

Thematic Review on Adult Learning

December 2003

Newsletter no. 8

SECOND ROUND OF THE THEMATIC REVIEW ON ADULT LEARNING: FOCUS ON THE LOW SKILLED

Topics Covered:

- Second Round of the Thematic Review on Adult Learning: focus on the low-skilled
- Calendar of Events in 2004
- The OECD Review visit to Mexico
- The OECD Review visit to the United States

The second round of the thematic review on adult learning includes a full set of nine countries; four having opted for a full scale review of their adult learning system (Austria, Hungary, Mexico and Poland) and five countries (Germany, Korea, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States) focusing on the low-skilled/low-educated. For the latter, the target group chosen for cross-country comparison is adults between 25 and 64 years of age with an educational attainment of ISCED 2 or below. In addition, if of particular importance for the country, a specific target group can be considered in the definition of the low-skilled.

The purpose of this focused review is to analyse whether the quantity and quality of learning opportunities for low-skilled adults is adequate in the different countries, and how access to adult learning can be better promoted in order to improve the employability and human capital of the target group. Within this context, most specifically, each country review will encompass:

- an analysis of the patterns of participation and non-participation of the low-skilled in adult learning (*i.e.*, by showing the percentage of the low-skilled among adult learners and/or among the total population eligible for adult learning, according to different variables such as age groups, gender, economic sectors, urban/rural, employed/unemployed, migrants/nationals, ethnic minorities, etc);
- an identification of the main problems arising from these participation patterns;
- a review of the policy actions, programmes and institutional arrangements in use by member countries and an analysis of the "good practice" models of adult learning for the low-skilled in each country.

All related documents, for both the focused and the full-scale reviews, can be found on the OECD adult learning website (<http://www.oecd.org/edu/adultlearning>).

Elena Arnal, OECD Directorate for Education.

Calendar of events in 2004

TRAL 2 Country Visits

January 2004: OECD review visit to Korea

February 2004: OECD review visit to the Netherlands

March 2004: OECD review visit to Hungary

April 2004: OECD review visit to the United Kingdom

May 2004: OECD review visit to Poland

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.oecd.org/edu/adultlearning

Those involved :

Mexico National Coordinator:
Ramón de la Peña, *Director of the National Institute for Adult Learning (INEA)*

Rene Gonzalez Cantú, *National Institute for Adult Learning (INEA), Director of the Planning Department.*

Ana Deltoro Martinez, *National Institute for Adult Learning (INEA), Department of Educational Research.*

Background Report:

Luz Maria Castro Mussot, *National Institute for Adult Learning (INEA), Academic Directorate*

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Patricia Martinez, *National Institute for Adult Learning (INEA)*

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Enrique Pieck, *Universidad Iberoamericana*

Alejandro Villagómez, *Research Institute.*

National Steering Committee:

Marco Polo Bernal, *Ministry of Education, Department for Public Education*

Daniel González Spencer, *Ministry of Education, Department for Public Education*

Juan Domingo López Buitrón, *Ministry of Education, Department for Public Education*

Felipe Martínez Rizo, *Director of the National Institute for Educational Evaluation*

Carlos Zarco, *President of the Adult Learning Council for Latin America*

OECD review team:

Rapporteur:

Prof. Kjell Rubenson, Sweden

External expert:

Prof. Peter Dolton, U.K.

OECD experts:

Mr. Koji Miyamoto, Employment Analysis and Policy Division, ELS.

Mr. Patrick Werquin, Education and Training Policy Division, EDU.

Mexico Visit: 17-27 September, 2003

Adult learning represents a marginal share of public policies in Mexico. Policies on basic education, on vocational training and on training for the workplace exist but are scattered, not always well articulated and often lack systematic information of the whole situation in this field.

The OECD Thematic Review on Adult Learning in Mexico focuses both on the characteristics of the supply and the demand of learning opportunities for those aged between 15 and 64 that have been excluded from the formal education system. This group represents a third of the total Mexican population.

