Dear participants,

The purpose of a study visit is to generate an exchange of experience and good practice between the country you visit and the countries you all come from. Thus, participating in a study visit can be an exciting experience and an important learning tool for you.

During the visit you are invited to prepare a group report summarising your discussions and learning. This will help Cedefop disseminate what you have learnt to others, who share your interest but did not participate in this particular study visit.

On the first day of the visit, you are to select a reporter who will be responsible for preparing the final report and submitting it to Cedefop. Everybody should contribute to the report by sharing their views, knowledge, and practices in their respective countries. Please start working on the report from the first day of the visit.

You will, of course, be taking your own notes during presentations and field visits; but the group report should highlight the result of the group’s reflections on what was seen and learnt during the entire visit and the different perspectives brought by the different countries and participants. The report should NOT read as a travel diary, describing every day and every session or visit.

Cedefop will publish extracts of your reports on its website and make them available to experts in education and vocational training. When writing the report, please keep this readership in mind: make your report clear, interesting, and detailed enough to be useful to colleagues throughout Europe.

By attaching any photos to the report, you agree to Cedefop’s right to use them in its publications on study visits and on its website.

Please prepare the report in the working language of the group.
Please do not include the programme or list of participants.

The reporter should submit the report to Cedefop (studyvisits@cedefop.europa.eu) within ONE month of the visit.
I FINDINGS

This section summarises the findings of the group while visiting host institutions, discussing issues with the hosts and within the group. You will be reflecting on what you learnt every day. But to put them together and give an overall picture, you need to devote a special session to prepare the final report on the last day of the visit.

In this section, it is important that you describe not only things you learnt about the host country but also what you learnt about the countries represented by group members.

1. One of the objectives of the study visits programme is to exchange examples of good practice among hosts and participants. Cedefop will select well-described projects/programmes/initiatives and disseminate them to former participants and a wider public, including potential partners for future projects. Therefore it is important that you identify and describe all aspects that, in your view, make these projects/programmes/initiatives successful and worth exploring.
Describe each of the good practices you learnt about during the visit (both from the hosts and from one another) indicating the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>title of the project/programme/initiative</th>
<th>country</th>
<th>name of the institution that implements it (if possible, provide a website)</th>
<th>contact person (if possible) who presented the programme to the group</th>
<th>whom the project/programme/initiative addresses</th>
<th>what features of the project/programme/initiative make it an example of good practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vyturys Primary School</td>
<td>Vilnius, Lithuania</td>
<td>Vyturys Primary School <a href="http://www.vyturio.vilnius.im.lt">www.vyturio.vilnius.im.lt</a></td>
<td>Ausra Drumstiene, Headmistress</td>
<td>Primary school children</td>
<td>Creative and cross curricular approach to teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vilnius Design College</td>
<td>Vilnius, Lithuania</td>
<td>Vilnius Design College <a href="http://www.dizainokolegija.lt">www.dizainokolegija.lt</a></td>
<td>Giedre Fledžinskiene, Director</td>
<td>Higher education students</td>
<td>Creative approach to learning and teaching children how to be creative!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten Saules Gojus</td>
<td>Vilnius, Lithuania</td>
<td>Kindergarten Saules gojus <a href="http://www.kindergarten.lt">www.kindergarten.lt</a></td>
<td>Laima Sirutiene, Headmistress</td>
<td>Children 2 - 6</td>
<td>Individual approach to children’s needs, bilingual foreign language learning and entirely flexible approach to teaching methods and content.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* You can describe as many good practices as you find necessary. You can add rows to the table.
2. The study visits programme aims to promote and support policy development and cooperation in lifelong learning. That is why it is important to know what you learnt about such policies and their implementation during your visit. You are invited to describe your findings concerning the following:

2.1 Approaches taken by participating countries (both host and participants’) regarding the theme of the visit. Are there any similar approaches/measures in participating countries? What aspects are similar and why? What aspects are different and why?

