2005, 38): "The convergence of cultures,

which many nations within Europe tend to resist fiercely, creates a system of common values, common practices and will inevitably lead to uniformisation". According to the objectives of youth organisations and the activities of youth centres they practice non-formal, learner centred pedagogy. However, this is not necessarily the reality. On a European Youth Forum 1 study on non-formal learning and youth organisations, Pasi Sahlberg argues that youth NGOs do not always practice what they preach. Organisations are sometimes run like schools or private companies: there is a strong hierarchical top-down management with already planned set of activities which do not give much room for an open-ended, actor-based learning process and participation. The Council of Europe Youth Sector training programmes on trainers are to be The arenas for non-formal learning. Recent research has shown that they combine a large range of elements of non-formal and formal learning (Chisholm et al. 2005) and that the teaching practices are "to such extent formalised that it is very difficult for the learners to challenge or change them" (Søgaard Sørensen 2005). Also it seems that in many of the Youth Centres their programme of activities is based on the expertise and ideas of the youth workers, but not so much on the initiatives and participation of the young people themselves. It is a challenge for both youth organisations and youth centres to develop activities which are more learner centred and truly based on non-formal learning approach.

"Mentoring" refers to the support provided for young people to help them integrate into society, in the working life, in particular. According to Helen Colley (2005) 'natural mentoring' is based on voluntary participation of young people into an open and confidential negotiation and information exchange with somebody the young person trusts on matters relevant to her/his career planning and future expectations. Often such a mentor is youth worker, social worker or youth counsellor. According to the study of Colley (2003) government education and welfare policies in England have increasingly emphasised youth mentoring, a development which has accompanied with an increasing formalisation of it. Mentoring has become better planned, more directive with increased level of compulsion and lower level of negotiation and it is situated in institutional settings rather than in less formal local community settings as earlier. It would be worth another study to know, to what extent



this development also concerns youth information and counselling, youth workshops and other policy measures targeted at better integration of young people into labour markets.

“Own Career” serves as an example of educational work which operates within the school premise and attached to the official curriculum, but based on a learner centred approach. It is a method to work with young people with problems to manage the school curriculum. Special teachers and youth workers/social workers design a curriculum which combines practical training and school lessons with support to self-management skills, identity growth and confidence building. The curriculum is based on each pupil’s individual life-situation and personal concerns. In this respect the method follows the ideas of ‘alternative educationalists’ like John Dewey, Maria Montessori, Celestine Freinet, Paolo Freire, A.S Neil and the present day constructivists like Patrick Slattery, Shirley Sternberg and Joe Kincheloe. One of their main emphasis is the importance of the learner itself.

Adventure education and experiential learning are based on a typically non-formal learning approach. The specificity of these approaches is discussed in more detail later in this guide.

Cultural and political action groups of young people operate outside institutional contexts. They are also strongly actor-oriented manifestations – and become deeply educational experiences. To what extent the educational aims are consciously displayed may be questioned, but there is a process of critically reflecting the reality and a conscious effort to change it. Similarly, many of the cultural productions and actions of youth cultures and subcultures include social and political messages, like for example rap-music which is (originally) essentially political and educative<sup>2</sup>.

Followed by Paul Willis’s classical ethnographic study “Learning to labour” on working class children at the school, researchers have shown how the school environment and the curriculum function as a learning context to many other things than just those intended by the official curriculum. The German educationalist Thomas Ziehe uses the notion ‘unconventional learning’ to all those – not pedagogically conscious - modes of learning which exist outside the official curriculum.

Even if it is often maintained that youth centres are sites for non-formal learning, often they are rather sites for informal learning, learning which is not consciously planned or promoted by the youth workers. This is particularly so in the case of the so called 'open doors activities', where youth centres are open for all young people for meeting each other, playing games, talking to youth workers, having fun. Different kinds of learning definitely take place, but in most cases it is not consciously planned or managed by the young people or the youth workers.

At the far right bottom corner of table 1 we find learning which takes place outside public institutional settings without conscious educational targeting. This is the dynamically expanding area of informal learning: all those everyday learning sites created by the globalised consumer society, the omnipresent (and mostly commercial) media, entertainment culture, youth subcultures, peer groups, hobbies, family life etc. No doubt, this is an area of rapid development with increased effects on the lifestyles, values and behavioural patterns of young people. Thus, making these effects transparent to young people, supporting young people to critically reflect them and also to take the necessary action for change, is also a challenge for educational intervention – for formal and non-formal education.

What is non-formal learning?

Following the assumption above that it is the educational orientation which best characterises different types of learning, one may summarize the key elements of formal education, informal learning and non-formal learning as follows:

formal education: institution based, structured, hierarchically and chronologically graded, teacher/trainer centred education which emphasises objectivity of knowledge, memorizing and aims at certification. School and university are typical sites of formal education.

informal learning: learning in everyday life which does not aim at certification but where a diversity of actors each with their own intentions impose meanings on the learner (the work place, media, commercial cultures, counter and subcultures, ideological and public sector agents, parents, children, peer groups, etc). It may be linked to terms like 'everyday learning', 'edutainment'

(Neil Postman), 'unconventional learning' (Thomas Ziehe) and 'counter-cultural learning' (Paul Willis).

non-formal learning: learner centred and practice based learning process which emphasises intrinsic motivation, the usefulness of knowledge and critical thinking (rather than objective knowledge and memorizing) and aims at identity growth, social change and integration into society. Learning is voluntary, involves conscious educational aims and may be credited. It is often linked to terms like 'experiential learning', 'empowerment', 'social pedagogy', 'participation', 'active citizenship' and 'social inclusion'. Non-formal learning may take place in public sector activities like social work, youth work, sports and cultural work, in working life and in civil society activities like in nongovernmental organisations, or in partnership with a variety of actors like is often the case in community work and social projects.

A Finnish outdoor education expert Steve Bowles has said that non-formal learning in adventure education is something that happens between the youth worker, the young people and "the sun, the moon and the campfire". Indeed, non-formal learning is a voluntary, situational and experiential learning process which is not easy to break down into measurable didactic phases leading to a clear-cut quantifiable certificate or a learning result. "The sun, the moon and the campfire" is not the classroom, but it does catalyse learning processes. In fact, research on outdoor education practice has shown that many skills and competences related to identity growth and social integration do develop during the activities. This is particularly so when the activity is long enough, is well designed in beforehand, is followed-up, assessed and possibly linked to formal education curriculum. Thus, much of the discussion around non-formal learning today is about improving its quality and promoting the transparency and recognition of it in community work, working life and in the educational field – outdoor education included.

One rationale behind the efforts to define non-formal learning in relation to other types of learning is to establish it as a recognised form of learning. Another reason for – at least seemingly clear – definitions is to promote shared understanding of what non-formal learning is about. However, even if

the above definitions are helpful for the purposes of recognition and understanding of non-formal learning, following remarks must be made:

First, the definition above is based on the theoretical assumption that it is the learner centred educational orientation which is the key classifying criteria. Those who sympathise with pragmatist educational philosophy, constructivist conception of knowledge, alternative educationalists, social pedagogy, emancipatory youth and community work and so on, are likely to agree on this criteria and the usefulness of this particular definition. However, those close to the objectivist conception of truth and the didactic thinking of the mainstream formal education might find the criteria too limited and too exclusive. However, the social world is about interpretations and it might not be possible to find a meta-level viewpoint which puts together the different theoretical educational approaches into a framework which all could share. In the end, also education is to take sides. What is anyway useful is to be aware of the differing approaches, reflect them and to be open to look at their weaknesses and strengths, their inter-relations and potential synergies.

Second, from the viewpoint of the learner, same things may be learned through different learning approaches. One may pass exams or even receive a university diploma in outdoor education (formal learning), build expertise in outdoor activities through active involvement and practice in an adventure education organisation or in a private company organising adventure activities (non-formal learning) and one may learn about adventuring in the nature from the media, from friends or from just moving around in the woods, lakes and the mountains (informal learning).

Third, even if a learning process is essentially formal, non-formal or informal it may comprise of elements of the other two types of learning. In this sense learning approaches inter-relate. This is a recent finding in the research on how to find the criteria for the classification of formal, non-formal and informal learning, which we will discuss next.

### Searching for the criteria

There are plenty of actors which try to define formal, non-formal and informal learning; representatives of the various educational disciplines, the professionals, organisations, political bodies in local, national and

international level, interest groups and so on. As one would expect the list of demarcating criteria becomes long. Based on a literature survey Colley et al. present a 'short' list of 20 distinguishing criteria.

Distinguishing criteria (Colley, Hodkinson and Malcolm 2003):

Teacher – learner relations

Location (e.g. educational or community premises)

Learner/teacher intentionality/activity (voluntariness)

Extent of planning or intentional structuring

Nature and extent of assessment and accreditation

External determination or not

Purposes and interests to meet needs of dominant or marginalised groups

The nature of knowledge

Whether learning is seen as embodied or just 'head stuff'

The status of the knowledge and learning

Education or non-education

Part of a course or not

Whether outcomes can be measured

Whether learning is collective/collaborative or individual

The purposes of learning

Pedagogical approaches

The mediation of learning – by whom and how

The time-frames of learning

The extent to which learning is tacit or explicit

The extent to which learning is context-specific or generalisable/transferable

Reading this list gives an idea of the plurality of dimensions which try pinpoint non-formal and informal learning. The list also illustrates the difficulty of finding a shared, concise and simple set criteria for grasping the scope and meaning of non-formal learning. Realizing that such a long list is not useful for analytic or even descriptive uses, the authors (Colley et al.) propose to cut it down to 'four dimensions of formality/informality':

Process. This includes learner activity, pedagogical styles and issues of assessment: that is, the learning practices, and the relationships between the learner and the others (tutors, teachers, trainers, mentors, guides).

Location and setting. Is the location of the learning within a setting that is primarily education, community or working place? Does the learning take place in the context of: fixed or open time frames; is there specified curriculum, objectives, certification; etc.

Purposes. Is the learning secondary to other prime purpose; or the main purpose itself? Whose purposes are dominant – the learner's or others'?

Content. This covers issues about the nature of what is being learned. Is this the acquisition of established expert knowledge/understanding/practices, or the development of something new? Is the focus on propositional knowledge or situated practice? Is the focus on high status knowledge or not?

These dimensions compress large empirical information on demarcating criteria into four groups. As an economic way of presenting information it is helpful. The authors have also used this classification to study how formal and informal learning inter-relate.

Before going on to summarize this study, a remark can be made on the way Colley et al. think on their dimensions. It seems to be assumed that formality/informality form continuums of, say, teacher – learner centred emphasis, fixed – open time frames, serving the purposes of the learner – the others, practical – theoretical knowledge, implying that the actual learning may be situated on either ends of the continuum or somewhere in between. The differences may also be qualitative in which case it is not so much a dimension with 'opposites' and 'midpoints', but rather educational approaches which do not have much in common. Presenting learning as formality/informality dimensions serves the (political) purpose of conceptualising formal, non-formal and informal learning as complementary modes of learning. In principle they could also be alternative or autonomous types of learning.

#### Types of learning inter-relate

Colley, Hodkinson and Malcolm (2003) have studied various learning contexts and processes and found that a typically formal learning process also includes significant elements of non-formal and informal learning. At the same time non-formal learning projects include characteristics of formal education. They

conclude that “there are few, if any, learning situations where either informal or formal elements are completely absent...It was the blending of formal and informal that was significant, not their separation”. Furthermore, the authors suggest that the way the formal and informal learning inter-related should be seen in relation to the wider historical, social, political and educational context of the learning: for example, historical roots and disciplinary paradigms of youth and social work lead to different emphasis of non-formal learning than is the case in school and university teaching.

These conclusions question the possibility of identifying formal, non-formal and informal learning as separate categories or types of learning. Instead of trying to identify and draw demarcation lines between formal, non-formal and informal learning, the authors suggest that “it is often more helpful to examine dimensions of formality and informality, and ways in which they inter-relate with each other”. For example, they feel more sympathy towards a definition which sees formal and informal learning as a continuum where degrees of formalisation fade into or mix with informal modes of learning.

This is a fair warning to those who wish to establish simplified learning categories for ideological, disciplinary or political purposes. It is tempting to create, through seemingly clear demarcation criteria, a learning approach superior to others. The superiority of formal learning is often argued to be based on its capacity to produce objective, accumulated, recorded and generalisable knowledge, while, for example everyday knowledge is claimed to be subjective, context-specific and qualitative. On the other side, non-formal learning is sometimes claimed to be superior to formal education, because it is more effective (things, like values, norms and languages, are learned better in non-formal processes) and has the benefit of empowering people and promoting (through active citizenship) human rights, democracy and social change. Clearly, the creation of such polarized positions has made it difficult to explore possible synergies and areas of common interest, between for example the university and the working life, or the school and the surrounding civil society. The benefit and relevance of the finding of Colley et al. that in the empirical reality and working practice formal, non-formal and informal learning approaches actually inter-relate, is that it allows us to look at relations between them. It is, for example, important to discuss to what extent

non-formal learning is complementary, alternative or autonomous to formal education. These relationships are discussed later in this chapter.

How is non-formal learning linked to formal education?

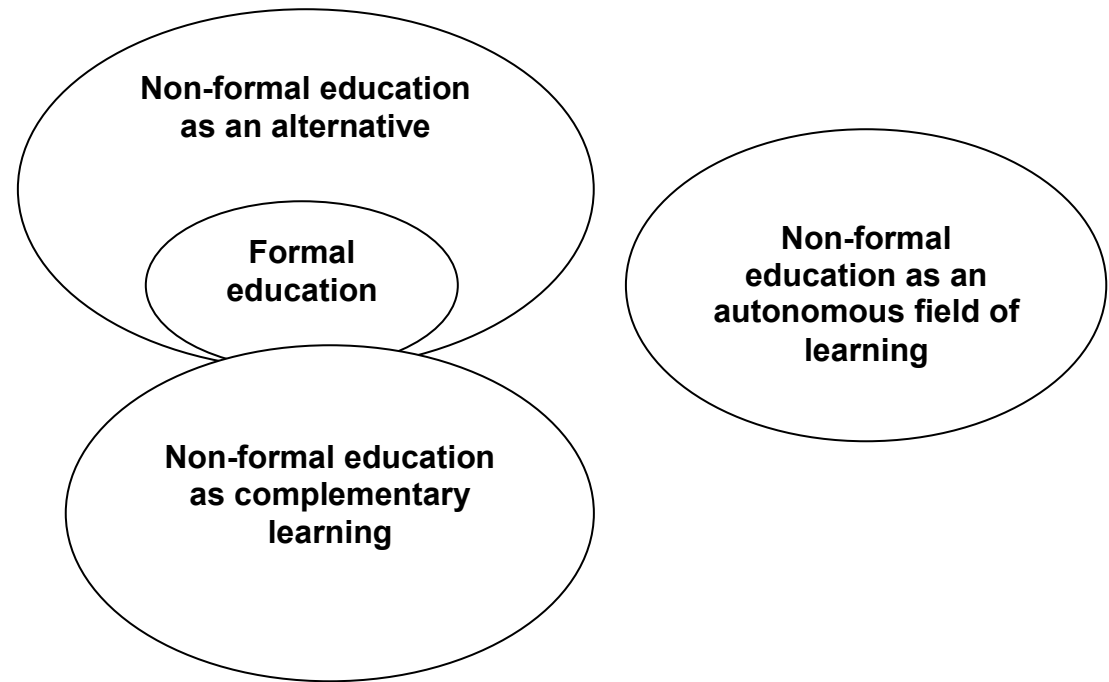
Colley et al. argue that to understand non-formal learning is to see it in relation to other forms of learning. Figure 1 describes three potential ways in which non-formal learning may be linked to formal education. Non-formal learning can have complementary, alternative or autonomous role in relation to formal education.

Non-formal learning as complementary to formal education

Lynne Chisholm, a leading educationalist and an expert of the Commission's educational affairs has put it (in 2000) very clearly: "It is time to move beyond regarding formal and non-formal learning as a binary opposition, in which non-formal represents all that is 'good' and formal represents all that is 'bad'. In reality, the boundaries between the two are not firmly fixed. Their respective features fade into one another towards the centre of what is ultimately a continuum of learning contexts, contents and methods." Both European international organisations, the EU and the Council of Europe, have both strongly stated that non-formal and informal learning must be better validated and recognised to become an integral part of the formal – non-formal – informal learning continuum. The Commission puts emphasis on non-formal learning as a complementary form to lifelong and lifewide learning and as an instrument in labour market integration, while the Council of Europe stresses its active citizenship agenda. Both are committed to work together<sup>3</sup> to develop concrete tools for demonstrating skills and competences acquired through non-formal learning.<sup>4</sup> In sum, to put it bluntly, is the future of non-formal learning dependent on its capacity to formalise its practices and to validate its learning outcomes and thus link itself to formal education, lifelong and lifewide learning?



