

## Final report – Years 2 and 3

### 2000 - 2002



The SLAM project received initial financial approval for one year in 1999. A second application was made for renewal project funding in March 2000 with approval received for September 2000 to August 2002.

The project has now reached the end of its three year operational phase and this final report reviews activities during the second and third years, from September 2000 to August 2002.

The SLAM (School Libraries as Multimedia centres) has been designed to develop the use of school libraries as multimedia resource centres encouraging and developing open learning within partner institutions. For some this has meant a radical change to existing teaching and learning strategies with a move from formal didactic methods to more open student centred models. For others the project has been an opportunity to share experiences and expertise in a European environment.

The first year of the project was very much a period of information exchange and dissemination of best practice. This was been invaluable for all - and has already shown far-reaching effects in the Czech Republic where discussions have led to the implementation of the SLAM project principles at both regional and national level. The key aims of the first year were transference of experience and the introduction and use of new technology including internet transfer.

Three project meetings took place during Year 2 (2000-2001) with two further meetings in the final year 2001-2002. The final meeting took the form of an extended conference session with input from the classroom teachers responsible for the delivery of the new learning concepts to their students. SLAM project meetings provided participants with extensive opportunities to look at the development and operation of school and public library services and to develop a student focussed topic designed to make use of and integrate the school library into the learning environment. The results of the student topic were presented to the final conference in Hum polec, Czech Republic, in May 2002.

#### **Project meetings:**

##### **Humpolec, Czech Republic – October 2000**

Gymnázium dr Aleše Hrdlicky

Development of the concept of the student project – discussion and adoption of the superior theme. Introductions to project based methodologies.

European integration in a cultural context – historic sites for background in the development of Czech culture – Czechia at the centre of Europe.

##### **Albertslund, Denmark – February 2001**

Pædagogisk Center, Albertslund  
Vridsløsselille Skole, Albertslund

Large conference event for the project group and participating teachers – with in service training and development of the student project concept.

Introductions to communications methods for participating teachers – beginning the student project.

European integration in a cultural context – Roskilde Domkirke and the Vikingskibsmuseet (Viking Ship Museum) – the impact of Danish culture on European development

### **Fareham and Gosport, United Kingdom – May 2001**

St. Vincent College, Gosport  
Brune Park School

The student project – initial multimedia presentations made by students. Developing the superior theme and mind mapping exercises. Open and Distance Learning in practice – an introduction to the use of First Class running within the Danish Skolekom system.

European integration in a cultural context – Winchester Cathedral and City, ancient capital of England, and the New Forest – a unique environment of European (and global!) significance resulting from the Norman conquest of 1066.

### **Karmøy and Rosendal, Norway – October 2001**

Karmøy Kommune, Kopervik  
Stangelands Ungdomskule, Kopervik

The student project – developments in all partner sites. Report back on the 'House of the Future' concept.

### **Humpolec, Czech Republic – May 2002**

Gymnázium dr Aleše Hrdlicky

The completion and presentation of the student project – multimedia presentations made by students to introduce themselves and their project work. Discussion of the outcomes and the evaluation process – 'How Good was my Project'. Discussion of positive and negative aspects of the project – including constraints placed on participants by national policy (particularly relevant to the UK partner).

### **Project development**

The first year of the project was centred on the transfer of experience and practice. The results of that first year can now be seen in the partner libraries – and particularly in the Czech Republic where there has been a



ICT facilities in Gymnázium dr Aleše Hrdlicky, CZ

substantial upgrading of both services and facilities. The project has now moved on to develop the school library as a multimedia resource centre and to embed its use within the curriculum.

All four partners are now fully integrated into the planning, development and delivery of the project. As last year, the Danish partner has taken a lead in the pedagogic development – with Norway and the UK providing ICT management and administration. It is a particular delight of this project to note the excellent inter-personal, inter-cultural and international relationships that have been developed. The European Commission can be justly proud that it has facilitated a project that has shown such integration – this is true European cooperation and partnership in practice.

