



eXchange! – eXplore! – eXcite!

ST. GEORGE SCOUT HOUSE

SCOUTING SLOVAKIA, BANSKA STIAVNICA - SLOVAKIA

17-21 OCTOBER 2007

CONFERENCE REPORT

Conference Report

The aim of this report is to give an overview of the content. This report has been produced by Mark Knippenberg - Kandersteg International Scout Centre / WSB-ERO with the assistance of all members of the planning team.

We would like to thank all the organisers of plenary and cornerstone sessions, and all participants that have given us written or verbal reports from workshops. Without this input we would not have been able to write this report. All participants will receive a CD with this report and more detailed information such as the evaluation, pictures and several PowerPoint presentations on it. If you are interested in receiving these files, please contact: europe@scout.org.

Aim

The aim of the European Scout and Guide Centre Managers' Conference is to strengthen and develop co-operation among Scout and Guide Centres and to facilitate strong working relations between the staff of those Centres.

Conference Programme

A planning team comprising of Grace Farrelly (WAGGGS World Centre – Pax Lodge, UK), Ingeborg Agterberg-van Dijk (Scout Centre Buitenzorg, The Netherlands), Peter Meulendijks (VVKSM De Brink, Belgium), Damien O'Sullivan (Larch Hill, Ireland), Katrin Tauscher (WSB-ERO, Germany) and Mark Knippenberg (Kandersteg International Scout Centre / WSB-ERO, Switzerland) were responsible for the organization and running of the Conference assisted by the staff at St. George Scout House and its manager Martin Marcherik

The important pillars of the conference are the "Cornerstones" sessions (their aim is to treat issues of fundamental interest for Scout & Guide Centres and to do this in smaller groups to allow interaction and discussion between the participants) and the workshop sessions (sharing experiences between centres). The plenary sessions were sessions on Future Plans, Speakers Corner and the presentation of the Group Work. We ended the Conference by presenting & eXchanging future plans and Celebrating Successes. Last but not least the host venue organised a 'Slovak Evening' in the beautiful medieval castle for the closing evening.

Opening of the Conference

After all participants arrived on the bus from the airport we started with giving out all of the "welcome packs". The next steps in the registration process were choosing workshops and cornerstone sessions, collecting t-shirts and informing the planning team of departure times. The participants then had to hike uphill to get to the castle, which was used during this event as a second place for workshops, general sessions and fairs.



Theme Introduction

We started with a little theatre, using the Castle: A Patrol leader collected his patrol and when the Patrol was complete he told them that they were going to search for the best Centre with the kindest manager to stay for a camp. "Do you know these centre managers meet every two years, so they must be very experienced! They exchange ideas, so lets explore the centres to find the most exciting!" The patrol discover the CMC banner, meet angry managers and finally find a very nice Centre Manager, Martin of St George Scout House. He invited them all to go inside.



Mark opened the Conference officially with a speech and invited Eric Knochenhouer (SE), who joined the very first planning team to say something about the history of the CMC. He also read some messages from the other members of the first planning team: Reg Flower (UK), Karel Budde (NL) and Marc Lombard (CH). The messages and all photos of ten CMC's were displayed at the Scout house.

The Theme: "eXchange, eXplore, eXcite – Just share it!" is symbolic for this conference in many ways. The "X" stands for the 10th edition of the CMC and the multiple "X" stands for 100 years of Scouting. The words are the heart of the conference which centres around exchanging ideas, exploring new opportunities and above all to excite the Centre Managers for another 2 years. The catch phrase "Just share it" is linked to the Centennial celebrations where we share the Scouts birthday with the world, but is also aimed at Centre Managers, asking them to leave their comfortable bubble, share their successes and failures and to learn from it.

Teambuilding games

We started Thursday morning with 3 teambuilding games:

1. Peter from Belgium helped us to make music with sticks and everything else we could find outside!
2. People Bingo which enabled us to find out some facts about other participants
3. Then we formed the text: "Just share it!" and "10th CMC, Slovakia" with our bodies



After this session, the conference photo was taken.



Group work

If you were able to build a new centre and you didn't have to worry about money (Isn't this the dream of every Centre manager?!) What do you think is important?

In ten groups of 7, participants thought about their perfect centre. The aim was to share their dreams and brilliant ideas without restrictions. Later, they started thinking about what they thought the most important features at the centres were. The most important issues were: Nature, environmentally friendly management, activities, buildings and camping. Some groups made a very good plan to reach their perfect centre step by step and some groups had a very special original centre.



