



CYPRUS PRESIDENCY
OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Cyprus Presidency Conference "Literacy for All"

Nicosia, 5-6 September 2012

Description of Workshop 3

Workshop 3 – Primary years

It is during the primary school years that children generally learn how to read and write. Gender and performance gaps in literacy skills are already apparent at the start of primary school. These years are therefore critical to support all children in acquiring and improving their literacy skills, in order to avoid a widening of these gaps later on.

Primary schools have a crucial role in creating a literate environment and in boosting children's motivation to read, especially for disadvantaged children and struggling readers. Motivation and competence in reading are highly associated: reading better, being motivated to read and reading for pleasure are complementary processes. Schools should also build on ICT technologies to create a digital literate environment, and incorporate ICT in literacy activities.

High-quality teaching and high expectations for all pupils are essential elements for the successful development of literacy skills for all children, irrespective of their socio-economic background, ethnicity or special needs. Early detection of reading problems and early interventions for struggling readers are crucial to improve children's literacy skills and to close literacy gaps. In this respect, tailored and specialized support for struggling readers should be put in place as soon as possible.

Questions

- a) How can primary schools provide a more targeted and tailored support to children who enter primary school with lower levels of literacy than their peers? How can schools close the literacy gap during primary school years? Do you know about any good practice examples in your country?
- b) How can we promote the use of specialized support for struggling readers at the national and EU levels? What measures at the EU and national levels should be put in place to ensure that all struggling readers get the specialized support they need?
- c) Any good examples on the use of ICT in primary school to engage children in literacy-related activities?