



Welcome to Workshop 35

LifeLong Learning in various EU countries

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Content

- Eight EU countries and LLL policies
- Summary
- Policy hooks

Ireland (1)

- Adult participation in LLL: 5.9% in 2003 vs. 7.1% in 2008. Challenges – lower socio-economic backgrounds, mature, disabled, ethnic minorities
- Since mid 1990's, steps taken in parallel with EU agenda. Personal development and social inclusion key, economic forces also NB driver.
- Key policy/ legislation: White Paper on Adult Education Learning for Life (2000); National Skills Strategy 2007; National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013, National Development Plan 2007-2013
- Importance of social partnership e.g. *Towards 2016*

Ireland (2)

- Flexible learning opportunities/Funding initiatives: SIF, National Access Office, Back to Education Allowance, Back to Education Initiative
- Challenges: fee's issue for p/t students significant barrier; no paid educational leave; mobility issues between levels
- NFQ – intro & fully implemented in line with EQF, but info provision a problem
- RPL in place, still not viewed as mainstream phenomenon
- Funding levels inadequate, heavy reliance on state funding

Belgium (Flanders) (1)

- Adult participation in LLL (all Belgium figures): 8.6% in 2004 vs 6.8% in 2008, Falling levels i.e. 'drying up of population'. Access of certain groups problematic – lower socio-economic status, (unskilled) immigrants, disabled and men
- Current interest since 1990's – challenges of globalisation, greying population, issues faced through immigration & minority groups
- Goals of LLL – increase employability, also personal development
- Key policy/legislation: Flemish action plan 2000, Vilvoorde Treaty 2001, Pact 2020

Belgium (Flanders) (1)

- Flexible learning opps/ Financial allowances: Flexibilisation Decree, paid educational leave, entrepreneurial portfolio system, training & guidance vouchers for employees, subsidies for critical jobs, rewards for HEIs for access
- New funding model – combination of input & output funding
- Consultation & collaboration with stakeholders a key feature
- NFQ adopted & developed in line with EQF
- RPL still communication issues between students and HEIs

Lithuania (1)

- Adult participation in LLL: 5.9% in 2004 vs 4.9% in 2008. Inequalities for national minorities (e.g. Poles, Russian), men
- Before 1990, education centralised – part of former USSR
- 2001 Lithuanian accession to EU – adult learning key education priority
- Key policy / legislation: National Education Strategy 2003-2012, Strategy for Ensuring Lifelong Learning 2004 & 2008, Lithuanian Higher Education System Development Plan 2006-2010

Lithuania (2)

- Consultation and collaboration with stakeholders a key feature
- Flexible learning opps/ Funding initiatives: students return part of income taxes, 'student basket' fund, e-learning
- Challenges: qualifications do not match current skills requirements of labour market; reliance on Gov. funding for HEIs
- NQF – submitted & awaiting final approval
- RPL – no system of RPL of informal learning within HEIs

Scotland (1)

- Adult Participation in LLL (UK figures): 27.3% in 2003 vs 19.9% in 2009. Still challenges for people from most deprived areas and men
- Educ long tradition of being socially valued *Opportunity Scotland* (1998) 1st policy doc on LLL: economic competitiveness major driving force, emphasis on social inclusion also NB
- Key policy docs/ legislation: Lifelong Learning Strategy 2002, Review of Scotland's Colleges 2007, New LLL Strategy 2007 *Skills for Scotland*

Scotland (2)

- Flexible learning opps/ Funding initiatives: access to education based on ability to learn not ability to pay; abolition of tuition fees & graduate endowment fee; p/t incentive premium; widening access retention; FE/HE access & participation grant; p/t fee waiver; increased funding in training courses; premium funding paid to HEIs to encourage students from under-represented groups
- NQF – fully implemented in line with EQF
- RPL clear policy for recognition of informal learning
- Still challenges to mainstream RPL: old vs new HEIs

Turkey (1)

- Adult participation in LLL: 1.8% in 2006 vs 1.8% in 2008. Problems with gender, geographic and social background
- Young population = 'demographic window of opportunities'. LLL seen as key to increasing employment skills in line with developing economy & labour market
- Key policy/ legislation: Lifelong Learning Strategy Document 2007, Ninth Development Plan 2007-2013

Turkey (2)

- Flexible learning opps/ Funding initiatives: modularisation of FE, Continuous education centres, Open universities, Evening & distance courses, grant & loans system
- Funding – substantial EU assistance through ETF. Problem: heavy reliance on state funding = HEIs little flexibility on switching resources & fixed tuition fees
- Stakeholder involvement – NGO sector weak
- NQF – currently being developed, envisaged to be implemented by end 2012
- RPL – not yet available
- Challenge: demand for education greater than supply

