



SUPPORTED MOBILITY ®

A method for
implementing
work practice
abroad





Life begins at the end of your comfort zone

A methodological description drawn up in the context of the Active Mobility project, part-financed by the European Union/European Social Fund. Updated in the ESF project Active Euromobility 2021.



Introduction to a work practice abroad

Quotes from participants who worked in another country for two months:

"If me, the shy little girl can do this experience, travel by my own and push myself to go outside the comfort zone - then I can do whatever I want in the future!"

"It felt like you were part of the population and really lived like them. You don't just get to see a culture, you get to live it too."

"I have realised that I can do more than I thought before I went. I have managed much better than I thought. I have the power in me."

We have seen many examples of how participants start in the preparations, quiet and inaccessible, sometimes with their hood covering their head, only to come home holding their head high, a new gleam in their eyes and a lot to tell after implementing their work practice abroad!

What is it about mobility that makes a person develop and grow on multiple levels?

A qualitative study carried out in 2018 at the end of the Active Mobility project highlights the factors that led to change:

I will never forget the trip to Slovenia. I would never have gone to university otherwise, the trip was my springboard



That's just great to hear! Take care!

"I appreciate all the experiences I have gained from the trip, even though there were many downturns, I feel that it has benefited me. When I came home from the trip, I felt like another person. I felt I had a new perspective on how I want to live my life."

- ★ Get away from your home environment.
- ★ Stand on your own feet without parents. (Applies to both participants who otherwise live at home with their parents, as well as participants who live on their own with close parental contacts)
- ★ Be able to take responsibility for yourself.
- ★ The realisation that you can do more than you thought.
- ★ Find yourself in a new context where there is an opportunity to grow.
- ★ Getting started with employment has contributed to increased own initiative.
- ★ Being supported by other participants.
- ★ Some have also been strengthened by having supported other participants.

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Summary, the method

SUPPORTED MOBILITY®

A method in four phases, designed to suit people who need support to partake in work practice abroad. The phases are as follows:

- **Recruitment phase**
- **Preparation phase**
- **Implementation phase**
- **Future phase**

A successful recruitment phase requires solid information efforts from project staff and a well-functioning collaboration with those who assign participants to mobility.

Professional supervisors follow the group from start to finish. This provides continuity and creates security for each individual.

The preparatory phase can either consist of group meetings interspersed with individual interviews. It may also be useful if it consists of group meetings interspersed with work trials at home to create opportunities for the participant to practice timekeeping, get into routines, follow instructions, and so on.

During the implementation phase, the participants work and live as residents of another European country. They embrace a new working environment and learn more about how to live in a different culture.

The Swedish supervisors travel together with the participants to introduce them into the host organisation and the new environment.

The supervisors leave the group after the first introductory week. This means that the support of the host organisation is very important in the event of problems or crisis situations. Unlike many other mobility projects, we believe that it is an advantage for the group to stand on its own during the project period. This is why we have chosen the arrangement that the accompanying supervisor returns home after one week. It is one of our success factors and a central part of our approach that the group is given the opportunity to take responsibility for itself. This leads to greater independence and self-confidence. They grow on multiple levels and develop their abilities that they are not aware of before. Some participants would prefer to see the supervisors remain for the whole period, while we see a big gain in leaving the group. Here, participants face new, challenging situations which they learn to deal with, to solve unexpected problems. You are forced to leave your comfort zone, where much is organised and planned by others. It does not leave much

room for the participant to influence and make decisions about his or her own life, to achieve empowerment.

The entire method is permeated by the participant taking responsibility for going to work, attending booked meetings with the host organisation, being a good ambassador and managing his or her own process. However, support and follow-up from the host organisation is necessary for the target group.

After returning home, the future phase begins, which is the most important phase. The participants will be able to evaluate and reflect on his or her new experiences and knowledge and how they can be used to approach work or studies.

Although not everyone is immediately ready for the open labour market or for studies, work practice abroad leads to the participant developing and making important step movement that in the long run can lead to entry into the labour market.





Background

Actíva is a foundation with Örebro Municipality and Region Örebro county as its principals and was founded in 1989. The main task is to guide and support people who are involuntarily outside the labour market. We turn to people with a diagnosed or suspected disability. Actíva started to work with mobility on a smaller scale in 2005 in Interpraktik and on a larger scale in 2010 within TransSam, an ESF project.

Since then, we have been running several projects co-financed by the European Union, through the European Social Fund and the University and higher Education Council, Erasmus+.

So far (spring 2021) we have sent 27 groups with a total of 211 participants to partake in work practice abroad in Europe.

Host organisations have been:

- **CSCS, Pistoia, Italy**
- **ZNI, Maribor, Slovenia**
- **KJSW, Landshut, Germany**
- **Ballyhoura Development, Kilmallock, Ireland**
- **Kids & Co, Berlin, Germany**
- **Q-Prints & Service, Pforzheim, Germany**

So why have we chosen to continue with mobility?

