

Study Guides  
in Adult Education

Esther Oliver

Research and  
Development  
in Adult Education  
Fields and Trends

Barbara Budrich Publishers



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edited by

Regina Egetenmeyer

Esther Oliver

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in Adult Education  
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# Preface

For a long time, education in Europe was first and foremost a national matter. Common educational activities emerged in the 1980s with the student and teaching mobility programmes. The 1992 Maastricht Treaty, while including education as a separate field of EU policy, continued to emphasize Member States' national sovereignty in educational issues. In subsequent years, the European Union published several documents and started diverse initiatives to support European collaboration. Adult education, however, long remained a somewhat marginal issue in these documents and initiatives, which mostly mentioned it only as a part of larger lifelong learning strategies. Only in recent years has adult education been recognized as a part of lifelong learning in its own right.

EU support for education is primarily focused on its educational programmes, which are currently organized under the umbrella of the "Lifelong Learning Programmes". The acronyms LEONARDO, ERASMUS, COMENIUS, and GRUNDTVIG stand for several European programmes. With GRUNDTVIG, adult education eventually got its own EU programme. In addition to promoting mobility, the programme also supports the collaborative development of common educational settings (e.g. ICT platforms or teaching programmes). The "Bologna-Process" is another major factor driving the development of a common European Educational Area. With their focus on research, the Framework Programmes of the European Union emphasize collaborative research.

Within all of these programmes, several research results and practical developments in adult education have been produced. If we see the Bologna Process not only as a structural reform, but also as an opportunity to enhance curricula with international research and developments, it is important to give students access to these results.

The Study Guides in Adult Education series is geared towards students and researchers in adult education. It has been designed to give them access to international discussions in adult education. Some volumes in the series will focus specifically on Europe. Since the study guides have been designed as text-

books to be used in higher education settings, each section concludes with several exercises and tasks. While the exercises may be used to gain a deeper understanding of the text, the tasks point readers to further readings and resources for each topic. Furthermore, the series aims to contribute to the emergence of a systematic framework to organize and synthesize international discussions. Taking European developments of past decades as a starting point, Esther Oliver in the present volume provides an introduction into some of the most important fields of research and development in adult education. She starts by outlining the emergence of EU education policy over the course of past decades and presents the Union's research and development programmes that support adult education. To provide readers with deeper insights into the discussions, Esther Oliver goes on to identify four key research fields in adult education: migration; inclusion, access and participation; professionalisation, assessment and counselling; as well as learning in the workplace. For each research field, she presents a number of past and present projects to illustrate European research in adult education. Finally, she also gives an overview over international and European organizations, networks, and academic journals involved in adult education.

The study guide is based on Esther Oliver's experiences as a European researcher. She is currently a Professor of Sociology at the University of Barcelona (Ramon y Cajal Reseracher) and has been engaged in several European research projects of the Centre of Research in Theories and Practices to Overcome Inequalities (CREA) at the University of Barcelona. She was a visiting scholar at the University of Warwick in Great Britain. From October to December 2007, she was the guest professor in "Adult and Continuing Education and Learning" at the University of Duisburg-Essen (a chair co-financed by the German Academic Exchange Service). This introduction into research and developments in adult education benefits from her European expertise. It provides various valuable insights into the transnational European discussion on adult education. To further enhance their international perspective, the study guides also include a collegial review by a colleague from another country. In this volume, Balázs Németh from the University of Pecs in Hungary gives his valuable feedback.

The study guide series is developed and published with the support of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the University of Duisburg-Essen. My heartfelt thanks go to Esther Oliver for writing this first volume of the Study Guides in Adult Education. I am grateful to Balázs Németh for his feedback. Further thanks go to all my colleagues who contributed to numerous fruitful discussions in the context of this study guide project.

*Regina Egetenmeyer*



# 1. Introduction

For a long time, research in the fields of Adult Education (AE) and Lifelong Learning (LLL) was mostly limited to the national level. Only in recent years have transnational research projects begun to overcome this fragmented vision and to work towards a shared European vision of adult education, supported by a variety of EU policies, programmes, and actions. This study guide has been designed to provide students with an overview of current research in the fields of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning, placing special emphasis on the European dimension in many of the projects that will be explored. At the same time, it aims to introduce readers to the main EU research guidelines and explain the relationship between EU policies on education and lifelong learning and the development of AE research.

As a dynamic document, the study guide will require ongoing revision and expansion. As with the other volumes in this study guide series, the material has been arranged to be updated on an ongoing basis to include the most recent research developments in different countries and international debates with respect to AE research.

In addition, this guide is intended to facilitate self-directed study by providing readers with suggestions for further reading as well as with practical exercises and tasks. Readers of this study will also benefit from a discussion of research areas that are still in need of development. Finally, they will gain an understanding of the relationship between defining educational policies, mainly at the European level, and developing concrete research projects and activities.

This introduction provides an overview of the structure of this study guide. Starting in chapter 2, readers will find descriptions of some of the main EU policy papers in the field of Education and Training, and more specifically, in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning. These descriptions are specifically designed to identify those topics and research areas in AE and Lifelong Learning which are promoted by EU policies. Chapter 3 goes on to present the EU's principal programmes for supporting research in adult education.

Chapters 4 to 7 are organized along a two-fold structure. First, each chapter provides an introductory description of AE research in one of these four major fields: “Research on Migration”; “Research on Inclusion, Access and Participation”; “Research on Professionalization, Assessment and Counselling”; and “Research on Learning in the Workplace.” This study guide is not intended as a comprehensive effort to include all of the research done in the field. In addition to the four specific themes selected for this volume, there is a much broader research approach to adult education and learning as a part of a lifelong learning frame, featuring a more holistic understanding which seeks to combine education, training and learning, economy and society, society and the individual, formal and non-formal education, etc. Instead of trying to give a full picture of AE research, however, this guide rather limits its scope to four research areas which are meant to serve as examples of the way research areas are linked to EU policy-making and Member States’ actions. As a result, readers are encouraged to reflect on the ways in which specific projects follow the main trends and objectives defined by the European policies presented in previous chapters.

As the second element of their two-fold structure, each chapter introduces readers to a variety of methodological tools currently used in research projects to produce accurate answers to the issues studied within each of the four research areas. These notes on methodology are meant to provide readers with an overview of selected research methods used to analyse different aspects of AE reality. In this context, it is especially interesting to see how projects sometimes combine different methods (qualitative and/or quantitative) to develop their research. With the help of this information, readers of this study guide may find suggestions for research techniques to be explored and developed in their own academic or professional works. Furthermore, a list of the research projects examined in this study is provided in the reference sections, along with a list of conclusions for each topic, at the end of each chapter.

The sources consulted for compiling these four overviews include current research projects, compendia of the GRUNDTVIG Programme<sup>1</sup>, and directories of research projects funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) or within one of the European Commission’s Framework Programmes (see chapters 2 and 3 for explanations of these programmes). Further sources included the proceedings from international conferences, peer-reviewed scientific jour-

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1 Lists of Compendia of the Socrates-Grundtvig programmes are available on the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency’s website (see Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency, Socrates TCP Document Library, link list)

nals, many of which are included in the Journal Science Citation Report (ISI-Web of Knowledge), and relevant books on AE research. All of these references are listed at the end of the study guide as suggestions for further reading. Moreover, research project titles and their respective start dates are always provided in parentheses to facilitate the search for in-depth information.

Chapter 8 offers an overview of the most important international organisations involved in the field of AE, including an outline of their main interests and activities. Profiling their activities also serves to highlight some of the main international topics in the field of AE.

At the end of each section, a list of suggested student activities is included to promote further individual study or group interaction. In some cases, however, there are specific “exercises for reflection” placed throughout the text, asking readers to address specific contents. With the exception of the list of EU policy papers explored in chapter 2, all references and links are listed at the end of the study guide.

Since some specialised terms may be difficult to understand, this study guide provides keyword definitions throughout the text and closes with a list of abbreviations and an annotated bibliography featuring key sources and selected other references to allow readers to explore individual topics in depth.



## 2. EU Policies on Education and Adult Education

### 2.1 Brief introduction to the policies of the European Commission

The Maastricht Treaty (Official Journal, 1992) was the first EU Treaty to include the term “education”. Article 126 highlights the Community’s role in increasing the quality of education by encouraging cooperation between Member States. Since EU intervention in the area of education has been highly controversial, the article emphasises the need to fully respect Member States’ sovereignty over the content of teaching, the organisation of their education systems, and their cultural and linguistic diversity. The foundation for the so-called European dimension of education was established prior to Maastricht, however, with a diverse range of Community actions aimed at teaching and disseminating the languages of the Member States, encouraging mobility among students and teachers, facilitating the recognition of educational qualifications and study abroad semesters, or promoting cooperation between educational establishments, to mention only the most important ones.

#### **Keyword: Maastricht Treaty**

The Maastricht Treaty, formally the Treaty on European Union, was signed in Maastricht on 7 February 1992 and entered into force on 1 November 1993. It represented a crucial step forward in the process of European integration by creating a Union consisting of three pillars: the European Community (EC) pillar, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) pillar, and the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) pillar, which focuses on intergovernmental cooperation in law enforcement. The Treaty introduced the concept of European citizenship, strengthened the powers of the European Parliament, and launched the European economic and monetary union.