Finland (1)

- Adult participation in LLL: 22.4% in 2003 vs 23.1% in 2008
- NB principles underlying politics – value of education, equity & relative equality. Right to basic education & post-basic education (HE) for all. LLL guiding principle of education policy
- Key policy/ legislation – no separate strategy for LLL, part of general 5yr National Development Plan adjusted to labour market demand e.g. Development Plan for Education & Research 2007-2012; Universities Act 2009

Finland (2)

- Flexible learning opps: subsidies to education provider, JBO agreement, virtual HEIs, Open HEIs, second-chance programmes, regional network of HEIs
- Funding initiatives: public student finance scheme; universal entitlement to student grant, loan & housing supplements; tax relief for graduates, subsidised healthcare
- NQF – to be ready by 2010 & compatible with EQF
- RPL – full implementation still challenge at universities

The Netherlands (1)

- Adult participation in LLL: 16.4% in 2003 vs 17% in 2008. However, low rates in ethnic minorities & people with disabilities
- NB economic & labour market forces influence education policy e.g. Aging of labour force
- Key policy/ legislation: no one document – HOOP (2004) for Higher Education, Reinforcing learning and working 2005-2007, Carrying on with learning & working: plan of approach 2008-2011, Steering course for BVE (2004-2008), Strategic agenda for adult & vocational education 2008-2011, Interdepartmental Project Unit for Learning and Working

The Netherlands (2)

- Flexible learning opps/ Funding initiatives – Open Universiteit, abolishment of those over 29, basic grant for all students differentiated between students living at home & those on own, supplementary grant for low-income, free public transport, entitlement to grants & loans for 10 yrs, individual learning accounts
- NQF – fully implemented in line with EQF
- RPL – ‘EVC’ essential element of LLL

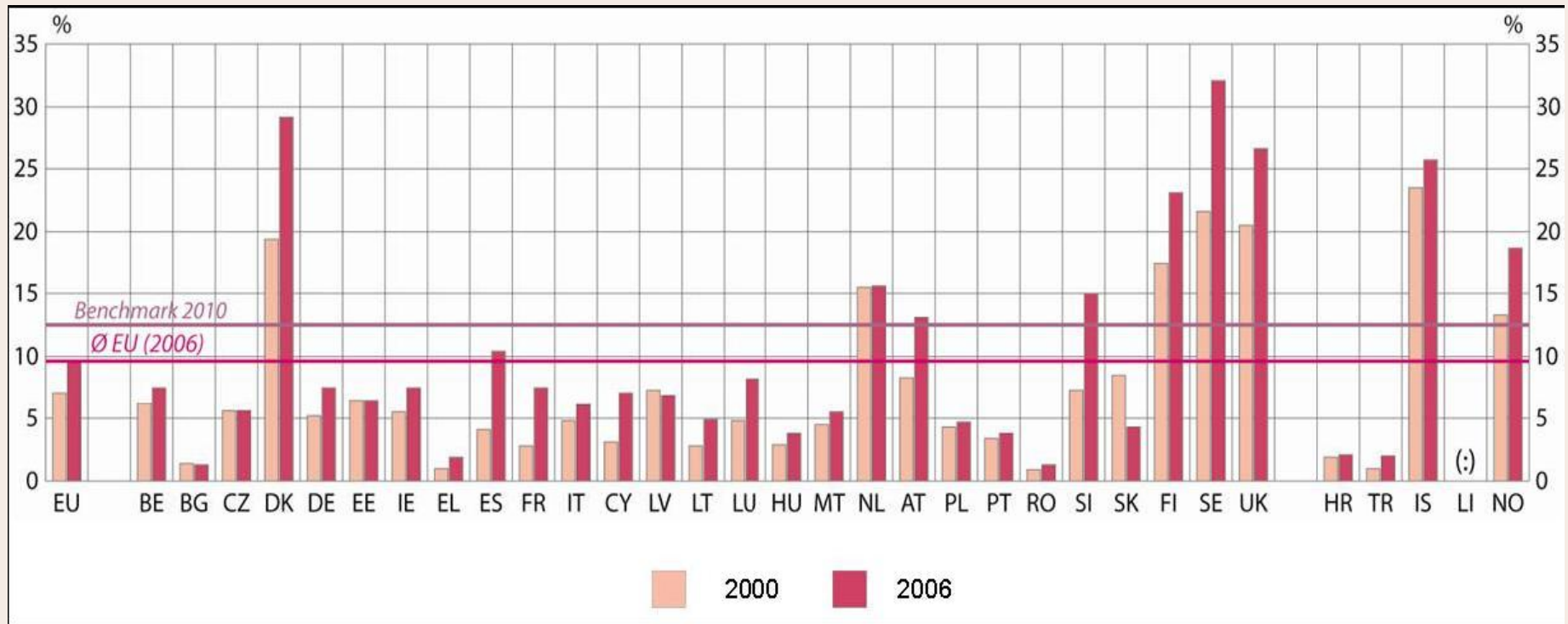
France (1)