Workshops

A total of 12 workshops were run by participants over 2 different sessions on Thursday. Subjects were proposed by the participants who ran the workshops:

1. Eco friendly building in the future – David Denning (UK), Great Hautbois House

A well-presented and informative session based on the extension realised at Great Hautbois House. Participants were informed about rain water recycling, solar power, self composting toilets, ground source heat collection, green roofing and environmental friendly ways of building and building materials.

2. Easy ways of saving water & energy – Eric Knochenhauer (SE), Vässerö

Eric informed his participants on all the systems used at Vässerö for saving energy and water including how this could be implemented at their Centres. For example using push knob taps for fresh water or using other types of water available for flushing toilets and for use in showers. Simple solar water heating systems or old style toilets which do not use water at all. Installing day/night sensors for your lights or led lights in toilets and many simple and easy to follow ways of reducing energy.

3. Managing a Centre with only volunteers – Svend-Erik Fangel Pedersen (DK) & Stine Kirk Jensen (DK) - Houens Odde and Elio Caruso (IT) – BP Park.

During this session the participants had a chance to look behind the screens of Houens Odde's and BP Park's operation. Houens Odde use the Patrol System and volunteers leading volunteers, to offer and run scout activities. It's very important to realize, volunteering does not happen or grow on its own. Volunteering has to be cared for and cultivated and the right breeding grounds must constantly be present.

4. Perfect Activity System – Thomas Kirkeskov (DK), Naesby Centre

This well led workshop showed a live example of how to run an activity programme at a Centre from informing the customers in detail, via instruction sheets for the volunteers to all the materials needed, how to store them and how to store them in such a way that materials can be found easily to a clear way of presenting the activities and making choosing easier. Also the topics of development, maintenance and financing the activities were dealt with.

5. Scout Centres working together – Piet Termont (BE), Moerkensheide Scout Centre

This workshop provided some basics and examples of good practice for centres (within an NSO/MO) working together and the possibilities for synergy in the areas of marketing, finances, human resources policy and a step towards quality.

6. The UK Association of Guide & Scout Centres – Douglas Stack (GB) & Julian Pierce (GB)

This workshop informed the participants how Guide & Scout Centres in the UK deal with the present day requirements of the health and safety regulations and NSO/MO policies while at the same time providing a quality label for their members and a helping hand in meeting the different requirements.

7. How to build a team – Katrin Tauscher (DE), WSB-ERO and Jens Sheeran (IE), KISC

In this very active and dynamic workshop participants learned about the different stages in building a team (according to Tuckman) while at the same time going through those stages by playing different teambuilding games.

8. Visions for your Centre – Troels Duhn (DK), Arresoe Scout Centre

This workshop described, based on the vision of Arresoe Scout Centre, the process of forming a vision leading to a strategic plan and how this translates into objectives and aim. From there Troels took the participants further and showed them what was done to realise these objectives and aims and what they resulted in.

9. SCENE Centres – Rod Abson (AU), WSB-CO

In this workshop Rod informed the participants about the plans of WOSM to revitalise the Scout Centres of Excellence in Nature and the Environment (SCENE), the timelines, how European centres can join this programme and what the requirements are.

11. Working with Schools – Guido Maccabiani (IT), Lake Bracciano Scout Centre

Our national scout base on Lake Bracciano (Rome) has been hosting school groups for the past ten years. This partnership between the scout centre and the local schools is such a good eXperience we want to eXchange our experience with other participants.

12. Developing a new website – Conny van Zuijlen (NL), KISC

Developing a new website is a time consuming and not always easy process. Conny took the participants through all the stages of the process using live examples of the new website of Kandersteg International Scout Centre. Topics such as maintenance of the website, technical requirements and the promotion of the website were touched as well.

European Update, by Heather Roy (Director WAGGGS Europe) and Mark Knippenberg (Director KISC / WSB-ERO).

The aim of this session was to bring people up to date with what will happen at European level from the 2007 Conference onwards. This was done by giving information first about the structure of both organisations, followed by the current situation in WOSM and WAGGGS, the different projects, the joint operations (such as this Conference) and where the Regions want to go in the future. After this information was given, participants had the chance to ask questions of clarification or for more information. The joint PowerPoint presentation used for this update is provided to the participants in the downloadable file.

