

## Field trip complemented by case study

A field trip is a journey to a place away from usual environment which is attended by a group of students. The purpose of the field trip is to provide insights and direct experience with real-life initiatives and activities in thematic accordance with the visited place.

In this format, however, the field trip is complemented by a case study. It is not only a passive excursion to see interesting places, but a learning opportunity that requires prior theoretical inputs, active participation and interaction at the place itself, followed by reflection of the experience. The students thus get theoretical inputs, already with the knowledge that they will have to use later in practice. Then, they gain practical experience when applying the theory during the preparation, realization, and reflection of the particular case studies.

### *Phase 1 – Preparation*

Theoretic knowledge referring to the context should be imparted in form of a pre-seminar or compact block courses. This may include obligatory readings and ideally reflections on the topics raised before the students get confronted with the real-life conditions. For the case studies, they form groups of 3-5 people and may choose from a pre-selection of enterprises that are part of the cooperation.

### *Phase 2 – Field trip activities*

At the field trip location, students should first get local orientation and knowledge. The one or more representatives of the hosting organization present themselves and share their experiences.

Second, the student groups prepare and subsequently perform their field research. After preparing the own research questions, they design suitable methods to generate relevant data and conduct interviews and thematically focused field research. They learn how to establish contact, build rapport and interact in a culturally sensitive way.

### *Phase 3 – Presentation and report*

At the end of the course, the results of the case studies are presented and summarized in a report. The representatives of the cooperating organizations – as partners of the students' research – should be invited to the final presentation. A possible outcome of the case study could be a set of recommendations for the organization.



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*“The preparation before the personal interaction with the enterprises is crucial for the students to be clear on what they want to learn.” Teacher, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic*

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### **Benefits**

- *Strong inspirational effect on students*
- *Authenticity of the experience*
- *Enterprises turn into research partners*
- *Meeting students from different cultural backgrounds is enriching*
- *Reflection on own work and its meaning in a broader context*
- *Critical and innovative thinking is fostered*

### **Success factors**

- *Enthusiastic and well-prepared partners*
- *Allowing sufficient time for the collaboration and discussions with partners*
- *Thorough preparations for the field trip (e.g. readings, reflections and case study focus)*
- *Easy and flexible arrangements between partners and university*

### **Challenges**

- *Careful preparation of research design by students*
- *Being involved in the partners' activities in some way*
- *Respectful and long-standing relationship with the partners*
- *Good organizational and time planning*

