

# **Eur-Alpha**

## **European network for adult literacy and numeracy**



### **Research on the workshops of training of trainers on literacy**

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Eur-Alpha as a European network works with the trainers to develop and exchange educational practices facilitating learners self-determination, citizenship and participation and each full member commits himself, between other goals, to invite learners and trainers of each country or region to participate to workshops proposed by the network<sup>1</sup>.

The three working groups of the network and especially the Partners Consortium, at the meeting in Thessaloniki on October 2012, decided to conduct a survey, which would involve the two workshops of trainers.

The first Eur-Alpha workshop was organized in **Belfast, 6-10 September 2010** (Northern Ireland-United Kingdom), entitled "Reflective practice and technology enhanced learning (TEL) in adult literacy and numeracy tutor education" and the second Eur-Alpha Workshop was organized in **Macon, 22-29 October 2011** (France), entitled "Literacy: Examples of good practices for the learners' self-determination".

The invited public in both workshops was trainers in the field of literacy and numeracy interested in gaining skills to promote the self-determination of learners. The competences which were required were knowledge of French or English is mandatory and knowledge of the other language is highly recommended.

Regarding the action-research we conducted, it was based on an anonymous questionnaire applied to the trainers who participated in the workshops. The questionnaire which was given after the workshops was comprised of 5 parts, which were also the research goals:

- the first is the participants' personal data,
- the second their educational qualifications and work experience,
- the third analyses the incentives for their participation in this workshop/ atelier de travail, while
- the fourth evaluates the workshops/ ateliers de travail themselves, at the same time ascertaining the degree of satisfaction of having taken part in them, and lastly,

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.eur-alpha.eu/spip.php?rubrique5&lang=en>

- the fifth part contains the participants' proposals and suggestions.

The survey results revealed the following interesting facts:

### *Survey results-discussion*

**First part:** the participants were primarily women 45-55 years old, highly educated, often with a master's degree and working.

**Second part:** the results also showed that the trainer who was involved was mainly Belgian, who worked in adult literacy classes and elsewhere and who was either at the beginning of his career or his professional experience was more than 15 years. Moreover, he says, although it was not the first workshop which took part in the last five years, however, revealed that only one of fifteen participants had attended seminars from the European program Grundtvig. Finally, it seems that the reasons for participation in the networks of the Eur-Alpha were realistic and pragmatic.

**Third part:** continuing the development of the participant's profile, we see that the main reason for participation in the workshop was professional, but not only, while declaring that it was difficult to attend the workshop, mainly because of the language and finally admits that the motivation for participation was both professionally and personally.

**Fourth part:** In general, participants believe that the objectives of the workshops were approached, that the information was enough and important, while methods, teaching materials, suggestions and technical equipment covered their expectations to a great extent.

Moreover, apart from these, participants said that they felt very positive after they managed to improve their skills on the reflective practice, the citizenships, problem solving and microteaching.

**Fifth part:** Finally, the participants stated that their expectations were covered satisfactorily and simultaneously benefited both in matters exclusively concerning literacy and issues related to general adult education. They also suggested more specialized courses, with a greater number of participants, from several countries. Nevertheless most noted as inhibiting factors the difficulties in using the language and the bureaucratic process in completing the applications.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the organizers of the 2 workshops, Jim Mullan and Sophie Etienne from Ireland and France, respectively, and Ms. Nadia Baragiola, from Lire et Ecrire in Brussels, and special thanks to my colleague Rob Mark from Glasgow, who worked together the idea of such an investigation.