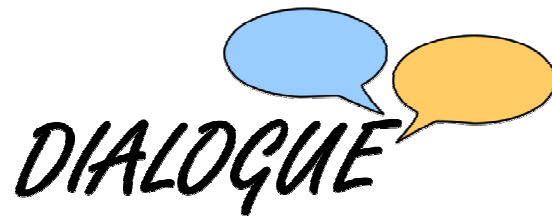




Executive Agency, Education, Audiovisual and Culture



DIALOGUE – Bridges between Research and Practice in ULLL

Final Report

Public Part

Project information

Project acronym: DIALOGUE

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Executive Summary

The DIALOGUE network was set up with the aim of bridging the gap between academic research on University Lifelong Learning (ULLL) and professional practice. A key focus was to look at how knowledge was or might be exchanged and how knowledge can be utilised to improve practices. A key focus was on adult teaching, learning and guidance within LLL provision.

The project sought to create a European Space for DIALOGUE between researchers, practitioners and policy makers.

User and target groups

The findings from the DIALOGUE project are very relevant for ULLL and adult education (AE) researchers and practitioners for their teaching, researching and planning activities, for ULLL networks as fora for exchange, and for social partners and policy-makers given their role as catalysts in creating change. The target audience for the findings is those working in the broad field of adult learning who can influence change which will benefit the adult learner.

The partnership

The 17 partners came from 14 different European countries and were all experts in their field, covering a wide variety of existing practice and research traditions throughout Europe. All partners had links to different regional, national and European networks for adult education, professional development, intergenerational learning and e-learning, etc. All of which was significant for developing European recommendations in practitioner-researcher cooperation. Links to seven AE and LLL associate partner organisations from 4 different European countries complemented the consortium with external expertise.

Approach

The research-practice link has been explored in four theme groups (Access and Progression, Learning and Guidance, New Media and Quality), which have been identified as highly relevant topics on the adult education agenda.

During the Dialogue project, several networks have been developed at different levels.

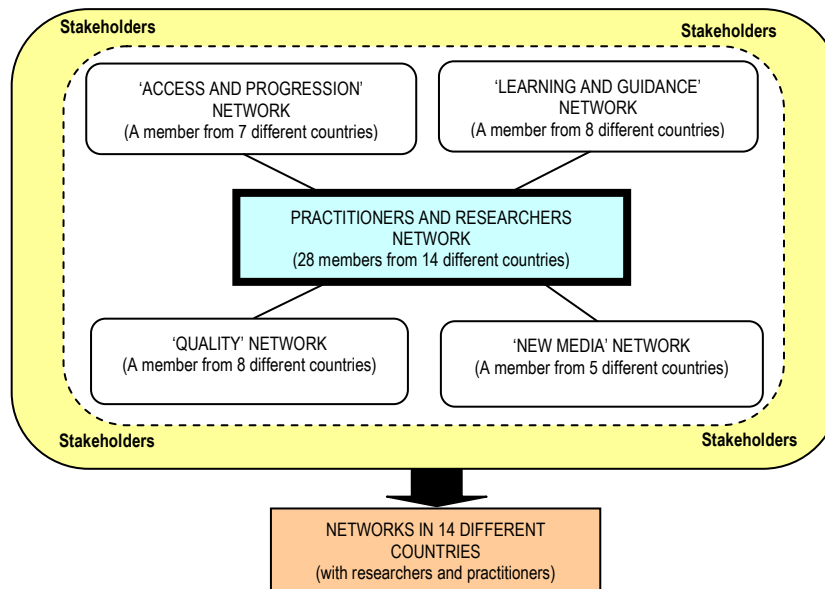
At the project level, a transnational group bringing together practitioners and researchers from 14 universities and 14 countries, coming from different trends of practice and research (in the 4 relevant selected themes) was set up.