During year 1, discussions took place about the future student project. Initial feelings were towards the development of a project based on the management of waste (SLAM – Danish for garbage!) and introducing Agenda 21 into the schools. But, discussions with project partners and the classroom teachers in the schools that were to be included within the project suggested that this topic would not be able to develop and demonstrate the effective use of multimedia ICT resources and would also not prove to be so interesting to students. Accordingly, after much discussion at the October meeting held in Humpolec, CZ, it was agreed to change the superior theme of the student project to the 'Green House', an investigation of energy efficient construction for the future.

This theme was effectively developed in all partner countries with enthusiastic student support. Student groups were created and worked towards the main research and development project which took place at the end of Year 2 and the beginning of Year 3 (from September 2001).



The project meetings became a focus for teacher development providing the stimulus to cascade the training to students and to other teachers. The training was effective – with one large scale meeting held in Albertslund, Denmark and attended by over 30 teachers and curriculum support staff from the 4 partner countries.

Before the large scale meeting took place (February 2001) a prior period of in-service training saw two teachers from Humpolec travelling to Albertslund in Denmark for a period of concentrated and in-depth introduction to the management of school libraries and the use of multi-media systems – including the latest state of the art digital video editing systems. This attracted substantial press coverage in both Denmark and the Czech Republic. Inservice training of this kind is extremely unusual – and very rare in a trans-national context.

**The European Commission may well wish to consider intensive practical experiences as suitable for future Comenius programmes.**

The large scale meeting in February saw the project partners meeting with classroom teachers, school librarians and curriculum support staff drawn from schools in all four partner countries. This was quite deliberately a much larger meeting – with over 30 delegates instead of the 11 main project group members – giving the opportunity for the actual classroom teachers to be involved in planning and discussion in a European context. The meeting was an outstanding success – and began with a full scale visit (invasion!) to Vridsløsselle Skole in Albertslund, to view the new library development and to meet students engaged in the SLAM project. Teachers from the UK (Brune Park School) were particularly interested in this visit as they were then embarking on a complete re-construction of their own school library and felt that this visit provided much to inform their own debate and planning for that project.

The teachers were broken up into groups to discuss the superior and subsidiary themes – with all groups carefully arranged with mixed nationalities. When the groups came to report back in the full plenary session, all reported similar discussions and outcomes in terms of learning methods and multimedia approaches

Running in parallel with the curriculum development focus groups was a separate technology introduction for curriculum support staff and school librarians. This included a rapid hands-on introduction to digital video editing and to multi-media authoring applications.

Digital video editing facilities are now in place in all partner countries. Norway (Karmøy Kommune) has been able to run editing courses for teachers across its area – impossible before the SLAM development. Norwegian delegates to the Albertslund conference included the school librarians from the lower secondary schools of Karmøy – allowing further dissemination throughout the authority.

A particular feature of the Danish in-service event was an extended introduction to project based teaching methodologies delivered by two senior lecturers from the Danish Pedagogical University in Copenhagen (formerly the Dansk Lærerhøjskole), Kirsten M Antilla and Mogens Erikson. Kirsten and Mogens have extensive experience of transnational projects – and their input gave an opportunity for the teachers to develop and extend their practice and knowledge in a European context. The SLAM project wishes to recognise and to thank Kirsten and Mogens for their input.

The Danish event introduced the use of electronic log books and mind mapping software. The log books are now in use in each partner school allowing staff and students to record their activities and project development. Mind mapping is a common technique in project development – but extended here into the multi-media mode of the project by the introduction of software to allow on screen creation and editing. At the Danish meeting the teacher groups took the first steps towards the creation of multi-media student



introductions – and noted the excellent progress shown by the Czech partners who demonstrated a PowerPoint presentation made by their students and 'burned' to CD-ROM. An example for all to follow!

