

Education as a Driver for Change



Enthusiasm for education!

Workshops for New Multipliers

Experiences and results of workshop offers for multipliers to increase participation opportunities for educationally disadvantaged people in Europe

Manual 1

Contents

1. Part 1 - General information and introduction.....	Page 4
2. Part 2 - Experiences, results, recommendations.....	Page 30
3. Part 3 - Evaluation Report.....	Page 55
4. Part 4 - Additional Work	Page 76
5. Appendix 1.....	Page 78
6. Appendix 2.....	Page 90

inclusion & **in.clusion**
education

Part 1

General information and introduction

in.education

The main aim of the **in.education** project is to increase the enrolment in education of educationally and socially disadvantaged people where access hasn't been made via the usual channels. Three different strategies have been developed and tested. The results will be summarized and presented. The products are intended to contribute to the further professionalisation of adult education.

Strategy 1:

Aims to activate the social environment, which is a major influence on entering an educational process. In.education develops special training for the new multipliers to raise awareness, to help them to understand the importance of their role and to support them in becoming active within their own social environment.

Strategy 2:

When it comes to education, people think mostly in terms of formal schooling including degrees and certificates, or a concluded apprenticeship. The main aim of this strategy is to acknowledge informal competencies, non-formal and informally achieved skills and knowledge from the everyday life of socially and educationally disadvantaged adults and leads to a understanding of education. The recognition of those skills will empower socially and educationally disadvantaged adults and lead to better participation in educational processes.

Strategy 3:

This strategy is aimed at employees of adult education organisations. We take a closer look at implementation systems in adult education and analyze how they are matched to the needs of socially and educationally disadvantaged. We analyze already existing offers for educationally disadvantaged groups and compare them with the findings of current science and research.

To provide access to new learning opportunities and to create a stimulating learning context is the focus of the transnational partnership **in.education** with the following partner institutions:

ISOP – Innovative Sozialprojekte GmbH
Dreihackengasse 2, 8020 Graz, Austria



Campaign for Learning, United Kingdom
24 Greencoat Place Westminster London SW1P 1RD



Galway and Roscommon Education & Training Board
An Coiléar Bán, Athenry, Co. Galway, Ireland



Zentrum für Soziale Innovation, Austria
Linke Wienzeile 246, 1150 Wien



The empowerment of people in diverse societies to step into lifelong learning is one of the important roles of adult education.

in.education faces this task through the above mentioned three strategies:

- o **Strategy 1**

Attract and activate new multipliers (persons from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged)

- o **Strategy 2**

To overcome participation barriers and promote learning and training activities

- o **Strategy 3**

Promote innovation and quality at an organisational level

in.education

creates a manual on each of the three strategies. Based on the experiences of the project, these manuals aims to inspire the work of those involved in adult education.

Educationally disadvantaged people

have, due to one or several factors, no or limited access to education. The conventional categories of description such as gender, age, ethnicity, health impairment, unemployment or social affiliation are no longer enough to capture the whole group of those affected. Other factors need to be considered such as, as learner friendly environment, empowerment of individuals and the support of people during the learning process.

This is related to the changing dynamic of European societies: the economic, financial and labour markets, the socio-political patterns and priorities, on which the political measures are focused. In recent years this has led to a growing rate of educational disadvantage.

With regard to the participation rate of adults in training and education, these groups tend to live in restricted environments. These may be social environments in which education traditionally has less significance than in others. However, it may include those who disengaged with formal education due to increasing socioeconomic pressure.

The aim of **in.education** is to accompany people on their way from a disadvantaged to a non-disadvantaged position and to work in an appropriate and supportive manner to reach this goal.

1. What is Educational Disadvantage?

A Working Definition

'Educational disadvantage' refers to individuals in a particular society gaining less from the education system than others – for example, Irish researchers Boldt and Devine¹ define it as 'a limited ability to derive equal benefit from schooling compared to one's peers'.

It is common across the EU for the term 'education' to be used to refer only to schooling and compulsory education for young people. For example, in the UK, *"Many people associate the idea of 'education' with gaining knowledge, a formal foundation for life and work, usually with an element of 'testing' involved. It is seen as being specifically aimed at young people, often associated with school or college ..."*² Thus, for example, the English Department for Education only concerns itself with young people up to the age of 18; after this, any education individuals receive is the responsibility of Departments concerned with business, civil society or employment. Similar situations apply in many other EU countries.

This narrow definition, however, ignores the many opportunities for involvement in learning that exist across Europe after compulsory education is over – through work, through evening classes, to gain skills or top up qualifications, for hobbies and leisure purposes, and for a wide range of other reasons. Research shows that adult learning brings many benefits to the individual, their community and society in general, from economic and social benefits to health, civic engagement, and social and intergenerational cohesion³.

The term 'lifelong learning' became current in the 1990s in an attempt to broaden our concept of education from something solely connected with schooling to something that does and should take place throughout our lives, for the benefit of the individual, society and the economy. The EU defines lifelong learning as follows: *"Lifelong learning must be understood as all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving*

1 Boldt, S. and Devine, B., 'Educational Disadvantage in Ireland: Literature Review and Summary Report' in Boldt, S., Devine, B., Mac Devitt, D. and Morgan, M. (1998) Educational Disadvantage and Early School Leaving Discussion Papers, Dublin: Combat Poverty Agency

² Maxted, P. (1999): Understanding Barriers to Learning; London: Campaign for Learning

³ See, for example, BIS (2013): 'Economic and Social Benefits Associated with Further Education and Skills' - available to view at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learning-for-those-not-in-employment-economic-and-social-benefits-from-further-education-and-skills> ; AONTAS (2010): 'More than Just a Course: Outcomes and Impact of Funded Community Education' - available to view at http://www.aontas.com/download/pdf/community_education_more_than_just_a_course.pdf

knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civil, social and/or employment-related perspective.”⁴

In their survey of EU Lifelong Learning policies and their implications for practice⁵, Holford et al explain: *“In the policies of the European Union, lifelong learning has been a means of achieving both competitiveness and social cohesion in an increasingly knowledge-based and globalised economy. (This) has developed in close connection with wider political, economic and social forces. While competitiveness has been a constant theme of Commission statements on lifelong learning, social inclusion and citizenship have also frequently been prominent. “*

Educational disadvantage is a complex concept, which Boldt and Devine note operates at two levels. The first is that which is experienced whilst participating in the formal educational system, through which young people from certain groups gain less benefit from the system than others. The second is the diminished life chances that are likely in future for adult members of those groups who have left formal education with no recognised qualifications or negative experiences in a learning environment. The cyclical nature of educational disadvantage, occurring both as a result of inequalities in society and acting as a contributory factor to increase them further, is a notable feature of this issue which will reappear throughout this chapter. Being able to identify common characteristics of groups of people who are more likely to be at risk of educational disadvantage is a useful starting point for policy making (at national, local and institutional levels) which can significantly assist the design and implementation of interventions, helping to reduce the disadvantages that some potential learners face and, where appropriate, to re-engage them in lifelong learning.

In order to deliver EU transnational projects such as **in.education** effectively, we need to:

- Define educational disadvantage and look at who suffers from such disadvantage currently in the EU
- Be aware of the barriers to engagement in education experienced by educationally disadvantaged adults

This paper attempts to identify who is educationally disadvantaged in the EU, with particular reference to the **in.education** partners’ countries of Austria, Ireland and the UK, to summarise the major factors behind such disadvantage, and to consider the barriers to learning experienced by educationally disadvantaged adults that we need to overcome.

⁴ EU Council Resolution, 27th June 2002, 2002/C 163/01

⁵ Holford, P. (2008): ‘Patterns of Lifelong Learning: Policy and practice in an expanding Europe’: LitVerlag GMBH, Vienna pp11-12

2. Who is educationally disadvantaged in the EU?

In this section we will attempt to outline who suffers from educational disadvantage in the EU. There is inevitably substantial overlap between the groups affected, as we will see, as a result of the complex interrelationships between the factors involved.

2.1 People living in poverty

A recently published Oxfam report⁶ on financial inequality in the EU points out: *“The EU is a group of rich countries characterized by high incomes, stable institutions, and home to 342 billionaires. It is also where 123 million people are at risk of poverty. (This) inequality is an unacceptable injustice.”* The report goes on to track links between income inequality in the EU and poverty, and to highlight barriers to economic equality across Europe.

In 2009 the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) published research⁷ showing that, in 2005, 16% of the EU population (about 79 million people) were at risk of poverty. The figures are rising. Eurostat⁸ data for 2013 shows that the percentage at risk has risen to 23.0 – 24.5% depending upon how the EU is defined – 24.5% refers to the EU as 28 countries. One-parent households and those with dependent children were identified as having the highest poverty risk. The Oxfam study comments on this data: *“Almost one European in every four – a total of 123 million people – is at risk of poverty, with an income of less than 60 percent of the average. Of these 123 million people, 48 million are unable to meet their basic material needs – with an increase of 6.5 million between 2010 and 2013.”*

The close interlinkages between levels of education and financial status are well documented in research literature across the EU, and work in both directions. A substantial volume of research⁹ shows that people from poorer socio-economic backgrounds and communities are more likely to underachieve in compulsory education systems across the EU than their peers from higher income backgrounds. Evidence clearly shows that someone who has grown up in poverty is less likely to achieve good qualifications, which is likely to

⁶ Hardoon, D. (September 2015): Background Data for Oxfam Briefing ‘A Europe For the Many, Not the Few’: Exploring inequality data for 28 countries in the European Union: Oxfam International

⁷ EAPN Explainer #1 (2009), “Poverty and Inequality In The EU”

⁸ Available to view at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=t2020_50&language=en

⁹ e.g. Kelleghan, T. et al. (1995), Educational Disadvantage in Ireland, Dublin: Educational Research Centre; Boldt, S. et al. (1998), Educational Disadvantage & Early School Leaving – Discussion Papers, Dublin: Combat Poverty Agency; Smyth, E. (1999), ‘Educational Inequalities among School Leavers in Ireland, 1979-1994’. Economic & Social Review Vol 30, July: 267-284; Smyth, E. and Hannon, D. (2000), ‘Education and Inequality’ in Nolan, B., O’Connell, P. and Whelan, C., Bust or Boom, Dublin: IPA; NESF (2002), Early School Leavers Forum Report No 24, Dublin: NESF.

mean that they will be disadvantaged well into adulthood through poorer access to secure employment. A recent pan-European study concludes: *“Educational attainment has the largest impact on the likelihood of being in poverty and severely materially deprived as an adult, both in the UK and the other EU countries studied.”*¹⁰

This has led the UK Office of National Statistics to conclude *“Educational attainment is the most important of the factors ... in explaining poverty in both the UK and the other EU countries studied.”* It gives the example of the impact of poor education: *“In the UK, those with a low level of educational attainment are almost five times as likely to be in poverty now as those with a high level of education.”*¹¹ This in turn makes individuals less likely to access education in future, as we will see, creating a vicious circle of disadvantage.

Poverty interacts with other factors to produce a complex mix: Guerin (2014)¹², for example, comments that in an EU context, “family status and income remain consistently strong indicators of later success at school, with academic success being correlated with social class, parental qualifications, income and other factors.”

Key characteristics linked with poverty highlighted by EAPN include:

- unemployment, or having a poor quality, low paid or precarious job
- low levels of education and skills, limiting access to work and full participation in society
- disability: limiting access to employment and increasing day-to-day living costs
- family composition: lone parents and large families are at greater risk of poverty due to higher living costs, lower income and more difficulty gaining well paid work
- gender: women are generally paid less, are less likely to be in paid employment, have lower pensions, and/or are unpaid carers
- being part of a minority ethnic group e.g. Roma, undocumented migrants
- geography: living in remote or very disadvantaged communities where access to employment and services is limited

This list shows that many disparate factors may be involved in socio-economic hardship, and these interact in various ways with educational disadvantage, with poverty both a cause and an effect of educational exclusion. Indeed, the above list with poverty might also serve as a list of key characteristics linked with educational disadvantage, as we shall see.

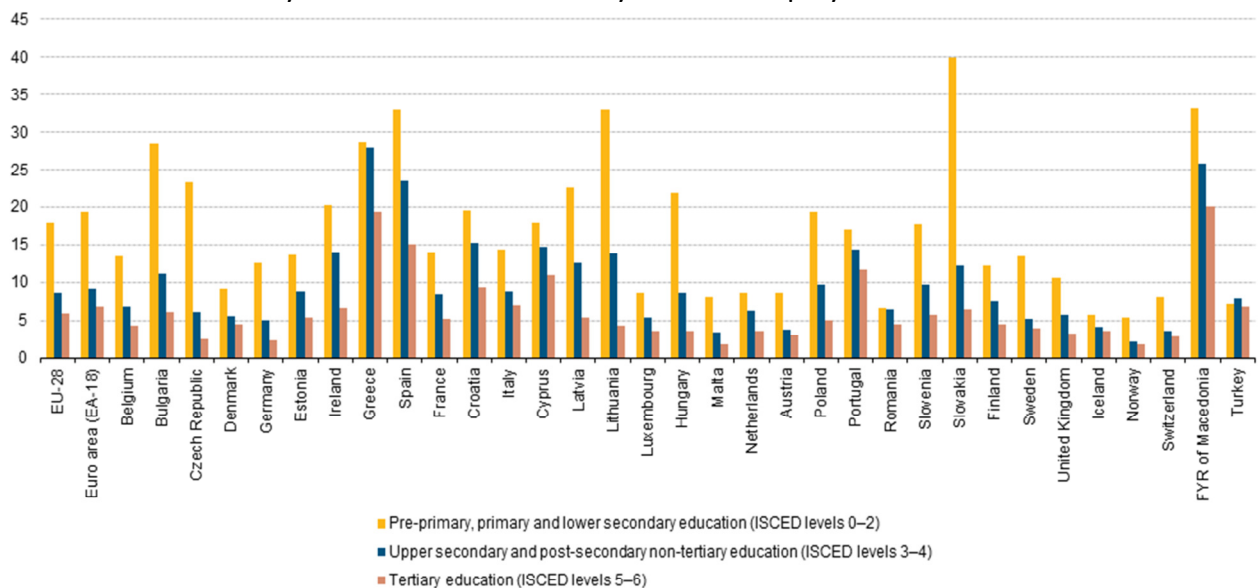
2.2 People who are unemployed, without regular employment or in low paid work

¹⁰ Serafino, P. & R. Tonkin (2014): ‘Intergenerational Transmission of Disadvantage in the UK and EU’, UK Office of National Statistics

¹¹ Office for National Statistics, UK (September 2014): [Intergenerational transmission of disadvantage in the UK & EU, 2014 Release](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/household-income/intergenerational-transmission-of-poverty-in-the-uk---eu/2014/sty-causes-of-poverty-uk.html) – available to view at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/household-income/intergenerational-transmission-of-poverty-in-the-uk---eu/2014/sty-causes-of-poverty-uk.html>

¹² Guerin, B., (2014) “Breaking The Cycle Of Disadvantage – Early Childhood Interventions and Progression To Higher Education In Europe”, RAND Europe

Unemployment and insecure employment are both an effect of educational disadvantage and a cause of continuing educational disadvantage for people across the EU – and are clearly closely linked with the economic disadvantage factors highlighted above. The table of 2013 EU statistics below¹³ shows the close correlation between level of previous education and unemployment in EU countries, with adults with only lower secondary education by far the most likely to be unemployed, particularly in certain countries, and individuals with tertiary education the least likely to be unemployed.



Source: Eurostat (online data code: ifsa_urgaed)

In the three countries represented in the **in.education** project, Ireland’s rate of unemployment is highest, followed by the UK and then Austria. As the table shows, in Austria adults with only lower secondary education are much less likely to be employed than those with higher secondary or tertiary education, with tertiary education making relatively little difference. In the UK, the biggest comparative difference is also made by upper secondary education, though the effect is not as strong as in Austria, whereas in Ireland the risk of unemployment reduces in steps as level of education increases. In the EU as a whole youth unemployment, which stood at 24% in 2013, is a particular problem¹⁴.

In the UK, part of the reason for the relative closeness between levels of unemployment of groups with differing levels of previous education is that the UK economy still has a high proportion of people in low skilled, low paid work in comparison with many other developed economies. (In Austria, for example, there are increasingly few opportunities for low skilled

¹³ From Eurostat: Statistics Explained – available to view at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/b/b0/Unemployment_rate_among_persons_aged_25-64_years_by_level_of_educational_attainment_2013_25_YB15.png

¹⁴ See, for example, CEDEFOP (March 2015): Germany – What’s the missing link for Europe’s young, educated and unemployed? - available to view at <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/germany-whats-missing-link-europes-young-educated-and-unemployed>

workers, with many low-skilled jobs outsourced to Eastern Europe since the expansion of the EU.¹⁵) While this reduces overall unemployment, it means that many people suffering poverty are in fact in low paid work – the Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s 2014 ‘Poverty, Jobs, Worklessness’ report¹⁶ shows that families in which at least one adult works are now the biggest poverty group in the UK.