**Source:** Official Journal (1992): Treaty on European Union. Official Journal C 191, 29 July 1991.

The European Union does not have a common education policy, however. Each EU member remains responsible for the content and organisation of its education and training system. The EU, in contrast, provides a general framework designed to promote exchanges, innovative teaching and learning projects, academic and professional networks, and a platform for consensus, comparisons and policy-making. One important source for the emergence of this educational policy is the European Commission's *White Paper on Education: Teaching and Learning. Towards the Learning Society* (1995). This paper was designed to map the route towards a learning society by identifying the options available to the EU in terms of education and training. In fact, it was designed to build bridges that were to reduce the high levels of inflexibility and compartmentalisation of education and training systems and to address the need for embracing new patterns of life-long learning. Five main objectives were defined: to encourage the acquisition of new knowledge; to bring schools and businesses closer together; to combat educational exclusion; to promote proficiency in three EU languages; and to treat capital investment and investment in training on an equal basis.

Later, these EU policies on education and training were understood to be of key relevance for achieving the Union's Lisbon goals (2000), by which it wants to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. In order to reach these goals, a modernisation of social welfare and education systems is required. Although progress has been made at different levels within the EU since 2000, many sectors continue to express their concern regarding the slow pace of change and the overall difficulty of accomplishing such daunting targets.

**Keyword: The European Union's Lisbon Agenda**

When European leaders met at a summit in Lisbon/Portugal in March 2000, they set the European Union the goal of becoming "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world" by 2010. Their objectives were wide-ranging and ambitious. On employment, the goal was to raise the employment rate to 70% of the population by 2010 and to increase the numbers of women and older people in work. To encourage innovation, the goals included ensuring more homes had internet access and spending more on research and development. On enterprise, countries were supposed to do more to

support small businesses and reduce regulation, and on liberalisation there was to be more competition in telecoms and liberalised gas and electricity markets. For the environment, goals included reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**Source:** European Council (2000)

Several processes of transformation were encouraged in each Member State. Exchanging experiences and best practices is of crucial importance in all of these processes. In the following sections, the trends and research fields that different EU education and training policies seek to promote, specifically in the field of AE, are described in more detail.

## **2.2 EU Policy on Education: Education and Training 2010**

According to the Lisbon goals, a profound transformation of education and training throughout Europe is required. In each country, these fundamental changes are implemented in line with national contexts and traditions. They are driven, however, by Member States' cooperation at the supranational level, by sharing experiences, by working towards common goals, and by learning from what works best elsewhere<sup>2</sup>.

Several reports or work programmes were written and conceived over the past couple of years to help promote the modernisation of education systems and to foster the changes required for achieving the EU's ambitious goals. These EU policy papers are key for understanding the different paths that research in the field has been taking to contribute to these transformations.

In this section, a number of general educational policies that sometimes influence the development of research will be outlined. In the following sections, several specific elements of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning policies that influence the development of research fields and trends in this area will also be highlighted. In-depth discussions of these EU policy documents and European strategies will be provided in future volumes of this study guide series.

In their 2001 *Report from the Educational Council to the European Council on "The concrete future objectives of education and training systems"*, the Ministers of Education defined key goals to be achieved in the

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2 see European Commission, Education & Training (link list)

field of education (Council of the European Union, 2001). Amongst these goals, different priorities may be assigned.

First, the document points out the need for improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the EU, especially in terms of enabling citizens to continuously enhance their skills and competencies. This strategy needs to take into account the fact that persons who have more difficulties engaging in lifelong learning face a greater risk of being excluded. To address this danger, a number of research efforts have been made which focus on the need for promoting social inclusion in AE to help reduce educational inequalities. At the same time, other projects focus on ways of improving workplace learning to better develop the competencies of the adult workforce. In addition, the need for comparability and validation of different educational and labour environments is stressed.

Second, the Ministers' objectives include the need for ensuring greater access to different education and training systems for all. Various barriers to engaging in formal, non-formal and informal learning have been identified for several groups of adults. As a consequence, efforts are needed to make these education and training systems more inclusive, coherent, and attractive for both young people and adults.

Third, EU policy also points to the need for fostering opportunities for increasing mobility and for working and communicating with others across national boundaries and in the context of a global society. In this respect, promoting European research projects within different EU Programmes contributes to strengthening the collaboration between EU countries and non-EU countries. It also seeks to promote the exchange of best practices in the field of adult education across boundaries.

These shared objectives, therefore, provide the groundwork for Member States to work together at the European level in an effort to contribute to the Lisbon strategy. This obviously represented a great challenge for all educational and training systems, especially regarding the priority assigned to lifelong learning. Based on these three concrete strategic objectives, 13 specific objectives were defined, covering the various types and levels of education and training. Although these objectives were defined with a broad perspective in mind, it is interesting to see how many of them are closely connected with developments in the field of research and practice of adult education.

In 2002, the Education Council and the Commission endorsed a 10-year work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe (2002/C 142/01), which was designed to accomplish the objectives set forth in the 2001 report. The work programme constituted the new and coherent Community strategic framework of co-operation in the



fields of education and training, addressing various elements and levels of education and training from basic skills to vocational and higher education, with particular emphasis on the principle of lifelong learning.

The work programme is interesting insofar as it provides concrete indicators for measuring progress for each of the 13 specific objectives detailed in the previous report. At the same time, it is important to mention that a variety of working groups have been working on these objectives, supporting their implementation at the national level through exchanges of good practices, study visits, peer reviews, etc.

All of these efforts have a very clear focus on the trends and priorities that should also be taken into account in the field of AE and lifelong learning (LLL).

## 2.3 EU Policy on Adult Learning and Lifelong Learning

The *White Paper on Education* (European Commission, 1995), mentioned in the first section of this chapter, represented an important starting point in the development of the Union's AE policy, which is why it deserves to be introduced in more detail at this point. The white paper defined relevant steps for achieving the goal of a learning society in Europe.

### **Keyword: The White Paper on Education**

A white paper is an authoritative report or guide addressing specific issues and how to solve them. White papers published by the European Commission are documents containing proposals for EU action in a specific area. The 1995 *White Paper on Education* was part of a process designed to provide an analysis of the status quo in the fields of education and training while at the same time suggesting guidelines for action. It built on the 1993 White Paper *Growth, Competitiveness, Employment*, which emphasized the importance of intangible investment for the European economy, particularly in education and research. Investing in knowledge, according to this earlier report, plays an essential role in employment, competitiveness, and social cohesion. The *White Paper on Education* considered the importance of education and training to Europe in the context of technological and economic change; and proposed guidelines for action in the pursuit of objectives to build up high-quality education and training.

**Source:** European Commission (1995)

Since the beginning of European cooperation in the field of education, promoting cross-border mobility of learners and teachers, encouraging cooperation between educational establishments in Europe, and improving the quality of education and vocational training have been key objectives of EU policy on Adult and Lifelong Learning.

These objectives have been pursued gradually with the help of action programmes and other initiatives which have achieved a great deal in this field. The launch of the SOCRATES programme in 1995 (with a section on adult education) was a particularly important milestone in this context. In fact, the programme was so successful that a second phase was adopted in January 2000, which also included the Grundtvig action, a pilot programme focused on adult education and other educational pathways to encourage the European dimension of lifelong learning.

Likewise, the Leonardo da Vinci Programme needs to be mentioned. Established in 1994, its focus is on promoting the European dimension of vocational training. In addition to encouraging transnational mobility, placement and exchange projects, study visits, pilot projects, transnational networks, language skills and cultural awareness, the programme also seeks to disseminate recommended methods and to collect comparative data.

Another key point of reference for EU policy in the field of education and training is the Agenda 2000<sup>3</sup>, which included the European Commission's strategies for strengthening growth, competitiveness and employment, for modernizing key policies, and for extending the Union's borders through enlargement. When the agenda was adopted by the Heads of Government or States at the Berlin European Council on 26 March 1999, the European Commission was facing the following three main challenges:

- How to strengthen and reform the Union's policies so they could manage enlargement and deliver sustainable growth, higher employment and improved living conditions for Europe's citizens;
- How to negotiate enlargement while at the same time vigorously preparing all applicant countries for the moment of accession;
- How to finance enlargement, advance preparations, and the development of the Union's internal policies.

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3 see Agenda 2000 (link list)

### *Excursus: CONFINTEA*

In the context of defining EU policies on adult education and lifelong learning, it is interesting to also consider the impact of the fifth Conférence Internationale sur l'Éducation des Adultes (CONFINTEA V), which took place in Hamburg in 1997 (UNESCO, 1997). CONFINTEA is a UNESCO inter-governmental international conference on adult learning and education held approximately every 12 years. At the Hamburg event, important reflections were made on the new role of adult education in an environment of ongoing change. Adult learning was understood to be an integral part of lifelong and life-wide learning, promoting family and community learning as well as facilitating the dialogue between cultures, respecting differences and diversity and thereby contributing to a culture of peace. Learners were not merely seen as objects, but as subjects of their learning processes.

The conference further resolved that adult education should more specifically contribute to the struggle for social and economic development, justice, equality, respect for traditional cultures, and recognition of the dignity of every human being through individual empowerment and social transformation. It should address human suffering in all contexts, including oppression, poverty, child labour, genocide, and the denial of learning opportunities based on class, gender, race or ethnicity. Finally, it should become a key factor in individual empowerment and social transformation.

With these ambitious objectives in mind, it will be interesting to follow the main conclusions from the most recent conference, which was held in Belem, Brazil in December 2009. CONFINTEA VI served as an important platform for activities and dialogue about policies related to formal and non formal adult learning at the international level. Main objectives of the conference included making sure that adults will be able to enjoy their human right to lifelong learning and to live a better and healthier life because of it. In its concluding statement, CONFINTEA VI highlighted the need for action, because the cost of not acting is too high. Further conclusions were defined around the impact that adult learning may have on sustainable development, including its social, economic, ecological, and cultural dimensions.