At the thematic working group level, smaller transnational and trans-professional groups have been created including 5 to 8 universities from different countries with two representatives, one practitioner and one researcher. Around the case study analysis done by each thematic working group, it was observed appearance of other networks of stakeholders, coming from different sectors (Education, Enterprise, Policy Makers, Non-for-Profit Sector, and so on).

At the university level, the two representatives of each institution, acting as a pair, had to build up within their own institution an internal network to identify and select the best cases.

Beyond the project limits, many people were involved in the project as practitioners and researchers who had their own Practice or Research networks: for example, EUCEN European Network of Practitioners and its (18) National Networks for University Lifelong Learning or ESREA European Network of Researchers, EARLI, and so on.

The DIALOGUE project has been an excellent opportunity to develop a Network of Networks.



This practical experience of the researcher-practitioner cooperation in the project was supplemented by different research activities:

- Collection of **best case practices** (45) of researcher-practitioner cooperation (transfer of research results to practice and practice's contribution to research) and of **national overviews** (28)
- **Production of SWOT** (29) and **Mapping and Network Analyses** (30): The identified case studies were analysed in detail in terms of practitioner-research cooperation and of the different research cultures and underlying concepts of research and learning cultures. The role of LLL networks to overcome barriers was investigated.
- Formulation of **multilevel recommendations**: Based on the results, partners identified regional, national and European recommendations to strengthen the research-practice links

Major Products

1. Creation of the European Space of Dialogue
2. 45 identified best practices and 28 national overviews
3. 29 SWOT analyses, 17 Mapping Analyses and 13 Network Analyses
4. An interactive project networking platform (<http://dialogue.eucen.mixxt.eu/>), that was replaced in the second half of the project by an Open Discussion Group in LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/DIALOGUE-Bridges-between-Research-Practice-5085494/about>) and complemented with a "Networking space" for discussion in the project website
5. Four Final TWG Reports
6. A final set of Recommendations for the "knowledge alliance and common/diverging findings"
7. A project website with background information about the project and access to all the products

All results and project information are available for download on the general project website (<http://dialogue.eucen.eu>).

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List of Acronyms

AE	Adult education
HE	Higher education
HEI	Higher education institution
LLL	Lifelong learning
RPL	Recognition of prior learning
TWG	Thematic working group
ULLL	University Lifelong Learning
VET	Vocational education and training

1. Project Objectives

The communication process between academic research and professional practice in the field of adult learning and ULLL is – underdeveloped in many institutions for a variety of reasons (historical, institutional, cultural, national, etc.).

For the most part, both domains operate separately and more or less independently from each other, so the transfer processes in both directions are underdeveloped and therefore there is little potential in this exchange for the enhancement and further development of effective learning in ULLL. One key indicator for this performance challenge is the mismatch of the Lisbon agenda to increase adult participation rates in LLL substantially. Therefore, there is a need for a network which will seek to identify the kinds of research which are undertaken on adult education in European universities and which can assist with increasing participation by encouraging the different stakeholders including policy makers and practitioners in the field of adult education to make use of the findings from research.

The consortium believes if there were a stronger dialogue within the knowledge alliance between research, policy and practice, participation rates would raise.

In this sense, the DIALOGUE project has:

- 1) Sought to identify relevant research and the good practices in the application of research in ULLL and AE.
- 2) Sought to identify case studies about the involvement of and contribution from professional practitioners in research
- 3) Improve quality, effective teaching, learning and guidance in ULLL through this exchange and develop recommendations to researchers, practitioners and policy makers.

