

Professional development of adult basic skills teachers in partner countries

Country: Switzerland

MACRO LEVEL:

<p>1. What do you think are the top five challenges in your country around the training of adult basic skills teachers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To create a coherent, modular training offer for basic skills trainers that covers all basic skills areas (R&W, Numeracy, ICT, language) - To deal with the trade-off between short, cheap and attractive BS teacher courses and the need for longer, substantial courses, in which the teacher acquire the competences they really need for their practice - To find enough work for BS teachers that have completed train the trainer courses - To bridge the gaps between organizations that work with migrants and those that work with natives - To professionalize a field that has a long tradition of volunteering.
<p>2. Do you have the support of your government? Is there a national policy?</p>	<p>There is no national policy. A few projects to professionalize the field have been and are being financed by the government, but all the initiatives come from the actors in the basic skills sector.</p>
<p>3. Is there a statutory entitlement to adult basic education?</p>	<p>There is no statutory entitlement to basis education in Switzerland. Currently a national law on Adult Education is being developed – Promoting basic skills is one important part of the law. But it does not look like it will constitute a “right” to basic education.</p>

<p>4. What are the employment prospects for trainee teachers? What conditions would they work in?</p>	<p>Generally, it is difficult for trainee teachers to find enough work. This is mainly due to the fact, that the amount of courses in the field is not growing (in R&W it is actually even declining). Thus the demand for new teachers is small. Basic Skills teacher mainly work part-time. Working conditions have recently improved, although they vary significantly between public and private providers (e.g. salaries). In the French speaking part of Switzerland volunteering is still widespread.</p>
<p>5. Are basic skills seen as separate subjects or one single subject?</p>	<p>Reading and writing, numeracy, ICT and second language are seen as separate subjects. Most of the work done in the field has been concentrated on reading and writing, where the term "Illetrismus" (Illiteracy) is being used - and language training for migrants, which is quite a large sector.</p>
<p>6. Is there a national requirement for teachers of adults to have a qualification to teach adults? separate from school teaching qualifications?)</p>	<p>No, there is no national formal requirement. SVEB has developed a national train the trainer system with non-formal and formal trainer qualifications. Many providers employ only teachers that possess a qualification. In some cantons, providers have to show that they employ qualified teachers in order to get subsidies.</p>
<p>7. Is there a requirement for teachers to have a subject specific qualification?</p>	<p>No. But providers will of course prefer qualified teachers. As the number of teachers that have completed one of the BS teacher trainings (and thus have a non-formal qualification) is increasing, it will be more and more difficult for non-qualified teachers to find a job.</p>
<p>8. What are the qualifications?</p>	<p>The basic qualification is the "SVEB Certificate" that proofs that the teacher has the necessary competences to work with adults. There are some BS teacher trainings that are based on the SVEB Certificate.</p>
<p>9. How long does it take to qualify as a adult basic skills teacher?</p>	<p>In the literacy field it is a 24 days course, in numeracy and language around 20 days.</p>

10. What levels are required from adult basic skills teachers?	The SVEB Certificate is on level 4/5 on the EQF. In the literacy and numeracy field the SVEB Certificate is the entry requirement for the course, thus the effective EQF level will be 6.
11. What are the entry requirements for trainee teachers?	In the literacy and numeracy field it is the SVEB Certificate, thus they should be experienced adult educators. Moreover they should be competent in the field in which they want to teach (for example a numeracy teacher should not be afraid of numbers), but this is not a formal requirement. For language teachers there are currently no formal entry requirements.
12. Are the entry requirements based on national standards?	No. Trainers do not need a national qualification, such as a professional bachelor degree.
13. Is there a distinction made between ITT / CPD?	ITT: pre-service qualification (sometimes combined with the parallel development of working experience) CPD: in-service training
14. Who delivers the training for adult basic skills teachers?	Literacy: a public provider for the National Reading and Writing Association Numeracy: currently SVEB delivers the training Language: a variety of providers from private umbrella organisations in the language sector, to private providers and Universities.
15. Who are the teacher trainers?	They are mainly very experience trainers in their field. Most of them have a degree at university level – and they have done research and projects in the field. But there is no formal requirement to be a teacher trainer.
16. Assumption of learners / contexts that the trainees will teach?	BS Teachers are trained to teacher non-formal, general courses in the classroom. Learners will mainly be low qualified and most of them will be sent from public bodies such as job centres.

17. Who pays for the training?	<p>In general: the trainee pays. Some trainees are being supported by their employers (i.e. training providers who send them to course).</p> <p>The numeracy teacher training currently provided by SVEB is partly financed by the government.</p>
18. Do you also have non-formal/unaccredited professional development/training?	<p>Yes, all of the training for BS teachers is non-formal, see above.</p>
19. Recruitment? Marketing of courses? Incentives?	<p>Marketing of courses certainly can be improved. First of all we would need more transparency on the courses offered. As stated above, we opt for an integrated, modular training offer. SVEB will take an initiative here.</p> <p>The financing of the costs of participation are the second problem. As participants have to pay for themselves, the course offers tend to be shorter than they should actually be. The shorter they are, the more attractive they are for learners. (see second challenge, question 1)</p>

SVEB, Bernhard Grämiger, Jan. 12