



EAEA
ACTIVITY REPORT 2009



EAEA ACTIVITY REPORT 2009

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HIGHLIGHTS OF 2009

EVENTS

- General Assembly and Grundtvig Award
- Financing adult education for development Conference
- European Active Citizenship Conference
- European Conference 2009 on Professional development of adult education staff
- CONFINTEA VI and FISC

PUBLICATIONS

- New EAEA leaflet (also in Portuguese)
- Trends in Participation
- Grundtvig Award Brochure
- European Adult Education outside the EU

STATEMENTS

- EAEA Statement on Territorial Cohesion
- EAEA comments on the Updated strategic framework
- EAEA Statement on the Employment Summit
- Appeal on Active Citizenship
- EAEA Statement on the Grundtvig Programme
- EAEA Statement on Financial Regulations
- EAEA Statement on the Mobility of Young People



EAEA General Assembly 2010



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This EAEA Activity Report refers to the period from January to December 2009 and it presents a general overview of the work of the EAEA performed throughout this time. It is based on the application for core funding from 2009 and follows the Work Plan 2009, which was approved by the General Assembly 2008 in Dublin. In the past, the reported period varied according to the timing of the General Assembly. This report now covers the complete year of 2009, which now corresponds to the financial reporting. Due to this change, some activities that were reported last year are now repeated in this report.

1. INFLUENCING PUBLIC POLICY

One of the most important events that influences EAEA's activities was the publication in September 2007 of the Commission's Action Plan "It's always a good time to learn", a follow-up to the earlier "Communication on Adult Learning: It is never too late to learn". EAEA is very much involved in the implementation of the Action Plan. EAEA's President Sue Waddington is a member of the working group.

1.1 Maintaining contacts with DG Education and Culture and other DG's

Working contacts with Directorate-General Education and Culture

(DG EAC) are getting closer each year; the main office is in regular contact with the Unit for Adult Learning. A particular highlight this year was a meeting with Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth Mr Ján Figel and the Director General for Education, Training, Culture and Youth Ms Odile Quintin.

The EU Commissioner Ján Figel, responsible for Education and Culture, met with EAEA's newly elected President Ms Sue Waddington, the EAEA Executive Board and Secretary General Ms Gina Ebner as well as EAEA staff representatives in order to discuss the role of EAEA and Adult Education in current and future European policies.

The Commissioner stressed in an in depth discussion the importance of Lifelong Learning in today's difficult time and pointed out that without lifelong learning, there will be no lifelong earning. He emphasised the importance of learning mobility and intercultural dialogue as key instruments for a future Europe of knowledge and underlined the need of an increased engagement of all Member States



On our way to meet Ján Figel



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in the field of education and culture. Answering some of the requests from EAEA on a deepening European engagement within learning the Commissioner replied that the trend is indeed to further increase the role of education across the whole field of Union policies. Answering a suggestion on increasing the speed of implementing lifelong learning policies the Commissioner replied by remarking that the Union has moved a long way already. Looking back only ten years shows us clearly how much has been achieved. We should not lose sight of the fact that we are in the middle of a process, and we are clearly moving forward. He gave the example of the initiative to harmonise adult education systems through the European Qualification Framework, which now is gaining global interest. In education, the European Union is seen as a forerunner, creating an example for others to follow. Thus education cannot for instance be ignored when the European Recovery Plan is being drawn up. In a detailed question session he strongly encouraged the representatives from non EU and EU accession countries to look for ways of cooperation within the current EU policy instruments and programmes and emphasised that this kind of cooperation is very welcome by the European Commission. The benefits are becoming more and more obvious to all those involved, because, said EU Commissioner Ján Figel, education unites.

This encounter was followed by a constructive meeting with Ms Odile Quintin, Director General for Education and Cul-

ture. She emphasised the need for extended cooperation with EAEA and also saw an increasing importance being given to education within other sectors. She especially mentioned that education and further training for adults is one of the key elements when trying to develop the European Recovery Plan. She did not, however, foresee any increases in the Union budget for education.

Regular meetings took place between EAEA representatives and the EC unit for adult education. The president and secretary general also met with the new director, Helene Clark, to introduce EAEA and non-formal adult education to her.

Via the European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS LLL), the relationship with other units in DG EAC has been reinforced and EAEA has been very active in the stakeholder initiatives (see below).

The Executive Agency, in addition to the Lifelong Learning Programmes, now also administrates the core funding for European associations and good relations have been intensified.



Meeting with Ms Odile Quintin and Mr Alan Smith.



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1.2. Lobbying for Lifelong Learning, Adult Education and Civil Society

Since January 2007, EAEA has been one of the NGOs with participatory status at the Council of Europe and is thus a permanent dialogue partner in the Council of Europe. Ruth Jermann, member of the EAEA executive board, has taken over the representation of the EAEA. The Conference of Ingo in Strasbourg is the main place where NGOs of all European countries can come together to promote their thoughts, remarks and action plans.

Via EUCIS Platform LLL, EAEA continues to be represented in the Liaison Group Civil Society of the Economic and Social Committee; whenever education and training are on the agenda, adult education is one of the themes that are being discussed. EUCIS Platform LLL has been accepted as the eighth member of the Civil Society Contact Group (CSCG), a group of large European NGO platforms in the following fields: culture (EFAH), development (CONCORD), environment (Green 10), human rights (HRDN), lifelong learning (EUCIS), public health

(EPHA), social (Social Platform) and women (EWL). The joint efforts are aimed at developing the dialogue between civil society organisations and the EU institutions as an essential part of strengthening participatory democracy. The CSCG tackles issues that go beyond the individual sectors (e.g. lobbying register, European elections, budget) and provide an opportunity for capacity building among its members.

1.3. Platform memberships

EAEA is a member of the Access2Culture platform, which was established by the European Commission in 2008. There, we are members of the working group on education and culture.

In 2009, the European Commission established a new platform on Multilingualism, where EAEA was accepted as a member and is actively involved in the working group for education and chairing the subgroup for LLL.

EAEA is also active in the Social Platform, in which it is a member. Through the Social Platform, EAEA could participate in a preparatory workshop for the employment summit and present its proposals for the financial crisis to a wider public and DG Employment.



At the EUCIS LLL Hearing on active citizenship..



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1.4. Statements and opinions

In order to be recognised as a policy actor and interesting representative of a civil society sector, an organisation in Brussels needs to take position, present opinions on policies, offer clear perspectives of strategies and produce convincing policy recommendations. EAEA has published a number of papers in the last year, which you can find in the annex.

1.5. EUCIS Platform LLL - The European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning

The platform successfully organised its General Assembly in March; exceptionally, no EU officials were present as it was seen as necessary to discuss internally how the Platform should continue working, the added value and relation towards European institutions. Four new members were accepted, so the Platform currently has 19 members. Gina Ebner, the EAEA secretary general, was appointed president of the EUCIS LLL platform in April, which will provide further visibility and civil society standing for the EAEA.

EUCIS-LLL, in partnership with the European Economic and Social Committee, organised a next public hearing on “Lifelong learning, a key to achieve European active citizenship?” on 22 September 2009 in Brussels. This event is part of a broader reflexion on how to promote active citizenship in education and training. EUCIS had already organised a workshop on this topic at the European Civic Days of La Rochelle in September 2008.

During this event, participants were in-

ited to share ideas and experiences on how to foster active citizenship in lifelong learning - taking into account the different contexts of learning, formal but also non formal and informal, from “cradle to death”. The participants also outlined its limits.

