

# ET2020 Working Group on Adult Learning

## 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Brussels – 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2015

Günter Hefler

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# First presentation – Further preparatory steps for the outcome paper on adult basic skills

# Overview

- Collection of arguments presented by 24<sup>th</sup> of April revisited
  - Feedback received on the collection of arguments
  - Preview – ICF report on policies supporting adult basic skills
  - Outlook
    - Linking arguments
    - Defining target audiences
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# Draft template for Adult Learning Working Group outputs

	<b>Pages</b>
Front cover	1
Chapeau	1
Table of contents	1
Introduction	1
Key messages	0.5
Recommendations	0.5
Policy context and why it matters	1-2
Research evidence on efforts to improve the situation, including challenges faced and how to address	5-6
Good practice	5-6
Summary/conclusion	1
Tools for active reading (check lists ...)	1
Back cover	
Total pages	20

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# Basic Skills:

## Key message

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- Content discussed*
- Employment opportunities and activity levels in participation in the society are strongly related to achieved levels of formal education and levels of basic skills (reading/numeracy/ICT)
  - For overcoming low levels of basic skills and completing upper secondary education in adulthood, lasting and comprehensive frameworks are required, supporting adults in multi-year learning trajectories
  - Outreach strategies, providing basic skill education within the living spaces of adult groups targeting, are key and indispensable for effectiveness of adult basic skill provision
  - Involved educators abilities to effectively work towards solutions for inhibitions of learning processes (including learning disabilities) are key for the success of programmes – programmes should be appropriate for all starting levels of proficiency
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# Basic Skills: Key message Proposals via google docs

- Embedded provision (in the workplace, in other places where the target groups could be easily reached) of a limited number of hours (+/- 30) create outcomes and works as an icebreaker for more encompassing courses on individual level (Theres Kuratli)
- Need of flexible provisions that do not copy initial education methodologies, environments and schooling time. (Aviana Bulgarelli)
- Curricula and pedagogies should include real life experiences like learning at the workplace and learning to cope with real life issues like building up your pension, taking care of your health, acquisition of social and employment search support (Aviana Bulgarelli)
- Not all adults wish or have the possibility to engage in long lasting courses to complete upper secondary education. Therefore it is important to develop modular curricula that allow for the acquisition of certified basic skills. (Aviana Bulgarelli)

# Basic Skills: Key message Proposals via google docs

- Countries need to develop recognised (modul-based) curricula for trainers specialised in adult basic education (Birgit Aschemann)
- For trainers in adult basic education, stable career pathway and appropriate employment conditions are required for allowing stable and long-term commitment to the field and avoiding a ‘brain train’ from the field of adult basic education into fields providing stable and non-precarious employment careers (Birgit Aschemann)
- In basic skills education, applying didactical approaches appropriate for adults (Andragogy) is essential and require particular attention in the preparation of trainers (Birgit Aschemann)
- Countries need to develop recognised (modul-based) curriculum for trainers specialised in adult education (Birgit Aschemann)

# Basic Skills: Key message Proposals via google docs

- For trainers in adult basic education, stable career pathway and appropriate employment conditions are required for allowing stable and long-term commitment to the field and avoiding a ‘brain drain’ from the field of adult basic education into fields providing stable and non-precarious employment careers (Birgit Aschemann)
- In basic skills education, applying didactical approaches appropriate for adults (Andragogy) is essential and require particular attention in the preparation of trainers; teaching material in reading, writing, numeracy and ICT should be relevant for the adults’ learners’ living environments (Birgit Aschemann)
- For effectively overcoming low levels of literacy and numeracy skills and achieving, for example, as level equivalent to the end of lower secondary education, comparatively intensive educational activities running over a multi-year framework are required. (Birgit Aschemann)

# Basic Skills: Key message Proposals via google docs

- The long term nature of overcoming low levels of basic skills implies the need for safeguarding participants' retention – including options for restarting after dropping out. It also implies that any assessment of programs' outcome need to choose a long-term observation period and to account for various contributions by different programs the final outcome. (Birgit Aschemann)
- Beyond long term effects on skills levels, adult basic education deliver a broad variety of positive effects, for example participants' improved self-esteem, which directly support participants' employment prospects (Birgit Aschemann)