The Foundation highlights the cyclical effect of the links between educational disadvantage, poverty and low paid work thus: *“People working in these jobs are more likely to face insecurity and less likely to receive training, hampering their chances of progressing.... This reinforces the observation that there is not simply a group of people that are in work and another that are out of work, with each requiring different sorts of policy intervention. Rather, people move between these states as they find and lose jobs, and for a minority these moves are frequent. .. One recent study estimates nearly 5% of the UK workforce was at risk of cycling between low paid work and unemployment (Wilson et al, 2013).”*

The UK Centre for British Teachers report, ‘Smoothing the Path: Advice About Learning And Work For Disadvantaged Adults’¹⁷ offers a wider breakdown of people who are likely to be disadvantaged when trying to enter the labour market and education. The research is based on CfBT’s substantial experience in delivering careers advice to adults who suffer from disadvantage. They include:

- people with a visual impairment
- people living with mental illness
- people who are receiving incapacity benefit (UK State benefit for people unable to work due to long-term illness or disability)
- trade union members who are low skilled, low paid, part time staff or shift workers
- homeless people
- older adults
- ex-offenders

Access to training through work is a key means of reducing educational disadvantage amongst adults: as long ago as 1997 an influential UK report by Bob Fryer, Chair of the Campaign for Learning, stated baldly: *“For many people, the workplace is the only place where they will engage in formal learning (as adults)”*¹⁸ Ironically, however, statistics show

¹⁵ OECD: Economic Surveys – Austria 2007

¹⁶ Schmuecker, K: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, February 2014: The Future of the UK Labour Market: Poverty, Jobs, Worklessness

¹⁷ Hawthorne, R. and Alloway, J. Smoothing the Path: Advice About Learning And Work For Disadvantaged Adults, CfBT, 2009

¹⁸ Fryer, R. H. (1997): ‘Learning for the Twenty-First Century: First Report of the National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning’, Barnsley: Northern College

that training is disproportionately given to those who already have qualifications and who already tend to hold good, secure jobs¹⁹.

This leads to what in the UK has been termed a ‘learning divide’ between disadvantaged and more advantaged adults in their access to the benefits of lifelong learning through work: *“Individuals are located within occupational hierarchies that provide differential access to ... learning opportunities ... As a result, some workers enter employment with expectations of access to learning and career progression and will find opportunities to learn informally in the work environment. Others will enter jobs with few opportunities for learning and progression, and low expectations for themselves, which are reinforced by the low expectations of their managers.”*²⁰

The picture is similar in Austria, where in 2007 the OECD commented: *“A worker with less than upper secondary education receives less than 200 hours of formal adult education in a typical working life, against more than 800 hours for a tertiary graduate. This gap is larger in Austria than in comparable countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark and Finland.”*²¹

Likewise, a recent OECD report on Ireland concludes that *“There is support for professional development and establishing career ladders for low skilled workers in Ireland, but it tends to be ad hoc and is generally undertaken by individual colleges and only in certain sectors...Employers should be encouraged to target (training) opportunities specifically at low skilled workers, since it is higher skilled workers who tend to participate in these training opportunities.”*²² The report goes on to recommend the involvement of Education and Training Boards, such as the Galway and Roscommon ETB represented in this project, to widen participation in training offered in workplaces.

2.3 Intergenerational factors

The relationship between poverty and low achievement in school is part of a wider cycle in which family disadvantage is passed from one generation to another. Consequently, educational disadvantage can be seen to be closely linked to the issue of poverty and is also considered to be a factor which drives to perpetuate intergenerational poverty.

Within a European context a strong predictor of educational disadvantage is the education status of the father and mother. Research by the European Centre²³ in 2007 concluded that:

¹⁹ See, for example, Evans, K. et al (eds) (2005): Working to Learn: Transforming learning in the workplace, Routledge

²⁰ Evans, K and H. Rainbird in *ibid*, p. 13

²¹ OECD (2007) – Economic Surveys: Austria 2007

²² OECD (2014):Reviews on Local Job Creation Employment and Skills Strategies in Ireland, p.97

²³ Zaidi, A. and Zolyomi, E. 2007, Intergenerational Transmission Of Disadvantages In EU Member States, European Centre

- disadvantage with respect to educational attainment persists across generations. In Germany a person whose father had a low education was twelve times more likely to be in the same position
- the disadvantage link with father's education is generally stronger for females than males

A recent pan-European study conducted in the UK showed that parental education level has a strong effect on young people's educational outcomes in all EU countries, with particularly strong effects in the UK (where intergenerational social mobility is poor) and Southern European countries. In the UK, people are 7.5 times more likely to have low educational outcomes if their father had a low level of education than if their fathers were highly educated. However, the mechanisms by which intergenerational effects take place is not clear, and is likely to result from a complex mix of factors which may include parents' ability to help with schoolwork, communication skills, parental aspirations, enhanced parenting ability as levels of education increase and genetic traits, as well as external correlated factors from childhood poverty to family size²⁴.

2.4 People with poor health or disabilities

As we saw above, people with physical or mental health problems and disabilities are disproportionately represented amongst the poor across the EU. People with health problems and disabilities are more likely to suffer unemployment and poor quality or insecure work. *"Many disabled people often experience discrimination and encounter barriers to participation in all aspects of society... As a result, they are at higher risk of experiencing poverty than other social groups. Research shows an insidious relationship between disability and poverty, and analysts have submitted that disability can be a cause and consequence of poverty."*²⁵

UK disability rights group the Papworth Trust publishes an annual report of facts and figures about disability, which in 2014 showed in its section on EU statistics that:

- On average 26% of the adult population of EU member states is disabled; an average of 47% are employed compared with 72% of non-disabled adults
- Across the EU, 31% of disabled people aged 16 and over live in households which are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, compared to 21% of people without a disability
- Disabled women are less likely to be employed than disabled men, with a gender gap of 7%
- 19% of young people across the EU are early school leavers, compared with 11% of

²⁴ Serafino, P. and R, Tonkin (2014): *ibid*, p.4

²⁵ Olakulehin, F.K. (2013): *Mainstream the margins: 'Disability, Disadvantage and Access to Higher Education'*, Association of Commonwealth Universities – available to view at <https://beyond2015.acu.ac.uk/submissions/view?id=46>

non-disabled young people

This once again illustrates the considerable overlap that exists between groups affected by poverty, social and educational disadvantage.

Despite the introduction of international Human Rights legislation, UNESCO comments: *“Societies’ misperception of different forms and types of disability and the limited capacity of social actors to accommodate special needs often place people on the margin. Persons with disabilities experience inequalities in their daily lives, and have fewer opportunities to access a quality education that takes place in an inclusive environment.”*²⁶

Similarly, poor physical and mental health are often factors that adversely affect participation in learning amongst people of all ages, although both the direct and indirect benefits of participation on health are well documented. A recent paper by Public Health England, for example, summarises the situation as follows:

*“People who are unemployed, live in deprived areas, occupy more disadvantaged socio-economic positions, or have few or no educational qualifications, could particularly benefit from adult learning, as they already face negative health outcomes related to the wider conditions in which they are born, grow, live, work and age. However... the more someone would benefit from adult learning, the less likely they are to participate, and the lower their literacy and numeracy skills are likely to be. This is due to a range of barriers, including prohibitively high costs, lack of personal confidence, or lack of availability and access.”*²⁷

The English Department of Business Innovation and Skills, which controls funding for adult learning, has recently cut budgets for adult learning provision by up to 24% as part of national austerity measures, but interestingly has funded a pilot programme, running at present, to investigate the benefits of informal adult learning on mental health, from which the results are currently awaited.

2.4 People with disrupted or limited schooling, including early school leavers

Most Western countries introduced compulsory education systems towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, although registrations in primary schools in many countries were already high when compulsion was introduced. In some countries, however, only two or three years of schooling was made compulsory, and it was not until after 1945 in Europe that systems involving more extensive periods of compulsory schooling were introduced²⁸. Young people in the EU are now expected to take part in compulsory education for a minimum of 9 years and in some cases as much as 12 years²⁹.

²⁶ Available to view at <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/strengthening-education-systems/inclusive-education/people-with-disabilities/>

²⁷ Public Health England (September 2014): Adult Learning Services: Evidence Review – available to view at <https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/.../adult-learning.../evidence-review>

²⁸ See, for example, Viarengo, M. (2007): ‘An Historical Analysis of the Expansion of Compulsory Schooling in

Extensive research has been undertaken on the impact of early school leaving (ESL) across the EU. A European definition and benchmark exist for ESL, but varying definitions within the European Member States have resulted in a lack of information on areas most in need of assistance, as well as limited measurement of the impact of initiatives. The European Court of Auditors recommended adopting the Eurostat definition in order to collect comparative data. The Eurostat definition of Early School Leavers is the percentage of the population aged 18-24 who have at most, completed lower secondary education and are not in further education or training. In the EU, about 6 million young people aged 18 to 24 – around 16% - are regarded as having left education prematurely³⁰.

Statistically early school leaving correlates with many indicators of disadvantage – for example, young people who leave school early are over-represented in statistics for drug misuse and offending behaviour. In the late 1990s, the Irish Youthreach ‘Copping On’ programme found a demonstrable correlation between early school leaving and offending behaviour, noting high levels of anti-social behaviour and substance misuse among early school leavers participating.³¹ Defining the cause and effect relationship of offending behaviour and leaving school earlier is also complicated and links back to the issue of the complexity of causes and risk factors. A similar issue is that of the connection between early school leaving and homelessness, which again may work in either or both directions: becoming homeless can be a contributing factor to having to leave school early but also those who leave school with few qualifications are more likely to become homeless³².

The Eurostat table below shows encouraging progress was made in reducing early school leaving in most member states between 2008 and 2013, including in Austria, Ireland and the UK. Austria in particular is complimented by Eurostat for having reached its self-imposed national target for reducing early school leaving by 2013.

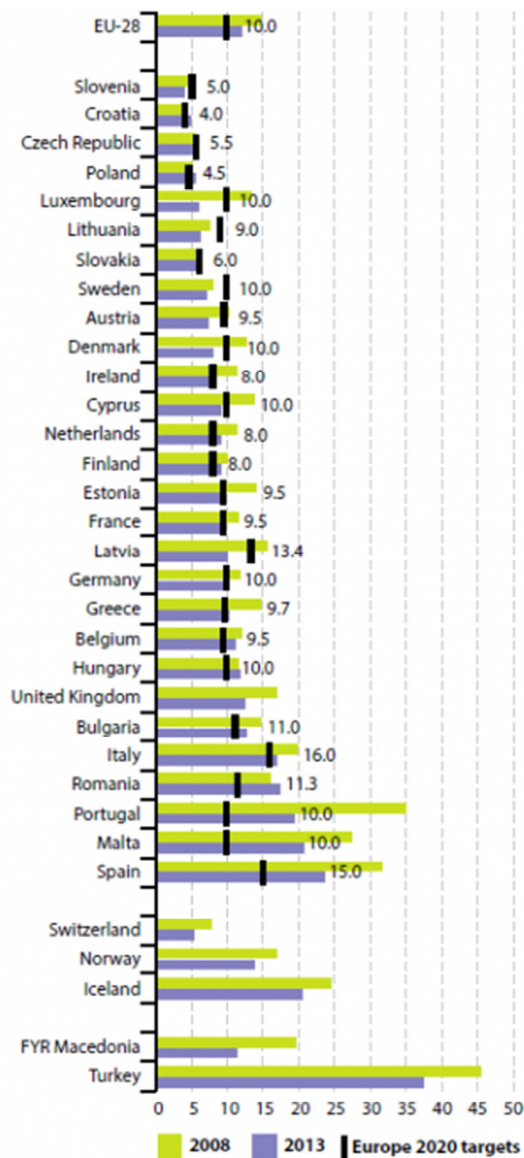
Europe’, London School of Economics Working Paper 97/07 – available to view at <http://www.lse.ac.uk/economicHistory/pdf/wp97.pdf>

²⁹ Euridyce (2015): Compulsory Education in Europe 2014-15 – available to view at http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts_and_figures/compulsory_education_EN.pdf

³⁰ See, for example, European Commission Report, 2006

³¹ Quinn, M. (1997) ‘Copping On: National Youthreach Crime Awareness Initiative’, National Documentation Centre on Drug Use, ROI

³² Maxted, P (1999): *ibid*



(*) Break in series for LU (2009), NL (2010), LV (2011) and FR (2013).

National targets: EU-28, DK, DE, LU, SE: under 10%, ES: 15% (drop-out rate), NL: under 8%, LT: under 9%, SK: under 6%, UK: no target.



Figure 3: Early leavers from education & training, by country, 2008 and 2013 (% of population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training) Source: Eurostat online data code

It is important also to reinforce the distinction between leaving the school environment early and opting out of education and learning altogether. It is worth nothing that Einstein left school without qualifications at the age of 15 yet continued to learn throughout his life³³. Leaving school early is a social problem if education or training cease and are unlikely to be resumed, but leaving school early is not necessarily a social problem if education or training of a recognized form continue. However, if an individual’s learning and experience

³³ See <https://blogs.warwick.ac.uk/einsteinproject/>

at school have been poor, this may weaken the extent and value of post-school education or training and work against participation in lifelong learning.

Disrupted education may not simply result from early school leaving, however. The UK Department for Education recently investigated young people who were doing well in school but failed to progress to higher education despite having the ability to do so³⁴. They found that groups of young people who did not progress included:

- young people with home caring responsibilities,
- young people from armed services or military families

Both these groups had suffered some form of disruption in their education, through having to take time off or through regularly moving school, which may have contributed to this.

Three further groups who suffer from multiple disadvantage, including educational disadvantage, across the EU, where disrupted education and/or early school leaving has been shown to be a factor, are:

- individuals who grow up in public care
- travellers
- refugees and migrants

The Who Cares Trust supports young people in public care in the UK. It reports that almost a third of young people in public care leave school with no qualifications at all, and only 13% achieve five good GCSE passes (akin to a school leaving certificate in other EU countries, required to progress to more advanced study), in comparison with 58% of all school leavers.

One third of young people in care are classed as NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) after leaving school, in comparison with 13% of others³⁵.

For travellers, access to education through a mainstream system may be problematic. Ireland has a substantial Traveller community, who form a distinct indigenous minority numbering 25-30,000 people. Census information from 2002 and 2005 showed that two thirds of Travellers had left school before the statutory leaving age, that 73% of Traveller men and 64% of Traveller women were unemployed (compared with 4.4% of the total population), and that Travellers suffered from significantly more health problems and had 10 or more years' less life expectancy than people from settled communities.³⁶ In its Traveller Education Strategy, the Irish Government comments: *"It is clear from existing evidence that*

34 Thornton et al, DfE, January 2014 School and College - Level Strategies to Raise Aspirations of High Achieving Disadvantaged Pupils To Pursue Higher Education Investigation

³⁵ Available to view online at <http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/pages/the-statistics.html>

Travellers can experience difficulties in obtaining access to education and training services. (We recommend) the integration of Travellers in mainstream provision at all levels of the education system, in a fully inclusive model of educational provision, thereby creating a positive environment for all the Traveller community.”³⁷

The current migration crisis across Europe has brought the plight of adults and children who are migrants or refugees forcibly to the attention not only of Governments but of ordinary people in the EU. Becoming a refugee or migrant inevitably greatly disrupts all aspects of a person’s life, including their participation in education.

Eurostat figures from June 2015 show that non-EU-born young people had the highest early school leaving rate of all groups, and at EU level non-EU-born young people in 2014 were twice as likely to leave school early as others. Eurostat comments: *“In the EU, the share of early leavers among migrants in 2013 was more than twice as high as for natives (22.6 % compared with 11 %). Language difficulties, leading to underachievement and lack of motivation, are possible reasons. Lower socioeconomic status of foreign-born residents increasing the risk of social exclusion is another. Educational systems may also exacerbate these circumstances if they are not set up to respond to the special needs of pupils from vulnerable groups.”³⁸*

In the same dataset, one in four non-EU-born young people aged 15 to 29 across the EU in 2014 were Not in Education, Employment or Training, in comparison to 15% of EU-born young people. Encouragingly, however, across the EU, non-EU-born adults had the highest participation in lifelong learning of all population groups in 2014. The need for such participation will clearly expand: the report’s authors comment: *“Increasing migration into an already culturally diverse European Union generates a need to prepare immigrants, and their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society by means of education and training.”³⁹*

2.5 People from certain minority ethnic groups

Just as migrants may be disadvantaged educationally as a result of a range of factors, including the higher proportion of migrants falling into lower socioeconomic groups, so individuals from certain minority ethnic groups may suffer educational disadvantage in the EU, even if they were themselves born in the country where they are educated. Eurostat comments on the interaction of factors at play here: *“Ethnic minorities are likely to be*

³⁶ Irish Government (2005): ‘Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy’ – available to view at https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/traveller_ed_strat.pdf

³⁷ Ibid, p.10

³⁸ Eurostat (2014): Europe 2020 Indicators – Education, December 2014 – available to view online at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Europe_2020_indicators_-_education

³⁹ Eurostat (2015): Migrant Integration Statistics – Education, June 2015 – available to view online at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migrant_integration_statistics_-_education

*excluded from education due to a combination of factors including parental choices, poverty, discriminatory practices, residential segregation and language barriers”.*⁴⁰

In Austria, young people from minority ethnic backgrounds tend broadly to do less well at school than young people from majority backgrounds. Researchers conclude that this results primarily from socioeconomic factors, as minority ethnic groups tend to be poorer, but some also argue that some parents’ lack of fluency in German and lack of information about the education system in Austria may also contribute.⁴¹

In the UK, young people from minority ethnic backgrounds used to perform less well than white children in school, but, perhaps surprisingly, this is no longer the case: children whose first language is not English tend to lag behind early in their schooling, but make faster progress than white British children, such that by the end of their schooling it is children from poor white backgrounds who perform least well. *“Overall, gaps in educational achievement by ethnic group have narrowed considerably over the last 20 years. Since the early 2000s, most broad ethnic groups have, on average, seen a greater improvement in attainment at age 16, compared with White British pupils.”*⁴²

Across Europe, more pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds than from indigenous backgrounds are born into poor families, but in the UK minority ethnic pupils show fewer of the damaging links between poverty and educational achievement than white British children. Eligibility for Free School Meals in England (denoting low family income) is strongly associated with low achievement, but significantly more so for white British pupils than other ethnic groups. However, despite having by far the highest proportion of FSM pupils, for the last few years London has had the lowest proportion in England of students not obtaining 5 good GCSEs including English and Maths; the success is attributed to programmes such as the *Academies Programme*⁴³ and the *London Challenge*⁴⁴ initiative.

