



For more details, please see our website:
www.masorti.eu


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Lifelong Learning Programme

Grundtvig Learning Partnership

Strategies for Voluntary Work in Europe

*This brochure was printed
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2008 – 2010

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
NEW NORTH LONDON SYNAGOGUE (London, UK)	4
ST ALBANS MASORTI SYNAGOGUE (St Albans, UK)	6
MASORTI E.V. (Berlin, Germany)	8
CJMP (Paris, France)	10
MAAYANE OR (Nice, France)	12
JEWISH CULTURAL ASSOCIATION (Valencia, Spain)	14
MAROM KLUB EGYESÜLET (Budapest, Hungary)	16
MASORTI ALMERE (The Netherlands)	18
COMUNIDADE JUDAICA MASORTI BEIT ISRAEL (Lisbon, Portugal)	20
PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS	22

ABOUT US

Grundtvig Learning Partnerships

Grundtvig learning partnerships enable organizations working in the field of adult education to work together on topics of common interest.

A particular focus is on enabling smaller organizations to take part.

To learn more about Grundtvig, please go to this website:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc86_en.htm

Masorti in Europe

The roots of Masorti Judaism are in Europe. Masorti first emerged as an identifiable ideological stream in Germany at the end of the 19th century, but few synagogues that followed the Masorti approach survived World War II. Following the war, Masorti Judaism re-emerged in several European countries independent of each other. Our Grundtvig project helped bring these separate organizations together. It was the first major project we have undertaken together.

Our Learning Partnership

Our learning partnership, 'Strategies for voluntary work in Europe', has brought together Jewish and inter-religious organizations from the UK, Germany, France, Spain, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal and the Czech Republic to exchange ideas about subjects of common interest and to develop new perspectives in their work.

This partnership aims to develop new approaches, strategies and plans of action to strengthen the involvement and motivation of volunteers through exchange, best practice projects and lay leadership training. The second major topic has been to learn about Jewish heritage, Jewish realities and Jewish perspectives in Europe today – focusing on the different situations in the participating countries. In this context the partnership organizations have also explored the subjects of anti-Semitism, immigration and integration.

In order to reach these objectives we organized face-to-face meetings and intensive exchanges via the Internet. As a result we have developed this brochure as well as a website (see www.masorti.eu) to summarize the outcomes of the partnership and to disseminate the results.

Strategies for Voluntary Work in Europe

We are a group of Jewish organizations in Europe who have formed a Partnership to share our experience of working with Volunteers. Volunteers play a large part in the life of each of our organizations and we have each developed ways of working with volunteers. In this brochure, we show our 'best practices' in the area of volunteering, which we shared with each other, and the new projects we developed through the new strategies and methodologies we learned when working with volunteers in our organizations and communities.

Introduction

Our partnership consisted of several stages. We had meetings where we shared our best practice projects with each other. Some of us learned new languages. We learned how to collaborate by building a 'wiki' and then a website together. Over the course of the partnership we learned about our shared European history and issues facing Jewish organizations in contemporary Europe.

On the following pages you will learn about our Grundtvig partnership. We hope we have succeeded in giving you a taste of the things we learned when working together.



NEW NORTH LONDON SYNAGOGUE (LONDON, UK)

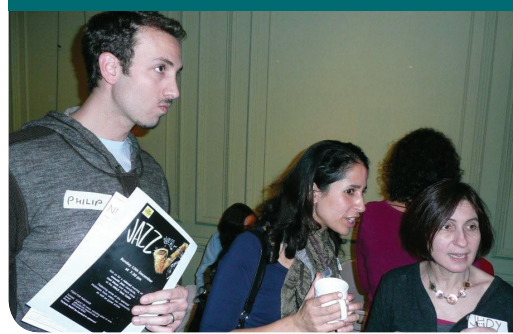
NNLS is a Masorti organization based in North West London, with a membership of 2,500 including more than 1,000 children and young people.