Aims of the project

1. Provide a European Space of Dialogue between academic researches, professional practitioners and policy makers
2. Improve the transfer of educational research into the field of professional practice and vice versa in ULLL through the involvement of practitioners in research
3. Improve policy and practice in the field of ULLL

Objectives

- 1) Develop the dialogue between research and practice around four themes:
 - a) Access and Progression
 - b) Quality Assurance and Enhancement
 - c) Learning and Guidance
 - d) New Media

- 2) Review, develop and evaluate models of good practice in the transfer of research results to professional practice and explore ways of involving practitioners in research.
- 3) Identify and explore the barriers and constraints at national and institutional level to transfer the knowledge
- 4) Explore and evaluate the role of national and international networks in the transfer of research to professional practice
- 5) Develop appropriate recommendations targeting networks, policy-makers and decision-makers, researching bodies and institutional actors at all levels

Benefits for and involvement of the target and user groups

The benefits for user and target groups of the project can be seen at various levels. Firstly, the European network for researcher-practitioner-cooperation, which is open to interested stakeholders in the field and which will improve communication and understanding of each other.

Secondly, cooperation during the project's lifespan between researchers and practitioners from partner institutions has improved their understanding of each other and influenced their future methods of cooperation, which it is expected to have an impact on teaching and research activities and will serve as an example for other LLL practitioners and researchers in their institution and beyond. The enhanced communication and new cooperation between various stakeholders has ultimately led to improved provision in the field of LLL, which combines the insights from research and practice and takes account of respective LLL learner target groups and their needs. So, in the medium term perspective the potential impact of the project will improve provision of lifelong learning for the ultimate target group: the LLL learners, and especially adult LLL-learners.

Thirdly, the recommendations generated by the project will benefit other ULLL researchers and practitioners eager to improve their institutional cooperation processes and what they offer in LLL. Therefore, the project also benefits teaching staff and project managers, as well as public and private LLL research institutes and organisations from other sectors of adult education and the voluntary and community sectors. The recommendations are relevant for social partners and policy makers to be informed about the developments of LLL in the higher education (HE) sector, as they are important cooperating partners.

The target groups mentioned above have been involved in the project in consultations (e.g. institutional seminars and workshops) about the findings from case studies and a SWOT and Network Analyses which examine hindering factors and opportunities for ULLL researcher and practitioner cooperation. Furthermore, the target groups have been informed about the project aims and results in presentations at international conferences and university lectures and can exchange their views by contacting the consortium directly via the website. While the majority of activities have been face-to-face events, it is hoped that online discussions and interaction will continue via the LinkedIn Open Discussion Group and the website forum.

2. Project Approach

The approach of DIALOGUE is based on the demand of a **common knowledge base between ULLL practitioners and researchers**. For this purpose, the project has developed an 'interactive research approach', in the sense that researchers and practitioners have developed a common understanding of interactions between research and practice based on practical examples (case studies, national overviews), and have defined a common knowledge for solving problems (analyses and recommendations).

Trust management forms a crucial element in generating this common knowledge base and professional knowledge, since "it is common that members of both systems [the scientific and the practice system] first have to be convinced of the benefits of dealing with the counterpart"¹. As trust is built by "systematically maintaining a dialogue"², **Networks** between researchers and professional practitioners form a substantial part of the project and its aim to create a **European Space of Dialogue**.

This European Space of Dialogue has been formed in a communicative, reflexive and collaborative way, using face-to-face or virtual meetings and exchanges during the project. ULLL practitioners, researchers and eventually policy-makers have exchanged ideas, develop professional knowledge and common visions for the further development of LLL.

The DIALOGUE network has focused on four highly relevant areas of adult education:

- *Access and Progression*, for flexible learning pathways and enhanced participation of adults in LLL
- *Learning and Guidance* for effective LLL guidance systems
- *New Media* for innovative solutions in teaching and learning methods and flexible access to programmes
- *Quality* for a high quality LLL-offer

European Space of Dialogue

Discussion about research is a complex intellectual process involving different approaches to research (e.g. qualitative/quantitative), and different designs for specific projects, combining to provide insight into research problems. Practice is an equally complex field involving formal/informal learning environments and varied contexts, including different patterns of social need and different national structures of provision/participation.