Similar trends have been reported in Ireland, which some ascribe to the high educational levels and positive attitudes of many parents of minority ethnic students: *“Considering the high levels of academic achievement among most adult immigrants in Ireland... it could be argued that despite lower economic and different cultural and social capital, they have positive dispositions towards academic success that could in future be exchanged to success in education and beyond.”*⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Eurostat 2014, *ibid*

⁴¹ Stevens, P.A. and G Dworkin (2014): ‘The Palgrave Handbook of Race and Ethnic Inequalities in Education’, London, Palgrave MacMillan

⁴² Stokes, L. et al (2015): ‘A compendium of evidence on ethnic minority resilience to the effects of deprivation on attainment’, Department for Education, UK, June 2015

⁴³ Further information is available (as of September 2015) on the National Audit Office (NAO) website: <http://www.nao.org.uk/report/departement-for-education-the-academies-programme>

⁴⁴ Further information on this five year initiative launched in 2003 is available in archive form at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20070108123845/dfes.gov.uk/londonchallenge/>

⁴⁵ Darmody, M, et al in Bekerman, Z. and T. Geisen (eds) (2012): ‘International Handbook of Migration,

Exceptions, however, are the Irish Traveller group mentioned earlier, and the Roma group, who suffer from severe educational exclusion and low attainment throughout Europe. Eurostat comments: *“In a number of Member States the proportion of pupils dropping out early or even not attending school at all is especially high among ethnic minority groups, such as Roma. In 2011 more than 10 % of Roma children were not attending compulsory education in Romania, Bulgaria, France and Italy. This figure reached 35 % in Greece. In response to persistent marginalisation and social exclusion of Roma minorities, the European Commission in 2011 adopted the ‘EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies up to 2020’. The framework reflects the EU’s commitment to ensuring Roma inclusion in four key areas, including access to education.”*⁴⁶

2.6 Skills factors

Poor essential skills (reading, writing, maths, speaking and listening in the language of the country of residence, and increasingly ICT skills) are both a result of educational disadvantage in the EU and the cause of further exclusion for adults, affecting everything from employability to ability to read instructions on medicine bottles or manage money.

The impact of poor literacy skills is well documented in the publication by the UK National Literacy Trust, ‘Literacy Changes Lives’⁴⁷. It states, amongst other findings:

- Within Europe, the UK presents the largest inequality between the literacy levels of the highest and lowest paid workers with the exception of Russia.
- People with low literacy skills are less likely to be in employment, more likely to earn less and are more likely to live in disadvantaged housing conditions.
- The negative effect of low literacy is greater for women than men. Women with low literacy levels are more likely to experience homelessness than men.
- Poor literacy is also linked to crime with low literacy levels being present amongst young offenders and the prison population. In the UK, 48% of offenders in custody have a reading age at or below that of a typical 11-year old.

It is estimated that 80 million adults in the EU are hindered by severe difficulties with basic skills, with many not having the literacy levels to cope with the daily demands of personal, social and economic life. The situation with school leavers is not much better: Eurostat reports OECD PISA figures showing between one sixth and a quarter of 15 year olds achieving badly in reading, maths and science.⁴⁸ As the table below shows, of the three countries involved in this project, in both Ireland and the UK maths skills are particularly

Minorities and Education’, p.290

⁴⁶ Eurostat (2014), *ibid*

⁴⁷ Morrisroe, J., 2014, ‘Literacy Changes Lives’, London, National Literacy Trust

⁴⁸ *Ibid*

poor (especially poor in the UK) in comparison with skills in reading and science, whereas Austria does better on maths skills and well on science, but worse on reading. There is clearly considerable need for improvement across the EU.

As we have seen, many groups suffer from educational disadvantage in the EU. Evidence shows the contributory factors to this are many and varied, and they correlate, interrelate and overlap in complex ways. As a result, is difficult to identify the causes of educational disadvantage across Europe, since many key factors operate as both cause and effect of educational exclusion.

However, it may be useful to identify common barriers to engagement in lifelong learning experienced by educationally disadvantaged adults, in order to guide efforts to overcome educational disadvantage. We will look briefly at this in the final section.

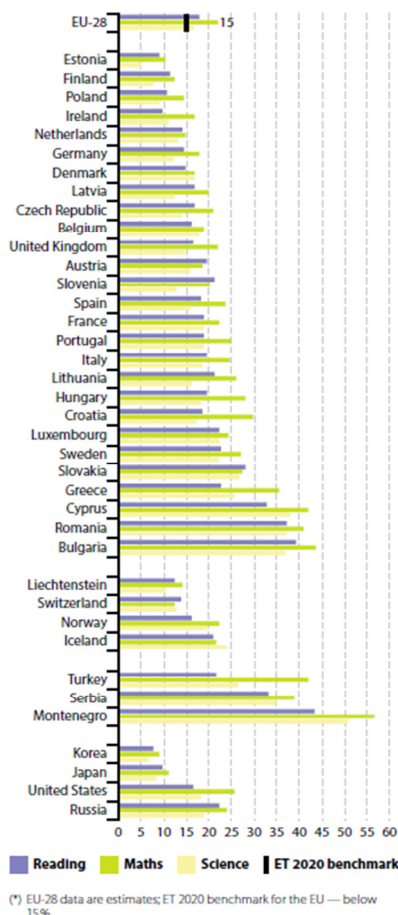


Figure 5: Low achievers in reading, maths and science, by country, 2012 (share of 15-year-old pupils who are below proficiency level 2 on the PISA scales for reading, maths and science) Source: OECD/PISA, Eurostat online data code

3. Barriers to Participation in Lifelong Learning

Education as a Driver for Change

Ensuring access to adult education is both a challenge for education providers across the EU and a key driver for change. The OECD Network recognises adult education as a “*key for transformation, challenging unjust power structures, enabling participation and overcoming marginalisation*”. Despite the levels of need, however, low skilled and disadvantaged adults are less likely to participate in formal or informal learning and have higher unemployment risks and end up in low paid, low quality, temporary jobs.

In their survey of EU Lifelong Learning policies and their implications for practice⁴⁹, Holford et al explain: “*In the policies of the European Union, lifelong learning has been a means of achieving both competitiveness and social cohesion in an increasingly knowledge-based and globalised economy. (This) has developed in close connection with wider political, economic and social forces. .. While competitiveness has been a constant theme of Commission statements on lifelong learning, social inclusion and citizenship have also frequently been prominent. “*

In 2006-7, the European Commission published ‘Adult Learning: It is Never Too Late to Learn’ with an associated Action Plan, encouraging member states to expand adult education opportunities and make them accessible to all citizens. It viewed adult learning as a response to three key challenges in the EU: economic competitiveness (with half of all new jobs by 2010 across the EU being expected to require higher skills levels), demographic change (with ageing populations across Europe and the resulting need for adults under 40 to improve their skills) and poverty and social inclusion, where a clear role for adult learning was identified in overcoming poverty, unemployment and reduced opportunities resulting from initial low levels of education.

Eurostat reports that low educational attainment also has a negative impact on individuals’ perceptions of their health and quality of life: “*The negative impacts of low educational attainment ...also influence other aspects of a person’s perceived quality of life. Across the EU, the perception of being in good or very good health in 2012 was highest among people having completed tertiary education (81.6%). Only slightly more than half (55.1%) of the people with at most lower secondary educational attainment shared this perception.*”⁵⁰

Despite the levels of need, however, low skilled and disadvantaged adults are less likely to participate in formal or informal learning. Participation in lifelong learning is generally low across EU member states, and is even lower for disadvantaged groups such as the Roma and

⁴⁹ Holford, P. (2008): ‘Patterns of Lifelong Learning: Policy and practice in an expanding Europe’: LitVerlag GMBH, Vienna pp11-12

⁵⁰ Eurostat (2014), *ibid*

migrants. Across the EU, levels of participation vary significantly, with Nordic countries demonstrating higher participation rates, in contrast with Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey and Bulgaria, where participation rates are very low.

Barriers to Learning

People who are less likely to access educational services than their peers are often depicted by providers as being “hard to reach”. This may appear to suggest that the ‘fault’ lies with the individuals themselves – that, in a sense, they are *in hiding* from the services on offer.

However, the situation is rarely as straightforward as this; a range of factors, from practical barriers such as transport or language issues to a lack of confidence, institutional bias or simply the fact that the individual does not find the educational services on offer relevant to his or her current needs, can skew uptake of educational services. In fact, it may be more apt to describe some services as “hard to find” instead. Similarly, inequality variances may also have a strong bearing upon whether particular individuals find adult learning opportunities “easy to reach” or not.

A stimulus paper prepared by the UK-based policy and lobbying organisation NIACE⁵¹ and presented in 2014 on meeting community needs sets out the three main types of barrier to learning and achievement faced by disadvantaged groups. These barrier types are codified as: (i) situational, (ii) structural and (iii) dispositional and cultural. The paper claims that national and international evidence demonstrates that these have changed very little over many years of research in this field.

1. Situational Barriers

There are three overriding situational barriers that are seen to affect participation in learning by adults, namely: time, place and money. People in work and those with caring responsibilities are particularly affected by a lack of free time. Caring for children and other family members, work patterns and particularly shift work are all seen as deterrents to participation in learning.

People naturally want to learn at a venue that is easy to get to and within their own locality. Many adult learners will be reluctant to travel outside of their own neighbourhood and unless there is local provision, learning will often not be accessed. Experience shows that when there are sufficient opportunities to learn at different levels within a neighbourhood, more originally disadvantaged learners are able to achieve their learning goals and progress in a coherent way.

51 National Institute For Adult Continuing Education

For adults on state benefits and low incomes, learning can be seen as being expensive due to costs such as course and exam fees, books, materials, care of dependants and transport. All of these can be significant deterrents. In the UK, recent changes to government funding of adult learning as a result of the austerity agenda are making this a prominent issue.

2. Structural Barriers

Structural barriers refer to the way that learning is planned and delivered by funders and educational providers. These barriers are usually beyond the learner's control. Examples include insufficient information or knowledge about the learning on offer, the geographical area in which the learner lives and the ability of the venue to be flexible to need as well as providing a welcoming environment.

Potential learners can only access learning if they know what is on offer and understand how the learning relates to their individual needs. The two are interrelated. Whilst a lack of information alone is clearly a barrier to participation, the same is also true in reverse, i.e. when there is an overburdening surfeit of information. For learners who do not engage readily with the complex nature of courses at different levels, a wide range of information can be confusing and learners will struggle to decide what is appropriate to them.

To give an example of the diversity of provision, across the UK, the availability of adult education can vary significantly. People living in rural areas can find provision sparse, and in other areas it is the sole availability of learning provision at specific, rather than all levels that affects the suitability of the educational offer.

Across the EU, austerity agendas are reducing funding for public services, including lifelong learning, limiting the range and spread of provision. Funding eligibility can also have an impact; for example, to be viable, a course may need to attract a minimum or a specific cohort of learners. Learner eligibility for access onto provision can demand prerequisites, e.g. prior qualifications, knowledge, or skills, which can also adversely affect disadvantaged learners. Learners with poor basic skills may be debarred from some courses because certain skills and pre-qualifications are required by providers.

3. Dispositional and Cultural Barriers

The way that people think and feel about learning can be heavily influenced by their previous experience and cultural identity. For some, memories of learning at school can be associated with failure and humiliation – particularly for individuals who may not have developed basic skills during their compulsory schooling. In other situations, it can be families and friends who influence participation in learning. In some settings learning is seen to be in direct conflict with domestic and family responsibilities. Formal learning may also be incompatible with masculinity identity for some men.

Re-engaging with learning may also be a huge psychological step for those who have been out of the education system for some time. A subsequent poor reintroduction to an educational environment through a non-welcoming learning environment can only serve adversely and discourage further participation.

European Evidence on Barriers to Learning

The Adult Education Survey, AES, which forms part of the corpus of EU Statistics on lifelong learning, describes the factors which make participation in learning for adults with low educational attainment difficult as:

- family responsibilities;
- conflicts between training and the work schedule;
- the lack of “prerequisites for study”;
- a lack of employer support;
- a lack of suitable learning activities;
- a lack of access to ICT;
- health and age.

In most countries family responsibilities were ranked higher as an obstacle; exceptions were Estonia, France and Finland, where conflicts with work were more important⁵².

Towards Overcoming Barriers to Participation in Lifelong Learning

One way of overcoming the barriers that exist for educationally disadvantaged individuals is through outreach activity, i.e. the use of formal processes and interventions which *reach towards* the potential learner, rather than placing the onus on the individual to initiate contact. The Eurydice report previously mentioned⁹ contains a full chapter on EU wide perspectives on outreach activity. It defines outreach as: “...a process whereby people who would not normally use adult education are contacted in non-institutional settings and become involved in attending and eventually in jointly planning and controlling activities, schemes and courses relevant to their circumstances and needs.”

Outreach strategies, such as contacting potential learners and developing appropriate services via new multipliers and intermediaries, hence may be of significant advantage in reaching those who are educationally disadvantaged. An influential UK report on lifelong learning, ‘Learning through Life’, wholeheartedly recommends working with new multipliers and intermediaries to reach educationally disadvantaged people, for these reasons:

52 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015. Adult Education and Training in Europe: Widening Access to Learning Opportunities. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

“Intermediaries can:

- *provide information on opportunities, & on where and from whom to find out more;*
- *encourage participation, and point the way to progression;*
- *influence their environment so that it encourages learning; and*
- *help colleagues to help learners, even when they might not think it part of their job*

Why are all these intermediaries so important? Because we essentially have a demand-side problem. Put another way, our learning aspirations are too low. People need stimulus, encouragement and the example of others to go for learning. If possible, they also need the approval of their peers. All this adds up to cultural change. Even where people have the motivation, they often do not know quite where to look to satisfy it. Intermediaries are the key to driving up demand for learning because they can do it both directly and surreptitiously; they can take the issue head-on, or they can insinuate learning into people’s lives without them realising. They operate where people are, physically and mentally.”⁵³

In conclusion, educational disadvantage is extremely complex and extremely challenging to overcome, but from both a practical and a moral perspective it is essential that we find ways to do so. In the words of two leading international commentators on educational disadvantage : *“We do not consider that there is any single factor that could reverse longstanding patterns of disadvantage, but neither do we consider them an irreversible fact of life. We believe that our society must –through government actions as well as through grassroots initiatives – begin to adjust the balance between individuals’ opportunities and their social responsibilities so as to develop a more equal society... We do consider... that the current waste of human resources caused by the educational failure of those with disadvantaged backgrounds is unacceptable in a modern society.”⁵⁴*

⁵³ Schuller, T. and D. Watson (2009): ‘Learning Through Life: Inquiry into the Future for Lifelong Learning’, Leicester, NIACE

⁵⁴ Cox, Theo (ed) (Falmer Press, 1999): Combating Educational Disadvantage: Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Children, p 172

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Part 2

Experiences, results, recommendations

Enthusiasm for education!

Workshops for new multipliers

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highlights the long-term experience, that training programmes of adult education institutions reach only a portion of those affected. The more socially and educationally disadvantaged people are, the less accessible education opportunities are. Either relevant information on programmes is not brought to disadvantaged groups, or the information isn't communicated in an appropriate way. Partially, organisations lack a defined target group, or institutions are satisfied once there is sufficient enrolment. The quality of participants is not frequently measured in many cases.

It is evident that the social environment plays a major role with regard to participation in education. In this workshops we address members in the social environment of educationally disadvantaged. Awareness raising, planning of activities to support educationally disadvantaged and actually delivering. There is a wide range of activities to be done by these new multipliers.

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defined important groups in each partner country, which were identified as "new multipliers" within the social environment of socially and educationally disadvantaged people. The main focus was put on the following individuals or groups:

- individuals or groups that the partner institutions have had no, or little, contact with so far
- individuals or groups who play an important role in the social environment of socially and educationally disadvantaged people
- individuals or groups that do not identify the topic of educational disadvantage as part of their remit but are in contact with socially and educationally disadvantaged.

Based on an outreach-concept, after considering how to get in contact with these groups, potential participants were invited to take part in the workshops.

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introduces the concepts and results from the partner countries. This should offer an incentive to train and support new multipliers in their role as activators for socially and educationally disadvantaged people.

In developing and implementing the workshops, the partners were focused on their own national and organizational environments and identified specific offers for their relevant social environment. Commonly agreed core elements were the basis for all actions within the partnership.

Core elements of the partnership:

- Attitude towards education (personally, within the social environment)
- Barriers to education and strategies to overcome them
- Reasons for participation in education
- Referrals to education offers for socially and educationally disadvantaged
- Knowledge on barriers, disadvantaged groups and their characteristics

Once the activities were developed and implemented in the partner countries, the elements were worked out from the common experiences, values for all partners. It is to be expected that these common aspects are similar throughout Europe. It can be seen as relevant to European Adult Education, in the context of educational disadvantage.

Common aspects:

- Participation in learning, as well as educational disadvantage, is mostly seen as an individual problem. Structural, social or financial barriers are not taken into consideration sufficiently.
- Education is seen for most people as having a strong connection with vocational training. It makes sense to participate in education, if better jobs can be found as a result. For many the term “education” is rather *fuzzy*. It is seen as needing to lead directly to benefit in the workplace.
- Educational disadvantage is very diverse. There is still a lack of knowledge about this issue, even with professionals, like volunteers, social workers, and adult educators
- Due to the sensitivity around this issue, an understanding of the specific needs of educationally disadvantaged people cannot be developed. In many cases educational disadvantage is not seen as such.
- Persons affected know more about educational disadvantage than others. Addressing educational disadvantage is seen as a political necessity to promote equality.
- People often use generalisations to compensate for their lack of competency regarding educational disadvantage.
- Improving capabilities, on a professional and methodological level, is imperative to replace individuals' experiences of educational exclusion with positive inclusive experiences.
- Educationally disadvantaged lack "natural learning environments" such as learning in the workplace or learning through pastimes (discussing a movie with friends). If there are no experiences acquiring non-formal knowledge or skills, learning is hindered.
- Learning takes place in a classical training room. Other locations (e.g. training on the job) are often not recognised as learning spaces.
- It is not primarily a matter of "voluntary exclusion", if educationally disadvantaged adults cannot be reached, it is more of a social and socioeconomic issue. Individual experiences are to be asserted subsequently, especially in the context of their current life situation. This determines their degree of openness to educational processes.