The outcome of the Danish meeting was significant. This had been an opportunity for a much larger group to meet, to discuss and to exchange ideas and practice. It was an opportunity for teachers from other countries to visit a Danish school – and to begin the introduction of the student focussed project.

With this meeting, the project moved forward from the initial management group, through the involvement of a larger group of teachers to the real work – the involvement of many more real learners in the classroom and school libraries.

In the next few months, students from each partner group worked hard to develop their own multimedia introductions – using Microsoft PowerPoint and Mediator. With final results burned to CD, copies have now been distributed across Europe giving students in each country the opportunity to find out about their partners in the other groups.

In Denmark, a new introductory leaflet to the school library has been created – for use by students, staff and visitors to Vridsløselille Skole. The leaflet, in both Danish and English versions is available on the project web site.



Students at Vridsløselille Skole, DK



SLAM project students at Brune Park School, UK

In May 2001, the group met for the third time – and for the second time in the UK. This gave an opportunity for the group to meet the students at Brune Park School – and to share in the developing success of the school. The group met in the current library – in its last week before the full scale redevelopment began - where the Head Teacher told the group that its input had been significant , from an opportunity for staff to visit Denmark (they came away very impressed) to the significant curriculum opportunity for the students. Student input had been hugely enthusiastic, even overcoming the loss of data due to technical failure. This project had a substantial impact on the school, raising expectations, achievement and delivery.

A significant development at the UK meeting was the introduction to the use of 'First Class', an online computer mediated conference system. The project group was been able to secure access to a web based version of 'First Class' with dedicated SLAM project discussion. Special permission was granted for the creation of a SLAM project area with user IDs and passwords for foreign users and the SLAM project group would like to recognise and thank the Ministry of Education in Copenhagen for its support and assistance in the use of the skolekom.dk server during the period of the SLAM project. The client based version of First Class had proved to be unsuitable as restrictions imposed by security systems at some partners sites prevented the transfer of data (the UK sites in particular had high level firewall and proxy server configurations – where this was provided by the local authority the school was unable to override the security for individual group sessions).

The project made use of the web based facility over the next few months. Whilst users were able to interact in an asynchronous mode, effective co-operation was thought to be better provided through virtual meetings arranged to take place at the same time. These were arranged to promote open and distance learning for the teachers and school librarians with trans -national discussions chosen to develop the project concept and the student activities. Once the teacher groups acquired confidence in the use of the online conference system the intention was to extend use to classroom groups of students (user IDs were allocated and made available for use).

### The Student Project

The student project formed the core part of the third year of the project, providing the opportunity to put into practice the developed SLAM principles and to demonstrate their use with the ultimate target group – students in the classroom.



Students sought to make use of their multi-media enabled school libraries to develop the concept of energy efficient houses within their own local contexts. Students will work on specific topics and will use ICT to enable discussion with partners in other countries, to research materials and to publish results in multi-media formats.

Project work took place over the Christmas term 2001 – from September to December. In 2002 the materials were drawn together to form the basis of multi-national presentations given at the May 2002 conference held in Humpolec, Czech Republic.

By the end of the student project, the SLAM group were able to show a substantially raised profile and use of school libraries across the partner communities and also, through the wider dissemination of practice and project, the extension and development of the role of school libraries and project focussed methodologies across Europe.

Each partner introduced a group of students to the use of the Library as a multi-media resource centre and to the concept of working together in a European transnational project environment. Students began the project by working to prepare a Powerpoint presentation to introduce themselves and their schools. The resulting presentations were distributed to partners on CD-ROM – with further discussion taking place between students using email and online conferencing.

Considerable discussions took place between partners within the management group to identify the most appropriate topic for transnational work. The topic of 'Future House' was chosen as this was relevant to studies in all partner countries and was of interest to the students.

Students agreed to work on different aspects of the topic and to share their findings with partner students. Email and online conference sessions were set up. Students used their libraries to research the topic – including the use of networked internet access to research wider availability and concepts. In some countries, students were able to visit specific exhibitions targeted at future housing ideas and reported back on these to the wider group (Future House, Malmö, Sweden – visited by students from Vridsløselille School, Albertslund, Denmark).

