



Adult Learning Working Group

16 September 2014

2.00 – 5.30 pm

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Introduction and welcome

- Introduction
- Aim of the study:
 - To create an analytical tool, which would support Member States to formulate and implement effective adult learning policies, making better use of existing evidence base.
 - Help national policy makers implement and improve their policies.
 - Model to guide the collection of quantitative and qualitative data

Objectives for this afternoon

The aims and objectives of this session are to:

- Update you on progress;
- Present an overview of the key success factors identified from the evidence;
- Identify evidence of any other key success factors (policy actions);
- Refine the principles and purpose of a toolkit; and
- Gather feedback from you on the possible design of a toolkit.

Timetable

- **2.00 – 2.30:** Introduction and ‘icebreaker’
- **2.30 – 3.00:** Emerging success factors we have identified
- **3.00 – 3.50:** Emerging success factors – discussion
- **3.50 – 4.10:** Break
- **4.10 – 5.25:** Toolkit design
- **5.25 – 5.30:** Finish and close

Introduction

- For the framework, we are seeking to identify evidence-based success factors that contribute to the outputs/outcomes/impacts of adult learning;
- Progress so far:
 - Consultation
 - Literature review
 - Data analysis (qualitative and quantitative)
 - Revised framework
- Other success factors or evidence to include?
- Development of the framework is an iterative process.

Task

- The purpose of this task is to ask you to identify the policy actions you consider to be the most important success factors;
- List of the 30 or so policy actions from the recent consultation document broken down by success factor category;
- Please write out the **four** policy actions you consider to be the most important success factors on post-it notes (four votes); and
- Place the post-it note with the appropriate success factor category.

Task

- What are considered to be the most important success factors?

Emerging success factors – objectives

- We are seeking to identify the key success factors that lead to effective adult learning, as demonstrated by outputs (e.g. increasing participation or more qualifications) and outcomes (e.g. “social” and “economic”)
- We want to establish the policy actions that contribute to achieving such outputs and outcomes.
- We have identified many from the research tasks undertaken.
- We want to ensure that the set of success factors and policy actions within them are as complete as possible.

Emerging success factors – standards of evidence

- Evidence which we included met the following criteria:
 - Measure and assess the effect of adult learning policy actions;
 - Demonstrate a causal relationship between adult learning and expected outcomes OR between particular policy actions and their expected outputs and outcomes; and
 - Indicate the scale of relationship.
- Lack of large scale quantitative and longitudinal studies
- Absence of evidence does not mean certain policy actions are ineffective

Methodology – evidence review

- Literature review:
 - 130 items initially screened
 - 73 items included in the review including:
 - Literature reviews/meta-evaluations
 - Evaluations of policy actions using quantitative and qualitative data
 - Quantitative analyses of statistical relationships
- Consultation
 - 55 responses
- Country analysis
 - Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data

Emerging success factors – key findings (policy actions)

■ Example:

- Tyers et al (2004) evaluated the success of the Adult Guidance Partnerships (AGP) across the UK
 - 9% of clients improved their qualification level since their first contact with the AGP;
 - 27% of those who first contacted the AGP with no qualification had a qualification of some kind at the time of evaluation;
 - 30% reported that they had gained new skills since contacting an AGP member and over half of these attributed it to the work of AGP staff.
- This provides evidence that guidance systems can assist target groups in accessing adult learning.

Emerging success factors – key findings (overall)

- Outcomes associated with adult learning:
 - Learners
 - Social
 - Economic
 - Well-being
 - Employers
 - Economic
 - Workforce
 - Innovation
 - Community
 - Economic
 - Social

Emerging success factors – key findings (overall)

- Increasing participation in adult learning:
 - Provision of opportunities to participate in adult learning is key driver
 - Employers play a very important role in providing/enabling participation but also stand to benefit from it
 - Building a positive disposition towards learning among adults is important
 - Harder-to-reach groups must be drawn in

Emerging success factors – key findings (policy actions)

**Planning and
governance**

**Providing learning
that is employer
and learner-
focused**

**Engaging employers
in promoting and
investing in adult
learning**

**Promoting active
inclusion**

Emerging success factors - gaps

- There are gaps in the evidence:
 - Introduction of over-arching strategies
 - Teaching workforce improvements
 - Qualification system reforms
 - The effect of the introduction of quality assurance systems on adult learning
- Do these make a difference? Is there evidence?

