

Report working conference in Prague

21.-23.2.2008

Participants:

- Katerina Silhanova, Spin Czech
- Alena Simeckova, Spin Czech
- Christo Bjalkovski, Spin Czech
- Maria Vitkova, Spin Czech
- Natalja Rakar, Maygar Hungary
- Kata Medveczky, Maygar Hungary
- Hilary Kennedy, Dundee, UK
- Ruth Cave, Dundee, UK
- Marinel Iordan, WUTimisoara, Romania
- Laura Pop, WUTimisoara, Romania
- Marius Dohotaru, Buna Ziua, Romania
- Gitta Griffioen, Jarabee The Netherlands
- Gina Spoelstra, Jarabee, The Netherlands

Trainers:

- Mirek Burkon, Czech
- Petr Simecek, Czech

Arrivals

In the afternoon and evening of the 20th of February all participants arrived in Prague. Our host Katerina had organised transport and pension accommodation very well. In the evening we had an informal meeting in the neighbourhood of our B & B hotel Kamyk.

Day one

The start of the conference was the next day at 9.00 in the office of Spin Czech. Everybody brought their laptops and other equipment to work on the wireless network of Spin Czech. We started to install the equipment, to log in to the wireless network and to download Mozilla Firefox, the browser the intranet is built on.

It was an impressive sight in the workroom: 13 laptops, 2 projectors and 11 very interested workers, curious about the things that were going to happen.

After the first welcome and practical things, Katerina introduced the developers of the website and intranet: Spinlink. Mirek Burkon and Petr Simecek. They were our trainers for the next three days to teach us how to use the intranet.

To support the training we received a hand out of all the steps and possibilities of the intranet on paper. The materials are placed on the intranet under the workgroup Conference Prague. The hand out also is a report of the content of the activities in this conference.

First we were informed about the possibility of using films on this intranet. One important remit of the project is to look at ways of giving distance supervision. Therefore it is necessary for the VIT trainer and supervisor look to a film at the same time and have the possibility of stopping the film to carry out a microanalysis.

For the full details of the possibilities and problems, see the handout. In short: there are possibilities to work with films on a distance, but the technical equipment of most of the partners at this moment does not support the needs for uploading the films to the intranet with the quality the VIT trainer and supervisor need to analyse the film. For the analysis it is necessary to have a good quality of film, because you need to see small details in the expression of parents and children.

The expectation is that the technical development will support this need in about two years. This means we have to find out what is available at the moment. On the second day Hilary showed us one possibility: e-pop

During the training Mirek and Petr both worked on their own laptops, so we could see immediately the scope of the communication tools within the intranet. We were taken through how to use the intranet step by step, and all tried out the various tools. Whilst practising, we became aware of further possibilities within the project and began to develop ideas about how we could continue the work once the project has reached completion.

In the evening we went to the centre of Prague to have dinner in a very nice fish restaurant, on the riverside of the Moldau.

Day two

The second day we continued to practise using the intranet.

In the afternoon there was a demonstration of e-pop, a programme that supports video conferencing. The University of Dundee and WiredRed (the software developers) hosted a live, online presentation of the videoconferencing software called 'e-pop'. The possibilities of e-pop are:

1. the face-to-face contact of the members of the video conference
2. the share of computer screen/desktop, documents, pictures or film

The quality of the film is also in this case a problem, but seems to be good enough to carry out micro-analysis. E-pop is a programme you have to buy a licence for, University of Dundee supports the use of the programme for the project 'til May 2009. WiredRed can give an overview of the costs if you have to buy the programme.

Dundee will try out and develop this possibility together with WUTimisoara over the next few months. As soon as the programme is available for supervisors to try out the system in practice of supervision, Dundee and Timisoara will support it.

The participants were enthusiastic about the possibilities of e-pop.

In the evening we went "downtown" for dinner and an informal meeting in a jazzclub.

Day three

In the morning we practised again with the intranet.

In the afternoon we talked about how to use the intranet for the next stage of the project. We drew up the following list of action points:

1. In the next IC's (6) the trainers will be asked to use the intranet for e-learning. The experience will help to develop the intranet and supports the digital experiment. The participants of a training group can be invited to be members of a workgroup, have training materials uploaded on the intranet, and communication between members of the workgroup via the intranet.
2. Two more working conferences (for WP 3 and 4) were planned in the original projectplan. We have decided that it is not useful to organise these as face-to-face conferences, because of the digital possibilities now available as a result of the work for this stage of the project. We will experiment via intranet and videoconferencing. The available hours and operational costs for these conferences will be spent to use and develop the intranet further. Gitta will ask Leonardo for the possibilities.
3. We want to plan the final conference in combination with the last IC for workers of the University in Timisoara. Because of everyone having full diaries, we decided to put the dates in our diaries immediately, as follows:
 - IC Timisoara for workers of University by Hilary Kennedy and Ruth Cave -8/9/10 september 2008 in Timisoara
 - Final conference – 11 and 12 september 2008 in Timisoara

Gitta will start up a workgroup on the intranet to plan the content of the conference.

4. The supervisors in Romania have to be trained in the use of the intranet. Marius will talk with Mihaela Zanoschi Buna Ziua about the possibilities and use of the intranet.
5. Marinel and Laura will talk to Ana about the possibilities for training supervisors and (aspirant)VIT workers for the use of the intranet.
6. Hilary will try out and experiment with the videoconference e-pop, together with Marinel, WUT. Hillary will get an overview of the costs. Because of the difficulties with uploading good quality films there is a suggestion to find interested software developers. Each participant will think about it and let the others know of any potential individuals or businesses.
7. We all agreed the importance of the follow up of the intranet after the project. Katerina will start up a workgroup on the intranet to think about the possibilities for the intranet after the project. Solutions have to be found for the organisation and costs and of further developing and service.
8. All partners will train interested people in their own organisation and country and invite new members. We will meet up on the intranet.
9. Mirek and Petr will go on developing the intranet.

After this discussion, we evaluated the conference. Hilary and Katerina made up some questions, related to the needs assessment. We all answered individually and sent it to Katerina. The results of that evaluation form part of the overall evaluation of the project.

The conference ended in the afternoon of the third day, with compliments to Katerina, Mirek and Petr for their hospitality and good training. We learned a lot from these three wise owls, they

succeeded “to keep the frogs in the pot”, while they were dancing because of enthusiasm. Good job!

Katerina and Alena asked us all to think about reports, documents and photos of this conference to put on internet.

To celebrate the final evening we were invited by Katerina and her husband Simon to their home. Before dinner we took a walk through Prague. We visited the Karlsbrucke and the castle on top of the hill and had an overview over the big city. After that we were welcomed very warmly at Katerina’s house and had a nice evening together with good food, a glass of wine and a lot of things to talk about.

Next day everybody went home at different times. Some of us spent some time together in the beautiful city of Prague.