There is no point in having a wonderful basic skills training offer if the target group doesn’t know about it, nor is motivated to use it. Good outreach measures ensuring motivation and persistence of the learners, are key issues for the successful implementation of basic skills policy.

Experience shows that learners who need to increase their level of basic skills the most, are consistently those who present the biggest challenge for outreach initiatives. Adequate information, encouragement, guidance - and high levels of motivation on the part of the learner – are needed both at the start phase, when getting in touch with the provision system, and during the whole learning path until the desired effects are attained.

To be able to create the environment in which the adult is motivated, policy makers need to create and sustain a series of elements. Working in cooperation with many other stakeholders (from employment, social, health services, and others), they need to create information campaigns, aiming both at the target group and at the general public by using a variety of channels and tools.

The information needs to present the issue simply and clearly and direct future learners to clear outreach points - at work, employment, health and social services, libraries and other possible meeting points - , all linked to good guidance offers. Information and guidance will lead the learner towards low-threshold learning offers, with good systems for level identification (including self-testing) and presenting motivational and flexible structures.

And then what?

Outreach measures lead only to the start. To the adult engaging in learning, motivation will soon be lost if the offer is not relevant and adequate, if the learner doesn’t feel understood and encouraged, or if the courses are too long or too difficult.

After the initial motivation, persistence needs to be encouraged. Persistence will depend on the quality of the learning program, on keeping the people at the center of learning by presenting relevant, attainable and desirable goals.

Motivation and Persistence are key factors to ensure that the learner achieves success on the journey. This success will contribute to documenting the Return of Investment of the basic skills programs for policy-makers and stakeholders, which will further increase the sustainability of the learning offer.

These are the issues we will present to you in this unit of Open Educational Resource. Continue your journey through the documentation and find out how you can create better systems for outreach, motivation and persistence in your locality, region or country.