When the participants get the chance to come to a new context, without “etiquette”, we have seen that they develop on several levels. Participants are forced to face new challenges and situations that can be challenging. The concept of “stepping outside one’s comfort zone” applies in this context. It is also a factor that strengthens a person and can also lead to increased self-awareness of one’s own abilities, but also limitations, which can contribute to a more realistic view of working life and the career choice one makes.

Supported Employment

Supported Employment (SE) is a method of working with people with disabilities and those with a vulnerable or disadvantaged situation, so that they can achieve/return to, and maintain, employment in the open labour market. In Swedish, SE is sometimes translated as Individual support in work. The method is based on the so-called “place, train and maintain” model where preferably all learning and training should take place in the workplace where the individual is to work. This approach is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (SFSE Svenska föreningen för Supported Employment, Swedish Association for Supported Employment)

In the ESF Active Mobility project, one of the goals was to compile a description of the method of mobility we have developed and which we call Supported Mobility®.

Empowerment

Empowerment is about strengthening the individual’s own ability to manage his or her situation, to influence and control his or her own daily life and to strengthen his or her own resources. Research shows that by consciously working to support an individual with the help of empowerment, lust for life and the feeling of being part of one’s own life appears.





The target group

The target group we work with is young adults with some form of disability or other difficulties that make it difficult to attain work or study on one's own. In order for our target group to have the best possible conditions to manage work practice abroad, together with a host organisation, we offer individual support during the stay abroad.

Financing and cooperation

The prerequisite for us to organise work practice abroad for groups is that funds from the EU are granted, which is certainly true for most organisations. The implementation of mobility in ordinary activities would of course be desirable, i.e. that the authorities and organisations had allocated funds for mobility in their budgets. But without external funds, we could not have worked with work practice abroad to the extent we have done.

Depending on the announcement, organisation and setup, it may be necessary to include partners in the application, such as municipalities, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, the Swedish Public Employment Service or other operators. One reason is to get a broader recruitment pool, another to spread the idea of mobility for everyone, not just for those who alone manage to go abroad to work for a period.

