

Training courses for maths teachers' mobility

Teacher mobility is one of the EC priorities in the field of education. The *MA²ThE TE AMO – Making MATHematics TEachers MOBILE* project aims at providing mathematics teacher training institutions with results from piloting activities, which may be used to develop and implement training programmes for international mathematics teachers and thus prepare future teachers to teach mathematics abroad.

The training courses

As part of the project activities, each of the partner institutions organised a course that included the following topics:

- broad description of the school culture in the areas of the partner institutions, experiences from teachers that had already taught abroad, classroom language in L1 and L2, classroom observation;
- mathematical terminology, mathematics teacher training activities, co-operation between mathematics and language teachers, information about curricula for mathematics in the partner countries, teaching experiments.

The courses, taught in English and the partner languages, and in close co-operation between mathematics and language teacher trainers, were designed in a different way, which reflected the didactic organization in the partner institutions and the different approaches by the national teams to the common task of organizing the courses.

Apart from the Czech course, which was adapted from an already existing, two semester, curricular CLIL course, in the other four partner countries the course had to be fully planned and run as a new, non-curricular, voluntarily based, training activity for the participants. Its average duration was twenty-four hours. The number of participants in the courses ranged from a few people to some tens. From each training course, a student teacher and an in-service teacher went to teach abroad for a week in a partner country.

Some comments from the reports

The following quotations from the trainers' reports on the courses illustrate some activities and issues related to the maths teachers' training for mobility.

Pre-visit classroom observation

The mathematics teacher of the Italian school *Liceo Leonardo da Vinci* in Paris kindly accepted to receive our participants in her courses. They attended to three lessons. That was a great opportunity for them before going to Pisa to become aware of the concrete differences between French and Italian school systems, to observe the way which the Italian teacher conducts her lessons and compare it to their own practice.

Students' evaluation

In an informal, oral evaluation students expressed their satisfaction with the fact that students and student teachers had had the possibility of taking a course together. They recommended this to be college policy in the future. They saw it as an advantage that the course had not dealt only with mathematics and language, but that *culture* also had been an important part of it.

Training in a foreign language

When the students worked in groups on maths, the language teacher trainer tried to be invisible but she listened to them and took notes of their mistakes or difficulties. Before the end of the lesson, there was time for explanations and answers to their questions ... The students were really interested and eager to try something new. They took part in the discussions often with enthusiasm and not only those who could speak English fluently, but almost everybody tried to have an active part in the lesson.

Participants' work and its aim

... participants work with a variety of textbooks and teaching materials in comparison with similar materials in the mother tongue (L1); the aim is to get awareness of the specificity of expressing the subject matter in L2 with regard to the age and language competence of the students, and possible obstacles based partly on L1 and L2 interference and partly on the relation of the subject matter and background knowledge of the target language community ...

Tradition in teacher mobility

... two teacher students and two in-service-teachers confirmed their interest in taking part in the course ... there is no tradition in Austria in teacher mobility, both with school teachers and with university teachers ... Each participant could freely choose a subject of their liking (within mathematics) and talk about this subject in front of his/her peers. These presentations have been videotaped. In the middle of the course the videos have been watched and commented on by the participants.

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