# Basic Skills: Policy Recommendations

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- Content discussed*
- Establishing stable funding for adult basic skills provision beyond project-based (ESF related) funding
  - Improving cooperation and partnership across policy fields supporting adult basic education
  - Better exploring and communicating the messages of the PIAAC survey or related national data sources
  - Allowing adult educators in basic skills provision to improve the level of task-specific professionalism (for example, identifying and overcoming learning disabilities of adults)
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*Additions*

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# Basic Skills: Recommendations – Proposals via google docs

- Define target groups and the scale of intervention for embedded provision in a way to reach a maximum of outcomes with a minimum of input (Theres Kuratli)
  - Start with more accessible target groups for getting new program initiatives established (Theres Kuratli)
  - mobilizing and involving actors that can contribute to adult basic learning like public libraries, banks (to teach adults how to manage and read a bank account while improving their numeracy skills), social security local offices, NGOs, health centres and hospitals. (Aviana Bulgarelli)
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# Basic Skills: Recommendations – Proposals via google docs

- Defining a recognized curricula for trainers/educators in adult basic education (Birgit Aschemann)
  - Programs in adult basic education should foresee appropriate steps allowing for the evaluation of their short-time and long time outcomes (Birgit Aschemann)
  - For effective upskilling of disadvantaged groups of the population, considerable public investments is required, spanning various levels of activities and levels of provision; this high public investment should be seen in the light of the high public returns of a effectively reduced number of low qualified/low skilled adults,
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# Basic Skills: Recommendations – Proposals via google docs

- To support systematically the development of a knowledge base in the various member states, reflecting the particular conditions on country level, and use these knowledge base for mutual policy learning (Birgit Aschemann)
  - In EU funding programs, support for adult basic skills should be prolonged for at least one [two] further program periods to safeguard long-term development of the sector (Birgit Aschemann)
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# Basic Skills: Ten Policy Recommendations by ICF 2015 study – without overlaps

- Ensuring that there is a framework curriculum for outcome oriented basic skills provision.
- Generating demand for basic skills training amongst employers, perhaps through education of employers or subsidies;
- Providing opportunities for learners to progress to further learning, and ensure that progression routes are clearly signposted to learners and are promoted through various channels;
- Ensuring that learners have opportunities for accreditation and certification of learning in order to open up progression opportunities

# Basic Skills: Ten Policy Recommendations by ICF 2015 study – without overlaps

- Providing support to adult learners (e.g. support with course fees, travel costs, childcare, and time off work) to encourage learner participation and persistence;
- Learner persistence and motivation is inhibited by mandatory participation in learning, and therefore unemployed adults with basic skills needs should be encouraged to take-up opportunities on a voluntary basis.

# Basic Skills: Context and why it matters

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- Content discussed*
- Deteriorating demand for low qualified adults
  - Strongly raising demands for basic skills across all occupational groups
  - Improving employment opportunities with post-secondary/tertiary levels of education – skill shortage in highly skilled occupations
  - Mio adults with low educational attainment (below upper secondary education)
  - % adults with low reading skills (Level 1 or below in PIAAC)
  - % adults with low numeracy skills (Level 1 or below in PIAAC)
  - % adults with low problem solving skills in IT environments (Level 1 or below)
  - Low basic skills as a barrier for full participation in lifelong learning (job and non-job related) and civic engagement
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*Additions*

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# Basic Skills: Why it matters – Proposals via google docs

- Refer also to (May 2015) OECD Skills Outlook 2015 on youth & skills (Aviana Bulgarelli)
  - Improved literacy is connected to better health, more civic engagement, a higher sense of trust and more social cohesion (various sources) (Birgit Aschemann)
  - Economic costs of low basic skills are struggling high (national and cross-country comparative sources) (Birgit Aschemann)
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# Basic Skills: Research evidence - Proposals via google docs

- Short work based provision of basic skills are able to deliver valuable outcomes (for the given workplace, both for the individual and the organisation) and could pave the way for longer participation spells on individual level (Theres Kuratli)
  - Research evidence on Basic skills for non-English Speaking countries needs further improvement (Birgit Aschemann)
  - approaches for a meaningful and more differentiated assessments of the lower levels of literacy (corresponding PIAAC level 1 and below) are not available in many languages beyond English (Birgit Aschemann)
  - In many countries, migrants are an important group for basic skills provision, requiring adequate support. (Birgit Aschemann)
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# Basic skills: Examples for Good Practice