My Centre, My Country

On the first and second evenings the participants were invited to present their countries and Centres. All Centres from the same countries had a chance to work together on their country presentations. Both evenings were very enjoyable and to run this evening on two different nights gives everyone a chance to both have a look around and present their Centre and country. This event gives participants the opportunity to become more familiar with the other Centres and to taste some of the different specialities from the various countries.



Excursion

On Friday the Conference travelled outside Banska Stiavnica in two groups to either visit a gold mine followed by a visit to a natural spa or a visit to a very beautiful and old church which has the largest organ in the whole of Europe followed by a short stop at a vineyard. Banska Stiavnica is in the middle of the area where until the start of the Klondike Gold Rush, nearly all the gold and silver for Europe was delved. After the Klondike and the opening of mines in South Africa and South America, the area lost its importance and by the beginning of the 20th century nearly all mines were closed and the prosperous days of Banska Stiavnica were over. Nowadays, the whole area is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Cornerstones of our work at Scout and Guide Centres

These sessions targeted fundamental aspects of running Scout and Guide Centres and were run where possible by external experts. This allowed a more in-depth discussion based on the presentation of knowledge and experience both gained inside and outside scouting. Nearly all sessions ran twice.

1. Growing as a Manager – Åsa Gurden, TSA

In this cornerstone session, Åsa led the participants through the following aims; Explore how your growth will lead the centre to growing, establish the path taken by a manager from day 1 in the job and generating ideas on creating a good place to work. Topics such as 'what a manager does', 'behavioural approach', 'reviewing', 'the team', 'setting the tone' were looked into in more detail and Åsa used real life examples from his own 'story'. At the end, the participants were asked to write down at least 3 things they wanted to do in the next 6 months to start their growing process.

2. Fundraising - Mark Knippenberg, KISC/WSB-ERO

In this cornerstone session the participants were introduced more deeply into the fundamentals of fundraising by discovering different forms of fundraising such as door-to-door, membership/friendship schemes but also by looking into legacies, major grants and sponsoring. The theory was highlighted with successful and less successful examples from inside and outside scouting, both by the participants and Mark.

3. Environmental Issues – Rod Abson & Lucy Mace, WSB-CO

In this cornerstone session the participants were introduced to the Environmental programme as operated at the moment by the World Organization of the Scout Movement, the work done by the Environmental Educational Task Team and the SCENE's Programme. An introduction was given into the new environmental programme elements, the role Centres could play in the achievement of the new World Scout Environment Badge and how a Centre could become a Scout Centre for Excellence in Nature and the Environment (SCENE). Especially on the topic of SCENE different cases were shown which was followed by a good constructive discussion between participants.

4. Introduction into Marketing & PR - Conny van Zuijlen, KISC

In this cornerstone session participants were given a practical introduction into the world of Marketing & PR based on theory and flavoured by examples from her work in this area. This was all nicely brought into a clear relationship with the work of a manager at a Centre. During the session participants were asked to share their practices and at the end the participants were asked to start working on their Marketing & PR plans for their Centre.

5. Customer Care & Measuring Quality – Heather Roy & Frances Hillman, WAGGGS

This cornerstone session looked at two important issues for any Guide or Scout Centre. In the first part of the session the participants were taken into the details of Customer Care including the segmentation of the customer group and the different levels of expectations that each segment has. The second part of the session was used to look at how & why to measure Quality at a Centre. All the different options were discussed using examples from the WAGGGS World Centres which formed a useful background to this session.

6. Managing Volunteers – Damien O'Sullivan, Larch Hill

This cornerstone session was prepared by Yvonne McKenna, but due to sickness she could not make it to the CMC and the session was run by Damien O'Sullivan. The session looked at volunteering from an 'outside' perspective and led all the participants through all the steps of management which, not surprisingly, is very similar to the World Scout Policy on Adult Resources, using only different terms. But the session also had time reserved to look at questions such as; 'Why do people volunteer', 'why are certain programmes more successful' and 'what are the expectations of volunteers'.

7. Programme for your Centre – Kate Turner, WAGGGS

This cornerstone session looked at a possible programme for Guide & Scout Centres from a different angle as usual. The angle used was the strategic priorities of both WOSM and WAGGGS and how a centre could be involved in realising those priorities. Some time was spent on the existing partnerships with big NGO's, the possibilities of advocacy (campaigning) and translating this into possible programmes and activities for centres.

