

## **Background Report: Scotland, UK**

### **Critical friend report**

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#### INTRODUCTION

*This review is part of the activities within R3L+ project, focused on internal quality assurance and mutual learning. As agreed in the transnational project meeting in Sibiu, Romanian partner was selected to review the background report of Scotland, UK. The aim of the review is to indicate, based on a peer review philosophy, the degree in which the report followed the agreed methodology and provided the information necessary for the following steps within the project. At the same time, the activity assures a better understanding of the national contexts within the project partnership, facilitating mutual learning and transfer of positive experiences.*

#### MAIN FINDINGS

The report provides a comprehensive presentation of the Learning City/Region selected (Dundee Learning City initiative). The introductory part is offering an overview of Dundee city and also of the main elements making the

case suitable for the R3L+ project, from the learning perspective but also from equity, excellence etc.

Of particular interest for the project is the Dundee decision to respond to the specific economic difficulties due to downsizing of the manufacturing and assembly sector by promoting a large partnership between various stakeholders in the public and private sector. This partnership is the main development relevant for R3L+ project, pooling together the strengths of key City agencies.

The report indicates in detail the vision of the partnership, in line with the shared values of the member organisations and also the key areas of intervention (mission) such as: Work and Enterprise, Learning and Culture, Integrated, Children's Services, Attainment and Achievement, Child Health, Looked after Children, Sports and Physical Activity, Community Learning and Development etc.

Of particular interest is also the fact that each key theme and the cross-cutting themes are addressed by a dedicated group which produces an Action Plan showing how they will take forward the issues pertaining to each theme while in relation to the overall vision the Dundee Partnership maintains that three key principles underpin all of it's activity on social inclusion, sustainability and active citizenship.

The report is also focused at the micro level on the activities of the Community Based Adult Learning (CBAL) Partnership and on specific policy directives such as *Local Government in Scotland Act*, the *Single Outcome Agreement (SOA)* and the *Local Community Partnerships*.

The second chapter of the report is indicating general patterns of interactions and how different organisations are co-operating. Also in this section are presented what specific roles are defined and what are the main network interactions between key structures such as Dundee Partnership Forum,

Dundee Management Group and Dundee Partnership Co-ordinating Group.

Also in this chapter the role of the *Community Based Adult Learning* (CBAL) Partnership is detailed. The report provides also detailed information on the locus of control of the co-operation structures: the *Management Group* and the *Operational Group*. In the following chapters the mechanisms of interactions to deliver adult learning opportunities are further detailed.

The main public and private actors in the Dundee Partnership network are presented in the third chapter of the report while the strategic and operational management issues are detailed in the fourth chapter. In this section are also presented the purpose, outputs and outcomes of the Community Based Adult Learning. It is further explained how the partnership members share responsibility in relation to a number of the roles which each partner undertakes at the operational level and the procedures to be undertaken when decisions are made about programs developed and delivered by network partners.

Here are indicated also the instruments through which the Dundee Partnership attempts to ensure the quality of its operations, a key aspect from the perspective of the project perspective. The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) is presented and some brief examples of indicators and actions are provided. The report presents also other main quality instruments or reporting procedures and mechanisms. Further discussion with network representatives should provide a more detailed perception of the network actors on the efficiency and effectiveness of the quality monitoring currently in place.

The section related to the role of EU policies is less detailed in comparison with the previous ones, indicating the fact that Learning City was perhaps more of a local, and national initiative, and the existence of the Dundee Partnership provided a vehicle through which this could be realised. Also the section on the added value of the partnership, the last section of the report is less detailed, however it is strongly stating the relevance of the R3L+ initiative for the current experiences of the network and also the possible areas of

cooperation with the representatives of both Dundee Partnership and the CBAL partnership.

## CONCLUSIONS

The report provides a comprehensive and clear account of both macro and micro level of Dundee learning city, presented within the different sections and the synthesis table included in the end of the report. The structure of the report follows all the key issues indicated in the agreed framework and provides various useful examples for the next working packages of the project. In particular, the report is very useful for the development of the quality criteria and indicators for all areas analysed within the project: partnership, participation, progress and sustainability and learning culture.