- Similar issues being faced by participants’ and host countries with regards to education, e.g. changes to education policy as a result of changes in government, the need to enthuse and engage pupils to raise standards.
- Similar approaches/measures to developing creativity used by host and participants’ countries, e.g. cross curricular teaching, focus on art, design, dance and music, etc.
- Different definitions of “creativity” from host and participants’ countries. These were discussed at length during and after visits (and during leisure times!). It seems easier to discuss what creativity is NOT rather than what it is. Creativity was often seen as shorthand for visual arts and performing arts practice in the settings/schools visited.
- Host country has a much more autonomous approach than many others—especially the UK. Lithuanian schools are more independent and key decisions rest with the principal. There is no regime of inspection by the Ministry of Education - it instead offers support and guidance and is moving towards more freedom for schools to innovate/be creative.
- The host country’s educational structure and approach appears to create better starting conditions to allow creative approaches to be developed. Many participants also commented that behaviour in schools is generally very good, and teachers spend less time in classroom management/behaviour management than in other settings (Netherlands, Spain and France in particular).

2.2 Challenges faced by participating countries (including host) in their efforts to implement policies related to the theme of the visit. What are the challenges? Are they common challenges? If so, why? If not, why not?

- Class size was discussed and its impact on planning, teaching and learning. The host country had very small class sizes in comparison to UK, France and Spain in particular. Behaviour of pupils did not appear to be significant issue for the host country, whilst this was seen as a key barrier to educational success and engagement in other participants’ countries.
- Population size had an impact on class size. (See above point).
- Creativity/creative teaching is not a policy as such in most of the participants’ countries. Hence it is difficult to establish creative practice and skills systematically. The host country is moving towards policy
development in this area, as are many other mainland Europe countries. The UK faces a particular challenge as creative/cultural education has become well established but Government policy is now moving firmly away from this.

- Levels of hierarchy between classroom and decision makers was discussed as an issue. Were the decision makers too far removed from “ground level” to be making the best choices for future generations?
- Language competence was an issue for some participants’ countries - particularly the UK. Making time in the curriculum for this important skill is essential to children becoming a fully integrated member of society. The UK is fortunate that English is viewed as a core language, but foreign language teaching is poor in comparison to other participants’ countries. Language skills are a key competence that are largely missing for UK students.
- Teaching to exams was also discussed as an issue to some degree for all participants. Some discussions included the necessity of this sort of teaching if children were to perform well. There was a difference in views as to how “accountable” creative practice needed to be in educational settings: is it sufficient to give students creative experiences and skills or do they need to be measured and related to academic attainment?
- We all had a similar challenge to face regarding time and content of the curriculum, with regards to creative teaching and learning. The challenge for teachers to make/be allowed time to try out and develop new ideas was seen as a key challenge. By contrast the host country appeared to have a relatively open curriculum, with more room to innovate (linked to class size, behaviour and later school starting age).
- For some participants’ countries, creativity was a possible answer to engaging and motivating children to learn. This didn’t seem to be a problem for all - particularly the children in the schools we visited. Were these children hand picked as the ones for whom this wasn’t an issue or were they a true representation of the general ethos of children in Lithuania?
- Another challenge faced by many of the participants’ countries was that of parental involvement. Many of the participants discussed the fact that this was a sizeable issue for them. How could they ensure parental involvement in school life and their children’s learning?
- Another issue shared by many, was some parents concern that creative teaching may not have the rigour behind it that is necessary to measure impact.
- Many of the participants’ and the host country shared a common challenge in setting the right atmosphere for creative teaching. Some of the discussions included talk of leadership/management teams and a whole staff ethos. Full support of “creativity” was an essential element of its success. It was clear from schools visits that the development and embedding of creativity (or any new methods) rested upon the drive and vision of the Principal. All participants agreed that strong leadership in schools was the key factor in facilitating and sustaining change.
2.3 Name and describe effective and innovative solutions you have identified that participating countries (both host and participants) apply to address the challenges mentioned in question 2.2. Please mention specific country examples.