Each group of students reported back within their own institutions and communities. Students from Brune Park School in Gosport, UK, reported on their findings at a special meeting for the Mayor of Gosport. In the Czech Republic, a similar session was arranged with attendance by the Town Major, Regional Minister of Education and Regional Minister (Jihlava).

The students used their libraries to considerable effect – libraries in all partner countries (Norway, Denmark, UK and Czech Republic) underwent considerable development during the course of the project and have now become a central facility servicing the curriculum in their institutions and beyond.

The student project did point towards a number of issues however. It was difficult to ensure that students were able to work together and at the same time across all countries. This was not just a matter of differences in time between mainland Europe and the UK, but also due to the varying constraints of examination and other timetable events. In the UK, it was not possible to integrate the project work into the mainstream day due to the severe constraints imposed by the National Curriculum. The UK partner group included students who undertook the SLAM work as an extension to their normal timetable – and in their own time!

## Dissemination

The SLAM project has provided an opportunity for partners to visit school and public libraries in each others communities. This has been invaluable opportunity to share experience and good practice (in many cases, exceedingly good and recognised practice) between widely separated partners and all in the context of working together for common European practice.

Opportunity was taken to discuss the experiences and practice at relevant conferences during the project. Major event presentations and discussions took place at the following – with much further informal discussion and dissemination taking place in addition to these listed:



**FERL 2000 (Further Education Resources Online), Stratford Upon Avon, UK: November 2000**

SLAM included as part of a presentation on online learning at the FERL 2000 conference for ILT managers and curriculum developers – 350 delegates from the UK Further Education (post 16) sector. (Peter Milford, UK)

**Humpolec, Czech Republic – Teachers INSET event – February 2001**

A special in-service training event held at Gymnázium dr Aleše Hrdlicky and attended by 30 head-teachers and senior managers from schools across the region. An introduction to the use of school libraries, project based methodologies and the SLAM project. (Vlastimil Fiala, Peter Fejt, CZ)

**ESP 2000 (European Schools Project), Rendsburg, Germany: March 2001**

A very well received presentation delivered to update the group on the development of the SLAM project - part of the main programme to over 150 teachers and education professionals drawn from across Europe. (Peter Fejt, CZ)

**Visit from Læringscenteret, Norwegian Board of Education, Oslo: March 2001**

A visit from the National Board of Education to the Rogaland region and Karmøy. A presentation on the SLAM project was given to the visit group who have a responsibility for School Library advice within Norway – 20 national advisory managers. (John Rullest, Per Fagerland, NO)

**Unge & Unger –Spring 2001**

Article about the SLAM project printed in the Spring issue of the Unge & Unger magazine published and circulated by PC Albertslund. The article will be re-printed in the June issue of the Danish School Librarians Association magazine with a circulation of 3,000 copies.

**Nordic Conference for School Librarians, Thørshavn, Faeroe Islands: June 2001**

A presentation delivered by Gert Larsen (Pædagogisk Center, Albertslund, Denmark) to the conference. (Gert Larsen, DK)

**International Association of School Librarians Conference, Auckland, New Zealand: August 2001**

Presentation delivered by Gert Larsen in his capacity as President of the Nordic Association of School Librarians

**Learning and Skills Council – national meeting: September 2001**

SLAM presented as part of the keynote address on New Learning Styles (Steve Frampton, UK)

**National Comenius Board meeting - Norway, October 2001**

SLAM presented to the National Comenius Board meeting in Haugesund (John Rullestad, Per Fagerland, NO)

**Bore Ungdomskole**

Presentation of the SLAM project and the Socrates programme to staff from Bore Ungdomskole attending a meeting in Haugesund. (John Rullestad, NO)

