

Organising a literacy campaign at regional level.

08/12/2009 – 11/12/2009

CUEEP, Lille (France)

Group No	1
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Group reporter	Maarten Christianen



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Introduction

This report will try to summarise the lessons learned during our study visit at CUEEP Lille.

The study visit was a moment of constant learning, the setting, organisers and participants made a visit which we will remember for a long time. Any attempt to summarise it into one word is then also futile, however if we would make an attempt we would say: common understanding. Learning lessons, practices, customs and culture (The Greek don't shake their head 'no' and say 'yes') made us more aware of the differences between us, but even more of the communality amongst us.

We wish to thank all of the people at CUEEP and of course all the others that made our stay in Lille and the region of Le Nord Pas-de-Calais a true learning experience in a pleasant context. A special word of thanks is going to Christian. Without his efforts and patience the trip would have not been the same. Thanks Christian!

Merci!

Simonsen Bente Mønster
Andersen Anders Harbo
Koumanakos Georgios
Kennedy Clifford
Christianen Maarten
Herman Dominika
Smolcec Irena

Organising a literacy campaign on a regional level: lessons learned, practices shared

To increase the readability of this document the contact information of the different organisations discussed are being provided in an annex.

The definitions (and discussion of) on illiteracy and alphabetisation were an integrated part of this study visit. We see differences appear between the different countries. We recognise these differences, but in order to have a readable document we will be using illiteracy as a common word to describe the difficulties experienced.

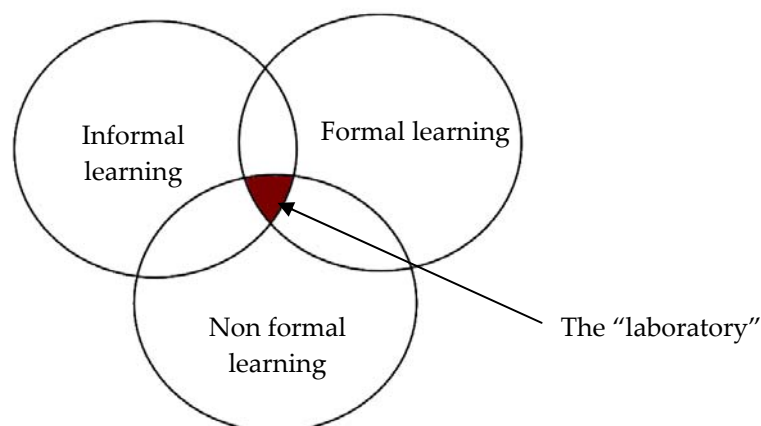
Similar approaches and methods of tackling illiteracy

Although it is possible to see differences in the naming of things (the definitions used to describe different elements of the illiteracy problem) there are also several similarities to be recognised. All of the participants can find the commonly used definition of their home country within the presented definition of the UNESCO (and the changes being made in this definition starting in 1958 and the changes made in 1978). The need for measuring of the illiteracy being it for research or practice is a problem all are confronted with.

On a policy level it is possible to see an enhanced focus on illiteracy. This attention is mainly focused on the integration of people into the labour market. For example in Denmark we see a strong integration of literacy and vocational training in the technical schools; depending on the organiser of the literacy training a similar situation can be recognised in Flanders (Belgium). Especially the local governments and the policy they carry out have a strong emphasises on the employability of the participants after the course, their integration into the labour market. This can be seen further in the report in the LEA plan of the region of North Pais-de-Calais with an integrated vision on illiteracy, and the fight against this deployed in a partnership between (national and local) policy and training centres.

The field of literacy training in France is being characterised by the difficult structure in which it is taking place. Different levels of government play a different role within this field generating a situation in which an outsider as well as a trained professional would get lost. As example it is possible to point out the structuring and role of the 'Agence Nationale de Lutte contre l'illettrisme'. These differences on the structure in which the different actions are being taken place, or the construction of the field towards content, literacy training as part of a cultural educational process and as part of a path to employment can be observed amongst the different participants and the country in which they work.

During the discussion on the definition of non-formal education, the position of the different activities in which learning can take place it was noticed that in many cases (all cases) there is a situation in which the three different activities of learning were combined to receive an optimal result:



In this report we made the choice to call this combination of these different learning activities the “laboratory”. This is to emphasise the setting of the discussion, the balance and experience needed to find an optimal ‘formula’ for learning, fighting illiteracy.