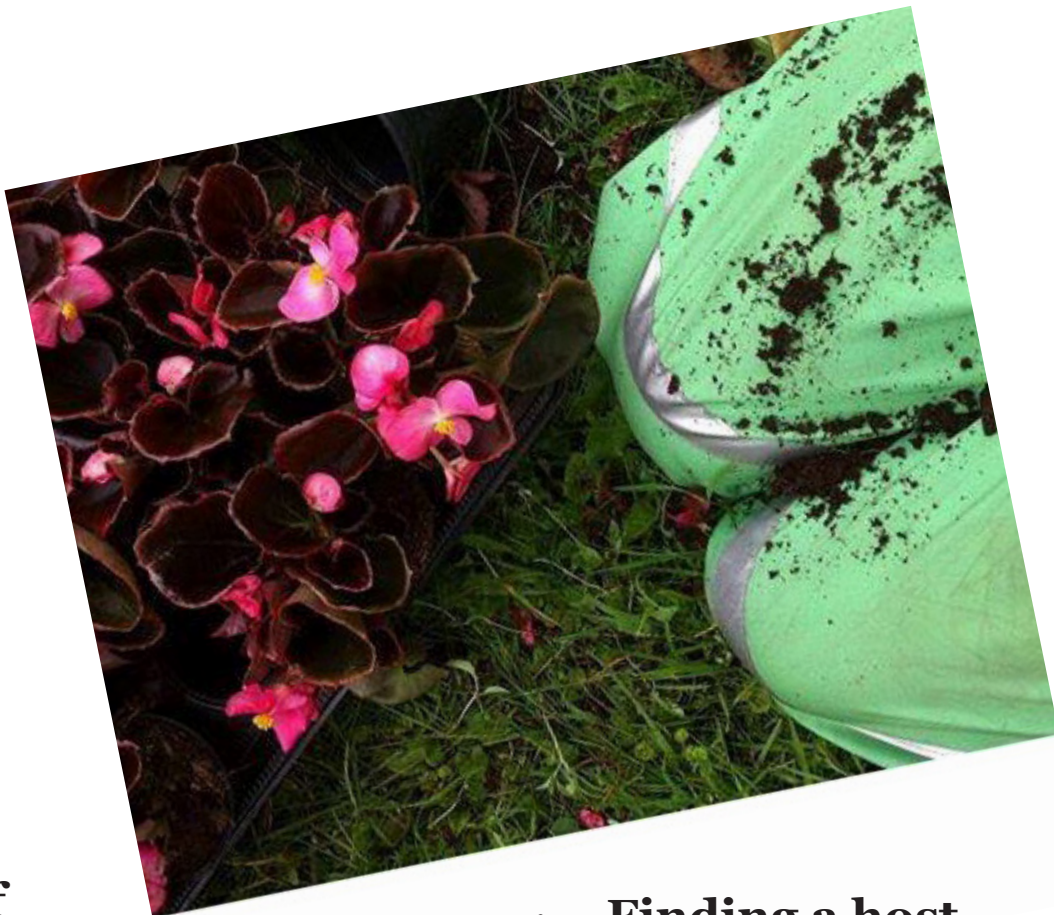
Start-up and planning

When funding and cooperation partners are secured in the project, the next step is to find an experienced host organisation and recruit competent staff. Are suitable premises available to everyone? Is there any possibility of adaptation to specific needs?

A steering group should be appointed with key people, preferably in a decision-making position, who will lead the work moving forward and ensure that the goals are achieved. There may also be benefits to having a working group, with members who are close to prospective participants in their activities in order to facilitate recruitment.

The organiser is responsible for ensuring that all administration, accounting, reports, documents, etc. to the provider of funding are met.

The budget should include funds to compensate for the participants' extra expenses in connection with mobility. We have paid out between EUR 8 and 12 per day depending on the country. The money has been deposited into the participants' bank accounts on a weekly basis.



Staff

Those who will work with the participants should be experienced, be able to manage groups, as well as individual meetings, and have knowledge of the target group. We strive for persons of different gender and age. The person in charge of the team should be able to manage and be prepared for unexpected and emergency situations and be able to make quick decisions, be able to determine what requires an immediate response and what can wait. As a staff member, you must be prepared to be available even on evenings and weekends when needed. However, the participants must have been prepared so that they can initially solve problems that arise, as this is when the participants get to know and take responsibility for the situation that has arisen.

When you coach a group, you need to have the patience and courage to allow the participants to be as involved as much as possible for example in finding the right flight, finding the town, keeping track of their times and managing everyday situations at home and in the workplace.

Those who are to work in the project need to have the same values and outlook on people, as well as good personal chemistry. The staff need to have plenty of time to plan cooperation and organisation, which should be done with some continuity. What should the division of responsibilities look like, who should take care of what, etc.?

A project manager and an economist with overall responsibility for e.g. contacts with the provider of funding, budget and documentation are also important functions for successful mobility work.

Finding a host organisation

In order to create the conditions for a successful mobility period, a reliable host organisation is needed, preferably through recommendations from others who have practical experience of collaboration. There are databases and various networks where one can find organisations to collaborate with.

To feel safe as a sending organisation, a study visit is required, where one has the opportunity to meet representatives from the host organisation, see examples of workplaces, housing and the city. (For us, it has been obvious that the host organisation is looking for workplaces in its networks, not that we should contact employers ourselves.)

It may take time to build mutual trust, but this first visit gives a picture of whether one has a common view and similar values for people in the target group. Questions to ask during the study visit are, for example, about the workplaces: the possibility of adapting working hours and tasks, is it possible to work two and two, what requirements are required for language skills? Does one need one's own work clothes, protective equipment? It is also necessary to find out what the host organisation offers for support in the event of a crisis, illness or conflict in the group.

We have sent our groups to medium-sized cities as well as large cities, and even a small Irish village. No matter where the group goes, the participants should be prepared for areas to be avoided.

Prior to the start of cooperation with a recipient, a contract must be concluded and an agreement must be reached on when and how payment should be made. Is everything to be paid in advance or will partial sums be paid?



Four phases

1. RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

The collaborating parties have an important role to play in directing participants and project staff to inform and give a fair picture of the project. The project staff often need information and close cooperation with the partners to ensure successful recruitment. It is a good idea to organise workshops or the like for the activities involved in the project in order to create participation and get closer cooperation to facilitate recruitment.

Does the person have the right profile according to the target group, are the criteria met? Does the participant have the right to retain his or her compensation during the project? Has the relevant caseworker approved mobility? The surrounding staff and family members who feel hesitant about a person being able to cope with mobility may also need information about the project and its setup.

A prospective participant interview is conducted in order to enable project staff to form an idea of the abilities and motivation of the participant. Is the participant evaluated to be able to cope with the stay abroad and meet the criteria? The interview is also important for the participant to feel selected and understand the importance of doing their best and feeling responsible.

There is a risk that some referring parties have a lack of faith in the participant's abilities that could lead to people who would benefit from mobility being screened out. In order to avoid this, it is important to present mobility correctly and to have clear criteria for what the participant is expected to be able to cope with and the support provided by the sending and host organisation.