**West Sussex Schools Norway visit: February 2002**

SLAM and Socrates programme presented to a group of teachers and administrators from West Sussex on fact finding mission to Norway. (John Rullestad, Per Fagerland, NO)



### **PILOT conference – Stavanger, Norway: April 2002**

Major presentation about the SLAM project to over 200 delegates at an important conference organised by Staten Undanningskontor Rogaland (regional education authority) to consider international cooperation in education.  
(Per Fagerland, John Rullestad, NO, Gert Larsen, DK)

Substantial newspaper coverage was achieved by the Czech partners with articles appearing in both local and national publications. These articles attracted considerable interest and the school received many calls from other schools to enquire about the methods and projects under development.

The project web site – <http://www.slampro.net> – was initially created and hosted by St. Vincent College in the UK and attracted many visitors to the site. The site was transferred to Karmøy Pedagogisk Senter following the project group meeting in October 2001 (the meeting requested that staff time at St. Vincent be focussed on project management instead of web development). The web site is linked from each of the partners and now features on the school library section of the EUN (EU Net) project site

### **Project Evaluation**

Evaluation of the SLAM project was carried out by Susanne Sjørslev, Principal of the Pædagogisk Center, Albertslund, Denmark.

Evaluation took the form of a questionnaire completed by all participants together with comments on specific topics raised by each partner. The questionnaire provided a series of performance indicators and asked participants to rank their response. Results were totalled to create an overall impression.

The full results and the conclusion of the evaluation are also appended as a separate item.

### **Evaluation**

The May 2001 project group meeting considered the evaluation of the project. Earlier discussions about the use of an external evaluator had resulted in correspondence with Brussels and the group decided to seek the services of an experienced evaluator within the project community. It was noted that the newly appointed Principal at Pædagogisk Center, Albertslund, DK, is an experienced project evaluator and was in an ideal position to evaluate the development and operation of the project. As a new appointment she had had no previous involvement with the SLAM group and was therefore able to provide evaluation without prejudice. In addition, the group investigated other means of project evaluation and discussed the use of the Scottish evaluation materials, 'How Good is My Project', based on the 'How Good is My School' evaluation pack.

### **Conclusion based on the answers from teachers, librarians and board members**

#### **Positive aspects of the SLAM project:**

The SLAM project has demonstrated that the school library as a multi-media centre, with a staff of media specialists and teacher librarians, can be an essential focus for new learning styles.

The SLAM project has demonstrated the importance of establishing and developing school libraries as multi-media-centres or Learning Resource Centres and to establish Regional Learning Centres to provide the essential support for the school development.

An invaluable outcome of the SLAM programme was the ability to share detail practice with partner staff through concentrated and in-depth introduction to the management of school libraries and Regional Learning Resource Centres. The study visits will be complemented by the use of multi-media systems to enable distant face to face meetings. Trainee service / work experience will include both basic and central library and information management activities.

Students have achieved better understanding of the importance of teamwork. It is very important to be a strong individuality but, on the other side, it is necessary to use co-operative methods and problem-solving methods not only in education but in a normal life, too.

The communication among students and teachers from different countries has played an important - students and teachers feel the new role of the EU, the new role of co-operation in Europe.



The SLAM project has documented the importance of trainee service / work experience for the development of school libraries in areas with weak or little existing tradition for school library activities (The evaluation report from Charles University on Humpolec).

Having a mutual project as "The future House, including students and teachers, has been very important. The importance of using English as a second language was obvious for three of the countries. The opportunities to share and compare values, similarities and differences to pupils in the other European countries has helped the pupils to better self-understanding and at awareness of every individuals' identity.

#### **Negative factors:**

1. Lack of strong, effective and full operative systems for all partners from the beginning of the project.

Technical problems with the Internet connections must not hinder or obstruct students and teachers possibilities for efficient communication.

If one or more of the partners have weak connections and old equipment it is very important for an Open and Distance project to secure same conditions for all partners in this area.

