

THE EUROPEAN AGENDA FOR ADULT LEARNING (EAAL). 2015/17 UK WORKPLAN: A SUMMARY FOR THE ENGLAND IMPACT FORUM

RATIONALE

The OECD Survey of Adult Skills indicated that the UK, like most European nations, faces significant challenges in attainment in basic and digital skills. These challenges are more acute for groups such as 16-24 year olds, socially excluded adults and those out of work. A number of our work packages focus on the needs of these groups.

The focus of the UK work is on improving skills for low-skilled individuals and participation in learning for groups currently excluded from education, training and the labour market. We will help bring about change by influencing both policy makers and practitioners. A key issue we have identified is the need to engage a wider audience outside of adult learning policy/practice circles.

We expect the programme will have the following outcomes and impact by 2017:

- Greater awareness of the EAAL in the UK, and policy coherence between the four UK national administrations and the UK government, ensuring policy development is evidence-based, accessible and effective
- A *State of the Nations* report outlining the current state of play in UK adult learning to inform future policy development
- A fully piloted Citizens' Curriculum with outline longitudinal findings that provide evidence for future policy development across the UK and Europe to enhance basic skills levels & other key competences
- Documented evaluations of young people-led participant research to inform policy development and practice
- Influential reports from UK impact forums on how they have contextualised research to enable better regional policy development & planning
- A fully trialled and developed CPD programme to support adult educators in the four UK nations to better use technology to support under-represented groups
- The direct participation of 200 practitioners and policy makers in two international conferences in the UK, with the involvement of EC colleagues, EPAL & other National Coordinators
- Virtual participation of 5000 people interested in adult learning policy development via social media

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the work programme will be to:

- Maintain a UK Reference Group for the EAAL as permanent mechanism to oversee the work and disseminate its findings to ensure maximum impact and synergies with other programmes such as Erasmus + and EPALE
- Enable greater policy coherence through sharing existing research, looking for regional and local case studies, and disseminating it
- Engage a wider range of policy makers, influencers and decision makers in each of the four home nations
- Promote evidence-based approaches to policy development and formulation across the UK
- Strengthen further the understanding amongst policymakers, practitioners, providers and adult learning and skills stakeholders that are implementing a Citizens' Curriculum approach to adult basic skills
- Produce, translate and disseminate evidence which effectively supports young unemployed adults to get the skills they need to access sustainable work
- Support adult educators to increase their effective use of technology with adults who are currently under-represented in adult education
- Attend and contribute to National Coordinator meetings, transnational events and collaborations to ensure that UK policy and practice is promoted, and to learn from other countries' experience
- Run four Impact Forums in each of the four UK nations to support collaboration, policy coherence and the sharing of transferable practice
- Organise and run an interim and a summative conference to disseminate and showcase the work in 2015-17.

THE WORKPACKAGES

1. The Citizens' Curriculum
2. Young Adults Employability
3. Digital Skills for Underrepresented Groups
4. The Impact Forums
5. Impact Research and Reporting

More can be read about each of these below.



Forum for Adult Learning

NI

ECORYS



Scotland's Learning Partnership



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

1. THE CITIZENS' CURRICULUM

This programme strand aims to strengthen further the understanding amongst policymakers, practitioners, providers and adult learning and skills stakeholders that are implementing a Citizens' Curriculum approach to adult basic skills – which interlinks language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills with wider health, financial and civic capabilities – will bring about increased participation and better outcomes for adult learners. In turn, this supports national priorities for improving adults' skills, and the economic and social benefits arising from this.

The objectives of the work are:

- to develop, through longitudinal research methods and evaluation, an enhanced evidence base about the Citizens' Curriculum's impact on longer term outcomes for participating learners, including achievement, progression to employment and further learning, which can be shared across the four UK nations and more widely with EU stakeholders;
- to develop, through research, structured discussion, and links with EPAL UK, a better understanding amongst stakeholders of how UK national / devolved policy and EU policy in relation to the Citizens' Curriculum capabilities, and in particular for adult literacy, numeracy, ESOL and digital learning, supports the development of the Citizens' Curriculum approach in each of the four UK nations.