If the concept of active citizenship is widely used today, it refers to different understandings. Some consider active citizenship as the active use of civic rights by EU citizens (voting at EU elections, participating in consultations...) others relate this concept to the feeling of belonging to a common project or identity. Participants tackled this issue by adopting a broad definition of active citizenship. “How do we ensure that citizens do participate actively in the life of the EU?”

EUCIS LLL started its first working group in 2009, on the topic of the European Qualification Framework and its implementation in NQFs. Vice-president Eeva-Inkeri Sirelius attended on behalf of EAEA. The working group identified the following needs: a definition of qualifications based on learning outcomes; to take into account non formal and informal learning; to develop the validation of non formal and informal learning; to promote continuity and progression; to enhance comparability and recognition; to involve civil society stakeholders; to define the next steps and priorities for after 2012.

The European Commission, in partnership with EUCIS-LLL, organised a second Stakeholders' Forum for broad consultation of European Stakeholders on 9 February 2009, in Brussels. The European Commission had published an ‘Updated Strategic Framework for Europe-



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an cooperation in education and training', which defines the key challenges and directions for education and training in the next few years and especially for the post-Lisbon period. EUCIS LLL proved to be a valuable partner in organising this event. In the morning, the various chapters of the updated strategic framework were discussed and in the afternoon, the concepts and proposals of innovation and creativity were debated, both for the immediate European Year but also for the longer-term. EUCIS-LLL was responsible for drafting the programme with the DG EAC and for the publication of the general report and of the Stakeholders key messages. The Forum will now become an annual event.

1.6. Grundtvig and the Lifelong Learning Programme

EAEA has been lobbying for a Grundtvig Mundus programme that would open Grundtvig to the wider world (especially the countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy, where we have many members who are keen to join European projects). In the call for 2010, which was published in Autumn 2009, multilateral projects and networks had been opened to other countries. EAEA is very happy about this development but still thinks that this can only be a first step in the opening of the programme. The publication 'European Adult Education Outside the EU', which was produced together with our member *dvv international*, will help with the lobbying.

In mid-2009, EAEA learned that the European Commission had started think-

ing about the future of the LLP. The new generation of programmes will start in 2014, so everything has to be in place then. EAEA then conducted an extensive survey among its members to learn more about their experiences with the Grundtvig programme and their suggestions for the future. The summary of this survey (see Annex) has been used to lobby for the Grundtvig programme including more money in the future.

Ms Eeva-Inkeri Sirelius, vice-president, and the Secretary General represented EAEA in the Grundtvig working group. This group consists of representatives of different National Agencies, experts and stakeholders and is responsible for developing new Grundtvig programmes, with a special consideration for the practical implementation of these new initiatives.



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2. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

2. Benchmarking and monitoring systems should be introduced in order to assess progress. This can only be ef-



President Sue Waddington presents the European region at FISC.

2.1. CONFINTEA VI and FISC

As all other organisations, EAEA was very concerned by the postponement of CONFINTEA to December. Nevertheless, the president and the secretary general could participate on behalf of EAEA, and quite a few other EAEA members went as part of their national delegations. EAEA represented European civil society and presented European developments to a wider public. At FISC, we organised a meeting of the European organisations that were present and put forward, on behalf of this European Caucus, two main demands:

1. A legal structure for the governance of ALE should be present in all countries. This governance structure should include civil society, learners' representatives, providers and governments.

fectively undertaken if civil society, learners and providers are involved as well as governmental organizations in this monitoring.

Both these demands were included in the Civil Society paper presented to CONFINTEA.

We organised two workshops in CONFINTEA, one on validation and recognition of prior learning and another on adult learners' festivals as a means for increasing participation. The EAEA, together with its civil society colleagues from around the world, lobbied for a number of demands. EAEA had the chance to present some of these demands in the plenary, where we also underlined the need for more money for adult education and the Lifelong Learning Programme. Despite the lobbying and the fact that a board



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member of the EAEA (Katarina Popovic) and some other EAEA members were in the drafting committee, it was not possible to achieve any quantifiable objectives and targets. The Belem Framework for Action contains many points that we are happy with, and we have joined our colleagues in the Civil Society Caucus to publish a summary from our point of view, both positive and critical.

2.2. UN Literacy Decade

We are in the midst of this literacy decade, and all the data coming up via the Global Monitoring Report on Education for All show that we still have almost 800 Mio youth and adults not fully literate on this globe, and maybe still some 100 Mio children no places to complete schooling successfully. Halfway through the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) 2003-2012, UNESCO has conducted a review of progress. The review has been a key opportunity to take stock and set a clear direction for the promotion of literacy between 2007 and 2012 in all key areas of the UNLD Plan of Action. The results of the mid-decade review have been submitted to the UN General Assembly in October 2008. EAEA president Sue Waddington participated in the High-Level Symposium and Technical Consultation which took place on 26-28 January 2009 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

2.3. Development

EAEA has decided to apply for membership in Concord. CONCORD Europe is a European NGO confederation for re-

lief and development. CONCORD Europe consists of 22 national platforms and European network organisations. Uwe Gartenschlaeger, who was appointed Vice-President with special responsibilities for international issues, will be the EAEA representative in Concord. Due to statutory issues of CONCORD, the membership procedure has been delayed, but EAEA has been invited to join some working groups already.

3. CONFERENCES

3.1. Financing adult education for development

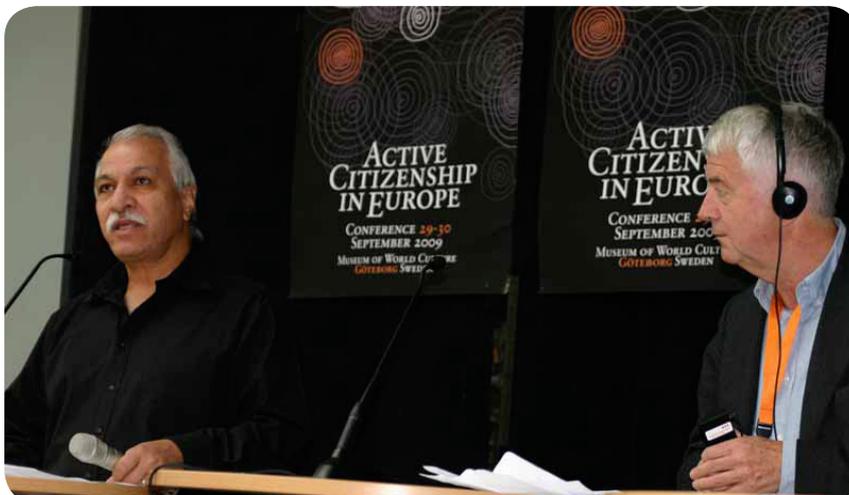
EAEA co-organised a couple of conferences with its member organisations. This way we could treat a broader range of subjects and gained both visibility and expertise in more countries and topics. In June 2009 (back to back with our General Assembly and Grundtvig Award Ceremony), DVV International (Germany) organised a conference on 'Financing adult education for development', which ended with the so-called Bonn declaration. As its main point, it demanded that funding should be available not only for primary education but also for adult education.