Criteria

We strive for as many as possible in the target group being able to participate, but some criteria have been important to us:

- ★ **Be able to travel by train, bus, air**
- ★ **Be able to live with others in student accommodation, share a room with one person, share kitchen and bathroom with several others.**
- ★ **Handle basic household tasks**
- ★ **Get to the workplace on one's own**
- ★ **Not have any drug problems**

Sometimes there have been participants who have no experience in cooking, washing, shopping, etc. and they have still managed to learn this on the spot. However, there should at least be an understanding that the participant is expected to be able to handle household tasks on his or her own, regardless of his or her knowledge, and that one must share a room with someone else.

Administration, order

In order to facilitate the work, you need to think about how documentation should be done. Collecting all information on participants, referring authority, travel dates, travel times, transfers, flight numbers, passport copies, accompanying supervisors, who (possibly) go to the group after half the time for support and follow-up, etc. will make it much easier, for example when someone calls and wants information or when compiling a final report.

2. PREPARATION PHASE

During the preparation phase, weekly meetings will be alternated with work trials/employment/school. It is beneficial that the participant is already given the opportunity at home to acquire work experience and routines before the implementation phase abroad. For participants who do not have a workplace, schooling or employment, we arrange a place. In preparation, we also have a conference with overnight accommodation at a folk high school. The conference has proved to be very valuable and has had positive effects on the interaction and group dynamics of the participants and gives a taste of living together. They have a common experience together, creating an “us feeling” and an opportunity to get to know one another better. We have chosen to collaborate with a folk high school: it is affordable, there is a possibility to hire pedagogues for the desired content and there is an opportunity to get study information for the group. After the work practice abroad, it may be necessary for some to study and then folk high schools can be a good alternative.

The number of meetings depends on what resources there is in the form of staff, project funds, etc. We have chosen to have two days/week with job-seekers and one day/week with students.

We have a strong focus on labour market knowledge for the participants. Study visits are made to different types of workplaces and we also conduct a job shadow day for participants.

In the preparation phase, we strive to get each participant to put their expectations into words. What is the purpose of going, what do you want out of it?

Mapping and professional profile

During the preparation phase, we collect the personal data and contact details of the participants, information on supplies and government contacts, information on any medicines that require Schengen certificates, allergies and establish consent where the participant approves contact and the exchange of information between us and authorities to facilitate planning. Each participant may also sign an agreement that participation in all three phases is compulsory. In addition, a professional profile is made. What industry does the participant want, what work tasks? What are the needs of the participant for adaptation, support, aids or guidance?



Examples of important questions to ask the participant:



- **Your thoughts about the trip?**
- **Are you worried about something in particular?**
- **How do you thrive in the group?**
- **Are you missing/wanting to change anything in the preparations?**

An individual conversation with everyone before departure is planned to give the participant the opportunity to give their views on the content, thoughts before the trip, expectations, fears, etc. During the individual conversation, each participant receives positive feedback, for example if one has helped someone in the group, include all participants and been involved. There is also an opportunity to talk about which workplace one wants in Sweden and/or the country travelled to.

Close contacts between sending and host organisations are important throughout the process in order to be able to match to the right workplace and gain a better understanding of the participant's needs. Digital meetings are held where the participant, project staff and staff from the host organisation are given the opportunity to get to know one another.

Insurance

Do all participants have an insurance policy that applies to travel, work and leisure? We have chosen to always insure the participants themselves to ensure that there actually exists an insurance and to have control over what it covers, such as ambulance transport.

Availability

There must be a readiness to make mobility accessible, if necessary, provide support or be able to adapt premises and materials. Examples include work shifts of a proper length, reading out questions, help with spelling or wording, that there are hearing loops and the speed is adapted so that everyone keeps up.

Examples of content in the preparations

- ★ Information about the project, the EU, the setup, the host organisation, etc.
- ★ Presentation, we get to know one another
- ★ Safety information: premises, evacuation, emergency exits
- ★ Protocol and structures: computers, the internet, times, breaks, sick leave
- ★ Passports and insurance cards, debit cards - withdrawals, security, blocking number
- ★ Introduction to the working materials
- ★ Labour market knowledge, what requirements are made by an employer?
- ★ Study information
- ★ Europass, CV with request for work practice, three sectors
- ★ Housing, difficulties and possible solutions
- ★ Homesickness
- ★ Putting expectations into works What is the purpose of you going, what do you want out of it?
- ★ Expectations from the project owner, designating and host organisation, employer, etc.
- ★ Non-discrimination, equality, accessibility
- ★ Participants who have been abroad and participated in work practice tell us about their experiences
- ★ Language skills, simple phrases, listening to pronunciation. I would like someone with the language as a native language who can provide easy instruction.
- ★ Travelling times, airport, baggage rules, packing, safety. How does one respond to delays/lost baggage on the return trip?
- ★ Ensure that relatives can get in contact with the participant
- ★ Budget for the work practice weeks, currency conversion
- ★ Social media contact forums
- ★ Research: what is there to do and discover in the town/area?
- ★ Own responsibility: each participant is responsible for his or her own safety and adult behaviour, e.g. not staying in unsafe areas and being careful with alcohol.
- ★ Being an ambassador for the project
- ★ Information from an EURES advisor, AF: working in another country
- ★ What is required for the work practice period to be successful for me, for the employer and for the host organisation?
- ★ The country's food culture – what typical foods are there?
- ★ Feeling good – physical activity, food, sleep, stress linked to working life
- ★ Sex and relationships
- ★ Environment, basic knowledge, what can one do oneself? Preferably external lecturer.
- ★ Socio-emotional training, conflict management.
- ★ What does one need to think about before leaving home? Flower watering, pets, bills, emptying fridges and trash, etc.?
- ★ The art of producing a report in different ways: text and images, slide shows, film, blog, voice notes, etc. What do I need to include for my documentation while abroad?
- ★ Language skills, useful words and phrases in my place of work practice.
- ★ Discuss: how to make the most of your free time? Take the chance to see and discover!