Best Practice Project: SEVEN – Members Teach Members in a Community Learning Experience

This project consists of Seven independent courses. Each course lasts Seven weeks with Seven participants taught by Seven teachers who are volunteers from the community.

Each course is skill oriented, which encourages raising individual's level of knowledge, understanding and ability. The small groups make it easier for the teacher/facilitator to mould the course to individual personal interests and thus make the participation challenging.

The 2009 Programme included courses on Jewish Parenting, Torah for Everyone, Hebrew Reading, Home Rituals for Shabbat. Smaller organizations could introduce or adapt their programme to offer, for example, One to One (Hevruta-style Learning), One to Three (Family Education), and so forth.



Follow-on Project: Fresher's Fair

This activity was inspired by our partners from Valencia and St Albans, who provided models of finding ways to include more volunteers in the organization and showing how to run various activities.

The programme provided an opportunity to introduce new members to many of the activities, clubs and services that are available through our organization, all of which are run by volunteers. A table was set up for each activity around which representatives sat and were available to chat to people on an informal basis and answer any questions.

The idea was to have as many different tables as possible with representation across key areas of services, learning and education as well as social and cultural activities, so that all members were able to see the breadth of what is on offer at NNLS and to find an area in which they feel they would be able to volunteer to help.



ST ALBANS MASORTI SYNAGOGUE (ST ALBANS, UK)

SAMS is a thriving and welcoming organization that comes together for Shabbat, High Holy Days and other festivals throughout the year as well as for a variety of social and educational events.

Best Practice Project: CAFE – Community & Family Education

SAMS has been running CAFE events for around eight years, with one or two events per year, around a range of themes, often related to the Jewish festivals. They are planned and implemented by volunteers of all ages (with input from the rabbi), and they are usually attended by members, although a couple of CAFE events have been run in conjunction with other local synagogue organizations.

Activities include: culture (music, dance, arts & crafts), learning (study with the rabbi), lectures, games, food and presentations. The event is publicized before the event and there is always an article with photos in the newsletter afterwards.

Follow-on Projects: Speed Networking and Mitzvah Day

SAMS' follow-on projects were inspired by Kehillat Aviv in Valencia, which helped the organization improve and enhance their volunteer culture.



St Albans Masorti Synagogue (St Albans, UK)

In May 2009 they ran a Lag b'Omer CAFE, with an Israeli breakfast sponsored by the Grundtvig programme, and a session called 'Speed Networking: What SAMS can do for you & what you can do for SAMS': representatives from each of 8 committees had 2 minutes to present to each participant a brief description of their work and what help was needed. The involvement of seniors was increased – the breakfast was organized entirely by senior members – as well as other adults, who volunteered to work on various committees.

The second project was Mitzvah Day, which took place in November 2009. Mitzvah Day is the perfect volunteer project – it encourages members of an organization to act collectively to give time (rather than money) by doing good deeds – and it enabled SAMS to take volunteering skills outside the organization to benefit the wider local community. Dozens

of members took part in two special projects: a 'Collectethon' for the Herts Young Homeless Group, a local charity, and a teenage interfaith event that brought young Jews together with Muslim refugees.



MASORTI E.V. (BERLIN, GERMANY)

Masorti Germany is a not-for-profit organization founded by Rabbi Gesa Ederberg and others in August 2002 in Berlin.

Best Practice Project:
***The Shabbat Children's Service
at the Oranienburger Strasse
Synagogue***

Masorti Germany runs a Kindergarten in Berlin with 45 children and is a partner with the Oranienburger Strasse Synagogue. The Children's Service – Tefilat Yeladim – takes place every Saturday morning during the Torah reading and takes about 15 minutes. This successful initiative started with a pilot phase, which included both professionals and lay leaders of Masorti Germany.

During the first four months, the rabbi was the main leader, which gave a clear signal about the importance of the new project. Feedback discussions were then held with parents. Once a certain stability of content, a core of participants and a cohesive group of adult volunteers were in place, the professional input was reduced to a meeting every few months and to consultation when requested by the volunteers, who now run the service.