Austria

The following groups of disadvantaged persons were focused on:

- People with a migrant background, who have faced discrimination due to their ethnicity (e.g. Sub-Saharan Africans) or their religious beliefs (e.g. Islam) and have had little or no participation in education in their countries of origin
- Asylum seekers and beneficiaries
- Employed women and men without a special education background with precarious working conditions

From the following social environments new multipliers were identified:

Migrants, asylum seeker, asylum beneficiaries

- Education co-ordinators
- Migrant self-organisations and representative institutions
- Protestant Church of Graz

Women and men with precarious jobs

- Trade Union Congress – training for works counsellors
- Protestant Church of Graz

Key questions for this process were:

- Which people within the target group do we have little or no contact with?
- Which people within the target group have no or just a little access to our educational offers?
- Which social spaces are visited by educationally disadvantaged people?
- What other users of these social spaces would be an important multiplier for us?
- How can we get in touch with them? In what ways can we reach them?
- What exactly do we want them to do after the workshop?
- How should we keep in touch with them?

Starting from the definition of outreach and the corresponding strategies workshops with the following objectives were developed:

- To raise awareness of education and educational disadvantage
- Knowledge development and capacity building for educationally disadvantaged
- Building networks, comprising of persons/institutions who work with educationally disadvantaged in various social settings
- Training on the subject
 - o Tasks and competencies of multipliers
- To increase the acceptance of responsibility for action in their own social environment

It was very important to start with a clear and accepted definition of "education" including individual and social objectives. Education to us means the following:

“Self-acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities, which makes a person capable of action in their own living environment and allows a successful existence in different social systems.”

Educational settings

The workshops were conducted as two workshops of three hours each with a week between the first and second workshop.

The participants had tasks to carry out during the interim week to deepen their understanding from the first workshop. Participants on the first round of workshops had to do research in their own social environment to find out about educational experiences and the framework in place to step into learning. Participants on the second round of workshops were asked to find out about the vocational learning opportunities in their own company and to focus on which of their colleagues were taking part in the available training.

With this methodological process we aimed to define the barriers, to confront members of their own social environments and thus change these barriers.

The participants also gain experience in their role as “new multipliers”.

Findings from this were: the importance of finding people in an appropriate situation increases willingness to talk. They gained experienced from these conversations as well as confronting their own prejudices after hearing different explanations for the educational performances of the educationally disadvantaged.

Workshop 1 – Women and Men in a Migrational Context

Participants were private persons, acquired from migrant education co-ordinators. The social meeting environments were an African free-church, open spaces for families and a Muslim women's association.

Contents:

- Discussion of the term "education"
- Sensitisation to the importance of networks
- Input on the field of activity with a focus on access to education
- Approach to the field of educational disadvantage with a focus on 4 diversity dimensions (individual, social, structural and political dimension)
- Editing the educational information provided by the interviewees
- Definition of tasks and roles of multipliers

Workshop 2 – Works Counsellors

All participants had just completed the four-semester trade union school. Participants came as workers' representatives from different sectors from the regional health insurance company, public employees of the province, State Hospital staff, automotive industry and social service. The participants chose the two workshops as an additional offer from the union school; they were interested in learning more about this topic.

Contents:

- Personal experiences and attitudes towards education, educational barriers and factors of discrimination
- The barriers to education were collected and structured into the 4 levels (individual, social, structural and political). There was plenty of discussion on the definition of education.
- An important part of the workshop was research in their own environment. To confront works counsellors in their own environment with barriers to education, the task was to find out about their colleagues' participation in training within their own companies.
- In the second part of the workshop the results of the research were the basis for discussion on disadvantaged target groups who find difficulty in gaining access to further trainings within their own companies.

Workshop 3 – Employees of a Migrant Self-Organisation

Participants were employees of the association “JUKUS”, two of them were trainees (students of pedagogy), three of them were Austrians, the rest were not born in Austria. Participants were from 21 to 59 years old. There were no men. One of the trainees works in a service for schools; she provides learning support students in cooperation with the secondary school St. Leonhard.

The **contents** were the same as in WS 1 and WS 2, with a special focus on the clients of JUKUS: young migrants, mainly from Turkey (especially Kurdish), more young men than women. A specific concern was for a stronger, more effective and broader network, with the aim of increasing the accessibility of services. The supporters also needed support - access to information and current projects. This was experienced in every workshop, but particularly in this one with (semi-) professionals.

Workshop 4 – Volunteers and Professionals from the Protestant Church

Persons who work either in pastoral care or as volunteers and within their role come into contact with many people in the church community.

The focus had to be put on educational disadvantage as participants initially struggled to accept the probability of finding disadvantaged people within the church community. Slowly their perspective changed on church activities, sports events for instance, where disadvantaged spectators could be assumed.

Workshop 5 – Networking

Through the workshops with new multipliers it became clear that participants need an opportunity to discuss progress and they need support. Both would make them more aware of participation in education and broaden their methodological competencies. At the same time this communication would meet their expectations: forming new networks and supporting a quicker dissemination of information.

Essentially it is about the organisation of network meetings on a regular basis and to put these meetings on a much broader footing. Participants of our workshops, representing diverse social environments, people active in associations, volunteers, important formal and informal persons in communities etc. were invited to take part in the bimonthly meetings. The idea being to support self-organisations in an accessible way, but also to provide information at the same time, as necessary.

Experiences - Recommendations

- The question, *how new multipliers can help themselves*, is vital. After the benefit is seen, new multipliers become active.
- The participants in our workshops were partially disadvantaged themselves. A conflict of interest arose here: benefit gained for themselves through participating and still to be available to help members of their own social environments. This is a situation that can become overwhelming.
- A close relationship to the subject creates a higher sensitivity to the challenges: to increase participation in education structurally and individually.
- Some participants have developed concrete ideas from the workshops. For example, some Works Counsellors have planned concrete changes in the approach and planning of in-house training.
- Participants of the workshops are close to people, who have not gotten the same opportunities to participate in education. Motivation is not common in the social environment. That is why the level of awareness differs significantly. Starting the workshops with open discussions on individual experiences to elicit a common definition of education, barriers to learning and unequal access, is recommended. Research that covers this issue has proved successful. Familiarity and concrete examples helped to focus on the real issues.
- New multipliers need actual and concrete information about training opportunities.
- Everyone has to be addressed personally to build the relationships.
- It is important to facilitate discussion on the definition of education. Otherwise, the essential part of this, being an active multiplier would be missed.
- In working with educationally disadvantaged, it should be noted and made clear, that viewing education in the traditional sense (happening only in the formal system) is outdated.
- It is important to find a solution to cost issues. This refers to the educational environment costs such as travelling to a training event etc. Educationally disadvantaged are often also in socio-economically precarious situations and may have to consider the perceived benefit of training against the cost of participating

- This means institutions must develop strategies to communicate effectively how worthwhile and important the training is.
- Our participants noted that self-esteem grows with every successfully completed course. This especially related to the ability to cope with the demand of education and willingness to repeat positive educational experiences.
- It was shown that there were always people in the social environment who encouraged learners with their educational goals. This role, in the context of educationally disadvantaged people, can be taken on by new multipliers: they encourage and motivate people to take the next educational step.
- People also need advice on their educational decisions and get most relevant personal advice from persons of trust. This could also be a role for the multipliers.
- Educationally disadvantaged people are less willing to accept a long commute for training and education. Services have to be close to home.
- Older learners are less comfortable in groups with younger participants. The fear is that they may not be as fast, or as good, in the use of new media or not able to engage with modern teaching methods
- Educationally disadvantaged people need very concrete information about the offer. What – when – how – what for – how expensive – how long.
- Long waiting times reduces motivation.

IRELAND

The objectives of the report are:

- To develop and test the transfer-orientated concepts/guidelines of reaching socially and educationally disadvantaged learners.
- To identify New Multipliers/ Agents of Change (Persons from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people (parents, family, non-family caregivers, union learning representatives, social workers, education- and career counsellors etc.)

To meet the objectives GRETB worked with existing Learning Networks, new and existing multipliers. As GRETB has been responsible for the development, delivery and implementation of education and training since the 1930s, it would have collaborated with many organisations over the years. Therefore identifying new multipliers was going to be challenging. As a result the multipliers selected were a combination of new, existing, or agencies who had intermittently worked with GRETB in the past.

Definition of educational disadvantage:

GRETB is also governed by the Education Act (1998) which defines Educational disadvantage as:

“...the impediments to education arising from social or economic disadvantage which prevent students from deriving appropriate benefit from education in schools.”

Also states that:

“...to promote opportunities for adults, in particular adults who as children did not avail of or benefit from education in schools, to avail of educational opportunities through adult and continuing education.”

Prior to identifying multipliers it was decided to:

1. Circulate to the multipliers prior to meetings/workshops an overview of the project explaining the background and asking participants to consider the core elements. (Appendix 1)
2. Create a survey monkey on educational disadvantage and circulate to practitioners in adult basic education in other ETBs.

Potential target group

As agreed by the partners GRETB felt that its target would potentially be combination of young people in the age bracket from 18-25 approximately who are either;

- Unemployed
- Traveller
- Early school leaver
- On probation
- At risk in their communities.

Identifying Multipliers

Currently GRETB is responsible for the provision and delivery of education and training in a region which spans two counties and has a population of approximately 390,000. Since its establishment it would have collaborated with many organisations and agencies both stationary and voluntary over many decades, therefore identifying new multipliers would be challenging. Where possible GRETB endeavoured to select new multipliers or those it would have worked with on a very intermittent basis. People working within GRETB were also identified, as they play a pivotal role and would have a wealth of experience in this area. It would have been remiss of GRETB not to tap into these resources to gain further insight into the core elements. The selections of multipliers were based on a number of factors not solely educational disadvantage, other factors considered included social, environmental, mental and financial difficulties.

Criteria used to identify multipliers

- Cover all aspects of rural isolation and disadvantage
- Represent minority disadvantaged groups
- Working with parents and schools to promote and encourage better pupil school retention
- Provide education and training to young people at risk
- Provide basic adult and further educational opportunities for those who failed to complete mainstream education

- Provide services and support to families and children who are experiencing mental, social, spiritual and educational disadvantage
- Working with disadvantaged groups in rural Gaeltacht areas
- Working with the long term unemployed
- Working with people who are socially and environmental disadvantaged
- Working with people before the court, at risk and on probation

Innovative Strategies

As it was not possible to identify new multipliers completely GRETB endeavoured to have a mix of different organisations working together.

Learning Networks

GRETB currently has a number of Learning Networks in place throughout the region. These networks were established in 2013 consisting of representatives from a broad range of statutory agencies, local authorities, voluntary bodies and community organisations. Multipliers represented on the networks include, Údaras na Gaeltachta, Muintireas, St. Vincent De Paul, Dunmore Enterprise Centre, Glenamaddy Community Development Company, Galway Teleworking, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) National University of Ireland (NUIG), Equal Ireland, Community Employment Schemes, Dept. of Social Protection, Family Resource Centres, Skills for Work Coordinators, Community Education, Adult Basic Education and Adult Further Education. The overall objective of the network is to support the co-ordination of adult education and training provision in their areas.

Two of these networks were selected to participate in this project, the North Galway Learning Network and the Gréasán Gaeltachta (Connemara Learning Network). It was felt that these two Learning Networks best represented the needs of the people in the Gaeltacht (Irish speaking region of GRETB) and the region as a whole. The participants are drawn from many organisations and as such they would have a comprehensive understanding of the education and training needs within their areas and the difficulties experienced by their target groups. As the networks meet regularly, these meetings were used to gather information on the core elements.

Other Multipliers

Galway Rural Development (GRD)

The participants on this workshop work with other agencies, groups and individuals around the county to improve the quality of life of all citizens in their area. They especially work with those in rural areas who are most in need of assistance, to provide real opportunities for people to gain significant improvements for themselves and their communities throughout rural Galway.

TUSLA and Youth Advocates

TUSLA (Child and Family Agency) is responsible for improving the wellbeing and outcomes for children, in the form of early intervention and family support services. While the Youth Advocates work with 15-21 year olds who are at risk of dropping out of formal education or have already dropped out and are now at risk within the community. It was felt that this group would represent those in the age bracket 0-21.

Home School Liaison Officers

The HSLOs seek to promote partnership between parents and teachers to enhance pupils' learning opportunities and to promote their retention in the education system. The HSLOs place great emphasis on collaboration with the local community.

Galway Traveller Movement (GTM), Canal House (Dept. of Justice) and Traveller Employment Worker

GTM's, primary focus is to enable the traveller movement to challenge structural inequality while Canal House works with young people before the courts or at risk in the community. The Traveller Employment Worker works closely with Department of Social Protection (DSP), and other agencies to secure employment or educational opportunities for Travellers.

Adult Literacy Organiser

Adult Basic Education is managed through the Adult Literacy Organisers within GRETB. They are responsible for the provision of basic learning opportunities for adults in reading, writing, speaking, listening, numeracy, and new computer-based technologies and communication systems that have become part of everyday life and work.

Ballinasloe College of Further Education

Further education colleges offer a re-entry route to formal certified recognised education for those unemployed, already in the workplace or simply wishing to return to education. It offers participants an opportunity to build on current qualifications in preparation to return to work or further education. Courses are offered on a part-time basis thereby allowing participants the opportunity to combine learning with family/personal commitments.

Youthreach

Youthreach is a Department of Education and Skills official education, training and work experience programme for early school leavers aged 15 – 20. It offers young people the opportunity to identify and pursue viable options within adult life, and provides them with opportunities to acquire certification.

Composition of Workshops

Due to the number of multipliers selected initially, it was decided to match organisations which would have a similar ethos and work with comparable target groups.

This resulted in three distinctive workshops.

1. GRD work extends to those in rural areas who are most in need of assistance, to provide real opportunities for people to gain significant improvements for themselves and their communities. The target groups GRD is involved with are comparable to the other multipliers e.g. lone parents, young families, Travellers, long term unemployed and early school leavers.
2. GTM, Canal House, Traveller Development Worker, Adult Literacy Organiser and the Ballinasloe College of Further Education are involved with Traveller communities, young people at risk, early school leavers, lone parents, and long term unemployed. They would have a good insight into the difficulties experienced by these groups.
3. TUSLA and Youth Advocates. This group have a specific remit in that they work with families and young adults up to 21 years of age.

The remaining two workshops consisted of participants from North Galway Learning Network and the Gréasán Gaeltachta (Connemara Learning Network). These workshops were arranged to take place during their scheduled meetings.

Selecting / Contacting Participants

Where possible a lead person was identified in each organisation as a “go to” contact. They were contacted by phone initially and given an outline of the project. They were encouraged to identify other potential participants and also to assist in organising the workshop. This strategy was used with GRD, GTM and Canal House. The other multipliers were contacted using the Web, internal contacts, and the Learning Networks. Once a list of contact details was established each potential participant received a phone call or email initially and each was given an outline of the project and its objectives. Thereafter all received the overview of the project. All potential participants were requested to review prior to attending the workshop. Thereafter each workshop was scheduled to facilitate the availability of the participants. In the case of the Learning Networks the contact details already existed and the workshops were organised during the scheduled meetings.

Content of Workshops

Discuss the following core elements

- Attitudes to education (personal level, social environment and gender).
- Barriers to education and how to overcome them (real and perceived barriers) e.g. discrimination, stigma, gender.
- Highlighting benefits of education (highlighting the arguments for education).
- Show concrete possibilities of education for educationally disadvantaged people considering the mentioned barriers
- Show concrete possibilities of education for educationally disadvantaged people considering the mentioned barriers

Workshop/meetings strategies

- Brainstorming
- Round table discussion
- Question and Answer
- Small group session
- .

Consensus of multipliers

When individuals in society are disadvantaged they are unable to extract the benefit from the education system in a way similar to their peers. This may be due to the following:

- Low literacy in family
- Poverty/financial difficulties
- Living in a disadvantaged area
- Poor school attendance
- Negative experiences of parents
- Disability
- Language barriers-newcomer students
- Addiction/mental health problems
- Family history of early school leaving
- Low expectations
- Early marriage
- Family responsibility- child minding
- Illness
- Domestic violence
- Low self-esteem and confidence
- Gender
- Discrimination- bullying, racism, stigma

What worked well in the workshops

- The mix of different multipliers in a new capacity to create innovative thinking and the sharing of ideas.
- The overview which was emailed to the participants prior to the workshop was invaluable in that some the participants had reflected on the core elements and recorded their views. This assisted in the smooth running of the workshop in that the participants knew what the workshop entailed and came prepared with either written or mental notes.
- The following strategies were used in the workshops, brainstorming, round table discussions, and questions and answers. All were very effective.
- Short workshops are more productive because they concentrated on specific core elements therefore simplifying the recording of feedback.
- The workshop size was a contributing factor to the group dynamics. Groups of five or less were more valuable and constructive.
- There was a better group dynamic where participants held similar philosophies.

What posed difficulties in the workshops

- It is not recommended to run a workshop for six hours. The participants lost focus and became unproductive towards the end.
- Workshops with no more than five participants created a better dynamic.
- The wording of the core elements created some difficulties, e.g. concrete and possibilities as one contradicts the other. Also participants had different interpretations of the core elements and what was being asked.
- Identification of actual participants was too early.

Experiences - Recommendations

Based on the work carried out we would recommend the following:

- Duration of workshops to be either 2/3 hour sessions.
- Participants to be furnished with an overview of project in advance.
- Have participants from similar organisations attend the same workshop.
- Five participants per workshop who share similar view is the optimum number.
- Use brainstorming as a strategy to elicit information.
- Use of a Survey monkey if applicable.
- Publication of finding in the workshops.

