

Organisation: NRDC

Meeting: Third meeting, Zürich

Host organisation: SVEB

Date: 21.-22.06.2012

Location: Zürich

What were the most useful experiences?

The meeting was a useful and enjoyable experience with some interesting discussions among the partners. The overview of the current situation in Switzerland was useful and helped to understand the specific presentations later in the day.

The approach to adult numeracy teaching presented by Hansruedi Kaiser of SVEB was conceptually interesting and full of practical examples. It focussed on the relationship between language and mathematics and the idea of situated competences. The other presentations were not related to this theme and so it was not possible to continue to address questions and issues raised here in the following sessions.

The second day session in which we worked in small groups to look at the situation of basic skills teacher training Romania and Hungary was interesting and demonstrated the importance of small group discussion to enable the partners to understand each others' contexts and bring their expertise to bear. It was also useful to better understand the great differences that exist in the current situations of basic skills teacher training in the partners' countries. Learning about the detail of progress in Romania and Hungary helped us to focus on the type of recommendations that BASKET will need to make.

What can be considered as examples of good practices?

The brief discussion of Scotland's community development focussed provision highlighted the importance of a clear and strategic approach and coherent implementation to developing policy in this area.

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

The approach to numeracy teaching and learning has both similarities (a focus on the language of maths, contextualised learning etc) as well as differences (more focus on conceptual understanding as opposed to the more functional, applied practice that we saw in the presentation).

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

We need to ensure that the inputs and discussions that we have as part of the BASKET meetings are focussed on supporting us in forming recommendations on relevant areas.

One area that we need to concentrate on is the difference between teaching adults and teaching children and young people. In Switzerland and other countries it appears that there is a lack of understanding of what makes teaching adults distinct from teaching children. Another is the question of specialism – should we train teachers of basic skills more generally, concentrating on the acquisition and understanding of adult pedagogies and assuming that they are able to work on all basic skills or should we focus on producing specialist literacy, language numeracy or IT teachers.

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

- at EU and at national policy making level;

Clarity is needed on the distinct nature of adult pedagogy.