The EU likewise considers adult learning a key component of lifelong learning. The *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (2000), for example, points out that the knowledge-based society is viewed as a frame for people to be permanently re-trained to improve their employability and to contribute to strengthening Europe's competitiveness. This EU paper also highlights the relevance of education in preparing people to understand current challenges

and to learn how to live in a context of increasing social, cultural and linguistic diversity. To this effect, several research projects have been developed to analyse opportunities and mechanisms within AE that may help to respond to the challenges that multicultural contexts bring to the field of Adult Education and to societies as a whole. The present study guide includes a full chapter on “Research on Migration” which outlines a number of contributions that AE can make to address this topic.

**Keyword: Memorandum on Lifelong Learning**

A memorandum is an informal document that contains directive, advisory, or informative matter. In the wake of the European Council held in Lisbon in March 2000, the European Commission published a *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, which served to launch a process of consultation across Europe, aimed at identifying coherent strategies and practical ways of fostering lifelong learning opportunities for all. These consultations are organised within a variety of representative bodies that cooperate at the European level. As far as higher education is concerned, for example, the *European University Association (EUA)* is the organisation in charge of coordinating consultations.

**Source:** Commission of the European Communities (2000)

The *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* was extremely relevant because it initiated a debate on forming a comprehensive strategy for implementing lifelong learning both at the individual and at the institutional level. Lifelong learning was considered a common umbrella for a diverse range of teaching and learning processes, explicitly including non-formal and informal learning. Based on this understanding, a set of guidelines was defined to shape a European lifelong learning strategy, which includes the goals of developing effective teaching and learning methods, renewing the skills needed for participating in a knowledge-based society, improving the ways in which learning participation and outcomes may be appreciated (particularly regarding non-formal and informal learning), and improving the quality of the learning opportunities offered.

The memorandum also stressed the need for promoting the European dimension when addressing all of these issues, when building strong partnerships, and when identifying good practices in different aspects of this lifelong learning strategy.

Moreover, the creation of a European Area for Lifelong Learning, as envisaged in a Communication by the Commission in November 2001, follows

the principal objectives of empowering citizens to move freely between learning settings, jobs, regions and countries, and of meeting the EU's and the candidate countries' goals and ambitions of becoming more inclusive and democratic societies. The European Area for Lifelong Learning is based on an idea of lifelong learning which values knowledge and skills gained in all spheres of modern life, encompassing the whole spectrum of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

The European Area of Lifelong Learning has contributed to promoting the influence of European ideas of lifelong learning on AE and adult learning. At the various policy making levels, it has helped to promote widespread reflection in the Member States and in major European organisations such as SOLIDAR, the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), CSR Europe, the European Vocational Training Association (EVTVA), or the European Youth Forum regarding the main debates featured in the *Memo-randum on Lifelong Learning*.

The emergence of a European Area of Lifelong Learning is closely connected to the development of the European Research Area (ERA). Both areas share the purpose of fostering trans-European networks of knowledge and science.

**Keyword: European Research Area**

The idea of a European Research Area grew out of the realisation that research in Europe suffers from three weaknesses: insufficient funding, lack of an environment to stimulate research and exploit results, and the fragmented nature of activities and the dispersal of resources.

To tackle this problem, the Commission proposed, in January 2000, the creation of a European Research Area. The initiative combines three related and complementary concepts:

- the creation of an "internal market" in research, an area of free movement of knowledge, researchers and technology, with the aim of increasing cooperation, stimulating competition and achieving a better allocation of resources;
- a restructuring of the European research fabric, in particular by improved coordination of national research activities and policies, which account for most of the research carried out and financed in Europe;
- the development of a European research policy which not only addresses the funding of research activities, but also takes account of all relevant aspects of other EU and national policies.

**Source:** European Research and Development, European Research Area (link list)

In the European Area of Lifelong Learning, the debate is guided by the following key ideas, which also influence educational practice and research:

- centrality of the learner
- equal opportunities
- high quality and relevance of the learning offer.

In order to reach these goals, efforts are needed in research and practice to identify ways of transforming traditional educational systems towards more open and flexible environments. This includes finding new tools for analysing learners' needs more precisely and for defining individual learning pathways. At the same time, however, it is important to respond to the needs of different social groups. In this regard, this study guide seeks to show how, mainly in the field of "Learning in the Workplace", numerous research efforts have been made to improve existing systems of analysing needs, validating adult learners' competencies, and promoting their transferability between different contexts. At the same time, mostly in research on professionalization, different examples are found regarding the ways in which these efforts are promoted to guarantee the quality of training programs for adult educators and, as a consequence, to define high quality AE programs which are capable of responding to different needs.

**Keyword: Adult Learning: It's Never Too Late to Learn**

*It's Never Too Late to Learn* is a Communication by the European Commission released in October 2006. It encourages Member States to increase and consolidate learning opportunities for adults and make them accessible for all: "Member States can no longer afford to be without an efficient adult learning system, integrated into their life-long learning strategy, providing participants with increased labour market access, better social integration and preparing them for active ageing in the future. They should ensure that they have systems which enable them to define priorities and monitor their implementation." The Communication is relevant because it identifies adult education as an area of education in its own right.

**Source:** Commission of the European Communities (2006)

The next important document to highlight is the Communication *Adult Learning: It's Never Too Late to Learn*, released by the Commission in 2006.

The importance of education and training for achieving the Lisbon goals is repeatedly emphasized in this EU paper, as is the relevance of adult learning for contributing to economic growth, social cohesion, and personal fulfilment. This EU paper clearly indicates several research fields where increased efforts are needed and others where very interesting developments may already be found (see the chapters on “Research on Migration” or “Research on Inclusion” in this study guide to learn more about some of the developments which try to address these issues). Some of the Communication’s key messages which influence the development of research in the field include:

*Lifting the barriers to participation.* Among these barriers, those that affect vulnerable groups such as adults with lower levels of initial education, older people, people in rural areas, or disabled people, are of special importance. Barriers to participation are often the result of (1) lack of access to good and timely information; (2) entry requirements, costs, level of learning support; (3) difficulties found in the social context; (4) problems of self-esteem and self-confidence, often linked to failure in previous educational settings; (5) lack of time, due to work or family commitments; (6) lack of awareness and motivation; (7) lack of information, and (8) lack of funding.

*Ensuring the quality of adult learning.* There is a clear focus on improving the quality of instruction provided to adults. According to the Commission’s guidelines, teaching methods should answer to adult students’ real needs, and learning outcomes should be clearly defined. Greater efforts to offer professional training to people working in the field are encouraged. The focus on quality also includes accreditation mechanisms, quality assurance frameworks as well as internal and external monitoring and evaluation procedures to assess teaching and learning outcomes.

*Recognition and validation of learning outcomes.* An additional emphasis in *It’s Never Too Late* is on making sure that different forms of adult learning, including learning at the informal or non-formal levels, are recognised and validated throughout Europe. Efforts should be made to involve all relevant stakeholders in these validation processes. These strategies are clearly designed to promote paths of lifelong learning that allow adult learners to receive credits and qualifications for what they may have already learned in non-formal pathways when complementing their lifelong learning processes within a formal offer, for example. In addition, these systems should take into account the development of National Qualification Frameworks within the overall context of the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

**Keyword: European Qualification Framework (EQF)**

The European Qualification Framework (EQF) is a common European reference framework which links countries' qualifications systems, acting as a translation device to make qualifications more readable. It has two principal aims: to promote citizens' mobility between countries and to facilitate their lifelong learning.

As an instrument for the promotion of lifelong learning, the EQF encompasses general and adult education, vocational education and training, as well as higher education. It applies to all types of qualifications from those achieved at the end of compulsory education to those awarded at the highest level of academic and professional or vocational education and training.

The core of the EQF is its eight reference levels describing what a learner knows, understands and is able to do – their 'learning outcomes' – regardless of where a particular qualification was acquired. The EQF reference levels therefore shift the focus away from the traditional approach, which emphasises learning inputs (length of a learning experience, type of institution). Shifting the focus to learning outcomes:

- supports a better match between the needs of the labour market (for knowledge, skills, and competencies) and education and training provisions;
- facilitates the validation of non-formal and informal learning;
- facilitates the transfer and use of qualifications across different countries and education and training systems.

The EQF provides that Member States relate their national qualifications systems to the EQF by 2010 and that their qualifications contain a reference to the EQF by 2012. It will therefore enable individuals and employers to use the EQF as a reference tool to compare the qualifications levels of different countries and different education and training systems, for example vocational training and higher education.

**Source:** European Commission, The European Qualification Framework (link list)

*Investing in migrants and an ageing population.* Current social and demographic changes make it necessary to guarantee ongoing professional development opportunities for a workforce that is expected to have a longer working life than in the past. Older workers require further training to remain employable, and even retired persons demand their share of a lifelong learning offer. In addition, adult learning has to face the challenge of facilitating and supporting the societal and economic inclusion of migrants. These challenges



require substantial research in order to be able to define and provide mechanisms for assessing capacities and recognising previously acquired competencies, as well as for making recommendations for designing an educational offer that will match migrants' demands and their current inter-cultural contexts.

*Indicators and benchmarks.* All changes promoted in the field of adult learning require evidence and data to help monitor and assess the developments implemented in the field. International surveys contribute to improving the data available. However, more efforts are needed to improve the provision of comparable data on adult learning. In addition, more detailed information is required regarding the benefits of adult learning and the barriers to participation that continue to exist.

EU Member States are encouraged to make increased efforts in each of these different fields. The Commission has pledged to support them with the help of the financial mechanisms that exist at the European level, such as the Structural Funds and the Lifelong Learning Programme. One of the ways to accomplish the defined targets is through financing relevant research projects. It goes without saying that these research projects should be able to justify their methodology for providing answers to some of the questions raised here.

