PASCAL International observatory

Learning Cities 2020

An initial suite of studies to enable cities and regions to maximise their competitive advantage

This brochure sets out the options, ranging from local analysis of the latest data on lifelong learning, skills and economic performance, the benchmarking of current practice, to masterclasses by international experts to help local policy appraisal and development. PASCAL can organise intensive local skills surveys if required. PASCAL will be pleased to tailor a package to meet individual city requirements.

Learning Cities 2020

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At this critical time cities and regions need to look closely at their education, skills and labour markets if they are to maximize their competitive advantage in the emerging global economy. Since the ground-breaking study by OECD, Cities and Regions in the New Learning Economy, published in 2000, much has changed in the context in which cities and regions strive to secure their economic prosperity and social and cultural well-being.

However recent months have seen the outcomes from important EU studies of regional performance on lifelong learning and the first report of the OECD's new international survey of adult skills and competences, the Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). Furthermore the latest sweep of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) will be published in December 2013, and UNESCO launches its international platform for learning cities. In the suite of studies described here, PASCAL International Observatory offers a range of opportunities for cities and regions to understand the implications of this emerging data for their own policy development.

City leaders will need to know answers to key questions such as:

- o   How is my city performing? And what are the trends?
- o   Are we doing a good job in connecting learning with its application for innovation, and economic and social development?
- o   How do we compare with others?   What could we do better to improve things?
- o   What will be the likely consequences if we continue as we are?
- o   How can we get government, business, educators and civic society to work together?

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PASCAL International Observatory

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PASCAL International Observatory is a research and policy alliance dedicated to bringing cutting edge ideas to local and regional policy-making. It is focused on the development of place through learning and social cohesion. PASCAL emphasises the importance of international comparisons and of the exchange of good practice to assess and improve local performance.

PASCAL has centres in Europe, the US, Australia and Africa, and retains a strong cadre of international experts drawn from senior positions in academia and national and international policy organisations, including several connected with the original OECD Learning Cities and Regions study. This suite of programmes is directed from the PASCAL centre based in Glasgow University.

See: pascalobservatory.org

PASCAL International **observatory**

Option 1:   How good is our city as a learning city?

Aims

The fundamental aim of this option is to enable cities and regions to take an enhanced place-based approach to securing successful economic and social development within the 21st century knowledge economy. It aims to enable cities to access and interpret the latest data on education, skills, innovation and economic and social development at local level, and to compare local trends and achievements with national data and with other comparable cities. It will allow cities to explore, with experts with international experience, ways to progress a comprehensive approach to development as a learning city or region, tackling issues of priority in the local context.

The study will follow a series of steps which will, for each participating city or region, examine the following key questions:

- o   To what extent is it now possible to demonstrate that city arrangements for learning are influencing economic development and social cohesion?
- o   To what extent is regional infrastructure able to connect learning with its application for innovation, institutional change and economic and social development?
- o   Is city policy-making sufficiently cohesive and coherent in developing processes of learning and progression which respond to changing economic and social pressures?
- o   How effective are local systems for adapting to new opportunities for employment, arising, for example, from technology and the green economy?

Methodology

The methodology of the study draws from two broad strands, one being secondary analysis of the large and improved datasets available through Eurostat, OECD and other relevant national statistics; and the second, qualitative case studies of each participating city/region carried out by selected experts. The study will move through a series of stages. The full option contains a number of elements:

- o   Preparation of data sets at city/regional level at the lowest geographical level available;
- o   Longitudinal analysis of these data sets;
- o   Comparative analysis to demonstrate how particular cities/regions perform when compared with national data and to the 'most similar' city/region derived from cluster analysis;
- o   Benchmarking current infrastructure development and practice;
- o   Developmental case studies;
- o   Opportunity for shared learning with other participating cities;
- o   Stocktaking in 2020 to review progress and achievement of goals.

Taken together, these elements will provide a comprehensive basis for cities and regions to appraise the current performance, governance arrangements and policy and practice for securing a successful place in the emerging knowledge economy. A full specification of these stages will be available on request.

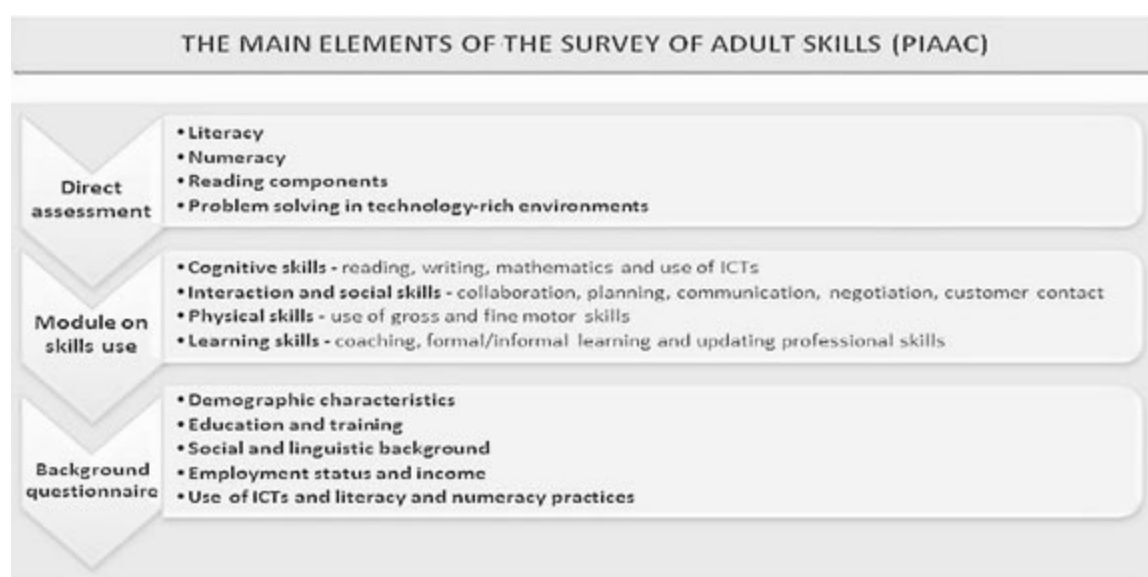## Option 2: Selected Information and Policy Services