Speakers Corner

The aim of this last session of the Conference was to bring the final thoughts together and give everyone an open forum with the possibility to bring up subjects they would like discussed. During the session, the following topics were brought up:

- How much do each of us charge to stay at our Centres? A list was drawn up and everyone was asked to add their prices after the session.
- With Regulations affecting all workplaces more and more. Have they started to be detrimental for scouting and guiding activities, in that they take the fun out of the things we would like to offer?
- A suggestion that we should donate all of our loose change to the Scout Centre and therefore a jar was placed in the entrance at the Centre to enable us to do so.
- An introduction to the Goose Network.
- Scouts/non-scouts at Centres
- Volunteers at the Centres

See document in downloadable file.



Evaluation

This year we did the workshop and cornerstone evaluations separately, done by the facilitators of the Workshops and the Cornerstone sessions. You can find the whole evaluation on the CD. All the other issues were evaluated on the way from lunch (in town) to the castle. We asked questions about the facilities at the centre, the conference facilities, the staff, the information given prior to the conference and so on. We asked the participants how they liked the new system of the "Group work".

The idea of using the time while walking up to the castle was really good, so we saved some time during the normal schedule.

Again "My centre – my country" is still the star session in this conference!

One remark – "even the facilities at the conference were unique, it was just brilliant how it all worked out very well."

Details about the evaluation can be read in the downloadable file!



Future plans

As managers, we are busy with the daily things and sometimes there is no time for our future plans and dreams. In this year of 100 years of scouting in the World, we look back a lot, but we also want to look forward!

To focus on this theme, we ask the participants to answer the following questions on flipchart paper before you come to the conference.

1. First, we look back: In one line: What is the most important change at your centre in the last two years or what was the most important thing that has happened?
2. Then, we look at the situation now:
 - How big is your centre? Is it a campsite, buildings or both? How many overnight stays? What percentage are guides/scouts?
 - How many people work at the centre?: How many are paid and how many are volunteers?
 - Is it open all year round? If not, for which period?
 - What are the specialities of your centre: eg. environment, programme, other things?
3. Now, we look to the future:
 - Exchange: What is the most important goal for your centre in the coming years?
 - Explore: What changes do you think the next 100 years will bring that will have the most influence on your centre?
 - Excite: what is your (personal) dream for your centre?

Because very few people brought this flipchart with them, we changed the programme a bit, and made the flipcharts during the session. We also added a 4th one: On which topic would you want help, information or something else from another manager.

After that we walked around and read each others flipcharts. Every participant received 3 blank forms, on which they could offer help to another manager.

At the second session we exchanged the 3 filled in papers. In the main hall we hung 9 flipcharts with the following topics (we counted the most important topics out of all Centre flipcharts from the first session):

- Getting money
- New (bigger) buildings
- Environmental issues: Rod Abson (WOSM) stood next to this flipchart for discussion and questions. We noticed that this issue was very important for centres much more than two years ago
- Scout (spirit) and non scouts: Jacob Knol (NL) brought this up during the speakers corner and stood next to this flipchart for discussion and questions
- Activities at your centre
- International contacts: Mark Knippenberg and Heather Roy stood next to this flipchart for discussion and questions about ESVP, AVS and Goose Network
- Consequence of legislation: Douglas Stack (UK) brought this up during the speakers corner and stood next to this flipchart for discussion and questions
- Volunteers: Lise Daugaard brought this up during the speakers corner and Houens Odde had a workshop about this topic, so they both made a flipchart with advice
- We also made a flipchart with 'guests', because we can easily forgot this "topic", as we are all so busy with all the other topics

Everyone walked around and added advice, thoughts, opinions or had a discussion. We will revisit these topics at the next conference.

All documents are included in the downloadable file.

Celebrating successes

Just before the Closing Ceremony, we gave everyone the opportunity to share their successes over the past two years with the rest of the Conference. People who wanted to share, just stood up and announced what things had been successful at their Centres. Everyone applauded after each success was declared and this was a good way to finish the sessions of the Conference as we look forward to our successes for the next two years.



Conference Closing

The Conference was closed by showing the pictures and photo's of this 10th CMC. The mayor of Banska Stiavnica spoke about the importance of Scouting for his town and how privileged they were having this Conference take place in Banska Stiavnica, especially as the St. George Scout House was such an important venue to have in the town. On behalf of the planning team Mark thanked Eric with a certificate for being the only Centre Manager who attended all 10 CMC's and the staff of the host venue for their hard work during the past few days. The host venue received the 3 wooden paintings of the logo, signed by all of the participants. Mark also thanked the members of the Planning Team for their commitment, motivation and hard work over the past 2 years.

