

Guidelines for the Pre-Visit

Purpose

The pre-visit is a key part of the planning process of the regional review visit. The purpose of the pre-visit is to develop a shared understanding of the processes and objectives of the review visit and to agree on a plan of the full regional review visit which can then be implemented by the regional co-ordinator.

More specifically, the pre-visit aims to:

- Inform the region of the purposes and format of the review visit;
- Agree on key substantive issues that should be addressed by the OECD review team;
- Agree on a detailed programme of the full review visit:
 - Identify the major stakeholder groups and key individuals that the review team should meet;
 - Identify institutions and organisations that the review team should visit;
 - Identify the geographical areas to cover within the region;
 - Map out a schedule for the review visit;
 - Agree the shape of the Review team; and
- Clarify administrative arrangements (hotel bookings, within-country transportation, interpretation services, assistance to the team, time keeping, etc)

Role and responsibilities

Ideally both the Team Co-ordinator (TC) and the Lead Evaluator (LE) will take part in a two-day pre-visit to the region, although under certain circumstances the visit can go ahead with one or the other. In any case, the close cooperation between the Lead Evaluator, the Team Co-ordinator and the Regional Co-ordinator (RC) is crucial to make the pre-visit successful. The following is proposed to clarify the role and responsibilities of the TC, LE, and RC in the whole process of the pre-visit, but actual role and responsibilities may vary depending upon the situation of individual regions.

The ***Team Co-ordinator*** will (amongst other things) be responsible - in consultation with the regional co-ordinator and under the guidance of the lead evaluator - for establishing the detailed programme for the review visit and for making practical arrangements for the visit in co-operation with the regional co-ordinator.

Once all the necessary agreements are made during and after the pre-visit, the team coordinator should prepare a brief report on the pre-visit, for other team members, including:

- a detailed programme of the review visit
- the key substantive issues that should be addressed by the OECD review team; and
- other practical information for the other team members (i.e. hotel booking, informal meeting plan in the first evening at the hotel etc)

The ***Lead Evaluator*** is responsible for taking the lead in identifying the issues to be addressed by the OECD review team, in consultation with the regional co-ordinator, on the basis of the information and analysis in the self-evaluation.

The **Regional Co-ordinator** is responsible for drafting (1) a brief note on the issues to be addressed by the OECD review team; and (2) a provisional programme of the full review visit based on the broad OECD guidelines (SEE Attachment 2: A possible 7 day schedule for the regional review visit) which will be used for a basis for the discussion before and during the pre-visit.

< **Summary Table** >

Timing	Action required	By whom
Before the Pre-visit	Draft a brief note on the issues to be addressed by the OECD review team	RC in consultation with LE and TC
	Draft a provisional programme of the review visit	RC in consultation with TC and LE
During the Pre-visit	Discuss & agree on the draft issues	Actual visitor/s and RC
	Discuss & agree on the draft programme of the review visit	Actual visitor/s and RC
	Discuss & agree on administrative arrangements	Actual visitor/s and RC
After the Pre-visit	Finalise the issues to be addressed	LE in consultation with RC and TC
	Finalise the programme of the review visit	TC in consultation with RC and LE
	Finalise the administrative arrangements	TC in collaboration with RC

*** All the above are to be done in consultation with the other two members of the review team if appropriate and possible.*

Attachment 1: A Possible Meeting Schedule for Pre-visit (2 Days)

Attachment 2: A Possible 7 Day Schedule for the Regional Review Visit

Attachment 1: A Possible Meeting Schedule for Pre-visit (2 Days)

1. Meeting with Regional Co-ordinator (1.5 hours)

- Clarify reasons for pre-visit;
- Review schedule and arrangements for the pre-visit;
- Define objectives for each meeting during the pre-visit;
 - Self-evaluation Report:
 - Meeting with Regional Steering Committee: What type of decisions to be made there?
- Discuss make-up of Review Team for the Regional review visit;
- General logistics for the Regional review visit – Where the team will be based; Priorities for geographical areas to be covered; daily schedule;
- Other issues

2. Meeting with Author(s) of the Self-evaluation Report (1.5 to 2 hours)

- Review current status of report
- Discuss in detail the Self-evaluation Report and its main implications for the review visit and the overall activity;
- Provide comments and suggestions for the improvement of the Self-evaluation Report;
- Timeline;

3. Meeting with Regional Steering Committee (1.5 to 2 hours)

- Brief presentation by the OECD on the activity
- Brief presentation by the OECD on the purposes and organisation of the visit + composition of review team;
 - The Self-evaluation Report (maybe short presentation by Regional Coordinator)
 - The visit itself, what it includes – collection of information + discussions at different levels
 - The make-up of the review team
 - The Peer Review Report (30 pages)

- Discussion on: (i) the main priority issues for the review team to address; (ii) Should the review focus on any specific areas? (iii) what geographical regions should be visited; (iv) the main groups and individuals that should be consulted; and (v) the main types of institutions that should be visited.
- Identification of the main steps in planning the review visit.

