get
assured

GUIDE

"Get assured, we manage the risks"

2020-2023

Inhalt

FORWORD

Dear visitor of this GUIDE,

right from the start, we would like to express our appreciation for your presence here. We hope that this GUIDE will provide you with all the necessary information to either organize international projects, or to inform you about everything organizations need to consider when planning a project.

This GUIDE was created by organizations from 7 different countries (Ireland, France, The Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Romania, and Turkey), covering a wide range of working fields such as sports, non-formal education, arts and therapy, volunteering, and more.

You will notice that this GUIDE is written on a basic white background with black lettering, without any extra design. This was intentional. During our project, we had the opportunity to meet with various individuals from our focus group who provided us with input on how this GUIDE should be written, what information should be included, and the ideal length.

The entire project of creating this GUIDE was funded by ERASMUS + with the aim of providing tools to enhance and increase international learning mobility for young people with impairments, while considering their specific needs. Our goal is to help them feel secure when traveling abroad.

AIM OF OUR PARTNERSHIP

The aim of this strategic partnership is to create safe environments for young people with impairments and chronic conditions in international mobility projects, and to reduce access barriers to international mobility programs for these target groups.

This initiative is based on a series of international meetings where organizations exchanged experiences and engaged with individuals with chronic conditions and disabilities, as well as their parents and caregivers, to better understand their needs, fears, and expectations.

The goal is to encourage both young people and youth organizations to include more individuals with disabilities and chronic conditions in international learning opportunities, contributing to the overarching aim of "International Mobility for All".

AIM OF OUR GUIDE

This guide is one of the tools made possible by this partnership. It is aimed at other international youth organizations, youth professionals, and young people who wish to participate in international activities and make them more inclusive.

The guide will help you ask yourself all the necessary questions and provide you with the tools to find the answers in order to prepare and organize a suitable and safe international activity for various target groups, including young people with disabilities and chronic conditions. This should assist you in planning your international and inclusive projects.

1. CHAPTER 1

1.1. Consider your risks before you start

The most important information on risk and inclusion attitudes in the project will be provided in this chapter. In order to successfully manage any project, three things are crucial: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. While knowledge and skills are practical, attitudes are more nuanced. Attitude is defined as the "chosen state of mind concerning uncertainties that could have positive or negative effects." Since every international project involves cooperation, the attitudes of various stakeholders must be taken into consideration, including project coordinators, group leaders, organizations involved, and the project consortium as a whole.

Developing and maintaining a positive attitude

"Being positive" may sound like a cliché, but it is a fundamental principle for inclusion projects. Like knowledge and skills, attitude is something that can be cultivated. By fostering a positive attitude, our behavior in uncertain or high-risk situations will also be positive, as attitude is reflected in behavior. This highlights the importance of investing in the emotional intelligence of project team members, who should be aware of their own fears and triggers and be able to manage them. Additionally, they should be able to motivate themselves and others, especially in difficult circumstances.

Involve people who have relevant experience

Please make sure that team members possess relevant experience, knowledge, and skills (*see Chapter 7*), with a special emphasis on an inclusive attitude. Projects involving specific target groups often pose unique risks, so having team members who are experienced in managing these risks can help minimize unexpected consequences and maximize project outcomes and overall success for all involved.

Addressing uncertainties in a proactive manner

Risk management is focused on addressing uncertainties in a proactive manner in order to minimize threats, maximize opportunities, and optimize the achievement of project objectives. Therefore, a risk management plan (*refer to the attached document for an example*) should be an integral part of each project, regardless of the target group. In order to develop an effective risk management plan, all stakeholders, especially participants, need to be included. Their needs must be carefully assessed (*see chapter 4*), as well as their fears and concerns. The risk management plan should be developed and communicated among all stakeholders, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Time management is especially important - tasks must be completed on time to avoid stress or any unforeseen circumstances.

2. CHAPTER 2

2.1. Communication

Communication and cooperation with participants or potential participants, as well as their families, relatives, and other stakeholders, are vital for the smooth and safe conduct of projects. This dimension is even more crucial when the interested participants are individuals with disabilities and chronic conditions.