3.2. European Active Citizenship Conference and Appeal

Our Swedish member Folkbildningsförbundet organised a non-formal educational conference on Active Citizenship on September 29 – 30 in Gothenburg, which EAEA co-organised as well. Together



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organised in cooperation with the Adult Education Society – EAEA members from Serbia and dealt with the subject and a publication presents the most important results. We also published a report (produced by our colleagues from the Serbi-

an association) that presents the results of this conference. we also produced a Citizenship Appeal, which underlines the important role of adult education and learning in tackling some of the major European challenges (see Annex). Both organisations handed over the appeal in Brussels, to high representatives of the European Commission and supportive Members of the European Parliament.

an association) that presents the results of this conference.

3.3. European Conference 2009 on Professional development of adult education staff and conference report

The professional development of adult education staff is one of the red threads of the Commission's action plan and of course one of the main priorities of EAEA and its member organisations. It was one of the main concerns for 2009. The annual conference, which brought together member organisations, adult learners, researchers and policy makers, was or-



Maicen Ekman at the Active Citizenship Conference.



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4. PUBLICATIONS

4.1. New EAEA leaflet (also in Portuguese)

Following the office move, EAEA produced a new leaflet that present the association to interested parties. A Portuguese version was also produced so that it could be disseminated in Belem at CONFINTEA.

4.2. Trends in Participation

This publication, which reviews methodological problems, the current state of knowledge about participation and access, the results of a survey among EAEA members and a set of policy recommendations hopes to raise awareness on the issue of participation and influence policy makers.

4.3. European Adult Education outside the EU

The publication looks at the state of adult education in the neighbourhood countries of the EU and includes the following regional surveys:

South-eastern Europe, Croatia, Turkey, Southern Caucasus, Russia, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Israel;

Each survey contains short information on Policy, Legislation and Financing; Providers of AE; Needs for and Participation in AE; Research and Training; International cooperation; Summary: Main challenges for the future

5. PROJECT COOPERATION

Our aim is to be present in European projects of strategic importance with regard to advocacy policy in adult education and Lifelong Learning. EAEA is requested as a partner in European projects with increasing tendency. An important role that the association takes over in these projects is disseminating projects in development and project results as well as disseminating good practice examples. Nevertheless, due to limited resources, EAEA cannot get involved in too many projects. The executive board therefore underlined that EAEA should only engage in projects that contribute to EAEA's strategic and/or financial goals.

Projects where EAEA is currently involved as a partner:

5.1. DOLCETA

One of specific actions for consumer education which contribute to sustainable consumption is the Development of Online Education Tools for Adults (DOLCETA) project.

It started with the assumption that consumers need a minimum level of knowledge and education to understand the information and to use it in the most appropriate way. For this reason, DOLCETA modules serve to give consumers the necessary competences to compare products and services on the market; to decide on purchases; and to defend their rights as consumers. The legal and practical information is adapted to the national charac-



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teristics of each country.

DOLCETA offers interactive multilingual online learning on consumer rights and financial issues. The website contains hundreds of articles on consumer issues all there for the interested consumer to read. It also contains a lot of fact sheets, lesson plans and different types of educational material for teachers. Dolceta can be used in home economics, maths, citizenship, finance, science and more. It can also be used as a training or reference tool by consumer organizations and other NGOs, SMEs, and consumer counselors. All the educational material on the Dolceta site can be used and downloaded for free (provided you acknowledge the source). The articles on the Dolceta site are checked by pedagogical and legal experts in all EU Member States, and all the content is maintained and updated continuously. Teachers can use and adapt the Dolceta material to fit into the curriculum at different levels and in different subjects, in primary and secondary schools or adult education and community education programmes.

DOLCETA contains seven different modules on the following thematic topics:

1. Consumer rights
2. Financial services
3. Product Safety
4. Teacher's corner
5. Sustainable consumption
6. Services of general interest
7. Financial Literacy

One more module will be published in 2011 with the focus on Food Safety.

All modules are available in 27 different versions, one for each European Member

State and in all official EU languages at www.dolceta.eu

EAEA is responsible for testing of developed materials with real users in real educational environment as well as coordinates the work flow of the development of new modules and maintenance of the existing once.

5.2. InfoNet

INFOnet is a large Grundtvig 4 network project of Adult Education journals in Europe. The project increases cooperation between adult education journals and offers a newswire for adult education. It is a European network of editors in the field of Adult Education and Life Long Learning with the main objective to build a community for sharing experience, knowledge and material (news, articles etc.) for editorial work. To achieve this, InfoNet is establishing a web based information service for the dissemination of news on Adult Education with European relevance.

From the second year, supported by an information bureau in Brussels, a regular information service is operating which works similarly to a news agency. InfoNet currently has more than 28 members, including the journal LlinE (which is a trans-European organisation dedicated to the advancement of adult education, lifelong learning, intercultural collaboration and best practice research). InfoNet is coordinated by KBE (Catholic association for adult education) with the project coordinator Dr Michael Sommer, editor



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of the German journal "Erwachsenenbildung" (Adult Education) and member of the Akademie Klausenhof, a large adult education centre in Germany. The financial support for the project has been renewed for another 2 years and EAEA is actively involved into this follow up project which aim is to strengthen and expand of the network of specialist periodicals on adult education in Europe and to develop a sustainable concepts following the support phase.

5.3. EDA EDU - System in Action for Study Circles in Vocational Training

Eda Edu aims to develop competences for trainers concerning transfer of innovation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) through the use of Study Circles. It is targeted on organisations of Vocational Education and Training (VET) system and SMEs.

In line with the objectives and priorities of the Leonardo Programme, the project aimed to promote training for trainers in non formal vocational training. It tried to define a "Model of Competences" for trainers in that specific field and disseminate it together with other best practices through a "Model of Transfer". The development of competences for trainers has been realised through an experimentation process based on the related Model and focused upon the introduction of Study Circles concerning transmission of innovation in SMEs. The project did also realise a Transnational Consortium, opened to other potential partners around

Europe, along with a Transnational Service which did provide tools, information and training service in order to maintain and consolidate trainers' competences on transfer of innovation within SME through the use of Study Circles.

EAEA as a European umbrella Association has been responsible for the dissemination of project information and results as well as production of marketing materials. The project ended in March 2009.

5.4. New project

EAEA joined the following project as a partner. It was selected and work began in the 2nd half of 2009.

Ginco: Grundtvig International Network of Course Organisers

The aims of the GINCO network are:

- To contribute to improve the quality of Grundtvig European training provision and its accreditation systems .
- To install effective mechanisms for co-operation between (potential) Grundtvig course organisers.
- To strengthen the cooperation between the relevant stakeholders of Grundtvig courses: Adult Education providers, National Agencies, the European Commission and other relevant stakeholders.
- To contribute to the professionalization of adult education staff concerning Grundtvig course provision and delivery
- To expand the Grundtvig course provision in eligible countries of the LLL programme



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- To support dissemination and sustainability of the Grundtvig course provision

The network (NW), organised through different strands of activities, will provide a wide range of offer available to cover specific needs of the Grundtvig training providers including:

- Support course organisers to link up their courses with LLP policy
- Support organisers in applying appropriate, innovative adult lifelong learning didactics for their courses
- Promoting the appropriate use of ICT in preliminary, face to face and follow up phases
- Support course providers in their care for quality
- Support improving intercultural skills of course organisers
- Provision of evaluation frames for the courses
- Support the organiser in follow-up and transfer of learning outcomes
- Support organisers focus on course impact on participants
- improve dissemination of programme opportunities and courses
- Analysis of national course provision in LLP countries and development of strategies to improve the GRU course provision

6. INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND SERVICES OF THE EAEA

6.1. Information and communication strategy

The information and communication strategy is implemented in the Helsinki link office. The Finnish government has been supporting our member VSY so that Johanni Larjanko can spend 80% of his working time on EAEA.