The *Action Plan on Adult Learning: It Is Always a Good Time to Learn* (2007) is also focused on disadvantaged groups, such as people with low literacy levels or a lack of skills required for their labour insertion. Depending on which Member State is concerned, these disadvantaged groups may include migrants, older people, women, or persons with disabilities. Providing high-quality and accessible adult learning systems is defined as a main priority in this action plan. In other words, it clearly embraces the messages given out by the Communication *It's Never Too Late to Learn*: removing barriers to participation; increasing the quality and efficiency of the adult education sector; speeding up the process of validation and recognition; ensuring sufficient investment; and monitoring the sector.

**Keyword: Action Plan on Adult Learning**

The pressures of demographic change and globalisation as well as the emergence of newly industrialised and highly competitive countries have highlighted the need for a coordinated policy response on adult learning in the EU. For this reason, the Commission launched the first Communication on adult learning, entitled *It's Never Too Late to Learn*, in 2006.

The Commission has since then developed the *Action Plan on Adult Learning: It Is Always a Good Time to Learn*, which is based on the five key messages of the 2006 Communication. These are:

- remove barriers to participation;
- increase the quality and efficiency of the adult education sector;
- speed up the process of validation and recognition of adult learning outcomes;
- ensure sufficient investment in adult learning; and
- monitor the sector.

The Action Plan aims to help strengthen the adult learning sector so that it can exploit its full potential. The challenges are many: this is a complex sector, with a wide variety of providers, reaching all kinds of target groups.

**Source:** Commission of the European Communities (2007)

Finally, it is relevant to outline the role of EURYDICE, the Information Network on Education in Europe, and the role of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). Both centres are EU-funded and recognised by the Member States' Ministries of Education as essential to monitoring the steps taken at the national level to raise the quality of education and training. Specifically, EURYDICE is an institutional network for gathering, monitoring, processing, and circulating reliable and readily comparable information on education systems and policies throughout Europe. EURYDICE covers the education systems of the Member States of the European Union, the three countries of the European Free Trade Associations, which are members of the European Economic Area, and the EU candidate countries involved in the EU Action Programme in the field of Life-long Learning.

Based in Thessaloniki, Greece, CEDEFOP is a European agency that helps promote and develop vocational education and training (VET) in the EU. It is the Union's centre of expertise to support the development of VET and evidence-based policy-making, providing advice, research, analysis, in-

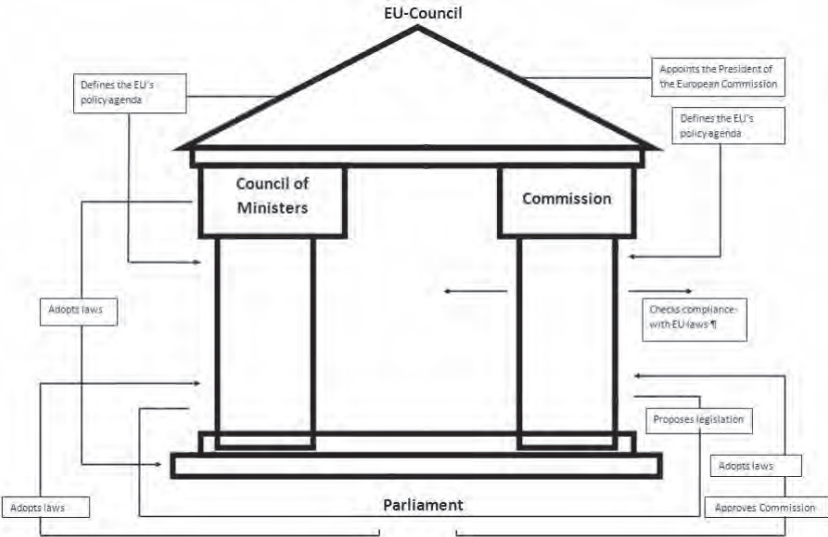
formation, and stimulating European cooperation and mutual learning. Its networks allow the Centre to keep abreast of recent developments. CEDEFOP works closely with the European Commission, governments, representatives of employers and trade unions, as well as with researchers and practitioners. It provides them with up-to-date information on developments, experience and innovation in VET, and forums for policy debate.

## 2.4 Other Relevant EU Bodies

### *The European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions*

In addition to the European Commission’s policies outlined above, this section is going to complement the information provided by explaining the role of the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions in the implementation of education policy. Both institutions have a strong impact on the framing of education policy, including adult education and learning.

Figure 1: Institutions of the European Union



### *The European Parliament*

The EU Parliament has always supported close cooperation between the Member States in the field of education and training and has worked to increase the European dimension in the educational policies of the Member States through advocating for the establishment of a solid basis for education and training. The EU Parliament has promoted education as the best way of ensuring the Union's competitiveness and has encouraged Member States to increase investment in education, to frame more consistent national educational policies, to promote scientific and technical studies or to develop an integrated strategy for lifelong learning which will support social inclusion.

### *The Committee of the Regions*

In the context of education policy, it is important to mention the Commission for Culture, Education and Research (EDUC) within the Committee of the Regions. In the field of lifelong learning, EDUC has been supporting the European Commission in pushing for many of the key objectives of the Lisbon strategy. EDUC's main activities include: promoting new skills for new jobs (i.e. promoting the right skills for tomorrow); strengthening co-operation between universities and businesses (i.e. building the knowledge-based triangle of research, education and innovation which will allow Europe to maintain its economic dynamism and social model); and embracing migration and education.

## **Exercises and Tasks**

### *Exercise 1*

In 2001, different objectives were defined in the field of education at the European level. What are the main connections between these objectives and the sub-field of adult education?

### *Exercise 2*

Which of the European programmes mentioned in this chapter addresses issues related to adult education?

### *Exercise 3*

What are the main differences between these programmes?

#### *Task 1*

Explore the following website about CONFINTEA. What were the main conclusions obtained at that event?

*Resource:*

CONFINTEA: <http://www.unesco.org/education/uiie/confintea/documents.html>

#### *Task 2*

Explore the websites of the following European organisations: SOLIDAR, European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), CSR Europe, European Vocational Training Association (EVTA), and the European Youth Forum. What are these organisations' main objectives with regard to adult education and lifelong learning?

*Resources:*

SOLIDAR: <http://www.solidar.org/>

EAEA: <http://www.eaea.org/>

CSR Europe: <http://www.csreurope.org/>

The European Youth Forum: <http://www.youthforum.org>

EVTA: <http://www.evta.net/home/index.html>

#### *Task 3*

Choose two of the policy documents mentioned in section 2.3. What is the role and the importance these documents ascribe to adult education?



### 3. Support for Research in Adult Education in the European Union

The European Commission has integrated its main educational and training initiatives under a single umbrella, the Lifelong Learning Programme. The programme is one of the major sources of funding for researchers, practitioners and adult learners engaged in developing initiatives and actions related to the research and practice of AE. This programme clearly responds to the priorities defined by EU policy.

This chapter will outline several opportunities for doing research in adult education. It does not aim to be exhaustive, however, and neither does it attempt to provide a full overview of research opportunities in the field. Some of them are mentioned in order to identify their relationship with the EU policies mentioned above. At the same time, this overview is intended to serve as a guideline for potential AE researchers. In many of the following programmes, calls for proposals tend to be open at different points in the programmes' lifespan, inviting researchers, educators, learners, etc. to submit their proposals to be considered for obtaining research funds. It is important to consider, however, that each programme and each call is governed by its own rules and priorities, which also affect the types of agents eligible for receiving funding. Before starting to write a research proposal, therefore, it is necessary to study each programme's requirements closely.

**Keyword: Calls for proposals**

A call for proposals is a legal text calling interested parties such as researchers or trainers to submit proposals for projects in order to obtain funding. The text defines the necessary specifications to prepare and submit a proposal, i.e. thematic priorities, instruments used, address and other technical modalities for submission, deadlines etc. Calls are published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities* in all of the Community's languages. They are also *published on the Commission's web page*, together with detailed guides for proposers and submission forms. When a proposal is successful, applicants become contractors in a research agreement, and the project may begin.

**Source:** European Commission, The Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 – Glossary (link list)

In order to be eligible for EU funding, research projects need to be in line with European policy goals. It is important, therefore, to make sure that each project proposal clearly demonstrates how its objectives match EU Policy.

### 3.1 The Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013)

The Lifelong Learning Programme, with a significant budget of nearly €7 billion for 2007 to 2013, is a new programme replacing the previous education, vocational training and e-Learning programmes, which ended in 2006.

The new Lifelong Learning Programme enables individuals at all stages of their lives to pursue stimulating learning opportunities across Europe:

The overarching priority of the Lifelong Learning Programme is to reinforce the contribution made by education and training to achieving the Lisbon goal of making the EU the most competitive knowledge-based economy, with sustainable economic development, more and better jobs, and greater social cohesion. Every part of the programme will give priority to action supporting development of national lifelong learning strategies by the countries participating and reinforcing collaboration between the different parts of the education and training system, strengthening the lifelong learning continuum, and supporting the acquisition of key competences. (Lifelong Learning Programme: Part 1 EAC/61/2006, p. 2)

This programme consists of four sub-programmes: Comenius (secondary schools), Erasmus (higher education), Leonardo da Vinci (vocational education and training) and Grundtvig (adult education).