United Kingdom

The Campaign for Learning became interested in the **in.education** project because we have a lot of experience in researching the factors involved in educational disadvantage, coupled with practical experience of finding ways to address them, particularly in workplace and schools / family contexts. We were interested in exploring these issues further with our Austrian and Irish partners, to learn from them and share experiences.

Our task was to identify new multipliers to work with in these contexts, with a view to then using these multipliers to deliver innovative learning programmes directly with disadvantaged learners. Delivering this outcome as originally planned relies quite heavily on existing local networks to build from and one or more local bases from which to work.

This posed two challenges for the Campaign for Learning:

- Firstly, we are in a parallel situation to our partners in GRETB, in having been working specifically to identify ways to overcome the barriers that excluded learners experience in returning to or accessing education for 20 years. In this time, we have collaborated with many groups and organisations concerned with these issues, so identifying entirely new multipliers with whom to work to achieve this outcome was difficult.
- Secondly, our partners at ISOP and GRETB have established local networks and delivery bases. They are well known in the geographical areas they work in and well placed to use this as a basis for developing work with new intermediaries.
- The Campaign for Learning, by contrast, is a national organisation with a small office in London and other staff spread across the country, who mainly work from home. We do not usually deliver learning directly, but operate mainly as a second-tier body – running research and development services, developing and running training the trainer programmes and undertaking policy work.
- While ISOP and GRETB have a strong local presence, we are well known nationally amongst learning professionals but not in any particular geographical area. We were therefore poorly placed to deliver intensive, in-depth work in one local area or with potential intermediaries in a specific disadvantaged community.

After long consideration, we concluded that we did not have time to establish contacts with multipliers in specific communities in particular geographical areas from a ‘standing start’, and so our intermediaries needed to be people in paid or volunteer roles that already brought them into close contact with severely disadvantaged and excluded adults, but who were not learning professionals themselves. From feedback received in previous work, we had concluded that these were people who might have limited understanding of the barriers to learning experienced by their clients, and where a deeper understanding of these issues might help them in their work and make it more likely that their clients would access education in future.

Initial Target Groups of Multipliers

We initially identified four possible groups of multipliers who met these criteria that we would be interested in working with:

1. **Workplace learning & development professionals:** This group of intermediaries works with low-skilled adults to draw them into learning in the workplace. They have extensive knowledge of formal training models, but may have less experience of how to overcome barriers to learning or draw adults who lack confidence into learning.
2. **Workplace learning advocates and Union Learning Representatives:** These people engage adults in learning in non-Unionised and Unionised workplaces by offering informal peer support. They know about barriers to learning but some want to understand more about the issues, suggesting potential to develop this further.
3. **Family and community learning animators:** These workers range from professionals working in Local Authority and FE services through to volunteers working in community settings. They often have access to low- income adults who can benefit greatly from learning but may have little confidence and poor information.
4. **Staff in schools working with low income families:** Many schools in the UK used to employ ‘home-school liaison’ officers with responsibility for linking with pupils’ families, in particular supporting children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Budget cuts and changes in Government policy mean that many schools no longer have such workers - but most schools recognise it is important to work with families and may wish to know more about helping parents overcome barriers and help their child.

When we began to research and make contact with multipliers in these groups about this project, we found very few people remaining in schools with specific responsibility for work with families (Group 4 above); those who remained in these roles were heavily overworked and found it difficult to get any time off to take part in training. (See later note on the policy context for adult learning in the UK.) Similarly in Group 3, many paid posts had been lost and

volunteer workers found it impossible to find time for training, so intensive face to face work was impossible for this group and we needed to think differently about our offer to them.

Key Questions Arising

- Which of our initial target groups of multipliers are still working with excluded adults?
- Are there other groups of multipliers that we could get in touch with who also have these contacts with excluded adults?
- How can we design training that is accessible to workers and volunteers who are overstretched in their roles and can get no time off for training?
- Is it important for us to keep our target groups separate or can we mix them up?
- How can we best get in touch with new groups of multipliers?
- How can we convince them that our training is a good use of their very limited time?
- What should happen next?

Developing Innovative Models for Working with Multipliers

While doing research on multipliers and considering how we could best answer the questions above, we came across individuals working with unemployed adults to help them back into work who expressed interest in knowing more about the barriers to learning their clients experienced, so we decided to include this group as potential multipliers.

So our final target groups of multipliers were:

1. Intermediaries helping adults who were out of work to gain employment
2. Intermediaries (either professionals or volunteers, such as Union Learning Reps) working with low-skilled adults who were in work and in need of training
3. Intermediaries (in and outside schools) working with disadvantaged families.

We hoped therefore to attract a mixture of entirely new groups of multipliers that the Campaign had not worked with before, and individual multipliers who were new to us, although they might be from groups we had worked with in the past.

We were aware from our initial research that people in all our target groups had some interest in these, but also that all our multipliers had very limited time available. We had no obvious rationale to choose locations to run intensive activities, and no local base or networks to use for recruitment. We wanted to develop an approach that allowed as many multipliers as possible to benefit from support, which we could then build on to develop more intensive work with a few selected multipliers.

We therefore decided to work rather differently on our delivery, using a staged model:

- running two national-scale webinars open to any interested individuals, one looking at barriers to learning experienced by educationally disadvantaged adults in the workplace and one on parallel barriers in the community
- running two short, large-scale face-to-face workshops aimed at specific groups of intermediaries which combined information on ways to overcome barriers with information on how to access new EU funding for work with excluded individuals, which we hoped would act as a ‘hook’ to draw new multipliers into the sessions
- following up interested individuals from these sessions to work with on a 1:1 basis.

We felt this would allow the maximum number of participants to gain greater understanding of the issues, without taking up more time than they could afford from their other work. We hoped we would then be able to work with individuals who expressed a particular interest in the topics we discussed to undertake more intensive support work and perhaps also to help us recruit disadvantaged learners for the next phase of the project where we work with disadvantaged learners.

Recruiting Multipliers

Webinars

We recruited for our webinars electronically via email and social media, using:

- our own substantial national database, wording the invitations to suggest that recipients should send the invitation on to their teams, and that the webinars might be of particular use to individuals new to the field
- databases of partner organisations, including organisations working with Welfare to Work providers (who help unemployed individuals into work) and with community and family learning providers

Workshops

We ran our workshops at two national conferences in London aimed at:

- **Conference 1:** staff in workplace training organisations
- **Conference 2:** staff in organisations helping unemployed adults into work

The conference organisers advertised the workshops to all delegates registered to attend the conferences. (For one conference, this was so successful that we had to run two workshop sessions rather than one, resulting in three face to face workshops.) We also handed out paper flyers during the conferences to encourage anyone who had not yet signed up to attend, and promoted the sessions by email and on social media.

Session Objectives

Starting from the needs identified through our initial discussions and research with potential multipliers, we developed these objectives for our sessions:

- To raise participants' awareness of the benefits of learning for adults
- To help participants understand the nature of educational disadvantage
- To raise participants awareness of the barriers preventing educationally disadvantaged people getting involved in learning, and some ways to overcome these
- To encourage participants to consider how to use this information in their daily work
- To advise participants on sources of further information and encourage them to get involved in follow up discussions with us
- In addition, for the face to face workshop sessions, we had the added objective of advising participants on how to access new EU funds to support their work with disadvantaged and excluded learners

Delivering the Sessions

- **Face to Face Workshops with Multipliers from Training Organisations:** We ran two face to face workshops (increased from the one originally planned, in order to meet demand), with multipliers from training organisations working with low skilled adults and young people in workplaces. These were mostly paid managers and project workers working directly with excluded adults. We ran these sessions at national conferences for this target group in June, which allowed us to work with busy participants at events they were already attending. These sessions were one hour long, and participants were given opportunities to stay afterwards for individual discussions and support, and given suggestions for further reading to find out more. These workshops took place in June, with a total of 55 attendees.
- **Face to Face Workshop with Multipliers from Welfare to Work Organisations:** We ran a further face to face workshop with multipliers from organisations supporting unemployed adults to get back into work, again as part of a national conference to allow us to contact busy people with no extra time available for training. This workshop used a similar model as the two workshops above. It took place in July and attracted 22 participants, who were mainly paid staff working directly with unemployed adults and managers responsible for arranging programmes.
- **Webinar with intermediaries in workplaces:** This session was run over the internet in July, aimed at raising awareness of barriers to learning in the workplace for lower-skilled staff and ways that had been successful in addressing them in the past. These sessions ran for one hour, with activity suggestions for participants which would comprise at least another hour's follow-up work, and the offer to contact us for further information and support. We felt this would allow a large number of participants to improve their understanding of the issues, without taking up more time than they could afford. 37 participants attended this session, who were a mix of workplace learning and development staff, Union and other voluntary learning representatives and people from other bodies interested in workplace learning.

- **Webinar with multipliers working with families and communities:** This was a parallel session to the one above, run in late July over the internet with individuals working with disadvantaged families or in low-income communities, with the same aims and similar format to the workplace intermediaries webinar. 37 participants joined the session, who came from Local Authorities, third sector organisations and other bodies outside the learning sector, and were a mix of paid staff (managers and project workers) and volunteers.

Following Up

Several delegates from these events stayed behind or contacted us for more detailed discussions about the specific issues they faced.

They included:

- someone from a Welfare to Work organisation who wanted advice on reaching adults her organisation found difficult to contact and improving the support they received, including through work with a wider range of partners
- a family learning co-ordinator interested in finding new ways to engage disadvantaged families and support adults with basic skills difficulties
- a worker with one-parent families involved in employability work who wanted to extend the range of workplaces where they could offer support
- a learning co-ordinator in a regional theatre who offered work placements to vulnerable individuals from his local community

We anticipate continuing to support individuals from these delivery sessions in a flexible way through the rest of the project, and will share outcomes of these discussions with partners.

What worked well in the workshops

- The webinars worked well
 - o We were able to identify some of the reasons for educational disadvantage and discuss ways to address key barriers to learning that disadvantaged adults experience, quite thoroughly in the relatively short period of the sessions. However, the webinar format is limited in that it is not very interactive, and although questions can be answered there is limited opportunity for discussion amongst the group. It is also more difficult to engage with participants to invite them to get involved in follow-up work, although some multipliers did get in touch with us afterwards for further support. The feedback from delegates suggested that most had found it very useful.

What worked less well in the workshops

- Although feedback from participants in all the sessions was good, we felt the face-to-face conference workshops worked less well, in terms of helping participants

understand the nature of educational disadvantage and see examples of how to overcome barriers to learning. The reason for this was that multipliers were primarily interested in the 'hook' we had used to draw them in – i.e. how they could access the funding - rather than in discussing how they could then use it to overcome barriers experienced by their client groups. Although the face to face workshop did allow for some discussion between participants, the workshop format within a conference session did not allow enough time to explore all the issues in detail. Having said this, some individuals from the workshops stayed behind for further individual discussion or made contact with us to ask for more information on ways to support excluded groups, so these sessions were not entirely unsuccessful.

Experiences - Recommendations

Based on our experience, we would recommend:

- engaging as many partner organisations as possible to promote events in order to broaden the audience for the sessions
- recognising multipliers' overriding concerns (in our case, lack of time and concerns about future funding for adult learning) and trying to find ways to help them address these while at the same time raising their awareness of the issues we wished to discuss these (eg by joining a session at a conference they are already attending)
- keeping numbers smaller in face to face workshop sessions, to allow individuals to ask questions and get engaged more easily in discussion
- offering a wider range of options for future engagement e.g. through social media

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Part 3

Evaluation report

New Strategies to engage
educationally disadvantaged
people in adult education
activities:
An evaluation report

Juliet Tschank
Caroline Manahl



Erasmus+

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Introduction: What is this paper about?

Increasing the participation of educationally disadvantaged persons in adult education

The project *in.education*⁵⁵ aims at developing strategies to increase the participation of educationally disadvantaged persons, especially those with basic educational needs in the relevant adult education programmes. To reduce possible barriers to education for this target group, the project focusses on developing strategies at three levels: system, individual and institutional levels.

Data from recent studies show, that persons with low levels of education are less likely to have access to information on learning possibilities compared to people with higher educational levels. Therefore, when trying to increase the participation of educational disadvantaged people in education and training, a key question that needs to be tackled is, how this target group can be reached.

New multipliers as a link between adult education institutions and educationally disadvantaged people

As a result of this, the first phase of the project *in.education* focussed on the systemic level. It did this by developing a model to reach educationally disadvantaged people through new multipliers. In this context, “new multipliers” are understood to be persons from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people e.g. parents, family, non-family caregivers, works council member or social workers.

In this phase of the project, workshops in Austria, the United Kingdom and Ireland were organised to sensitise potential new multipliers by establishing these persons as a link between adult education institutions and the educationally disadvantaged.

This paper presents and analyses:

- The new multipliers that were identified in the 3 partner countries (Austria, the United Kingdom and Ireland);
- How they were reached; and
- Whether workshops are an appropriate method to prepare the participants for their new role as multipliers for the educationally disadvantaged.

⁵⁵ Please see Annex 1 for a short description of the project *in.education*.

Methodology: How were this study’s results achieved?

8 interviews and the analysis of additional documents were used to answer the research questions

To evaluate which new multipliers were identified in the 3 partner countries, how they were reached and whether workshops are an appropriate method to prepare them for their new role, ZSI conducted interviews and analysed additional documents provided by the partner organisations.

Interviews with one person from each partner organisations were conducted at two points in time:

- After the first weeks of outreach activities to new multipliers; and
- After the implementation of the workshops.

In total, 8 interviews were conducted. All interviewees were directly involved in the organisation and implementation of workshops for new multipliers.

A content analysis of the interview transcripts and the additional documents produced the results discussed in the following chapters.

Definitions: What is “outreach” and who is a “new multiplier”?

Disadvantaged people often face barriers in accessing education and training

People with social and educational disadvantaged backgrounds often face barriers in accessing education and training. These barriers can range from a lack of information about training offers, to language barriers, unsuitable locations at which trainings are held, barriers of a personal nature such as the personal or cultural value attached to education, low self-confidence or poor experiences with education institutions in the past.

As the OED-network states: “non-participation is not necessarily a shortcoming of the non-participating person. Rather, it is the education providers who might be hard-to-reach in different ways.”⁵⁶ In addition to these barriers at personal and institutional levels, barriers at structural level (such as funding possibilities, the availability of childcare facilities, etc.) are also considered.

⁵⁶ OED-Network (2013), p. 11.

Against the background of the various barriers educationally disadvantaged people can face, traditional concepts of public relations (like the distribution of advertising materials) are of little value when trying to reach this target group. It is rather necessary to develop alternative strategies and “outreach activities” to get this target group interested and engaged in education and training.⁵⁷

‘Outreach’ in adult education means trying to get people at risk of social exclusion involved in learning activities

Outreach can be understood as interventions “to reach out and to involve targeted groups that are not in contact with or do not make use of available services.”⁵⁸ In the context of adult education this means: “reach[ing] out to target groups of adults who are not involved in learning activities but who are at risk of social exclusion.”⁵⁹

The Irish ‘Back to Education Initiative’ distinguishes three strands of outreach activities:

- Engaging with, consulting and listening to those who are targeted with the outreach activities and to their advocates, to identify and understand their circumstances, motivations, needs and interests in relation to learning;
- Physical relocating of trainings and education programmes into local settings; and
- Adapting methods of provision of training and programmes as well as of the programme designs to the learners’ needs.

Finding appropriate ways of communication is time consuming and requires establishing trust

The first strand, which was dealt with in this phase of the *in.education* project, is described as especially challenging due to the fact that finding appropriate ways to communicate with potential learners is time-consuming as it involves building relationships and establishing trust.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Bremer, H. (2010), Krenn, M., Kasper, R. (2012), National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (2001).

⁵⁸ Hake, B. (2014), p. 255.

⁵⁹ ibd.

⁶⁰ BTEI (n. y.), p. 6f.

New multipliers are persons from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people who are trusted by the target group

Activating disadvantaged people through their social networks is reported to be a successful approach in this regard.⁶¹ Therefore, the project *in.education* tried to establish a link between adult education institutions and disadvantaged people through “new multipliers”. In the project, new multipliers are understood as persons from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people who are trusted by them. They can be private persons (e.g. peers of the target group), reference figures with a certain standing in a community of the target group (e.g. members of migrant self-organisations, travellers movement) but also persons who work or are engaged in organisations that are in contact with educational disadvantaged people (e.g. local charity organisations, Home-School Liaison Officers), churches (e.g. protestant community) etc.

Background information: Who has access to information and participates in education and training?

European policies focus on increasing adults participation in lifelong learning and on reducing imbalances in participation

For the last one and a half decades key questions that sought to be answered by European policies in the field of lifelong learning were how to increase adults participation in lifelong learning and how to reduce imbalances in participation between lower and higher skilled adults.⁶²

In the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning published by the European Commission in 2000 one of six key messages was ‘bringing learning closer to home’. In this regard also the role of civil society organisations and associations was stressed.⁶³

The need to increase participation in adult learning and to address imbalances in participation was again underlined by the European Commission in its communication “Adult learning: It is never too late to learn” in 2006. In 2007 an action plan on adult learning “It is always a good time to learn” was published. One of the objectives of the action plan is to remove barriers to participation. Measures to achieve the action plan’s objectives should bring “high quality information and guidance closer to the learner.”⁶⁴

⁶¹ Krenn, M. (2013), Kuwan, H., Baum, D. (n. y.), OED-Network (2013).

⁶² Hake, 2014, p. 252.

⁶³ European Commission (2000).

⁶⁴ European Commission (2007), p. 6.