2009 was an intense and productive year for the EAEA Information office. Much effort was put into a number of publications, such as a new leaflet, the Grundtvig Award 2009 publication, the leaflet on Participation in Adult Education, several EAEA statements, and the regular EAEA News.

The idea behind the increased number of publications is to make results of EAEA efforts more visible.

According to plan, the recipients list of the printed newsletter was analyzed, and updated. National policy- and decision-makers were added, and the EU-level list of recipients was extended and updated. Following a discussion in the Board, work has begun on a new communications strategy for the association. The work includes three steps. 1. Short-term, immediate improvements to the web site and other output, 2 mid-term strategy for improving the current services, and 3 long term strategy for a whole new approach to communication. For step 1 a) a survey was introduced asking end users to eval-



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uate different aspects of the web site, b) a graphical designer was contacted to extend and update the graphical guide and create more versions of the logo for print use, c) a list was made of small direct improvements to be addressed. The mid- and long term-strategies became the focus of a working group that will produce the first results in 2010.

In addition to the above mentioned printed news, EAEA continued to produce monthly electronic bulletins, as well as EAEA insider, the quarterly internal news service for members only. A new service was also introduced, targeting policy makers. The electronic EAEA Policy News was issued three times in 2009.

The EAEA web site offers many paths to find relevant information. One of our specialities is to sort information according to topic. As the years go by, the list of topics has grown a lot. In 2009 we once again began to write short introduction to the topics, intended as guidelines for end users. So far we have managed to publish these in English, work is underway to translate them.

In 2009 EAEA worked on Development and education as a focus topic, as a result of a dissemination contract with dvv international. The results are visible on the website. This pilot dissemination service has provided us with valuable experience, and we are now eager to find more interested projects and organization to whom we might offer this service..

The office also produced cultural presentations on Europe for CONFINTEA VI.

6.2. Contacts with EAEA members

EAEA launched nine different Thematic Networks, online discussion groups to give its members the chance to discuss different topics, but also to support and advise the EAEA's policies and strategies in different areas. The general assembly provided a chance to meet face to face. Nevertheless, the thematic networks did not prove to be a success. EAEA will restructure the networks and some of the more successful ones to work on concrete issues and help with the preparation of events or publications.

As every year, several groups and individuals visited the main office and received information on EAEA's activities, its role at a European level and possibilities for members to get involved.

Members of the Executive Board, the President, Vice-Presidents, and Secretary General have been invited to a number of events, conferences, seminars, meetings and discussions. All representatives of EAEA contributed to making adult education more visible and promoting the association at different levels.



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7. ACTIVITIES IN THE ORGANISATION AND THE OFFICES

7.1. General Assembly and Grundtvig Award

For some years, the EAEA has now organised an adult learner award for excellent projects in adult education and learning. The topic of 2009 corresponded to the European Year of Creativity and Innovation - Creative and innovative ways to overcome barriers to learning. EAEA received 12 European and 5 non-European submissions, a wealth of outstanding achievements to choose from. The ceremony for the winners took place during the General Assembly in Germany. The mayor of Bonn welcomed the participants and ICAE president Paul Belanger was the key note speaker. The two winning or-

ganisations and projects were the following:

Outside EU category: **'Non-formal skills training in rural Kyrgyzstan'** - Lead organisation Kyrgyz Adult Education Organisation and within the EU **'VEPS' Virtual European Prison School Project** - Lead organisation European Prison Education Association (EPEA) France working with organisations from 8 EU countries. EAEA also published a brochure that presents the winners and submissions of the projects, which constitute a collection of excellent project results.

The General Assembly took place after the award ceremony. Adama Ouane, director of the UNESCO Institute for Life-long Learning, was the key note speaker, concentrating, of course, on the upcoming CONFINTEA VI. Workshops also provided the opportunity to discuss topics of interest among EAEA members.



Grundtvig Award winners 2009.



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7.2. Membership

New applications for membership were received and approved by the General Assembly:

Associate

- Art Aspects Kunstverein e. V. Art Aspects Association (Germany)
- Jacobs Center on Lifelong Learning and Institutional (Germany)
- Університет менеджменту - University of Educational Management (Ukraine)

Ordinary

- Studieförbundet (Sweden)
- International public association "Education without Borders" (Republic of Belarus)

We are glad to further expand our network and consolidate our position as the largest association for general adult education.

7.3. Executive Board and President

The Executive Board and its preparatory body the Bureau (President, Vice-presidents and Secretary General) are supervising the work carried out in the association. Primarily the board works on policy level, leaving the running of the association to the Secretary General. The role division is clearly defined in the constitution of the association. The Executive Board aims at supporting adult education issues at transnational as well as country levels: The EAEA Board is rotating its meetings in order to liaise with adult education and lifelong learning institutions in various host countries.

In 2009, the Executive Board had four meetings, one in Antwerp in February, another in Copenhagen in April, a third one in September in Warsaw and a fourth one in Belgrade in November. Following each Board meeting the news info "EAEA Insider" was distributed to all EAEA members with a short summary of the main decisions and discussion points. The meeting in February was combined with a policy day in Brussels, where the new board met with Commissioner Figel and Director General Odile Quintin. In the late afternoon, a get-together with representatives from the Social Platform and CONCORD was organized, ending with a social buffet with other EC representatives. In Copenhagen, the board had the chance to learn more about Danish adult education, with an additional meeting at the DPU. In Warsaw, the board met with current and potential members. The meeting in November was combined with the conference as well as a meeting with the EU representative in Serbia.

The board decided to present the presence of its members at the meetings in the annual report

Name/Number of days attended
(4 Board meetings / 2 days)
Sue Waddington/8
Eeva Inkeri Sirelius/8
Eitan Israeli/4
Uwe Gartenschläger/8
Juan Jose Salado Sanchez/2
Per Paludan Hansen/8
Levan Kvatchadze/8
Katarina Popovic/8
Britta Lejon/4
Ingrida Mikisko/8
Ruth Jermann/6



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7.4. Finances

The Core funding application from the European Commission for 2009 was approved. The final report for 2008 was accepted and the work plan application for 2010 submitted.

Unfortunately, EAEA had to repay a considerable amount for the core funding of the years 2003 – 2005. Due to the otherwise positive financial situation, EAEA was able to compensate for this payment and settle its account with a very small minus only.

In the meantime, changes within EAEA and in the administration of the core funding programme ensure that any future audits will not pose a problem. The payments are now made on a flat-fee basis and an external auditor has to approve the final reports. Besides, the change in accounting firm and procedure also contributes to a more transparent system.

Additionally, there are members who do not pay their membership fees and thereby reduce the income of the EAEA. On the other hand, DOLCETA is still providing enough funds to balance out set-backs and is providing a stable cash-flow situation.

7.5. Link Offices

Currently, there are three link offices, in Helsinki, Budapest and Madrid. A link office meeting took place in March 2009 in Bonn in order to prepare the next General Assembly and to discuss the next steps

in the action plan and then in October in Budapest. A review of the agreements and the tasks and roles of the main and link offices was started. Meetings took place with the presidents of the organisations hosting the Madrid and Budapest offices and the discussions are ongoing.