- Parental involvement in Lithuania - this does not appear to be an issue as we heard in a basic school in the Trakai region. Parents were keen to get involved in school projects with their children and no “cajoling” or “convincing” seemed necessary. No effective or innovative solutions appeared to be needed! Cultural differences with regard to education perhaps?
- Sharing of good practice and new ideas across and within schools. In the UK, a system of collaborative learning across and within schools is being encouraged.
- Time versus curriculum content - in the UK we have been encouraging schools to look carefully at their long term (yearly) plans to make clear links across all subjects. Flexibility is essential here. By teaching in a cross curricular manner, we can “share” time for certain subjects, e.g. report writing after a science experiment. Obviously care would need to be taken that coverage of both the science and the English curriculum were being adhered to.
- Rigour behind/underpinning creativity - in the UK teachers/schools are encouraged to ensure adequate coverage of the National Curriculum by effective assessment processes, e.g. through the use of APP (Assessing Pupil Progress materials.) A constant cycle of planning, teaching and assessment is a key to children’s progress. This aspect was a key discussion point at the final feedback session - the UK approach necessitates rigour and ‘proof’ that creative/ different approaches are effective, whilst in Lithuania there was more freedom to value creativity without the need to demonstrate direct academic impact.
- Full support of leadership and management teams - in Lithuania, on our visit to the Ministry of Education and Science, we were told by advisors to the Minister that changes to the employment process for head teachers and staff were planned. It was hoped that this process would make it more likely that all levels of school staff were fully “on board” with creativity, i.e. they knew what it looked like in the classroom and the necessary conditions for it to have an impact on children’s lives and progress. This is something which would also be included in any teacher training and is obviously an easy element to apply in any country.

2.4 Assessment of the transferability of policies and practices. Could any examples of good practice presented in this report be applied and transferred to other countries? If so, why? If not, why not?

Many of the good practice examples mentioned in this report could be applied and transferred to other countries:
- Cross curricular teaching and flexibility with timetables is crucial if we are to do so much in so little time. “Do we want quality or quantity?” is a question which any nationality of leadership and management team could
ask themselves.

- The rigour needed behind creative teaching is also easily transferable, as this simply requires effective assessment and monitoring procedures.
- The inclusion of creative teaching in teacher training is also an example of good practice which is easily transferable to other countries. In fact this is already an aspect of some of the participants’ countries teacher training programmes.
- Sharing good practice across and within school needs to be set in a safe environment.
- The teachers at Vilnius Design College were also practicing artists (or vice versa?). This enabled them to be current in their practice, and to have a clear understanding of creativity in their own work and as a transferable process to students. This approach of teacher/practitioner is very interesting and could be transferred to higher education settings. It also has the potential to transfer to pre 16 settings, but this would require a more fundamental policy and culture shift. It would be very exciting to pilot this approach!
- The key aspect to transferability of any practice is to understand the educational and cultural contexts of all partners involved. For example, many of the successful teaching methods we observed would not work in larger class sizes or in classrooms with behaviour issues. Freedom to innovate within a curriculum may not always be possible.
- The only exception to this is parental involvement in Lithuania as no methods for overcoming this barrier were mentioned!
- UK schools are experienced and open to outside practitioners working alongside teachers in the school and classroom. This did not appear to be common practice in Lithuania. This practice is transferable but not without first understanding the cultural differences at play and establishing clear professional and workforce development structures to enable dialogue, training, application and reflection.
- Another challenge is for all collaborators to first gain and communicate a shared understanding of creativity and creative skills. A shared vocabulary and the co-design of transferable models need to be created before anything takes place in educational settings. Without this shared understanding and attempts to transfer ‘creative’ methods will fail to meet expectations.
- Space for educators, policy makers and creative practitioners to come together outside of immediate work settings is vital to establish models of best practice and transferability. There are many common challenges and solutions but one size does not fit all and each partner/participating country needs to be able to shape and design creative approaches that work best for them.
3. Creating networks of experts, building partnerships for future projects is another important objective of the study visit programme.

Please state whether and which ideas for future cooperation have evolved during meetings and discussions.