- Adult participation in LLL: 7.1% in 2003 vs 7.3% in 2008, well below EU average
- HE in France complicated: range of HEIs, different purposes, structures & funding
- Principles of education laid out in *Code de l'Éducation*. HE seen as NB for economic development
- Key policy/ legislation – period of reform since mid-2000's: Law on Lifelong learning & Social Dialogue 2004, Law on Freedom and Responsibility of the Universities 2007, Validation of Informal Learning 2002

France (2)

- Flexible learning opps– Plan for success in first degree courses; 2005 Act for equal rights & opportunities, participation & citizenship for disabled persons; National centre for long-distance Education; Evening courses, half-day courses
- Financial allowances – Student life programme, HE grants, mobility grants, bank loans, improvements to student accommodation & health promotion
- NQF – currently being implemented
- RPL – Validation of acquired experience (VAE)

Summary of performance for LLL



Linking policy to practise

‘Policy Hooks’

‘a State or EU policy, directive or piece of legislation that legitimises an action or strategy by an individual HEI’

Comparative Matrix for Intensity of Lifelong Learning Policy Implementation in FLLLEX Countries

Characteristics	Countries							
	Ireland	Belgium	Lithuania	Scotland	Turkey	Finland	Netherlands	France
Legal framework/ legislation	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Participation rates	2	3	3	1	3	1	1	3
Funding and investment	3	2	3	1	3	1	1	2
Flexibility and access to learning pathways	3	1	3	1	3	1	1	3
Link between education and work	2	1	3	1	2	1	1	2
Transparency of qualifications system	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	2
Public awareness and perception of lifelong learning	2	1	2	1	3	1	1	2
Link with wider EU developments	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	2
Involvement and support of key stakeholders	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2
Information and guidance for learners and potential learners	2	1	2	1	3	1	1	2
Recognition of all forms of learning	2	1	3	1	3	2	2	1
Cost of Education – support/ initiatives	3	1	2	1	3	1	1	2
EU Benchmark for LLL (2010=12.5%; 2020=15%)	7.1%	6.8%	4.9%	19.9%	1.8%	23.1%	17.0%	5.58%

Policy hooks and institutional control or freedom of action

Policy 'Hooks'	Freedom of Action by Individual HEI	Observation
Legal framework/ legislation	Limited freedom of control	
Participation rates	Limited freedom of control	
Funding and investment	Limited freedom of control	
Flexibility and access to learning pathways	Limited/Moderate freedom of control	Depending on the legal arrangements governing the access, transfer and progression of students individual HEIs may have opportunities to enhance progression pathways
Link between education and work	Moderate freedom of control	Depending on the mission of the HEI some opportunities exist to enhance the link between education and work
Transparency of qualifications system	Moderate freedom of control	Where member states have introduced qualifications frameworks and enabling regulations/policies HEI's have significant freedom of control to publicise these developments
Public awareness and perception of lifelong learning	Significant freedom of control	Individually or collectively through representative bodies HEI's can widely promote public awareness of lifelong learning
Link with wider EU developments	Significant freedom of control	Individual HEI's have tended not to get involved in EU wide projects and other developments. Such involvement potentially greatly enriches the lifelong learning agenda within an HEI
Involvement and support of key stakeholders	Significant freedom of control	Many opportunities exist at no cost to involve wide ranging groups of stakeholders into the lifelong learning agenda
Information and guidance for learners and potential learners	Significant freedom of control	Many opportunities exist for individual HEI's to significantly enhance the information flow to potential learners
Recognition of all forms of learning	Significant freedom of control	RPL and APL are EU wide policy requirements and individual HEIs should have policies and practices in place to accommodate this aspect of lifelong learning
Cost of Education – support/ initiatives	Moderate freedom of control	Although funding policy is outside the remit of HEI's, where LLL is regarded as of strategic importance flexibility exists to design counseling, guidance and mentoring initiatives that are low or no cost