PASCAL recognises that this comprehensive approach may not be possible for some cities and regions, which, nevertheless, will be faced with the need to respond when the new high profile data on adult skills and competences in the PIAAC survey and in other studies is published. PASCAL is also able to offer a range of specific information and policy services to make particular contributions to local policy-making and practice development. The services would be tailored to specific city and regional requirements, but could include:

- o Single elements from within the programme for Option 1, for example collection and analysis of local datasets on lifelong learning, benchmarking of engagement between education, business and civil society, or local developmental case studies;
- o Masterclasses provided by international experts focussed on priority issues, for example, strategic governance in the city or region;
- o 'State of the Art' reviews of policy and practice on priority issues bringing worldwide perspectives to the local context;
- o Expert appraisal of, and/or participation in the formulation of strategic policy initiatives within the city to support learning, innovation and economic development in the light of emerging data.

PASCAL is happy to negotiate particular work programmes to suit city needs.   We will seek to involve local experts and draw on local analytic resources whenever possible, working with international experts and associates.

International workshops

PASCAL is organising a series of international workshops during 2014 on different aspects of learning city development, such as health, sustainability, and smart technology. There is the option for participants in the learning city programme to host such a workshop, with a focus of particular interest to the host city.

THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE SURVEY OF ADULT SKILLS (PIAAC)

Direct assessment
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Reading components
- Problem solving in technology-rich environments

Module on skills use
- Cognitive skills - reading, writing, mathematics and use of ICTs
- Interaction and social skills - collaboration, planning, communication, negotiation, customer contact
- Physical skills - use of gross and fine motor skills
- Learning skills - coaching, formal/informal learning and updating professional skills

Background questionnaire
- Demographic characteristics
- Education and training
- Social and linguistic background
- Employment status and income
- Use of ICTs and literacy and numeracy practices

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Option 3: Local survey of adult skills and competences, and comparison with national PIAAC data

What is PIAAC?

The [Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies](#) (PIAAC) has been carried out in 24 OECD member countries, and first national reports were published in October 2013. PIAAC assesses the level of core skills and competencies possessed by adults in participating countries, and contains a range of other important data about them and their lives. The data has been collected from a representative national sample of at least 5000 adults in each country, using detailed face-to-face interviews in respondents' homes.

What does it do?

PIAAC connects with previous skills surveys such as IALS and ALL, but extends the range of skills assessed, and expands the scope of the other information collected. PIAAC assesses reading competencies, literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology rich environments. The analysis of this data will deepen understanding of the distribution of human capital, especially of high and low skills, facilitate the analysis of links between key skills and a range of background variables, and, crucially, analyse the utilisation of skills by looking at the extent to which people are able to deploy their skills in society and the world of work. PIAAC will enable important national comparisons of performance in education and skills and their utilization for economic and social development.

Local interpretation of national-level analysis

It is widely recognized that cities and regions are increasingly important as drivers of economic development. It is vital therefore, that cities are able to assess and develop their own strategies for generating and efficient use of skills for the benefit of securing their place in the globalised economy, and have a basis for the local interpretation of the PIAAC data. PASCAL offers a programme to provide exactly this local analysis.

This PASCAL programme will:

- o Undertake a local skills survey using the PIAAC survey instrument with a random population sample of at least 1000 respondents;
- o Undertake interviews with key stakeholders in regional government, business and civic society;
- o Provide an analysis of this local data, and comparisons with national data for the jurisdiction in which the city or region is located;
- o Present an expert seminar for local stakeholders to assess and interpret the findings and help formulate future strategies for skills and skills utilisation in the city/region.

PASCAL has a skilled team of researchers already engaged with the analysis of PIAAC data. Where-ever possible local researchers will undertake data collection. The analysis will be overseen by international experts on economic development, governance and learning cities and regions.

Expressions of interest and further Information

Discussions about participation in this programme are already underway with some cities and regions in the UK and South Africa. If you would like to express an interest in your city joining the any part of the programme, please contact Professor Mike Osborne, Co-director PASCAL International Observatory, University of Glasgow or John Tibbitt, PASCAL vice-chair for policy engagement. For general enquiries please contact us at info@learningcities2020.org .

It will be helpful if expressions of interest can be received as soon as possible, and if an indication can be given of the options of most interest:

- ✓ How good is my city as a learning city (Option 1)?

- ✓ Specific information and policy services (Option 2)

- ✓ Hosting a PASCAL workshop (Option 2)

- ✓ Local PIAAC study of adult skills and competencies (Option 3)

Full specifications of Options 1 and 3 are available on request.

A programme launch seminar will be held in Glasgow in early 2014 to which all participants are invited. Further seminars will be held during the course of the programme to enable all participants to share and learn from the programme as a whole.

As the programme develops there will be opportunities for participants, individually or in groups, to formulate and implement practical plans to achieve real economic and social gains through to the year 2020. For EU countries this is scheduled to coincide with the European Commissions' Europe 2020 plans, although we believe this is an appropriate target date for all regions.

For the most up-to-date information on the PASCAL International Observatory Learning Cities 2020 programme, please visit http://learningcities2020.org