

Organisation: Education Scotland

Meeting: Basket kick -Off

Host organisation: Vox

Date: 9th -11th October

Location:

I. Reflections

What were the most useful experiences?

The most useful experience was actually getting the opportunity to speak to representatives from each country and to hear their views, experiences, challenges and successes.

What can be considered as examples of good practices?

One of the most interesting aspects was the success of VOX in establishing an entitlement to basic skills teacher training through statute.

That Rumania was professionalising the workforce through a national system.

That the employability agenda was strong and there were many attempts to align basic skills training within workplace settings.

What did you learn that is similar or different from policy and practice in your own country?

The differences on what is considered to be a basic skill was important, several countries reported that IT was included. This is different from the Scottish experience which regards it as a mode of teaching and core skill but not a strand of literacies education.

I think the emphasis on developing teachers in Norway - i.e. those from a school teaching background – to also provide adults education was quite different from the focussed approach on adult learning that is used in Scotland. It has a different pedagogical emphasis and philosophy with negotiation of learning at its core.

We can share many of our own experiences with colleagues who have systemic weakness in the development of basic skills e.g. Czech Republic. We have come

from this position in the last 10 years and can offer our recent experiences which may provide useful support.

What conclusions can be drawn from the experiences of the meeting?

I think it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the first meeting. We all have to have an understanding of each other's particular contexts in which we develop models of learning and teaching. This helps strengthen the understanding about why we have approached the professional development of literacies educators in specific ways. We have much to learn about how to ensure that an entitlement to adult literacies education exists across Europe as standard. How we can ensure that there is a statutory obligation to train teachers of basic skills for example? Can this be lobbied for at a European level?

What recommendation can be made based on the experiences and discussions of the meeting

- **at EU level;**

That we must have a deeper understanding of the current systems and political influence on basic skills provision, approaches to teaching and learning and training for teachers of basic skills. That basic skills has to be considered as part of a lifelong learning system and that it is not a problem that can be resolved. We need to move to a position where we create an understanding that basic skills are something which each and every one of us will need to review as society moves and changes, therefore as new literacy practices are introduced in society we have to have systems to respond to the changing needs of adults as a result of the introduction of new literacy practices.

- **at national policy making level;**

That the positive effect that including lifelong learning as statutory can have on all aspects of education.

- **at institutional level**

That there is recognition of the changing development needs of individuals and that resources are allocated for the implementation of ongoing professional development.

There was a general agreement that a focus on 'what works' on a practical level for the professional development of basic skills teachers may have the most impact within the current project.