Looking forward, Mark informed the participants that it was likely that before the end of the year an Open Call to host the 11th CMC will be sent to all the National Scout Organisations and Member Organisations. Simultaneously, the Open Call will be sent to all the Centres present at the conference. Centre Managers who will still be a Centre Manager in October 2009 and are interested in joining the planning team are invited to contact Mark directly.

Everybody was asked to move outside into the courtyard of the Castle where we symbolically let our spirits fly away with 10 pigeons and celebrated the Centennial of Scouting with releasing 100 balloons for 100 years of scouting.

Continuing with the drama from the opening, the patrol now goes home. They had a great time with such lovely managers in such a nice **building** and very interesting **activities**. They met many real **international guides and scouts with the guiding and scouting spirit**. They also met the not so nice manager again. He had now learned a lot about **guests and Customer Care!** One of the patrol members now even wants to be a **volunteer** at his centre! The patrol took the banner with them to sell, so they had some **money** for their projects. They also learned about **legislation & regulation and environmental issues**.



Martin Marcherik & Major of Banska S.



Closing Party

After the official closing all participants were invited for coffee and cake. The dinner and the rest of the evening were part of the Slovak Evening offered to the CMC by the host venue at the Castle.



The strength of a Conference like this is in meeting colleagues, exchanging ideas, sharing experiences, having fun and inspiring each other. Of course it is the time after and in between sessions that can make the difference.

Thanks to our supporters

The European Guide & Scout Centre Managers' Conference could not take place without the support of several different organisations. In particular, we would like to thank:

- The European Scout Region and the Europe Region WAGGGS;
- Scouting Slovakia;
- The participants who gave lots of good feedback and worked hard during the event;
- All those who took part and helped to create such a great event in Banska Stiavnica.

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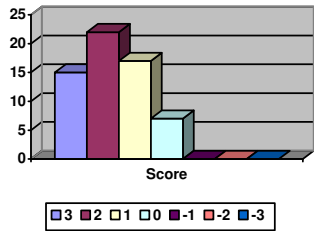
5 RUE HENRY CHRISTINE, BOX 327

CH-1211 GENEVA 4, SWITZERLAND

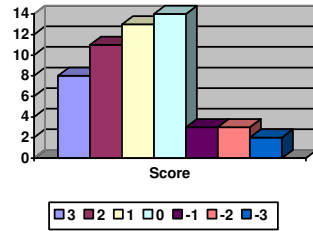
TEL + 41 22 705 11 00 - Fax + 41 22 705 11 09

**Addendum 1
SUMMARY GENERAL EVALUATION CMC 2007**

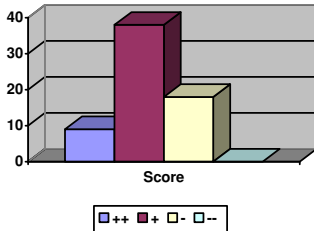
About rooms and Facilities



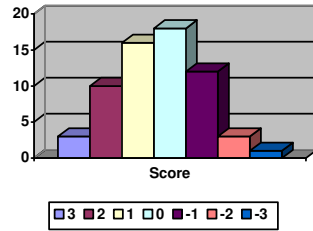
ABOUT THE BAR



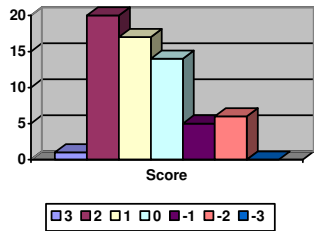
About Conference Facilities



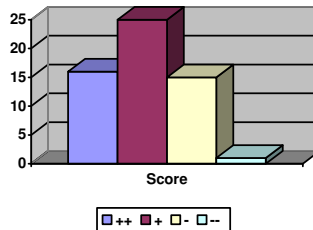
About the participants info



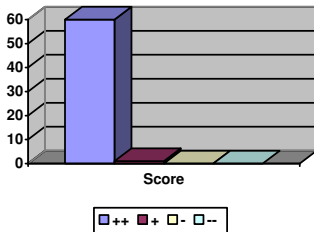
About Food and Catering



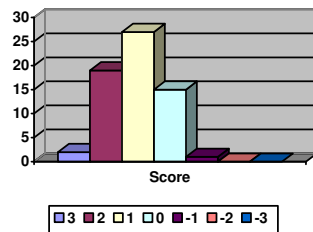
About the arrival (pick up, registration,...)



