



## **FUNDING ALLOCATION IN THE LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME 2007-13**

### *THE VIEW OF THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING (EARLALL)*

EARLALL is encouraged by the deal negotiated in April 2006 by the European Parliament, the Austrian Presidency and the Commission, which has resulted in a revised programme budget of €6.17 billion. We are however aware that the budget is still significantly lower than that which informed the Commission's original proposal. We understand also that the Commission is in the process of examining and revising this original proposal to fit with the April budget and is planning to publish its revised proposal on 25<sup>th</sup> May. EARLALL would therefore like to take this opportunity to write in support of two of the smaller strands which we feel are of particular importance.

The Association would firstly like to put on record its support for the Grundtvig programme. We believe that Grundtvig is particularly important because it offers a potential source of funding to adults with low skills, both employed and unemployed, and as such is in line with EARLALL's aim to promote learning and up-skilling throughout life. As the Grundtvig programme was only allocated a very small percentage of the budget in the Commission's original proposal, the Association feels that any absolute reduction might make the programme unviable. In view of this EARLALL calls for Grundtvig to be protected at the absolute level of provision originally proposed by the Commission in order to maintain its potential impact within the new programme.

EARLALL members would also like to pledge their support for the Transversal element of the programme, particularly the language and policy development strands.

As regards the former, you will be aware that for legal reasons the specific budget line that supported Regional and Minority languages (RMLs) has been discontinued and that therefore the language learning strand of the LLP now offers the primary source of funding for RML projects. Given that RMLs are spoken on the territories of a number of EARLALL members, such as Catalonia, the Basque Country, the Balearics, Brittany, Scotland and Wales, EARLALL is keen that adequate support for language learning and linguistic diversity is maintained during the reconfiguration of the programme. We are particularly concerned that "new" areas of work like support for networks in the field of linguistic diversity do form part of the Commission's forthcoming proposal.



The Transversal strand of the programme also offers a potential source of funding for EARLALL members working collectively on joint developmental programmes. Since the Association's inception in 2001, EARLALL members have worked together successfully on a number of projects that have been match funded by the Commission. Particular success stories include the REKNOMA and TAGS projects. As an Association we feel that these joint projects enable us to harness the opportunities that membership of EARLALL offers. They allow us to share the experience and best practice that exist within our own regions and to move forward collectively in tackling a range of lifelong learning challenges. In order that this valuable work, in respect of both Regional and Minority Languages and joint working between regions, can continue, EARLALL calls for the protection of the Transversal strand in determining how the Commission's original proposals should be adjusted to comply with the €6.17 billion budget figure now agreed.

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