

Why Cooperation is an Important Skill for Adult Learning Professionals

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How did we get here?

2001 Making a European Area of
Lifelong Learning a Reality



2006 Adult Learning: It's Never too
Late to Learn
2007 Adult Learning Action Plan



Education & Training 2020
Europe 2020



2011 Renewed European
Agenda for Adult Learning



Renewed ET 2020

Grundtvig
Programme



Lifelong Learning
Programme



Erasmus +



Cooperation in policy - 1

ET 2020 Priority areas for 2012-14

Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality

Work together to complete ... **national lifelong learning strategies** ... focusing on **partnerships** with stakeholders ...

Renewed Agenda for Adult Learning, 2011. Priority areas for 2012-14 Improving the **quality and efficiency** of education and training

Intensifying **cooperation** and **partnership** between all stakeholders relevant for adult learning, notably public authorities, the different providers of adult-learning opportunities, social partners and civil society organisations, **especially at regional and local level** ...



Cooperation in policy - 2

Rethinking Education, 2012

Partnerships can provide a platform for targeting the 'right' skills- if they are actively supported.

Partnerships of public and private institutions are not only a **source of education funding** but also of **mutual learning, joint policy development and implementation.**

ET 2020 Joint Report , 2015

The quality of learning outcomes to be stimulated in a lifetime perspective ... lifelong learning strategies ... ensure permeability ...This requires continued efforts of coordination and **partnership** between different learning sectors and between education institutions and relevant stakeholders.

Priority Area: Open and innovative education and training, including digital
Fostering **cooperation** by stimulating the engagement of learners, teachers, trainers, school leaders and other members of educational staff, parents and the broader local community such as civil society groups, social partners and business



How important is cooperation?

“...building links to collaborate with social partners (including employers) and various stakeholders is important in **raising awareness of the benefits of learning among learners as well as engaging learners**

... formation of these networks and engaging social partners led to **increased participation in learning, especially among socially disadvantaged groups**”. (p59)

“Working with social partners to plan, promote and recruit learners to learning **improves skills and competences and increases employability**

... social partners (not just employees) play a significant role in **increasing participation in learning and expanding the existence of a “learning culture”** (p87)

European Commission/ICF (2015)

An in-depth analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe

http://ec.europa.eu/epale/sites/epale/files/all_in-depth_analysis_of_adult_learning_policies_and_their_effectiveness_in_europe_12.11.2015_pdf.pdf



How can cooperation help adult learning professionals?

Diversity and stage of development of adult learning means cooperation has great potential to help professionals:

- To increase participation
- To support students
- To develop permeability
- To innovate
- To pool resources and develop quality systems—the “back office”
- To learn internationally



Cooperation to increase access and participation

- Reach out to **disadvantaged communities** with the help of the 3rd sector
- **Civil society** can help to plan provision, recruit participants and deliver learning in non-threatening environments

e.g. Matosinhos second chance school, Portugal, opened as a partnership between the Association for Second Chance Education (AE2O, a local NGO), the local authority which provides the site, and the government education ministry.

Source: Ecorys/European Commission (2013) Preventing early school leaving in Europe – lessons learned from second chance education

- **Work-based learning** is a major incentive for adult participation
- Cooperating with **employers** makes it possible to benefit from their labour market knowledge and involve them in design and delivery of provision to meet their needs