¹ Juette, Wolfgang et. al.(2012). "Interactive Professionalization in Continuing Education and Training.Suggestions for the DIALOGUE framework." Faculty of Education, Bielefeld University. Published as proceedings of the Joint Conference 2nd ESREA - ReNADET Meeting and the 4th TGF Seminar Tallinn EE 9-11 Nov11, p.8

² Ibid, p.8

These complex issues and their interactions have been explored in the DIALOGUE project and many different perspectives shared amongst the contributors. It is abundantly clear that much more discussion is possible and would be very valuable. Consequently the European Space for Dialogue should provide a rich source of ideas and further opportunities to develop the discipline of Lifelong Learning, and its application to critical goals such as increased participation.

The DIALOGUE European Space of Dialogue involved two representatives (a practitioner and a researcher) of each partner institution in the project. Each of these two institutional partners joined a different thematic working group (TWG) and each TWG had a balance of practitioners and researchers. Like that, partner institutions have benefited from different insights of at least two working groups when discussing DIALOGUE, especially when preparing case studies or the SWOT and Network Analyses.

This practical experience of the researcher-practitioner cooperation in the project was supplemented by **different research activities**:

1) Case Studies and National overviews

All partners explored models of good practice in the transfer of research results to professional practice on the one hand and of practitioner-based research on the other hand in four thematic subgroups. These case studies were complemented by national overviews, which gave background information that helped understanding the national systems of ULLL and the context of the case studies.

2) SWOT, Mapping and Network Analyses

The identified case studies were analysed in detail in terms of practitioner-researcher-cooperation and of the different research cultures and underlying concepts of research and learning cultures.

Partners also explored the relations and influences of hindering factors in ULLL research and professional practice, as well as the reasons of constraints in regional and national higher education systems. And investigated the role which national and international networks can play to overcome identified barriers and to strengthen the exchange between research and practice.

3) Recommendations

The partners of the network have contributed to the development of a multi-level report containing recommendations based on national experiences and findings, seeking to promote a ULLL DIALOGUE. The regional/national recommendations collected by partners have been summarised to formulate European recommendations of the project.

Opening up the network

The project has opened up gradually to external stakeholders, who have been consulted by project partners about their findings of the SWOT and Network Analyses and informed about the project's intermediary findings. These stakeholders have been institutional colleagues, learners, especially students of adult education, other adult education providers and national or European networks (e.g. ESREA).

The associate partners (7 national and internal AE and LLL organisations from 5 different countries) plus 18 ULLL national network in 16 countries have been involved in the process of opening up the network as they were invited to share their insights and experience about the (U)LLL research and practice link with the network at the project symposium in March 2013 and at the final dissemination conference in October 2013.

While the exchange of experience has mainly taken place in face-to-face events, the project will open up virtually once the project finishes and invite the associate partners and interested stakeholders to share their views and experience on the project open discussion group and through other online activities.

The added value of the project approach

The impact of ULLL research on ULLL practice and the involvement of ULLL practitioners in ULLL research have not been addressed at European level before and the creation of a European Space of Dialogue to encourage this exchange presents a novel approach.

Analysing the researcher-practitioner cooperation based on case studies is a very accessible approach that has allowed the partnership to reflect on their own and others situations, and has enabled them to learn from each other through methods which demonstrate different approaches to learning at regional or national level.

The added value can also clearly be seen in working with the institutional tandems (two institutional partners who work on two different themes) and in the consortium as partners have not only analysed researcher and practitioner cooperation, but experienced it and developed recommendations in joint researcher-practitioner collaboration.

Involving the user and target groups in consultations about findings from case studies and the SWOT and Network Analyses has helped with dissemination to relevant groups, while generating new ideas and perspectives for the project content.

The evaluation strategy

While internal quality assurance was organised by the project management group, an external evaluator was also engaged to assess the overall quality of the project, progress being made and finally how results linked to formulated objectives in the proposal.

During the project, the evaluator has collected feedback from the partnership and reported it back to the Management Group to help improving the project processes in a constructive way.

In terms of the project's content, the evaluator has assessed the project's ability to *"open up the space where researchers, practitioners and policy-makers/other stakeholders can identify and articulate common visions to forward university lifelong learning research and practice in each country and across the European area"* (p.2 Evaluation Plan).