**Figure 1. The role of non-formal learning in relation to formal education**



Non-formal learning as alternative to formal education

Juha Suoranta, a Finnish media educationalist, says: "Non-formal learning is very different from, even opposite to, formal education as to its conception of knowledge, understanding of identity, approach to education and design of learning context" (Suoranta, Nuorisotutkimuslehti [Journal of Youth Research] 2000/3). He has presented the main differences as follows:

**Table 1. Institutional Setting And Pedagogical Orientation**

| <b>Formal education</b>          | <b>Non-formal learning</b>                        |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>conception of knowledge</b>   |   |
| one interpretation, objectivist  | many relatively true interpretations of the world |
| <b>understanding of identity</b> |   |
| a stable and coherent identity   | a changing, multiple and contradictory identity   |
| <b>approach to education</b>     |   |
| teacher centred                  | Negotiation                                       |
| <b>learning context</b>          |   |
| curriculum, school books         | the society surrounding the school                |

The proponents of this kind of approach strongly feel that formal education today is at the end of its road and must be replaced by an alternative. Manuela du Bois-Reymond, from the University of Leiden, argues that “European countries have similar problems in their formal education system – motivation problems, irrelevant and/or outmoded curricula, problems with the preparation of young people for a flexible and unforeseeable labour market etc. Non-formal education, in combination with ICT and lifelong learning, need to be incorporated”. Within this perspective non-formal learning does not serve as a marginal and secondary support element to formal education, but as a powerful learning approach ready for broader challenges. To strengthen its identity as a serious educational approach, the non-formal learning community (practitioners and researchers) should constantly reflect, criticise and develop its educational philosophy, conceptual relationship to other forms of learning and its methodological specificity. From this point of view it would be more helpful to the future survival of non-formal learning to concentrate on critical reflection of its own “key meaningful threads” and production of distinctly good practices than on validation and marketing (to become acceptable to formal education).

Non-formal learning as an autonomous field learning

*“It is more important to learn Latin well than to make a class journey to Rome”*

Theodore Adorno

As Theodore Adorno points out, there are things which you learn better at school (Latin) and there are other matters which require personal involvement and experience (sensing Rome). Thomas Ziehe (2000) goes on to argue that formal education and non-formal learning represent qualitatively and normatively different fields and types of learning. For him the relationship between school and youth is “a normative relationship of difference”. The school has its own logic, its own demands and working methods and culture. It may be very far from young people’s own demands, habits and cultures. The gap has become smaller, but there is a limit to which school can be ‘de-standardised’ or made to become a youth centre. It should be understood that school simply is normatively different from youth cultures, it is one of the life-

worlds that are different from those of many young people and the role of a pupil is just one role among others. Young people today are able to smoothly move around these life-worlds and change their respective roles. The school has its own educational mission and is good in its own learning offer. Non-formal learning provides an efficient way to build motivation and self-esteem, learn from real-life contexts, promote critical reflection and social action, and acquire a large variety of social skills and competences. They are different kinds of learning and should be kept at arm's length from each other.

From this point of view it would be important to be critical towards the now popular efforts to better link formal and non-formal education, to recognise and validate the outcomes of non-formal learning. It has been suggested that the mere introduction of and emphasis on the concept 'non-formal learning' by the Commission in relation to lifewide and lifelong learning "is invariably linked to the desire to introduce more formal attributes to learning in these contexts" (Colley 2005, 32). This would then lead to formalisation and increased state control of non-formal learning. The key element of non-formal learning, its voluntary nature and independence, would be lost. This debate is going on in relation to the integrated school-day proposal and the non-formal learning study books and passports (to validate NGO and other leisure time activities of young people). Telemäki and Bowles (2001) argue that we should "be suspicious of any attempts to formalise and discipline" adventure education: non-formal education may be considered as 'semi-professional' at best and should not be too quick to claim scientific status.

Steve Bowles has further argued that non-formal learning has been 'commodified'. Particularly during the 1990s, under the influence of neo-liberalist policies, non-formal learning has become a cheap integration instrument (like using voluntaries and NGOs to run 'empowerment' –projects with youth at risk). Bowles seems also to suggest that 'adventure' and 'experience' have become fashionable products for today's individualised sensation seeking youth. Together with this commodification process, non-formal learning has lost its historical, political and social roots and become 'decontextualised ahistorical and apolitical activity'. To redirect this trend non-formal learning should return to its roots as conscious educational activity in a given historical, political and social condition. This would mean emphasis on

empowerment to critical reflection and social change to challenge the increasingly commercialised and individualised pleasure seeking cultures. Also non-formal learning should be kept at arms length from the increasingly individualised and privatised formal education.

Siurala (2002) argues that there has been a 'non-formal education boom' and describes how a large variety of actors, all with their own interests, have relatively recently underlined the importance of non-formal learning. He concludes: "the term 'non-formal education' does not have a clear-cut, universally shared, objective definition. It is a context specific, ideologically loaded term...it might be useful to be aware of the ideological and political interests, meanings and assumptions of the actors with which [we are] supposed to co-operate in promoting non-formal learning" (opus citatus, 86).

**Figure 1** gives a simplified description of the 'battlefield of interests'. It is perhaps useful also for Outdoor Adventure Education (OAE), as an important vector and practitioner of non-formal learning to situate itself in this battlefield. This means constant reflection of the role and the key elements of OAE:

How far should OAE follow the validation and recognition policies of non-formal learning?

What does increased formalisation of non-formal learning mean to OAE?

What are the threats and possibilities of increased co-operation of OAE with the school, the vocational education institutes and the universities?

Does and should OAE, as an alternative educational approach, have a role in developing formal education?

What is the key methodological specificity of OAE?

Has OAE become 'commodified' to the extent it is in danger of losing its educational roots?

What are these educational roots?

What are the risks and benefits for OAE to maintain a deliberate distance to formal education?

What does non-formal learning mean to OAE?

Why do we need non-formal learning?

At the same as it is important to involve oneself into reflecting and developing non-formal learning approaches, there is always a need for more general

arguments on 'Why non-formal learning'? A review on the literature and political texts on non-formal learning may be squeezed to following five arguments: non-formal learning is needed because...

it promotes the learning of essential skills and competences

A European Youth Forum study by Pasi Sahlberg (1999) on non-formal learning in youth organisations lists following ways in which development and learning of young people is enhanced:

"Firstly, it [non-formal education] can help to develop the learning skills and competences that are necessary in work, studies, hobbies or in life. Secondly, it promotes socialisation and the acquiring of appropriate social skills. Thirdly, it increases the level of active participation in communities." 5

it enriches learning environments: adds values, personal experiences and critical reflection into citizenship education

Formal education is still very much based on individual cognition, theoretical learning and teacher-oriented provision of facts and generalisations. Manuela du Bois-Raymond, a professor of education and youth sociology from the University of Leiden (NL) summarizes the contemporary educational debate and literature: "I have become aware of a new rhetoric, one that speaks about situated or experiential or self-administered learning...It seems that there is a growing consciousness that subjectivity, the "subjective factor" in education and learning is receiving greater recognition than in the past" (2005, 21).

Non-formal learning can be seen to enrich or complement formal education through its emphasis on social learning, links to real-life and learner oriented processes of critical reflection of knowledge and values. 6

Empirical evidence from a study on citizenship education in 24 countries shows that there is an overemphasis on 'knowledge'. There should be more room for 'personal critical thinking', 'participation' and 'values'. 7 The formal 'fact and teacher based' class room education needs to be added by educational elements typical for non-formal learning: better links to the meanings and experiences of the learner, a more direct relationship to real life situations, a more transparent exposure of values and political interests and an emphasis on critical reflection. This approach is concomitant with the aim to develop youth participation through 'experiences in the immediate

environment – family, school, leisure time and work’ (CLRAE, Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, 2003). Citizenship skills should be learned in real life contexts and concern matters relevant to young people.

it broadens the spectrum of citizen involvement and has a spill-over effect on institutional politics

Young people have increasingly expressed their aspirations through global and local movements and actions, campaigns, protests, personal life-style choices, cultural events, youth organisations and other civil society activities. Social and political issues are reflected, debated, negotiated, criticised and acted on. These actions and experiences may also contribute to the strengthening of ‘institutional politics’. First, ideas and issues which are developed and raised in these non-formal learning environments, also enrich the political debates of the ‘institutional politics’. Second, in the non-formal areas young people acquire competences and skills, which also are helpful to become active citizens in traditional politics. Furthermore, it has been suggested that “young people involved in protest movements may later on in life become more involved in traditional politics and that this could be a part of a life-cycle of political engagement”.

It is a powerful instrument of social integration

Non-formal learning has been successfully applied by NGOs and the public sector to improve the employability of young people, to help school drop-outs to finish their studies, to encourage low achievers at school to better performance and to support young people with behavioural problems or those otherwise at risk.

An example is employment projects which use arts, craft or the new media to motivate unemployed young people to set themselves occupational goals, to learn in practice skills and competences needed to apply a job or training and to become acquainted with codes and practices of the working life and to strengthen the young person’s self-confidence.

Another experience comes from school life. Authors like Habermas (2001) have talked about ‘modernisation winners and losers’ referring to mechanisms, including formal education, which create widening of the social cleavages. However, it has been shown that non-formal participatory projects

provide meaningful learning contexts for otherwise 'low achievers' and 'disengaged learners'. As a result they build self-confidence, life management skills and future orientation. They become "active participants and navigators of their own learning biography" (Manuela du Bois-Raymond 2005). In this sense non-formal education has the capacity to equalize learning opportunities and social cleavages.

It is an effective method of communication and intervention

The top down delivery of educational messages, to young people, in particular, have not always been very effective. For example - in the field of health education - alcohol, tobacco and drug campaigns at the schools have proved to be not effective. New approaches, like peer education, widely used in combating HIV, tobacco, alcohol, drug use and other unhealthy life-styles have showed promising results. Messages are taken more seriously when people are not 'told to', but when there is a possibility to discuss the messages with peers and draw one's own conclusions.

Research of school life indicates that there is a growing lack of trust and lack of feeling of shared interest between pupils and teachers. Pupils feel that school is not dealing with issues relevant to them and that teachers are not competent to counsel them about their life interests and vocational prospects. In this respect youth workers, social workers, youth information and counselling workers and peer-counsellors have a much positive image in the eyes of young people.

### **Concluding remarks**

In a wider European context non-formal learning/education remains an ambiguous concept. It is perhaps too ambiguous and abstract to allow any reasonable comparative analyses or fruitful learning through best practices. This article has tried to 'bring order into chaos' through describing non-formal education practices, their differences and relationships in a framework of their institutional setting and pedagogical orientation (table 1). It is proposed that pedagogical orientation is a key demarcation criteria. A learner centred, situational pedagogy aiming at identity growth, support to self-management

skills, critical reflection and social action is typical to a non-formal educational approach.

Recent research has shown that, as a rule, the different types of learning are mixed in educational practice. Thus, it is difficult to create clear-cut typologies or classifications of learning types. Still, formal, non-formal and informal learning are very different kinds of learning approaches. Even if their classification is difficult, it is necessary to recognise their respective differences in their concept of knowledge, educational philosophy, ethical and moral principles, methodological specificities etc. One of the key differentiating factor between the educational approaches is their power. The superior power of formal education is related to its legal, political, social and financial status. It also has the power of creditation, the power to define the contents and accomplishments of learning. The influence of non-formal learning is much lower; the professional status of practitioners of non-formal education is lower than those of formal education, their professional representation is weaker, their social and political recognition is lower and their measures and standards of creditation have only taken their first steps.

In this situation Outdoor Adventure Education and other non-formal learning fields welcome the recent strong political support of the international organisations, the Commission, in particular, to the recognition of the achievements and the potentiality of non-formal learning. At the same time it is vital for the non-formal learning community, the practitioners and researchers, to involve themselves in a continuous development and self-reflection of their own educational thinking and methodological practices.

One of the current challenges is finding the ways to link non-formal learning and formal education. For European Union and the Commission, in their efforts to create these links, Outdoor Adventure Education provides a particularly interesting partner. OAE is a leading vector in the development of non-formal learning with long-standing experience on co-operation with formal education, both with schools and with vocational and university education. However, as we have seen, linking formal and non-formal learning is not as self-evident or unproblematic as it might first appear. Outdoor Adventure Education, with its first hand experience of and constant critical reflection on co-operation with formal education, provides front-line information on the



prospects and problems of strategies to promote the linkages between the two types of learning.

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#### Notes

1. European Youth Forum is an umbrella organisation for international youth organisations and national youth councils in Europe
2. For an exciting analysis of the political and educative essence of rap-music see Shusterman, Richard, Practicing philosophy: Pragmatism and philosophical life. London:Routledge 1996
3. For more details, see European Commission/Council of Europe (2004) Pathways towards validation and recognition of education, training and learning in the youth field, joint Working Paper from the Youth Unit at the European Commission's Directorate General Education and Culture and the Youth Department of the Council of Europe's Directorate of General Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport, Brussels and Strasbourg, February
4. These include the European Youth Worker and Youth Leader Portfolio (Council of Europe) and YOUTHPASS certificate for participants of the YOUTH Programme (European Commission)
5. Pasi Sahlberg: Building Bridges for Learning. The recognition and value of non-formal education in youth activity. European Youth Forum, Brussels 1999
6. see also Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1437 (2000) 1
7. Parker, Walter (ed) Education for democracy, Greenwich 2002)

8. CoE Directorate of Youth and Sport: Draft report on research seminar "What About Youth Political Participation?" 24-26 November 2003, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg 2004

## **Perspectives Non-formal and experiential**

### **Perspectives about Non-Formal Education and experiential Learning**

The idea is to describe the context and the actual situation / panorama of the non formal education in each partner country. So what we need is a short description.

### **NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN POLAND**

The educational system in Poland is still under influence of the political changes. This process applies to both formal and non-formal systems of education. In the years 1947-1980 all forms of non-formal education were financed and controlled by the state. There were functioning many sport clubs, clubs of interests, youth clubs, scouting, etc. Besides many weak points this system was very efficient because it was mass and freely available. It offered various forms of self-development beside the school education.

Since 1989, as a result of deep political changes in Poland, many of the institutions and educational centres were privatized and many other have failed to survive these changes. The community centres, local common rooms, youth clubs were replaced by new, private institutions which offer a wide range various activities adjusted to the demands of the modern society.

Non-formal education in the official Polish educational system is represented only by individual ventures and is not present in the educational programmes. Usually it takes form of some individual experimental projects and is not a systematic and planned action. There are also the institutions of social welfare designed for some specific social groups like the unemployed, the poor, the handicapped, etc. They prepare and conduct special educational programmes for them to help them in their personal development and functioning in the society.

The greatest advantage of the political changes for non-formal education is abundant development of non-governmental organisations like foundations, associations, etc working in this field. Every of these organisations has its own

aims and ways of working, and this diversity and flexibility allows non-formal education to reach all social groups at all levels responding to their specific needs. It can be said that vast interest in NGOs' offer will bring their further development and arising many new organisations which consequently will contribute to the development of non-formal education in Poland.

## **NON FORMAL EDUCATION IN PORTUGAL**

"... You learn things that are not taught and are taught things that no one learns.

Fortunately, most learning situations which we live are not formalized, or even deliberate .... "(Canary, 2008).

Several discussions have been made concerning the delimitation of the concept of non-formal education and its articulation with the formal and informal education. However we would like to highlight one that seems to match the work that we developed under this project:

"You can speak of non-formal education where the organization of a social activity (productive, culture, sports, associative,...) takes into account the intention of facilitating learning of educational knowledge and skills identified" (Morand-Aymon, 2007: 11, cit. in Pinto, 2007). The concept of non-formal education concentrate, in this way, two parts, one referring to a concept and another as an educational response, as it was necessary to overcome the problems that the system of formal education did not solve (Pinto, L. 2007). Several authors have reported that even non-formal education comes from the result of difficulties in the rural context, namely the need to "meet educational needs in under-developed countries" (Pinto, 2007).

At European level, non-formal education has been the target of programs and discussions for 30 years here.

More recently, the EU has been giving greater emphasis to the need to take into account the broad range of knowledge, skills and abilities of an individual, which are not only learned at school, university or other training organization. Recognize all forms of learning is a priority for the European Union , on

Education and Training area. This is demonstrated in Europe 2020 strategy, which expressed the need to promote the recognition of non formal and informal learning as a means to improve the overall quality of all levels of education and training in the EU, combining excellence and equity through the promotion of mobility of students and trainees, and improve the situation of youth employment.

In Portugal, available information is scarce. Pinto, in 2007 states that one of the reasons for this dearth of information refers to the fact that a term is not consensual. For example, this concept is often associated with extra-curricular education, adult education, community education, vocational training, etc..

This concept, non-formal education is, practically not identified on government documents and only sees a close, when we look closely at the Article 4 of the Law of the Education System (Law No. 46/86 of 14 October) for the extra education -school, that qualifies as a lifelong learning process, with the aim of enabling people to increase their knowledge and develop capabilities in a perspective of lifelong learning and continuing educational activities, such as the European Commission also sees the Non-formal education (Pinto, 2007). In terms of government, financial support is scarce at this level, taking into account the documents provided and information available on the INE (National Institute of Statistics).

Also the INE - National Institute of Statistics, by its published information, confirm this, since only a minority of the population engaged in activities of non-formal education and are younger and more qualified to attend. In 2007, according to a study conducted by the Institute, 23.1% of individuals aged 18 to 64 years, participated in some activities of non-formal education. Considering this typology as a way to lifelong learning, then we have:

| <b>Age</b> | <b>Percentage of population</b> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| 18-24      | 27,4%                           |
| 25-34      | 31,8%                           |
| 35-44      | 24,7%                           |
| 45-54      | 20,0%                           |
| 55-64      | 10,1%                           |

In what concerns policies and programs developed in this field, at national level, we should refer the "Escolhas" programme. This programme appeared after a Resolution of Council of Ministers in 2001. In 2009, the third phase of the programme was finished. The target groups were children and youth at risk, living in troubled neighborhoods, children of immigrants or ethnic minorities. It was intended for non-formal education to crime prevention and social inclusion of young people (Pinto 2007). As we saw earlier, information on the types of educational non-formal education in Portugal are scarce. It is clear that the non-formal education still does not occupy a place of great prominence and is the only non-school education that we found the best approach to this concept. This reality extends also financially level since in recent years the state budget continues to show little expression (Pinto, 2007). But if you think of this issue at the intersection as a target group with the disabled population, according to our project, so the references are reduced drastically. From research information conducted on the Internet, find the national Good Practice developed under the project Markthink (see Chapter 7), as well as a bibliography. Thus, in an attempt to overcome these difficulties, the project team felt the need to create a questionnaire, which is attached for information otherwise. Based on information from INR - National Institute for Rehabilitation, we obtained a list of IPSS which joined a list of institutions that work with the PCD's level of sport. The questionnaire was sent to all these entities, but the answers were very scarce (only 6)

In one of the answers, the institution did not perform outdoor activities. Another concretized only swimming activities. Finally the most complete response states that perform outdoor activities, such as: exchange - mobility projects; canoeing; outputs to the community, therapeutic riding, camping, sailing adapted, etc..

