A LANDSCAPE OF LITERACY PROGRAMMES IN EUROPE: FEATURES AND PERSPECTIVES

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The European Literacy Challenge

European Literacy Crisis

• ‘Problematic’ results of population in international assessments (OECD & Statistics Canada, 2000; OECD-UIS, 2003)

Recognition of the importance of literacy

• Social and economic progress
• Citizens’ empowerment
• Lifelong learning (Hannon, 2000; Stromquist, 2005)

Development of programmes/projects/initiatives

• To improve literacy performance of citizens
• To analyze educational policies (ELINET, 2015; HLG, 2012)
The Answer

Mission

- To examine how to support literacy throughout lifelong learning
- To identify common success factors of literacy programmes and policy initiatives
- To provide some proposals and best practice examples for the improvement of the European literacy policies
The Follow-up

Mission

- To analyse literacy policies and practices of European countries
- To raise awareness of all European institutions about the importance of reading and writing in the every-day life of the population
- To contribute to a greater involvement of all citizens with literacy

Project reference: EAC/S05/2013
The Research
Research goal

To characterize 114 initiatives

- Political contexts & Circumstances of Implementation
- Similarities & Differences
- Literacy Approaches Underpinning Conceptual Basis
Methodology of Data Collection

- Overall picture resulting from international concerns and guidelines
- Exploratory moment of desk research in websites and European reports
- Definition of categories and preliminary features of literacy programmes
- Identification and description of examples: consulting websites, reports and ELINET members
### Research Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Intervention Policy Areas</th>
<th>Subareas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating more literate environments</td>
<td>Literate environment out of school</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literate environment in school</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Digital environment in and out of school</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the quality of teaching</td>
<td>Literacy curricula in secondary schools</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teacher training on literacy</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increasing participation, inclusion and equity</td>
<td>Opportunities to disadvantaged groups</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting children with special needs or language difficulties</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting adolescents whose home language isn't language of school</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preventing early school leaving</td>
<td>14</td>
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Some Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td>17</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading/Read</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book/Library</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning/Learn</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing/Write</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology of Data Analysis

Content analysis

1. Period of activity
2. Financing/Support
3. Goals
4. Contexts
5. Participants/Promoters
6. Activities/actions
7. Resources

Official documents
- Legislation
- Guidelines
- Working programme
- Reports
- Research articles ...

Descriptions
Political Context & Circumstances of Implementation

- Lisbon Strategy (53) + 'Europe 2020' Strategy (51)
- Governmental funds (58) and European Union funds
- The (unsatisfactory) results of the population in international or national assessments
National Reading Plan

Portugal

“the main objective of the National Reading Plan is to raise the level of literacy of the Portuguese people and to place the country on a par with its European partners”
Reading Circles Romania

“to improve the students’ literacy skills, which are tested in national examinations”
Right to Read

Ireland

“in Ireland, the further development of literacy skills is critical across all ages, as recognised by several international reports including (…) PISA 2012 survey”
# Similarities & Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOALS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>CONTEXTS</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❯ Reading promotion and development (62)</td>
<td>❯ Reading activities (80)</td>
<td>❯ School settings (72)</td>
<td>❯ Teachers (97)</td>
<td>❯ (Literary) book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❯ Creation and/or improvement of techniques or models of teaching (50)</td>
<td>❯ Training (53)</td>
<td>❯ Informal context (53)</td>
<td>❯ Education institutions (80)</td>
<td>❯ Traditional and/or digital support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❯ Reducing inequalities (37)</td>
<td>❯ Producing &amp; disseminating materials (46)</td>
<td></td>
<td>❯ Policy-makers (national and local level) (65)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Reading promotion and development
- Creation and/or improvement of techniques or models of teaching
- Reducing inequalities

- Reading activities
- Training
- Producing & disseminating materials

- School settings
- Informal context

- Teachers
- Education institutions
- Policy-makers (national and local level)

- (Literary) book
- Traditional and/or digital support
Literacy Approaches Underpinning Conceptual Basis

- ‘Deficit model’ (Clark, 2005)
- Consequences of (‘poor’) literacy skills
- ‘Skills for life’ (Clark, 2005)
- Encouraging the use of literary book
- Enhancing Reading (‘Reading for pleasure’)
- School environment
- Teacher’s supervision and support
- Traditional approach of literacy (Street, 2005)
Conclusions & Recommendations

1. To broaden and diversify the field of action focusing not only on reading but also on writing, orality and digital literacy (HLG, 2012).

2. To extend the contexts in which they are developed involving the wider community (Dionísio, 2007; HLG, 2012).

3. To take into account that pupils are successful when texts are written in a social settings, for social purposes (NCTE, 2007).
THANK YOU!

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