Preparation and Organization

Before selecting the potential participants, it is needed to understand which is the best way to communicate with each target group, their needs and their possibilities.

It is essential to prioritize respect, acceptance, individualization (recognizing that every person has unique needs), tolerance, privacy, social justice, and maintaining professional integrity.

It is important to have all information relevant for the selection of your potential participants and provide this information in alternative formats, taking into consideration the different target groups' needs (make sure that the information services are accessible to people with disabilities).

Assessment of the participants

Different target groups require different assessment methods. Here are some examples:

- For online assessments, make sure that individuals with visual impairments can access and complete the forms using screen readers or audio assessments.

- If the target group includes individuals who are hearing-impaired, consider integrating videos with sign language.

- For individuals with intellectual disabilities, tailor the assessment to their understanding. Consider factors such as age and severity of the disability. It is recommended to involve a family member, legal representative, or other appropriate person (social worker, teacher, etc.) in the assessment process.

- Some participants may require an accompanying person[1]. This person should be selected based on the individual needs of the participant and in consultation with them or their legal representative.

Best communication methods

In order to achieve the best results and ensure efficient communication, we recommend establishing the most effective channel with each target group. This may require individual communication through methods such as telephone calls, emails, or any other preferred means of communication for the individual. In cases where the disability is severe, it may be necessary to communicate with someone close to the individual. It is also important to establish the best way of communication with a family member or legal representative. Please keep in mind that some individuals may not have access to all communication devices or may lack the necessary skills.

To agree about adequate terminology with a group

Language can make people uncomfortable, especially when it comes to pronouns and discussing disabilities. In order to create a safe and welcoming environment for all participants, it is important to have open discussions about how to refer to someone's disability or condition. It is best to first talk with the individual about their preferred terminology and then communicate this with the group and partners. This ensures that everyone is on the same page and respects each other's identities and experiences.

Stakeholder engagement

A key strategy for stakeholder[2] engagement is consistently communicating.

For this to happen it is needed to

- understand who stakeholders are,
- be aware of each other roles and responsible,
- share and deliver on expectations,
- be aware of each other understanding and concerns,
- based on the mutual support and respect

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[1] someone who provides assistance, support, and companionship to the individual, helping them navigate and participate in various activities and situations
[2] individuals or groups who have an interest in a particular project. It can include employees, suppliers, investors, communities and any other parties that are involved or affected by the organization's project.

3. CHAPTER 3

3.1. Respect the participants rights and privacy

All participants in any project have the right to dignity, respect, and privacy. These rights affirm that everyone is important and should be treated as a human being. They also acknowledge that each person has their own thoughts and feelings, and that others should recognize them as individuals. We understand that some participants may not be able to communicate their thoughts and feelings, and in such cases, an appropriate adult may act on their behalf.

Address potential participants

When possible, ask individuals themselves for specific information before asking their caregiver, parent, or anyone else. The goal should be to communicate directly with the individual. It is their responsibility to disclose any specific health conditions. If they are unable to do so, it is the duty of their caregivers or parents to provide this information.

Involving participants on health and needs that affect them

Participants or parents/legal representatives should provide information about their (participant´s) needs. Individuals can communicate what they believe will make them safe during the project. Examples: include sign language interpreter for those with hearing impairments or a description of the space for persons with visual impairment.

The project coordinator will also provide specific safety measures based on each of the individual's needs. These measures should be decided upon in cooperation with the individuals/parents/legal representative to ensure that they match the individual's needs.

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

Only essential and fundamental information should be collected.

Ensure that legal regulations for data protection and privacy are included in your application form. For example, obtain consent for taking pictures or videos.

Take into consideration that GDPR regulations may vary between countries.

Make sure to inform participants about how and where their information will be shared.

