

**Proposals for Development  
for the Increase of Efficiency of Basic Skills  
Development  
in Hungary**

## **The Purpose and Background of Preparing the Development Proposals**

The Erasmus+ project entitled 'BACK TO LEARNING – Developing Key Competence of Adults for High Quality Learning Opportunities' aiming to improve the basic skills of adults has been implemented by a consortium of three Hungarian and German, Irish, Estonian, Maltese and Spanish partners between October 2018 and December 2020.

Through the exchange of good practices applied in the organisation of training courses for the development of basic skills for adults, in the development of learning content, in the sensitisation and preparation of development of trainers and professionals capable of improving the situation of low-skilled adults, the toolkits of all project partners for professional work and the cooperation with other partners have broadened.

During the studying of the innovative methods and examining their adaptability to the domestic environment – either partially, or complete programme elements –, then throughout the course of testing of each method a number of proposals have been put forward in relation to what innovations and improvements are considered necessary by the partner organisations in the partner country, or even in a narrower location (e.g.: in county/town level cooperation) in the area of Adult Skills Development.

Therefore, in addition to the Collection of Best Practices and the framework for the training and further training of professionals involved in adult skills development, this package of proposals is also an important product of the project, which covers:

what and how the partner organisations intend to implement in the field of basic skills development either by themselves or with organisations they cooperate with beyond the project period, and

if necessary, what proposals will be made to policy makers for the social sensitisation towards adults with low basic skills, and the dissemination of international innovations applied in professional activities in the area of basic skills development in order to improve the effectiveness of inclusion.

This country-specific professional material with factually listed proposals will be widely disseminated among organisations involved in adult skills development as well as professional decision-makers.

## Development proposals:

### 1. *Proposals for policy professionals and decision-makers:*

- Based on the experience of the PIAAC survey, we consider it necessary to conduct a deeper analysis of basic skills of adults, in which it would be appropriate to examine exactly how disadvantaged target groups with low basic skills are stratified.

In order to anticipate the expected trends, we recommend to examine what level of standard deviations are available for each group (according to age, social and labour market position, place of residence, etc.), the number of adults with the lowest level of skills and their characteristics.

We consider it particularly important to research functional illiteracy among young people. The growing gap between those most affected by the lack of basic skills and those who perform excellently at international level poses serious risks, especially for young people, as the relationship of this age group to lifelong learning and its integration into the labour market is a key factor both for the economy and for society, as well as for the individual.

- A deeper understanding of the lack of adult basic skills may provide the opportunity to develop and implement targeted core programmes tailored to specific subgroups. We recommend that during the next EU budget period there are targeted calls for proposals to establish partnerships to support the development of adult basic skills at local/regional level.

We believe it is important that the partnerships can work together with government agencies, local authorities "Nyitok" open education centres, adult education and all social and non-profit organizations (family services, various prevention organizations, etc.), who can have any contact with disadvantaged adults.

- The development of adult basic skills is greatly hampered by the fact that adult education is not sufficiently prepared professionally for this specific training activity. As a result, they do not offer appropriate training programmes tailored to the specific needs of the target groups. It is recommended that training programme requirements, methodological materials are developed and made available free of charge in accordance with the German model to help organisations and experts in developing adults basic skills. By methodology we mean both the methodological materials that can be used during the training and the professional materials supporting the search, solicitation, inclusion in a development programme and training of disadvantaged adults.
- Training offers of central operational programmes implemented by the participation of the low-skilled (eg. GINOP 6.1.1.) to include centrally developed basic competence development programmes based on requirements defined by a learning outcome-based approach.
- In addition to modern teaching materials, we consider the sensitization, preparation and regular further training of professionals involved in the development of adult basic skills to be crucial. We recommend that the training programme modules developed taking into account the framework developed within the project be integrated into the relevant higher education courses (e.g. andragogy, community teacher, social worker, etc.), or in the training offer of the public service compulsory further training system, either individually or in the training programmes already developed.
- In the partner countries, sensitization to the problem of functional illiteracy in society plays a huge role. Germany is particularly in the forefront of this, and a number of good practices can be found in the brochure. We recommend informing the general public about the presence of functional illiteracy and its long-term effects on the economy, society and the individual through various channels (events, campaigns, media).

It is important to accept at a social level that it is in the common interest to address the problem rather than the exclusion and the concealment of the problem. The state can also support the development of adult basic skills through central programmes and the creation of broad partnerships.

It is also important for sensitization to raise employers' awareness that it is in their interest to identify and address the problem. Employers need to be motivated and supported in that through their internal trainings basic skills that are key to work should also be developed.

Calls for proposals are needed from which national and regional events can be organised, which highlight the importance of combating functional illiteracy and focus on sensitization.

## **2. *Proposals for training providers:***

- Training providers should take into account the development and maintenance of basic competences – in particular relevant to the major or profession - in the development and implementation of training programmes. This also supports the prevention of dropping out of training, in addition to receiving professional skills.
- Adult education providers engaged and motivated in adult basic skills development should form an alliance with each other to share good practices and to cooperate more closely. In the framework of cooperation, the development of curriculum, the measuring of the level of existing basic skills and sensitization would be more effective and based on uniform principles.
- Adult education providers should also pay particular attention to basic competencies in measuring and recognizing the previous knowledge of those applying for training. They shall support the sensitization to the topic, the necessary preparation and further training of their trainers.
- It is recommended that basic skills developments to be combined with with practical content trainees are interested in (e.g. cooking, growing plants, folk arts and crafts, etc.).

## **3. *For authorities and other organization:***

- We recommend that leaflets, publications and letters aimed at disadvantaged adults be formulated in simple phrases ("easy language", "Lichte Sprache"). The method is successfully applied in several partner countries; there are various specialised materials available. You may find out more about this topic in the good practice presented in the Best practices brochure as well.
- The organizations interested in the topic shall jointly organize conferences and workshops at which, in addition to sharing good practices, it may also be possible to prepare future collaborations.
- We recommend that each organization devote resources itself to sensitizing their employees to the topic, as it may be particularly important to identify signs of illiteracy and manage them with sufficient sensitivity for those working in customer service or in supporting roles.