

## **Swiss Federation for Adult Learning 's report on project meeting in Bonn**

*Organisation: SVEB*

*Meeting: Bonn*

*Host organisation: DIE*

*Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> October*

*Location: DIE, Bonn*

### **What were the most useful experiences?**

This well organised meeting was very rich in terms of information exchange and learnings. We appreciated the overview of the completed and new "alphabund" research programmes in Germany providing a research base which is very valuable especially for the practical work being done in Switzerland concerning basic skills training at the workplace. The overview of adult basic skills teacher training in Germany was also relevant compared to the ongoing processes in Switzerland together with the report about the Scottish system of educational pathways which will shortly be implemented.

### **What can be considered as examples of good practice?**

The report from Scotland about the project dealing with the question on "how to attract people into learning" through hot spots down to streets to build up relationships to engage learners (social workers and family centers) to prove the effects of engaging with learners at early stages.

The presentation about the Scottish framework and online information tool about teacher training is certainly an example of good practice inspiring ongoing development work in this field in Switzerland.

Furthermore the Learners Manifest of the Eur-Alpha Project and experiences with learner's involvement may be considered as example of good practice as well as the German Campaign and film [www.alphabund.de/1638.php](http://www.alphabund.de/1638.php) about learners of the Eur-Alpha project.

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

The statutory right to basic education in Norway provides an important driver for different actions all over the country. It also requires a very strong effort in training of teachers. The Norwegian development emphasizes the crucial need for financial support of legal provision to support actual implementation. The draft Swiss Federal Law on Further Education does not entail statutory rights but legal ground for action on national and cantonal level based on federal funding schemes.

The comparison of the roles of volunteers in the training of basic skills was also interesting. Partners agreed that volunteers need to be trained to be able to do the right things. This goes in line with the Swiss perspectives and current work on national frameworks for the education of basic skills teachers.

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

Generally the qualification of basic skills teachers is based on the assumption that well qualified teachers provide better results for learners. This assumption is not yet proved based on research, although it seems to underly the teacher training efforts in each country. Also the work of the High Level Group of experts on Literacy whose report we took as starting point for the formulation of first recommendations on professionalization of basic

skills teachers is based on the same assumption. Further research needs to be done in this field.

A major conclusion from the meeting is that the professional development of the “literacies workforce” needs a professional framework which provides flexible pathways supporting entry, development and progression of trainers like the Scottish system presented at the meeting.

**What recommendations can be made based on the experiences and discussions of the meeting?**

One of the major conclusions is to develop common recommendations considering all relevant work already done in the field as well as country specific guidelines to be able to take the different national situations and needs into account.

The demand for “Best teachers for the least qualified” emphasises the need for good and flexible qualification for basic skills teachers. This demand also clarifies the need for basic training for volunteers to be able to give good support to learners. Furthermore the need for clear national pathways regarding the professionalization of basic skills teachers was clearly shown.

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