

**Strengthening home-school links through family literacy programmes:
a comparative European case study****Rose, Anthea and Atkin, Chris.** University of Nottingham, UK

Family literacy programmes have become increasingly popular over recent years, particularly in England since the implementation of the Skills for Life (SfL) agenda, (DfEE, 2001). They are perceived as a means of addressing low levels of literacy and numeracy in families who are viewed as underachieving, economically and socially, (Atkin, et al. 2005). Drawing on Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of *habitus* (1977) and *field* (1993) and incorporating the different forms of capitals - this paper looks at family literacy programmes in England, Ireland and Malta and the role of schools in strengthening links between the home and school *fields*. Based on research undertaken as part of a doctoral study at the UNESCO Centre for Continuing Education Research, (UCCER) University of Nottingham, this study takes a qualitative comparative case study approach. A series of semi-structured interviews with policymakers, practitioners, learners, ex-learners, non-participating fathers and children's teachers were conducted at each site. This identified a series of themes, including the importance of parents as educators, the gender bias in adult learner profiles and the role of schools in developing home-school links. In particular, the potential to build relationship with parents who previously did not value education or were disengaged from the educational process were highlighted.