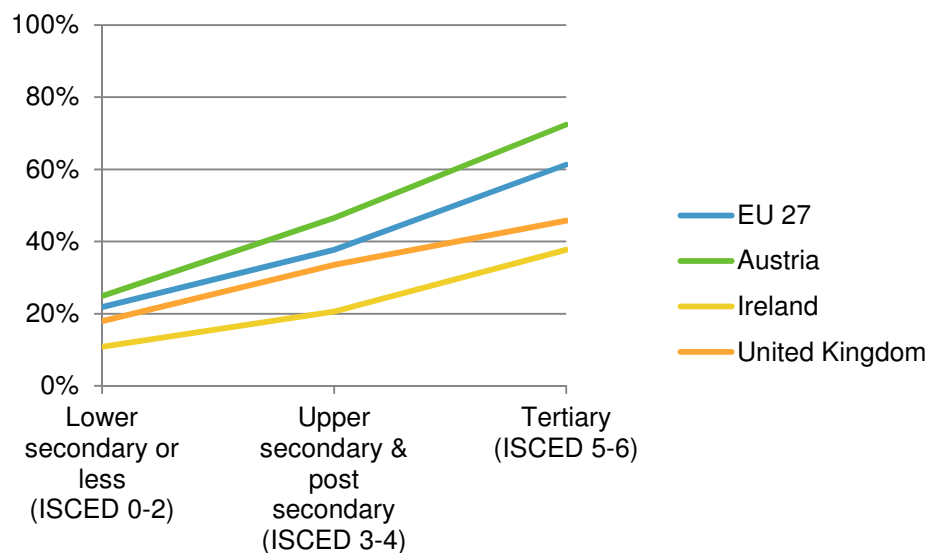
In the EU27 a gap of 40 percentage points in participation rates in lifelong learning between the high and low qualified can be observed.

Despite efforts at national and European level, data on the participation of adults in education and training show that inequalities in participation between the lowly and highly qualified adults exist. At European level (EU 27) 61 % of adults with tertiary education (ISCED levels 5 and 6) participated in education and training in 2011. This was the case for 38 % of adults with secondary and post-secondary education (ISCED levels 3 and 4) and for 22 % of adults with lower secondary education or less (ISCED levels 0 – 2).

Although the participation rate in education in Austria is generally higher than in the UK and Ireland, the gap between persons with tertiary education and those with lower secondary education or less in Austria was 48 percentage points in 2011 and therefore significantly pronounced. In Ireland and the UK where the participation rate in education is generally lower than in Austria, the gap between persons with tertiary education and those with lower secondary education or less was 27 % and 28 % respectively in 2011 (this information is captured in figure 1 below).⁶⁵

Persons with a lower level of education participate less in education and training than higher educated people

Figure 1: Participation rate in education and training, by highest level of education, 2011 (Eurostat)



Persons with a lower level of education have less access to

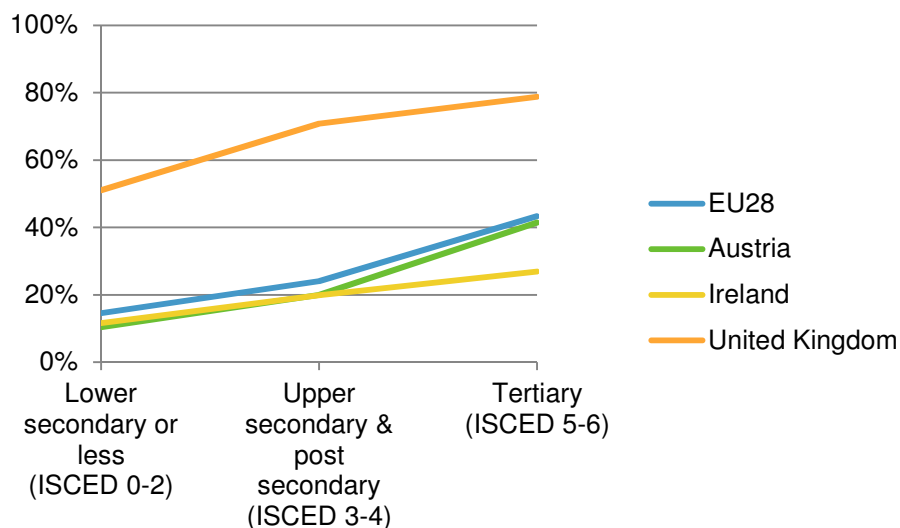
A large imbalance between persons with different educational levels is also observed with regard to access to information on learning possibilities. While the access to information on learning possibilities is generally better in the UK than in Austria and Ireland, what all countries have in common is that higher

⁶⁵ Eurostat (2011).

information on learning possibilities than higher educated people

educated people have better access to that information than lower educated people. A comparison of the gap between persons with tertiary education and persons with lower secondary education or less shows that this gap is especially pronounced in Austria with 31 percentage points compared to UK (28 percentage points) and Ireland (15 percentage points) as can be deciphered in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Access to information on learning possibilities, by highest level of education, 2011 (Eurostat)



Against the background of this unequal access to information about learning opportunities and to training, the following chapters describe the *in.education* project’s attempt to overcome some of these inequalities and therefore increase access of education possibilities to educationally disadvantaged people.

Outreach: What works and what doesn’t work when reaching out to new multipliers of educationally disadvantaged people?

“New multipliers” identified were e.g. (self)-organisations

This chapter describes the most fruitful channels in reaching new multipliers as has been ascertained by the implementing partners⁶⁶ in the *in.education* project. It focusses only on the channels used to reach those multipliers that are regarded as “new multipliers” according to the project definition of new multipliers: private persons, reference figures, persons working in organisations that are in contact with

⁶⁶ In this report, “implementing partners” refers to all the partners of the *in.education* project except ZSI who are actively responsible in carrying out the tasks of the different intellectual outputs i.e. IO1: Development of an offer for the sensitisation and education of persons from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people ; IO2: Development of a curriculum for the collection and validation of informal and non –formal competencies of educationally disadvantaged people; IO3: Development of training for adult education providers to increase their expertise in implementing offers addressing educationally disadvantaged persons. ZSI is responsible for the scientific accompaniment and evaluation in the project.

working with migrants / minorities / vulnerable groups / families, people working in churches, rural development, probation services, local charities and stakeholders from trade unions/works councils and

educationally disadvantaged people who would be considered to be in the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people and as such are trusted by these people. The implementing partners in the *in.education* project tried to recruit the following stakeholders that would fall into the “new multiplier” category: people in the context of churches, people involved in trade unions and works councils, migrant self-organisations or official migrant representatives, people working in regional/rural development, people or organisations representing the traveller community, organisations that work with young people in crime, local charities dealing with disadvantaged people in the community, people working in the probation service or people who liaise between children, families and schools e.g. (Home School Liaison Officers or voluntary learning coaches).

However, some target groups reached in this phase of the project cannot be regarded as new multipliers as per the project definition of “new multipliers” as they are already working in the field of education and training or whose main focus is education are not going to be included in this report. These include for example (adult) education providers in and outside workplaces, people working with unemployed adults and (migrant) associations that primarily or to some extent provide clients with information on education.

Using personal contacts regardless of target group is the most reliable channel for reaching new multipliers

Regardless of the target group, country or partner organisation, the most successful channel of reaching new multipliers was personal contacts. These are contacts of people that the implementing organisations have worked with before or had somehow crossed paths with in the past. These people are not necessarily the new multipliers although they can be.

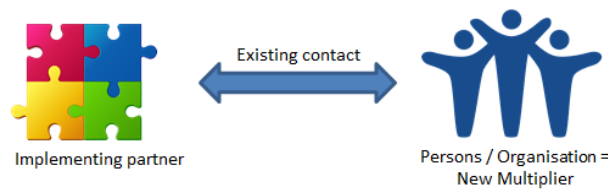


Figure 3: Existing personal contacts between implementing partner and new multiplier



Figure 4: Existing contacts of implementing partners acting as intermediaries between the implementing partner and new multiplier(s)

Nominating a

In Ireland for example, some direct contacts existed between the implementing

person whom you know personally and who falls into the target group to help you bring together similar persons works well in reaching the target group

partner and some new multipliers. Here, what proved invaluable was nominating one person directly who was himself or herself a new multiplier and had previous contact with the implementing partner. This person would in turn invite other persons in his or her organisation or other organisations that were similar to his or her organisation to attend the workshops that succeeded the outreach phase. For example a person working for the Galway Rural Development Company (GRD) was nominated by the implementing partner in Ireland. This person can be considered a new multiplier as the GRD is a government funded company which provides services for the rural communities for example transportation, sporting facilities and employment workshops. Through the different projects and activities they implement, they come across educationally disadvantaged people. The implementing partner together with the nominated person selected a date for the workshop. The nominated person then contacted other people at the GRD. This also worked for other people who were nominated and then contacted other relevant stakeholders outside their organisations.

Exploiting existing contacts who have direct and trusted relationships with new multipliers to initiate the communication works

In most cases however, these intermediaries acted as the connection between the implementing organisations and the new multipliers. They themselves were not the new multipliers. For example in Austria ISOP contacted educational coordinators with whom they had dealt with in different capacities in the past. Educational coordinators are migrants who have undergone training to become contact persons for education-related questions in their respective migrant contexts. They provide members of these organisations with information and support and where possible, they organise and coordinate internal training courses⁶⁷. As such, following the definition of “new multipliers”, they in themselves are not new multipliers as their main task is to inform on education-related matters. However, they formed a great stepping stone for ISOP as they were able to identify people in the migrant communities they are active in, who are new multipliers for example young adults active in their peer groups.

To recruit new multipliers, it should be clear how they fit in. Thus, arguments for being new multipliers need to be clear from the onset and should be clearly

Staying with this example, the attempt to recruit the education coordinators themselves as participants of the workshops in this phase failed. As they were not new multipliers in the strict sense, it is very probable and has in general been observed with regard to other groups targeted in this phase of the project that educational coordinators failed to see how they fit into this role. This problem of not understanding where one fits in as a new multiplier was noted even with persons or groups which would otherwise be considered new multipliers according the *in.education* definition of new multipliers. An example is the migrant advisory committee which is an interest group that represents the political interests of migrants in Graz with which ISOP has cooperated with in the past. During their different activities, they come across people in the migrant community who are potentially educationally disadvantaged. In their position as representatives of migrants, they are potentially trusted by the people they represent and as such they can be considered as

⁶⁷ nowa, 2015

communicated new multipliers. However, even after numerous attempts to recruit them for the workshops in this phase, they failed to see their role as new multipliers and failed to understand what is expected of them in this new role. As a result, before starting the outreach process it is highly recommended suitable arguments for taking up this role are thoroughly thought out and suitably communicated.

Enough time should be planned to win over those stakeholders that have never identified themselves with the topic At the same time, it should be noted that if the target group one is trying to reach out to are quite distant from the subject from the very beginning as they may never have identified themselves with the topic, more time and personal meetings would be required to win them over. Therefore, enough time has to be planned from the onset not just by the implementing organisation, but also by the intermediaries where these are activated.

Hand in hand with personal contacts, the channel that proved quite important in mobilising new multipliers was emails. This channel had two-fold effects depending on whether it was used dependently with other channels or independently of other channels.

Emails work when people are addressed in their official capacities It was deemed very successful when emails were used in addition to face to face meetings or telephone calls. It worked when the implementing partner contacted these people in their official working capacities for example Mr. John Smith as “Home School Liaison Officer” and not to Mr. John Smith in the social context. This channel was relevant in cases where the implementing partners already had existing relationships with new multipliers for the educationally disadvantaged, or with an intermediary who formed the connection between the implementing partner and the new multiplier.

Emails are successful when implemented as a complimentary activity e.g. to provide additional information In the case of the latter, for example, an intermediary from ISOP who is the manager of café Palaver⁶⁸ which among others, provides an intercultural breakfast with migrant women⁶⁹ and who has dealt with ISOP in the past, was initially personally contacted⁷⁰ by ISOP and informed about the project. The intercultural breakfast is a social gathering where women from different countries and of all ages have the opportunity to meet, talk, interact and have breakfast together. This women’s breakfast is a great way for the women to socialise, exchange ideas and perhaps even launch new initiatives and small projects. Therefore, this manager according to the definition of a new multiplier would be considered as one due to the fact that during the course of her work at the Café, she is in contact with people who may be educationally

⁶⁸ <http://www.frauenservice.at/internetcafe-palaver/internetcafe-palaver-connected>

⁶⁹ (Frauenservice, 2015)

⁷⁰ In this report, „personal contact“ refers to contacting people with whom one already has a relationship with by phone or through face to face meetings.

disadvantaged. However, it was thought that she would be better off as an intermediary since among the women who gather during these breakfasts, there are women who are in a more trusted position in the group and who would therefore be more suited as new multipliers. The manager of this Café informed the women who she thought would fit into the role of new multipliers the best about the *in.education* project through face to face contact. She followed up this personal contact with emails (developed by ISOP) providing the new multipliers with additional information about the project and what their role would be.

Email contact as a complementary outreach channel should still be followed up with face to face meetings or phone calls for it to be successful

However, even after following up personal contacts with emails, these contacts still need to be cultivated to ensure that these people are won over as new multipliers. This became clear with regards to the example of Café Palaver. Shortly after sending out the information email, the intermediary at Café Palaver left for sabbatical leave meaning that she could no longer follow up the people she had identified and spoken to about becoming new multipliers. As a result, the attempt to win over new multipliers from Café Palaver unfortunately did not bear fruit. The implementing partner in this case, believes that this would have turned out differently, if the intermediary was able to continue acting as the ‘middle man’. Where this proved to be successful was in Ireland whereby the implementing partner tried to identify people in organisations like the Galway Rural Development Company or the Galway Traveller Movement who are in essence potential new multipliers and nominated a person with whom they already had existing contacts. After informing these persons about the project and what their role could be, the partner sent them the overview of the project as well as the core elements to be discussed in the workshops for new multipliers per email. A couple of days after sending the information per email, the new multipliers were contacted by phone to ask if everything was clear or whether there was need for clarification after which the workshop appointment was arranged. This proved successful as all the people contacted in this way also attended the workshop.

A general mass email as the outreach channel independent of other channels only works when: in the first instance, not a lot (resource-wise) is asked of the participants; when the

Email contact used independent of other outreach channels only seem to work when: Too much is not expected of the participants in the first instance; when the emails are sent to people who know the organisation and when the information in the email is relevant to them. This is demonstrated as in the case of the implementing partner from the United Kingdom, who instead of requesting the potential new multipliers to attend either two 3 hour workshops or a 6 hour workshop like the other partners, requested them to attend an hour long webinar as the first step (this would then be followed by more intense individual meetings for those interested). By way of example, to get participants for the webinar with community organisations working with disadvantaged families, the implementing partner in the United Kingdom sent an email to contacts that were already included in their database. This was a general email inviting them to join the webinar providing the date and time of the webinar as well as the contents that would be delivered. To decide on the content that would be deemed as interesting to the recipients, Campaign for Learning also negotiated with some organisations that

recipients of these emails have had some contact with the organisation sending the email before and when the content of the email is relevant to them

work with them most closely to determine what content in connection with the core elements, is most relevant and useful to this target group. As a result of this single email, 41 interested people took part in the webinar. From the onset, all the partners from the implementing organisations expressed their concerns of using generalised mass emails as the only channel of reaching the target group as their own past experiences had shown low feedback rate from such communications. This has also been largely confirmed by a number of publications. In fact, at the beginning of the outreach phase, Campaign for Learning sent emails to union learning representatives and workplace learning advocates but there was very low feedback rate.

From the experience gathered from the *in.education* project's attempt to recruit new multipliers of educationally disadvantaged people outlined above, it can be deduced that the most successful strategies are those that involve personal contact, either through face to face meetings or phone calls with existing contacts. The existing contacts themselves do not have to be the new multipliers but can also act as the stepping stone or intermediaries between the organisation looking to recruit the new multipliers and the new multipliers themselves. Emails as an outreach channel best works as complementary canal to personal contact (to send additional information). However, emails can also work if the output of the outreach process does not ask too much of the participants in terms of resources such as time; when the recipients of the email can identify with the sender and when the content of the output is clear and considered useful in the participant's line of work.

Workshops: Was the goal to sensitise and educate new multipliers of attachment figures of educationally disadvantaged groups reached? Which methods proved important in reaching this goal?

As explained before, the main aim of output 1 of the *in.education* project was to "develop an offer for the sensitisation and education of attachment figures of people who are disadvantaged in education." The first part of this project phase, as described in the chapter above, outlines how these attachment figures or otherwise referred to as "new multipliers" were successfully reached and recruited. The idea of the second part of this project phase was to develop an offer to sensitise these potential new multipliers so that they can identify with their new role as multipliers and also act in their new capacity. This offer was to be delivered in the form of workshops with the new multipliers. For these workshops, core elements were decided on by the partners which were to be

included in the workshops in one way or another. These include:

1. Attitudes to education (personal level, social environment, gender, ...)
2. Barriers to education and how to overcome them (real and perceived barriers) e.g. discrimination, stigma, gender
3. Raise sensitivity of disadvantaged groups by defining “educational disadvantage” and how people become educationally disadvantaged (causes)
4. Highlighting benefits of education (providing the new multipliers with arguments for their outreach work)
5. Show concrete possibilities of education for educationally disadvantaged people considering the mentioned barriers (educational programmes, training offers)

Workshop format

A workshop for new multipliers works best when it is split into two sessions with some time a part (a week is ideal) with “homework” because it allows the participants:

- **To reflect on what they have learnt**
- **To put what they have learnt into practice**
- **To clarify difficulties during the second part**

The three implementing partners integrated the core elements differently and also to different degrees in their workshops. One method that clearly worked and with which the success of sensitising and educating new multipliers can already be affiliated to, was the 6 hour split workshop used by ISOP. Here the workshops for new multipliers were divided into two 3-hour sessions, with the 2 sessions being a week apart. Between the first and the second session, the participants were given “homework”. This homework involved among others, the participants identifying and speaking to people in their social environment who were possibly educationally disadvantaged and using their gained knowledge from the workshops in these conversations. Such a split workshop also had the advantage that the participants were able to reflect on what they have learnt and could put what they have learnt into practice and in case of any difficulties or questions, they were able to discuss and clarify these in the second part of the workshop. All the workshops carried out by ISOP took this form, and in all except the workshop with the people from churches, this idea of “homework” proved successful as each of the participants talked to at least 2 people in their social environment who were educationally disadvantaged. For the workshop with students from the trade union school, the effect of the split workshop and “homework” was especially visible. During the first session, it was noted that the participants knew little about educational disadvantage especially in the context of their companies and they could also not identify themselves with the topic in general. They were given the homework of having a closer look at the training activities of their colleagues in their companies. By doing this, on their own, they came to the realisation that there are many different barriers, other than personal barriers as they had thought in the first session, that prevent some people from taking part in further education including structural, political and social barriers.