The target group of activities varies in age from 10 years to 50, (17 are the number of female participants and 26 are males). The age group with the largest number of participants is between 15-19. The aims for these activities



were: enable participants to enjoy experiences in recreation and leisure that are present, but also to acquire skills. As the frequency with which these activities occur, the institution states that occur weekly, while others depend on the community and invitations made. Staff involved is diversified with higher education and professional technical courses. Our organization considered that these activities are good practice, since they allow the personal and social development of the clients, and otherwise promote a change of attitudes towards people with disabilities with a view to greater social inclusion.

These results suggest that there are practices of isolated non-formal education in the various organisations working in the field of disability and who are not widely distributed abroad. However, we believe that this situation does not reflect the situation in Portugal. Indeed, there were daily practices in the various public institutions working with disabled, for example, summer camps, tours, field trips, sports activities, cooperative games, etc.. But because they have implemented a routine will not be identified it as good practice or disclosed as such. If you consider the characteristics of our target audience, this project, all these practices gain a new dimension since they are par excellence facilitate the acquisition and development of new knowledge / skills.

Is urgent to considered non-formal education as a possible alternative and complementary to formal education and to implement measures to make this alternative a reality.

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*CEDEFOP - The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training- European guidelines for validating non -formal and informal learning, Luxembourg, 2009*

## **Good Practice identified in each partner country**

### **APCC - PORTUGAL**

#### ***The Markth!nk Project:***

In 2004 sponsored by EQUAL Initiative, had the aims of create methodologies and work tools to be used with the disable people, with a view to increasing their employability and developing their quality of life.

It shows how to use outdoor pursuits to increase employability of disable people provides a new perspective on some important aspects of work, such as empowerment, the exercise of citizenship and the activation of the relation between the actors/agents and the area of social integration.

Starting from the presupposition that “social” living (i.e. living in relation to others) is only possible through the analysis of concrete situations, the Project’s Activity Plan included the methodology already successfully tried out by the APCC, of involving social partners, this time with a view to increasing employability. Our role (APCC) is that of facilitator, who offers employers a space where they can interact with trainees in order to discuss their points of view and experiences. During the outdoor sessions, the employers were asked to learn to interact by, experience, developing a direct awareness of their limitations and those of others in various kinds of activities and trying to overcome them in group context (outdoor learning). Indeed, one of the main aims is to work on the social perception of disability.

In this method, a multidisciplinary team from APCC, using an Activity Plan structures in accordance with the aims to be achieved, worked with the Young people on behavioral and social aspects, trying to encourage them to become more aware of their own strengths and weaknesses in order to subsequently be able to change behavior and attitudes.

More important than the outdoor activities or what results from them is the continual work that we engage in with our customers, business professionals and the community. Our work consists of welcoming customers with disabilities and making it easier for employers to recruit them.

Description of the target group:

Minimum academic qualifications: 2nd cycle of Basic Education;  
Trainees in Professional training courses;  
Trainees with good ability for comprehension and verbal expression;  
20 elements, ages ranging from 17-32.

Aims:

Develop skills that will be useful for integration into the job market – Professional Integration;  
Develop the personal skills of our trainees – personal training;  
Involve employers in the training and promotion of skills in the target group.

Development of the activities:

It was developed a group of systematic activities, with the aim of developing a specific group of competences previously established.

Description of the activities:

We have done 4 urban orienteering activities and one multiple activity during one weekend, with the participation of the employers.

The target-group was divided into 3 groups, each group with a leader; the groups should be equivalent as possible regarding their physical characteristics; at the end of the activity, there was a meeting with the observer to analyze the activity and the group's performance (positive and negative aspects).

Results:

Concerning the skills development:

Generally speaking, we felt that the participants overestimated themselves in this domain ( a judgment based upon our knowledge of the group and of the results of their initial skills assessment, carried out before they had participated in any activity at all) although cases would occasionally arise where participants were too demanding on themselves and underestimated their capacities in one skill or another. Above all, this questionnaire allowed us to clarify our ideas about the degree of development of these skills in each participant.

Concerning the end of activity assessment questionnaire:

One of our aims in including in the methodology was to assess the target group's degree of satisfaction with regards to the different activities. We also wanted them to assess their own participation.

What I remember doing: the results were satisfactory, since they generally managed to list the activities carried out, for example (urban orienteering; climbing; Tyrolean, etc.);

What I learned: we hoped that the target group would refer to the key skills to be developed; however, although they presented valid responses, these did not completely correspond to what was desired ("respect for people and listening to others", "I got to know the places better where we went", "I learned how to read a map"). Analyzing these examples, we can say that the idea transmitted is valid and includes the acquisition of something positive and important for the group on level of both personal development and integration into the job market.

What I felt: in general the participants said they liked the activities, and enjoyed taking part, that they had fun, felt pleasure, etc. However, there were some replies which need to be analyzed further. For example, tiredness was something we had not expected, but it was referred to constantly. Adrenalin, anxiety, and fear were felt on the weekend activities, because this was when they did more radical activities.

How it might help me: we had hoped that the target group might generalize their learning experiences to other contexts, eg. Professional training, courses, job, future, etc. what was particularly emphasized in this context was employment. One explanation may be that the participants were all completing courses of professional training, and so the question of employment would naturally be a constant concern throughout all activities.

Concerning the Analysis of the skill assessment questionnaires:

Our first thought was to do a quantitative survey of the number of times a skill appeared, which would mean creating a scale to be used for the classification of records.

Thus the results per skill and per activity were as follows:

Of the 6 skills that we were hoping to improve, there was one which proved very difficult to develop for various reasons, namely time management.

A second skill was not always assessed because the need for it did not arise, - conflict management. As not all activities had moments of conflict, we felt that it was not possible to properly assess this skill.

The other four skills were easily observed, and it was possible to assess their development.

We should also point out that there did not seem to be a progression in the number of times skills were observed.

Analyzing each of the skills in turn, we can say that:

#### Responsibility

This was a skill that was quite well developed (frequent 33/ very frequent 21).

#### Time management

As the results show, this skill was poorly developed (46 Infrequent or never).

The sum of the frequent and very frequent result did not even reach half the score obtained by the previous skill.

#### Teamwork

Generally speaking, participants had acquired this skill: very frequent 25, Frequent 36.

#### Conflict management

We consider that this skill was less well developed than the others, since there were not always conflicts between the groups, or they had to be provoked by the observers. Therefore, the results obtained reveal that the skill was not very well developed: 32 infrequent or never.

#### Decision making

This was one of the skills that had the most balanced results: 25 very frequent; 24 Frequent; 32 infrequent or never. One explanation for this could be the fact that, in all activities, the young people had to take decisions various times during the course of the activity.

#### Expressing opinions

As in the previous skill, this was also used frequently in the activities and showed a good level of development (33 Frequent, 29 very Frequent).

Some explanations of the results obtained:

The period of observation of the skill was between 9 March and 4 May, excluding the month of April.

Throughout this period, the number of observations of the skills went down, because:

Few activities were carried out, so the skill was not systematized and therefore difficult to consolidate;

The young people were tired, very often, leading to a lower learning capacity;

The activities were too spaced out;

The motivation was sometimes less than desired.

Personal Feedback of the participants:

What I remember doing: “walking with a map”; “Urban orienteering in the city of Coimbra”; “I remember doing an orienteering game in which they gave us a map to find our way and a questionnaire”; “I walked a lot, but it was good, because I got to know the city better”; “I socialized with the colleagues and forgot about work in the training course”.

What I have learned: “Improving my sense of direction, working in a group, helping each other”; “To respect and help people and manage time”; “to value myself and others more”; “I learned how to work in a group to manage time and give more attention to the things around us”; “I learned that we can’t do everything on our own, that we can in a group”; “To respect others and listen to people”.

What I felt: “Pride, I enjoyed myself, tiredness”; “That the orienteering wasn’t going very well; that the group was not up to my expectations; that I made some mistakes that affect the group”; “Tiredness, happiness”; “-I felt that the group had to be united, you couldn’t work with just half the group, it had to be the whole group together”; “I felt good and I learned some good things that I didn’t know before”; “I felt a bit closer to the group and maybe for this reason I felt a bit more “useful” to the group than the last time (some more activities like this and maybe I could manage it ☺)”; “I felt that I was helping my colleagues”.

How it can be useful to me: “It can help one day on for a job”; “It can help one day at work so that I can manage things better and work in a group”; “To help me to integrate into groups better in the future, at work or with friends, and knowing how to listen to their opinions and respect them”; “To give more attention to others, thinking that they exist, people with these problems. In the

end these activities could help to give us some experience of life”; “It helps us to feel stronger, in the way we do, hear, see things”; ”to know how to get on with people”.

Feedback of the employers

Employer 1 –

“I remember that I arrived on time, which is something that doesn’t happen very often. This is the first time I’ve been on one of your schemes that I’ve done anything like this, and I was a bit apprehensive about what we were going to do. The radical activities were something new for me, so this was a mixture...”

“I would say that the attitudes that the people had, the game that we did, I didn’t think was very different from the attitudes that so-called “normal” people have every day.”

Employer 2 –

...” The conversations, the experience of seeing their attitudes, the conversations between them, the attitudes amongst them, I think that is the strongest thing that I’ll take from this.”

“To us, so-called “normal” people, very often we don’t have enough willpower for the simplest things. It’s natural that we make comparisons, even in personal terms. A person remembers situations. It’s inevitable”.

“I saw many similarities with situations that have happened to me in the place where I work, and where there are a lot of people working.”

“And then people are afraid (there are some that are not, of course, that don’t think about it) to take on these people, just because companies have to have some kind of social responsibility.

## **FRAJDA – POLAND**

### ***GOOD PRACTICE***

Because in FRAJDA we still have very little experience in working with handicapped people, thus we used an example of our partner organisation which has been working successfully with the handicapped for many years.

#### **Description of the organisation.**



The Occupational Therapy Workshop in Szczecin, Poland is an institution destined for 50 mentally handicapped people. It was established in November 1997 as a non-governmental organisation. The workshop executes tasks on the level of socio-occupational rehabilitation. Its main aim is the improvement of each participant's general development and dexterity which will enable him independent, self-reliant and active life in the society.

Realization of this aim is held through general rehabilitation and socialization of the handicapped people: improving their mental condition, preparing for living in the society, developing skills with the help of different techniques of occupational therapy and finally helping them in getting a job.

Occupational therapy is held in the form of ten workshops:

carpentry, art, computer printing, ceramics, weaving, handicraft, wickerwork, leather craft, stained glass, souvenirs and ornaments.





Since many of the clients also have physical handicaps, there is provided motor rehabilitation, too:

individual rehabilitation, Sherbone method, aerobics.

Social rehabilitation is executed both individually, according to a person's individual needs, and collectively for all of participants.

The individual rehabilitation includes:

economic training, social training, self-control, self-esteem, self-service, responsibility.

The group rehabilitation consists in carrying out different or the same tasks by a group of participants.



Good practice example.

To intensify the process of rehabilitation and make it more effective they brought into effect their own idea of clubs of interests for the participants of their workshops. Participation in the clubs is voluntary but 70% of our clients take part in them. One person can be a member of a few clubs.

At present there are working five clubs of interests:

music-instrumental club, theatrical club, photographic club, journalist club, hiking club.

The music-instrumental and theatrical club prepare performances according to their own idea. The members of the theatrical club make up their own story and prepare all the necessary costumes and decoration. They participate in all kinds of performances, festivals and competitions.

The participants of the photographic club experience the world through the eye of lens. They learn the secrets of photography - how to use a camera, both digital and traditional, how to make good pictures and how to develop or print them.

Persons who are the members of the journalist club learn how to write a short text to a newspaper or to make an interview. They also attend various cultural events and write reviews.

The members of the hiking club experience the beauty of the nature during their tours into different parts of the country including high mountains. Although it usually requires a strong physical effort, they do very well.

Once a year members of each club go for a week-long trip. During this trip they undergo an intensive process of social rehabilitation. Every day they make a plan for the next day. Each day is for them a challenge and a personal test of skills. They prepare all the meals and take care of their personal hygiene by themselves. They learn how to manage in the real life circumstances and how to manage unexpected situations.



## Results.

It has been noticed that people participating in the clubs, comparing to those who do not participate, are much better prepared for their roles as an individual in society. They are more open to changes in life and this way it's easier for them to adapt to new circumstances.

Among many advantages the clubs give their members it is worth to mention the following:

- intellectual development,
- socialization and social activating,
- self-dependence and self-service,
- ability to function in society,
- group cooperation and team spirit,
- responsibility.

## SONCEK – SLOVENIA

An example of good practice: ***Holidays for adults with disabilities***

TITLE: HOLIDAYS ON FARM

CONTENT: The program consists of a week-long holiday camps for adults with special needs. The program includes learning about the life and work on the farm, trips to surroundings with sightseeing, horseback riding, swimming, fishing, boating, art workshops, social evenings at the camp-fire and help with preparing meals and work in the kitchen.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES: Active leisure choice and planning of leisure time (leave), the proliferation of social networking and socializing, getting new experiences in different environments and situations, relieve of the family...

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY: The program provides safe recreation for people with disabilities who need guidance, special care and protection. The program provides holiday gathering and making new friends. Vacation is attended by users from all over Slovenia and also abroad. The program runs since 1999.

CRITERIA FOR REALISING THE PROGRAM: The program can be attended by adults with disabilities that contribute some funds to cover costs. The only restriction is the number of participants.

PROGRAM USERS AND THEIR NUMBER: Users are adults with special needs.

In 2009 we organized holidays for 70 adults with special needs (3 Dates), including 25 wheelchair users and 43 first time participants, with help of 61 collaborators.

METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION OF holidays run from late June to early September in the one-week periods. Carried out on Sonček farm near

Maribor. The environment is fully suitable for wheelchair users and people with other disabilities.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME out success were determined by the total number of participants, and the satisfaction of participants to be assessed through surveys

EXAMPLE of daily program.

Participants are divided into groups because of daily routine (meals, cleaning, transportation...) but can decide what activity they would like to attend.

|              | 1.GROUP   | 2.GROUP |
|--------------|---|---------|
| 09:00- 09:30 | BREAKFAST   |         |
| 09:30- 11:30 | GAMES WITH PARACHUTE AND LOWERING<br>A WHEELCHAIR |         |
| 11:30-12:30  | SWIMMING, HORSEBACK RIDING                        |         |
| 13:00        | LUNCH   |         |
| Do 15:30     | REST  |         |
| 16:00-17:30  | ROWING,BOCCIA, FISHING                            |         |
| 17:30- 18:30 | PARTY WITH DANCE AND PICNICS                      |         |
| 19:00        |   |         |

## **Mühlenkraft - Germany**

-Mühlenkraft description:

Since 1571 the ancient houses of former University of Nuremberg are situated in the centre of the small town Altdorf (15 000 inhabitants; distance from the centre of the Metropolregion Nuremberg with nowadays 1 million people: 25 km or 30 minutes by accessible train.).

From 1925 on the “RDB - Rummelsberger Dienste für Menschen mit Behinderung” (services for persons with impairments) are offering enablement for persons with (in Altdorf: physically caused) impairments. At that time the young democracy, Weimarer Republik, had started social legislation to enable charities like the diakonic Fraternity from Rummelsberg to offer places for the disadvantaged after Worldwar1: out of a Lazarett grew in Altdorf an orthopedical clinic with residence for younger and older persons with physical handicaps who received not only medical services but also school and professional trainings.

In Worldwar II those who were able to work in war industries survived – but in general, persons with severe impairments, mental und learning disabilities had to suffer from ”Eugenic” programmes – like many others had to suffer.

After polio-epidemics and Thalidomid-embryopathia in the early nineteen-sixties the Bundesrepublik Deutschland started the legislation for a universal right on “Bildung” for every child that was born with any kind of abilities. In order to guarantee the best possible education according to their special needs, the state (severely driven by parents of children with special needs) invented a system of special education that – differing in the eleven old Bundesländer: “Kulturhoheit der Länder” – became a reality in different shapes, in Bavaria as a variety of 12 specialized types of schools. Teachers for regular Volksschule could add a two year’s qualification study, in 1978 the first “Sonderschullehrer” started their basic studies to become teachers specialized for one (maybe two) types of special needs’ education.

At that time, 1980, the Volksschule für Körperbehinderte in Altdorf was attended by about 90 pupils, none of them suffering from polio nor from Thalidomid-embryopathia. What still existed was a residence for youngsters who came from far away and spent the weeks there instead of covering the

distance between home and school over 40 Kilometres by a daily bus-service. Some of them attended the Leibniz-Gymnasium in Altdorf which was one out of two accessible schools in Bavaria who led disabled youngsters to be accepted at Universities' studies.

From 1980 to now the institution "Wichernhaus" grew continuously up to 235 pupils in 2009/2010. What had happened: The abilities of neonatological und acute medicine enabled many of those children to stay alive who before would have had to leave their lives shortly after birth, an incident or an accident. And the changes in modern society caused new syndromes of special needs that also challenge the competence of a "Förderzentrum mit dem Förderschwerpunkt körperliche und motorische Entwicklung" which is the name of it in 2010: Centre for Improvement of physical und mobility Development as one part of the complex Wichernhaus Altdorf – Residence, School and Work for Persons with Impairments.

