





‘Researching Widening Access to Lifelong Learning: findings from transnational research.’ Rob Mark

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Rationale

- Knowledge and Learning are key drivers of social and economic change.
(OECD 2000; Kuhn & Remoe 2005)
- Research is an important part of every academic discipline.



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Aims of the DIALOGUE Project

- To develop a dialogue between researchers, practitioners and policy makers in the field of research on lifelong learning which seeks to improve the links between research and practice
- To examine ways of improving the transfer of knowledge between research and professional practice in ULLL within and outside the university
- To examine, develop and evaluate models of good practice in the transfer of research to professional practice and to explore ways of involving practitioners in research.
- To develop recommendations aiming at the promotion of a sustainable Dialogue in ULLL.
- To share and learn from practices across Europe







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Summary

- Background – process; methodology
- Case Studies
- Conclusions


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Access & Progression Group: Genoa



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Access & Progression

- Finland: Esko Paakkola
- Ireland: Maeve O'Byrne
- Portugal: Isabel Menezes
- Romania: Gabriela Gruber
- Slovakia: Lucia Hrebenarova
- Spain: Various
- UK (Scotland): Lyn Tett; Bill Johnston



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16 Case Studies from 7 countries

NOSTE Finnish Adult Education & Training Initiative programme from the point of view of dialogue between researchers and practitioners (Finland)

Widening Access at University degree level (Administrative Law) in the open university 2007-2010 (Finland)

Stretching the Academy? Widening participation and outreach campuses: An Irish case study (Ireland)

The Return to Learning Programme : a bridge to Higher Education? (Ireland)

The Adult Learner Journal : National and international platform for publication and debate in adult learning (Ireland)

Post-Graduate Education : Linking Research and Practice (Portugal)

Higher Education for Students with Disabilities (Romania)

University Lifelong Learning for Students with Disabilities (Romania)

Adults and Participation of Adults (Spain)

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CASE STUDIES

INSETrom– CE programmes for teachers of Roma students at basic schools (Slovakia)

SIZA – Access to LLL of blind and partially sighted people (Slovakia)

Research & Practice in Adult Literacy and Numeracy (UK)

Research & Practice in Adult Community Education : linking the research dissertation to practice in undergraduate study (UK)

Greater Opportunity for Access to Learning from Schools (GOALS) Project & Focus on College & University Study in the West of Scotland (FOCUS West) (UK)

Research & Practice in Adult Learning (UK)

Adaptive Responses to Learning: a negotiated process of social, emotional and intellectual growth (UK)

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Background and Rationale

Who does the research?
 What role will their be for teachers & learners in research?
 What should the relationship with other research be?
 What about the broader public interest?
 Is LL research disciplinary or multidisciplinary?
 Who is the audience for the research?
 Is there a need for quality management or standards for research?
 What ethical issues arise?

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Background to Case Studies

- Based on existing practices
- Development projects
- Good practice rather than theoretical underpinning
- Training or Experience of doing research varied

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Scope and Methodology

- Target groups teachers & learners
- Development projects to improve practices
- Action orientated research
- Evaluative research
- Little evidence of theoretical underpinning
- Research included observation; questionnaires; interviews;
- Ethical issues under stated;

Dissemination

- Developed within time frame
- Sometimes mainstreamed
- Little evidence of dissemination of new ideas

e.g. through reports; publication;

Target Groups

- Adults who did not complete schooling
- Adults with a particular disadvantage- e.g. disabled; blind; gypsies; adults with literacy needs;
- Training needs of teachers working with disadvantaged groups;

The Research

- Older adults & Ministry of Education (Spain, Granada)
- Roma, Blind & Disabled (Romania & Slovakia)
- Researchers, policy makers and practitioners (Scotland- Dialogue- ALN)
- Involving local people & Interest groups in widening access (Ireland)
- Access through employers and other groups + training programmes (NOSTRE- Finland).
- Skills development & cross-departmental degrees(PG- Portugal).

Conclusions

- There is extensive research on access to higher education with some focus on progression
- The reports provide evidence of engagement using different types of research methodologies
- The case studies involve different partners provide different reflections
- Reports focus on policies and practices to support access and progression within higher education.
- There is considerable evidence focusing on learning in different contexts
- The research is not widely disseminated either nationally or internationally

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