

Activity 1: SWOT analysis

Topic assessed: e.g. cooperation between practitioners and researchers for the realisation of a workshop on teacher beliefs in Sibiu/Romania.	
Helpful in achieving the objective	Harmful in achieving the objective
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Internal Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good communication processes due to proximity: the practitioner was a co-worker at the same university, the National Teacher Training Centre is also located in the same town and good relations of trust existed between the researcher, the practitioner and the head of the institution which hosted the workshop described in the CS. - Cultural, attitudinal, behavioural aspects of the team: the practitioner asked to build some of the adult learning research into her teaching practice was from Germany, a state where new research about learning is known to be put into practice. The practitioner was therefore very open to suggestions; she was also interested in her own development and therefore keen to get information. - Management cover, succession: the course was financed by the DAAD, the setting was offered by the national Centre for Continuous Teacher Training; therefore no expenses were spared to provide the necessary materials and attendees were well taken care of. - Due to the good experiences made with the Teacher Training Centre in the past, many teachers from all over Romania attended the workshop; - All actors involved in the case were open to new experiences. - Policies: the Romanian law of education, implemented by the Ministry of Education provides a very good frame for the development of education for minorities in general. This frame provides opportunities for the development of programmes and workshops with German teaching. The 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Barriers of communication: Proximity, mutual consideration and overall good communication in daily (professional) life can create a perception of shared understanding which is not always reflective of the actual reality of knowledge transfer during training, thus, the transfer of information during the discussions may not have been as profound as assumed. - Working concepts and mentalities/values: This means that the initial strength bestowed upon the project by a participant who was familiar with research into adult learning could, in time, prove to be a weakness, if she were unable to transmit some of the behavioral and attitudinal aspects of teaching to her Romanian colleagues due to her departure. - Mismatch between theory and concrete needs for practical situations due to the fact that the traditional teaching practice in Romania is not yet guided by learners needs, as research suggests it should be¹. - Research on adult education with respect to learning and guidance is not yet very well known in Romania, the fact that the practitioner open to apply this research was not Romanian does not provide continuity for the dialogue on this micro – level. - Lack of time: the discussion meetings on actual findings did not last very long due to lack of time on both sides. - Fluctuation of DAAD-lecturers does not permit continuity for the dialogue on this micro-level. - The entire workshop was funded by external institutions and will not become part of a standard training curriculum; - The interest in the dialogue between research and practice was a personal choice of the people and institutions involved and would be very difficult to institutionalize. - The workshop would have been suitable for teachers in different areas of expertise, not only for teachers

¹ This and similar statements in this document are to be read with the following caveat: since this report is based on a particular case study, and the time allocated is insufficient to conduct extensive research into matters tangential to the study proper, no in-depth analysis has been conducted on the state of research on learning and guidance in Romania, or on the extent to which teaching practice is guided by learners' needs. Therefore, for the purposes of this SWOT analysis, the author had to draw on her own experience as well as the experience of others, communicated to the author during subject-related discussions. More in-depth research would be necessary for an objective analysis of the current situation in Romania.

	communication with German Institutions is very good and sets the frame for a beneficial exchange and transfer of knowledge.	of German.
External Factors	Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An informal network for continuous teacher training was established for further training programs between the Institution for Teacher Training in German, the DAAD and the University; - The group of teachers who attended the workshop can act as multipliers in their home institutions; - Since the beginning was made, other practitioners might find the dialogue between research and practice on learning and guidance interesting and worth trying; - Since the first workshop was successful, the Centre for Continuous Teacher Training (ZfL) might keep the network of practitioners and researchers for further workshops and financial support could be easier to obtain than the first time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The research on learning and guidance is not well known in Romania and there is little practical interest in learners' needs; - Since financial support for this workshop came partly from the DAAD, relevant Romanian authorities might have little interest in taking over the costs for such workshops on topics which are unusual in Romania; - Legislation and external procedures: legislation changes in Romania almost every year; there is little stability in the system. This means that the Centre for Continuous Teacher Training might be obliged by legislation to organise its workshops in a certain manner or renounce collaborating with other educational institutions. The network established for the workshop described in the case study was an informal one, but was beneficial in a formal training. - Economical context: Teachers are very badly rewarded financially for their work and teachers' interest in attending workshops for their own benefit is decreasing. The offer of continuous training on any subject with no immediate relevance for the profession might lack participants in the future.