Aims and objectives of the organisation:

The motivation of Rummelsberg is basically Christian ("Die 7 Werke der Barmherzigkeit/Misericordia"- bewahren, behausen, heilen, nähren, pflegen, erziehen, bilden). - Up to now the perspective for our work was to provide all necessary kinds of support for individuals and their relatives to face the challenge of life with the prefix "Disabled". Wichernhaus is a harmless perfect world as part of a harmless perfect little town. According to my personal connotation of "preservation" within such a specialized context, I draw the conclusion: The outcome for our students might be that they will always be harmless persons depending on their harmless surroundings. So: For challenging the independency of my students within the last 15 years we included and developped a range of methods of empowering the youngsters by means of experiential learning – sometimes in the outdoors. Many of them cannot use reading and writing as key-abilities for abstract learning. They need other ways of learning, other ways of teaching. This is the motivation for the "Mühlenkraft-Projekt" (millpower-project).

Mühlenkraft is an association funded in 2007 as an initiative of persons of different perspectives on the prefix "disabled": Karl is born with a genetic mutation causing muscular atrophy – he is running a company with 20 employees – ACCESS: work for persons with impairment. Chrissie and

Bernhard are parents of an autistic young woman – but they are working as outdoor guides, always having their daughter with them. Andrea is ergotherapist, Kerstin physiotherapist, Philipp and Jule are studying social work and intend to feed their work with carpentry and gardening; me, I am teacher for special education. In the meanwhile many parents of children with special needs became supporters, but also a wide range of people without direct concern are engaged to give tributes to the start of our millpower-project: In the summer of 2010 we run a summerworkshop– 20 to 70 free travelling craftsmen/-women who promised to rebuild the old barn. After they finished we started our projects of cooperation: Berufsschüler in regular professional trainings building the walls in Franconian style, improving the place to become a platform for “building bridges” at Harnbacher Mühle, bridges seen under cultural, technical, physical and social aspects.

What we want to offer: The Catchwords of A Collection of Media and Methods Basics:

Bring all participants in a circle. Take care for the basic needs: toilet, orientation, light, temperature, hunger, thirst, toilet: take time! - Decide: what barriers are broken best – keep in concern group's (which is your team and the participants) and individual's interests. Choose media and methods according to everyone's needs, special needs, safety and complexity (before: make sure to have a look at the foot nails; arriving: make sure to have a toilet; whilst: be prepared for dealing with changing needs, with changing circumstances, with surprises, with danger, with uprising emotions, with conflicts, with pulverised time tables; after: make sure to provide media that will help to sustain the experience of broken barriers).

Discovering my body:

Silence, Breathing, Tension, Extension, Relaxation, Yoga, Jogging...

Gendering programmes: Lady Power: WenDo, Girls'-Swim, Boys'Swim, co-educational gender mainstreaming.

Discovering my life:

Personal future planning; work with biography; D.I.E.: (Drama in Education)

Stage Manager of my Dreams (Regisseur meiner Träume)

At Work:



Engaged, active, involved living; the intelligence of hands; roles, companies; practical trainings; projects (f.e. Anthroposophische Dorfgemeinschaft, Die Redaktion, AK Mobil mit Handicap); in the gardens

Involved in human expression:

Drama, dance, music, poetry, painting, photography, video, ...

Discovering the neighbourhood:

Worlddays, journeys through everyday life's world; city bound; experiencing community; joining in.

Meeting alternative life:

Animals – for watching, making contact, to learn responsibility, to get in motion, to enjoy and share lifetime.

In the outdoors:

Experiencing: elements, weather, ecology. Seasons: Heat and coldness, sun and shadow, rain, ice and snow and everything in between, distances, speed, thirst and hunger, quality and conditions of equipment and preparations.

Living in the outdoors:

At any daytime and night time, at all seasons, using fire, hunting, fishing and collecting (berries, mushrooms, leaves, roots, herbs, fruit...) and making use of nature's gifts

Above und underneath ground:

Rock climbing and cave experience

In designed challenging surroundings:

Obstacle parcours, climbing walls, high ropes/low ropes, zip wire, flying fox, ...

Problem solving:

Orienteering; designed exercises

Adapted sports:

Boccia, Archery, Rollerball, ...

Locomotion:

Rolling and moving with all kinds of vehicles

At water – (pantha rhei – everything's flowing):

Experiencing water and ground: banks, slopes, beach, cliffs, shore – approaching, watching, analysing, appreciating life and sustainable life

Carried by water:

Stirring on a lake, experiencing sea, moving with the flood – on a river (canoeing, rafting), at the coast (watching tides, rock pooling), with the wind (sailing), swimming, diving, rocking and rolling (skimming) – all in one boat

In the air:

Team Lifting, kite flight, gliding, ballooning

Far away:

Journeying to a strange world – strange language, strange money, strange climate, strange habits: contrast experience

Magic Moments:

How to get benefit from “open situations”...

Here is one example of best practice seen as a pilote project in 2009, a journey called “Leben gewinnen mit Mühlenkraft 2009”:

### **– “Improving Life with Millpower 2009”**

“Improving Life 2009” - this was a ten days’ stay at the mill, the attempt to experience all the possible methods in these surroundings. But – as the weather turned out to be very bad, many things could not be proved: rock climbing, abseiling and bouldering at the nature dolomite walls of Franconian Switzerland, slacklining across the river...

May 2009: The class BSS Riehl travelling again – this time with 15 students and 5 professionals at the source of “Millpower” at Harnbacher Mühle in the valley of Pegnitz.

It has been 15 years then that in may or june (one time even in april – the rain was changing into snow at the end of april 2002) you might happen to meet a very special travelling group from Wichernhaus, Altdorf.

This time they were not heading for the far. Quite relaxed they started with bikes and fieteses to the s-bahn-station to Nuremberg, from there in the accessible regional train to Rupprechtstegen, arriving after a short walk along the river to Harnbacher Mill. That is the place of “Mühlenkraft e.V.”, the site where the plans will be realized for “Building Bridges At Harnbach Mill” (see [www.muehlenkraft.de](http://www.muehlenkraft.de)). The subjects are “enabling instead disabling”, joining-in

in nature, in adventures, in working situations and in hosting guests - inclusive adventures for all.

Mühlenkraft e.V. could buy the place just after the journey, and the discussions about the acknowledgement of the state to run two regular classes of special school there were just beginning. Before, the place should have been proved by heads, hearts and hands by BSS Riehl and Co.

The God of weather was well prepared and made up a nice programme for us:

Thunderstorm, raining cats and dogs on the first day. Constant heavy rain through three nights, steady landrain on two days and on the final day roaring sun. The coldness we had expected for the nights was not that bad and as the sky was mostly cloudy in daytime: no danger of sunburn except on two days. Also the danger of burning forests (this year a matter of April) was no longer a problem. On the contrary: Just before the start of the camp we received the permission for a camp meadow with fireplace until 2013.

That's what we had expected: Occurring challenges that we could handle with head, hearts und hands: "Leben gewinnen mit Mühlenkraft – Improving Life with Millpower".



The tent material of our "Bevercraft-Things-for-the-Outdoors-to-Lend" and of our guides-family Maisel added the rest to the mill's place which was important for surviving safely.



5 cbm of firewoods was delivered by a farmer from the neighbourhood.



Benny fell in love with Bernhard's motorsew, Nico was pleased by the warm sweaters with "Improving Life"-logo.



In spite of rain we had a comfortable campfiresite under a former baggage-fallschirm, especially when we had built sofas out of hard benches.

The bathtubs – heated by a fire underneath for the preparation of warm water.





In the shower cabins right beside them the water was hung up in spreading cans and simply moved when necessary.

Two small tents und a big one served as toilets und nursing rooms.



In the kitchen of the camp we prepared fresh delicious food organised by Chrissie, either using wishes of the participants...



... or using fresh collected herbs and plants guided by a woman who is an expert in preparing magnific quark (fresh cheese / yoghurt) sweetened with honey but flavoured with the wide range of herbs from a short walk through the surroundings of the mill.



For the “basics” of elementary importance: The “Clover leafs” of youngsters and students of social work as assistants. Here: The “Adventurers” Johannes and Florian with the Studies Franz, Jenny und Esther from Nuremberg.



Every morning we met in the circle to adapt plannings and ideas to the daily weather and to actual incidents.



By the riverside at the mill, the “Adventurers” prepared our first tour on the river. Others went on bikes to the train station to visit a live football match, the classical derby Nürnberg – Fürth.



Four Rafts, (2 Spreuboote-Otters and two Gomotex Colorados) and one Canoe outward bound to go down south...





Every inch of ladypower was necessary to...

...prevent the bus from gliding aside the slippery road or...



... to start a tour with the pro-trek-Himalaya-wheelchair from Switzerland:

Always with us: “Dr. Hand” – Bernhard: Hotelist, Safetyassistant, climbingmaster and canoeing guide – basics for the ideal Mühlenhausel.



Top: Paddling the river Main through “Flussparadies Franken”. Here we needed the whole experience about logistics and special device to make the rstay on a river to an actual flow-experience.



To build one nevertumbling Kat out of two tumbling canoes, with best views for Kerstin and Kerstin and Maisel family with daughter Malin and dog Nelli.

Further ingredients: relaxation in the Frankenalb-therme, handmade music at the firesite...



... party with activities for friends and families – at least one good news: It's not easier with a strange man in the boat...

Outlooks at the end: No rainbows without rain – and: Everybody thankful for the huge sum of great inner visions made of nature, human heads, hearts and hand



Outcomes –

actual comments of participants – students, teachers, parents, ...

“We see: It is not depending on sun or rain that we can live more than survive in the outdoors: it is a matter of knowing what to do, of equipment and experience, of a process that is balanced by experienced leaders, of a process which is including all participants with all their special needs and strange behaviours. And this is an experience we can transfer to our daily lives.”

“We are not made of sugar.”

“You have a wide range of alternatives in nature – (hunting, fishing) collecting, watching, - moving, being moved.”

“Adventure for all is only possible with hands, heads and hearts in addition to everyday life - but it is a huge profit for all participants – to share this experience; so: as a method for improving heads and hearts towards an inclusive school for all it is a brilliant method using the hands to enable each other – enabling versus disabling.”



***Describing of the relevant project at Zerum; Background and working of the client group(s):***

***The “IntegrationsProjekt” (“project integration”)***

**Aims and activities of the project**

Basis for the practical and theoretical work of the “IntegrationsProjekt” at the ZERUM is the fact, that as well the humans’ body as the power of movement are important “instruments” dealing with the world. During the practical activities it is not important, that professionals are telling, what to do and how to act, but the participants, joining the project – the disabled children and youngsters - shall be those, who are acting.

Not physical and mental power are the things that are counting, but cooperation and communication. Also the slowest participants of a team shall reach the aim – for example to go canoing – without being separated. Speed and time get a new dimension.

**Body and movement as a key for self- and world experience**

At the ZERUM the great number of the offered activities make young people with disabilities able to experience new or unusual, for those people partly incredible sides of themselves.

The aim is to emphasize the self-acceptance of the body and to confirm the young people’s autonomy. One can say, that activities with adventurous background are a basis for the empowerment of people with disabilities.

It is also of importance, that the participants are able to create their own “world of movement”, to change their direct environment for example by building their special “motion equipment”.

**Social integration and aids for living an “usual life**

Because of the fact that either groups of people with and without disabilities are guests at the ZERUM during the same time, social integration for them is very easy to practice. Therefore, not only the different offers of practical

activities are “aids for social integration” but also the direct contact between the persons staying at the “ZERUM”.

One important aim of the “IntegrationsProjekt” is also to build up a network between those social institutions working with disabled young people and those, which act with “normal” youngsters.

### **Scientological aims**

The practical offers are intensively evaluated (by interviews, questionnaires, meetings after the stay etc.). Significant to prove are the facts, if and which aims of the project are reached and which not. In cooperation with the institutions that take part with, the activities are going to be analysed before and after the stays of the participants.

### **Working with social professionals and the families**

Working with pedagogical professionals and the families of disabled people is very important concerning the aims of the “IntegrationsProjekt”. At seminars and conferences, organized by the “IntegrationsProjekt” there are chances for the participants to exchange experiences and to get new perceptions and inputs for the work with people with disabilities.

### **Groups of users and partners**

Young people (aged between seven and twenty-seven years) with special needs and their families.

Employees of social-educational professions

Institutions of social work with people with special needs and children and youngsters in general

Schools (different “types”. for example: school for children with mental handicaps, primary and high-schools)

Colleges and universities

### **Offers**

Residences at the ZERUM for more than one day (as school outings a.s.o.)

Visits for one day or several hours (so called “days of practice” and “days of action”)

Events for mothers and fathers and their children (with and without disabilities); for example special week-ends

Regular cooperation between institutions of youth-education and institutions working with persons with disabilities

Seminars for further education

Conferences

### **Possibilities for experimental activities**

The practical outdoor-activities at Zerum mainly take place in four different “fields of experiences”: “Water”, “Nature”, “Handicraft” and “Highness”. Usually it is difficult to disjoin those “fields of experience” exactly. Often they are merged into a “conglomerate” of different activity fields and methods.



### **Adventurous activities**



In the following some of the relevant working-aspects in the pedagogical “experience-fields” at Zerum are described:

## ... at the Water



### At the Water I



Getting to know the “element water” by doing first exercises at land trying to answer questions like “What is water?”, “What kind of animals are living in and at the border of water?” “Why are we dependant on water?” by practical doing. Trying out different possibilities of water-activities: for example trips with a motorboat, sailing, canoing, exploring the beach and the small fisher harbour nearby.



### At the water II - the fishermen





... in nature and environment



Nature I



Offers in the natural environment can be the basis for intensive situations of sensual perception and unusual stimulations to move oneself. Worthful activities are for example excursions suggesting fantasy, activities at the “Naturerlebnispfad” (path of nature experience), working with natural materials (stones, wood, sea-shells, sand a.s.o.).



Nature II



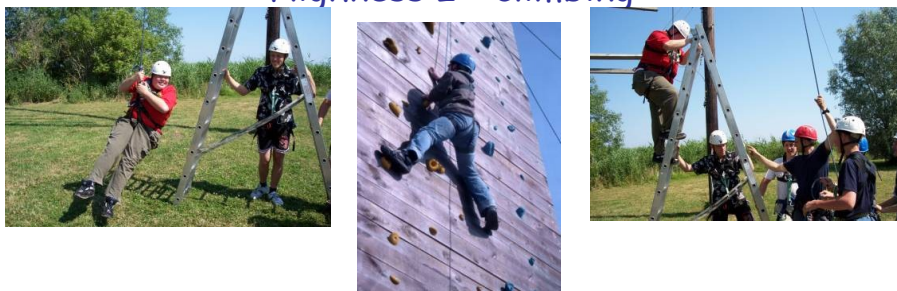
### ... by handicraft

At the “Holzwerkstatt” (a place for creating wooden objects) and in the garden of the ZERUM the participants of the project are able to work with different materials, can produce motion equipment, “buildings” made of willows and natural art works by themselves. By using handicrafting this way one has not only the possibility to learn to know and to prove own abilities but also to influence one’s own environment.

### ... up above



### Highness I - climbing



Using the climbing tower and the ropes course nearby (low and high elements), the project participants can explore highness and adventure in a new, unusual way. The using of ropes courses has become more and more common in the adventurous based social-pedagogical work. The application of this medium makes it possible to use both natural settings far away and the neighbourhood area nearby.



Highness II - Ropes course



Hohe Elemente  
im Seilgarten





## The Activities: Examples

The following descriptions shall show the variability and “basic intentions” of some activities that are realized in relation to “project integration” at Zerum.



### Abenteuerliche Gruppenaktivitäten



Important is the fact “**intention**” – you have to know “**why**” you want to do something, before the questions of “**what**” and “**how**” can be answered!

### Example 1: Orientation in the surrounding

One very important aspect – not only in the work with people with special needs – is the fact, that it is very “useful”, that all the people you are dealing with, are acting on the “same level” That means for example, concerning a stay in a new setting like in a “Youth hostel” like “Zerum”, that everybody has to have the chance to learn to know her or his new “surrounding”.

### Associations

**Intention** To find parallels and references between known and unknown objects

**Material** A big sheet or blanket, different typical objects of the surrounding

**Duration** 30 to 45 minutes

**Description of the sequence** Under a blanket some typical objects of the surrounding are hidden (f.e. for Zerum: a paddle, a life-jacket, a climbing-



helmet). The participants shall feel the shape of the objects – without watching, and shall try to find its name. After the examination by everyone, the object's "identity" will be verified. The next step is to find a correlation between the (now identified) object and the surrounding place. First the participants tell something about their ideas, afterwards the teamer shall complete them. This activity is a possibility to get first impressions of a unknown place. In this manner they get the chance to "capture" a place more easily.

### **Example 2: Cooperative group-activities**

Some of this kind of activities are really good possibilities to connect people and to encourage persons to act as a group!

Lessons with the parachute

**Intention** Learning to know each other, (for the teamer) getting to know the participant's skills, learning names

**Material** a parachute, different balls (if necessary)

**Duration** 15 to 45 minutes

**Description of the sequence** The participants are standing at the parachute, introducing themselves by telling their names (if possible, otherwise someone other is the introducer) – it is also possible to connect the name with some other individual indication like place of living, famous meal a.s.o..

### **"Sorting"**

**Intention** Practicing concentration, getting to know the group

**Material** No material

**Duration** min. 10 minutes

**Description of the sequence** The group has to sort themselves according to certain criteria (eg. birth date, initials of name, size, name of mother, etc.), eg in succession with the condition that it must not be spoken. A "rule violation" leads to repetition, possibly with a different task. Some the participants will not understand this complex task (how should I sort by the first letter if I did not even master the alphabet?) and violations of the "silence" are common. In this case a very simple, easily comprehensible task

should be made (eg to sort by size) and it may be allowed to speak. Important is, that all possible participants are involved in the solution process (although some help from non-disabled actors is necessary).