About Staff of the Host Venue

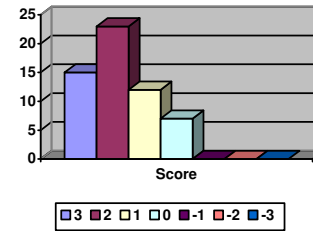


About the Welcome-Pack

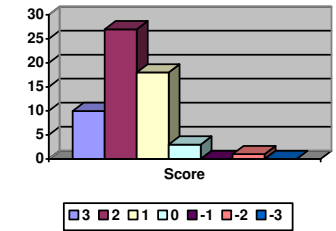


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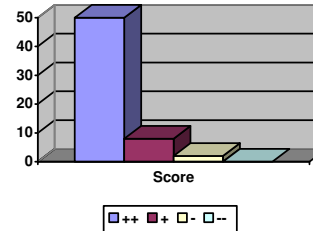
About the Opening



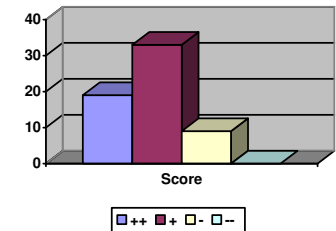
About the Speakers Corner



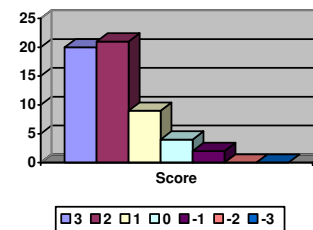
About the MCMC-evenings



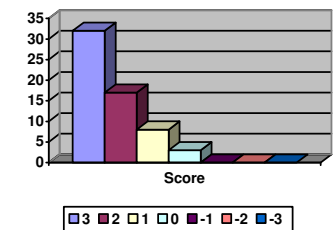
About Presentation Guiding and Scouting in Europe



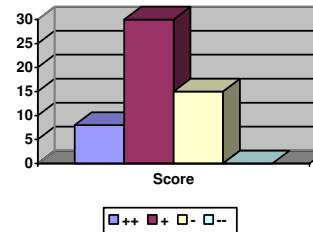
About the teambuilding (Thursday morning)



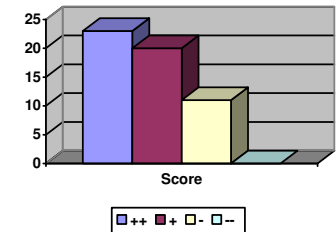
About the Excursions



About the Future Plans

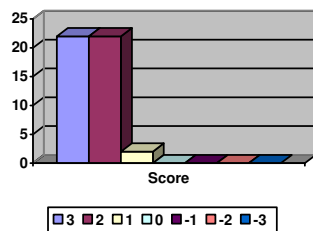


About Celebrating Successes



**Addendum 1
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ABOUT CLOSING CEREMONY



**Addendum 1
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Other comments : mostly in the style of : thanks a lot, very inspiring,
See you next time

COMMENTS ABOUT THE NEW SYSTEM OF GROUPWORK

- smart way of keeping us busy and interested in some subject/issue during the free time
- didn't know the old system but the new one was good, bit too much time
- not good on a Friday-evening, too abstract, too big difference between countries and way of structuring centres, too much time spend
- very good because you can discuss things and sleep about it before you take another step
- good to do it, but a bit unrealistic in the beginning
- we had a great change to see how everybody is working in his centre and how he/she is organising things
- good chance to work in small groups, good way to break up nationalities
- good, because I can see an impossible centre
- enjoyed working with young team with young ideas
- good to discuss in small groups
- nice, like building up a model-railway
- good to get started at once
- more specific task please
- not good, because the theme was too big to work out in detail, so maybe next time split up :
campsite, buildings, activities, staff
- good idea, spread over several days
- too much time
- not so nice, the group was not so nice to discuss with, the job was so typically scouting
- the group was nice but more specific objectives would be good
- not late in the evening
- should be more focused to a smaller item, building a whole centre is too big
- nice as starter
- nice idea : maybe some more challenges to make us less traditional, would be nice if we could use it somehow
- nice way to learn to know each others thoughts but we were sometimes too tired to do a proper job and to focus
- i don't like the old system, but i like this one here
- too many British ideas
- good idea, nice experience