7.6. Fellowship with the European Foundation Centre

EAEA signed up to become a receiving organisation for the International Fellowship Programme of the European Foundation Centre, which aims to strengthen leaders in and boost international cooperation of European foundations and NGOs. The programme was initiated and is funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation in cooperation with other European and US foundations. From early March to mid-April, EAEA hosted Mihai Calalb from the organisation ORDSE in Moldova, who used his time in Brussels to meet with various colleagues and make contacts for his organisation. Staff of EAEA members can also apply for this programme if they want to do a fellowship at the EAEA office in Brussels. More information can be found at <http://www.efc.be/projects/ifp/>

7.7. Staff

Ricarda Motschilnig worked as a project assistant from May 2008 until June 2009. She then left EAEA in order to pursue a master's degree. Andrew Button replaced her in the 2nd half of 2009. Andrew joined EAEA after his work experience with NIACE in UK.



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The permanent staff of EAEA main office in 2009:

Valentina Chanina, Administrator
Gina Ebner, Secretary General
Marta Lottes, Project Manager

7.8. New office space

In August EAEA moved to new offices in Rue d'Arlon, 1000 Brussels. We are renting a floor of a traditional Brussels house from a UK consultancy firm. The office is in the middle of the EU quarter, just opposite the European Parliament.

7.9.. Trainees and Volunteers

In the reporting period, the following trainees did their internship at the Brussels Main Office:

1. Ester Garcia Sanz, Spain
2. Deborah Löffler, Germany
3. Norbert Kuijpers, Netherlands

7.10. Bob Schouten Fund

The Bob Schouten Fund, established in 1981 in commemoration of the international work of Bob Schouten, the long-standing first Secretary of the European Bureau of Adult Education, aims to 'assist workers in adult education to make themselves familiar with international aspects of their work by studying Adult Education abroad in one of the countries of Europe'. The travel and accommodation costs of some colleagues to participate in the General Assembly in Bonn and the Active Citizenship conference in Gothenburg were taken on.



The new office in Brussels.



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ANNEX – POSITION PAPERS, OPINIONS, STATEMENTS

TERRITORIAL COHESION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EU EDUCATION SYSTEMS.

A response to the consultation on the Green Paper from the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)

The EAEA welcomes the publication of the Green Paper and the opportunity provided by the Commission to participate in the debate on how education policies may better address the challenges posed by turning territorial diversity into strength.

The EAEA is an association which promotes adult learning (AL) and the widening of participation and access to formal, non-formal and informal adult education (AE) for all, particularly for groups currently under-represented by

- providing policy advocacy for lifelong learning (LLL) at an European level;
- developing practice through publications, projects and networks;
- international co-operation with other stakeholders in the AE field

The EAEA has 131 members from 41 countries (of which 25 are EU members).

The majority of the members' organizations are NGOs. Many of our member organizations provide professional and non formal education for different target groups including employed people.

Introduction

The EAEA recognizes the importance of coordinating policy for an incredibly rich EU territorial diversity. Territorial cohesion is about ensuring the harmonious development of all EU territory and about making sure that their citizens are able to make the most of inherent features of these territories. As such, it is a means of transforming diversity into an asset that contributes to sustainable development of the entire EU. Increasingly, competitiveness and prosperity depend on the capacity of the people and businesses located there to make the best use of all of territorial assets. Cooperation along with the flow of technology and ideas as well as goods, services and capital is becoming an ever more vital aspect of territorial development and a key factor underpinning the long-term and sustainable growth performance of the EU as a whole.

Towards a more balanced and harmonious development.

The key challenges of the 21st century are rapid change, technological growth, demography and globalization. The directions of the Lisbon strategy and these challenges make us look for innovative solutions to increase economic growth and employment, to become competitive in the rapidly changing world. One of the solutions is to increase the role and effectiveness of AE by finding new opportunities for adults to improve their knowledge and perfect their skills throughout the lifespan turning them not only into more effective and informed employees but also active



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citizens.

The European Commission, in the documents „Adult learning: It is never too late to learn” (2006) and Action plan on Adult Learning „It is always a good time to learn” (2007), has stressed the necessity for the improvement of accessibility of AE and motivation of the population to engage in it. The participation rate of adults in AE rises very slowly. One of the education benchmarks is the participation in lifelong learning, which should be 12.5% by 2010. In many of EU countries adult participation rate is low, for example, in Latvia it is 6.9%. Lithuania, Italy, Bulgaria and Greece and many other countries are in a similar or worse situation. One main reason is the unbalanced territorial development, which is based on:

- weak accessibility to adult education institutions;
- little financial capacity;
- a weak IT infrastructure;
- long distances to education institutions.

All these reasons stand in the way of increasing of human capacity.

Policy Responses

Improve accessibility

The Green Paper stresses the balance among different EU regions. EAEA wants to underline the importance of adult education. By connecting territories, increasing road building and providing public transport services, the EU will improve people’s access and participation in AE, and help to provide adults with pathways

to improving their knowledge and competences for better life and promote they competitiveness in labour market. A better distribution of adult education centres in less-populated areas will also contribute to the social cohesion and well-being of people living there.

Improve IT nets

Using new technologies will help many people to provide access to opportunities for lifelong learning. Many people will use the Internet for learning; communication and distance education as one of tools for raising their education level. It will realize lifelong learning possibilities in their every-day lives.

Raise the financial capacity

In many of the new EU countries adult education is expensive. People, who want to participate in non-formal education, have to contribute a lot, but the unemployment, low skills and knowledge force them to stay outside of lifelong learning. Harmonious EU development with more and better support for adult education and learning will improve the situation. By acquiring new competences, these people can upgrade their standards of living, which will contribute to a better and more democratic society.

There is a large role of territorial cohesion that can provide better access, motivation and conditions for LLL.



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UPDATED STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK - EAEA COMMENTS

Published March 2009

EAEA welcomes the updated strategic framework and agrees with many of its recommendations and strategies. There are welcome proposals in the paper such as the suggestion to raise the benchmark for participation of adults to 15% from 12.5% and the reference to a greater involvement of stakeholders and social and civil society partners in the policy dialogue and in implementation. In order to improve the paper, we would nevertheless make the following suggestions:

One weakness in the paper is the lack of consideration of how the current economic crisis could impact upon individuals and groups for years to come and the role that education and training could play to enable people to adapt to new labour market and social conditions such as greater levels of unemployment and lower incomes and the threats to social cohesion. One suggestion could be that the Commission and member states investigate how learning opportunities could prepare those most at risk of long term unemployment to meet new challenges both in the work place and in their personal lives. Benchmarks could be set in relation to the % of unemployed people participating in education (incl. non-formal learning) and training.

An additional point that deserves to be seen as a challenge is sustainable development and climate change, to which education and learning can contribute.

In order to succeed with the ambitions in the Lisbon strategy there is an urgent need for national systems for life-long learning. Member states differ in many ways and there will of course be many different solutions on how to make life-long-learning a reality. But it is a fact that each member state must have a politically legitimate system which enables the ambitions of life-long-learning. On page 8 the commission writes; "To provide high quality outcomes on a sustainable basis, the governance of education and training systems must also be addressed." This is, for example, a part of the text that could be developed and where the discussion could be extended. We would like to take this opportunity to point out the fact (according to many different studies, for example by OECD) that countries that have a publicly financed system for life-long-learning also are countries that have achieved more in life-long-learning.

Another comment concerns the fact that most of the benchmarks that the Council set for 2010 will not be reached. The Commission expresses its concern regarding the development and underline the importance of further actions from the member states. Some analyses on the possible causes to the failures would have been very useful. When lacking information about the causes it is uncertain and problematic to continue with the same methods, priorities and actions as before.