By analysing this reality, the study has permitted to review and specify the actions, programmes and public policies under way. It has also brought the opportunity to reflect on their utility, their link with the labour market, employment, and the demand and needs of those involved. It is expected that the OECD study will improve the articulation and targeting of present and future adult learning efforts and actions and increase their financial support. Increasing the social and political visibility of adult learning is another of the expected outcomes of this exercise.

Mexico National Coordinator

Mexico Visit Programme**Wednesday 17 September**

09.00 Meeting with officials of the Labour Secretariat to discuss public policies, training and employment. General Coordination of Planning and Sectorial Policy (Secretariat of Labour);

Support and registration for training (General Directorate for Training and Productivity); Training Program and Employment (General Directorate of Employment, Secretariat of Labour).

11.30 Meeting with representatives of business chambers and unions.

15.30 Visit to the BIMBO bakery and the Mexican Foundation for Rural Development.

Thursday 18 September

09.00 Meeting with officials of the Rural Development and Agriculture Secretariat to discuss training in rural areas (Vice secretariat of Rural Development, Agriculture Secretariat) and training of technicians and professionals (National Institute for Skills Development in the rural sector).

12.00 Meeting with officials of the Economy Secretariat to discuss training for employees and employers of Small and Medium Size Enterprises.

19.00 Visit to the Community Plaza of the Mexican Labour Confederation (CTM), in Tuxtla Gutiérrez (Chiapas). Meeting with union members and users of the plaza.

Friday 19 September

09.00 Meetings and visit to training institutions in Chiapas. Visit to the Training Center for Industrial Technicians. Meetings with educational officials (Adult Education and Lifelong Learning).

12.00 Meeting with officials of Economic Development, Labour, Rural Development, Employment and Micro-enterprises Secretariat of the State of Chiapas.

16.30 Visits to an NGO and an enterprise (Art Crafts and a plant of automotive parts).

Saturday 20 September

09.00 Visit to the Community Development Center "La Albarrada" and to the Community of San Juan Chamula in San Cristobal de las Casas.

11.00 Visit to INEA's local headquarters to discuss about projects for indigenous people.

12.30 Visit to labour organisation projects (textile plant) in San Cristobal de las Casas.

14.00 Interviews with local NGO's and cultural missions in San Cristobal de las Casas.

Mexico Visit programme (continued)

Monday 22 September

- 09.00 Meeting with officials of the Education Secretariat in Mexico City.
 Basic education for adults (National Council for Education and Lifelong Learning and National Institute for Adult Education, CONEVyT-INEA).
 Job training (Technological, Education and Research Vice Secretariat and Directorate of Centres for Job Training, Education Secretariat).
 Middle education (General Coordination of Middle Education and Directorate of *Bachillerato*).
 Recognition of knowledge, Agreement 286 (Accreditation, Incorporation and Equivalences Directorate).
 "ALLs in México" (INEA and National Institute for Educational Evaluation).
- 12.30 Meeting with officials of the *Oportunidades* Program (Social Development Secretariat, SEDESOL).
- 16.00 Visit to services. Community Plaza, job training center and Enterprise with integrated education services.

Tuesday 23 September

- 09.00 Visit to NISSAN plant and training center in the State of Aguascalientes.
- 12.00 Meeting at the Governor's Office to discuss training supply in the State of Aguascalientes.
- 13.30 Meeting with the State Governor, Mr. Felipe González González.
- 16.00 Visit to the Community Plaza at Mexico Solidaridad II.
- 18.30 Certification for low-skilled youth and adults.

Wednesday 24 September

- 09.00 Training Projects for employment and self-employment developed by the social sector in Aguascalientes (Institute for Development of Entrepreneurs).
- 11.30 Training Projects coordinated by the education sector.
- 13.30 Training Projects coordinated by the State Employment Services.

Thursday 25 September

- 09.00 Visit to the coordination office of the Open University and Distance Education (National Autonomous University of Mexico, CUAD-UNAM) to see an example of open higher education and continuous education in action.
- 10.45 Visit to the Training Institute of the Chamber of Construction Industry.
- 16.00 Meeting with the Chairman of the Latin American Adult Education Council and representatives of NGO's.
- 17.00 Meeting with academics and experts in the field of Adult Education to discuss the findings of the OECD review.