**Variations** The participants are standing on a log or a bench, “blind” (sort blindfolded), “blind” as directed: A goes to B, B to C, etc.

### **Example 3: Outdoor Activities**

#### **3.1 Experiencing nature**

The experience and perception of natural contexts are often “worthful” - not only concerning working with disabled people. The natural features at Zerum offer many opportunities to be active, especially in these issues. On the other hand, the actions described are also easily to be realised in other places. Most of the described activities are marked by their quiet and relaxing aspects. The places where the actions take place mainly are - naturally - the exterior.

#### **“Hear noises”**

**Intention** Attunement for experiencing nature, creating peace in the group, determining concentration, bundling of attention.

**Material** No material

**Duration** 5 to 10 minutes

**Description of the sequence** The participants are standing or sitting in a circle, eyes closed and are listening to sounds that they perceive in the environment. Subsequently, everyone should have the chance to “report”, what he or she had heard, also “repeats” are allowed. A variation could, that for each identified noise a finger is held in the air. During the evaluation the number of different sounds can be determined easily.

## **"Fox and Rabbit"**

**Intention** Practicing concentration, sharpening the senses

**Material** Blindfolds

**Duration** 10 to 20 minutes

**Description of the sequence** The group stands in a circle - they are the "foxes". Only one participant crouches in the middle – she or he is the "rabbit" in its rabbit-hole. As it is dark in there, the rabbit can not see anything (it's wearing a blindfold), but it hears very well! The foxes have scent it and try to roast a fat one! After a hidden hint, always one of the foxes tries to reach the rabbit. If the rabbit in the middle hears a fox coming closer, it has to show the direction, the noise (suppose to) comes from. Was it right, the fox is "banned" and he must stop on the spot. Then it is the next fox's turn! This goes on until one reached the rabbit. He then takes over the role of the rabbit.

**Tip** The surface grass has been shown to be particularly suitable, where some "rustling" components (eg dead leaves) are available. In this way, the "foxes" and the "rabbit" have in about the same chances.

## **(Blind) Adventure caterpillar**

**Intention** Raising awareness for the environment, practicing coordination in the group, strengthening a sense of responsibility

**Material** Blindfolds

**Duration** 30 to 60 minutes

**Description of the sequence** The participants are forming a "caterpillar" by holding the shoulders of their front person. All participants are made "blind" by blindfolds, except the "head" of the caterpillar. In the beginning the front person should be one of the teamers, who later can be replaced by one of the participants. The "head" leads the caterpillar slowly (!) and carefully through the area. It should be spoken as little as possible and the pace of the slowest participants has to be adjusted. Particularly at long caterpillars (past 10 persons) it is important to pay attention that no one will be pushed or will

stumble. After the “adjustment period” in the beginning, various materials (eg branches of a tree, a wood railing, etc.) and different gaits (eg in the squat, triple steps On this tour can be felt along the way,...) can be felt and different walking-speeds are selected.

**Problems** for some participants could will be the wearing the blindfold for a long time. In this case the duration of the sequence could be shortened individually. In order to allow wheelchair users to participate, it may be necessary to make very little “caterpillars”. They could be “segments” with open eyes (= shifting helpers) or the head of the caterpillar. Participants in a wheelchair should always are at the beginning of a caterpillar.

### **3.2.6 Working with boats**

Due to the location and facilities of the Zerum issues that water plays an important role in the integration project. The activities in and on the water offer many possibilities for the “motion-and body-work” of the project. The offers described below seem to be very special, but most are transferable to other places and circumstances.

**Attention!** Some basic safety precautions should be observed before. The wearing of “faint-safe” life jackets, should be obligatory, even for teamers and guidance people, regardless of whether people can swim or not. So, the instructor can give sovereignty and security also if the participants have little or no experience in dealing with boats. In addition, the knowledge of lifesaving, first aid and in the general rules of navigation is useful.

Because many people with special needs often have little previous experiences with the “medium” boat, they frequently have fears in this particular area. To ensure that all participants are able to participate in the activities, the explanation of safety-rules, the using of life jackets by everyone and a “slow approach” to the foreign medium is extraordinarily important. Therefore for these preparations should be enough time and space in the programme.

Also “dry-exercises” (“paddling”, sitting in boats on land etc.) on land are very important: only when I am feeling safe on my usual ‘earth ground’, I will dare to enter the “new area water”.

In all activities, including the fetching and bringing back of life jackets and paddles and taking the boats into the water it is to ensure, that as many participants as possible are involved in, to support and to clarify each individuals’ importance for the group and for the processes of the action.

### **Paddling**

In contrast to activities with motor or sailing boats the using of the own body stands in the foreground. The participants are learning in a direct and engaged way what kind of influence they have on the “boat movements”. Everyone is performing her or his specific task and it is necessary that all are participating.

The practical experiences during the project has shown that experiences in dealing with canoos can be useful but – and that is more important – it is not absolutely necessary! For the described activities, the basics are simple and above all, the willingness to deal with this medium is sufficient.

But however, all activities place high demands on flexibility, empathy and sense of responsibility to all participants – both for people with or without special needs.

### **Preparation** - explanation of the paddles

As “means of transportation”, the paddles play an important role. Therefore, again, an accurate and detailed explanation is necessary:

To deal in a playful way with these “working tools” the “**Paddle Mikado**” is a good start:

**Description of the sequence** Standing in a circle, all participants are holding their own paddle. After a sign, given by the instructor, the participants let their paddle fall down – straight forward. Now the group is playing a kind of “Mikado”. In difference to the real game, one after the other has to try to take

her/his paddle – as careful as possible. To learn to know each other a little bit better (also the participants linguistic, cognitive and physical abilities) it is useful to combine the lifting of the paddle with questions like “what is your favorite meal”, “what are you doing during your leisure time” etc.).

### **“Balancing with the paddle”**

**Description of the sequence** In the middle a vertically standing paddle is located. Together the group tries to put this paddle in motion. Ideally, it moves in a center circle holding by the other paddles.

### **The (paddle-)catamaran**

Two “simple”, normal canoos are attached together with two half-round wooden screws. This construction makes the “catamarans” very stable and secure on water. So, this boat is ideal for first “examinations” on the “unstable sea”.

**Intention** Approaching the medium, training of motor and social skills

**Material** Catamaran, six canoe paddles, possibly blindfolds, balls, floatable plastic rings, tennis balls

**Duration** At least one hour duration (without preparation)

**Description of the sequence** After explaining the using of lifejackets and the paddles (see above) the action can start. The catamaran is carried by all participants, if possible – everyone should be participated (and that almost for everyone possible!) to a level spot - this is important to endorse, preferably all, only then this task easily accomplished. When the team of a boat is “selected”, it is useful to ensure that in addition to more or less paddle-experienced” teamer at least two to three people are on board who are physically and mentally able to use the paddle.

One possibility to get in contact with the catamaran is to ask, where the “front” or the “back” of the boat could be. The following discussion about the right answer will ensure, that all participants will have the same “level of knowledge” about the medium. In this moment it is important that as little as possible advices from outsiders are given – also of the (sometimes) more experienced teamers.

After having cleared all important items of the boat have been, the most essential paddling strokes are practiced - forward, backward, stop! It is not so important that the “sporty-correct” paddling is practiced, but that even in dangerous situations, such if the boat is headed for an obstacle, the team is able to react quickly and correctly.

After practicing the basic rules of paddling, the catamaran is launched. It is important to ensure that the boats will be treated with care, the significance of the boats should be clear also as media for others.

Also the boarding is practiced intensively. Each person should enter individually, if possible without help. It should be made clear that it is better to “trust” on the boat itself (eg in the timber construction) when getting into it than “seeking” for assistance by other individuals - because they have even a low stability on the swaying boat.

On the boat the participants relatively soon should find their places and sit down. Standing upright and climbing on board in a hectic way should be avoided – in spite of the fact, that the stability of the catamaran design would allow this easily!

The easiest and safest way is to position the two rear-places with one teamer and a “motor-fit” participant - they “take control on board”. Thus prepared, the boat will be put to sea. Now the crew should try out their selves and to coordinate on board. In a clearly defined area near the shore, different exercises like going forward, reversing, turning and stopping is practiced extensively. Only when the group feels safe, the next action unit is carried out.

### **Exercises with the catamaran.**

In a sheltered spot along the beach, the seats are changed on board. While two participants are changing their places, the others remain calm! Also in this situation it is very important to hold oneself tight at the boat – not at a person!! To prevent a turbulent atmosphere on board it makes sense that the instructor

determines the person who, when and with whom shall exchange. After several changes, the tour continues, now sometimes with new roles and different teams.

Depending on the group, a shorter or longer tour is chosen. Especially in the beginning it is useful to avoid extreme and strenuous routes! By the way, water law provisions and prohibitions and weather conditions should be necessarily taken into account.

During the trip and during the breaks, various simple exercises, such as changing places on the open water, passing under an obstacle (eg a jetty), slalom runs, 180 °, phrases, etc. can be included.

After returning in the harbour the boat is pulled by the crew from the water (this can managed, if everyone is helping!) and it is placed on land. Then all participants will bring back their life jackets and paddles. A brief analysis of eg round in the form of a “flash in” should take place afterwards!

#### **4 Outcomes**

Throughout the project period, the measures were continuously monitored, recorded and evaluated.

Facts and figures certainly do not tell everything about the practicality and the “success” of the various measures adopted in the framework of the integration project. Therefore following some “original sounds” of children and young people, teamers, parents, but also of employees of the ZERUM are presented. Please not: The texts are not “censured” and originally translated!!

#### **”Everyone was allowed to drive - that was a great feeling”**

Extract of the travel-diary of a participant of trip to ZERUM with 24 young adults (with different disabilities)

”2. day: When we arrived at the ZERUM, at first, we have to set up the big eight-man tents with the supervisors. We have also helped to build up the



small tents. The big tent was a place to sleep and food and beverage storage at the same time. After work we had lunch. ... After a cold night it was sunny and windy in the morning. After breakfast we made the welcome game. We introduced ourselves. Then we made ... some other games and a house search game. This morning we had the offers: catamaran and sailing and making nature games. Then we went blind over a dirty path across the wooden piles to the pier. We went from there on dirt, gravel and stone to the tower ... This afternoon we took a catamaran. First we had to do some exercises on the water: eg we were in a katamaran with 13 people (six persons are normal). We had to slalom, paddling under a bridge. Then we went to the Uecker. Later we went kayaking this morning ..... we went with the “Slupki” (a motor-boat) to the ship-cemetery. We traveled in two groups. Everyone was allowed to drive sometimes - that was a great feeling. I have also used the camera with: When we started, the clouds in the sky, going to the catamaran-paddling and kayaking. We drove a bit, then we caught the rain. We had to row like there’s no tomorrow. Nevertheless, we were wet. Back at the dock we had to help to lift the catamaran from the water and clean up. Then there was first a warm shower. ... Today we bought food for the open campfire. Then we needed drinking. When we arrived, we collected firewood for the fire. There was a real good vegetable soup with noodles. We had to clean the vegetables and wash and peel ... This morning, a kite was built. One had to first pick tool, for example hammer, saw, nails, rasp and wood. First you had to saw the wood and measure precisely the effort. Then it was nailed and rasped. It was then glued and painted ... Today was the program that we could sail again. We had bright sunshine. We sailed in three boats on the Haff with good waves. You had to concentrate with the controller and the wind and sailing. We had life jackets on for safety. ... Today-shopping before noon I went with C., and S.. We have shopped for a party in the evening ... The coaches and counselors had to look for it. There was a program item for the party. There were stilts, teabag-throwing, deposits with pyramid and music and a bicycle-parcour.... At 12 o’clock pm the beautiful party evening was over. “

**” However, together we cope with this risk,...”**

**(Report of a Trainee)**

“2. Day at the Zerum, learning to know the sailing-ships: G. (16 years, a student at a special school for people with special needs), very quiet and with physical problems, very overweight) trying to get on the boat. However, it was problematic. She is very afraid to fall into the water. Following the action, I offered to G. to go paddling with me - she wanted but was still very uncertain. Finally, she managed it getting into the boat from the side with help. Shortly we paddled, G. was very uncertain, wanted to get back on land.

4th Zerum day, introduction to the rules , sailing with the dinghies: Due to the problems of embarkation of G. this time we go from the canoe-jetty into the boat. G. climbs with help into the boat. She sits in the middle of the boat, still a little bit anxious, but smiles a lot and manages to control her fear. “ Then G. is making a rowing trip together with one of the Zerum-staff and a classmate. G. now expresses the desire to row also.

The pupils both are very happy and have reduced their “aversion” against me. We have a rest on a shore nearby and talk very relaxed. Then we must replace seats, so that G. must row. We begin to drift, the boat gets “into the swing”, and I am afraid that G. could fall into the water (she stands and begins to lose a little of balance) ... Surprisingly, G. begins to laugh, M. too, and I’m suddenly the only one, who thinks, that the situation is not funny. However, together we cope with this “risk situation”, and G. rows now.

Her voice grew louder and she answered me clearly to questions: “G. Want to row? “-“ Well, clearly I want to row! “.”

**”They could be here, like they are”**

**(holiday camp with girls with special needs - report of a Trainee)**

“... I think some of the girls (with different mental and physical limitations (13-22 years) used to test the continuity (of a timed section of a partially known location) to boundaries and strategies to try. ... After a time, the girls developed feeling for the group and took responsibility for each other ... they

were less fixated on adult women, ... Were sensitive to the concerns of the other participants, they took care.... I mean to confirm that the girls were resting in their selves. They had space to focus once more on their selves .... learning about their own competencies and skills, contributing to a better, wider understanding about their selves.

The self-consciousness is strengthened. In my opinion, the girl-week ran in an atmosphere that was free of competition and comparison.

### **“The integration took place”**

(Excerpts from the initial assessment of leisure arches care workers)

“... Personally, I have particularly liked the experience, and that all act as a group (young adults with various disabilities). ... in the beginning I thought “oh, my God, how can I motivate them (with a lot of respect to boats)?” But the integration took place. By itself, which I found very good. Spontaneous evenings around the campfire, singing with the common, sharind Disco-evenings, which were requested by themselves and which were not imposed by us. ... In my opinion - the other groups or individual members of these groups were integrated into ours. For our participants, and also for the caregiver-team - at least for me - the interviews with participants from other groups or with tutors were very interesting and informative. ... The use of water is just for the more disabled participants very pleasant. None of the participants expressed anxiety or insurmountable uncertainties in the activities.

### **”But there it was the total opposite”**

(from the evaluation report of teacher)

”M. (15 years, Down syndrome, very slowly in motion) is very slow in school and listless, talking little and unresponsive. But there (on the earwax) it was the total opposite of what I could now already observed for the second time - she sparkled with movement, climbed from boat to boat - she dressed herself alone on and off - she talked with us and their colleagues - she defended and

developed in and with her personality. “

**”Such experiences need them!”**

(From the evaluation report of a social worker)

”Our young people (pupils of a school for educational support, 14 to 15 years) are attracting attention very often in a negative way, and it was especially nice, that they were at Zerum unreservedly open and positive recorded. Such experiences need them!

The water, the different boats, most students were so much fascinated. They have practiced again and again and have not given up. And some have become really good at kayaking! On other occasions, they are inclined more quickly to cancel the learning process or gave up because they believe that they cannot do it anyway. “

## Human Reform – ROMANIA

During this project we, the Human Reform Foundation were working in very closed partnership with Pro Autist Foundation.

The Pro Autist Foundation was established by the parents of autistic children in 1998, in order to provide services to this group of children and to help their families.

### **Our common objectives:**

To offer an alternative service for the children with autism, without separating them from their families

To offer daily care and therapy for 6 children/youngsters based on the TEACCH approach. These services take place at The Welfare Center of Children with Autism, in cooperation with the Public Service for Children Protection, Harghita County

### **Our common services:**

Organizing professional training for the staff and providing them supervision

Arranging a special, structured, protective environment using visual support tools which help the stabilization of social environment (different functions, like time, space, procedural, reinforcement)

Individualized assessment, planning and development: centered around development of communication and social skills

Organizing meetings for parents and professionals

Organizing summer camps for the children/youngsters in order to develop their existing skills outside the protective environment they are used to and also to discharge their parents for a short while

Organizing outdoor activities (mainly walking) weekly, every season

Springtime



By now we can do such long walks

Summer time



Climbing the hill

Autumn time



Enjoying the nice weather and colors

Wintertime



It is a real challenge to walk on a snowy road

## WERKENRODE SCHOOL - NETHERLANDS

### Example of good practice

**Location:** campingsite 20 km from Groesbeek

**Organisation:** team of staffmembers from school and social-cultural work

**Geographical Situation:** flat surface, big camping site, divided into several small districts, next town 3 km, big playground, small swimplake

**Historical background:** Camp is organized since over 15 years. All 2nd year pupils join, mostly about 45 youngsters, together with staff. Everyone sleeps in (small) tents, each group has it's own large tent for cooking, eating and leisure time

**Clients:** physical and multiple disabled youngsters, aged 14-16. Different disabilities, either physical and mental.

**Philosophical underpinning of the organisation-** (aims and objectives of organisation): Main aim is to go through a week without a lot of luxury, live and play together, to go there and to be there, sleep on a different place, in different circumstances.

**Pedagogic (teaching) approach-how the activities are facilitated:** Each group contains a teacher, an associate of the pavillions where the pupils live and an assistant. Materials can be taken from school, or each team has to make x quartets themselves.

Each team has to make tactical appointments, work together.