Figure 2: Components of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme

LIFELONG LEARNING					
COMENIUS (Actions for Secondary Schools)	LEONARDO DA VINCI (Vocational Education and Training)	ERASMUS (Higher Education)	GRUNDTVIG (Adult Education)	TRANSVERSAL (Policy Cooperation and Innovation, ICT, Languages, Dissemination and exploitation of results)	JEAN MONET (Promotion of knowledge on European Integration)

**Source:** Based on European Commission, Education and Culture (link list)

The Grundtvig programme, which is part of the Lifelong Learning Programme and aims to strengthen the European dimension in adult education and lifelong learning, has the following specific and operational objectives:

**Text box 1: Grundtvig Objectives**

*Specific objectives:*

- (a) to respond to the educational challenge of an ageing population in Europe;
- (b) to help provide adults with pathways to improving their knowledge and competencies.

*Operational objectives:*

- (a) to improve the quality and accessibility of mobility throughout Europe of individuals involved in adult education and to increase its volume so as to support the mobility of at least 7 000 such individuals per year by 2013;
- (b) to improve the quality and to increase the volume of cooperation between organisations involved in adult education throughout Europe;
- (c) to assist people from vulnerable social groups and in marginal social contexts, in particular older people and those who have left education without basic qualifications, in order to give them alternative opportunities to access adult education;
- (d) to facilitate the development of innovative practices in adult education and their transfer, including from a participating country to others;
- (e) to support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning;

(f) to improve pedagogical approaches and the management of adult education organisations.

**Source:** Article 29 of the Decision N° 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006, establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning, p. 327/59.

In order to address these objectives, different actions are envisaged within this sub-programme, such as promoting

- the mobility of individuals, including visits, assistantships, and exchange opportunities for participants in formal and non-formal adult education;
- partnerships that focus on themes of mutual interest to participating organisations;
- multilateral projects, aimed at improving adult education systems through the development and transfer of innovation and practice;
- thematic networks of experts.

### **3.2 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2007-2013)**

The European Commission has established a Directorate General on Research, which is in charge of developing the so-called Framework Programmes. Since their launch in 1984, the Framework Programmes have played a lead role in multidisciplinary research and cooperative activities in Europe and beyond. The 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) continues that task, and is both larger and more comprehensive than earlier Framework Programmes. Running from 2007 to 2013, the programme has a budget of € 53.2 billion over its seven-year life-span, making FP7 the European Union's chief instrument for funding research in Europe. The programme joins other research-related initiatives in their common purpose of contributing to the goals of competitiveness, growth and employment defined in the Lisbon Strategy. As mentioned earlier, knowledge is considered a crucial factor in reaching these goals.

**Keyword: Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)**

The Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) aims to encourage the competitiveness of European enterprises. With small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as its main target, the programme will support innovation activities (including eco-innovation), provide better access to finance and deliver business support services in the regions. It will encourage a better take-up and use of information and communications technologies (ICT) and help to develop the information society. It will also promote the increased use of renewable energies and energy efficiency. The programme will run from 2007 to 2013.

**Source:** *Official Journal of the European Union* (2006)

FP7 is designed to confront some of the main social and economic challenges that Europe is facing today. Themes addressed by the Framing Programme include demographic change and quality of life, education and employment in view of current economic trends, global interdependence and the transfer of knowledge, democracy and political participation, as well as cultural diversity and values.

One of FP7's main concerns is fostering the link between research and policy, i.e. assigning priority to research actions focused on those issues that are of high priority at the European level and are addressed by Community Policies. The main research areas to be addressed within the timeframe of the FP7 are shown in Text Box 2.

**Text box 2: FP7 Research Areas**

- Growth, employment and competitiveness in a knowledge-based society (innovation, competitiveness, and labour market policies; education and life-long learning; and economic structures and productivity).
- A combination of economic, social and environmental objectives in a European perspective (socio-economic models within Europe and across the world; economic and social and cohesion across regions, the social and economic dimensions of environmental policy).
- Major trends in society and their implications (demographic change, reconciling family and work, health and quality of life, youth policies, social exclusion and discrimination).

- Europe in the world (trade, migration, poverty, crime, conflict and resolution).
- The citizen in the European Union (political participation, citizenship and rights, democracy and accountability, the media, cultural diversity and heritage, religions, attitudes and values).
- Socio-economic and scientific indicators (the use and value of indicators in policymaking at macro and micro levels).
- Foresight activities (the future implications of global knowledge, migration, ageing, risk and the emerging domains in research and science).

Source: European Commission (2006, p. 13)

Within this conceptual frame, education is understood to include the idea of lifelong learning. The programme also seeks to address various aspects of social life in which adult education can play a crucial role, e.g. in overcoming social exclusion and discrimination, managing migration, poverty or conflicts, or defining new forms of EU citizenship that embrace issues such as democracy, cultural and religious diversity, and values in a context of increasing risks and challenges.

FP7 is composed of four specific programmes which correspond to the main areas of EU research policy: cooperation, ideas, people, and capacity.

- *Cooperation.* Support is provided to transnational cooperation for the development of collaborative projects and networks. At the same time, international cooperation between the EU and third countries is also promoted by this programme. Areas in which collaborative research is promoted include health, food, agriculture and biotechnology, information and communication technologies, nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies, energy, environment (including climate change), transport (including aeronautics), socio-economic sciences and humanities, security, and space. The socio-economic sciences and humanities, which include research on education and training, have been allocated a budget of € 610 million for the entire programme term (2007-2013).

**Keyword: Collaborative projects**

Collaborative projects are research projects carried out by consortia with participants from different countries, aiming at developing new knowledge, new technology, products, demonstration activities or common resources for research. The size, scope and internal organisation of projects can vary from field to field and from topic to topic. Projects can range from small or medium-scale focused research actions to large-scale integrating projects for achieving a defined objective. Projects should also target special groups such as small and medium-sized enterprises and other smaller actors.

**Source:** European Research and Development, Seventh Framework Programme, Funding (link list)

- *Ideas.* Activities in this area are designed to enhance the dynamism, creativity and excellence of European research at the frontier of knowledge in all scientific and technological fields, including engineering, socio-economic sciences and the humanities. The “Ideas” programme, implemented through the European Research Council (ERC), is expected to boost Europe’s competitiveness by helping to attract and retain the most talented scientists in a diverse range of disciplines and new, fast emerging fields. In other words, there aren’t any predetermined priorities for this programme, which serves to make it more attractive to leading scientists from both Europe and third countries and to promote dynamism and the emergence of fast, new and high-quality ideas and developments.

**Keyword: European Research Council**

The European Research Council (ERC), launched on 27 February 2007, is the first European funding body set up to support investigator-driven frontier research. Its main aim is to stimulate scientific excellence by supporting and encouraging the very best, truly creative scientists, scholars and engineers to be adventurous and take risks in their research. Scientists should go beyond established frontiers of knowledge and the boundaries of their disciplines. The ERC complements other funding activities in Europe such as those of the national research funding agencies, and is a flagship component of the 'Ideas Programme' of the European Union's Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7).

**Source:** *Official Journal of the European Union* (2007)

- *People*. This programme is specifically designed to strengthen the human potential in European research and development by providing training opportunities to qualified researchers, who are expected to contribute to Europe's economic growth and social cohesion. In the framework of FP7, funding is provided to support the ongoing training, research and mobility of highly qualified scientists within Europe and the rest of the world. All the stages of the researcher's professional life, from initial training to lifelong learning and career development, are covered by this programme. At the same time, it is expected to encourage the proliferation of centres of excellence in the EU and their contribution in new areas of research and technology.
- *Capacities*. The objective of this programme is to support the development of research infrastructures, to increase the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in research, and to enhance the European regions' innovative capacities and research potential by creating "Regions of Knowledge". Further goals of the "Capacities" programme include stimulating the realization of the enlarged Union's full research potential by creating "Convergence Regions", and building an effective and democratic European knowledge-based society by supporting the coherent development of research policies and the promotion of science in society with the help of various actions. Support is also provided to horizontal actions and measures which include international cooperation.

It is important to note that FP7 features strong elements of continuity with its predecessor, mainly regarding the themes covered in the "Cooperation" programme. These themes correspond to major fields in the progress of knowledge and technology, where research must be supported and strengthened to address European social, economic, environmental and industrial challenges.

Looking back at previous Framework Programmes, it deserves pointing out that interesting projects in the field of education were funded in these past programmes too. The 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (1998-2002), for example, supported ETGACE: "Education and Training for Governance and Active Citizenship in Europe", which focused on analysing active citizenship and governance in relation to learning, and the follow-up project RE-ETGACE: "Reviewing Education and Training for Governance and Active Citizenship in Europe - A Central and Eastern European Perspective".

### 3.3 Other EU programmes providing opportunities for research

The following other EU programmes related to the field of education and culture should be mentioned:

- The “Youth in Action Programme” aims to develop among young people a sense of personal responsibility, initiative, concern for others, civic participation and active involvement at the local, national, and European level. Furthermore, the programme aims to help improve existing support systems for youth activities. The proposed budget for the 2007-2013 term is € 885 million.
- The “Culture Programme”: With a proposed budget of € 408 million, the Culture Programme is a Community programme established for a term of seven years (2007-2013). It aims to enhance the cultural area shared by Europeans by fostering cultural cooperation between cultural operators based in countries eligible to take part in this programme.
- “Europe for Citizens”: This seven-year programme (2007-2013) is designed to help bridge the perceived gap between the general public and EU institutions, providing the Union with instruments for promoting active European citizenship. It puts citizens in the spotlight and offers them the opportunity to fully assume their responsibility as European citizens. It responds to the need for improving citizens' participation in the construction of Europe, and seeks to encourage cooperation between citizens and grassroots organisations from different countries in order to help European citizens come together, act together, and develop their ideas together in a European environment which goes beyond a national vision, while nonetheless respecting their diversity.
- “Tempus”: The Tempus programme funds cooperation projects in the areas of curriculum development and innovation, teacher training, university management, and structural reforms in higher education. It puts special emphasis on the mobility of academic and administrative staff from higher education institutions, both from the EU and its partner countries.
- “Erasmus Mundus”: The Erasmus Mundus programme is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education designed to promote the European Union as a centre of educational excellence around the world. It supports top-quality Masters Courses at European universities and enhances the visibility and attractiveness of European

higher education in third countries. It also provides EU-funded scholarships for third country nationals enrolled in these Masters Courses, as well as scholarships for EU-nationals studying at partner universities throughout the world.