2. To consider the project evaluation methods, linked to clear aims and objective, from the beginning of the project.

Evaluation of the project must be developed on the formative model ensuring that changes in organisation, technical systems, use of school library and learning styles and teaching and learning methods are captured and recorded. Data generated by students, teachers and librarians in frequent short meetings with stakeholders must be a part of the documentation of the programme and form part of both the formative and eventual summative evaluation. On a daily basis, the project must seek to make use of self-assessment and to encourage self-reflection, particularly amongst managers and teachers/librarians with responsibility for learning styles and library management.

3. It is very important for international co-operation that there are produced tighter time schedules that all partners adhere to.

Students and teachers are impatient. The need to know when the events, projects and meetings are taking place. Tight schedules and detailed planning are have a substantial positive impact on the engagement from students and teachers.

#### **The Questionnaire "How good is our SLAM project"**

The conclusion of the project based on the answers from the questionnaire "How good was our SLAM project" is that the project has been very successful.

The assessments from teachers/librarians as well as board members are very positive. Most of the activities are judged as "very good", "grade 4"

Only a few areas have as "grade 3" and a very few "grade 2":

- Promotion of other languages
- Link between the aims of the event and the overarching aims of the trans-national project/funding programme
- Effectiveness of shared ownership of the event
- Organisation of the trans-national event
- Provision and suitability of materials, resources and equipment

No activity or event has been characterized as "grade 1", "major weakness".

**The main conclusion based at the questionnaire is that the project has been very successful expressed from teachers, librarians and board members. A few things could have been better, but have not had a substantial impact on the project as a whole. Partners need to improve the national as well as the trans-national planning and the communication between managing board and teachers/librarians.**



### **Additional Comments:**

The project group once again feels it necessary to draw the Commission's attention to the delays in the receipt of project funding.

The project application was submitted in February 2000 to begin in September 2000. Final agreement was not received until December 2000 with project funds not being transferred until February 2001. The receipt of funding was thus delayed for half of the first year of the project – potentially a disastrous situation for any project reliant on public funding. Regrettably, a similar situation occurred again at the start of the third year with final year funding not reaching the beneficiaries until half way through the final funding period.

It is to the credit of the partners that they agreed to continue in the absence of agreements and finance from Brussels. School funds are often expressly prohibited from running deficit budget accounts and considerable risk was accepted by the partners to maintain the project. The group wishes to recommend that the Commission should be able to make decisions and funding available at the Commission published start date of projects.

Of course, we recognise that the Commission needs to maintain checks on projects and viability but do feel that it is essential that projects receive official notification of acceptance by the stated start date. If formal notification of acceptance is made by the start date, then institutions may be prepared to underwrite risk in the knowledge of future payment and accept a delay in terms of weeks rather than months.

The use of electronic communications does provide for virtual meetings, allowing discussion at either an agreed time or in asynchronous mode. However, the project does wish to advise that there is no substitute for the impact and effect of physical meeting, of the opportunity for senior teachers and managers to meet face to face and examine each others facilities and services in a direct manner. The opportunity to discuss and share practice, experiences and problems is the real essence of European trans-national co-operation.



**Attachments:**

1. Meeting minutes
  - a) Humpolec, Czech Republic – October 2000
  - b) Albertslund, Denmark – February, 2001
  - c) Fareham and Gosport, United Kingdom – May 2001
  - d) Karmøy and Rosendal, Norway – October 2001
  - e) Humpolec, Czech Republic – May 2002
2. CD-Rom – student and other presentations. Papers and documents. Minutes.
3. Evaluation of the Project undertaken by Susanne Sjørslev, Pedagogic Center, Albertslund, Denmark
4. Review of the impact of the SLAM project on Gymnázium dr Ales Hrdlicky, Humpolec, Czech Republic, undertaken independently by Dr Borivoj Brdicka from Charles University in Prague. The report is also available on the web at: <http://it.pedf.cuni.cz/sitesm2/gymhu/cz003en.htm>