TIP

Does the mobility take place during a period when it is time to declare or vote? Then some participants may need support to avoid missing these important things!



Conference with overnight accommodation has the following content

- ★ Collaboration and communication exercises aimed at creating a good climate in the group and achieving a good dynamic, getting to know one another's strengths and weaknesses, understanding one another's differences and abilities
- ★ Joint cooking to provide the opportunity to plan, work together in a practical manner and distribute tasks
- ★ Try sharing a room with someone else before your stay abroad, where young people can expect to stay at least two in one room.
- ★ Develop common values, how are we going to be toward one another in the group? In this case, it is appropriate that the supervisors initiate questions concerning non-discrimination, equality and accessibility, standards and norm criticism.

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At an early stage, the participant should write a CV. We are using Europass, which is sent as soon as possible to the host organisation, which can begin the process of matching a participant to a workplace with the correct adaptation, if necessary.

TIP

Write your CV early!



TIPS

Has everyone obtained passports and EU cards? Do all participants have insurance for travel, work and leisure?



Tips on websites and literature on the horizontal principles

www.esf.se, search for equality

The Swedish ESF Council makes it possible for the projects to better contribute to programme goals, labour market goals as well as gender equality goals being met through gender mainstreaming. The site includes fact sheets on horizontal principles, gender equality standards and information on the support that can be obtained from the ESF.

www.jamstall.nu

Facts about gender equality, practical examples and concrete tools for gender equality work.

www.jamstallt.se

Jämställt has worked with gender equality, diversity and norm criticism for the past 10 years through lectures, tutorials, workshops and method and material production.

Exercises we have used:

“When did it happen?”, game about equal treatment.

Bryt! developed by RFSL Ungdom
(Swedish Youth Federation for LGBTQ Rights)

A methodological material on standards in general and heteronormativity in particular.

www.umo.se

UMO is a website for anyone aged between 13 and 25 years. At UMO you can find texts about everyone's equal value, equality, male/female, sex, health, relationships, etc. All county councils and regions are behind UMO.

Pink, the Dangerous Colour

Book by Fanny Ambjörnsson.

Magazines

Review ads and articles to analyse gender roles and stereotypes.



Conflict management, socio-emotional training

In our method, great focus is placed on conflict management. Exercises will provide participants with strategies and mental preparation for how to act and manage their concerns and anger in difficult situations. In particular, the participant needs to reflect on how to react to different moods and tell the other people in the group.

Sometimes a participant may have little understanding of other people's disabilities because they themselves have an impairment that makes them unable to interpret others' reactions and expressions. In such cases, the supervisors need to be aware that this can occur and that it can cause problems.

However, it is one thing to discuss conflict resolution and problems in the preparations and another thing to deal with in reality once one is there. It seems very simple when discussing and the participants have good suggestions for solutions in theory, which can be more difficult to live up to in reality. Staff should give concrete examples of problems that may arise, such as joint cooking and joint household kitchen facilities. What do you do if Lovisa eats a lot and Samir never eats lunch, etc.?

The group is asked to resolve issues on the following scale:

1. I try to solve the situation on my own.
2. I try to solve the situation with the help of my friends in the group.
3. I look up my contact at the host organisation.
4. I contact the sending organisation.

Knowledge of working life

There is a recurring theme in the preparations: what concerns the demands of the labour market and expectations from an employer. Sometimes people in the target group have a diffuse picture of how the labour market works. In particular, if a participant has or her their employment in a business where there are not so great consequences if one is absent, the understanding of working life is small.

Participants' finances

In our business, the cost of passports and personal expenses for leisure activities is the only thing the participant has had to pay for. This can, of course, change over time.

In the preparations, the group should be able to work with a budget and finance, a review of how much money will be enough during the work practice abroad. Participants receive a daily allowance to cover additional costs during the mobility period.