- Further “Creativity” study visits have been discussed in each of the participants’ host countries!
- Other visits discussed for partnerships include school inspection, teacher training and language learning, e.g. a Multilateral Comenius Project on “Reducing the school dropout”. (Collaboration between France, Romania, Turkey, Poland and possibly Spain), Leonardo da Vinci/ VETPRO between School Inspectorate of Bucharest and KPC Groep, The Netherlands on “Improving methods of approach in formal and non formal work of teachers Methodist”.
- It would be very beneficial and valuable to establish a mixed network of educators, policy makers and creative practitioners with a specific focus on creative/ cultural education across Europe. This could involve online networking, paired exchanges, co-mentoring opportunities and regular group visits to directly observe practice.
TO SUM UP

4. What is the most interesting/useful information that the group believes should be communicated to others? To whom, do you think, this information will be of most interest?

- Learning needs to be child centred. Creativity is more than a beautiful looking outcome, it is the impact on learning that counts.
- A shared language and understanding of creativity needs to be established, with clear frameworks for creative skills development, creativity and vocational progression and creativity as part of a cultural education.
- The learning environment plays an important role in a child’s educational experience. This needs to be stimulating and interactive - not just ‘wallpaper’.
- Important for senior leadership team to be fully supportive of creativity and its necessary conditions. Strong school leadership is key if embedded change is to take place.
- Language learning needs to be a central part of children’s education from the earliest age possible. It is a core competency.

The people who need to hear this are:
- Educational and cultural policy makers;
- Educators and school leaders;
- Entrepreneurs and business leaders;
- Children and parents.
II Organisation of the visit

This part of the report will not be published but it will be made available to the organiser and will be used by national agencies and Cedefop to monitor and improve implementation of the study visits programme.

We recognise the value of ongoing feedback as a way of ensuring that the programme is at all times a responsive and dynamic initiative, meeting the needs of its various participants and target audiences. In this section you are invited to give us your feedback on several factors that, in our opinion, contribute to an effective visit.

1. Discuss within the group and check if you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please mark only one box (☑) that expresses most closely the opinion of the entire group. Please use Question 2 of this section to elaborate on your responses, if needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All agree</th>
<th>Most agree</th>
<th>Most disagree</th>
<th>All disagree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The size of the group was good.</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1.</td>
<td>The programme of the visit followed the description in the catalogue.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2.</td>
<td>There was a balance between theoretical and practical sessions.</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3.</td>
<td>Presentations and field visits were linked in a coherent and complementary manner.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.</td>
<td>The topic was presented from the perspectives of the following actors of the education and training system in the host country:</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.1.</td>
<td>government and policy-makers</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.2.</td>
<td>social partners</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.3.</td>
<td>heads of institutions</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.4.</td>
<td>teachers and trainers</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.5.</td>
<td>students/trainees</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.6.</td>
<td>users of services</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.5.</td>
<td>There was enough time allocated to participants’ presentations.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<td>1.6.</td>
<td>The background documentation on the</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All agree</td>
<td>Most agree</td>
<td>Most disagree</td>
<td>All disagree</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
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<tr>
<td>theme provided before the visit helped to prepare for the visit.</td>
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<td>1.7. Most of the group received a programme well in advance.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>1.8. The information provided before the visit about transportation and accommodation was useful.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>1.9. The organiser accompanied the group during the entire programme.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>1.10. The size of the group was appropriate.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.11. The group comprised a good mixture of participants with diverse professional backgrounds.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.12. There were enough opportunities for interaction with representatives of the host organisations.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.13. There was enough time allocated for discussion within the group.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.14. The Cedefop study visits website provided information that helped to prepare for the visit.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. If you have any comments on the items 1.1. - 1.14 above, please write them in the box below.
III Summary

1. Having summarised all your reflections and impressions, please indicate how satisfied you are with your participation in the study visit. Indicate the number of participants for each category, e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfied Level</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. What elements and aspects of the study visits do you think could be changed or improved?

- Too much organised on Wednesday 6th October!
- Maximum of 2 visits a day not three.
- More lesson observations and fewer presentations.
- Lesson observations do not need to be longer than half an hour.
- More discussion rather than Q and A.
- More opportunities to talk to children/students.

3. If there is anything else you would like to write about that is not included in the above questions, please feel free to write below or attach a separate sheet.