The dissemination and exploitation strategy

The dissemination strategy has followed the general project work plan and aims of each year of the project. Apart from activities for the distribution of general project information, targeted activities have been organised by partners to combine information about the project, involving externals in the project processes and developing the project content.

The target group during year one of the project was other project partners and institutional colleagues sensitive to the topic, who were interviewed and consulted for the production of case studies and the national overviews.

In year two, the target group was extended to other (U)LLL and AE experts (other LLL/AE associations, national and European ULLL networks, etc), who were consulted about the first findings resulting from the case studies and SWOTs and about recommendations for sustaining and improving DIALOGUE between researchers and practitioners.

Involving end users in project discussions during year 3 was seen as an effective way of reaching the target group and keeping them interested, which we expect will have a positive impact on the exploitation of recommendations.

The main dissemination activities carried out are various international conferences, seminars and meetings to develop and inform about the project's content, as well as the distribution of the project information through the EUCEN newsletter, online articles and blogs.

In terms of online dissemination, the project website(<http://dialogue.eucen.eu>) throughout the project, the networking platform (<http://dialogue.eucen.mixxt.eu/>) in the first half of the project and the LinkedIn Open Discussion Group (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/DIALOGUE-Bridges-between-Research-Practice-5085494/about>) in the last year have been the information interface for external stakeholders, though the platform and the LinkedIn group have not developed a very high level of engagement. These tools have been constantly updated. Nevertheless, a recently developed "Networking space" in the project website will allow registered users to read, discuss and add topics from the project. The website will be maintained for at least 5 years after the duration of the project, supporting information exchange and serving as a knowledge resource in the field. The LinkedIn Group will also be kept open for the same period.

The Final Dissemination event in Brussels, 15 October 2013, reached various target groups and involved them in discussions about the proposed recommendations. It was designed in interactive training and workshop sessions and was open to various groups like ULLL researchers and practitioners, project managers, teachers, national and European ULLL networks, learners, social partners and policy-makers. Partners

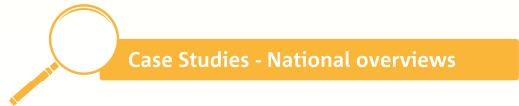
are well linked to various adult education and LLL-networks, where they will continue to use and disseminate the experience gained through the project and its outcomes.

The cooperation between practitioners and researchers throughout the project has been fruitful for the partners. It is expected that they change their way of working towards a more collaborative way in the future. This will have an impact on their teaching and researching activities and could serve as an example for other LLL practitioners and researchers in their institution and beyond.

3. Project Outcomes & Results

A European Space for Dialogue was created when the different working teams of partners of the consortium started to work together in the themes of the project.

A total of 45 case studies and 28 national overviews were collected in the four thematic subgroups.



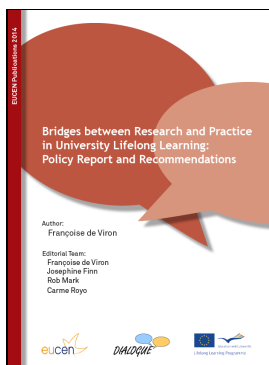
These case studies were analysed in terms of underlying concepts of research and learning cultures, existing barriers and constraints to

mutual exchange between research and practice using SWOT, Mapping and Network analyses. The collected analyses were the basis for formulating the **Policy Report and Recommendations** for the knowledge alliance and common/diverging findings, a summary on how the knowledge alliance between researchers, professionals and policy makers can be reinforced and strategically developed in the future.

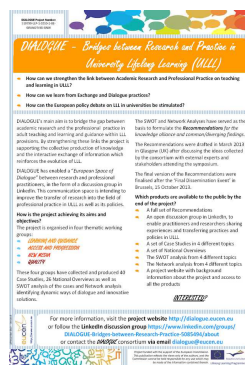


All the above documents are available for downloading from the [project website](#). Thus, the website provides a repository of materials which is expected to encourage collaboration and exchange in the future to those who use it either in internal processes or with the DIALOGUE partners via the open LinkedIn Discussion Group.