TIPS

The book Know Your Money from the Consumer Agency is highly recommended. It offers clear examples of what happens if you do not pay bills, what small purchases cost during a year, the difference in cost if you borrow or save money, etc.

Koll på cashen (Know Your Money) is yet another tip. kollpacashen.se

You may want to arrange a workshop on smart finances and, if possible, invite an external lecturer, from the municipality for example.



3. IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Participants travel to the destination country together with project staff. During the trip, project employees allow participants to take their own initiatives, such as finding the right way, being on time, etc.

Introduction

Introduction is provided by the host organisation.

The length of the introduction depends on how long the mobility period lasts. The focus should be on work, if the participant has a short mobility period it is good to get started as quickly as possible at work.

Contents:

- ★ Information about the organisation
- ★ Practical things related to accommodation with keys, rules, etc.
- ★ How to contact the person responsible for the support.
- ★ What requirements are made: one must go to work every day, be on time, report sick in good time, be a good colleague and attend the follow-up meetings organised by the host organisation.
- ★ Get to know the city through walking tours, where to find ATMs, where to shop for food, tips on affordable restaurants, where to find train and bus stations, the police, etc?
- ★ Interview training before the meeting with the employer is a very good element for all participants.
- ★ First visit to the workplace, where there should always be a representative from the host organisation and a representative from the sending organisation, who can assist, if necessary, in explaining matters relating to the ability to work, function and need for adaptation; if the person finds it difficult to express it on his or her own or simply does not have the language for it. In order to facilitate communication, the staff from the sending organisation has an important role in providing support in a situation many experience as stressful.
- ★ The participant may also need support to learn how to find their way to and from the workplace. Preparedness for those who have a poor sense of direction must exist, until the person feels secure in finding their way.

TIP

Ask for an opinion from the workplace in the participants' certificates.



At the time of the introduction week, participants should be reminded of the importance of going to work every day. In cases where one really is unable to work because of illness or another valid reason, the participant must be aware of the requirement to get in touch directly with the workplace and the host organisation.

In some groups it may be necessary to intervene if conflicts arise when the group has had time to live together for a few days. But insofar as possible, the participants themselves must solve situations that arise. Often, it can be enough to ask a simple question such as “how do you think it can be solved?”. It is important that participants should be given the opportunity to solve problems and difficulties on their own. The project staff will have to wait and have a sense of when they need to help solve problems.



During the implementation, the host organisation is kept in contact to be able to jointly handle any problems that arise and receive information about how the group is doing, attendance, how the work tasks have been managed, accommodation, etc. After the introduction, the Swedish project staff go home to let the group take responsibility for the remaining time, with support from the host organisation.

The mobility weeks

The host organisation shall be available to the group and also provide support and follow-up at the workplaces, accommodation and to intervene, if necessary, in the event of complications in the group or for individual participants. What this should look like must be stated in the contract. Follow-up with the entire group should take place at least once a week, where, in addition to monitoring the progress of work and housing, language teaching can also be included, either the language of the country in question or English. They should also encourage participants to find things in their leisure time by organising or proposing possible activities. Exploring, seeing the country and culture is a way of developing and gaining a better understanding for others, as well as a chance for unique experiences.

The host country's supervisors conduct follow-up at the workplaces to ensure that there is sufficient work, that the working time is appropriate for the participant, or if adaptation needs to be made according to the participant's needs. The supervisor also follows up the attendance frequency of the participants and reports deviations to the sending organisation.

Before the participants end the implementation phase, it is valuable to have an evaluation together with the host organisation, as all participants can give their views on the stay.

The agreement with the host organisation should include that the participants receive a certificate of completed mobility to add to their CV. See appendix 2.

It is also desirable that the employer gives an evaluation from the workplace.

Study visit

At the end of the implementation phase, it is valuable that a study visit is conducted by one of the Swedish supervisors and representatives from the partners who can meet the participants on the spot, see the accommodation and visit the workplaces. The host organisation is instructed to arrange the study visit, which should be at least two days on site. It is an important step in the dissemination of the project and creates an understanding among the partners about what is happening with participants who are partaking in work practice abroad. Seeing them on site, in the work situation and in a new environment has meant a lot for future recruitment, know what awaits a prospective participant is known and it is easier to convey what work practice abroad means when one has experienced it oneself. This gives them the opportunity to gain an increased understanding of mobility as a measure for approaching work/studies. But the study visit can also be useful in providing support to participants who want to talk, have problems or are experiencing homesickness. Most things can be solved.

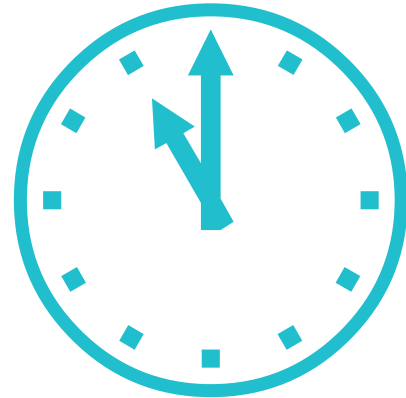
4. FUTURE PHASE

Evaluation, reflection.