Follow-on Project: Marom

The new follow-on project of Masorti Germany is Marom, i.e. activities for young adults and students, based on the best practice example of Marom Hungary.

In May 2009, the staff of Masorti had a kick-off meeting with the new group of volunteers, whose involvement has been a key element. This group plans and promotes the activities, which provide networking and learning opportunities for Jewish adults between 18 and 35, such as regular meetings and kiddushim, events for the Jewish holidays and trips to partner organizations. The activities take place in the Oranienburger Strasse Synagogue as well as in the Masorti rooms.

The staff of Masorti Germany are involved in the programming, outreach and fundraising aspects of Marom and are available for consultation and guidance.



CJMP (PARIS, FRANCE)

For over 20 years, Adath Shalom has created a vibrant community centre and organization, with about 350 families, which promotes encounters among its members while integrating the values of Masorti Judaism.



Best Practice Project: The Children's Synagogue

Adath Shalom's best practice project involving volunteers is an activity for young children (3 to 6 years old), accompanied by their parents.

The Children's Synagogue is held on Saturday, twice a month, at the same time as the main service, and it lasts one hour.

It is organized by our Talmud Torah director, involving volunteer parents who share this time with their children.

The activity is divided into two parts: a half-hour service and a history & games session. Once the activity is over, parents and children join the service held in the main synagogue. This activity, which has been running for more than a year, has been very successful and, due to popular demand, will start running weekly.

Follow-on Project: Exchange Project

Apath Shalom has set up a programme of exchange visits designed to strengthen and build relationships between members of the European Masorti organizations.

Led by a project manager, a team of volunteers finds and selects volunteer host families, acts as the mediator between families and organizes activities for the group. This service is accessible to all members and encourages volunteers to take an active role in the organization, creating a more dynamic atmosphere.



MAAYANE OR (NICE, FRANCE)

In the beginning, in 1996, we were a small group, predominantly but not exclusively women. Today, thirteen years later, over 120 families belong to Maayane Or. We offer numerous cultural activities including a literary cafe, movie club, educational travels and conferences. We participate actively in interfaith events in Nice and the wider region. We provide a full range of religious services for Shabbat, for all Jewish holidays and for all life's events.



Best Practice Project: Financial Independence

Maayane Or's best practice project is having become independent financially.

All work besides that done by the rabbi was and is handled by volunteers. The budget comes mainly from membership fees, fees for the High Holy Days and fees from all sorts of activities, such as dinners, the annual seder, conferences and movies events. The treasurer works hard to bring in the fees and everything is prepared by volunteers.

Follow-on Project: Recipe Booklet

The follow-on project was inspired by the Lisbon partner – recipes – so Maayane Or decided to make a booklet with their own recipes.

Members come from different countries so they put together an interesting collection of recipes for everyday and festival meals.

A Shabbat dinner was planned to explain what the Grundtvig programme was all about. The idea was publicized and then volunteers were encouraged to come forward and take on the responsibility for recipe

collection, checking, translation and production. A number of recipes were received as well as some translations into English, Spanish and German, which were turned into a booklet of family recipes, *Les Délices de Maayane Or*.



JEWISH CULTURAL ASSOCIATION (VALENCIA, SPAIN)

In Rosh Hashanah 5754/2003 a group of people from different countries met to share a dinner for the festival. From this initial group, Kehillat Aviv began to grow; in 2005 they registered as a non-profit association and received a donation of a Sefer Torah. Besides offering services and activities for its members, the organization plays an important role in the wider society since knowledge of Judaism and Masorti has been virtually unknown in their country.



Best Practice Project: Brunch to Attract New Members and Volunteers

In September 2008, Kehillat Aviv invited people to share a brunch at a hotel to celebrate the restart of the year, to explain about the achievements of their organization, to promote their new activities and to transmit the importance of participation and collaboration through volunteer work.

