

Swiss Federation for Adult Learning 's report on the BASKET meeting in Timisoara

Organisation: SVEB

Meeting: BASKET Meeting Timisoara

Host organisation: IREA

Date: February, 25-26 2013

Location: University of Timisoara

Reflection on the progress of the recommendations and outcome so far

“The best trainers for the least qualified” – this sentence, extracted from the recommendations, sums up why there is a need to (further) qualify adult educators in the basic skills field. Professionalization of teacher training should be a central and key element of every national basic skills strategy. The BASKET recommendations are needed to spread this important message across Europe.

In general, I have the impression that we are producing a well-founded set of recommendations. The approach to develop the recommendations so far was very democratic. I felt that all partners could equally contribute to the development process. The meeting in Timisoara was an important step in the process, as we managed to reduce the scope of the recommendations and really focus on the professionalization of basic skills teachers. The two levels chosen (policy level and methodological/content level) are adequate. Also, I appreciate the decision to allow country specific recommendations in addition to the general recommendations. In this respect I was a bit surprised to learn that some countries in the partnership do not think it is necessary to write something country specific. We expect that the country specific recommendations for Switzerland will have a much larger impact than the general ones.

In relation to the content of the actual list of recommendations I would like to highlight three issues that are of special importance from the Swiss point of view:

1. *Teaching literacy, numeracy and ICT needs subject specific competencies.* There is no such thing as a basic skills teacher! Teaching literacy requires different methodologies and didactics than teaching numeracy or ICT. In consequence, there is a need for a modular teacher training system, which allows teachers to specialize.
2. *Initial training is not enough.* Continuous professional development (CPD) of the teacher staff is as important as the initial training of teachers. There is a huge need to offer on-service training, coaching and peer-to-peer-learning networks for the staff in basic skills. The basic skills field is on constant move – and so should be the working force.
3. *Development of a national standard.* A main driver for professionalization is a certain pressure to qualify. In order to build some pressure, the public authorities have to play a role to set minimal qualification requirements. Of course, the stakeholders in the basic skills sectors should be allowed to specify or at least influence the definition of the requirements.

The BASKET recommendations will only have an impact, if the partnership manages to disseminate it to the relevant national and international bodies. On the international level, the EBSN could play an important dissemination role. On the national level it is up to the partners to approach and talk to relevant decision makers. The question of efficient dissemination should be discussed in the Budapest meeting.

Reflection on the situation in Romania

From Simona Sava's presentation on the situation regarding the Romanian system for the professionalization of adult educators I was surprised to learn that a lot of adult educators are overqualified for their jobs. It seems that the qualifications system is not adapted to the needs of the adult education sectors. The system should particularly allow non-formal pathways into the teaching adults. Less surprising, however, were Simona Sava's statements about the lack of finances and the problem with unreasonable bureaucracy.

Zürich, April 22, 2013

Bernhard Grämiger, SVEB