4. CHAPTER 4

4.1. Decide on precautionary measures and supports

Deciding on precautionary measures and supports is important when organizing a project as it helps to minimize risks, ensure the safety of participants and resources, and contribute to the overall success of the project. By identifying potential risks and developing strategies to mitigate them, the organizer can prevent accidents, delays, or other issues that may arise during the execution of the project. Additionally, having precautionary measures in place can provide a sense of security and confidence to all those involved in the project, especially when there are participants with disabilities or chronic conditions, leading to increased motivation and productivity.

Start the organization of your projects on time

The key to a successful project is to begin organizing your projects in a timely manner. Please create a detailed project schedule that allows ample time to complete each step of the project.

Collect all information about special needs of your participants

In order to provide a positive experience and equal opportunities for all participants, it is crucial to inquire about any special needs or requirements that your participants may have. By understanding and addressing these needs, you can ensure that everyone can fully participate and enjoy the event or activity. Taking the time to cater to these individual needs will not only create a more inclusive and welcoming environment, but also demonstrate your commitment to accommodating all individuals regardless of their circumstances.

Share all collected information with your partners

When organizing international projects, especially those involving individuals with disabilities and chronic conditions, it is crucial to recognize that both the sending organization and the hosting organization are equal partners. This requires collaborative decision-making, information sharing, and shared responsibilities.

After gathering all necessary information with the assistance of participants, it is essential to share this information with your partners, particularly the hosting organization or individual in the foreign country. Prior to sharing any health information, it is important to obtain consent from the participant.

Choose methods that are inclusive and designed for all

It is important to choose inclusive methods designed for all individuals. In order to achieve this, one must adopt various strategies that cater to the diverse needs and abilities of all participants. This may require thinking outside the box and getting creative with your approach. Remember, inclusivity is not a one-size-fits-all solution – it requires flexibility and a willingness to adapt to ensure that everyone feels welcomed

and valued. Therefore, it is important to explore different methods and not to be afraid to try new approaches in order to create an environment where everyone can thrive.

5. CHAPTER 5

5.1.   Preparing the group

In order to ensure full participation and inclusion, as well as create a positive and respectful environment for all participants, it is essential to proactively prepare the group. This can involve setting clear goals and expectations for behavior, creating opportunities for open communication and collaboration, and addressing any potential barriers to participation.

Share all information with your participants.

It is important to share all information about participants with partners, but it is even more crucial to share all information with participants. Make sure to provide participants with information about accommodation, travel plans, activities, and all other details related to the project. Sharing detailed information with participants ensures they feel safe and has a positive impact on the quality of the project.

Meetings before the project are essential

It is necessary to gather a few times before the project begins, especially when involving people with disabilities and chronic conditions, in order to discuss all details. In this way, you not only gather important information about participants, but also build connections with them and between them.

Types of preparation

There are different types of preparation. Here are some examples of what can be used:

- written information (Info-Pack)

- individual consultation

- group meetings (in person)

- online groups/conferences

- photo/video presentations of the place/region of destination

- exchanging songs, games, and meal recipes between participants

- language animations

- short group excursions/training weekends.

6. CHAPTER 6

6.1. Logistics and activities

Insight into the key steps that should not be missed while organizing travel, accommodation, meals, and activities is essential. To ensure equal opportunities, detailed planning well in advance and clear communication between all parties involved is crucial.

Data collection and participants needs

Any preparation for traveling, accommodation, meals, or activities begins with collecting information about the participants' conditions and specific needs. It is crucial to address each person's needs individually. This can be achieved, for example, through specially designed forms or interviews. It is advisable to have an understanding of the participants (or their profiles) at the earliest stages of planning, as meeting some needs may require additional funding that cannot be requested later.

Many participants with disabilities and chronic conditions may require assistance to support them during travel, their stay at the venue, or to ensure equal participation in activities (such as sign language interpreters or an accompanying person). Consider that some individuals may prefer to be accompanied by someone they already know and trust rather than by a new person.

Travelling

Deciding on the best means of transportation for people to travel comfortably is of utmost importance. For example, an adapted vehicle where a person can remain in their wheelchair at all times may be the most suitable option. It is important to consider that when traveling by air or train, the number of reserved places for wheelchairs may be limited. In some countries with less developed infrastructure, it can be difficult for participants with certain disabilities to access transportation options such as high trains with stairs and no ramps. It is crucial to communicate these needs effectively with the host organization.

