

Target groups

The main target groups for the MATURE project include teachers, managers and planners of adult education, older people and later-life learners, volunteers and organisations involved in lifelong learning and older people, researchers in this field, politicians and policy makers.

Project dates

The project runs from 1 October 2012 until 30 September 2014.

Contacts in the United Kingdom

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Project partners



AidLearn
Lisbon, Portugal
www.aidlearn.com



bia-net
Graz, Austria
www.bia-net.org



Hamburger Volkshochschule
Hamburg, Germany
www.vhs-hamburg.de



50plus Hellas
Athens, Greece
www.50plus.gr



PRO-MED sp. z o.o.
Gdansk, Poland
www.pro-med.org.pl



**Verband der Schweizerischen Volkshochschulen
Association des Universités Populaires
Suisse**
Bern, Switzerland
www.up-vhs.ch



ZDUS
Ljubljana, Slovenia
www.zdus-zveza.si



**Making Adult Teaching
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Lifelong Learning Programme
Grundtvig Multilateral Project
527911-LLP-1-2012-1-UK-Grundtvig-GMP



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The MATURE project

MATURE is a Grundtvig multilateral project which aims to provide continuing professional development for practitioners in formal and non-formal adult education. Training focuses on reaching, engaging and motivating older adults.

A feature of MATURE is to develop strategies to overcome age-related barriers to learning, such as those caused by health, dependency, low self-confidence, cultural and/or attitudinal factors. The project considers the role of intermediary agencies in facilitating older people's learning and presents a model that is collaborative within and beyond education providing for the well-being of older people through integrated responses to learning needs.

Benefits of later-life learning

Later-life learning is able to bring many different benefits for individuals, families, communities and countries in Europe and beyond. It can help to overcome social exclusion and isolation, and can promote older people's mental and physical health. Learning for older people may assist in maintaining independence and general well-being in later life and it enriches the lives of individuals and communities.

The MATURE project aims to promote the most effective ways of realising the benefits of learning for older people and of promoting these activities for wider numbers of people. The project aims to make adult teaching useful, relevant and engaging.

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Aims

- ✓ Analyse the barriers to learning faced by older adults
- ✓ Seek examples of good practice from national, European and international sources of engaging hard-to-reach older adults
- ✓ Explore the role of intermediary agencies, organisations and individuals in supporting older people to become involved in learning
- ✓ Develop face-to-face and online training for both paid and voluntary teachers and educators
- ✓ Develop advice and guidance for intermediaries to advocate and argue for learning

Meeting practical challenges

Previous European project work by the MATURE team has shown that older Europeans with the confidence and skills to engage in learning enjoy far-reaching benefits. However, their numbers are relatively small and their success is reliant on previous experience, prior knowledge and the development of learning opportunities to meet their individual aspirations.

More needs to be done to reach and motivate isolated older people to assist them with support and the active resolution of difficulties. Key to this is the provision of resources, ideas and methods for learning providers to help them meet the practical challenges of implementing learning for non-participant, disadvantaged older adults.

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Activities

One of the goals of MATURE is to help raise standards of practice throughout Europe. It aims to develop training to overcome barriers faced by older learners and to find ways to reach and engage older adults.

Key activities for the MATURE project include undertaking research in the field of later-life learning; analysing what lessons can be learned from different European experiences; meeting together to discuss and critically assess the results and the most effective ways to apply them; writing, testing and refining training materials; putting the results into practice; and promoting this work through publications, the internet and a conference.

Outputs

- ✓ Flexible, freestanding units of continuing professional development training for group or self study, for use individually or in combination
- ✓ A training course that collates underpinning knowledge and practical advice into a comprehensive package for the effective engagement and motivation of older adults
- ✓ A booklet for intermediary agencies to engender better understanding of the value of learning for older people and of the organisations that can provide it
- ✓ A European conference to debate widening engagement in learning by older people

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