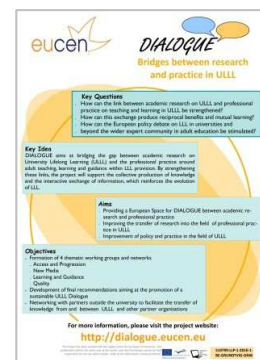
The basic dissemination materials created and distributed during the project are:



Recommendations (2013)



Poster and Leaflet - v2 and v3 (2012 - 13)



Poster - v1 (2011)



Post-its (2012)



Leaflet - v1 (2011)

The main dissemination activities include:

- Organisation of seminars and meetings to develop the project's topic:
 - Lunch-time seminar on 'Exploring our different ways of learning and communication styles' at the University of Strathclyde on 01/03/2012 with 38 invited LLL researchers and practitioners
 - Research seminar on 'Improving the research-practice dialogue to promote access and progression of non-traditional students in higher education' at the University of Strathclyde on 30/05/2012 with 27 participants
 - Presenting the project in a workshop about developing a Quality Plan for the University of Zilina
 - Alliance building on practitioner-based research: Meeting of heads of Departments from various sectors of education within three higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Dublin region, where the cooperation on practitioner-based research was agreed
- Presenting the project in meetings with university authorities, the European Commission and VET providers and different regional or related networks, e.g. in the RPL network meeting of the Scottish Higher Education RPL Network Meeting on 6 June 2012 (P2) or in the Meeting of European associations of VET providers on the same day(P4)
- The German national network (DGWF) conference from 14-16 September 2011 with 160 participants, the conference topic linked to DIALOGUE
- Presenting the project in various seminars, workshops and university lectures to vice-rectors, deans of faculties, directors, ULLL researchers, teachers, ICT developers, LLL experts and students of all levels of education
- DIALOGUE Symposium. Glasgow, 22 March 2012. Presentation of the project and presentations from external experts contributing to the discussion and thinking on DIALOGUE topics. 40 participants in total.
- DIALOGUE Final Dissemination Conference. Brussels, 15 October 2013. Presentation of the project draft results and discussion in an interactive format with participants. Exchange of ideas and information with the participants in another project's Final Conference (OBSERVAL-Net). Total number of participants in the full day activity 120.
- Displaying and distributing the project materials (posters, flyers, post-its) at seminars and meetings, or via emails and newsletters to (national) LLL networks, university staff, students by various partners and by EUCEN, who presented the project at three international conferences in poster sessions:
 - 5 EUCEN conferences: 41st EUCEN conference in Granada, 25-27 May 2011 (ca. 130 participants), 42nd EUCEN conference in Genoa, 16-18 November 2011 (ca. 150 participants), 43rd EUCEN conference in Graz, 9-11 May 2012 (ca.140 participants), 44th EUCEN conference in Valletta, 7-9 November 2012 (ca. 120 participants) and 45th EUCEN conference in Charmey, 29-31 May 2013 (ca. 130 participants). At the Granada

conference project flyers were included in the conference packs for participants. In Graz, DIALOGUE's new leaflets and post-its were distributed to all participants. In Valletta and Charmey the new leaflets were distributed to the conference participants.