As example of this we can use the activities within Oasis or ILEP (Tourquoix, France):

- **Oasis:** It has been emphasised that next to the formal education there is a lot of learning in more informal setting of the quilting class, and during the coffee breaks (informal learning). It has been emphasised that the goal of this learning is not only the increasing literacy but also gaining more mutual understanding, a further build up of social capital.
- **ILEP:** During the building up of the training and the activities deployed within the centre there is an explicit attention for the combination of formal and non-formal learning, especially cultural activities. An example of how this is being implemented in practice is during the week of the French language. During this week the trainees/students create an art piece. There is an enhanced attention on the words of the week¹.

However this way of working is also hindered by challenges common to these organisations, but also others (see further: Common challenges in the fight against illiteracy).

The use of technology and distance learning in the fight against illiteracy in which the CUEP has been and is still taking a leading role can also be found most clearly in Denmark where software programs have been developed (CD-ORD 7, www.Mikrov.dk) in order to support the training in general but also specifically for people confronted with dyslexia. A similar trend can be observed in Croatia for general distance learning, but also specific for people with dyslexia or literacy problems.

Common challenges in the fight against illiteracy

Due to the past (current) economical crisis on a structural level it is possible to observe a decrease of public funds in the fight against illiteracy. This shift in economical resources increases the difficulties in the continuation of the different actions.

The challenge of screening/identification. When the lawmaker (politics) gives the right to education in the field of literacy there is a clear difficulty in the screening-process in order to establish who is eligible for this support. In practice we see this problem less by the direct contact (and screening) of the different participants in a project/programme.

¹ The French minister chooses 10 French words around a specific theme. Last time this was the future.

In regards to lifelong learning (LLL) as a whole it is possible to come to the conclusion that there is a clear need for a good basis in (earlier) formal education before people grow into this whole. This creates a certain Mattheus effect, making the struggle against illiteracy only stronger by (the sometimes) missing wish to develop further in this path.

In some cases there is incoherence in the national and local policies, especially in the final goal of this policy (personal development/labour market). This creates a difficult paradigm for the different organisations in the area to find a correct balance, taking their own vision in consideration.

During the study visit there was a certain consensus on the interdependency of formal and non-formal education. However policy choices, the allocation of the (financial) means in order to reach this are less present. Contributing to the earlier described paradigm of balance between activities and goals.

A final common problem perceived during the study visit was the length of time to come to recognition of a programme. The period between the conceiving of an educational programme and the moment of recognition by the state/government can be regarded as too long. This can lead towards the implementation of the programme (in order to fulfil a need) even before it is recognised. Especially in Croatia this was conceived as a problem.

Organisation of the study visit

		All agree	Most agree	Most disagree	All disagree	Not applicable
e.g.	The size of the group was good.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.	The programme of the visit followed the description in the catalogue.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.	There was a balance between theoretical and practical sessions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3.	Presentations and field visits were linked in a coherent and complementary manner.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.	The topic was presented from the perspectives of the following actors of the education and training system in the host country:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.1.	- government and policy-makers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.2.	- social partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.3.	- heads of institutions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.4.	- teachers and trainers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.5.	- students/trainees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.6.	- users of services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5.	There was enough time allocated to participants' presentations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.6.	The background documentation on the theme provided before the visit helped to prepare for the visit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.7.	Most of the group received a programme well in advance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.8.	The information provided before the visit about transportation and accommodation was useful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.9.	The organiser accompanied the group during the entire programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.10.	The size of the group was appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.11.	The group comprised a good mixture of participants with diverse professional backgrounds.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.12.	There were enough opportunities for interaction with representatives of the host organisations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.13.	There was enough time allocated for discussion within the group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.14.	The Cedefop study visits website provided information that helped to prepare for the visit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Remark: The discussion and the translation of this from French to English was sometimes difficult. This led to sometimes difficult to follow presentations and discussions.

Annex 2: Organisations discussed in this report

Organisation	Website	Contact
Oasis	Oasis-ni.org	Cliff Kennedy
Aarhus tekniske Skole (new name from the 1. March 2010 <i>Aarhus Tech</i>)	www.ats.dk	Anders Harbo Andersen ahan@ats.dk
Tech College Aalborg	www.techcollege.dk Telephone 7250000	Bente Mønster Simonsen bmsi@taa.dk
CUEEP		