

Frequently asked questions COMENIUS

<i>Question</i>	<i>Answer</i>
Comenius School Partnerships	
Is my school eligible to take part in a Comenius School Partnership?	A list of all eligible school types per country can be found on the Commission website under http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius . In case of doubt, please contact your National Agency.
How many partners do we need and are there any conditions concerning the profile of the Partnership?	There are two types of School Partnerships: multilateral and bilateral. A multilateral Partnership has to involve a minimum of three eligible schools in three countries participating in the Lifelong Learning Programme. Bilateral Partnerships can only involve two schools. The participating countries are the 27 EU Member States, Norway, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Turkey. At least one of the schools in the Partnership needs to be located in an EU Member State.
Are there any other important eligibility issues we should be aware of?	A list of the eligibility criteria is included in the Partnership application form and you can find these criteria also in the LLP Guide 2009. The main eligibility conditions are linked to formal issues such as using the correct form, completing the form in full and respecting the submission deadlines. It is also important to note that, in the case of Partnership applications, the coordinator is responsible for filling in the form, once the content of the form has been agreed jointly between the participating schools. The coordinator sends a copy of the form to each of the participating schools, each of which must also sign it and send it to the National Agency in their country. Please note that National Agencies might also request applicants to submit some country-specific supporting documents.
What makes a bilateral Partnership different from a multilateral one?	A bilateral Partnership is a project between two schools in two countries, with a main focus on the practice of foreign languages. The aim is to give pupils the opportunity to get to know the language of

	<p>their partner country and to practise their foreign language skills with pupils from the partner school. For this reason, the participating schools cannot have the same main teaching language. A bilateral Partnership has to include a reciprocal class exchange, making it possible for a group of pupils from each school to visit the partner school, and vice versa, each for a minimum of 10 days. The pupils participating in the exchange have to be at least 12 years old.</p>
<p>Is there a minimum number of pupils to be sent on a class exchange?</p>	<p>Yes, the minimum size of the group participating in <u>one</u> class exchange is 10 pupils in the case of "small group class exchanges" and 20 pupils in the case of "large group class exchanges". These minimum numbers depend on the grant amount requested.</p>
<p>Can a class taking part in a bilateral Partnership be split up into groups and do more than one exchange in the course of the partnership's duration?</p>	<p>The minimum number of pupils (10 or 20, depending on the grant amount requested) has to carry out the exchange together, in one group. The aim of these projects is to create links between classes or groups of pupils, not to carry out individual or small group exchanges. If the school does not respect the minimum group size, the part of the grant corresponding to the pupil exchange will be recovered at the final report stage.</p>
<p>How will our application be assessed? What kind of criteria will be used?</p>	<p>Partnership applications are assessed in the coordinating country by experts selected by the National Agency. Two experts evaluate each application using a common assessment sheet (the same model is used in all participating countries). The average of the points given by the experts is used as the final quality score of the application. If the points given by the experts are too far apart, they will seek to reach a common understanding, or a third expert can be asked to evaluate the application.</p>
<p>Where can I find more detailed information on national priorities and the way they are applied?</p>	<p>Some participating countries have decided to publish national priorities that apply to candidates in their country. This means that in the selection of Partnerships, applicant institutions in these countries</p>

	<p>can get extra points if they address one or more of the national priorities. The list of the 2009 national priorities is published on the Commission website at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius.</p>
<p>What happens if our project idea does not correspond to the national priorities set by our National Agencies?</p>	<p>Applicants should choose the theme of their Partnership according to their common interests. An application that does not address the national priorities of the countries involved in the Partnership also has a good chance of being selected, provided the quality is sufficient.</p>
<p>When and where will I find application forms?</p>	<p>The application forms are published on the websites of the National Agencies. They will be available from the beginning of December 2008.</p>
<p>Apparently the grants are awarded as lump sums which are linked to specific numbers of mobilities. How can I choose the correct lump sum?</p>	<p>Schools applying for a Partnership grant can choose between four grant amounts, based on numbers of mobilities to be carried out over a two-year period: either 4, 8, 12 or 24 mobilities for multilateral Partnerships and 12 or 24 for bilateral Partnerships. Schools should choose a grant amount that corresponds to a mobility number which is realistic for them. Before submitting an application, schools should have a clear idea of how many staff and pupils they can possibly send abroad during the lifetime of the Partnership. Each school involved in a Partnership can apply for a different grant amount, on the basis of its own needs. The grant request of each school involved in the Partnership must be input by the coordinator into the table in section 7 of the application form (Requested EU Funding).</p>
<p>What exactly is meant by a "mobility"?</p>	<p>A "mobility" is a trip abroad carried out in the framework of a Partnership either to a partner institution or to an event organised by a European project or network (funded through the LLP or predecessor programmes). One trip by one person is counted as "one mobility". When planning the mobilities to be carried out in the framework of the Partnership, the schools involved should try to plan visits to each of</p>