4. Bilateral Meetings with Key Regional Actors (up to half day)

- Municipal and regional authorities
- Individual business and their representative bodies and associations
- Higher education institutions: The rectorate, deans, heads of departments, students
- Other regional stakeholders (i.e. public research institutes, training organisations, social partners and NGOs)

5. Final meeting: Debriefing with the Regional co-ordinator (2 hours)

- Review the discussions and their implications for the review team visit.
- Clarify the key stages of the review team visit;
- Agree on the next steps to be taken by: (a) the Team Co-ordinator; (b) the Regional Co-ordinator.
- Review team;
- Geographical areas to be covered.
- Tentative schedule. 9:00 to 6:30 daily, short lunches; no official dinners (maybe 1 or 2)
- Logistics: Hotel recommendations, place for the team to be based; translation/interpretation; assistance during visits; time keeping; transportation.
- Costs: Internal travel, interpretation services, staff member(s) to assist the review team.

The region' financial contribution to the project (€ 35.000) covers travel to/from country of the review team, secretariat members and per diems (covering hotel + meals, honorarium fee for external reviewers).

Attachment 2: A Possible 7 Day Schedule for the Regional Review Visit

1. Day 1 (Sunday): Arrival at the region & Informal meeting in the evening

Each team member will arrive individually at the region under review.

- *Before travelling to the region, the work will essentially involve the collection of information regarding the region. The detailed reading of the regional self-evaluation report and to identify key substantive issues that should be addressed by the review team are the critical task to perform before getting to the region. The OECD will send each review team member the regional self-evaluation report and other relevant reading materials at least one month before the review visit. The team coordinator will also provide other team members with a short note summarising the results of the 2 day pre-visit including a planned programme of the review visit, the major issues to be addressed for the region and other practical arrangements.*

In the evening, team members will have a first (informal) meeting at the hotel where the coordination of team's work will be made unless otherwise agreed beforehand. Issues such as the division of work, potential assignments of specific domains to the different team members, strategy for the site visits and coordination of the different contributions to the PRR will be discussed in the meeting. The lead evaluator will have a particular say in the design of these strategies as the final goal is the writing of the PRR.

2. Day 2 – 5 (Monday to Thursday): Planned Activities (Field visits, meetings & interviews)

Day 2

Meet with the regional co-ordinator & the Self-evaluation Report author(s): questions and comments and suggestions for the SER;

Meet with Steering Committee

Day 3 -5

Specific schedule depending upon the situation in the region under review. However, the typical stakeholders for the review team to meet during the regional review visit might include:

National level:

- Relevant ministries (agencies) or organisations
- Senior policy makers
- Academics

Regional or local level:

- Municipal and regional authorities
- Individual business and their representative bodies and associations
- Other regional stakeholders such as public research institutes, training organisations, other education bodies (e.g. schools, colleagues etc), social partners and NGOs

Institutional level:

- Higher education institutions: The rectorate, deans, heads of departments, students

3. Day 6 (Friday): Team discussions and working on the report (No planned Activity)

Before leaving the region under review, the review teams convened to summarise and discuss issues & preliminary findings, to exchange ideas on drafting the peer review report, and to agree at least broadly on the direction of the policy recommendations. *This time can also be used for last-minute or re-arranged meetings, or for follow-up with people seen earlier in the week.*

Possible procedures to be considered for this informal meeting and subsequent task of report writing would be:

- 1) All team members will spend some time on drafting strengths/challenges (weaknesses), and policy options for the region as a bullet point (very briefly) by several categories or sub-themes upon which team members agreed beforehand. Team members will share responsibility and draft some of these sub-themes depending upon his or her expertise.
- 2) The lead evaluator will put these individual drafts open to all members' discussion and try to reach agreement regarding the facts and at least a broad direction of policy recommendations.

Following the visit

- 3) *Each team member will elaborate the bullet point draft and makes it a full text version draft; and then send it to the team coordinator.*
- 4) *The team coordinator will collect all drafts prepared by other team members including his/her own and edit it.*
- 5) *Once the team coordinator finishes a draft peer review report, the report will be circulated to other team members including the lead evaluator for their comments.*
- 6) *The team coordinator will revise the draft in consultation with the lead evaluator reflecting the comments received if necessary.*
- 7) *The lead evaluator will sign off the final draft.*
- 8) *Once the draft is signed off by the lead evaluator, the team coordinator will contact the region of concern to ensure that there are no factual errors or misinterpretations in the report.*

4. Day 7 (Saturday): Final Meeting with the Regional Steering Committee & Return

Meet with the regional Steering Committee in the morning (Joint Meeting)

- The OECD review team presents preliminary findings to the Regional Steering Committee followed by responses from & discussion with the Steering Committee members and other regional representatives.

Meet with the regional co-ordinator to review the visit and plan the next steps