The event included: team-building activities, coordinated by two psychologists who specialize in group dynamics; a video about the history of the organization, focusing both past activities and future plans; a presentation of new projects; and a discussion in which everyone could express what they expect from the organization like ours, what they would like to have and how we can achieve

their goals. At the end, feedback sheets were distributed and filled in.

It was a very positive experience, resulting in five new volunteers to work in committees and four new families joining the organization.

Follow-on Project: Chanukah CAFE - Community & Family Education

The new activity was a Chanukah CAFE, based on the T"u b'Shvat CAFE run by St Albans Masorti Synagogue. It was designed for all ages, focusing on different aspects of the festival, and was organized by volunteers from the organization. A range of activities were on offer, some for all ages together, some for specific age groups.

The first step was to find the volunteers to run the activity, who were recruited through publicizing the project and through personal phone calls. A specific role was found for each volunteer, according to each person's interests and skills, a strategy learned at the London Conference. After the event, evaluation meetings were held with the volunteers and photos and an article appeared in the newsletter. All the printed material was prepared at Vistaprint, a best practice suggestion from by the Netherlands Masorti organization,

Some of the activities during the CAFE were: learning about the history of the festival; cooking (Chanukah cookies); arts & crafts (making your own chanukiah); singing Chanukah songs; sports games for families; and learning how to light the chanukiah.

MAROM CLUB ASSOCIATION (BUDAPEST, HUNGARY)

Since 2002 Marom Hungary has been actively reaching out to the generation of young Jewish adults in Budapest who are re-awakening to their Judaism. Activities range from large cultural events (festivals) to colourful informal education programs, artistic workshops and religious activities.



Since 2007 Marom Hungary has provided regular Jewish programs in the 'Sirály' independent civil and cultural centre in the heart of Budapest. Marom Hungary's programmes aim to increase knowledge about Judaism among the Jewish and non-Jewish population, actively involve young people as volunteers, connect different generations and promote values of tolerance and diversity.

Best Practice Project: Bánkitó festival

Marom Hungary's best practice project was the organisation of the 'Bánkitó festiva' in the summers of 2009 and 2010. In the second year the community festival's staff reached over 100 volunteers, some of whom worked for more than five months to make the event happen. The theme of the festival was 'Minorities in Hungary', with a special focus on Jewish, Gipsy and Slovakian

minorities, and a range of informal educational, cultural, art and sports programmes were offered to participants.

Follow-on Project: Mitzvah Day

Marom Hungary joined the network of the Mitzvah Day projects inspired by St Albans Masorti Synagogue. As part of the 'Social Action Exchange Program' of Marom, fifteen young people spent a weekend cleaning a Jewish cemetery in the fall of 2009. The same group also collected clothing and gave out food for the homeless as a continuation of this project.

A second follow-on project was a more narrow focus on the Jewish district of Budapest, inspired by Comunidade Judaica Masorti Beit Israel (Lisbon, Portugal). As part of the Quarter6 Quarter7 festival organized by Marom in the winter of 2009, Marom Hungary offered tours of the Jewish neighbourhood in Budapest. Over 120 people (of all ages) joined the tours, which were offered free for one week.



MASORTI ALMERE (THE NETHERLANDS)

Masorti in the Netherlands was founded in 2002 in the city of Almere. The organization holds services every two weeks and at most Jewish holidays, with many happy occasions taking place, including weddings, bnei mitzvah, conversions and social activities.



Best Practice Project: Annual Treasure Rally

For many years, the Almere/Weesp organization started the summer with an annual treasure rally, which brings participants to different parts of Holland. The finish is always in Almere, where everyone gathers for a copious barbecue. Prizes are given and there is an opportunity to socialize under the often lukewarm Dutch summer sun.

This annual event employs a lot of volunteers: those who plan the treasure rally as well as those who man the starting point, serve coffee and cookies, take photographs, write down all the personal details, take payment and then prepare the evening barbeque event. With their help, the event has always been successful.

Follow-on Project: Questionnaire – What do our members want?