A single workshop of 6 hours doesn't work well because it is difficult for people to commit to such a long time and also because they lose concentration during the workshop

This splitting proved successful in comparison to a single 6 hour workshop as this was attested to by the Irish partners in some of its workshops with new multipliers were criticised for being too long; owing to the fact that in the first place it is generally difficult to get people to commit to such a long time and it is also difficult to keep the concentration of the participants up for such a long time.

In general it turned out to be only a first step in creating new multipliers. Follow-up activities are essential to establish lasting links between potential multipliers and adult education providers.

Experience from these workshops has shown that workshops of 6 hours in total are too short to really educate and sensitise new multipliers; they are rather a first step to the education and sensitisation of new multipliers. For example for groups of people that "have a lot to say" (ISOP, 2015) like the people who attended the workshop with migrants in Graz, the time was too short as they brought in a lot of information from their own experiences. Furthermore, for participants that take a while to identify with the topic such as the workshop with the students from the trade union, the second 3- hour session seemed too short as they were just getting in terms with the topic and more discussion seemed possible.

Campaign for Learning, the implementing partner from the United Kingdom, did their workshops quite differently altogether. They carried out 2 webinars and 3 face-to-face workshops; all of which were just an hour long and are planning on some individual "follow-up" activities with some participants who have expressed interest. Due to the very short duration of the workshops and webinars, it could not be determined whether the goal of the workshops to sensitise and educate new multipliers was reached. The implementing partner believed that the goal "started to be achieved in some of the contexts but we haven't gone far enough down that line to be able to say we've done that. But I'm hoping if we follow-up some of those individuals who have expressed interest we would be able to say yes (CfL, 2015)." Therefore, the webinars can rather be understood as a method for identifying new multipliers. The sensitisation work starts afterwards.

Workshop content

When working with new multipliers that don't know much about the topic, then provision of information or content coupled with discussions is invaluable.

Just like the length and format of the workshops differed in the different countries, so did the delivery of the 5 core elements defined above. In Ireland, these took the form of brainstorming in the group; while in Austria and the United Kingdom, the core elements were covered both by content provided by the implementing partners as well as discussions with the participants. From these methods, it is not quite clear which were more successful and to what degree. However, what is clear is that when trying to sensitise and educate new multipliers who are not aware of the topic altogether or who have never identified themselves with the topic, it is quite important to provide them with information and at the same time, give them a podium to discuss this information and share their own experiences or realisations. This is demonstrated for example by ISOP in trying to educate the students from the trade union school as well as people involved in churches. With regard to the former target group, the workshop worked well as the implementing partners provided this target group with a lot of information for example concerning educational barriers which was quite new to them. Together, using an exercise with different pictures depicting education, they were also able to come to a consensus on the meaning of education. It was noted that in the first session the participants were not able to bring themselves into the discussions as the topic was unfamiliar, but after receiving a lot of information in the first session and going through a lot of reflection before the second session, they were able to engage in discussions during the second session; to the extent that it was even noted that more time would have been necessary.

The organiser is the expert and therefore should try to stick to his/her planned agenda to ensure information transfer

With regard to the workshop with people affiliated to churches, the importance of providing the participants who did not identify themselves with the topic was noted. This workshop was described as the one that least worked as at the end of the workshop sessions the participants still did not consider themselves new multipliers in their environment. This was largely because during the first session, the implementing partners did not deliver the content they had planned because the discussion was steered in a different direction by the participants from the very beginning. As a result, although there was an attempt to cover those elements that were planned for both sessions in the second session, the time was too short to achieve the goal of sensitising and educating the participants as new multipliers. In hindsight, the implementing partner should have gone into the workshop with their expertise.

For people that can't identify with a topic, it might be helpful look at the topic from a

In particular it was realised that had the workshop started by looking at "my education experience" from the beginning; which makes the topic more

personal point of view

personal or enable the participants to gain a more personal feel of the topic, they would have probably been able to win over these participants who do not identify themselves with the topic.

In order to keep the new multipliers engaged, it is important that their long-term role is clearly defined from the start

Reaching the potential new multipliers and educating and sensitising them through the workshops alone may not be enough. After some of the workshops, the participants still seemed unresolved, “what now?” This issue had not been raised, discussed or clarified within the project consortium before the implementation of the workshops. However, after the first workshop the Austrian implementing partner noticed that this would have been important so as to ensure that after educating the new multipliers, they have a long-term vision of what their new role entails. ISOP was able to salvage this by organising a networking workshop.

A regular meeting of multipliers from different backgrounds, increases their motivation and knowledge in this new role

The idea of a networking workshop is for all of the participants from the different groups to regularly meet and exchange their ideas and experiences. Such a regular meeting could ensure that the new multipliers stay motivated and continue to learn from other people in the same role on how they could carry out their tasks as new multipliers better.

All things considered, it can be construed that sensitisation and education of attachment figures of people who are disadvantaged in education can start to be achieved through such 6 hour-long workshops as implemented in the *in.education* project. However, this is just a starting point and follow-up activities need to be implemented to establish lasting links between adult education providers and the new multipliers.

However, the workshops with the following characteristics seemed the most successful in starting the sensitisation and education process of new multipliers:

- Workshops split into sessions with some time in between
- The assignment of “homework” during the first session and the reflection on the results during the second session
- In such workshops involving possible new multipliers who are not knowledgeable of the topic and do not associate themselves with the topic, an input from the organisers is necessary coupled with discussions with the participants.
- Because the new multipliers should be in the social environment of the educationally disadvantaged people, they are able to identify with the topic better when it is dealt with from a personal point of view
- The role of the new multipliers should be clearly defined before the workshops and clearly communicated during the workshop

- Knowledge exchange between multipliers of different backgrounds could increase motivation and expand knowledge on the topic.

Shorter workshops or webinars should rather be considered as new innovative outreach strategy for identifying new multipliers than an appropriate method for the sensitisation or education for new multipliers. Intensive follow-up activities with the participants are essential to ensure that these participants are educated and sensitised about their new role and afterwards they will be able to act in their new capacity as new multipliers.

Outlook: What's next?

This paper has discussed good practices in reaching different groups of new multipliers of educationally disadvantaged people and some of the challenges that were faced in the *in.education* project. It also discussed how these (potential) new multipliers were sensitised and educated in order to take up their new role and how far this was successful. The success of this project phase will be confirmed in the course of the following project activities of the project which involve the development of an education offer for educationally disadvantaged people. At least 40% of the participants taking part in this offer should be reached through the new multipliers. The success of this goal will largely depend on the follow-up activities.

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Annex 1: Project description ‘*in.education - inclusion & education*’

Development of strategies to increase the enrolment of educationally disadvantaged people, especially those with basic education needs, into relevant educational programs

Existing data as well as practical experiences show that educational programs - including those that specifically address educationally disadvantaged people - are not utilised enough by "all potential" target groups and sufficient diversification of participants groups is achieved only rarely. The reasons for this phenomenon are many and varied. They arise as a result of mixed organisational patterns, educational behaviour of individuals and are caused by structural, procedural and individual initial conditions, which have a common relevance to adult education. The often-mentioned structural change facing Europe in general and specifically each Member State, which particularly refers to its migration and diverse society, can only be dealt with by providing equal and suitable conditions for accessing educational opportunities to people, who because of their personal situation, for example due to lack of educational qualifications, have difficulties in accessing education. The responsibility of the provision of these fair and adequate conditions for the participation in education should also be borne by adult education providers. They must be empowered to develop solutions to reduce barriers and offer educational programs that address diversity to especially those people who may not yet have found a satisfactory entry route into education or for those who have “finished” with education; so that they can reopen the education window for them.

In.education focuses on the development of strategies to increase the enrolment of educationally disadvantaged people especially those with basic education needs into relevant educational programs. The project therefore develops strategies to reduce possible barriers by focussing on system, individual and institutional related levels.

Systemic level: Following the hypothesis that people are deeply influenced by their socio-economic environment, methods and strategies are developed that proactively raise awareness and motivate enrolment in education. This will result in the activation and expansion of multipliers. Besides the identification of relevant target groups, application-oriented settings (pilot workshops) targeted towards stakeholder groups are developed. From this experience, *in.education* develops an application oriented curriculum.

These activities are evaluated in this report.

Individual level: The hypothesis that that the enrolment rate in education increases when informally acquired educational qualifications are collected, described and recognised, leading to the admission of those concerned into the education system, emerges from a cycle of transnational cooperation in the collection and validation of informally gained educational competences of educationally disadvantaged people with basic education deficits. This is implemented by the provision of formal compulsory education measures in each partner country in order to validate whether shorter possibilities of accomplishment of compulsory education for adults can be yielded from this cooperation.

Organisational level: Starting from the presumption that adult education institutions have not yet adjusted sufficiently to the challenges generated from a diverse society and based on the

implementation experience of *in.education* specifically derived from the learning outcomes and the competence-based training events in the systemic and individual levels, implementation competences that organisations dealing with educationally disadvantaged individuals must have in order to increase enrolment and guarantee the quality of results for this groups of persons is extracted. From these defined implementation competences, training are designed in which educational managers and trainers can participate.

As a consequence, three curricula for three target groups (new multipliers, educational disadvantaged people, and educational managers and trainers) are developed and tested. The products are user-oriented, prepared to be self-explanatory and include information on the process, content, methods used and allow a glance into the used materials.

Part 4

Appendix 1 – Ireland

Appendix 2 – UK

Survey Monkey

From the **Irish partner** a survey monkey was created using the core elements as a basis for the survey questions. This was intended to elicit feedback from groups not participating in the workshops as an additional piece of work. This was circulated to practitioners in Adult Basic Education who work within GRETB and other Training and Education Boards throughout Ireland, and are members of the Adult Literacy Organisations Association and the Mid-West Region Adult Literacy Group. Feedback was very positive with 20 respondents.

Appendix 1:



Dear Participant,

GRETB and Campaign for Learning UK are collaborating on an ISOP-Innovative Social Project (Austria).

Aim:

Is to develop and test the transfer-orientated concepts/guidelines of reaching socially and educationally disadvantaged learners.

Objectives:

1.) Definition of models/best practise increasing participation in vocational educational/adult education training for educationally disadvantaged people on three levels:

* New Multipliers/ Agents of Change

Persons from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people (parents, family, non-family caregivers, union learning rep's, social workers, education- and career counsellors etc.)

* Educational disadvantaged people in need of basic education (individual level)

Validation of existing informal competencies

* Trainers/ counsellors/executives within adult education (institutional level)

Increase the participation through change of framework conditions and change of attitude towards the target group

Methodology:

To hold a number of interactive workshops to brainstorm the following questions:

Duration of workshop is 6 hours in one block. However if this is not possible two 3 hour workshops can be accommodated.

In preparation for the workshops I would ask you to consider the following

1. Attitudes to education
 - a. Personal level
 - b. Social environment
 - c. Gender
 - d. Other

2. Barriers to education and how to overcome them
 - a. Real and perceived barriers
 - b. Discrimination,
 - c. Stigma
 - d. Gender

3. Highlight benefits of education
 - a. Arguments for education

4. Show concrete possibilities of education for educationally disadvantaged people considering the mentioned barriers

5. Raise sensitivity of disadvantaged groups by defining “ educational disadvantaged” and how people become educationally disadvantaged (Causes)

Outcomes of Brainstorm:

We would ask the Participant to reflect on the following

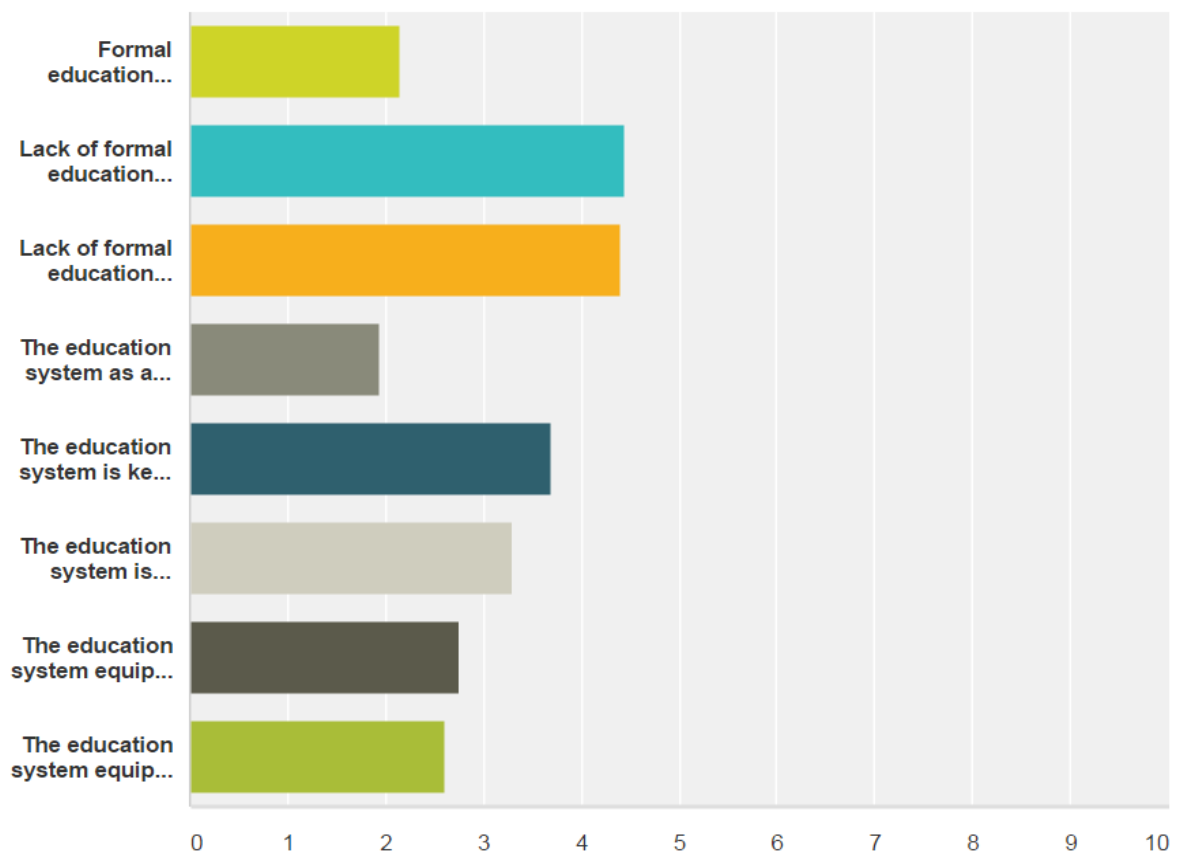
1. Your understanding of the problems experienced by the disadvantaged people
 - a. What is educational disadvantage?
 - b. What groups would you consider educationally disadvantaged in your area.

