

Report from BASKET meeting in Switzerland, 21 and 22 June 2012

Organisation: Romanian Institute for Adult Education

Meeting: Zurich

Host organisation: SVEB

Date: 21-22 June 2012

Location: Walensee Resort

I. Reflections

What were the most useful experiences?

The whole meeting itself can be considered a very useful experience for the good functioning of the partnership, but also referring to the adult education field we are investigating in this project, which is professional development of basic skills trainers.

Among the many useful experiences I could mention firstly that it was very good to meet again the partnership and the hosts, to discuss and learn from each other.

It was very useful that we got an overview of the basic skills issue and teacher training in Switzerland, but also heard about other experiences of other partners like the teacher training programme for numeracy in England, ICT teacher training in Norway or workplace teacher training in Scotland.

What can be considered as examples of good practices?

Numeracy teacher training in Switzerland- the programme is offered within 9 months time, comprising 6 full (2x3) and 4 half days of course attendance. A special emphasis is put on reflection and didactic implementation and less on the theory.

Numeracy teacher training in England- a new teacher training programme that will start from September at the Institute of Education. Students have the possibility of full time study, graduating after one year, or part time study, graduating after two years. The programme contains both training classes and teaching practice placements.

Teaching basic skills teachers to work in the workplace- The PDA in Developing Literacies Learning Programmes for the Workplace has been

designed to support the continuous professional development of adult literacies practitioners and to develop the specific knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them for a role that includes engaging employers and employees in adult literacies. It also provides practitioners with the skills required to develop, plan and deliver literacies learning in workplace contexts.

ICT Teacher training in Norway- the programme is implemented since 2009 as part time study based, comprising 30 ECTS points. The training is a combination of seminars at the university college – lectures, various group work; papers - individual and collaborative; online activities; oral presentations.

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

The more we are advancing with the study visits I can tell that the differences between Romania and countries like England, Scotland, Norway or Switzerland are quite big, both from practice and policy point of view.

On the other hand, it is clear that the situation in Romania is similar to the one in Hungary and the Czech Republic, meaning that basic skills programmes and teacher training programmes are often scarce or in some cases lacking at all.

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

My personal reflections on the presentations made during this meeting can be summarised in the following:

- numeracy is most of the times bad understood and confused to mathematics; we can say that is the forgotten basic skill, as numeracy teacher training programmes are less than the ones for literacy
- cultural context is very important when teaching numeracy
- in countries like Romania and Hungary, where the formal regulations and public funding regarding basic skills is missing, the best way for success are the bottom up initiatives- a very good example is the case of Hungary- providing basic skills programmes in the Open Learning Centres and training the Learning Integrators to teach basic skills.

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

- at EU level;

- *at national policy making level;*
- *at institutional level*

At national policy making level there is a need for establishing a professionalization system for adult educators and adopting a sectoral approach, which would offer a statutory entitlement for adult basic skills teacher. Also would be needed a national framework for adult basic skills.

In this respect, after the presentation of the situation of basic skills and teacher training in Romania, the BASKET partnership contributed with suggestions for an action plan:

- raising awareness campaign
- engaging "positive" people/stakeholders
- running a pilot project at local level
- building partnerships/networks
- transfer from other countries
- role of the Basket partnership: train the teachers- the EBSN Academy