A further weakness relates to the fact that some sections put an emphasis on children only. One example appears in the sections on equity and active citizenship. The only benchmarks relate to children (pre-primary) and early school leavers. The same is true for migrants. The paper empha-



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sises the need to improve the educational attainments of children. There is little mention of the educational needs of adult migrants.

Building on the work of CEDEFOP on new skills, we suggest a high-level group including representatives from Civil Society and Adult Education that will explore the social and personal skills and competences for the future.

EAEA would also like to express its concern that adult education and especially non-formal education and learning might be neglected in the implementation of the EQF on member state level. We therefore ask the European Commission to ensure an adequate role of adult education and AE providers in the development and implementation of the EQF in the member states.

For a future initiative we also propose to open the GRUNDTVIG programme to the countries of the European Neighbourhood Programme and beyond.

Finally, we recommend that the important work on the implementation of the five key actions of the Action Plan on Adult Learning and Education[1] be continued.

[1] COM(2007) 558



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EAEA INPUT FOR THE EMPLOYMENT SUMMIT OF MAY 7 2009 AND THE COMMISSION'S FORTHCOMING CONTRIBUTION TO THE JUNE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

Spring 2009

Lifelong learning is an investment. Now is the time to implement the plans such as establishing national systems of lifelong learning. Through campaigns and efforts from all stakeholders we can create a lifelong learning culture in Europe. This needs strong partnerships on national, regional and local levels, an involvement of government, social partners and civil society. Non-formal adult education can play a crucial part in reaching and teaching adults.

Now is a good time to implement the European Commission's Action Plan for adult learning, and especially the 3rd key action: Increase the possibilities for adults to go one step up and achieve at least one level higher qualification. Member States should explore the possibility of setting national targets increasing the skill level of the target population (see the Adult Education Initiative (1997-2002), the largest ever investment in adult education in Sweden)

EAEA asks the Commission and member states to investigate how learning opportunities could prepare those most at risk of long term unemployment to meet new challenges both in the work place and in their personal lives. Benchmarks could be set in relation to the percentage of unemployed people participating in education

(incl. non-formal learning) and training.

EAEA suggests that member states establish a guidance service that helps adults in vulnerable employment situations to plan their careers and gain an insight into any further education and training that might increase their employability in a new economic environment, which includes the recognition and validation of their skills and experiences. It may mean redirecting systems to meet the needs of particular target groups in partnership with social partners and adult education organisations.

In addition the further development of adult education services addressing key competences may be required to help people develop generic skills such as literacy, numeracy, use of ICT, problem solving and social skills etc. This could be part of an activation model at a time of increasing unemployment. Also, for vulnerable groups the combination of basic education and vocational training, i.e. embedded learning has been proven successful and can contribute to employability.

The barriers to learning should be examined by the member states. In particular several member states restrict unemployed peoples access to learning since enrolment in a course may be seen as limiting a person's chance to get a job.

Consultation with potential learners (as well as examining labour market needs) is required if programmes are to be designed that motivate people to learn.

Modular approach to the programs of education and training (which gives the



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possibility to adapt to the labour market needs, to individualize the learning/training program and make specific combination for each individual, enabling also different dynamic of the obtaining skills and certificates for everyone).

Member states can create jobs in the third sector / civil society organisations, which will contribute to more employment and active citizenship at the same time.



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APPEAL FROM THE CONFERENCE - ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP IN EUROPE

Active Citizenship in Europe is a unique European conference for non-formal adult education institutions, other civil society organisations and decision-makers at all levels, to be held in Gothenburg on 29-30 September 2009. The conference is organised by the Swedish Adult Education Association – the umbrella organisation for the nine Swedish study associations – and EAEA, European Association for the Education of Adults.

Summary:

The conference highlights the fact that non-formal adult education and informal learning promote active citizenship in Europe. Non-formal learning emphasizes empowerment, grass roots participation and is a driving force in civil society.

Challenge 1: Only four out of ten Europeans voted in the European election

Politicians have long talked about the need to increase the involvement of citizens in EU issues. However, only just over four out of ten Europeans put a polling slip in the ballot box, despite the fact that EU policy has a huge impact on their daily lives.

Option 1: Put more emphasis on non-formal adult learning

The EU's draft Lisbon Treaty sets out the intention of maintaining an open, transparent and regular dialogue with civil so-

ciety. Active adult education organisations constitute, together with other civil society organisations, a foundation for a strong civil society. They form a structure of crucial importance for a sustainable democracy. Non-formal learning is an important tool for discussing and promoting the European idea itself. If civil society is to be capable of successfully generating involvement in Europe, decision-makers at EU, national and local levels must embody and pay attention to the democratic activities carried out by civil society organisations. Non-formal adult education and informal learning can play a crucial role in promoting active citizenship, but there is very little political and financial support available. We therefore suggest an extension of the EU Citizenship Programme to include a strong emphasis on non-formal adult learning. The parts of the European lifelong learning programme targeted at non-formal adult education should also be extended. The European leadership must move from words to deeds.

CHALLENGE 2: IGNORANCE BREEDS EXTREMISM

Extremism in Europe is on the rise. Xenophobic and anti-democratic fractions are established.

Option 2: Support a citizens' Europe

- We understand that the growing support among Europeans in favour of extremist parties is rooted in ignorance and a sense of powerlessness. To be able to combat extremist ideas, a functioning democracy needs well educated citizens with respect for hu-



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man rights and a global awareness. The EU's current education initiatives and programmes emphasize formal learning. It is high time to provide equal support for non-formal adult education and informal learning. For many people, non-formal learning is a stepping stone to, for instance, formal education or the jobs market; it also fosters personal development and provides meeting places for people from different social backgrounds and with different views.

learning can reach out to people and foster a sense of community and citizenship. It is an asset and a necessity

CHALLENGE 3: THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

- The financial situation in Europe is tough. Public finances are increasingly under pressure and unemployment is rising, especially among young people.

Option 3: Time for an adult education initiative

Encourage the EU community to launch an adult education initiative, an initiative that invests in the education and learning of citizens. The initiative will promote the acquisition of the EU's key competences, such as learning to learn, social and civic competences, cultural expression, digital competence and entrepreneurship. This will promote social cohesion and more people will be able to join the labour market. It will also prepare Europe for future challenges such as demographic and environmental change. Non-formal learning is crucial for promoting learning for sustainable development. An investment in adult education now – despite and because of the crisis – will bring long-term benefits. Non-formal adult education and informal



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EAEA SUBMISSION TO THE CONSULTATION ON FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

January 2010

Introduction

The EAEA is an NGO with 128 members in 42 countries, representing non-formal adult education and learning on European level. EAEA's members mainly participate in the Lifelong Learning Programme (and here mostly in Grundtvig); some also work with ESF projects, TEMPUS and related programmes.

EAEA itself has received core funding for European associations through the Jean Monnet programme. Our response to the consultation is therefore based on the day-to-day experiences of working with European projects and grants.