### **3.4 European Social Funds (ESF)**

Finally, another possible funding body for research in the field of adult education deserves pointing out: the European Social Fund (ESF), one of the EU's Structural Funds. Designed to reduce differences in prosperity and living standards across EU Member States and regions, the ESF promotes economic growth, social cohesion and employment. More specifically, this body is concerned with enabling European workers and companies to face new and global challenges by providing better skills and better job prospects.

The ESF budget for the 2007-2013 period is € 75 billion, which will be distributed among the EU Member States and regions to help them achieve the ESF's goals. ESF strategy and budget are negotiated between the EU Member States, the European Parliament and the European Commission. Based on the results of these negotiations, seven-year operational programmes are planned jointly by Member States and the European Commission. These operational programmes are then implemented through a wide range of organisations, both from the public and private sectors. These organisations include national, regional and local authorities, educational and training institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the voluntary sector, as well as social partners such as trade unions and works councils, industry and professional associations, and individual companies.

Fields in this programme include:

- Workers and new skills
- Businesses undergoing change
- Access to employment and social inclusion
- Education and training
- Women and jobs
- Fighting discrimination
- Working in partnership
- Better public services
- Transnational projects and networks
- Innovative actions



In the field of “Education and Training”, this programme highlights the importance of providing a good education and training to European workers, in order to contribute to meeting the objectives of the EU strategy of growth. This kind of education and training should facilitate the acquisition of the skills required in the knowledge-based economy. In other words, it is clearly understood that learning must not stop at school, but become a lifelong process.

### **Text box 3: ESF Education and Training Priorities**

The European Social Fund’s 2007-2013 priorities regarding education and training include:

- Designing and introducing reforms in education and training systems: reforms that make people more employable, that make initial and vocational training more relevant to employers' needs, and that update the skills of educators and trainers to take account of the need for innovation in a knowledge-based economy. In particular, these reforms are intended to widen the relevance and availability of routes to lifelong learning for workers.
- Promoting networking between higher education institutions, research and technology centres and enterprises. Since all of these organisations are involved in vocational training, communication between them is critical for the relevance and effectiveness of training programmes – and also for the design and implementation of innovative approaches to lifelong learning.

**Source:** European Social Fund, Education and Training (link list)

In less developed EU regions, the ESF supports additional types of activity:

- Implementing reforms in education and training systems in ways that raise people's awareness of what is needed in a knowledge-based society, in particular the need for lifelong learning;
- Increasing participation in lifelong learning by reducing the school dropout rate and existing gender disparities in some subjects, and by improving access to quality education;
- Producing more researchers and innovators by supporting post-graduate studies and research training.

**Source:** European Social Fund, Education and Training (link list)

## Exercises and Tasks

### *Exercise 1*

Keeping in mind what has been presented in this chapter, write a short essay explaining, in your opinion, the most relevant objectives regarding AE in Europe and how they can be related to promoting research in the field.

### *Exercise 2*

In the light of this unit, discuss the main connections between EU policy and the development of research projects with your colleague (or member of your working group).

- The following questions may help to guide your discussion:
- Do you think that it is possible to develop research actions or projects within the 7FP related to the field of AE? Can you think of possible topics related to AE within this research programme? (If necessary, explore the websites related to this research programme before starting your discussion. See the links section for further information.)
- Do you think that it is possible to develop research actions or projects within the other EU-programmes described in section 3.3? How?
- Which are the main differences between the approach followed in the Life-long Learning Programme and in the ESF programme in promoting actions related to AE?

### *Task 1*

After examining each of the following electronic resources, decide with your colleagues which of them are most useful for obtaining a general overview of the state of the art in AE research.

A) Follow these steps:

1. Find a project within the 6th Framework Programme.
2. Find a project within the 5th Framework Programme.

*Resources:*

CORDIS Database: <http://www.cordis.lu>.

Information on the FP4 and FP 5: <http://www.pjb.co.uk/npl/index.htm>

B) Explore several possibilities at the website on citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society

*Resource:*

<http://cordis.europa.eu/citizens/home.html>

C) Have a look at the links section offered by this site

*Resource:*

<http://cordis.europa.eu/citizens/links.htm>

D) By using “Cordis”, you may also have access to the information on “open calls” within the Framework Programme. Try to find information on open calls.

1. Are open calls currently available? In which programmes are they published?
2. Which kinds of documents are provided on the website? Do you understand the meaning of all of them?

*Resources:*

CORDIS Database: <http://www.cordis.lu>.

E) Try to identify projects related to your research interests in the Socrates Projects Database. Once you have identified two of them, try to identify their website in order to find more information about project features.

*Resource:*

Socrates Projects Databases: <http://www.isoc.siu.no>

F) Explore the information available on “Education and Training Policy” and “Research Policy”.

*Resource:*

European Commission, EU policies: [http://ec.europa.eu/policies/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/policies/index_en.htm)

## *Task 2*

Define five possible topics for an AE research project that will respond to the priorities defined in the 2007 Action Plan. Justify your choice of topics. Read section 3 (pp.7-10) of the Action Plan.

*Resource:*

Commission of the European Communities (2007). *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Action Plan*

*on Adult Learning. It is always a good time to learn.* Brussels, 27/09/2007.  
COM (2007) 558 final. Retrieved from  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/adult/com558\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/adult/com558_en.pdf)

## 4. Main Areas of Research in AE at the International Level: Research on Migration

### 4.1 Overview of main contents

Successful grant proposals in education need to involve both theoretical concepts and research-based evidence. This chapter is going to provide some examples of research projects which have focused on migrants and adult education. In analysing research done in this specific field, it is possible to identify some general trends. They are illustrative of some of the main concerns or challenges which the research community is facing in dealing with research on migration in adult education.<sup>4</sup>

### 4.2 Towards greater employability and social inclusion of migrants groups

Searching for ways to facilitate the social inclusion of migrant groups, some adult education research projects have focused on the need for promoting language acquisition and basic knowledge of cultural and social aspects of the European host countries. In a project on “New Ways of Adult Education in Multicultural Societies” (2003)<sup>5</sup>, for example, new concepts of learning in multicultural societies were designed to improve the ways in which migrants and non-migrants live together. In some cases, European consortia have been working to extend and disseminate knowledge on the European Union’s history and on European national cultures among adult learners and trainers.

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4 I would like to thank the students of the course on “Fields and Trends in Research on Adult Education”, developed during October-December 2007 at the University Duisburg-Essen, for their contributions in our discussions on the issues presented in this section, which was a work in progress at the time.

5 Each time a project is introduced in the following sections, its starting year is provided in parentheses. More information on these projects is available at the end of this study guide in the bibliography section.

Specifically, the WAYTOUE network (2000) aimed to exchange relevant information, innovative methodologies, and good practices in adult education with a focus on socially disadvantaged groups such as members of minority groups or migrants.

In addition, several efforts have been made in past years to disseminate the rights and obligations of citizens of the European Union and to promote the history, culture and traditions of different host countries amongst their migrants groups. In “IMED: Training of Immigrants thus Assisting their Integration into the Host Country Society” (1998), for example, the main results were designed to contribute to reaching a better understanding of the objectives and functions of the Union, learning more about the history, culture and traditions of the respective host countries, and leading to a better integration into the host country and the Union.

In many of these cases, materials were created on topics related to the European Union, to European citizenship, and to individual European countries, all to be disseminated through a diverse range of adult education channels. These materials aim to foster greater awareness of the reality of the European Union and to enhance immigrants’ social and cultural integration. In other cases, special efforts were made to promote foreign language acquisition as a first step to expanding immigrants’ opportunities in the labour market. The ESF project “Greek Language Training for Immigrants” (2001-2003), for example, was designed to give an answer to the increasing influx of immigrants into Greece since the early 1990s. Since many of these migrants were absorbed by the informal economy and tended to be employed in temporary, low paid and poorly regulated jobs, the provision of adequate training and language instruction was prioritised in this project. In addition, this project provided for the inclusion of further lifelong learning opportunities for immigrants and other measures to assist them in finding employment or in setting up their own business.

Reflecting on current trends in immigrant language education in Greece, Mattheoudakis (2005) reaffirms the need for supporting immigrants to facilitate their social integration and their insertion into the labour market. Presenting results from a survey, this author specifically explores immigrants’ language needs and preferences. His findings suggest a high degree of interest among immigrants in learning Greek on the one hand, but very low levels of enrolment and attendance in language courses on the other. In order to match interest with enrolment, greater cooperation is needed between immigrant associations and educational policy-makers in terms of designing successful language programmes and promoting policies of integration in Greece.

A similar ESF project was developed in Sweden: “Integrating Immigrants into the Swedish Workforce” (2001). It sought to address the needs of a significant proportion of migrants in Sweden who had little or no knowledge of Swedish and experienced severe difficulties finding a job. In this case, an individualised coach system was implemented, featuring personal employment plans and additional language coaching in the workplace.

Other projects stress the fact that many migrants arrive in European societies characterised by high levels of competencies, qualifications, and professionalism. In order to respond to this reality, efforts were made to offer these immigrants learning and lifelong learning opportunities to support their professional and personal development. The E-DRIM project (2005), for example, focused on removing occupational barriers that ethnic minorities and migrants tend to face in order to facilitate the social inclusion of these groups.