For participants with chronic health conditions, it is important to ensure they have a letter from their doctor detailing their medical history and enough supplies of their required medication. It is also important to be prepared and informed on what to do in case of emergency.

Accommodation

For some participants, specifically adapted space will be required. It is essential to clearly communicate this requirement to the participants and to the host organization, which should verify that all necessary accommodations are in place. Specifically adapted space typically involves providing wider doors, more space, accessible

shower rooms, and toilets for participants who use wheelchairs. Participants who are visually impaired may need detailed descriptions of the space for easier navigation, or a special orientation tour may need to be organized on the first day. All spaces should be easily accessible to ensure that individuals can move independently, with options such as ramps or elevators instead of stairs.

Dietary requirements

Depending on their conditions, people may have varying dietary needs or special requirements such as specific diets, allergies, food intolerances, or assistance during meals. This information should be collected and provided to the host organization before arrival. Group leaders and the host organization need to be aware of these needs in case of an emergency. Restaurants should be accessible, so individuals in wheelchairs do not have to eat separately from the rest of the group. Meal schedules should align as much as possible with the participants' regular routines.

Activities

Adapting activities and methods to ensure that all individuals can actively and equally participate is essential. To achieve this, it is important to hire facilitators with experience working with mixed-ability groups and provide them with detailed information on participants' profiles for proper preparation. For participants requiring assistance to participate on an equal level, support should be provided based on their expressed needs.

7. CHAPTER 7

7.1. Support and supervision for group leaders

In order to have a quality organized project, it is important that all individual needs are fulfilled. To ensure that the group is led effectively, we suggest organizing training for group leaders with a focus on working with people with disabilities and chronic conditions. Here you can find useful information for organizing training.

Group Leader and International Mobility
It is important to define the role of a group leader, especially when leading a group of individuals with disabilities or chronic conditions, and to discuss the concept of international mobility. Participants in the training need to understand their responsibilities and tasks as team leaders.

General knowledge about disability and inclusion (mixed abilities)
The purpose of this part is to provide the group leader with knowledge about disabilities and inclusion, and how they impact everyday life. It is important to understand and combat stereotypes associated with these topics, and to provide an understanding of the legal framework.

Learning to understand special needs of participants and their importance

In order to prepare an inclusive project, team leaders need to understand the importance of accommodating special needs, identifying the specific needs of each participant, and determining how to meet those needs throughout every aspect of the project, including preparation, travel, daily activities, health, food, accommodation, and follow-up. It is crucial for group leaders to recognize and respect the uniqueness of each individual in the group.

For example, team leaders can utilize a questionnaire with specific questions about daily routines and gather information from various sources to better cater to the needs of participants.

Communication

Good communication among all people involved in the organization of the project is crucial to ensure inclusivity. During training sessions, team leaders should familiarize themselves with whom they need to communicate regarding special needs and how to do so without discrimination. They must also be mindful of data protection regulations while ensuring that essential information is shared with all project participants. This could include creating a list of questions and a communication plan.

To build up cohesion

With this training, team leaders need to gain competencies on how to build cohesion in their groups so that all participants, including those with disabilities, feel comfortable in the group.

Examples of this include team building exercises, defining cohesion, and promoting practical actions within the group.

8. Chapter 8

8.1. Joint crisis intervention plan

Even in the best-prepared projects, difficult or dangerous situations may arise. To be prepared, we must have a clear understanding of what crisis intervention entails.

Crisis intervention is a short-term management technique designed to reduce potential permanent damage to an individual affected by a crisis. A crisis is defined as an overwhelming event, which can include violence or experiencing difficulties during a project or health condition. A successful intervention is based on background information about the participants and the local organization in case of an emergency.

Emergency situation steps

Protect

- assess immediately the situation and make sure that the person and the rest of the group is safe.

Alert

- seek for help and inform/call all needed authorities and stakeholders.