Friday 26 September

- 09.00 Meeting with the members of the Steering Committee to present the preliminary conclusions of the OECD review team and agree on future activities.

United States Visit: 20 – 24 October, 2003

The United States was the first country visited by the OECD review team under the part of the Adult Learning Review focusing on the low-skilled and low-educated individuals. The focused group, as defined by the US government, consisted of adults with literacy skills in the two lowest levels of the National Adult Literacy Survey scales, those who do not speak (sufficient) English, and who lack a secondary school credential.

The mission programme led us to Washington, D.C., Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania -- a relatively tiny geographical area in a huge country whose adult education system is characterised by a wide variety of arrangements at local and state levels. We visited a good number of providers in the area of basic and literacy education; of adult secondary education that provides a second chance to achieve a high school or equivalent diploma; and of training for immigrants in English as a Second Language. Our general impression was that, while the problems are substantial, important efforts are undertaken, by the government but also by the individuals themselves, to overcome the cycle of disadvantage associated with low literacy and low skill. Notably, hundreds of thousands of adult individuals pass every year the high school equivalency exams (GED). We also got a glimpse of the importance of local initiatives to link up education and employment through the system of "one-stop" career centres.

Peter Tergeist, OECD Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs.
Patrick Werquin, OECD Directorate for Education.

United States Visit Programme

Those involved :

US National Coordinator:
Michael Jones, U.S.
Department of Education.

Background Report:
Barbara G. Elliot, RTI
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Carol Van Duzer
Donna Moss
Miriam Burt
Joy Kreeft Peyton and
Lauren Ross-Feldman from the
Center for Applied Linguistics
(CAL) and the National Center
for Applied Linguistics (NCLE).

OECD review team:

Rapporteur:
Prof. Robert Boyer, France

OECD experts:
Mr. Peter Tergeist,
Employment Analysis and
Policy Division, ELS.

Mr. Patrick Werquin, Education
and Training Policy Division,
EDU.

Monday 20 October

- 09.00 Welcome meeting with the national coordinator. US Department of Education.
- 09.30 Meeting with officials of the US Department of Education. Setting the context: US political structure; the Federal involvement in Adult Education; U.S. social and economic structure; how Adult Education serves American society; Federal role in workforce investment.
- 10.00 Meeting with representatives of the National Institute for Literacy to discuss on policy and organisation of Adult Learning systems; the Workforce Investment Act and future legislation.
- 10.45 Meeting with the authors of the Background Report: A Portrait of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.
- 13.00 A Portrait of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (*continued*). DAEL Management Team.
- 14.30 Volunteer-Based Programs in the U.S.
- 15.45 State Education Director Panel Videoconference with Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, Idaho, New York, Arizona, Ohio, Washington. Visit to the Arlington Education and Employment Programme (REEP), Virginia.

Tuesday 21 October

- 08.30 Center for Lifelong Learning/ American Council on Education.
- 10.00 University of the District of Columbia. Visit to the Transformer project.
- 11.00 Discussion of quality and certification of teachers in adult learning.
- 13.00 Visit to the Academy of Hope – District of Columbia.
- 15.15 Panel of experts: from research to practice.

Wednesday 22 October

- 09.00 The Learning Bank in the Baltimore area. Meeting with the local President of the AFLCIO, the Deputy Secretary of Economic Development in Maryland and representatives of John Hopkins University. Tour of the Learning Bank to speak with teachers and students.
- 14.30 Visit to the Baltimore Correctional Facility.
- 16.30 Visit to a Baltimore One Stop Center.

Thursday 23 October

- 09.00 Family Literacy Program and Workplace Education Program. Center for Literacy, Philadelphia.
- 13.30 National Center for Adult Literacy (NCAL) Lab site.

Friday 24 October

- 09.00 De-briefing at the U.S. Department of Education in Washington: presentation of the preliminary findings of the OECD review team.

Who to contact

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