Group cohesion is a very important part of a study visit, as is the friendliness of the hosts. We all felt very lucky to be in such a friendly group with exceptional hosts.

THANK YOU!

Please submit the report to Cedefop (studyvisits@cedefop.europa.eu) within one month of the visit.
For additional information - group notes from each day:

**Monday**
- Visit to the Vilnius Vyturys primary school - some members had predetermined expectations towards of what they would find, however these expectations were changed - we saw good cooperation between pupils and teachers, stress free teachers and children (!), genuine relationship between children and staff, all children were respectful to us as visitors and to their teachers. Director seemed very much in control but without being over bearing.
- Presentations - need to find a common definition of creativity. We all had different views about this, e.g art/culture, variety of pedagogies.

**Tuesday**
- Ministry - easy to get in! Creativity one of their 3 main priorities for coming year. Seemed like they were at the very beginning of this process of introducing creativity into schools. Discussion included concept of autonomy, advisory role in place of inspection and necessity for leadership and management to be fully supportive of creativity. Future of this education department is centred around monitoring and consulting. Discussed the need for principals to be more involved in the management of schools (importance of appropriate recruitment process).
- Tour - history of Vilnius was extremely interesting. We visited the cathedral, university, etc.

**Wednesday**
A very full day - no group notes as everybody was fully involved in the visits!

**Thursday**
- You can’t have creativity without teaching the children how to be creative by them selves.
- Passionate belief from director of Vilnius Design College - triangle necessary (head, heart and hand) for creativity to happen. She worked with her staff and students, empowering them to develop. Using their ideas.
- Cookbook method in some classrooms we have visited, e.g. we will make this in this way. No room for creativity here?
- Director of Vilnius Simonas Daukantas basic school this morning - evaluation criteria used for what is a good lesson, project work, etc. Only person in a school we’ve visited who talked about improvement. She found it difficult to think of any challenges her school/her face. She could give reasons why the school celebrations were necessary - not just because they happen every year. She allowed the children to have discos etc, as long as they put a plan together for costs etc. She recognised that 70% of these then don’t happen but that pupils feel that they are listened to. She gives children the responsibility to develop. Cultural differences in the school we visited this morning - the students stood up when the adults entered the room. Effective relationships with the children as they responded to her in the corridors and she talked to them on their level, comforting them too.
Friday
Defining creativity for the group:
• Chris - learned as much from group as did from the visits. Well structured week with high quality visits. Varied definitions of creativity seen have now made it harder to define what it is. Saw ‘cookbook’ creativity as well as encouraging creative thinking - which is most creative?
• Barbara - has new ideas for creativity. Friendly group.
• Peter - importance of child centred education. Magical triangle consisting of teacher, principal and parents. When relationship between all of these is successful then creativity happens like magic.
• Georgeta - creativity is inside your mind and soul. It depends very much on the place and systems as to whether it is possible or not.
• Didier - particularly appreciated the creative activities where children learn to be creative. You have to learn how to be creative.
• Herman - no expectations for going away at the end of the week with all answers. Agree with Chris that creativity is big field which must be worked on and with. No solution about how to teach creatively but have learnt a lot about creativity. We have talked a lot about our values and experiences which have been very interesting and valuable.
• Waldemar - importance of monitoring and evaluating. Good practice for Ministry of education to construct a site where practitioners can go to read about good practice.
• Maria - learned a lot from this visit. Clarity of thought about student teachers needing a lot of exposure to good practice examples. Too much focus on theory and not enough time spent in classrooms. Enlightening for student teachers to see what is going on elsewhere.
• Phillippe - rigid system of evaluation in France which is stressful for pupils. Saw relaxed pupils who were ready to be creative. As a headmaster, feels now that the best way to learn is to be creative and will now encourage staff and children at home to do more projects and be more relaxed and creative.
• Nil - pleased that we were able to take lots of photos and videos which can be used when working with student teachers in Turkey.
• Louise -

Discussion included: “so what?” question - impact of project/outcome/creative teaching, importance of travel to experience what is going on in other countries and in other classrooms, interesting for children, bigger picture in terms of the skills we are teaching.