The Almere organization decided to take an idea from Kehillat Aviv in Valencia and find out about what their members want by using a questionnaire. It was sent to all members, who were asked them to fill it out and hand it in either personally or send it back by post. Afterwards, the results are being tallied and a summary is being prepared, followed by a discussion with the Board when decisions will be made about which new ideas to implement. The final results will be published in the monthly magazine and a meeting with the members will also be held. We hope to have everything ready before the High Holy Days in 2010.



COMUNIDADE JUDAICA MASORTI BEIT ISRAEL (LISBON, PORTUGAL)

In 1999 a group of Marranos (Bnei-anussim) began to meet in an old Ashkenazi synagogue. The first Masorti kehillah in Portugal, Kehillat Beit Yisrael, was born and, with the help of several visiting rabbis over the years, the organization has grown. They are a small yet happy and committed organization, comprised not only of Marranos but also of people who decided to convert.



Best Practice Project: Jewish Portugal

For their best practice project, Kehillat Beit Yisrael focused on three areas: making their Marrano history known through several means, including the Internet; implementing new melodies for services; and touring key historical Jewish locations throughout the country.

Several tours of Judiarias (Jewish neighbourhoods) were undertaken in Lisbon and other villages and cities in Portugal. These have included: the Jewish neighbourhood of Sintra; the Judiarias of Lisbon; and Cabeço de Vide, a village located in the south of Portugal (Alentejo) by the Spanish border. Further tours are scheduled for the future, aiming to acquaint members and

anyone else with an interest in this subject with the most important sites of Jewish history in Portugal.

Follow-on Project: One to Six

Kehillat Beit Yisrael adapted New North London Synagogue's Seven project, turning it into a One to Six activity, in which each member taught the others something.

Topics included: discussing the evolution of kibbutzim throughout history and their impact in the development of Israel; sharing a new Marrano recipe for apple pie; learning about the life and work of Leonid Afremov, a Belarusian Jewish painter; learning about the Portuguese Jewish origins of the painter Diego Velázquez; and looking at the Shema and its significance.



PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS

The face-to-face meetings of the partners were key in sharing ideas and developing relationships. All of the partner organizations gained insights about improving their own volunteering strategies at these meetings.

Meeting 1: London, UK (September 2008)

Grundtvig Programme Training Seminar: 12 – 14 September 2008, London

This seminar was organized by Professionals and Volunteers within London organizations. It was led by Rabbi Chaim Weiner and Gillian Caplin, with input into the seminar sessions provided by Cheryl Sklan, a leadership consultant and other professionals in the volunteering and education world.

Meeting 2: Budapest, Hungary (January 2009)

Grundtvig Programme Meeting: 23 – 25 January 2009, Budapest

The main focus of this meeting was to present and discuss 'Best Practice' projects within each of the organizations. In addition, a tour of Jewish Budapest and a talk by a prominent member of the Budapest Jewish Community were scheduled.

Meeting 3: Nice, France (June 2009)

Grundtvig Programme Meeting: 12 – 14 June 2009, Nice

This meeting was organized and coordinated by Espace Maayane Or Culture in Nice. It included an update of the 'Best Practice' projects and talks on the Jews of Provence and the theme of 'Integration and Immigration'.



Meeting 4: Berlin, Germany (November 2009)

Grundtvig Programme Meeting: 6 – 8 November 2009, Berlin

The partners had the opportunity to find out about the work of Masorti Germany, with a focus on reporting about the new follow-on projects

based on work with volunteers.

Development of the website and brochure were discussed and workshops on German Jewish Heritage and Jewish Berlin were held.



***Meeting 5: London, UK
(March 2010)***

**Grundtvig Programme Meeting
& Conference: 5 – 7 March 2010,
London**

The final meeting of the partners in the Grundtvig Learning Partnership was held in London, which saw the largest gathering of members of all partnership organizations – over 200 people – including teachers, learners, volunteers and observers. Updates on the volunteer projects were given as well as a tour of the East End of London, focusing on Jewish immigration to England. Over 30 volunteers helped to plan and run the conference.