2. Can the hindering factors (weaknesses and threats) be generalised and applied at national level? Which other hindering factors can be identified?

Two of the hindering factors can only be dealt with at a national level:

- The frequent changes of educational laws and regulations fail to offer the stability necessary for a dialogue between research and practice on Adult Education or between researchers and practitioners in ULLL. The director of the Teacher Training Centre, the institution offering continuous training for the teachers of Schools with German Teaching on a national level, changes every time the government changes colour. This means that this institution is potentially subject to changes of internal regulations almost every second year and no long term policies can be applied.
- The economic situation in Romania and the limited financial resources available to the educational sector in general are not conducive to sustainable development. Apart from the general aspect of development on a national level, researchers and practitioners could therefore lose their interest for new professional challenges.
- The lack of efficient communication among the ministries dealing with the implementation of LLL. ULLL is not yet a subject in Romania, because LLL implementation is probably stuck in an initial phase.

3. Once you have identified the general hindering factors, please try to analyse their reasons to find out how these factors are embedded in your respective learning and research culture.

- Insufficient network: on a national level, as pointed out in the national overview, there are almost too many institutions responsible for LLL. There seems to be no problem of acceptance, since more than two ministries are implementing the legislation. Every ministry organises the infrastructure for the implementation in its own way, according to specific regulations, for example by funding local or regional institutions or commissions. These different commissions however do not work together; they are separate entities often doing similar work.
- Organisation structure: since Romania is a centralised state, decisions are made at a national level, and commissions are founded to implement regulations at regional or local levels, being dependent for every decision on the central commission in Bucharest. This can slow down processes or obstruct them very seriously.
- Funding: The fact that the education sector has few available sources of funding also has an influence on LLL, because insufficient funding in general makes new developments in LLL unlikely.

4. Actions that could be carried out to overcome these identified reasons for barriers and hindering factors to cooperation between ULLL researchers and practitioners or solutions
Please identify and explain possible solutions for the identified reasons of barriers.

On the one hand, the economic situation in Romania can only be overcome by substantial economic growth. On the other hand, economic growth depends on serious investments in education and LLL, at least to some extent.

Efficient networking would solve the communication problem between the different commissions responsible for LLL and would set some resources free for new perspectives and projects. One argument for keeping all commissions is the different perspectives they have regarding LLL. The Ministry of Education has a different perspective than the Ministry of Labour, for example, and networking should start at the top. There is also a need for dialogue between researchers (professionals resp. ministerial counsellors) and practitioners (employees in the institutions on a regional or local level), and a delegation of responsibility to the local level.

The organisational structure of a centralised state cannot be changed overnight, nor would this be a possible solution to the problem of slow communication, even if in some cases decentralisation would offer much more opportunities at a local level. A possible solution would be the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity, which has been much spoken of in the last few years for different areas where the bureaucratic burden was seriously slowing down the development at the local level.

5. Actors which (could) play a role in carrying out these actions (based on the network analysis of activity 2 and 3) and reason:

Please reflect on how the identified actors of the network analysis could help to overcome identified barriers and constraints.

Actors	Reason
Universities providing researchers, practitioners, as well as	Universities can organise workshops or conferences, bringing together different actors, initiating dialogue and making networking possible by offering the setting.
Institutions for Adult Education	Institutions for Adult Education could initiate debates, or permit the dialogue between theory and practice by employing researchers to partially conduct workshops and get in touch with the actual practice.
Ministry of Education	<p>The Ministry of Education can influence the stability of the system offering the frame for sustainable development and dialogue between all actors involved or interested in LLL. It also provides the financial support for the whole educational system, having special funding programmes for different target groups. (esp. minorities)</p> <p>It could also open up to a bottom up approach before changing important policies, because this institution has to first and foremost permit a real dialogue. Real dialogue means real communication with all actors interested in education.</p>
German Ministry of Internal Affairs	Offers support for education in German, too, due to the German Minority living here. By offering financial support, one of the most threatening barriers for dialogue between researchers and practitioners might be overcome. LLL could be one of the fields targeted for co-funding in the future.