EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INCLUSION

Europe 2020 : Employment policies
Vocational training and adult education

ET 2020 WORKING GROUP ON ADULT LEARNING

REPORT OF SIXTH MEETING, 21-22 APRIL 2015 (BY WEBINAR)

Participants: AT, BE FR, BE FL, BG, CY, DE, FI, IE, IT, NL, PL, SE, SR, NO and CH, ETF, Cedefop, Business Europe, CSSE-ETUCE, EAEA, EBSN, ELGPN and EUCEN.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this meeting were to:

- Consolidate the discussion carried out at its last meeting regarding the format and character of the outputs and agree on the work process and template to use for the concrete outputs responding to the specific key priorities under ET 2020 and Europe 2020 identified in the mandate.
- Initiate the process of mapping content, key messages and policy recommendations for policy challenges 1 (Basic skills) and 2 (Policy effectiveness).
- Report from the Oslo workshop on implementing ICT and OER in AL (policy challenge 3) and agree on how to proceed with the initiated process.

1. WELCOME

Paul Holdsworth (DG EMPL) opened the meeting and introduced Guenter Hefler, ICF, who is currently replacing JD Carpentieri in supporting the group.

2. POLICY UPDATES

The European Agenda for Adult Learning revised priorities for 2015 – 2020 will be agreed as a part of the ET2020 Joint reporting exercise. The Commission has analysed Member States' reports on the work they have done so far to implement the Agenda, and on the main challenges they see ahead. In the light of this, the Commission proposes to focus on four priority areas: Governance, Supply and take up, Flexibility and access, and Quality. The proposed priority areas have been presented to the meeting of Directors-General for VET and adult learning in Riga.

EPALE, the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe, was launched by Commissioner Navracsics on 15 April. The site now offers a pan-European Calendar of events, a Newsroom, a Resource Centre and five Thematic Pages which focus upon topics important in the Adult Learning Sector. EPALE is still developing and WG members are strongly encouraged to be in contact with their respective National Support Services to be involved in shaping the platform to help meet the needs of AL stakeholders in their country and across Europe.

The Call for proposals through which the Commission offers funding to the National Coordinators of the Adult Learning Agenda was issued in the beginning of March and work programmes are to be submitted by 19 May 2015. Paul encouraged WG members to liaise with their respective AL Agenda coordinators to discuss the focus and actions of their proposed work programmes 2016 – 2017. .

3. WG AL WORK PROGRAMME 2015

Angela Andersson gave a short overview of what has so far been achieved by the group. She informed the group that it may, if needed, continue to work until the end of 2015. A revised timetable for the outputs was suggested and will later have to be confirmed through Yammer. She also asked the group to suggest possible engaging speakers ("TED-like") to promote AL during the 2015 ETY Forum to be held this year from 19 to 20 October. More information about this will also be presented on Yammer.

Guenter Hefler introduced the suggested template to use for the final outputs, developed by JD, the Commission and Jan Hylén after the January meeting. He emphasised the importance of outputs coming from the group, and stressed that they should focus on what the group's work can add to the policy discourse, not just repeat or summarise other sources. He also introduced a mapping of target groups and fields in adult learning, to be used as a basis for considerations regarding target groups and messages. WG members found the mapping very useful.

4. POLICY CHALLENGE 1, BASIC SKILLS PROVISION

Guenter Hefler gave an overview of areas, topic and themes in this field so far dealt with by the group. From the meeting reports and outputs of the group he had listed, among other things, key messages, policy recommendations and good practice examples being discussed so far by the group, and invited the group to comment and add to this selection, in order to create a "menu" to choose from when deciding on the outline of the final output. This process will continue until 5 May on Yammer.

5. POLICY CHALLENGE 2, POLICY EFFICIENCY

Mantas Sekmokas gave a short overview on the status of the study "Analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness" which is being finalised in April. This included the final version of the conceptual framework, which had been uploaded on Yammer before the meeting. He reminded the group about the very close links between the WG and the study, and encouraged the group to consider how best to make use of the Final study report in its outputs, and how, as a group or in each country, they could take forward the study proposals and further develop its results. He also mentioned that the production of the on-line Analytical tool, designed to help policymakers, is underway.

Guenter Hefler made an overview of the group's work so far in the area of policy coherence, and the expected output focusing on efficiency and effectiveness of policies described in the mandate. As for Basic skills he had listed, among other things: key messages, policy recommendations and good practice examples being discussed so far by the group. Members in the webinar discussed the concepts of coherence, cooperation and partnership which will later be examined by the editorial team. Also for this output the process will be initiated on Yammer in order to create a "menu" to choose from when deciding on the outline of the final output.

6. POLICY CHALLENGE 3, ICT AND OER IN ADULT LEARNING

Birgit Aschemann, AT and Norbert Lurz, DE, briefed the group about the cases they had presented during the Oslo workshop in March; an Austrian MOOC and a German Web

portal, both aimed at adult learners with low basic skills. Both members reported that feedback from colleagues had been very valuable in further developing their concepts, and both had initiated activities in their countries as a result of the workshop.

Jan Hylén, ICF, gave an overview of the process leading to the workshop and briefly presented the remaining two cases (DK and ES). He summarised the key messages from the workshop, among others that blended learning seems to be an element in successful implementation of ICT in AL, and that communication seems to be a crucial element, as demonstrated by the cases presented. The report from the workshop is being validated by the participants and will be posted on Yammer in the beginning of May.

The final part of the meeting was spent discussing a Dutch model developed for the evaluation of implementation of ICT in schools, which the participants in the Oslo workshop had suggested could be modified and developed for AL use, in particular by adding the communication aspect. Members in the webinar agreed that the model, which puts ICT in a broader context of AL development, could be further developed, and added that the learner focus must be different in an AL environment. They also pointed out that the terminology has to be adapted to AL, as this takes place in many places other than schools, and that the concept of chronological coherence – or need for flexibility in defining tools - is, because of the speed with which things become obsolete in this field, also to be taken into consideration.

The discussion will be continued on Yammer.

10. NEXT STEPS

- All presentations will be uploaded on Yammer and all members of the WG will be invited to comment on what was presented and discussed during the webinars.
- Editorial teams will start their work on drafting final outputs – WG members are reminded to sign up for a team.
- A new, detailed roadmap for the WG will be uploaded on Yammer
- More information about the "TED-like" speakers sought will be uploaded on Yammer.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the WG will take place on 16 and 17 June in Brussels.

Preliminary dates for the coming meetings of the WG are 16-17 September and mid-November.

If needed, a seminar or workshop might also be organised during the autumn, date, venue and topic to be decided and suggestions welcome.