What do you bear with you?

Planning for the future.

- ★ Participants tell about the mobility period, reflections, experiences.
- ★ Discussion of differences/similarities in working life and culture between the countries that were experienced.
- ★ Write/create a report.
- ★ The benefits of the work practice period? How have you evolved? What do you bear with you? How do you move forward?
- ★ Working with work materials.
- ★ The Caseworker from the Swedish Public Employment Service tells you what service you can get from there, opportunities for support, etc.
- ★ Update their CV.
- ★ Evaluation of the project by the participants.



A workplace where the participant can start immediately after return, in combination with the group meetings with the mobility organiser, should preferably be completed already during the preparation or mobility phase. Otherwise, there is a risk that the participant suffers from depression after returning home, so-called cultural shock, relapses into old patterns and experiences that nothing has happened at home, when the participant himself or herself has experienced something big and has developed. It is a matter of quickly utilising the newly gained energy and improved self-esteem that so many participants experience after a successful mobility period. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that there should be a plan that is quickly aimed at work or studies. If possible, the continued support should be provided by the staff who followed the participant during preparation and the mobility period, as a good relationship has often been established.



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A report should be produced in any way to allow the participant to put the experience into words. How can the participant take advantage of their new experiences? Planning for the future, what does he or she want to do, what support is needed? Is schooling unfinished? Is it the open labour market that is relevant? Are studies needed to get to where you want? The reports are also important from a dissemination point of view, in order to get the participant's own view of the experience.

Regardless of what the participant chooses to invest in the future phase, it is likely that continued support will be needed even after the person has started in some activity, in order to achieve continuity and long-term sustainability and to increase the chances of success, whether in terms of work or studies.

At the last meeting in the future phase, all participants should receive a certificate from the project owner for the entire project period.

See appendix 3.



Evaluation of the opinion of the participants

Purpose: to measure differences before and after the mobility period, how did the development of the participants look, have the participants taken steps forward? Are we doing the right things? The evaluation is also important for the project as a whole, to be able to demonstrate the results of the European Social Fund for example.

It is important not to complicate this with too many questions. It can be difficult for some people to answer abstract questions, so keep the surveys short and think about the questions carefully, so you can compare the answers before the mobility period and after.

In our own work material, there are also questions the participant should answer in order to reflect on any personal development.

Examples of questions:

Before the mobility period

- ★ What expectations do I have?
- ★ Is there something in particular that I am concerned about?

After the mobility period

- ★ What expectations did I write before? Have they been fulfilled after the end of the work practice?
- ★ How will the the work practice period benefit me on a personal level?
- ★ How will the work practice period be of benefit to me in working life?
- ★ Are there things I should have done differently?

Risk analysis and possible solutions

The providers of funding believe that the cost of the mobility period is too high	Show positive effects achieved in previous projects. Find external funding.
Difficult to find participants	Invest in marketing via several channels: ads, social media, website. Organise an open house, posters, distribute brochures. Ask partners and previous participants for help in spreading information.
People in the participants' environment are opposed to mobility	Sometimes people (e.g. relatives, support persons, etc.) in the participant's environment think that they should give up, there is a lack of confidence that the participant will be able to manage the mobility. Invite those involved to a meeting, tell about the structure and working methods, create security and build trust. Show pictures or films from previous mobility experiences.
Uneven gender ratio	Focus on this in the recruitment process, involve the partners in the project. Sometimes there may be an uneven gender ratio in the selection groups, which is likely to affect the composition.
Participants want to cancel prematurely	Allow all participants to sign an agreement to complete the entire project period. Have support talks with the participant concerned, push and energise! Get help from the host organisation to solve the problem that is at the heart of the problem.
Participants feel mentally ill	Supporting conversations. The cooperation between sending and host organisations is very important in this situation. The host organisation needs to enter and meet the participant in a personal meeting in order to assess the severity of the situation and determine if contact with a doctor is required. Involve the person's coordinator or equivalent who has assigned the participant.
Undesirable behaviour by a participant	Conversations with the participant, both the sending and host organisation. Remind what was said in the preparations that each participant is an ambassador for the project and that bad behaviour can result in the person being sent home at their own expense. (Although it is far from all participants who are able to pay for a ticket themselves, you can at least refer to it.)
Conflicts in the group	Proper preparation is alpha and omega, where the participant is given tools and methods to sort out situations that have arisen. However, conflicts will still arise during the stay abroad and the host organisation will then have to decide what efforts are required. First, the participants should try to resolve the conflict among themselves. The Swedish supervisors are also available as remote support.