The objectives will be achieved by:

- Follow up of longer term learner outcomes from selected Citizens' Curriculum Phase 1 pilot projects, working with specific disadvantaged cohorts such as homeless adults and migrants
- Embedding of longer term learner outcomes data capture approaches in new Citizens' Curriculum pilots, in settings such as provision for unemployed adults
- Analysis and interpretation of the longitudinal data gathered, to support the evaluation of the Citizens' Curriculum
- Sharing of current policy across the Citizens' Curriculum capabilities through round table sessions at impact forum meetings / conferences.
- Develop and embed longitudinal data capture in new Citizens' Curriculum pilot settings, preparation of policy briefings to inform impact forum meetings / round table discussions
- Follow up of Citizens' Curriculum Phase 1 pilots at 12 months, and analysis of the resulting data
- Longitudinal follow up of new Citizens' Curriculum pilots
- Analysis and evaluation of longitudinal data and production of impact report
- Sharing of findings and further policy updates through round table discussions at impact forums, conferences



- Inclusion of key findings and outcomes in 'state of the nation' reports and links with EPALE UK

2. YOUNG ADULTS EMPLOYABILITY

This programme strand aim to contribute to key national priorities of youth employment and social inclusion through a young-people led research model. It will be achieved through the following activities:

- Desk research to identify/review current national programmes that support young peoples' employability and transitions to employment and the effectiveness of such programmes in enabling young people to understand and develop the skills and attributes that employers value.
- Recruitment and training of partners that work directly with unemployed young people from specific target groups, to deliver young people-led research activity with employers.
- Direct research with employers to identify the range of ways in which employers can support young people to develop employability skills, barriers and how such barriers can be overcome.
- Sharing of key findings at local, national level and EU with a range of stakeholders, including employers, learning and skills providers, specialist support agencies, local authorities, LEPs and employer forums, and via EPALE UK

3. DIGITAL SKILLS FOR UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS

This activity aims to:

- Identify relevant existing research and effective practice in the use of learning technologies with niche groups
- promote an awareness of this work through EPALE UK and other forums/platforms
- Identify effective models of delivery and support for blended / online learning programmes
- Design and develop an online CPD course for adult educators (including those supporting learners in the workplace) to increase their capacity and capability in the use of technology with niche groups
- Deliver the course to adult educators in the 4 UK nations with input and participation from other EU states.

Evidenced by:

- Positive feedback for staged project outputs from providers and practitioners in the 4 UK nations and in EU states who support / deliver learning to adults from niche groups
- Positive feedback from online course delegates
- Expressed Intent to use project outputs by course delegates and round table



participants to improve access for all adults to high-quality learning opportunities at any time in their lives, for any purpose

- Web statistics for access to digital assets
- Participation numbers and demographics of webinars

4. THE IMPACT FORUMS

Impact Forums are independent stakeholder meetings which discuss research and development activities related to the UK's programme of work and contextualise them for each UK nation and report back formally at the UK National Conference each year.

Membership and attendance

- Representatives of local and national policy makers in England
- Representatives from adult learning providers including colleges, local authorities, as well as private and third sector bodies
- Representatives of infrastructure bodies, or agencies in health or regeneration bodies with an interest in adult learning
- Employers and trades unions with an interest in the EAAL and adult learning policy
- Support agencies and curriculum specialist agencies in adult learning
- Universities and think tanks researching in the field of adult learning
- EAAL project leads will be invited to attend and presenting their findings
- Representative of LEARNING & WORK INSTITUTE as National Coordinator
- Representatives of EPALE UK and National Agency

Each Forum will:

- Convene at least three times per annum at times to maximise synergies with policy cycles in each administration
- Promote its work through progress blogs for EPALE UK
- Enable greater policy coherence through sharing existing research, looking for regional and local case studies, and disseminating it
- Promote evidence-based approaches to policy development and formulation across the UK, particularly around the social and economic impact of learning
- Produce, translate and disseminate evidence to networks from WPs 1-3
- Organise and run a workshop at the UK interim and summative conferences, summative blogs for EPALE UK

5. IMPACT RESEARCH AND REPORTING

The aim of this work package is to convene an expert group of researchers to oversee the



Forum for Adult Learning

NI

ECORYS



Scotland's Learning Partnership



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

compilation of a *State of the Nations* report, which brings together national, international and regional research on adult learning in order to influence policy makers and practitioners alike.

It will establish a strong working relationship with EPALE UK, which will also be invited to attend meetings, so that wider networks of adult education policy makers, researchers and/or practitioners are involved.

Please see attached paper for more detail.

L&W February 2016