ET 2020 Working Group on Adult Learning

Report of ninth meeting, 26-27 October 2015

Participants: AT, BE NL, BG, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, IE, LV, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI,SK, RS, TR, IS, NO) ETF, Cedefop, ETUC, CSEE-ETUCE, EAEA, EBSN, ELGPN and EUCEN.

Objectives

The objective of this meeting was to agree on key messages and recommendations for the Group's reports on successful policies in delivering basic skills for adults and improving the use of ICT-enhanced approaches in adult learning. It was also to comment on and provide additional input to the Group's report on the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of adult learning policies and, as this was the last meeting for the Group, to reflect on and summarise the mutual learning having taken place during the two years of the Group's cooperation.

1. Welcome

Paul Holdsworth, Team Leader – Skills for Adults, EMPL C5, welcomed the members of the working group and pointed out the operational character of the meeting, aiming at agreements for the outputs - policy guidance to be used by colleagues in the member states countries.

2. Report from Editorial team Basic skills

The report covering policy challenge 1, Basic skills, had been shared on Yammer in the weeks before the meeting, and comments to the key messages and recommendations received during this period had been integrated to the text by the editorial team during its meeting 26 October.

The revised messages and recommendations were presented in detail, and further comments collected from the group. Ema Perme (SI) volunteered to coordinate these, and any other comment being made before 4 November into a final version to be uploaded and validated by the Group through Yammer.

3. REPORT FROM EDITORIAL TEAM OER AND ICT IN AL

The report covering policy challenge 3, use of ICT and Open Educational Resources (OER had been sent out to the Group and comments to the key messages and recommendations had been integrated to the text by the editorial team during its meeting 26 October.

The revised messages and recommendations were presented in detail, and further comments collected from the group. Michal Denes (SK) volunteered to coordinate these and any other comments sent to him before 4 November into a final version to be uploaded and validated by the Group through Yammer.

4. REPORT FROM EDITORIAL TEAM POLICY EFFECTIVENESS

The report from the editorial team for policy challenge 2, Policy coherence, efficiency and effectiveness, is at an earlier stage of production than the other two parts of the final report. The editorial team decided after the meeting in September to take a few steps back and rewrite most of the text with the aim of making it less theoretical. In the meeting of the editorial group 26 October they re-organised the key messages and recommendations, without changing their content, under the headings: coherence, efficiency and effectiveness. These were presented in detail, and further comments collected from the group. Liesbet Vermandere (BL NL) volunteered to coordinate these, and other comments coming in before 4 November, into a version to be further developed by the Commission and uploaded on Yammer for comments by mid-November.

After questions from members of the Group regarding the role of consultants and the relations between the output of the Group and the final report from the 'Study on adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe', commissioned from the ICF consortium by the European Commission, the Commission clarified that the final report from the study is a separate publication, not technically part of the Group's output.

Having said that, it was pointed out by members of the group that many conclusions presented in the final report of the study were used to support the Group's recommendations. Members of the Group also mentioned that they participated actively in developing the analytical framework for the study, and that, without being a direct recommendation in the final output of the Group, the framework could be suggested as a useful new tool for policy makers to use.

5. COORDINATION OF OUTPUTS

The three reports will, together with the infographics, be put together into a final report by the consultants and the Commission in the last weeks of November. This might involve some reorganisation of material to support readability, avoid overlap and clarify the messages. This draft will be uploaded on Yammer for final comments and validation by the group.

6. COMMUNICATION

Angela Andersson reminded the Group about the agreed communication products that are to be produced to support the dissemination and exploitation of the final output; a

PowerPoint, a short video and three infographics to be included in the final product. The Group will be consulted on Yammer when there are drafts available from the communication and graphical teams, which might need to be commented on at short notice.

A draft three-page document summarising the key messages of the ET 2020 Working Group on Adult Learning was presented. This document will be part of a document presenting, in short, the results of all six working groups and will be used to inform the DGVT and the Education Council in November. This document will also be translated to all EU languages.

7 POLICY UPDATES

Mantas Sekmokas briefly presented an upcoming Erasmus+ call, (Key Action 3: Policy experimentation), which would invite partnerships of national authorities to experiment with using an analytical framework such as the one developed by the 'Study on adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe' to analyse the effectiveness of their adult learning policies. The Group will be informed through Yammer as soon as the call is launched.

Paul Holdsworth confirmed that the suggested theme for the Working group on adult learning in the next generation of ET 2020 working groups (2016 – 2017) is 'adult workplace based learning'. The draft mandates will be discussed in the DGVT meeting in Luxembourg 16-17 November. DGs will in particular be asked to identify the most pertinent issues in relation to 'adult work-place based learning' in their countries, and invited to consider how they will identify experts that have both a long standing involvement with national policy development in education and training and relevant national experience of policy on adult learning and training in the workplace.

8. LEARNING REFLECTIONS

Several members of the group pointed out that the three policy challenges the group has been asked to address are big and complicated. Covering these, and the two studies indicated in the mandate, has been very demanding and could in fact have needed three parallel processes. The fact that each of the three policy areas was supported by a different external consultant had not been ideal.

Comparisons were made with the flipped meeting approach applied by the Commission for this Group, and the earlier thematic working groups, where consultants were described as working very close to the experts, taking part in all meetings, all European events in the field, and producing the Group's final reports for the experts to comment on.

It was also mentioned that meeting minutes should more clearly indicate what has been agreed and what remains to discuss. Members agreed that the Peer Learning Events organised in Stuttgart, Brussels and Oslo had been very rewarding, and suggested that researchers and others such as representatives from sectoral skills councils or other bodies dealing with adult learning outside the educational system could be invited to meetings for sharing their experiences and allowing dialogue.

9. NEXT STEPS

The Basic skills and ICT&OER texts will be uploaded on Yammer for comments no later than 4 November. Draft infographics and first versions of video will be uploaded during November and might need to be commented on with short notice.

Remaining texts will be uploaded during November and remaining consultation will be carried out on Yammer and if suitable in webinars.

10. END OF MEETING

The Commission staff thanked the members of the working group for their involvement and their expertise and wished them well for the future.

Attendance