



Tampere University, Finland

Invest in reflection

Methods enabling reflection

Focus groups

The purpose of using focus groups is to reflect on and evaluate the transnational project from different perspectives, to develop its activities further.

The project participants are divided into groups of 5–7 persons. Each group has a chairperson who asks questions of the group, directs the discussion, and gives the floor to each project participant in turn. Firstly, the project participants introduce themselves. After that, the chairperson asks them questions – for example:

- What expectations did you have for the project?
- In your opinion, what is the added value of the project?
- What have you learned in the project, and how does it affect your work?
- What has been especially important in the project?
- What has not been so useful?
- How could the lessons learned in the transnational project be brought into your national projects?
- Has the project's network supported your work?
- What could have been done differently in the project?

The discussion can be recorded (if this is OK with the project participants), analysed, and reported to all project participants. Thus, the ideas from each group can be shared with all.

It is important to create an open and trustful atmosphere in the discussion so that everyone feels comfortable and is willing to give his or her input.

Pitch discussion

It is good to give every project participant an opportunity to share his or her experiences, feelings, and thoughts about the seminar when reaching the end of each seminar. This enables joint reflection, learning from others' experiences, and building joint understanding about the project.

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so that everyone is able to see each other's face.
- Ask each project participant, in turn, to briefly answer two questions:
 - o What was the most important thing you have learned in this seminar?
 - o What has been the best way for you to learn?
- The floor can be given to the project participants by, for example, throwing a ball to them: when they are ready, they wave a hand and the ball is thrown to them.
- Keep the discussion relaxed and informal.
- Take care to ensure that everyone receives the floor in his or her turn. It is important that the facilitator too participate in the discussion, as an equal with the other project participants