- S-ICT conference at the Vienna University of Technology, the 4th International Conference on Student Mobility and ICT, with 39 participants, 3-4 November 2011
- DIVERSE conference³ in Leuven from 03-06 July 2012
- Presentation at a symposium session in the European Conference on Educational Research (ECER) in Cadiz from 18-21 September 2012
- ICERI 2012 International Conference, Madrid 19-20 November 2012: An abstract was prepared and the work was accepted for the poster session. Leaflets were also distributed at this event, with 560 participants.
- National conference organised by the Quality Assurance Unit of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki on 20-21 September 2013.
- Distribution of leaflets at many events. For example: EDULEARN in Barcelona July 2013, CATES in Lisbon July 2013, ENAEE in Leuven September 2013, EFQUEL in Barcelona September 2013, "2013 anne des competences" conference in Louvain-la-Neuve (10 October 2013), project THEMP final conference in Barcelona (14 November 2013), PACE project kick-off meeting in Vienna (21-22 November 2013), LLL Week in Brussels (03-06 December 2013) organised by EUCIS-LLL.

Filming, editing and production of 10 videos recorded during the DIALOGUE Symposium (Glasgow, 22 March 2012), available in EUCEN's YouTube channel, and through the DIALOGUE website.

Promotional video of the Final DIALOGUE Conference in Brussels 15 October 2013, available in the DIALOGUE website.

Articles about the DIALOGUE project appeared in the EUCEN members e-newsletters of February 2011, September 2011, March 2012, June 2012, March 2013, June 2013, September 2013 and October 2013.

A project newsletter was also published in August 2013, announcing the Brussels event, and in December 2013, announcing availability in the website of the results from the final event.

An informative project article was published in the grassroot online newspaper *The Evollution* (<http://www.evollution.com/?s=dialogue&x=0&y=0>) and a blog entry (http://www.sivistys.net/nakokulmat/tieteen_sana/dialogin_sietamaton_keveys.html) about the project was written in Finnish.

The DIALOGUE project was presented and chosen as finalist among 5 other projects for the EAPRIL Best Research and Practice Project Award 2013. Impossibility to attend the EAPRIL conference ruled the project out from being awarded the prize.

³The DIVERSE conference is the leading conference on video and videoconferencing in education.

Five face-to-face full partner meetings have taken place throughout the project:

- Barcelona, 25-26 January 2011 (including a face-to-face management meeting),
- Genoa, 17-18 November 2011
- Potsdam, 19-20 January 2012 (including a face-to-face management meeting)
- Glasgow, 21-23 March 2013 (including a face-to-face management meeting)
- Brussels, 14 October 2013

Six virtual management meetings have taken place throughout the project too.

4. Partnerships

The DIALOGUE partnership comprises 17 organisation members from 14 different European countries, and thus represents a broad coverage of Southern, Northern, Western and Eastern Europe. Therefore, this project covers a wide variety of existing practice and research traditions throughout Europe. All partners have links to different regional, national and European networks for adult education, professional development, intergenerational learning, work-based learning and e-learning, just to name a few. Consequently, the dissemination and valorisation of the outputs of DIALOGUE are effective beyond the partnership to the wider community of LLL and AE.

The partners, all experts with extensive experience in their field of practice, have contributed to the project with different aspects of adult learning (access, progression, quality, teaching and learning, guidance, new media) and a range of experience in terms of their teaching (different forms of delivery) and their learners (different ages, different work experience, different social backgrounds and different educational qualifications). The perspectives of many highly experienced and committed professionals have exchanged and discussed in this project and create the European Space of Dialogue.

Furthermore, the partnership includes a mix of partners who have already worked together successfully in other relevant European projects (e.g. EQUIPE Plus on quality, TRANSFINE and REFINE on RPL, ALPINE on access, ADD-Life on intergenerational learning) and new partners, which assure an effective working mode, but also the potential for innovation through new ideas and perspectives.