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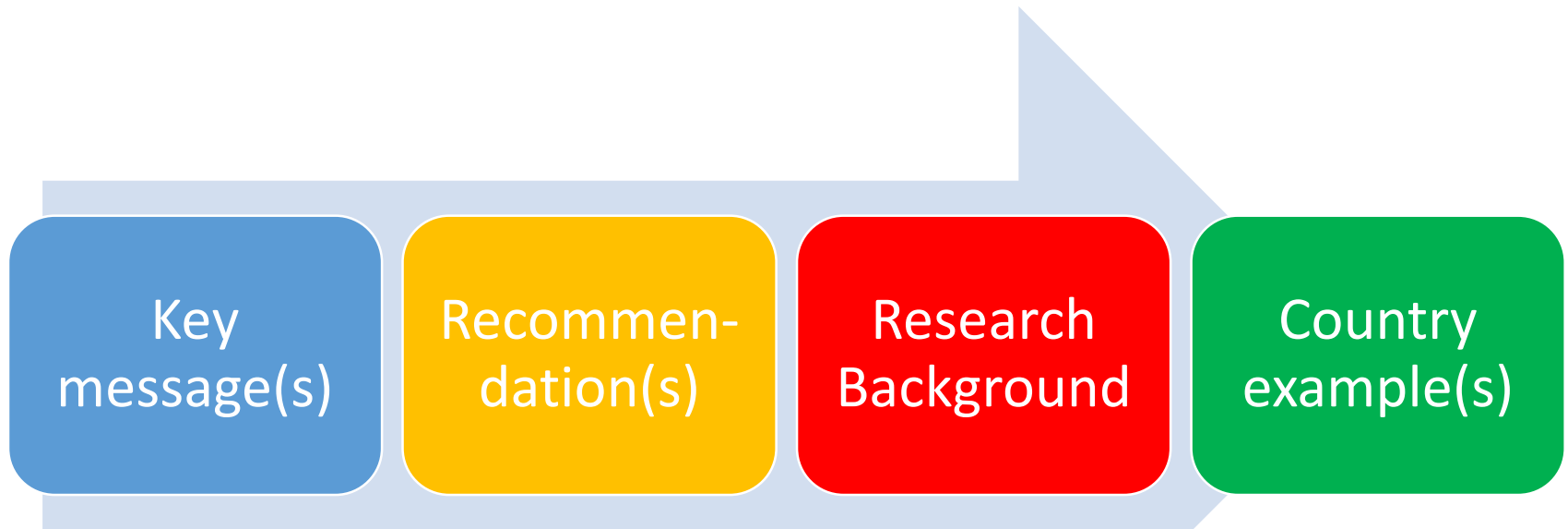
## *Examples discussed*

- Austria: Initiative Erwachsenenbildung
  - Belgium/Flanders: Flemish Strategic Plan for Increasing Literacy; Centres for ABE
  - Bulgaria: New chance for success project
  - Germany: Baden-Württemberg – Schools and basic education
  - Italy: Flexible Training interventions
  - Luxembourg: Promoting the basic skills
  - Norway: Basic Competences in Working Life (BCWL)
  - Poland: Lighthouse Keepers
  - Serbia: Second Chance/Functional Based Elementary Adult Education
  - Slovenia: Development of Basic Skills
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## *Proposals via google docs*

- Switzerland: Basic education at the workplace  
(*Grundkompetenzen direkt am Arbeitsplatz fördernGO/GO2*) (Theres Kuratli)
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# Strategy for organising arguments across sections of the output papers



1. Linking one key message to one (or more) recommendations,
2. Provide tailored research background supporting the key message and the recommendations
3. Choose one or more country examples demonstrating the key message/the recommendation

Key  
message(s)

Recommen-  
dation(s)

Research  
Background

Country  
example(s)

## Basic Education

Supporting  
Professionalisation/  
Professionalism of  
ABE trainers

Funding educational  
programmes  
Creating qualification  
standards  
Crafting stable  
employment patterns