**Who is involved** in the actual example of good practice ie numbers of participants , particular disabilities (working with able-bodies etc): all participants of the camp, divided in 4 groups. Try to distribute different disabilities over all groups, to make physical even groups.

**Description of an example of activity:** Play a game together, "Living Quartet". Aim of the game is to get 4 pieces together, which are divided over 4 different areas. You have to steal those pieces out of the guarded areas from the other teams. Everyone gets a coin. If one is ticked in a dangerous area (i.e. not your own area) you give your coin to the team which ticked you. You need a new coin from your own team. The game ends after a certain time or if one of the teams have collected more than 1 quartet (or you choose an other rule...)

**Outcomes-** actual comments from students, teachers, facilitators etc:

*Nice game, playable for most of the pupils*

*Running all the time, having fun*

*Most fun for runners, difficult for wheelchairs*



## 4 days camping -

|       |   |  |
|-------|---|--|
| Day 1 | Travel to the campsite<br>Every pupil who can use a bicycle does the trip by bike, the others will be taken by buses. |  |
|       | Building the camp<br>Everybody has to build his own tent, and help the others to build the camp for each group.       | Pupils stay in tents, to experience an other way to be sheltered |
|       | Shopping<br>Buy everything that's necessary for the dinner and breakfast next morning                                 | Every group has it's own budget to control their meals.          |
|       | Cooking<br>Make dinner with (a part of) the group for your whole group  |  |
| Day 2 | Breakfast<br>Each group prepares its own breakfast  |  |
|       | Game<br>A game is played. All groups take part as a group.  | For example: Living quartet                                      |
|       | Free Time<br>To be filled in as a group, or parts of the group  |  |
|       | Meals   | Each group takes care of their own meals                         |
|       | Night walk  | Walk through the area, part with and part without light.         |
| Day 3 | Breakfast & lunch<br>Each group takes care of their own meals   |  |
|       | Game<br>A game is played. All groups take part as a group   | For example Fox Haunt  |
|       | Free Time<br>To be filled in as a group, or parts of the group  | For example swimming, cycling, go to the playground              |
|       | BBQ + Final night<br>Closure of the week  | Each group prepares a presentation (song, theatre, show, etc.)   |
| Day 4 | Breaking down the camp  |  |
|       | Cycle back  |  |

Some pictures of the camp:

Cooking together; Living together; Having fun together



## **Good Practices – UNITED KINGDOM**

### **-The Ashley School – Embedding Outdoor Learning in the Secondary Curriculum.**

#### **Context**

The Ashley School is a Special school for pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) in Lowestoft on the East coast in the UK. Lowestoft is the most easterly point of the UK in the county of Suffolk.

There is currently no clear definition of Moderate Learning Difficulties within Suffolk, but most of the learners have a low IQ, low reading age- being 2-4 years below expected, some have conditions and syndromes such as ADHD and ASD. Suffolk is an inclusive authority so only 2% of Suffolk's population is in special schools, where the national average is 4%.

Learners are aged 7-16 years old, which is through keystages 2, 3 and 4. The school also has 30 residential beds where some pupils can sleep between 1-4 nights a week.

The school is divided into 3 keystages. Keystage two has three classes, a mixed year 3-4(8-9yrs), year 5 (10 yrs), and year 6 (11yrs). Keystage 3 has four classes, year 7(12yrs), mixed year 7-8, year 8(13yrs) and year 9 (14yrs). Keystage four has four classes, two year 10 (15yrs) and two year 11 (16). Classes have an average of 12 learners with a maximum of 14. Each class will have a teacher and at least 1 support assistant.

The motto of the school is “supporting achievement” and the curriculum is designed to facilitate this. There is a clear focus on trying to raise literacy and numeracy levels and to make learning fun and motivating. Most learners and their parents will see themselves as having “failed” in at least one other school before coming to Ashley. This is largely because of the current statementing process which takes time to complete and they can only be considered for a place at Ashley when they have a full Statement of Educational Needs in place.

To enable this engaging and motivating learning experiences all staff look to use visits and experiences in the local and not so local communities. As a

whole class will fit on a minibus it is fairly straight forward for learning outside the classroom activities to take place.

### **Description of an example of activity**

The school has a strong history of using the outdoors to make learning relevant and motivating. This includes many visits to museums, businesses, zoos, London, etc. The outdoor Education programme is quite extensive and is embedded into the curriculum as well as annual trip to Wales and other targeted programmes.

Since September 2011 a programme working with keystone 4 learners who are aged 15-16 has moved under a new piece of accreditation. For the last 10 years we have run at least half a day of vocational and recreational activities including things like cooking, first aid, painting and decorating, cycling, canoeing, orienteering, gardening and careers guidance. The programme has been very successful and includes some learners from the local mainstream schools.

With the new Foundation Learning programme coming live in the UK from September 2010 we have looked at ways to develop this programme and include it further in the Foundation Learning Programme. The revised programme called FFlash includes most of the previous options but with a slightly greater emphasis on gaining accreditation. We have chosen to work with City and Guilds as an awarding authority as their work seems relevant to the needs of our learners and the brand of city and guilds is very good with employers and colleges.

The whole of year 10 are engaged in Foundation Learning. A small number of learners (5) who have been identified as having greater ability have been given 1 day a week at the local Further Education College working towards a level 1 vocational award, the remainder approximately 17 learners plus an additional 12 learners from mainstream and 3 learners from another special school are on the programme. The programme has been delivered to mainstream pupils for some time. The local high school is just across the field and so it is relatively easy to move learners about as required. The learners from the other special school are at about the same level as some of our least

able pupils. These pupils come to the school in a minibus and bring their own support staff with them to aid their successful learning on the programme.

The table below shows how the existing provision was moved into the new City and Guilds framework.

| City & Guilds Employability and Personal Development |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| YEAR 10 (Fri am)                                     | Existing Accreditation                      | C & G E&PD Unit   |
| Mandatory Unit 1                                     | Not delivered                               | Preparing for Progression Autumn term Tutorials (3 credits)     |
| First Aid  | St John Ambulance 'Young First Aider Award' | Dealing With Problems in Daily Life (2 credits)                 |
| Outdoor Ed   | No accreditation                            | Making the Most of Leisure Time (2 credits)                     |
| Food Hygiene   | CIEH Foundation Essential Food Hygiene      | Basic Cooking (2 credits)                                       |
| Horticulture   | No accreditation                            | Enterprise Activity: Producing Products or Services (3 credits) |

The Outdoor Education unit is being delivered through “off road” cycling and canoeing but is entitled making the most of leisure time. In this way the outdoor education is fully embedded within the curriculum and offers credits for learners towards their final certification. This is not based on performance or skill level of the activity but rather the reflective learning that has taken place. That they have tried a number of experiences in the local community and they have thought about how these could be continued as leisure activities.

### **Gender issues**

As this programme is part of the curriculum there is an expectation that learners will take part and there isn't an option not to. That said there is some

flexibility depending which term they take the Outdoor Education module as to the exact nature of the activities. So those that don't want to canoe do theirs during the spring term when it is off road cycling etc. Some of the female learners do show reticence to take part but this is helped by the fact that the majority of the staff leading and supporting the sessions are female. In addition as the work is based around personal and social development the sessions are about experiencing what the outdoors has to offer rather than performance coaching. This usually means that most learners will eventually engage although there are occasionally issues that have to be worked through with parents to allow them to take part.

### **Staffing and Resources**

Over the years the school has built up its own resources and now has a trailer of canoes, a set of offroad bikes and a trailer for a class set if needed and has access to a trailer of Sea kayaks that belong to the local Explorer Scouts but are stored on the school site. Additional outdoor resources include crate stacking inside the sports hall, traversing wall outside, orienteering map and permanent markers on the school site and 5 other local sites. The school also has tents and camping stoves for camping expeditions and supports learners to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, usually completing the expeditions by canoe and kayak.

Over the last few years we have worked on training a team of teachers and support assistants to gain the appropriate National Governing Body awards to undertake the activities. Currently we have 1 level 4 BCU coach (inland, sea and open), 1 level 2 BCU coach and 2 level 1 BCU coaches, 1 British Orienteering Instructor, 3 staff trained in use of the Outdoor Learning Cards, 5 staff British Schools Association – offroad bike leader, 1 SPA, 3 in county climbing supervisors, 2 MLTB summer, 5 accredited Duke of Edinburgh's Award Assessors, 2 will be trained and accredited for archery in Nov 2010 and two staff have just enrolled with Registered Practitioner of the Institute of Outdoor Learning (RPIOL). Having developed such a wide variety of expertise across the staff team makes the work sustainable into the future as we are not paying for external providers. It also allows for staff to develop much better relationships with the learners as they have chance to see the teachers and support assistants in a different light.

## **Impact and developments**

At the time of writing this the programme has only been running in its new form for a few weeks. It appears to be popular with the learners at the moment as they generally seem to feel that they are being very active and are not aware of the assessments which are ongoing. Staff have needed some planning time to get “to grips” with the requirements, but are broadly in favour so far. We will keep updating our progress on our website as well as publishing a review of the years work in Summer 2011.

The work described here is only a small part of our outdoor programme and only a small part of the Foundation Learning Programme. Further information can be found on our website or by contact Lawrence [lchapman@ashley.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:lchapman@ashley.suffolk.sch.uk)

Lawrence Chapman is the Deputy Headteacher at The Ashley School. He has been awarded Leading Practitioner of the Institute of Outdoor Learning (LPIOL), and is a member of the East of England IOL committee. Lawrence delivers BCU coach education courses in the East and is a part time lecturer for Anglia Ruskins post graduate centre lecturing in learning outside the classroom for MA students. In his spare time Lawrence is District Explorer Scout Commissioner for Lowestoft and organises the Lowestoft Christmas Day Swim which raises up to £12,000 for local good causes.

## **Further info**

*The Ashley School* [www.ashley.suffolk.sch.uk](http://www.ashley.suffolk.sch.uk)

*Details of orienteering courses please see under news on the school website*

*Lowestoft Foundation Learning* [www.lowestoftfl.co.uk](http://www.lowestoftfl.co.uk) *with direct links to the city and guilds pages relevant to this article.*

*City and guilds* [www.cityandguilds.com](http://www.cityandguilds.com)

*UK Government, Foundation Learning* [www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/)

*Lowestoft Explorer Scouts* [www.lowestoftexplorerscouts.org.uk](http://www.lowestoftexplorerscouts.org.uk)

*Lowestoft Christmas Day Charity Swim* [www.splash4cash.org.uk](http://www.splash4cash.org.uk)

*Suffolk post Graduate centre – Anglia Ruskin* [www.sapu.co.uk](http://www.sapu.co.uk)

### **-The Calvert Trust**

The Calvert Trust is a UK based charity that was established in 1976 and whose mission is to “enable people with disabilities to achieve their potential through the challenge of adventurous activities in the countryside”. Their work is delivered by three residential centres that are geographically spread throughout Britain. This case study is based at the Lake District Calvert Trust which has 48 beds and a client base that is exclusively disabled people (of all ages) who are mainly from organised groups such as special schools, hospitals, residential homes, disability organisations or other charities. The purpose of the visit may be educational, personal development, recreation or rehabilitation and course duration is between 2 days (weekend) and a full week. The Centre offers an extremely wide range of activities and the level varies from taster sessions, through national governing body awards, to expeditions.

The courses are designed to deliver the desired outcomes of the visitors. The centre experiences very high repeat bookings and the visiting leaders are usually aware of both the potential for learning from the activities, as well as their own organisation’s agenda. All programmes are written following a pre-visit discussion with a representative from the visiting group which establishes the aims and objectives of the course, the most suitable approach for delivery as well as the specific activities to be undertaken. The majority of courses are “multi-activity taster session” with the activities being only the medium in which the learning takes place. A few courses are skills acquisition courses, and these are invariably deliver the PE curriculum or are recreational courses. The activities are facilitated by a “lead” tutor who works alongside the participants for the duration of their stay. They are assisted by other tutors as the activities demand. The lead tutor is fully appraised of the intended outcomes and gauges the participants’ abilities, strengths and weaknesses. The tutor works closely with the visiting staff to ensure the activities and approach to learning is appropriate for the participants and meets the visiting organisation’s requirements. The philosophy is to set the activities at an appropriate level of challenge that can be surmounted by the participants, thus creating cognitive dissonance. In overcoming the challenge a sense of



achievement is obtained that demonstrates what is possible to the participant, thus changing their perception of what is possible and increasing their confidence in their own ability. Thus success is the intended, but not essential, ingredient in the activities. The type of challenge will vary across the different activities and the level of challenge progresses through the week, irrespective of the order in which the activities are undertaken. Each activity is reviewed on completion of the task using a technique appropriate to the participant's cognitive ability. There is an end of course review which aims to maximise transfer of learning to the "home" environment and evaluates the learning outcomes from both the participant's, the visiting leader's and the tutor's perspective.

#### Background and working of the client group: Back-Up Trust

The example programme involves Back-Up, a Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) charity that is a long-standing client who runs numerous courses a year at the Centre. The aim of the course is to promote rehabilitation through sporting activity. It does this by providing a motivating learning environment in which activities for daily living and life skills can be obtained. The activities demonstrate what can be achieved post-injury. The reported outcomes, which over time have become the course objectives, include a greater understanding of one's own disability and ability, greater confidence in establishing and maintaining relationships, life skills that improve employability, and recreation options – all of which lead to a greater degree of independence and inclusion in everyday society.

Each course involves 16 participants, 8 with SCI and 8 able-bodied (AB) which includes 2 leaders (1 SCI & 1 AB). The SCI participants may be either para- or quadriplegic, but with a maximum of 2 people with quadriplegia. The majority of participants are less than 3 years post-injury and will not have attended a previous course. Participants come from all over the UK and are unlikely to have met before. The non-disabled participants (referred to as "buddies") include a leader, 2 or 3 professional care workers (nurse, carer, physio) and a number of AB participants who are either sponsored by a corporate or are self-paying. Buddies benefit from the experience by gaining a greater understanding of the issues surrounding this disability group (and some of the issues can be generalised to other disability groups or the

disabled community). The “buddies” fully participate in the activities alongside the SCI participants, including wheelchair skills and other disability specific activities. The 1:1 ratio of SCI to AB allows the activities to progress at a rate, and at a level of activity, that would not be possible if all participants were disabled. In addition this provides a context of inclusion that is one of the intended outcomes of the course. The Back-Up leaders speak to all participants before their arrival at the Centre to establish a rapport, ensure they understand what Back-Up is expecting in terms of participation and to be certain that the SCI participants needs will be met.

### **The Activity: Course outline**

| Whole course            | Activity   | Intended outcomes   |
|-------------------------|--|---|
|                         | Time, temperature, bladder, bowel & skin management. Practice activities for daily living. Share experiences. Physical exercise. Socialising. Solving real practical problems. | Time management. Manage body in challenging situations. Independence. Learn from others. Improve fitness. Gain confidence in body, ability and social situations. See what can be achieved. Enjoyment is still possible. Meet new friends. Develop a “can do” and problem solving attitude. |
| Day 1                   | Activity   | Intended outcomes   |
| Pre-view                | Participants declare ambitions and concerns for the course. Centre shares approach and expectations.   | Participants / leaders / tutors get to know each other. General awareness of concerns. Fears addressed where possible.  |
| Wheelchair (w/c) skills | For SCI. W/c set up. Basic and dynamic self-propelled techniques. Back wheel balance and downhill running. Recovery from fall.   | Tutors become aware of skill level of group. Participants gain w/c skills needed for mountain “walk”.   |
| Moving and handling     | For AB. Disability awareness, interactions with SCI & dos & don’ts. How to help. Injury prevention.  | Confidence around SCI and learning to be useful.  |
| Day 2                   | Activity   | Intended outcomes   |
| Mountain “walk”         | 3-mile hard walk including: Push up step hill to summit with view; downhill on rough ground;   | Balancing the sacrifice of independence against the benefits gained. Team work. The terrain capabilities of a chair. The options for walking  |

|                     |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|
|                     | journey on level smooth surface.  | activities post-injury.   |
| Camp Prep           | Pitching tents; using camp stoves, sleeping and personal care needs for camp.   | Chair-to-floor & floor-to-chair transfers. Realising that all personal care issues can be addressed in a hostile environment with forethought and lateral thinking. Psychological preparation for expedition.   |
| Day 3               | Activity  | Intended outcomes   |
| Canoeing & kayaking | Build canoe rafts. Adapt canoes with seating to meet the needs of participants. Enjoy the activity.                                       | See how an activity can be adapted using simple and readily available modifications. Learn a variety of methods for chair-to-chair transfers and the use of simple aids to overcome difficulties in non-standard environments. See how the selection of equipment can enable participation without the need for modifications. Sport for non-ambulant people. |
| Sailing             | Sailing in crewed and single-handed craft   | Learn how specially designed equipment can enable participation. Demonstrate that with the right equipment, one can “go sailing” rather than be “taken sailing”. See the use of technology in enabling participation (electronic controls and modern hoists). Sport for those with v. limited mobility sport  |
| Day 4               | Activity  | Intended outcomes   |
| Climbing            | Abseiling (with and without w/c); rope or rock climbing.  | Overcoming personal challenge and fears. Transfers using pulley systems and own-power.  |
| Wheelchair skills   | Overcoming obstacles – ledges, thresholds, steps  | Provide skills for challenge course and the urban environment.  |
| Challenge course    | Bespoke w/c challenge course with a variety of elements.  | Apply and practice skills learnt to date.   |
| Day 5               | Activity  | Intended outcomes   |
| Activity options    | Choice of sailing, canoeing, hand-cycling or horse riding. (Land yachting, paragliding & quad-biking have all been included in the past.) | Taking an activity to the next level or trying an appealing activity not yet experienced. Problem solving by applying or adapting learnt skills to novel situations. Expanding the range of wheel chair sports options.   |
| Day 6               | Activity  | Intended outcomes   |
| Expedition          | Journey by canoe / kayak  | How logistics can be managed in challenging situations  |
| Camp                | Pitch camp and live in a “wild” environment.  | Survival with the minimal equipment - can transfer to other situations with accommodation. Camping  |

|                |   | as an option.   |
|----------------|---|---|
| Day 7          | Activity  | Intended outcomes   |
| Return journey | Canoe or "walk"                                   | Discipline in time management (ongoing theme of week). Complete an unfamiliar task to given timescales. |
| Clean          | Full involvement in chores.                       | Don't expect others to do the nasty bits!   |
| Debriefing     | Reflect on learning & applications for the future | Transfer learning from the course to the "home" environment.  |
| Celebrate      | Eat, drink, and be merry.                         | Informally share experiences, cement friendships, celebrate learning and success.                       |