EAEA members think that European programmes contribute extensively to their work, their organisations, and their countries. In a recent survey on the Grundtvig programme, EAEA members made comments such as:

- It has broadened our view on general adult education issues and politics.
- Our organisation:
 - gained wider experience and knowledge in adult education at international level
 - enhanced international network of relevant educational and other diverse institutions- gained more experience in teamwork and intercultural communication at international level-

enhanced visibility at international level

- improved possibilities of learning by sharing ideas and teaching methods-
improved self confidence

- improved language and intercultural communication skills

- New international contacts, broader understanding of adult education as well as language learning in Europe (different systems, models etc.), better insight into the specific topics, a lot of extremely useful discussion (processes), new ideas, concepts, ways of approaching challenges, new projects etc.
- It is important that Grundtvig raises new themes such as higher acceptability of non-formal or informal competences or supports projects on "difficult" topics such as integration, gender or senior citizens etc. It widens the view towards Europe and it plays an important role for the improvement of intercultural understanding and learning.
- Grundtvig is important to improve the quality of lifelong learning activities also at national level through exchanges of competences, experiences, didactic tools; to increase transnational relations and networking in this field. Particularly, Grundtvig actions are important in our country especially because the LLL politics are currently absolutely insufficient.

EAEA would therefore like to underline the importance of EU funding and contribute to a better regulation and administration.



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Question 1: Are you sufficiently informed about upcoming calls for proposals in a timely manner?

What improvements would you suggest?

EAEA answer: Concerning the Lifelong Learning Programme and other calls that concern the lifelong learning sector, the overview is easily and timely presented at the DG EAC and EACEA websites.

Nevertheless, there might be other calls in other DGs / organisations that could be interesting, but which are more difficult to follow. Why not introduce a similar system to the information about consultations linked to the lobby register? There, you can sign up to receive information about consultations in certain areas - one could do the same with calls for proposals and tenders.

Question 2: should the rules be more flexible on co-financing requirements taking into account the type of actions and project managers? How could in-kind contributions best be dealt with, while adhering to the non-profit principle?

EAEA answer: Concerning this issue, there is now a chance to integrate more flexibility, which takes into account the way non-governmental and non-profit organizations work. Very often, the budget that is accounted for only shows a fraction of the real working budget of the association. In kind contributions - mainly in the form of working hours - can consist of volunteer work, resources by member associations, work by presidents, chairs or board members etc. An association might have only one employee but might be able to provide the work of four. This makes it extremely difficult to provide co-financing

when in-kind contributions are not possible. We therefore recommend two approaches: the co-financing rates should be kept very low, especially for programmes that contribute to European Commission policy developments and there should be certain flexibility in determining the co-financing rate and how it is determined. For example, an NGO working mainly with volunteers should have the chance to provide lower co-financing.

Question 3: Should the use of lump sums, flat rates become the norm rather than the exception?

Should the rules allow for costs to be covered on the basis of expected outputs? If yes, can you provide concrete examples?

EAEA answer: We support a shift to lump sums and flat rates wherever possible. The current practice of very detailed financial planning, which is then administrated in a strict way and leaves little room for flexibility over the project period, is very time consuming and discouraging. We would also welcome financing that relies less on financial outcomes and details but on the results of the project.

Question 4: Should the rules strictly adhere to the non-profit principle or should there be room for some flexibility in this matter? Do you have examples of good practices from other public authorities?

EAEA answer: we would urgently recommend that this be allowed some flexibility. This concerns especially our experiences with the core funding as European Association. A small surplus automatically leads to the reduction of the Europe-



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an subsidy, which makes it impossible to foresee any - even small - reserves. These reserves might prove to be crucial for the good management of an NGO. We therefore suggest that a surplus of up to 10% of the subsidy can be used as a reserve without leading to a reduction of the funding or the loss of the non-profit status.

Example from Denmark: In Denmark the standard rules are like this: If an organisation is asking for a grant/core funding from a ministry, the amount is set by the donor according to the application. The sum must be shown as an income in the annual accounts; afterwards the ministry will check the accounts and approve it.

There is no rule for setting the surplus off against the grant. Thus it is possible to transfer money from one fiscal year to the next. A certain net capital is regarded as a necessity for all organisations.

Question 5: What, in your view, would be the appropriate amount for low and very low value grants?

EAEA Answer: We suggest a doubling of the current amounts, i.e. 50.000 for low and 10.000 for very low grants.

Question 6: How could the rules on operating grants be more flexible? In which way? What are your views on the duration of framework partnership agreements?

EAEA Answer: While the general objective of decreasing European funds is understandable, it puts additional pressure on NGOs. The financial situation

of NGOs is a constant struggle for survival and resources. For most NGOs, the development is also not linear. There might be years where other sources provide more support, the following it might be less. Any system that foresees a steady decrease does not take this into consideration. For most NGOs, the support by the EU is not enough anyway, and other sources of financing have to be tapped into. Negotiations about the decrease of Community funding should be more based on a dialogue with the Commission and probably based on the decrease in the percentage of the funding rather than the amount.

Question 8: From your experience, what alternative solutions could be proposed for prefinancing payments while safeguarding tax payers' money?

EAEA Answer: Remove the requirement for interest accrued on pre-financing. The amount of money that goes back to the European Commission is in no relation to the resources necessary to administrate it.

Question 9: What mechanism, other than pre-financing guarantee, could be explored while ensuring adequate protection of community funds?

EAEA Answer: Remove the option to require financial guarantees from the Financial Regulation. If there is a significant risk to advance funding, the Commission should change to paying quarterly in advance. Allow grants to be refused on the basis of significant financial risk, but only after taking into account the beneficiaries being targeted.



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Question 10: Based on your experience, do you think current thresholds are still adequate or should they be increased, and why?

EAEA Answer: We propose a doubling of the amounts for the thresholds. When it comes to smaller amounts - which are often linked to complicated procedures - it is often more difficult to find enough tenderers that are interested!

Question 11: How could the application procedure for both grants and contracts be further improved?

EAEA answer: For this answer, we rely on and agree again with the proposal in the report 'Striking the Balance'.

The eligibility requirement information should be removed from the application process and be replaced by a separate submission to an 'Eligibility Database'.

- Initial vetting could be through remote access to a database including questions that require yes/no answers, or values, that enable the system to 'estimate' eligibility.
- For first time applicants, the legal documents, which are usually in a local language and usually unique to a country, should be sent to the Commission's national representation for checking by a national official. This would have to be completed before a contract could be signed.
- After the first application records would only need to be updated.

A 3-5 - page concept paper, plus an outline budget and a Logical Framework Analysis should be used to judge project relevance and give an overview of the activi-

ties. It should not be more than 5 pages.

The full application form should be completed only by those who are selected for the next stage. This can then show more detail of the project activities and the associated costs. It should include only enough information to form a reasonable view of the applicant's capacity and skills, whether the activities are likely to lead to the achievement of the objectives, that the activities are adequately costed, and that a contract can be agreed. It should expand on the 3 page concept paper that has already been approved for the application to reach this stage.

The cost of producing the full proposal, including planning costs and the cost of raising co-finance should be included as part of project costs eligible for a grant. They should be limited to a maximum percentage of the grant available.

The number of organisations selected to reach the full application stage should be limited to enable very high pass rates to minimize the costs of failed applications to both NGOs and the Commission.

The objective should be to keep the requirements to the minimum necessary so that applications:

- Can be easily understood
- Can be reviewed cost effectively
- Minimise the cost of the process to the Commission and to applicants

To facilitate this, any point scoring system should focus on key drivers, not detail.



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Co-finance

The time given between concept paper and full application should take into account:

- Value of co-finance to be raised and likely partners
- The number of partners who have expressed interest It is only at this stage that firm commitments need to be obtained from co-financiers and partners.