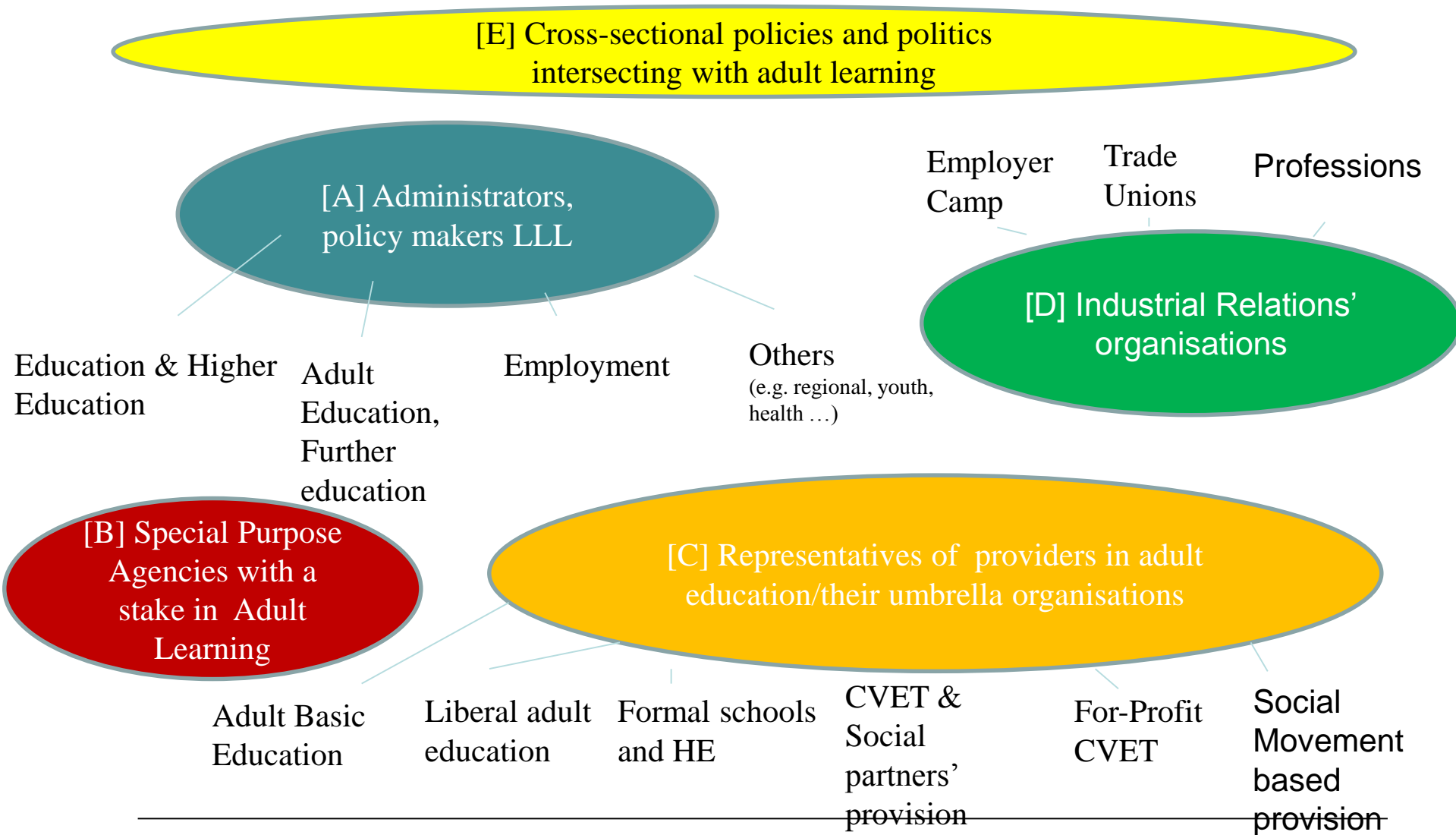
Full/parttime/  
volunteer trainers in  
ABE  
Challenges for  
professionalism  
Challenges for  
professionalisation

Example for  
modular/APL based  
curricula (e..g Austria)  
Example for successful  
Professionalisation  
(not identified yet)

# Guiding questions for the preparation of the outputs

- What are the outcomes of the working group's cooperation **adding** substantially to the policy discourse, as represented by recent policy documents?
- What are the (multiple) positions ('voices') in adult learning to be strengthened from the (various) vantage points of the group members?
- Who are the target groups of the output documents?
  - What are the **new messages** to be delivered to them?
  - What is required so that the output documents effectively attract the attention of the intended readership?
- How to account for cross-country (even regional) variations in adult learning, and their likely impact on what might be perceived as helpful in the various contexts?