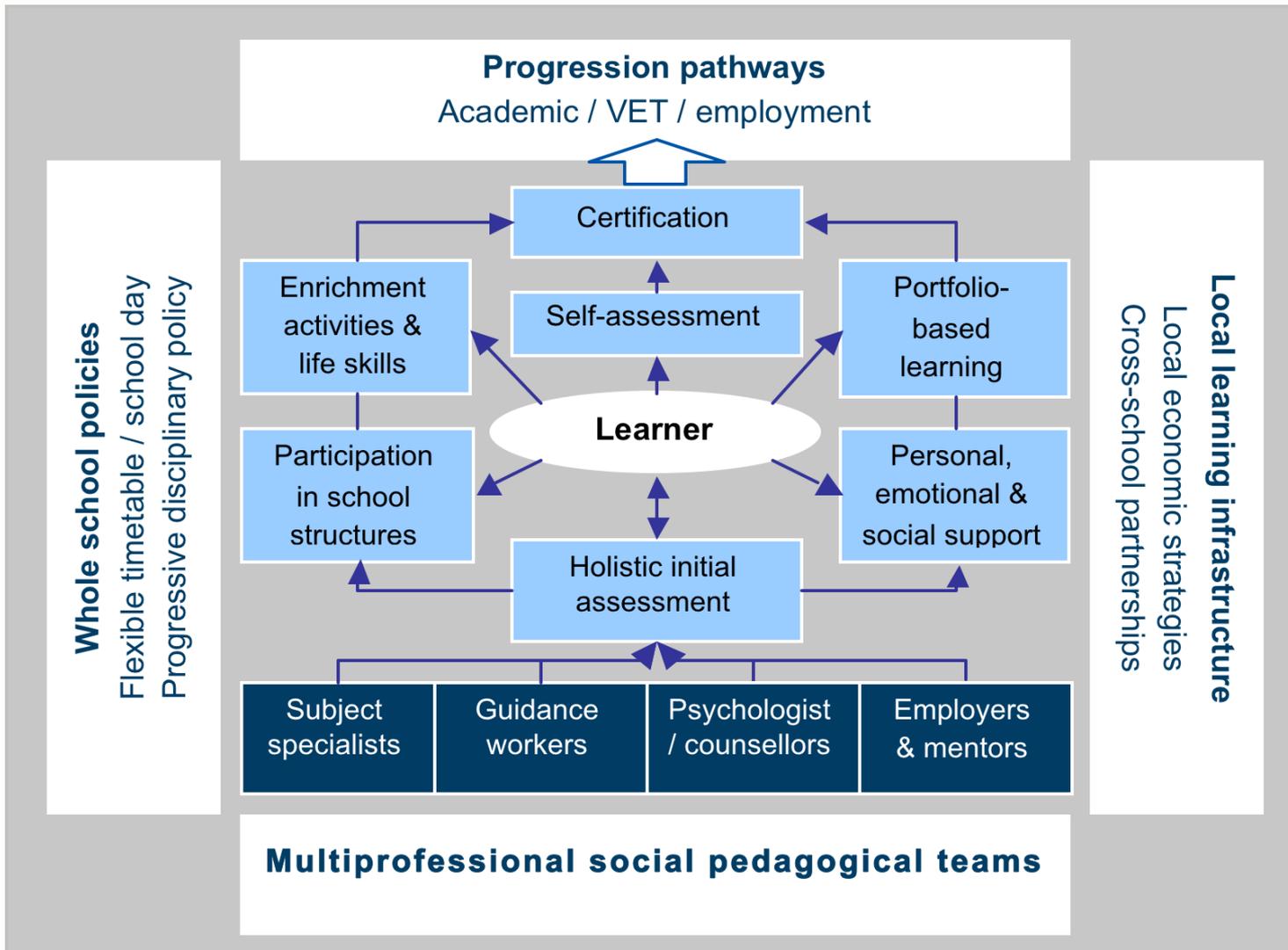


Cooperation to support students - 1

- All adult learners benefit from **advice and guidance**
- This means working closely with guidance professionals at local level
- Many adult learners need **special support**
- Cooperation **in the classroom** can help deliver, e.g., language support to refugees
- Cooperation **outside the classroom**, e.g. with social services agencies, can help tackle non-educational needs that hamper adult learning



Cooperation to support students - 2



Source: Ecorys/European Commission(2013) Preventing early school leaving in Europe - lessons learned from second chance education

Cooperation for innovation

- Working with other educators and with employers through local networks can help **professional development**

E.g. the Dobbanto programme, Hungary, allocated professional mentors to continuously work with teachers and “edu-coaches” to support head teachers during the pilot phase. Teachers were also encouraged to work as a multidisciplinary team for at least 40% of the total teaching time.

- **Digital learning and open educational resources** have great potential
- Working with suppliers and open source communities can help to access and get the most from digital applications

e.g. In Salford, England, mobile phone apps are being developed to support peer assessment processes linked to digital badges



Cooperation for permeability

- Opening up **progression routes** is an important incentive for learners
- Progression can be into **employment or further education**
- Many of the structural arrangements are being put in place, e.g. national qualifications frameworks
- But pathways need to be designed at **local level** which needs cooperation, e.g. with guidance services, higher education, employers



Cooperation for international mobility

- Trans-national projects, e.g. Erasmus+, offer opportunity to learn from other adult educators
- And opportunities for placements for adults in other countries, e.g. ESF Transnational Learning Network on Mobility for Disadvantaged Young Adults – www.tln-mobility.eu
- Making a success of transnational partnerships faces some particular challenges, e.g. inter-cultural understanding

EPALE Blog: 7 tips for how to be in a transnational partnership and come out smiling

<https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/blog/7-tips-how-be-transnational-partnership-and-come-out-smiling>



Cooperation in the “back office” - 1

Pooling of resources

- At all levels from place of learning outwards
- Not just financial but also expertise, knowledge etc

Quality systems

- Top-down or bottom-up approaches ?
- Cooperation is essential to define what we **mean** by quality
- Better quality should lead to **better outcomes for learners**
i.e. in the “front office”



Cooperation in the “back office” - 2

- Cooperation between organisations,

e.g. Women’s Community Education Quality Assurance Framework, Ireland developed by Aontas, the National Adult Learning Association, has developed voluntary quality labels in cooperation with 7 women’s community education groups

- Partnerships as a component of quality,

e.g. Wales’ inspection framework includes strategic partnerships and joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance – Indicator 3 (Estyn)

e.g. Malta has an indicator for involvement of social partners in the development of courses

Source: Panteia/European Commission (2013) Developing the Adult Learning Sector: Quality in the Adult Learning Sector



To sum up ...