5. Plans for the Future

Three main aspects are in place to ensure the dissemination and sustainability after the lifespan of the project:

- 1) **EUCEN as an umbrella organisation of University Lifelong Learning organisations.** Through its regular work with the 18 national networks in ULLL across the Member States and its 199 members, EUCEN will encourage a wider take up of the outputs of DIALOGUE at national events. Being a well-established international association, EUCEN is also well-placed in relation to disseminating results to policy-makers. EUCEN also organises regular conference targeting European ULLL practitioners and researchers (average number of participants is 130), where current trends in LLL are discussed and the project results will be disseminated. EUCEN also counts with alliances to stakeholders through whom will also disseminate the project and its outputs.
- 2) **Partners' contributions to events and seminars.** All project partners have links into different regional, national and European networks for adult education, professional development, intergenerational learning and e-learning, where they will share their experience gained in the DIALOGUE project in seminars and conferences. This will ensure an effective valorisation beyond the partnership to the wider LLL community. In addition, we hope that the cooperation between practitioners and researchers will be fruitful for the partners and change their way of working using more collaborative methods. This will have an impact on their teaching and researching activities and could serve as an example for other LLL practitioners and researchers in their institution and beyond.
- 3) **The project website.** It supports information exchange, dialogue and serves as a knowledge resource in the field. Since it will be maintained at least 5 years after the duration of the project, it will stay the key interface for external stakeholders. Online discussions will be posted via the Networking Space in the website and the LinkedIn open Discussion Group.

In addition to these three essential points, partners have prepared different papers about DIALOGUE, which will be soon published:

- "Research-practice partnerships: improving links between research and professional practice in lifelong learning" for publication in Routledge. Paper accepted, but not published yet.
- "University Lifelong Learning: The Case of Turkey" for publication in ODTÜ'lü Journal. Paper accepted, but not published yet.

Partners are also preparing different papers about DIALOGUE:

- Article for the German Journal REPORT: "Opening Higher Education to Adults" <http://www.report-online.net/english/start/> (to be published in July 2014)
- Article for the Journal "Hochschule und Weiterbildung" of the DGWF association, to be published in its issue 1/2015: "Auf dem Weg zur Hochschule des Lebenslangen Lernens – Mehrwert, Aufwand und Erträge" entitled

"Brücke zwischen Forschung und Praxis in der Hochschulweiterbildung: Ergebnisse aus dem DIALOGUE-Projekt – best practice Modelle in Europa". (to be published in early 2015)

- Article for the Irish Journal "The Adult Learner" published by AONTAS (to be submitted in mid-end of 2014 and published in 2015).

A number of the DIALOGUE project partners are committed to ongoing dissemination and exploitation activities within their universities and local and national networks once the project has finished. These same partners are keen to stay in touch through face-to-face and virtual meetings to plan the steps for a follow-up project proposal under the new ERASMUS+ programme.

EUCEN will use the results of the project as discussion materials for its 2014 Autumn Seminar in Barcelona, 06-07 November 2014 (expected number of participants in this activity is around 70). Copies of the final Recommendations will be also distributed in each activity in which EUCEN participates.

6. Contribution to EU policies

The importance of lifelong learning and adult education in fostering employment has been highlighted in various EU strategies and communications like the Lisbon agenda and its successor the Europe 2020 strategy, the Action Plan on Adult Learning and the 'ET 2020', just to name a few.

However, in order to achieve the headline targets of

- 75% of employment of adults aged 20-64
- the reduction of early leaving from education and training to below 10 % or
- enhancing the rate of people aged 30-34 holding a tertiary education degree to 40% as envisaged in the Europe 2020 strategy,

the LLL offer will have to be improved in view of, for example, flexible learning paths, improved options of accessing programmes and efficient LLL guidance systems. These are some of the solutions to encourage adults to upgrade their skills and prevent learners from dropping out of education.

Innovative and effective solutions require among others exchange of best practice at an international scale and a reinforced cooperation between LLL researchers and practitioners to maximise the impact of research results and experience gained from practice on the ground with the ultimate aim of benefiting the LLL learner, notably the adult LLL learner.

The DIALOGUE network has examined this link between research and practice creating a European Space of Dialogue where (U)LLL researchers, practitioners and policy makers can develop common visions. The areas of the four thematic working groups (Access and Progression, Learning and Guidance, Quality and New Media), in which the practitioner-researcher cooperation have been analysed, are crucial topics for innovation and efficiency of the education and training sector.