Study, former participant

Johanna Gustafsson, PhD in disability research who has been employed in the project, has, with the support of another project employee, conducted a qualitative study of Active Mobility, where the model's impact on participants' behaviour and self-perception was in focus.

The study was conducted between January and July 2018. The question to be answered was how mobility can help to change the self-perception and behaviour of young people with disabilities, especially young people who are far from the labour market? The evaluation has interviewed 11 of the participants in semi-structured interviews, where they have been able to tell about their experiences during the preparation phase and the work practice abroad. The analyses show that mobility can affect the participants' self-esteem and confidence in their own ability (self-efficacy) in a positive direction. The behaviour of the participants has changed to some extent, partly through increased initiative, which can be seen to a large extent as a result of the fact that they have been given the conditions for change. However, when participants return to their normal lives after the end of the mobility period, the conditions given in the project disappear or diminish, which affects their ability to maintain the behaviour. The increased self-esteem and confidence in one's own ability will remain and the participants feel that they can see more opportunities than before concerning their own development in education and work.

The study confirms the experiences of the project staff that the individual increases confidence in their ability after completed mobility. The factors which the study points out are important is that the participants come into a new context and break familiar patterns and have thus been given the conditions for development. The results of the study also show that it is extremely important that the participant receives continued efforts in immediate connection with mobility.

Quotes from participants

"I can't emphasise enough that I was really nervous about this, but now afterwards I can say that it went well, even better than good. This journey I've been on has made me much stronger, more daring, more open and more receptive to new challenges. I have learned a lot during this journey, much about myself and others around me."

"What did this give me? Yes, I have gained absolutely more self-confidence and dare myself among people. Before I had to always have someone with me, but now I can stand on my own two feet. Plus you get more meat on your bones from all the good food that was everywhere. /.../ I would definitely consider doing a trip like this again. It is both very instructive and useful to get out into the world. Discover and learn new things."

"My experiences include being able to collaborate, even though you have different opinions and views. I have learned to better distinguish between person and opinion."

"I thought about the future, what I want with my life and how to get there. I have stopped making impulsive decisions and instead think through them carefully so that I don't make mistakes. Being resistant to stress and being able to make good decisions are great qualities to have at work."

Reviews from staff about development of the participants

"I personally saw it on her when visiting the workplace (in Slovenia) that she had grown, she felt both happier and more confident than I had seen her before."

"I believe that the most tangible development is the ability of the participants to take their own responsibility. In a completely new environment with and without their normal social network, participants have shown themselves, together and on their own, that they have the skills and resources they themselves have not always used. I am thinking in particular of practical things like taking care of one's home, cooking, times, washing and shopping, among other things."

Appendices

Appendix 1: Example of values, developed by participants

Appendices 2 and 3: Certificate

Appendix 4: Mobility checklist

Appendix 1

Values

Common perception of how we should be toward and with one another!

- ★ Do not make unreasonable demands on one another
- ★ Think of one another
- ★ Inform one another
- ★ Ask if someone wants to come along, e.g. out for a walk, shopping for food, etc.
- ★ Consideration for one another
- ★ Tell us if you go out alone (so your group does not become worried)
- ★ Honesty
- ★ Respect – respect one another
- ★ The requirement we have is that we go to work

Appendix 2





CERTIFICATE

First Name Last Name

has during the period of YYYY-MM-DD through YYYY-MM-DD participated in the NN project. During the project period, NN has participated in preparations, implementation and follow-up. The implementation consisted of work practice in XXX.

For a period of X weeks, NN completed work practice at [current workplace]. Work tasks included...

The work practice period in NN also included...

Place date

Signature



Appendix 4

Proposal checklist



	Group 1 Resp.	Group 2 Resp.	Group 3 Resp.
Make timetable			
Planning of meetings			
Book premises and computers			
Book conference			
Study visit at workplace 1			
Study visit at workplace 2			
Book conflict management			
Employment service, preparations			
Employment service, future phase			
Equality seminar 1			
Equality seminar 2			
Someone from the country, language instruction and tips			
Timesheets			
Book work practice weeks with host organisation			
Insurance e.g. ERV			
Participant details			
Flight participants + staff			
Transfer Sweden, group			
Transfer host country, group			
Transfer in host country work consultants v 1			
Transfer in Sweden, work consultants v 1			
Flight round-trip study visit			
Transfer Sweden round-trip study visit			
Transfer host country round-trip study visit			
Contract host organisation			
Account number, participants			
Payment days for participants' allowance			
Hotel for accompanying staff			
Hotel study visit			
Relative contacts, participants			
Copies of passports			
Mail addresses participants			
Mobile number participants			
Sign GDPR			
Certificate to participants			

And then I realised adventure was the
best way to learn



Active Mobility, 2015-2018, and Active
Euromobility, 2018-2021, were projects co-funded
by the European Union/European Social Fund.



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