Contract

There should a published time limit set for completing contracts. The Commission should be bound by these time limits. If the deadline is missed, the NGO should be allowed to begin work on the project, and claim the costs of the work done prior to signature. (We have taken this recommendation from 'Striking a Balance. Efficiency, Effectiveness and Accountability. Report by F.M. Partners Limited, 2005. P. 34.)



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WHAT EAEA MEMBERS THINK ABOUT THE GRUNDTVIG PROGRAMME

In September 2009, the European Association for the education of adults sent a survey to its members asking for their experiences and suggestions for Grundtvig. We received responses to our questionnaire from the following countries: Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Netherlands, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Armenia, Israel and the European Prison Education Association / Bulgaria. Below you find a summary of the most important results. If you would like more detailed results, please contact the EAEA office at +32.2.2343760 or gina.ebner@eaea.org

Benefits and impact of the Grundtvig programme

EAEA members agree that the Grundtvig programme has benefitted their organization and their country. Here are some comments:

- It has broadened our view on general adult education issues and politics.
- Our organisation:
 - gained wider experience and knowledge in adult education at international level
 - enhanced international network of relevant educational and other diverse institutions
 - gained more experience in teamwork and intercultural communication at international level
 - enhanced visibility at international level
 - improved possibilities of learning by

sharing ideas and teaching methods
-improved self confidence
-improved language and intercultural communication skills

- New international contacts, broader understanding of adult education as well as language-learning in Europe (different systems, models etc.), better insight into the specific topics, a lot of extremely useful discussion(processes), new ideas, concepts, ways of approaching challenges, new projects etc
- It is important that Grundtvig raises new themes such as higher acceptability of non-formal or informal competences or supports projects on “difficult” topics such as integration, gender or senior citizens etc. It widens the view towards Europe and it plays an important role for the improvement of intercultural understanding and learning.
- Grundtvig is important to improve the quality of lifelong learning activities also at national level through exchanges of competences, experiences, didactic tools; to increase transnational relations and networking in this field. Particularly, Grundtvig actions are important in our country especially because the LLL politics are currently absolutely insufficient

When asked about the impact on national policies, EAEA members are more sceptical – the majority see little or no impact (someone points out the big difference to Erasmus), others see awareness raising or an alignment of national policies with Grundtvig priorities.



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Why we need more money for Grundtvig

All members of EAEA think that the Grundtvig programme needs more funding. Here are some of their arguments why:

- Learning in a civil society context has an enormous potential to cope with learners who otherwise often lack alternatives. Functional and effective ways to increase participation in adult learning is a common issue which is addressed by e.g. Grundtvig. The present 4 per cent allocation is not reasonable from this point of view. The gap between the resources from the LLL program to citizens with higher education and those citizens without will become wider, which is a threat to social cohesion.
- Modern knowledge society requires every adult to participate in LLL programmes to be able to survive in fast changing labour market, not to feel excluded for the senior citizens and to get better career opportunities for young adults.
- The EU stresses the importance of lifelong learning and thus the continuous learning of adults. It seems vital to provide more funds that this sort of learning can take place and to support it where and whenever possible.

What we are happy with

We have already summarized the benefits of Grundtvig that EAEA members can see. Concerning the programme and its administration, EAEA are happy with the support of the National Agencies. They also underline that the procedures

have improved a lot and are now easier than before. EAEA members are particularly happy with Learning Partnerships, In-service training and workshops. They appreciate the introduction of lump sum approaches in some of the strands.

What we suggest for improvement

EAEA members point out that the time for dissemination of project results is too short. Some members also suggest a more centralized approach to exploitation. The resources needed for application writing in the centralized actions are seen as too heavy for smaller organizations. EAEA members also criticize the long period between application deadlines and results. Members also suggest easier and more transparent financial regulations.

Talking about decentralized actions in particular, members suggest a more uniform and better coordinated appearance and approach of the National Agencies. Late payments can be a problem in both centralised and decentralized actions.

What we think of the future of Grundtvig

Most members are happy with the programmes in their current structure. When considering a merging of Leonardo and Grundtvig, our members are either opposed to the idea or can only imagine it if both vocational and general adult education receive the same amount of money or if Leonardo became a sub-programme of Grundtvig.

In addition to more funds for Grundtvig, our members suggest a more flexible handling of funds (e.g. the possibility to trans-



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fer money from Erasmus to Grundtvig) and the possibility for adult education organization to participate also in other programmes such as Comenius and Erasmus.

Individual Mobility

EAEA members agree that Grundtvig has contributed very much to the professional development of adult education staff. In order to improve the situation even more, they suggest more funds and more courses as well as a more flexible budget. The availability of professional development courses varies strongly between countries, as well as their openness to participants from other countries.

The new measures for staff mobility have had a slow start in many countries, and the information about them is only slowly getting known. Nevertheless, EAEA members are excited about these possibilities, and one organisation has already started working with some assistants.

When asked about the improvement of the information, EAEA members suggest the following:

- presentation of the ongoing actions to the relevant target groups via different local/national/international events (seminars, conferences, fairs, etc.)
- information on line at the relevant websites with wide network of links
- information via mass media of success stories, best practices and experience
- more financial allocations for mobility receivers in order for them to share their experience with wide relevant audience through more economic incentives to the AE organisation involved in the staff mobility programmes

- Concerning senior volunteering and workshops, EAEA members emphasise mainly the workshops as building on their way of working and being a very good fit to extend their activities. They also think that they have a great potential in the future and think that the National Agencies should play the most crucial role in the information and dissemination.

Cooperation between organisations: partnerships, projects, networks

EAEA underline their appreciation for these initiatives, especially the learning partnerships. Projects and networks are also seen as very attractive, although some members point out that the results are often difficult to find for other organisations and that the dissemination needs to be improved.

Concerning networks, EAEA members suggest more awareness raising, more funds, and an improved cooperation between the EC and EAEA.

When it comes to Accompanying measures, EAEA members point out that the competition is very high and the percentage of approved applications are very low. Some members do not know this action, for others the application procedure is too low. One member has very specific recommendations:

- Accompanying Measures should clearly state their high importance in the valorization. It should be clearly identified that using Accompanying Measures each applicant could present products and methods developed in the course of previous partnerships



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and other relevant institutions could get familiar with and use these products or methods in their education systems

- EAEA members welcome a possible opening of the Grundtvig programme to the wider world, pointing out that many of them already have working relationships with such organisations that could now take place within the Grundtvig programme. They also see a wide range of topics for the cooperation with organisations from other regions of the world:
- Civil society building, Intercultural education, public-private partnership, capacity building, development and implementation of training courses.
- Work out of methodology, participation in programs, training of trainers, summer academies, international conferences ect.
- Adult Learners' Week, Train the Trainer, low educated persons.
- Family literacy, intercultural dialogue, inter-generational dialogue
- Transfer of ideas and of creative methodologies on an international level.
- Staff development;
- Policy building;
- Vocational training and employability schemes;
- Breaking new grounds for language-teaching targeting new and veteran immigrants;
- Peace and conflict resolution good practices.

Languages

Quite a few EAEA members think that adult education providers are not aware of the fact that language learning can fall under the Grundtvig programme. An additional issue, in some countries at least, is the low interest in language learning by adults. EAEA members suggest a more thorough dissemination of the possibilities, so that people are more aware of the possibilities. Concerning the mobility of adult language learners, the evaluation of EAEA is split – some see great potential and interest, others experience a lack of interest, others suggest also more support for language learning in the countries of the learners.

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