Cooperation enables professionals to access:

- Knowledge and expertise
- Learners
- Resources

Cooperation involves:

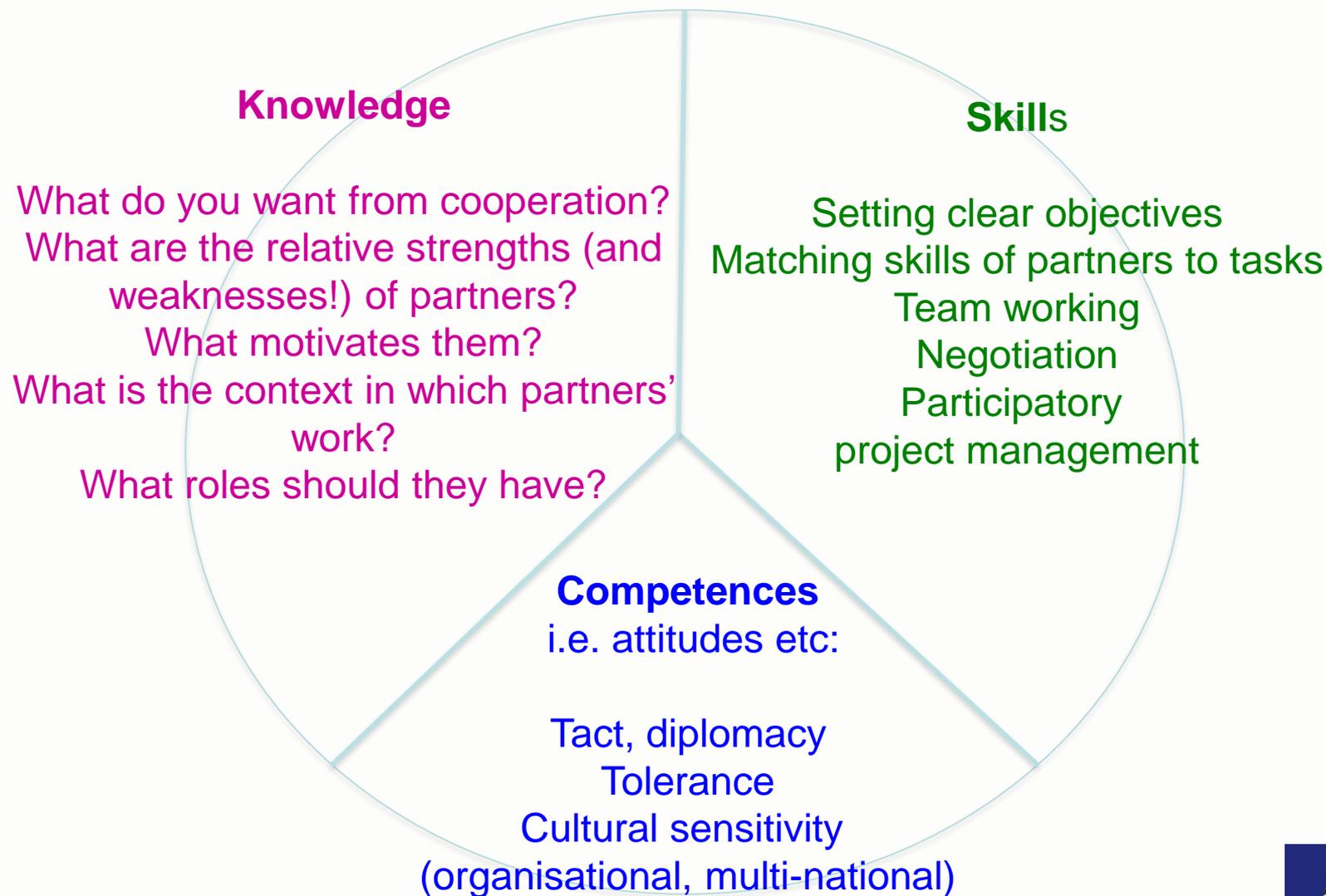
- Informality as well as formality
- A wide range of stakeholders other providers, higher education, employers, trades unions, guidance services, civil society

Cooperation needs:

- A particular set of knowledge, skills, and competences ...



What knowledge, skills and competences are needed?



Finally, let's return to where we started...

Cooperation can potentially play a central role in achieving goals like these:

Governance: ensuring the coherence of adult learning with other policy areas, improving coordination ... increasing, where appropriate, both private and public investment.

Supply and take up: significantly increasing the supply of high-quality adult learning provision ...

Flexibility and access: widening access by increasing the availability of workplace-based learning and making effective use of ICT ...

Quality: improving quality assurance, including monitoring and impact assessment, improving initial and continuing education of adult educators, and collecting the necessary data on needs to effectively target and design provision ...

Adult Learning Priorities, ET 2020 Joint Report , 2015



Thank you



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