Some of these projects have promoted the implementation of pilot training projects to assess their own results. This is a way of reflecting on the efficiency of these programmes in creating new employment opportunities and encouraging migrants to play an active role in European societies. At the same time, critical reflection on learning procedures is also promoted to identify innovative methods based on self-directed forms of learning, as in the FIRST STEPS project (2006). Similarly, a number of research projects have focused on finding and testing new and integrated self-learning methods that promise to improve the capacities of migrants and non-migrants in order to ensure their full integration. In the “New Educational Methods for an Integration of Migrants in European Society” project (2002), for example, a European Consortium composed of six partners from three different countries aimed to develop methods in the fields of social, pedagogical and cultural competencies, information and communication technology (ICT), and political management using ICT tools.

Other research projects, however, emphasize the need for developing training methods which allow immigrants to continue to enjoy their cultural identity in their new European homes as well. Cultural and social integration of immigrants into mainstream society, understood in this sense, does not necessarily involve the loss of their former cultural identity. The EURO-Identity project (2000), for example, was established to design an immigrant training module which was sensible to these cultural differences.

The main outcome of many of these projects is the development or implementation of training modules and the dissemination of their results. In many cases, the methods used were first and foremost designed to achieve these objectives, not to collect data through research. However, it is important to point out that the development of studies for identifying “best prac-

tices” is widespread, as is the use of various methods of disseminating the information collected, such as Internet portals or workshops and conferences. The MIGRANET project (2001), for example, worked towards a European-wide approach to ensuring migrants’ equal access to lifelong learning processes by exchanging good practices in the field.

In contrast, “ERMES-Educazione Radiofonica con i Migrati Europei e I loro Saperi” (2005) is an example of a project using qualitative methods. It consisted of collecting and analysing migrants’ biographies and presenting them with the help of media tools (radio and ICT) to disseminate content for learning, training, and reflection. These narratives of migrants’ biographies were then analysed to obtain insights and suggestions for improving the skills of adult trainers working with these adult learners groups.

The projects explored in this chapter used a wide range of tools and methodologies to achieve their objectives. In the project on “New Educational Methods for an Integration of Migrants in European Society” (2002), for example, seminars were held in which participants were asked to define their own needs and to suggest suitable locations for training.

In the MIGRANET Portal, different methods are specified, including:

- compiling information on different countries and making it available through an Internet portal
- benchmarking through study visits
- assessment of data collected through joint meetings.

In other cases, such as the ERMES project, different types of tools were used, including the compilation of biographies, while Mattheoudakis (2005) employed the following techniques:

- Surveying a group of immigrants to retrieve information regarding their opinions, beliefs, and preferences in terms of language programmes.
- Designing a questionnaire and distributing it to immigrants through their respective associations in 19 prefectures of the country (Greece). A total of 1150 questionnaires were mailed to associations of immigrants mainly from countries of the former Soviet Union and Albania.
- 558 questionnaires were completed and returned (493 by immigrants from the former Soviet Union and 65 by immigrants from Albania).
- With regard to Greek language education, participants were required: (a) to assess their level of proficiency in Greek (both oral and written) prior to immigration, as well as at the time of the survey; (b) to state where/how they learned Greek (attending language courses, at home from other



family members, at the workplace, etc.); (c) to express their opinion about the usefulness and effectiveness of state language courses; (d) to state their preferences and suggestions regarding language and general education programmes for immigrants. Immigrants were also required to provide details of their occupation prior to and after immigration to Greece. (Mattheoudakis, 2005, p. 325)

### 4.3 Gender approach

Migrant women without academic degrees constitute one of the groups of people more easily affected by social exclusion. To address this issue, “A Comparative Study of the Situation of Immigrant Women in Europe” investigated the position of immigrant women and their access to formal and informal education in several European countries: France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom (1998). The research team considered it necessary to complement its analysis of existing programs by interviewing immigrant women in order to explore their difficulties in accessing education in more detail, as well as to analyse the values, norms and conflicts underlying these processes.

In addition, the diversity of lifestyles and learning conditions of women participating in further education was the focus of a project called “European Women-Images of Interaction”, designed to strengthen intercultural exchange in further education programmes targeted at women (2002). This project used images as a main tool for communicating and sharing women’s experiences in further education. The aim was to share different concepts and programmes followed by women in different countries, with different lifestyles. The use of images as the main vehicle for disseminating the results of these exchanges was conceived to avoid misunderstandings due to linguistic or cultural barriers. As a result, one of the main outcomes of this project was an “Images Exhibition” disseminated also through virtual tools.

The gender dimension of adult learning has also been approached by making efforts to train men. A number of family education provisions offer these kinds of programmes. “Committed Fathers: Optimising Concepts for Family Education for Fathers with a Migration Background”, for example, was geared towards migrant fathers in order to promote gender equality and greater flexibility of gender roles among migrant groups (2002). In this project, methods included the development of training materials to be used as

a handbook for trainers, and a variety of dissemination activities, e.g. national dissemination conferences.

Interestingly, qualitative methods were also the technique of choice for Julia Preece when she developed her research on the situation of women from India or Pakistan attending bilingual courses in community-based programmes at Lancaster University (UK). Her main conclusions illustrate how learning opportunities for Asian women are exacerbated by Western institutional structures, which only accommodate their practical needs to a very limited extent. Education in England, these students felt, could be an isolating experience compared to the collective life in their home countries (Preece, 1996).

The projects explored in this chapter used different tools and methodologies. The “Comparative Study of the Situation of Immigrant Women in Europe”, for example, conducted interviews with migrant women. “European Women-Images of Interaction”, in contrast, primarily used images and discussed them with local groups of women.

Julia Preece (1996) also used interviews with migrant women to collect their views on the education they received and on the differences they perceived regarding the way education is implemented in the UK and in their countries of origin. The information was analysed using a grounded theory approach of deductive analysis.

## 4.4 Counselling and Support

### **Keyword: Counselling**

Counselling in adult education comprises all activities aimed at increasing adult learners' awareness of their personal resources that will enable them to overcome transitional phases, to improve competencies and ability, to take advantage of opportunities and to embrace challenges in a positive way, assuming responsibility for their decisions.

**Source:** *Trans-national Report MOSAIC. Models of Synergetic Activities in Immigrant Counselling* (2002)

The arrival of diverse groups of migrants at adult education centres or at any kind of training organisation requires transformations in the management and educational methods implemented in these institutions. A number of studies

have addressed this issue (e.g. MOSAIC 2002) in order to improve welcoming and counselling services for adult immigrants through experimental models and tools for educational staff and trainers. In the MOSAIC study, the methodological approach developed to achieve these aims consisted of conducting a comparative study on a European scale to compare migrants' welcoming, counselling, assessment, and placement experiences in each of the five participating countries. The aim was to develop a model of "best practices" to be implemented and tested in different national contexts.

The European consortium behind MOSAIC analysed the methods used to welcome immigrants and to provide useful information on the existing training programmes offered by different organisations. It also looked at the ways in which migrants were introduced to training activities and how education providers made sure they enjoyed a quality learning process. In the results, cross-cultural communication skills were highlighted as extremely important in the development of these kinds of services. The procedures used to accompany migrants in their insertion into the labour market were also analysed. Recommendations include providing guidance and help with decision making, vocational consulting, or opportunities to learn from experience.

In a different project, Andersson and Ahn (2004) analysed initiatives regarding the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) developed in Sweden, which mainly focused on prior vocational learning among immigrants. The authors explored different systems of recognising prior learning and identified some of the potential problems that the implementation of these systems creates. Since experience and language are closely related, one of the issues highlighted in this study is the importance of the Swedish language in the whole process of recognition. According to the authors, being able to express and explain what one knows is an important part of one's competencies. As a consequence, immigrants in Sweden who are not proficient in Swedish have a much harder time getting a fair assessment. Furthermore, differences between educational and vocational contexts across different countries create barriers even for the recognition of advanced academic degrees. Since Sweden has many immigrants with high levels of education who work in occupations that do not do justice to their qualifications, this is an urgent problem to be addressed. The authors suggest defining a system of recognising prior learning which would serve to maximise the utilisation of migrants' competencies in Sweden, opening more occupational possibilities for qualified immigrants who are unemployed today.

**Keyword:** Recognition of Prior Learning

The recognition of prior experiential learning (RPL) involves the assessment of skills and knowledge acquired by an individual through previous experience, which is not necessarily related to an academic context.

**Source:** Rimbau-Gilabert and Ficapal-Cusí (2008)

The projects outlined above used a variety of tools to reach their objectives. The MOSAIC project, for example, developed a comparative study of best practices at the European level, using specific tools for developing services related to welcoming and counselling adult learners who are migrants. These services included analysing their personal background, doing interviews, performing psychological diagnoses, writing daily diaries about their job experiences, designing multilingual brochures for the effective dissemination of information, etc. In addition, seminars were held which focused on empowerment, communication, and the integration of immigrants in local communities.

#### **4.5 Overcoming misunderstandings among diverse cultural groups**

In addition to the areas described above, research has been developed to help overcome misunderstandings between different cultures, religions or ethnic groups in European societies, such as the ones that often exist between Muslim and Non-Muslim populations. Prejudice, fear, and intolerance often emerge from these misunderstandings, e.g. between Christian and Muslim communities. As a consequence, inter-religious dialogue seems to be an important mechanism to be promoted in adult education to contribute to overcoming these difficulties in living together. In the “Tolerance and Understanding our Muslim Neighbours in Europe” project, best practices were studied regarding methods and didactic approaches in the field of AE to teach and/or to moderate inter-religious dialogue and communication between Muslim and Non-Muslims (2002). In this particular project, the analysis of “best practices” of promoting exchange and inter-religious dialogue was done through case studies. As a consequence, new innovative approaches and strategies were developed to be implemented throughout Europe.