## Outcomes

The following are quotes from SCI participants:

*"I learnt for the first time since becoming a quadriplegic that disability is not inability and sports can still be fun."*

*"It was fantastic being shown how to use a wheelchair by other wheelchair users. The session gave me more confidence and showed what is possible with time."*

*"The feeling of being out on the lake by myself and in complete control was amazing."*

*"After spending a week clambering in and out of canoes and abseiling down huge drops, the day-to-day stuff doesn't seem to worry me anymore. It's like I've made a year's progress within a week."*

*"The course made me realise that I can achieve so much more than I thought"*

*"Although you get to do loads of activities, the best thing is you get to learn loads of skills including things you can't learn in hospital. These new skills have helped me to be more active and independent. It has basically put me in a position to be able to be in control and get on with my life the way I want to."*

*"It was one of the best experiences of my life. The Back-Up Trust formula really does work."*

*"I have gained a huge amount of confidence and increased physical ability. I got the most out of seeing just what extremes can be achieved with a little help and encouragement. I think that Back-Up courses should be seen as a*

*vital part of rehabilitation, both physically and mentally, and should not be missed by anyone with a SCI.”*

*“The Calvert Trust has shown me that with the right conditions and equipment I can do as much as an able-bodied person.”*

*John Crosbie*

2 February 2010

## **Theory Gender and Diversity into Practice**

### **Girls, boys and integration in outdoor adventure education programmes.**

**Barbara Humberstone**

#### **Introduction**

A current educational idea is the notion of 'mainstreaming' gender. There appears to be a move away from the ideas of liberation and elimination of sexism towards concern over boys and social justice. This therefore has implications for youth work practice and the use of outdoor adventure. Historically, mainly women teachers and youth workers focused upon creating equal opportunities for girls and developing girls' self-esteem and skills. The principle practice was to work with girls in single sex groups. More recently there is concern over boys' academic achievements and increased violence such as fighting and bullying. Post-structuralist feminism and post colonialism have pointed to the deconstruction of the universal 'woman' and 'man'. In policy terms, this means addressing not only gender equity, but also antiracism, combating homophobia and so forth under an umbrella of social justice. In terms of practice, this change in focus raises particular concerns around how programmes are organised and made available to girls and boys. Amongst these concerns are issues around co-educational and/or single sex programming in education and youth work.

This paper conceptualises gender and locates the practices of working with girls and boys in current issues around masculinity, femininity and social justice in outdoor adventure education.

#### **Conceptualising gender:**

Calls to nature or naturalness are frequently used to justify what is to be taken as appropriate behaviour of women and men, defining characteristics of 'real man' and 'natural woman'. This appeal to nature and naturalness was played out in the UK in a BBC radio 4 programme in early 1999 titled 'In Our Time' in which Darwinian philosopher, Helena Cronin, debated with Germaine Greer

explanations for sexual and gender differences. During this discussion Cronin argued for an essentialist model of difference, based upon Darwinian theory of natural selection. She maintained that women and men have innate and distinct characteristics, which are immutable. This argument uses nature or naturalness to support it. Greer, however, counters this argument with a constructivist model of gender, that is masculinity and femininity vary from one culture to another and from one time to another. Arguably, an individual girl or boy's gender subjectivities/identity may vary from place. If we take Cronin's argument, then there is little point in providing programmes for young people that aim to change their perceptions of themselves and their relationships with other people. However, we take the latter view and will be working with the notion of the possibilities of changing identities and relationships through youth work practice with outdoor adventure.

### **Masculinities and outdoor education**

Outdoor adventure programmers and facilitators need to consider the implications of traditional forms of sport in their provisions of outdoor adventure to young people, since, in some sense, outdoor adventure education may, on occasions, possess many of the characteristics of sport where physical strength and skill may be valued. Research has identified sport and physical education as particular social contexts where discourses and practices normalize traditional forms of masculinity, excluding other forms of masculinity and femininity but which may, on rare occasions, provide space in which traditional forms are challenged (Humberstone 2001). For the most part, however, these activities are strongly associated with messages and practices that bolster ideological forms of masculinity and exaggerated inferiorised forms of femininity. Connell (1995:77) suggests that 'at any given time, one form of masculinity rather than others is exalted. Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women'.

Although youth work practice may be informed by anti sexist and anti racist theory, outdoor education traditionally is male dominated and has a history of male exclusivity ( Gurholt 2008; Humberstone and Pedersen, 2001; Humberstone & Clayton, 2006; ). Consequently issues around the content of programmes, the forms of teaching/facilitation and the grouping practices are important considerations in developing programmes.

### **Gender and grouping practices**

Masculinity, it is claimed is 'in crisis'. 'Boy trouble' has been on the political agenda in Australia since the early '90s. In the UK it was suggested by a government minister that boys would do better in single-sex classes, taught by men. However, research from Australia (Collins, Kenway and Mcloed 2000) and from UK, Mac an Ghail (1996) and others suggest there is no evidence to support this view. Kenway found that for all male classes,' students and teachers can enjoy being sexist and uncouth with impunity. Single sex provides new opportunities for old-style masculinity, for male bravado and bonding...in terms of gender reform such classes are bad news'(Phillips 2000:4).

Arguably, sex segregation does little to create greater understanding between girls and boys. It can reinforce attitudes that announce and celebrate the stereotypical polarities of representations of masculinity and femininity (essentialist notions of gender) prevailing such that co-operation and the recognition of similarities between the sexes is stifled. Furthermore, evidence from an ethnographic study of one mixed-sex outdoor adventure centre highlights unintended consequences of the teaching approaches realised through the material conditions, social relations and ethos. There appeared to be a shift in gender identities and relations during this experience (Humberstone 1990, 1993, 1995).

All-male environments may be problematic for some boys. Such contexts may place boys under considerable pressure to conform to non-emotional, uncaring masculine stereotypes (Askew and Ross, 1988;Wright, 1997). Nevertheless, Scraton's work (1992, 1993) is significant in pointing to the enigmas for girls when their physical education lessons are organised on mixed sex/coeducational basis. For Muslim girls and women, all female



environments are crucial for their involvement in sport and physical activity (Zaman, 1997). Single –sex girl groups in outdoor adventure provide scope for work that may not be possible within situations where boys are present. Issues pertinent to young women, such as those concerning personal relationships and health can more easily be addressed in ‘safe’ girl-only situations (see Baker-Graham, 1999; Barak et al. (2000); Spratt, McCormack and Collins, 1998). This may also be true for boy-only groups. Furthermore, research in schools suggests that girls lose out in mixed sex groupings because of inabilities of teachers to bring about pedagogic change, together with persistent demand by many boys for the teacher’s attention (Evans, 1989). This is important to consider when ‘mainstreaming’ gender, if this is taken to mean working in mixed sex groups. The provision of programmes, where boys and girls are work together, needs to take account of sensitive and careful integration and to consider the ways in which the youth worker/instructor interacts with the young people. If care is not taken when providing integrated programmes there may be increased misunderstandings and mistrust between the sexes and so masculine hegemony, with its attendant violence and insensitivity to ‘others’, may be perpetuated undermining girls’ confidence and development as well as some boys’.

### ***Concluding Remarks***

In any programme that uses outdoor activities and experiential education the issues surrounding ‘mainstreaming’ are important. They are equally important for young people both with as well as without disabilities. The questions that need to be considered include:

What are the benefits and disadvantages for girls and boys in single-sex and mixed sex groups?

What are the most appropriate teaching/facilitating approaches in single –sex and integrated groupings?

How can we guard against ‘macho’ behaviour largely in boys and lack confidence largely in girls?

How can we promote social justice within these groups?

## Note

See also current conceptualisations of the 'Journey' in outdoor adventure education (Allin and Humberstone, 2010).

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## Description of activities undertaken (Gender and Diversity)

Werkenrodeschool, Groesbeek – NETHERLANDS

Henk Kuiper

### *Gender practice*

**Subject:** archery

**Groups:** 1 male, 1 female, more mixed groups

**Activity:** After explanation about archery, first everyone gets a few rounds of getting familiar with arch and bow, just to learn shooting and aiming.

After this, we were playing a small game in teams: which team can shoot all colours on the shooting board.

**Outcome:** You cannot say there is a direct difference between boys and girls.

Actually there are 4 (3) groups:

Boy-boys: They want to shoot at their best, try to win games, and be better than the others.

Girl-boys or boy-girls: They care less about winning, just want to have fun and play a game for their own good feelings, and the good feelings for others

Girl-girls: Achievements are not the most important. Social interacting is more important and games are most of the times a sad interruption of the talks they are holding

For any activity you are practicing you cannot just rely on the male/women-distribution, but also on the distribution of the 3 groups named above.

Most of the time there won't be any trouble in a group with members of only 1 group.

Also a combination of middle group (b-g, g-b) and 1 of the other groups may not be a problem. If there are more people out of the middle group the people from the other group will adapt themselves so that they can achieve almost at their own level.

The combination between people from both "extreme" groups is not one of the best, as this combination won't work in most cases. It is too hard for everyone to adapt themselves and most of the participants will not have fun with the activity.

## **Zveza Sonček – SLOVENIA**

I have to say that we do not have much experience same-sex groups. But during the camp that I was leading, I noticed that the groups formed spontaneously based on the activities and that in some there were more men (horseback riding, fishing ...) and others more women (working in the kitchen, cleaning, creative workshops ...). The groups were never homogeneous. Interestingly, I liked Henk's thinking about when he said that we have men and women and we also have men who are more women and the other way around. Consideration should also be taken on affection, friendship and sympathy, which also strongly influence the formation of the groups (men who wanted to make an impression on the women are happy to help in the kitchen...)

We have more experience in the field of diversity, as our group of mixed gender, nationality (international participation), environment (from different parts of Slovenia and abroad), type of disability (physically disabled, mentally disabled, blind, deaf...), the ability and wishes. Experience shows that the mixed groups are performing well in means of making new acquaintances, mutual aid between group members, cultural exchange and staying in touch with participants for years. The same goes for stuff also.

## **APCC – Portugal**

### **Theme: Gender and Disability**

**Date:** 27/04/10

**Activity:** Trekking

**Target Group** (8 to 10 elements): the group was 8 elements; the ages were distributed from 20 to 32 and there were present mental and physical disabilities. It was a male group, concerning the gender.

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Analysis of the activity** (concerning the following aspects: leadership; interactions; problem solving; conflicts; time expending to conclude the activity)

Before the group initiates the activity the facilitators give a few instructions concerning the activity: function has a group, helping each other and adjusting the rhythm of the trekking to the rhythm of the group. At the same time they should observe the nature; landscape; sounds, etc.

One participant, o CS, was a little bit far from the group because we walked faster than the colleagues. Another boy followed the first, but some times we came back to check on the group. PA,



was one of the participants that even going in the front of the group revealed preoccupations with the group and ready to cooperate with the group. And then a group of 4 elements that were closer and worked actually has a group, especially because de person with more physical difficulties has there. We didn't identificate a leader, because also of the type of activity choose and they didn't solved problems. It was some cooperation and mutual help between some group members.

### **Comments of the participants**

They enjoyed the activity. Some said that the activity was easier, and would like a bigger level of difficulty and more time/longer. At the end in the discussion the participant with more physical difficulties said that he missed help from the others colleagues.

### **Comments of the facilitators**

(concerning: positive aspects; difficulties; strategies used, what could be done in a different way, etc)

Initially the objective has that the facilitators interfere the less possible, but during the trekking we felt need to give some alerts to group to adjust/improve some aspects like: adjusting the rhythm; don't separate from the colleagues; helping each other; function has a group and no has individuals.

Physically all the participants endured the activity, and to note that RM, it was the person with more physical difficulties never give up and always tried to follow the group and overcome obstacles.

The group revealed a good level of interaction. They already knew and now the names of each others.

A long the trekking, it was necessary to alert the participants to the rules given initially, but we didn't saw big differences.

The time used was the time expected by the facilitators.

The group watched with some care to the landscape and have identified the more relevant aspects: bridges; flowers, the Sun; the sound of a cuckoo...

In the end we have presented to the group the positive aspects and the those o need improvement, but one of the members didn't initially accept very well the critics, but recognized that it was un aspect to change in the next's activities.

It was easy to followed and with positive emotions. Didn't talk a lot. It was possible to used some of this aspects to transfer to the job market and evaluate the consequences and needs to improve/change.

### **Notes**

Is a very nice activity, of simple organization and implementation. Allows a direct and important contact with nature.

### **Final conclusions:**

It was activity that worked well. The group didn't talk a lot and some think that it was a simple activity and would liked something more difficult/demanding; but the boys with the physical disability said that a part of the trekking was exactly difficult according to their ability's to walk.

Didn't appear that the gender have influenced the result of the activity.

**Theme: Gender and Disability**

**Date:** 28/04/10

**Activity:** Trekking

**Target Group** (8 to 10 elements): the group was 8 elements; the ages were distributed from 17 to 28 and there were present mental and physical disabilities. It was a female group, concerning the gender.

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Analysis of the activity** (concerning the following aspects: leadership; interactions; problem solving; conflicts; time expending to conclude the activity)

Before the group begin the activity, it was given the same instructions that were gave in the day of the trekking of the boys group. It was also the same route/course.

We didn't identify any leader and we saw a more careful with cooperation and mutual help.

They spoke more between then and we didn't saw conflicts. The rhythm of the walk faster then the previous day (boys trekking) and much more closer/united.

In the end of the trekking and during the discussion, it was asked to the group of girls to



give un individual note to the activity, that oscillated between 5 and 10 (options 1-10). Then we asked them to reach a consensus and it was complicated. We have verified some difficulty in the negotiation and no flexibility by some elements. That was a person that stubbornly insists in maintains is note and didn't accept the strategies suggested and even with the intervention of the facilitator the consensus was gained. They decided after a while give 8 as a global note of the activity, but not as a consensus of all the members.

**Comments of the participants**

They enjoyed the activity and did some reference to some tiredness.



Identified the following aspects: the dog's that were with the sheep's; the flowers; the sound of the crickets and of the birds.

### **Comments of the facilitators**

(concerning: positive aspects; difficulties; strategies used, what could be done in a different way, etc)

It were presents all the girls selected.

All of them knew each other's and knew the name of all. They had more physical abilities.

They showed much more united than the boys, but much more distracted too with the talks between themselves, and because of that they missed the observation of the aspects of the landscape.

During the activity it were gave some tips, specially because one participant always showed some tendency to go a little bit far/in front of the group. One of the facilitators has "monopolized" during the activity, being one major focus of attention of the girls, always near her and talking with her.

### **Notes**

Need to change lightly the activity for the mix group.

### **Final conclusions:**

The rhythm of the walk faster than the previous day (boys trekking) and much more closer/united.

They showed much more united than the boys, but much more distracted too with the talks between themselves, and because of that they missed the observation of the aspects of the landscape.

And at the end they showed more difficulties in achieving an agreement.

It was different from the boys in the aspect that the girls talk more and sometimes that could impair the performance.

**Theme: Gender and Disability**

**Date:** 06/05/10

**Activity:** Trekking

**Target Group** (8 to 10 elements): the group was 16 elements; the ages were distributed from 16 to 32 and there were present mental and physical disabilities. It was a mix group, concerning the gender.



**Duration:** 1 hour

**Analysis of the activity** (concerning the following aspects: leadership; interactions; problem solving; conflicts; time expending to conclude the activity)

This time the course was walked in the opposite way of the others activities because it was a little bit more difficult.

Again it was presented to the group the instructions, with relevance to the aspects to improve, that here identified in the others activities. The group has larger and naturally were created more sub-groups. We did identified much more stop's, asked by need's of boys and girls.

It was interaction between the elements, of both sex's.

It wasn't possible to identify a clear leadership, but it was a by that although the tips of the facilitators insists in going in the front alone and kipped the behavior.

The activity lasted a little more than the expected.

**Comments of the participants:**

They enjoied the activity and presented will of doing more trekking's in a regular way and more longer and difficult.

They identified the following aspects: the sounds of the crickets and birds; the flock of sheep's; the wind; the small river that was dry; the wind; the flowers, lot's of them; and talk also about the tree's eucalyptus and oaks. Global note to the activity – 8.

**Comments of the facilitators**

(concerning: positive aspects; difficulties; strategies used, what could be done in a different way, etc)

The group was united and we didn't observed conflicts and clearly was a more closer group. They tried to improve all the aspects signed before. We have observed also a major caution in observe the nature, the landscape.

**Notes:**

**Final conclusions:**

Didn't appear that the gender didn't have influenced the result of the activity. The fact that it was the second activity allowed the group to improve the team work; cooperation and other aspect's identified previously.

**Theme: Diversity****Date:** 19/10/10**Activity:** Mountain bike orienteering, climbing and cooperative games

**Target Group** (8 to 10 elements): the group was 5 elements; one of the elements was ill; the ages were distributed from 17 to 32 and there were present physical disabilities (Cerebral Palsy). It was a mix group, concerning the gender.