# Mapping fields in adult learning



# Starting points (examples of members of the working group) and ...

Units for Adult Learning in M f Education (5)

Units for HE M f Education (1)

Units for Employment and skills in M f Education (2)

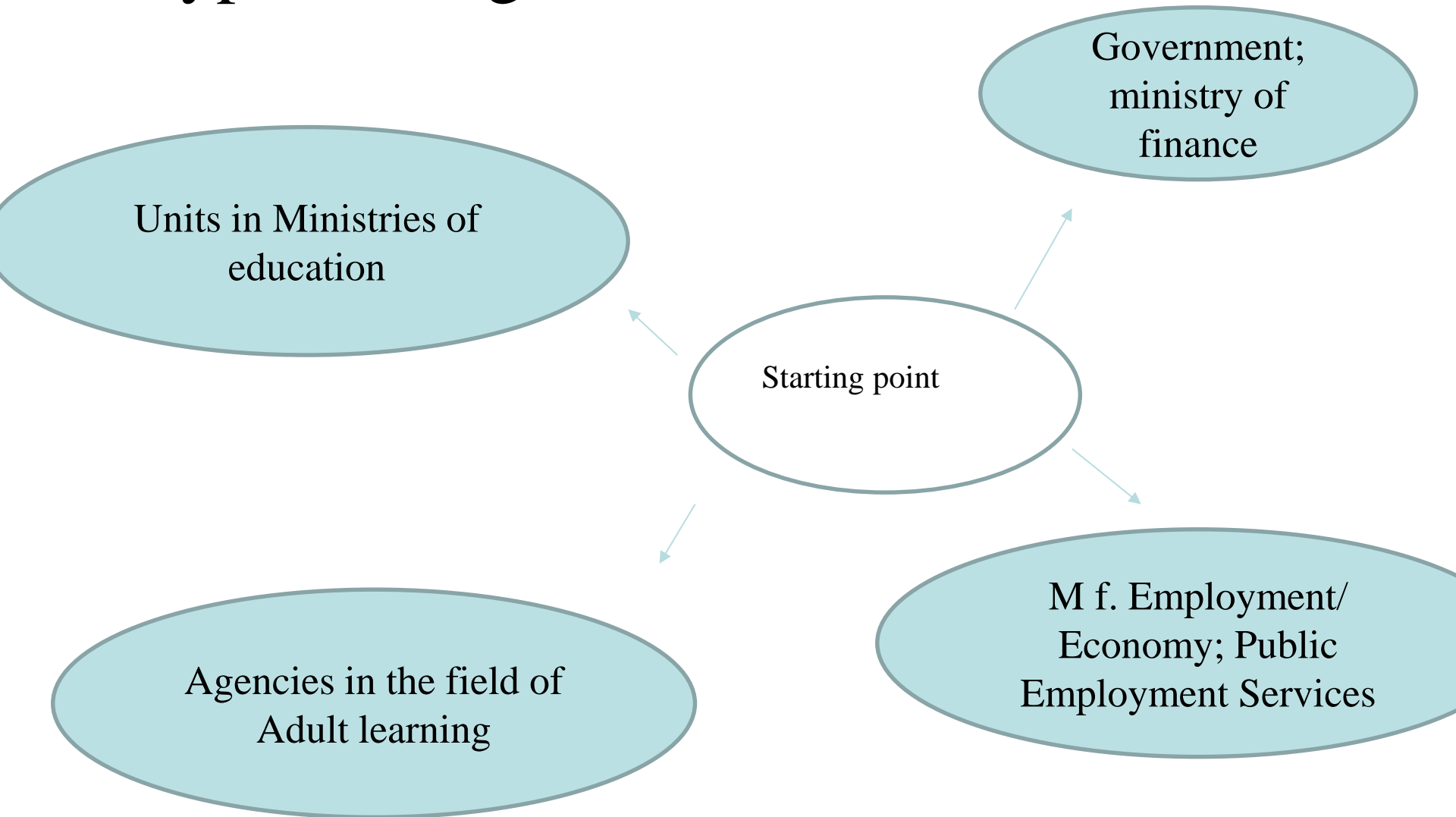
Units for International Relations in M f Education (1)

National Agencies related to learning (2)

Units for skills in Ministries of employment/economy (2)

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# Types of target audiences



# Thank you very much for your attention!

Kontakt:

3s research laboratory

Dr. Günter Hefler

Wiedner Hauptstraße 18

1040 Wien

[hefler@3s.co.at](mailto:hefler@3s.co.at)

[www.3s.co.at](http://www.3s.co.at)