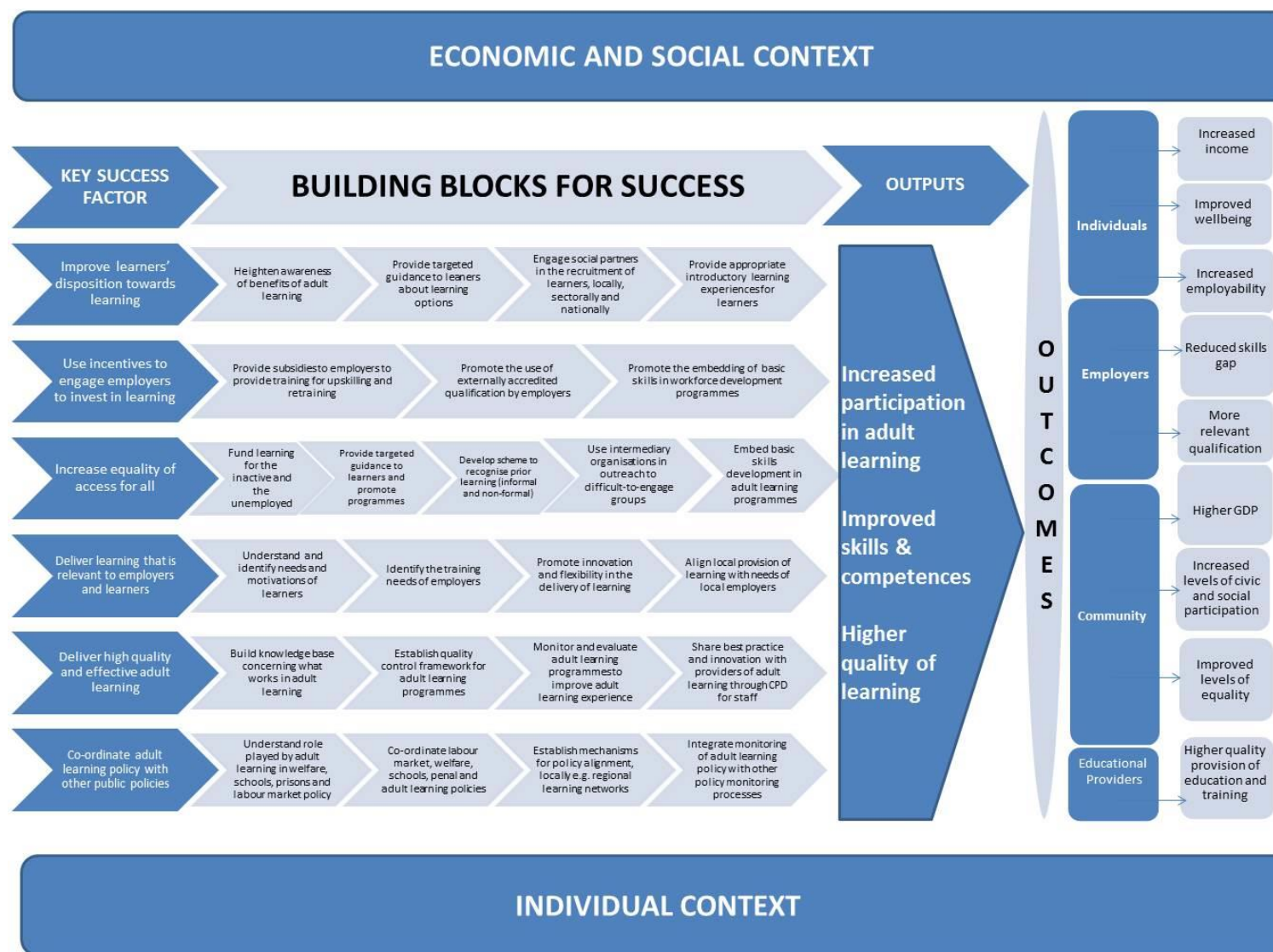
Emerging success factors – changes to conceptual framework