Organize

- Once you provide all needed support/help monitor the rest of the group and (re)evaluate the situation and continue accordingly.

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Before the activity, please ensure that:

• Participants are aware of the requirement to have valid insurance (private or EU health insurance card).

• Participants have emergency contact numbers readily available.

• You have collected information about the participants (e.g. age, gender) in compliance with GDPR regulations.

• Partners are informed about any medical conditions or medications that participants may have.

• Any necessary adaptations to accommodation are noted and implemented.

• You have gathered all necessary information about participants' allergies or special dietary requirements.

During the activity, make sure to:

- Be aware of the evacuation plan of the facility you are staying at and share this information with your group in case of an emergency.

- Have a procedure in place to follow in the event of unexpected situations such as participants going missing.

- Keep all necessary emergency contacts on hand, including national agencies and embassies.

9. Chapter 9

9.1. Evaluation and reflection

After involving people with disabilities and chronic diseases in international projects, it is important to implement this chapter. By doing so, organizations will be able to further encourage the participation of individuals with disabilities and chronic conditions in international projects.

Discussion Points and reflection

At the end of the project, it is useful to organize an activity to identify best practices and areas for improvement. This allows participants to reflect on their experiences and

what they have learned. There are various ways to facilitate such a space. For example, participants with intellectual disabilities and chronic diseases may benefit from a non-formal setting. Another idea is to create a material object together, such as a photo album, that they can take home. This helps lower the barrier to participation for individuals.

Buddy/Mentor system

Participants should be encouraged to mentor other individuals within the youth community as mentors can learn alongside the youth. By involving past participants in new projects, they can share their previous experiences and become mentors to new participants, creating a supportive environment. This gives past participants the opportunity to share their knowledge with new participants through a buddy system that encourages sharing among friends and peers.

Create a role model

When organizing a new activity, it will be very beneficial to ask participants who have attended previous projects to share their experiences. This can help make future participants feel more comfortable and secure. Encourage them to inspire others by spreading the word, so that more people, especially those with disabilities or chronic health conditions, can participate in the activities.

Networking

It can be empowering for participants to stay in touch after the project. However, not everyone may be able to utilize the platforms to their fullest potential. It is a good idea to keep your organization accessible for post-project communications, as this can increase the likelihood of attracting more young people to help break stereotypes about travel for those with disabilities.

A more casual way to keep in touch and stay updated with one another is through social media. Feel free to share your organization's social media accounts as well. This will show ongoing participation in future opportunities and encourage continued engagement for personal growth.

Last Words

Dear visitor,

we hope that this guide has helped you in organizing inclusive international projects or has motivated you to participate in international projects.

Upon reading our guide, you may have noticed that some information was repeated in different chapters. This is because all the information we have gathered in this guide is a result of meeting people with disabilities and chronic conditions from five different countries. In structuring the guide with them, they felt that certain information needed to be mentioned in multiple chapters to emphasize its importance.

If you have any additional questions, suggestions for changes, or if there is something important that was not covered in this guide, please feel free to reach out to us. We will take your feedback into consideration.

In addition to this guide, we will be sharing other documents from our partners on our page that may be useful for organizing inclusive international projects. Please feel free to use them.

We wish you all the best.

Your "Get Assured, We Manage the Risk!" Team 😊

Partners in this project:

Jugendhilfe und Sozialarbeit e.V. – Germany: Home — Jugendhilfe und Sozialarbeit e.V. (jusev.de)

Asociatia Babilon Travel – Romania: Homepage - Babilon Travel NGO

Drawing To Health – Netherland: Drawingtohealth.com

Fundacja Nieprzetartego Szlaku – Poland: Das Fundament des unbefestigten Weges - der unbefestigte Weg (nieprzetartyszlak.eu)

Hockey Ireland – Ireland: Hockey Ireland

Akdeniz Egitim ve Istihdam Dernegi – Tükiye: Akdeniz Eğitim ve İstihdam Derneği – Mediterranean Association for Education and Employment (mafee.org)

UFCV – Toulouse: L'UFCV - Une association au service de la vie sociale des collectivités.