	the partner countries, in order to make it possible for each partner school to benefit from the experience.
We have planned to conduct XX mobilities and want to apply for the corresponding grant. But what happens if we cannot respect the minimum number of mobilities?	At the end of the Partnership, each participating school has to report to its National Agency on the activities and mobilities carried out during the lifetime of the project. If the minimum number of mobilities has not been reached, the final grant amount will be reduced and the school will have to reimburse the surplus money that it has received.
Our school has pupils with special needs and we have high additional expenses when travelling abroad (e.g. need for special vehicle). How is this taken into account?	Once your school has been approved to take part in a Partnership, it can contact its National Agency and submit a request for a reduction of the minimum number of mobilities for the grant amount chosen. The request needs to include an estimate of the additional costs involved in the mobilities — on this basis the NA can approve a lower minimum number of mobilities for your school. Depending on the amount of extra costs, the National Agencies may agree to reduce by up to half the minimum number of mobilities. Please anticipate this when choosing the type of grant amount.
We have a French partner school in Martinique and the travel costs to Martinique are much higher than to destinations within Europe. Do we still need to carry out the minimum number of mobilities linked to our grant amount?	The procedure will be the same as for cases of special needs described above. If the partner school is located in one of the ultra-peripheral regions of the EU (Canary Islands, Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, Réunion, Azores, Madeira) or in one of the overseas countries and territories (as specified by the Council's Overseas Association Decision ¹), approved schools in the same Partnership can ask for a reduced number of mobilities for the grant amount chosen on the basis of high travel costs to or from these regions.
We are a school in Cyprus and have a partner school in Northern Finland. The travel costs are very high. Do we still	Yes, the minimum number of mobilities linked to a grant amount stays the same, even if the partners are located far from each other (except

¹ Decision 2001/822/EC of 27 November 2001, Official Journal of the European Communities L 314, 30.11.2001, p. 1.

<p>need to carry out the minimum number of mobilities linked to our grant amount?</p>	<p>for the case of ultra-peripheral regions and overseas countries and territories, as explained above). You should take this into account when planning your project and try to plan your mobilities on a realistic basis.</p>
<p>What is meant by dissemination and exploitation of results?</p>	<p>To disseminate the results of your partnership you could, for example, send publications to other schools or other interested organisations, invite local media to events, draw the attention of others to your activities within the Comenius School Partnership and show the effects of your work on your school and on the pupils. Exploiting your results means, for example, using them in future teaching or continuing the cooperation with your partner schools, even after the end of the funding period. Both dissemination and exploitation depend very much on the type of results you want to achieve and the concrete activities that you are planning. Experience shows that you should plan dissemination and exploitation activities already at the beginning of the project.</p>
<p>We applied for a Partnership in 2008, but our application couldn't be funded due to lack of funds. When submitting our application next year, what adjustments do we have to make? Have there been important changes in the forms or the conditions?</p>	<p>The design of the forms has not changed compared to 2008 but there are some small changes in the content. However, most of the questions are the same and you will be able to make use of the text of your previous application. If your National Agency gave you feedback on the weak points of your 2008 application, you should try to improve the application in that respect. Please note also that the national priorities might have changed and that the form has to be completed in the working language of the Partnership. It is also important to note that the budget requests of each partner have to appear in the table in section 7 (Requested EU Funding).</p>