- We have made the following alterations to the original conceptual framework as a result of our findings:
 - Identified the linkages between outputs and outcomes for the key beneficiaries;
 - Re-ordered the key success factors to match the ordering of the outcomes;
 - Clarified the key success factors to reflect the research evidence;
 - Renamed the policy progress steps as “building blocks”; and
 - Ensured the building blocks and their descriptions reflect the research evidence.

Emerging success factors – overview of categories

- Drawing on the evidence, the six key success factor categories are as follows:
 - Improve learners' disposition towards learning
 - Use incentives to engage employers to invest in learning
 - Increase equality of access for all
 - Deliver learning that is relevant to employers and learners
 - Deliver high quality and effective adult learning
 - Co-ordinate adult learning policy with other public policies

Conceptual framework



Emerging success factors - discussion

- In groups, please discuss:
 - Are the success factors we have identified the ones you would expect?
 - Are there any success factors or building blocks which surprise you? Why?
 - What evidence is there about other policy actions or potential building blocks which we have excluded/consider to be weak?
 - Is there evidence (e.g. evaluations of initiatives focused on adult learning etc.) from your country/transnational projects?

Break

- Tea/coffee is available in the break-out room.
- Please be ready to resume by 4.10 pm.

Toolkit design – principles

- Recap
- The aims of the toolkit are as follows:
 - To provide an overview of Member States' performance;
 - To show the progress of individual Member States in implementing;
 - To provide a tool for policy-makers to implement and improve their policies
 - To be considered as a knowledge base to help Member States; and
 - To provide a publicly accessible source of information on adult learning.

Toolkit design – principles

- Review of 9 toolkits and online tools:
 - Examples of toolkits from the adult learning sector; and
 - Other toolkits used at a European level
- Identified a number of desirable design features for a toolkit:
 - Clear structures;
 - Easy to view comparisons;
 - Display of progress made;
 - Individual country profiles or reports;
 - Clear explanations about the indicators being used; and
 - Data to download and/or explore.

Toolkit design – six features

- Countries can assess their performance in implementing policies for effective adult learning in comparison with other countries;
- Comparative data on Member States' performance with respect to outputs and outcomes and implementation of adult learning policies
- Quantitative data on outputs should allow comparison of countries and provide trend data;
- Thematic presentation of the quantitative and qualitative data relating to implementation, by success factor;
- Enable use and interrogation of data by policy-makers and other stakeholders; and
- Easy updating of data.

- Have we missed any principles for the design of a toolkit?
- Are there any other design features which we should include?
- How could we improve on the “vision” for the toolkit?

Toolkit design - criteria for assessment

- Comparability
- Ability to monitor progress in implementation
- Clear linkages to conceptual framework
- Usefulness
- Usability and clarity
- Updatability

Toolkit design - features

- Potential high-level design features of a toolkit (in no particular order):
 - Feature 1: Integrated structure;
 - Feature 2: Framework focus;
 - Feature 3: Indicator dashboard;
 - Feature 4: Country focus; and
 - Feature 5: Success factor focus.