**Duration:** 10h00m-16h30m

**Analysis of the activity** (concerning the following aspects: leadership; interactions; problem solving; conflicts; time expending to conclude the activity)

The entire group adhered to the activities with ease. One of the elements selected missed due to illness, so the teams for the activity were adjusted; both were mix and one team composed just two members.

One element of the group, a girl was more disturbing because she always spoke a lot and always complaining. This behavior during the games of cooperation has not positive. Despite various interventions in an attempt to modify the behavior by the facilitator, had no effect.

During the activity of orienting, the groups showed some difficulties in analyzing the map and the main complaint was regarding some climbs. In group two, the boy became the clear leader; In this group he tried to make attempts to the female colleague observe the map, to give her opinion and then decide together what way to follow.

In none of the groups were found conflicts and mutual help was always present.

During the journey, the team that left in the first place, arrived in second, because they lost two times.

It was clear that a better knowledge that some elements had about the space of the farm, was facilitator in the activity.

In climbing one girl (A.) did not want to do the activity or attempt. The other girl (P.) made two ascents, one of them was blindfolded. None of the group members had previously scaled.

This was followed by another time for 2 more games of cooperation. The girl (A.) was voluntary to do the part in the game, but showed a lot of difficulties to implement all the indications/orders given and also showed very tough/resistant to fulfill them.

### **Comments of the participants:**

In general all expressed satisfaction with the activities. Reported some fatigue after the orienteering in mountain bike, especially by some who considered the toughest climbs. Also highlight the fact that the groups showed mutual support, wait for each other, make decisions together.

They attributed to the activity in the morning: from 1 to 10, a time grade was 9 and the other note 8.

The group that arrived in second place said that they were lost states that it lost, lost because it looked good map, but highlight the fact that they have always waited for all the members of the group.

### **Comments of the facilitators:**

(concerning: positive aspects; difficulties; strategies used, what could be done in a different way, etc)

Indeed we must highlight that this time the activity was done as a group and were discussed all the possibilities. There was always a great support among the elements of the groups.

It was difficult trying to deal with the participant girl who had a more inappropriate behavior and, despite the interventions of the facilitator, the behavior has not changed greatly.

It was important the presence of the facilitator in the groups because it allowed the groups, for example to examine the map more carefully, better observe the details; The fact that some of the group members knew the

majority of space of the farm, was an capital gain. The facilitator of the second group (2 members) said that the enthusiasm with which they departed for the activities in some way affected the performance, then didn't consider the map as well and this had an impact on the results went from first to last.

During the activity of climbing almost everyone participated and it was clear that the encouragement of colleagues and facilitators was important for the realization of the activity. We tried to always positively reinforce the participants performance, regardless of its outcome.

### **Notes**

Some elements of this group had previously participated in the walk (first activity), which may have allowed some to avoid conflict situations and the support and mutual help had been more present.

### **Final conclusions:**

Mixed groups allows rich interactions and it is possible to see the best of the participants; the mutual help was always present; the day was organized in a different way with more activities that was a positive aspect referred by the participants. In this special group we saw that the physical disability have influenced the results of the activities (more fatigue; more time to do the activities).

### **Theme: Diversity**

**Date:** 21/10/10

**Activity:** Mountain bike orienteering, climbing and cooperative games

**Target Group** (8 to 10 elements): the group was 6 elements; the ages were distributed from 18 to 34 and there were present intellectual disabilities (Cerebral Palsy). It was a mix group, concerning the gender.

**Duration:** 10h00m-16h30m

**Analysis of the activity** (concerning the following aspects: leadership; interactions; problem solving; conflicts; time expending to conclude the activity)

The elements of the groups were punctual in arriving at the place of the activity. It were created two mixed groups.

In a group was more obvious the leadership by one element, but not too strong. The interactions were always appropriate and we never found conflicts. The group that gets out in second place came in first, with a fast rhythm during the task. The other group arrived about 30 min. after.

Naturally shared the task of poking the pliers and the analysis of the map, was also made together.

### **Comments of the participants**

All participants enjoyed taking part of the activity. Stated that they always walked together and that they helped each other. Both groups attributed to the activity score of 10. They felt that time passed very quickly and they have said that they would like to repeat this kind of activities.

Although information that some elements of the groups were about the farm was seen like an advantage, they also reported difficulty in analyzing the map.

They also liked the climb and to most of them was the first time. They also gave note 10. Some have shown special interest because it was given the opportunity of climbing blindfolded.

### **Comments of the facilitators**

(concerning: positive aspects; difficulties; strategies used, what could be done in a different way, etc)

The facilitator of a group said that his group was very united and always waited for each other. Everyone bit the pliers to turn. The knowledge that some elements had about the farm was clearly one of the facilitating factors. There were no physical complaints about the track.

Once again the support and presence of the facilitator in the groups was especially important to highlight some details in the examination of the map. There was an element of a group who tried to go ahead despite the incentives of the facilitator to wait for the colleagues to support them. The boy never fully complied with the advice.

Again the greatest difficulty was the analysis of the map. This group never reported physical complaints not unlike the group of motor impairment.

One group completed the work faster and faultless.

During the climb was used again the encouragement and positive reinforcement to support all participants.

### **Notes**

The elements of this group were not known, but worked very well together.

### **Final conclusions:**

Mixed groups allows rich interactions and it is possible to see the best of the participants; the mutual help was always present; the day was organized in a different way with more activities that was a positive aspect referred by the participants. In this group we saw that the disability have influenced the results of the activities (less time to do the activities; more will to do some more activities).



## **Diversity Example: CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

### **Jochen's group going to FRAJDA – language communicating – JOCHEN & MACIEJ**

**Journey through open situations** – an adventurous travel to Poland Midsummer 2010 – 10 of Jochen's students from Altdorf started for a seven days' trip from North Bavaria to the North-West of Poland, to FRAJDA. Companies: 5 students of special education, 5 professional carers. Two minibuses with



trailers could transport half of the group and the complete equipment – including breathing machinery, special bikes and boats... The other half went by train, having a break in the German capitol Berlin, arriving just in time (after 12 hours of travelling) at Szczecin Main Station. With support of the partners of WTZ they arrived late but safe and enjoyed their first evening with a beautiful sundown at the FRAJDA shore. First day – arrival day?

The minibuses started at 10.30, long after the train group, all the baggage had made a lot of work. After the first hour of driving – 95 kilometres from the beginning – the exhaust of one minibus was finally exhausted, broke down. Stop.

ADAC came quickly, rebuilt the rest of the exhaust, led us the way back to Bayreuth to a garage. After three hours, only half of the exhaust was renewed,



but we were told to go on. Back on the highway the bus was filled with black stinking clouds – the bus' floor had become too hot; the same point, no way, stop.

So these travelers to Poland spent their first night about 95 kilometres away from home in a nice hotel beside the highway – ADAC again paid for the night. In the morning, the caretakers from Wichernhaus arrived, brought another bus and kept the broken one. 650 kilometres ahead, we went on, arrived late but safe and enjoyed our first evening with a beautiful sundown at the FRAJDA shore.

The journey's second day was meant for orienteering: Horses and a coach were prepared to show us around in the birdwatch territory which is the land next to FRAJDA over several kilometers. Birds and cattle were the only beings who came across on the rough, uneven sandy road. After lunch they spent a lazy afternoon, towering in art action: handprints on a flag. A walk to the beach again – without swimming device: Still no sign from the minibuses – that carried all the baggage; our hosts did their best to give support with tooth brushes, towels, food and smiles. Smiling returned shortly before



dinner, when we celebrated reunion... Obviously: For those who had to wait, the uncertainty caused a tension, because they could not see nor imagine what had happened to their colleagues on the busses. The camp fire was the round place to meet and to tell all the stories – through the whole week. Sausages, story telling and handmade music completed the relaxed feeling.

The languages spoken at breakfast were the same as in the evening before: Some German, some Polish, some English, some speaking with the body: gestures, yes/no, no idea, hmh? Eyes in contact, and more and more just doing together: Waiting – playing ball; entering the buses, help each other; moving somewhere, pushing the wheelchair, carrying baggage for each other. To enter the ground floor with wheelchairs FRAJDA staff had built a ramp and



they used a wonderful carpet to avoid slipping. Small obstacles inside the house became mentionable very fast and were quickly changed to accessible conditions.

Third day – contact making day: we were invited by people from a partner organization –WTZ – to visit their institution and to spend the day in Szczecin, the big town of the region where the very special dramatic history of the Polish people in the 20th century still is quite remarkable: after World war II Polish people driven away from their land in eastern Poland had to settle in formerly German houses – villages, cities... We got a close and unfiltered impression of the various efforts for inclusion of Polish men and women with special needs into work that gives them challenge, satisfaction, contact and structures for their lives – and we also had to hear that it is not possible for everyone who has the demand of such a place in life: WTZ is not able to offer more than 50 places in their workshops; many people who apply for have to wait for many years, sitting at home with their parents. The human right on getting work to do is apparently not fulfilled for everybody.

WTZ is definitely a model for many other places that need to be developed offering workshops and courses: pottery, woodwork, sewing, artwork, painting, physiotherapy and social assistance in addition – they might tell much more and much better.

Travelling to a far out place always brings a big change, strange impressions: The smell, the sounds, the motions on a Polish train on Polish rails, the smell of waterside, the sounds of wind in the willows and the seeds – no sounds else around in FRAJDA; the starry sky at night, the 1000 swallows flying at daytime, disappearing in the evening, leaving their shit everywhere. Moving through the big town, listening to Polish language everywhere, trying to read, to understand anything, to read the signals, the meanings of colors and pictures in public communication: being irritated, still feeling safe: this is the big success a host can offer to his guests.



Fourth day – tourist day, touring to the Baltic Sea: Some of the German youngsters never had the chance in their life before to travel to seaside, so we



took the time for it. Best weather, warm without wind, so we were able to go out to the beach, go swimming, put out the inflatable boats, paddle as far as the bay watchers would let us (not so far, indeed – they have their instructions...): For Michael it was his first time in a boat ever in his

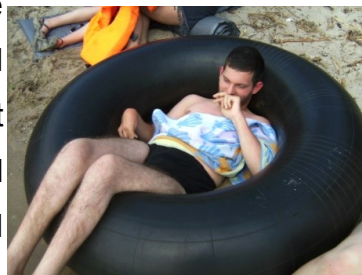
life; he did not need his breathing machine on this day for several hours without getting afraid of losing control. Tobias, Oliver, Matthias, Nicki, Florian, Henriette, Julia, Marina, Johannes: How we could enjoy the certainties of seaside! By the way, the girls happened to get a tattoo, some souvenirs and some sun burn. Travelling home to FRAJDA our hosts appeared impressed about the easy going way, how it was easily possible to overcome obstacles, to enjoy time in unusual circumstances and return happy and relaxed for dinner.

Probably we were too relaxed when we arrived, because at the moment when everybody rushed out of our minibuses to toilet, to dinner or to do any other work, at this moment we did a miserable mistake: One bus was left open with



the keys on the driver's seat.

The following morning, we missed that bus. We still miss it in December of that year: it was stolen, with all the things inside we needed for safe travelling with



wheelchairs, with a ramp in the back, with clamps to fix the chairs... Fifth day was the day of water activities with our partners from Szczecin – of course, noon went by for me with police activities. The groups enjoyed canoeing from the beach along the shore between fields of shelf; some tried out windsurfing, some did water games, swimming in huge tires. – The flag was finished on that day. Everyone added his or her handprints and we tore the flag up in the wind to give a sign for our encountering. Still the feelings appeared relaxed.



Inside we had some feelings for the troubles we expected concerning our journey back home on the seventh day.

Before we spent the sixth day: Challenge by choice-day; everyone could



propose an activity, then see what was makeable: Eaglewatching from fishermen's boats,



a biketour through the surroundings, horseriding and horsecaring – those were the chosen activities. We were lucky to have Dutch photographers at FRAJDA who were professional birdwatchers. They went with us

and we took the chance and saw many eagles approaching the boats, attracted by fish donated by our captains to the seagulls. Amazing animals acting freely – the bird reservation around the Stettiner Haff, on both sides of the German/Polish border are amongst the places with the biggest populations in the whole Europe, respectively in the whole world.

The afternoon was spent with preparations for the evening and for the travel back. Again: ADAC organized a car that would take half of the bus group with one trailer close to Berlin, then give them a rental car for their way home.

Everything was prepared for packing, and everybody was prepared to have a mask of nature materials for Julia's birthday party in the evening – dance and fun until midnight, even the first look back in joy with a presentation of pictures of the week: For the hosts it was a very good experience to see



us still happy and enjoying our journey's last evening in their wonderful place.

The last day, of course, belonged to the travel. This time everything worked out as planned and expected. The Polish friends took the train people to the station in time, the ones on the highway had enough drinks to stand the hot day; a break close to Leipzig brought the minibuss and the rental car together –

we could watch the German football team beat England 4 v 1. At nine o'clock all was done, one week's journey finished.



10 youngsters with all kinds of special needs collected inner pictures – pictures against the power of the metaphor “disability”. We could watch remarkable changes of behavior and self-esteem in the following days. Our abilities as a group to go out and break barriers: passing horrible situations on the highway; spending nights in never planned situations; crossing borders, getting aware of strange rules, language, regulations, feeling everywhere: okay, we are accepted. Having arrived at home, we also were respected: We mastered lots of difficulties; nobody was damaged in any kind; all the possible catastrophies concerning the medications, the epileptic activities, allergies, breathing difficulties, homesickness, ... nothing became big enough to get real.

The sum of feelings of the group from Altdorf was: This was a great journey! Let us ask our partners from Poland how they felt, what they thought about this week.

### **Answering our friends' question...**

From the very beginning when the idea came up we were very happy and very excited to host Jochen's students. We had groups with moderate degree of disability previously but it was to be first time ever to host a group of people with considerable disabilities. Our building is not fully accessible for people on electric wheelchairs so it was a real challenge. We didn't know what the expectations and needs of the group would be. Because of the lack of experience we were walking around, looking and thinking what could be a barrier and how to solve it. Finally we were fixing the things throughout the whole stay.

The more troubles you get into the more you learn. Thus from the beginning we started to learn. The first group who came by train had no luggage because it was in the bus and the bus has not come... So... quick shopping in a supermarket: toothbrushes, toothpastes, shampoos, shower gels, towels... The problem solved, so far. Later on, when being with the group in different

situations, we have learnt from them how to solve many problems so they were not the problems any more.

Every year in our centre we have about 1500-2000 non-disabled youngsters. They of course enjoy their stays but we have never seen such happy faces enjoying every moment of being together in the group in their activities. The last evening - the birthday party - was an unforgettable experience for us and we understood that disability is only an idea in our minds, nothing more.

## **Conclusions / Perspectives**

Was our intention that this project was a exchanging of experiences and learning. Building bridges, to identify different situations...

This handbook reveals the diversity of stages in which several European countries are in relation to non-formal education.

Some of them with policies and financial support already well established and others still undergoing significant evolution and recognition of the importance of this subject in the training of its population.

Indeed, we have to increasingly consider learning as a process that occurs throughout life and in various contexts. When referring to disabled people, all this ends up winning much more prominence, since their chances are lower and because it is necessary to use other forms of learning that transcend the barriers of their difficulties.

We hope the richness of experiences that we report here constitute a useful perspective to raise awareness of the need to build bridges with new educational forms and among all audiences, in our case disabled people



## Web – Links and Documentation

[www.apc-coimbra.org.pt](http://www.apc-coimbra.org.pt)

[www.frajda.com.pl](http://www.frajda.com.pl)

[www.adventureforall.org.uk](http://www.adventureforall.org.uk)

[www.muehlenkraft.de](http://www.muehlenkraft.de)

[www.bsj-marburg.de](http://www.bsj-marburg.de)

[www.zerum-ueckermuende.de](http://www.zerum-ueckermuende.de)

<http://www.soncek.org>

<http://www.disabledadventurers.com/>

Agência Nacional para a Gestão do Programa Juventude em Acção

<http://www.juventude.pt/index.php>

Direcção Geral de Educação e Cultura

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm)

Portal Europeu de Juventude

[http://europa.eu/youth/about\\_pt.html](http://europa.eu/youth/about_pt.html)

Secretaria de Estado da Juventude e Desporto

<http://www.sejd.gov.pt>

Instituto Português da Juventude/ Portal da Juventude

<http://juventude.gov.pt/portal/>

SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres (organização que apoia a implementação do Programa Juventude em Acção)

<http://www.salto-youth.net>

[http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-](http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/Coyote/Coyote)

[partnership/publications/Coyote/Coyote](http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/Coyote/Coyote)

[Wheels for Independence - Paralympics and Sports for disabled people.](http://www.wheelsforindependence.biz/)

<http://www.wheelsforindependence.biz/>

English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS):

<http://www.efds.co.uk/>

<http://www.cirius-kamnik.si>

<http://www.center-jpv.si/>

The lead strategic development agency for sport and physical activity for disabled people in London.

<http://www.interactive.uk.net/>.

Public services all in one place

[Sports and hobbies : Directgov - Disabled people](#)

[High Peak Borough Council - Sports for Disabled People](#)

[Adapted sports for people with disabilities.](#)

[National Sports Center for the Disabled - outdoor recreation opportunities for individuals with disabilities](#)

[Outdoor Sport and Leisure Activities - Activities-for-disabled-people Disabled Skiing and other sports activities from Handiconcept - Paragliding](#)

Centro de Recursos TIC para a Educação Especial do Seixal - CRTIC-Seixal.

<http://crticseixal.webnode.com/>

Espaço de debate, de informação, de divulgação de actividades, de partilha e de troca de experiências relacionados com o processo de inclusão dos alunos com necessidades educativas especiais (NEE)

<http://inclusaoaquilino.blogspot.com/>