



Ten Years of Trans-European Adult Education activities!

How these ten years have flown for the Grundtvig Programme! Participants can testify to the many ways in which Adult Education in Ireland has benefitted through opportunities to collaborate with other European organisations. Through this sharing at European level, organisations have found new ways to address the challenges they face and developed new approaches to providing quality adult education for learners with different needs and interests. Projects have dealt with an extensive range of topics and focused on adult learning in various contexts including: learning for older people; people with disabilities; deaf adults; and migrants. The Grundtvig Programme has supported the Continual Professional Development (CPD) of those working in Adult Education and has seen an increased take-up each year of opportunities to attend courses and conferences in Europe through Grundtvig In-Service Training. Whether as an adult learner or an adult educator, participating in the Grundtvig Programme means learning and promoting a love of learning. Here's to another ten years!



Maths in Adult Education: A European perspective

John Keogh from the Department of Lifelong Learning at the Institute of Technology, Tallaght, attended *The Whats and Hows of Adult Numeracy—European Numeracy Seminar* hosted by VOX, the Norwegian agency for lifelong learning, in Oslo. John was supported to attend the conference through the Grundtvig Visits and Exchanges Action. The conference was led by internationally recognised experts in the field of mathematics education for adults, including Dr Terry Maguire, Institute of Technology, Tallaght. It addressed a range of topics including meeting learners needs; the challenges relating to policy implementation and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for teachers; functional mathematics as preparation for work; the role of analytical competence at the core of developing adults as learners; and a profile of ongoing work towards the creation of a European Common Reference Framework. It also saw the launch of the *Network for Basic Skills in Adults* initiative with a view to developing coherent policies and practices for adult learners across Europe.

Ongoing research at the Institute of Technology, Tallaght, is investigating the mathematics that people use every day and benchmarking this against the National Framework of Qualifications. It is a step along the path to the formal recognition of knowledge and skills acquired in informal and non-formal ways—in other words, the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) acquired by people in their working life.

John says “*the opportunity to develop personal contact with a network of experts in the field, will have a far-reaching effect on the depth, quality and relevance of the future findings of this work while at the same time, adding to the research capacity of the Institute of Technology, Tallaght. Over the course of a few days...it was possible to explore different approaches to the problem, to highlight our shared objectives, and...establish a platform to support our shared future within and across the European Union. I would like to express my gratitude to Léargas for supporting my attendance at the conference in Oslo through the Grundtvig Programme.*”

Grundtvig Assistantship: A Scottish experience

Below, Maurice Murphy describes his experience of a Grundtvig Assistantship. Formally a secondary school teacher, Maurice is looking to build a career in adult education.

Arriving at the Edinburgh University Settlement, Community Learning Centre I was given a warm Scottish welcome by the centre manager Ron Mc Farlane who spent the morning familiarising me with the vast and varied work that is undertaken by the Centre. Over the next few months, the programme leaders and EUS staff were very supportive in explaining their work and the different facets of adult and community education in Scotland. I was invited to participate in a CLAN Edinburgh literacy class for older Chinese people who had never been in formal schooling. I went on an outreach project which was part of the SureStart Programme where parents returning to education were hoping to achieve a Scottish National Qualification in Childcare. Another programme I enjoyed working on was the Core Skills Programme where I delivered the Licensed to Learn module, aimed at adults who had been away from education and who hoped to go to college. I also helped out in the IT centre where learners were following self-directed courses such as ECDL.

My main assignment though, was working on the Personal Steps Programme with Project Leader Audrey Fitzgibbon. This programme provides communication skills to 30 adults with learning difficulties. I worked with Audrey and volunteers to devise and deliver suitable learning situations to the group which would ensure that all participants had a meaningful educational experience.

This Grundtvig Assistantship gave me a unique insight into the Scottish adult and community education sector. My most valuable learning however, came from the Personal Steps Learners. Their philosophy of life which manifested itself in the care, support and patience that they showed to each other, and the courage they displayed in their everyday lives, is a lesson that will remain with me forever.

For further information on this action please see our website www.leargas.ie/grundtvig

GRUNDTVIG NOTICE BOARD

Grundtvig Workshops

Grundtvig Workshops enable adult learners to participate in workshops (learning events and seminars) taking place in another European country. Funding is available through Léargas for organisations wishing to coordinate this type of event for adult learners—the next deadline for applications is in February 2011. Learners who wish to attend a workshop must apply to the workshop organiser who will coordinate and finance their stay. Check out the Grundtvig Workshop Catalogue on our website www.leargas.ie/grundtvig to see the workshops being held throughout Europe.

Promoting Quality in Adult Education

EPOS, the Flemish LLP National Agency, held a conference to build on new developments and opportunities in the Lifelong Learning Programme and more especially in the area of professional development. The conference took place in the beautiful town of Hasselt, a small provincial town in Limburg, Belgium.

The Grundtvig Programme now offers a very wide range of possibilities, and the conference aimed to take stock of all the developments and to link them to the emerging policy agenda for professional development of adult education staff. As well as reflecting on what the programme has achieved, conference participants were asked to look beyond the end of the present programme phase, and to come up with practical and workable ways to improve the dynamism of the Grundtvig Programme.

The conference brought together a wide range of relevant players in the field of adult education: traditional/structured in-service course providers, non formal training activity providers, beneficiaries of in-service or non-formal training grants, experts, and representatives of the European Commission and the National Agencies. The diversity of participants added greatly to the discussions that took place over the four days and many new ideas and concepts were shared.

Overall the conference was a success and many constructive outcomes emerged. Strategies were developed to enlarge training opportunities and to strengthen the link between in-service training with Grundtvig and the policy priorities developed at national and European level for professional development. Moves were also made towards improving the quality of provision and long-term impact of adult educators participation in training activities.



Grundtvig Contact Seminars

If you are interested in becoming involved in a Grundtvig Learning Partnership, contact seminars are one of the most successful and enjoyable means of finding European partners. Contact seminars take place throughout Europe usually between September and December. Seminars are thematic and will facilitate you in finding partners and putting a project proposal together. Participation in these seminars is funded through the Education Service of Léargas. Details of upcoming seminars are updated on our website. Contact Kathleen Carey at 01 887 1212 or kcarey@leargas.ie to be included on our mailing list.

2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion

Each year since 1983, Europe has initiated a 'European Year' awareness campaign designed to inform the citizens of Europe and engage in dialogue with them to work for change. These European years provide opportunities for drawing the attention of national governments to societal themes. The objective of this year, the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, is to raise awareness of these issues in Europe in four specific ways: by recognising the right of persons experiencing poverty and social exclusion to live in dignity and take an active part in society; by promoting shared responsibility and participation of public support for social inclusion policies; by promoting the concept of a more cohesive society; and by renewing commitment and practical action by the EU and member states to combat poverty and social inclusion and involve all levels of authority in the pursuit of this aim. For further information on the European year and Ireland's National Programme and timetable of events please consult www.welfare.ie/en/eu2010

Upcoming Deadlines

Grundtvig In-Service Training

15 September 2010: for activities taking place on or after 01 January 2011

Grundtvig Visits and Exchanges

06 July 2010: for activities starting on or after 03 August 2010

05 October 2010: for activities starting on or after 02 November 2010

Check out our website for further details on these actions www.leargas.ie/grundtvig