2. Reflect on your;
 - a. Your own attitude to education
 - b. the attitudes of disadvantaged people

Summary of Survey Monkey findings on educational disadvantage

How strongly would you agree with the following:

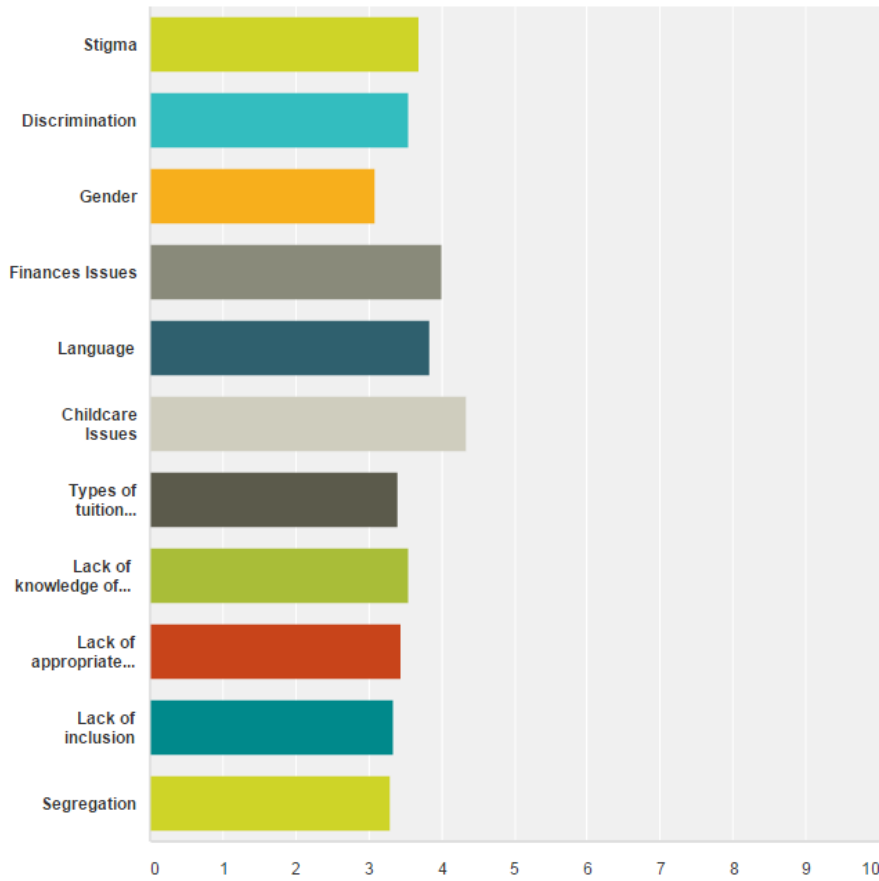
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	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Weighted Average
Formal education effectively meets the needs of socioeconomically disadvantaged learners	15.00% 3	60.00% 12	20.00% 4	5.00% 1	0.00% 0	20	2.15
Lack of formal education contributes to socioeconomic disadvantage	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	55.00% 11	45.00% 9	20	4.45
Lack of formal education contributes to socio environment issues	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	60.00% 12	40.00% 8	20	4.40
The education system as a whole meets the needs of the socioeconomic disadvantaged	20.00% 4	65.00% 13	15.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20	1.95
The education system is key to narrowing the gender inequality gap for the socioeconomically disadvantaged	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 8	50.00% 10	10.00% 2	20	3.70
The education system is fostering intergenerational disadvantage	0.00% 0	25.00% 5	20.00% 4	55.00% 11	0.00% 0	20	3.30
The education system equips the disadvantaged with the skills to access employment	10.00% 2	45.00% 9	10.00% 2	30.00% 6	5.00% 1	20	2.75
The education system equips the disadvantaged with the skills to sustain gainful employment	15.00% 3	45.00% 9	5.00% 1	35.00% 7	0.00% 0	20	2.60

How strongly would you agree that the following are barriers to education for socioeconomically disadvantaged adults: (perceived barriers or real barriers)

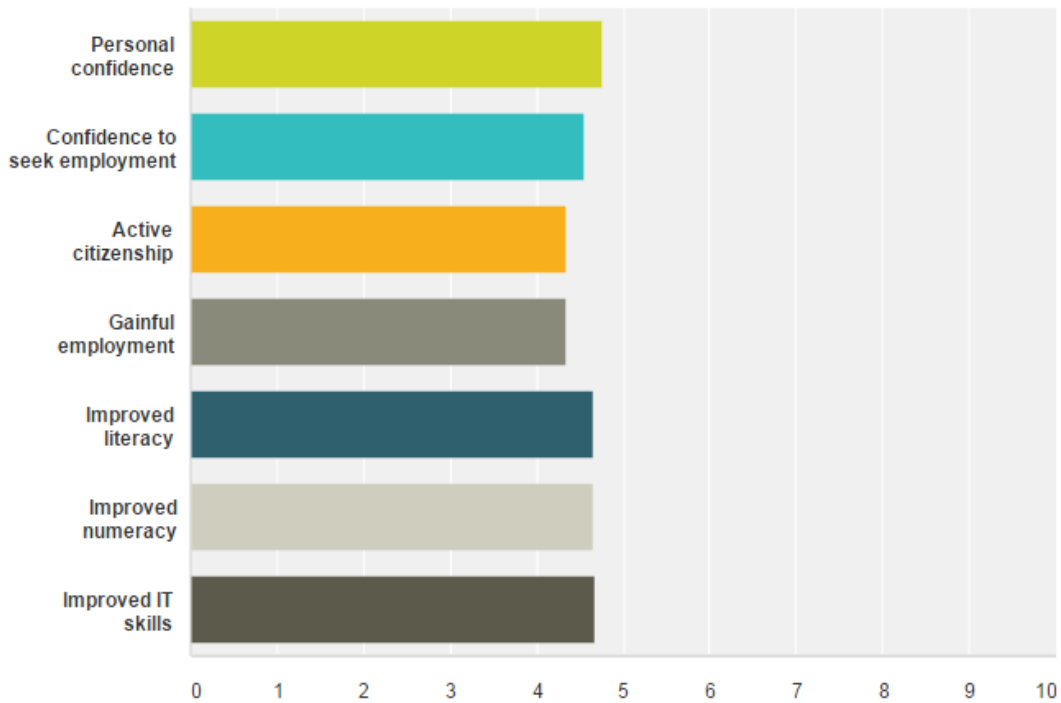
Answered: 20 Skipped: 0



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Weighted Average
Stigma	0.00% 0	15.00% 3	15.00% 3	55.00% 11	15.00% 3	20	3.70
Discrimination	0.00% 0	20.00% 4	15.00% 3	55.00% 11	10.00% 2	20	3.55
Gender	0.00% 0	35.00% 7	30.00% 6	25.00% 5	10.00% 2	20	3.10
Finances Issues	0.00% 0	10.53% 2	10.53% 2	47.37% 9	31.58% 6	19	4.00
Language	0.00% 0	10.53% 2	10.53% 2	63.16% 12	15.79% 3	19	3.84
Childcare Issues	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 2	45.00% 9	45.00% 9	20	4.35
Types of tuition available	0.00% 0	25.00% 5	20.00% 4	45.00% 9	10.00% 2	20	3.40
Lack of knowledge of services available	0.00% 0	20.00% 4	15.00% 3	55.00% 11	10.00% 2	20	3.55
Lack of appropriate services	0.00% 0	20.00% 4	20.00% 4	55.00% 11	5.00% 1	20	3.45
Lack of inclusion	0.00% 0	25.00% 5	20.00% 4	50.00% 10	5.00% 1	20	3.35
Segregation	0.00% 0	35.00% 7	10.00% 2	45.00% 9	10.00% 2	20	3.30

How strongly would you agree that education positively impacts:

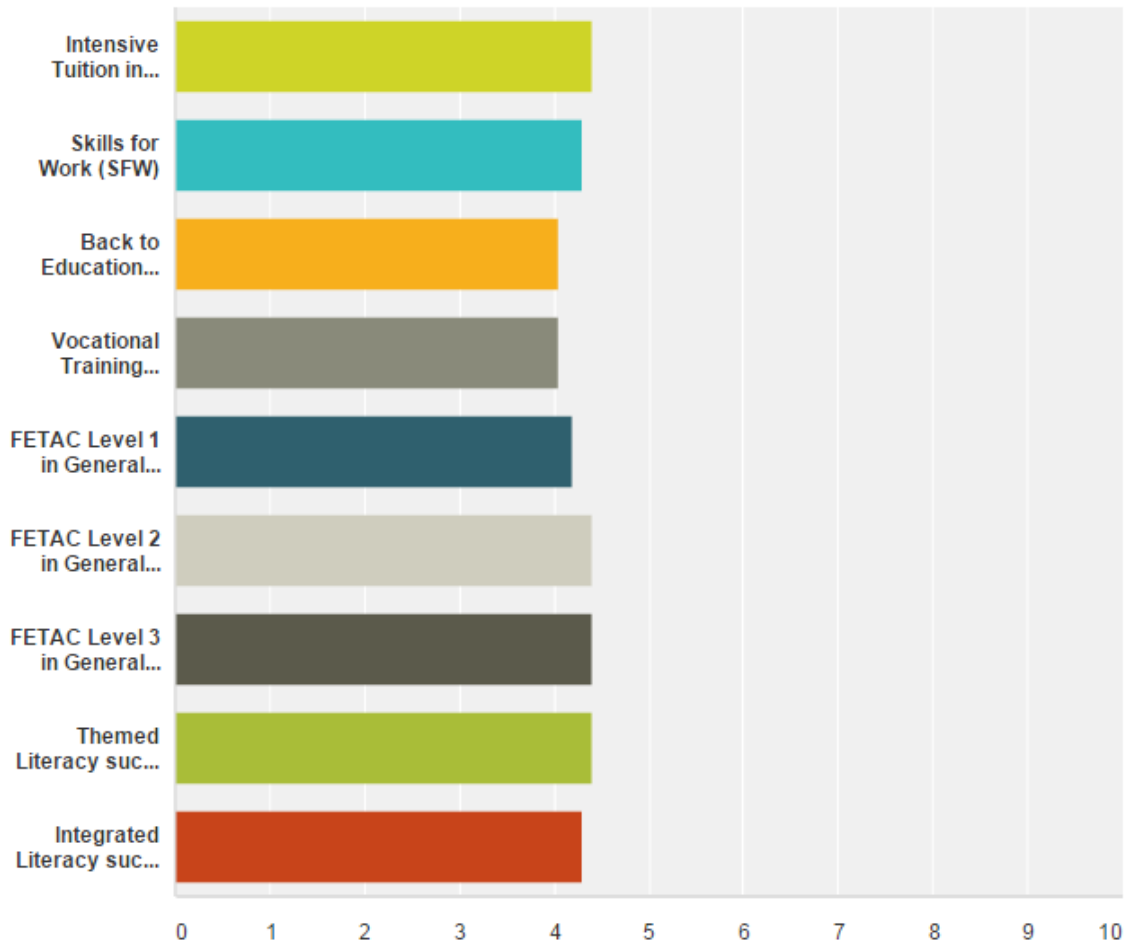
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	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Weighted Average
Personal confidence	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 5	75.00% 15	20	4.75
Confidence to seek employment	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 2	25.00% 5	65.00% 13	20	4.55
Active citizenship	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 2	45.00% 9	45.00% 9	20	4.35
Gainful employment	0.00% 0	5.00% 1	10.00% 2	30.00% 6	55.00% 11	20	4.35
Improved literacy	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	35.00% 7	65.00% 13	20	4.65
Improved numeracy	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	35.00% 7	65.00% 13	20	4.65
Improved IT skills	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	31.58% 6	68.42% 13	19	4.68

How strongly would agree that the following programmes benefit your target group:

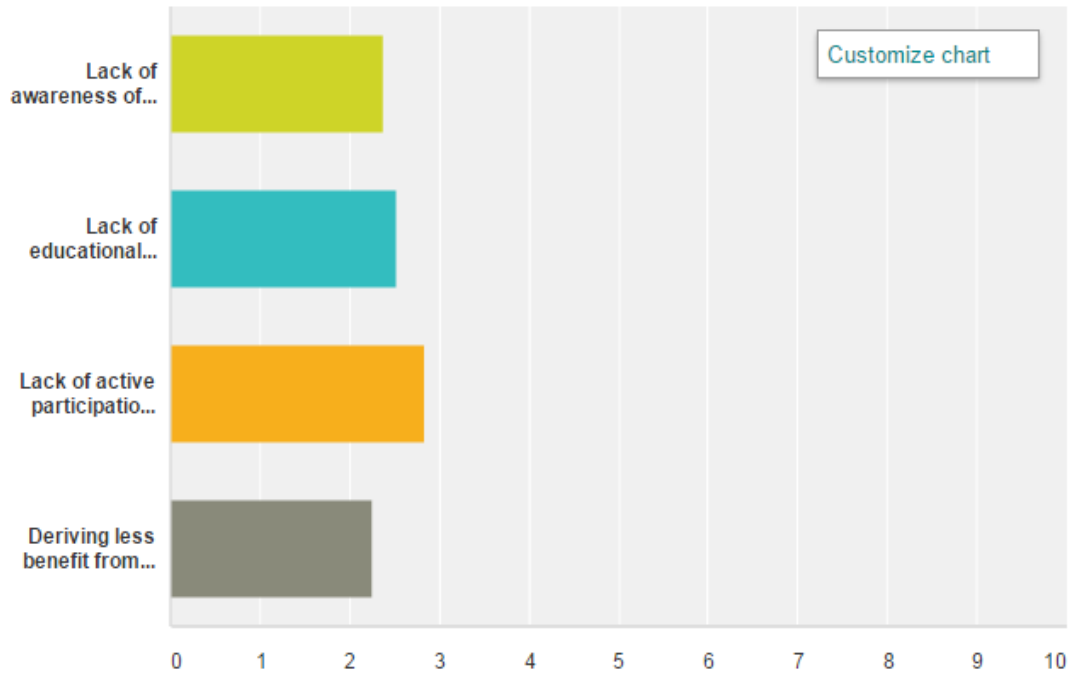
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	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Weighted Average
Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education (ITABE)	0.00% 0	5.00% 1	0.00% 0	45.00% 9	50.00% 10	20	4.40
Skills for Work (SFW)	0.00% 0	5.00% 1	0.00% 0	55.00% 11	40.00% 8	20	4.30
Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)	0.00% 0	10.00% 2	5.00% 1	55.00% 11	30.00% 6	20	4.05
Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)	0.00% 0	10.00% 2	5.00% 1	55.00% 11	30.00% 6	20	4.05
FETAC Level 1 in General Learning	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.00% 3	50.00% 10	35.00% 7	20	4.20
FETAC Level 2 in General Learning	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.00% 1	50.00% 10	45.00% 9	20	4.40
FETAC Level 3 in General Learning	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.00% 1	50.00% 10	45.00% 9	20	4.40
Themed Literacy such as Home and Garden	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.00% 1	50.00% 10	45.00% 9	20	4.40
Integrated Literacy such as Hairdressing or Woodwork	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 2	50.00% 10	40.00% 8	20	4.30

Rank the following contributory factors for educational disadvantage where 1 has the greatest impact and 4 the least impact.

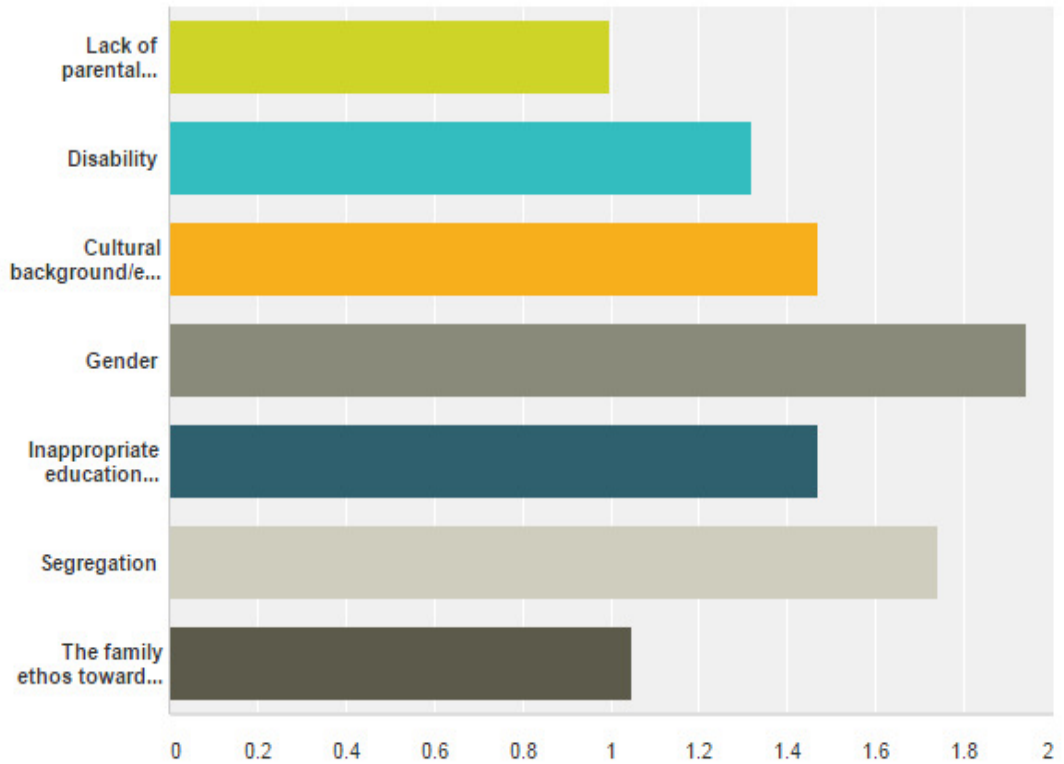
Answered: 19 Skipped: 1



	1	2	3	4	Total	Score
Lack of awareness of educational opportunities	15.79% 3	26.32% 5	36.84% 7	21.05% 4	19	2.37
Lack of educational provision	31.58% 6	15.79% 3	26.32% 5	26.32% 5	19	2.53
Lack of active participation while in education	31.58% 6	36.84% 7	15.79% 3	15.79% 3	19	2.84
Deriving less benefit from education provided than the general population	21.05% 4	21.05% 4	21.05% 4	36.84% 7	19	2.26

Do you consider the following to be contributory factors to educational disadvantage:

Answered: 19 Skipped: 1



	Yes	No	Don't Know	Total	Weighted Average
▼ Lack of parental involvement	100.00% 19	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	19	1.00
▼ Disability	78.95% 15	10.53% 2	10.53% 2	19	1.32
▼ Cultural background/ethos	68.42% 13	15.79% 3	15.79% 3	19	1.47
▼ Gender	11.11% 2	83.33% 15	5.56% 1	18	1.94
▼ Inappropriate education provision	63.16% 12	26.32% 5	10.53% 2	19	1.47
▼ Segregation	42.11% 8	42.11% 8	15.79% 3	19	1.74
▼ The family ethos towards learning	94.74% 18	5.26% 1	0.00% 0	19	1.05

Comments (2)

Appendix 2:

UK Policy Context:

The policy context on adult learning in the UK that forms a background to the delivery of this project is worth noting, as it has changed substantially since the start of the project. This has had considerable impact on project delivery, and has contributed to the circumstances which have obliged the Campaign for Learning to change its initial delivery plans for IO1.

As part of austerity measures and to deliver the main post-compulsory educational objective of the Government, the recruitment of 3 million apprentices by the end of this Parliament, massive cuts to other education budgets have been made. As funding for schools is protected, these have fallen primarily in non-advanced further education, including a reduction in basic skills budgets and English for Speakers of Other Languages, and an overall 24% cut in adult learning budgets in England.

This has meant many adult learning providers have been obliged to make large numbers of staff redundant and that a variety of previous courses and opportunities (in particular, for first steps learning for vulnerable adults, with progression routes into certificated learning) have ceased to exist. Many in the sector are very concerned that opportunities for the most vulnerable in their communities are under very serious threat.

This has made it challenging to focus the attention of multipliers on ways to overcome barriers, as many of them know excluded individuals who may be interested in learning but will no longer have the opportunity to do so through the statutory system, and most are devoting much of their attention to trying to secure other sources of funding to make up the shortfall in their budgets.