Toolkit design – Feature 1

The screenshot shows the top of the European Commission website. At the top right, there are links for 'Legal notice', 'Cookies', 'Contact', 'Search', and a language selector set to 'English (en)'. Below this is a header with the European Commission logo and the text 'EDUCATION AND TRAINING' and 'Supporting education and training in Europe and beyond'. A breadcrumb trail reads 'European Commission > Education and training > Discover the EU's role > Strategic framework'. Below this is a red navigation bar with a home icon and three links: 'Discover the EU's role', 'Find Erasmus+ opportunities', and 'Tools, Portals, & Partners'. The main content area has a red banner that reads 'Welcome to the European Commission Online Scoreboard on Adult Learning.' followed by a paragraph: 'This scoreboard is designed to assist policy-makers in monitoring the progress of implementation of effective adult learning policies.' Below this, it says 'From this page, you can:' followed by a list of five bullet points. To the right of the main content is a sidebar with a light blue background. It contains three sections: 'CALLS' with a radio tower icon, 'DOCUMENT LIBRARY' with a book icon, and 'MEDIA GALLERY' with a play button icon. Below these is a 'NEWS' section with a dark blue header. It lists three news items, each with a small image, a date, and a headline. The first news item is dated 01/08/2014 and mentions Xavier Prats Monné. The second is dated 29/07/2014 and mentions Vassiliou. The third is dated 10/07/2014 and mentions a record-breaking year for Erasmus.

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Erasmus+ programme

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Welcome to the European Commission Online Scoreboard on Adult Learning.

This scoreboard is designed to assist policy-makers in monitoring the progress of implementation of effective adult learning policies.

From this page, you can:

- Learn about the conceptual framework underpinning this study;
- View Member States' performance on a range of indicators;
- Assess the success of Member States in implementing effective adult learning policies.
- Read individual reports on Member States; and
- Access further additional resources.

CALLS

DOCUMENT LIBRARY

MEDIA GALLERY

NEWS

 01/08/2014
Xavier Prats Monné –
New Director-General
of DG Education and Culture

 29/07/2014
Vassiliou urges
Education Ministers to
help kids crack the code

 10/07/2014
Another record-
breaking year for
Erasmus

Toolkit design – Feature 2

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IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE ADULT LEARNING POLICIES

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

KEY SUCCESS FACTORBUILDING BLOCKS FOR SUCCESSOUTPUTS

IndividualsEmployersCommunityEducational Providers

Increased incomeImproved wellbeingIncreased employabilityReduced skills gapMore relevant qualificationHigher GDPIncreased levels of civic and social participationImproved levels of equalityHigher quality provision of education and training

Increased participation in adult learningImproved skills & competencesHigher quality of learning

INDIVIDUAL CONTEXT

CALLS

DOCUMENT LIBRARY

MEDIA GALLERY

NEWS



01/08/2014
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10/07/2014
Another record-breaking year for
Erasmus

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Toolkit design – Feature 3

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Adult Learning Indicator Dashboard

Contextual indicators	Data	Source
Indicator 1		Eurostat, Demography
Indicator 2		Eurostat, Demography
Indicator 3		Eurostat, LFS


SUCCESS FACTOR 1	Data	Source
INDICATOR 1		Eurostat, LFS
INDICATOR 2		Eurostat, LFS
INDICATOR 3		Eurostat, LFS
INDICATOR 4		Eurostat, UOE

 CALLS


 DOCUMENT LIBRARY

 MEDIA GALLERY

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Erasmus

Toolkit design – Feature 4



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Toolkit design – group discussion

- In groups, please discuss possible features of the toolkit with regard to the following:
 - What features would be strengths of a toolkit?
 - How might features be improved?
 - What features would enhance its use at national level?
 - What features are missing?

Next steps

- Evidence review:
 - Completion of 10 country case studies, alongside evidence review;
 - Further refinement of the conceptual framework.
- Toolkit design:
 - Incorporate feedback
 - Identify and match indicators
 - Bring design to production to prepare working model
- Consultation in October on evidence review and toolkit design

Conclusion

- Should you wish to get in contact, please do:
 - Shane Beadle – shane.beadle@icfi.com
 - Séin Ó Muineacháin – sein.omuineachain@icfi.com