Similarly, other projects study dialogic spaces between migrants and non-migrants in order to promote exchanges amongst these communities. The main aim of projects, named such as “Who Speaks” (2001) is to give a stronger voice to migrant individuals and collectives within adult education so they can express their needs and can be involved in AE centre management and the decision-making processes. These dialogic approaches help to transform the management of inter-culturalism in adult education classrooms and to promote a multicultural adult education model which responds to the statements made by the movement for Democratic Adult Education (DAE). Based on the results from several multicultural groups organised in three different European countries, a *Manifesto for an Intercultural Adult Education in Europe* was written and disseminated by this project, advocating for an anti-racist approach in the field of AE.

#### **Text box 4: Goals of a Democratic Adult Education**

According to CONFAPEA (Confederation of Federations and Associations of Participants in Democratic Adult Education and Culture):

- To be a connection between different associations with the aim of making information exchanges about the different activities that are created to promote the DAE's movement (Democratic Adult Education).
- To protect participant voices of the subordination of professional and administration voices.
- To promote the DAE's movement through a transforming and democratic educational model, based on the participants Right's declaration and on the *Ethical DAE's code*.
- To promote formative chances for all participants but especially for the more excluded people).
- To promote the elimination of all discrimination situations.
- To work for the educational and social equality of all cultural groups.
- To work against social exclusion.
- To become a valid interlocutor between different institutions and administrations.
- To promote participation of the women collectives in educational and cultural activities and in the social development.
- To promote a DAE's European association creation in a international level.

**Source:** CONFAPEA (link list)

**Keyword: Good Practice**

A good practice is an exemplary project (including results or processes) which has positively influenced systems and practices throughout its activities and results. Consequently, good practices are worth transferring and exploiting in different contexts and environments by new users or entities. (For more information see the website below)

**Source:** European Commission, Glossary of Terms (link list)

Again, we can see that the projects outlined above used different kinds of tools to reach their objectives. In the case of the “Tolerance and Understanding our Muslim Neighbours in Europe” project, forums of exchange and co-operation between academics, experts, adult educators as well as Muslim and Non-Muslim participants were organised in different countries. In addition, they conducted cases studies to gain in-depth insights into current problems, arriving at various useful approaches and methods in adult learning. Their “Best Practices in AE as a Means of Inter-religious Dialogue and Communication” include literature studies and an experience-based needs analysis through focus groups for collecting new and innovative approaches and methods in AE.

Finally, transnational conferences were organised to develop draft guidelines and to share and analyse experiences. Based on these activities, they produced handbooks and new materials for adult educators and developed guidelines for evaluating new materials.

“Who Speaks” is another interesting project previously mentioned in this section. Bringing together groups of people with diverse cultural backgrounds, it was designed to achieve the following objectives: creating egalitarian opportunities for access to education; bringing immigrant voices to public debates on multicultural education; starting an egalitarian dialogue between different cultures to share differences, but also common interests and needs; and grounding all activities on the idea of solidarity across cultures.

## **4.6 Training for adult educators on intercultural education**

Some projects focus on the need for providing intercultural training to adult educators. In the ARTEMIS project (2003), for example, the need for providing training on intercultural learning environments was translated into a train-

the-trainer programme for mediators of intercultural learning, based on a learner-centred approach and to be implemented in cross-cultural learning settings. In a more specific field, explored by the MIMEX project (2002) curricula for the training of mediators in exhibitions, museums and events were promoted since these are spaces where innovative methods for avoiding prejudice towards migrants in host societies can be implemented.

Promoting active citizenship and democratic values is another concern in AE projects focused on migrants groups. Indeed, some projects, e.g. "Pathways to Democracy" (1999), dedicate their efforts to training and re-training AE educators and to producing modules and advisory publications to contribute to this goal. In addition, the enlargement of the European Union has brought on new intercultural challenges in the field of adult education as well. To meet these challenges, great networking efforts have been made to promote the exchange and dissemination of good practices in intercultural learning in order to prepare people to live together with more and diverse religions, languages, cultures, and ethnic roots in mutual respect. The NILE network (2005), for example, composed of 20 organisations, helps to identify settings and situations in which European cooperation on intercultural learning may be useful. NILE's main goal, therefore, is to build a network of interculturally trained adult educators across Europe. Structural and organisational changes have to be made in adult education institutions to satisfy the requirements of intercultural learning, and teaching and learning methods suitable for a diverse range of minority and migrant groups need to be studied more closely.

In fact, intercultural learning and the acquisition of intercultural skills are highlighted as pathways to creating environments of ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity where people can live and learn together. This is one of the goals the European Commission aimed to enforce by proclaiming 2008 the "International Year of Intercultural Dialogue."

Other projects have focused on developing strategies for training adult educators or mediators chosen from within migrant communities. IRIS (2005), for example, developed the role of the intercultural mediator/community learning advocate, providing professional training to members of local migrants or minority communities who have already acted as volunteer community advisors or advocates.

Finally, as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme, the research project on "Immigration as a Challenge for Settlement Policies and Education: Evaluation Studies for Cross-Cultural Teacher Training" addressed immigration settlement policies and cross-cultural teacher training, conducting a study in six countries (Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Israel and United Kingdom).

Some of the main needs identified by this study were: 1) the need for higher education institutions to review their policies and practices in order to support the recognition and the acceptance of ethnic and cultural diversity; 2) the need to develop teacher training programmes that can provide learners with the competencies required to function effectively in multi-cultural environments; and 3) the need to improve “culturally responsive education”.

ARTEMIS, one of the projects presented here, tested different training methods (oral history work in study circles, cultural mediation, outdoor education, tandem learning, learning diaries, etc.) and conducted a permanent evaluation and assessment of the training processes implemented in order to develop a CV and a tool-kit, containing working material, literature, recommendations and examples of good practices. This tool-kit included the following pedagogical methods: oral history, study circles, cultural mediation in/with museums, intercultural learning, tandem learning, and learning diaries.

MIMEX used interpretative methods to analyse the way the concept of “migration” is presented in exhibitions and museums in order to increase our knowledge of migrants’ histories and status quo in different European countries, especially with regard to the history of the migration of workers. Finally, “NILE: Networking on Intercultural Learning in Europe” developed strategies for disseminating and transferring good practices in intercultural learning and made important efforts to clarify key terminology (migrants’ perspective, ethnic and religious minority communities).

## **4.7 Conclusions**

The sources of information presented in this chapter indicate that “Research on Migration in Adult Education” is a field facing several challenges, especially when taking into account the realities of migration in our societies. Researchers address a wide range of topics which require new approaches and insights. Based on the research explored in this chapter, a number of main conclusions may be derived, raising new questions which can be relevant for future work.

One aspect to consider is the extent to which the development of an intercultural approach in the field of AE may help to improve the social inclusion of immigrants in European societies. To this effect, it could be interesting to analyse the differences between the various approaches addressing interculturalism and the different kinds of impact these approaches have on AE practice with migrant populations.



Similarly, it is important to know which of the AE programmes geared towards immigrants manage to achieve higher levels of labour insertion and which programmes help to bring about a better fit between migrants' competencies and their current nature of employment.

Another field for further investigation concerns training methods. We need to know more about which of the methods used in AE programmes are successful in providing migrants with high-quality educational or vocational training.

Adult education can also help to promote the idea that the intercultural exchange going on in European host societies as a result of increased migration represents a form of cultural enrichment. It will be interesting to analyse which methods or tools can favour this understanding and how AE can contribute to reducing racism and xenophobia in host societies in the context of an increasing number of intercultural relationships.

Similarly, we should explore how good cross-cultural communication practices may be ensured in AE provider institutions to offer better services to migrant populations. What are the best ways of guaranteeing migrants' full participation in decision-making processes affecting their learning careers and their professional projects?

Regarding professional development for trainers, it would be interesting to analyse the requirements for "training the trainers" programmes in the field of AE to prepare educators for giving suitable answers to migrants and to define the intercultural skills needed by an educator in the field of AE.

## **Exercises and Tasks**

### *Exercise 1*

Explore some of the websites of the projects mentioned in this chapter. Select three of these projects that match your interests and write a brief piece answering the following questions:

- What are the main objectives defined in these projects?
- Do you think the way these projects are designed is suitable for accomplishing their objectives?

### *Exercise 2*

Explore the work done in the field by the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), the

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (IIZ-DVV) (For descriptions of these organisations, see the section on “Trends in Organisations Related to AE from an International Perspective”). In 2007, IZZ-DVV organised an important conference on migration and integration, which is worth mentioning here (IIZ-DVV, link list).

- Write a short essay answering the following question: What are the main issues explored by these institutions regarding the topic of “Migration and Adult Education”?

### *Task 1*

Working Groups. Study the MOSAIC project in greater depth.

*Resource:*

<http://www.oapee.es/documentum/MECPRO/Web/weboapee/pap/grundtvig/documentos/grundtvig1/compendiumgrundtvig12002.pdf?documentId=0901e72b80003a02>

Starting from the fact that immigrants from non-European countries represent an increasing number of potential beneficiaries of AE provision, this project addresses the need to define new strategies, new models, and new tools related to counselling and information in AE organisations with migrants as participants or clients.

In order to do so, the MOSAIC Consortium developed a comparative study on best practices at the European scale. For this study, partners in participating countries analysed their counselling, welcoming, and assistance systems.

A survey was sent to all partners to collect information about each specific country. The first part of the survey consisted of a description of the organisation/agency, its services and its environment. In its second part, the survey requested details on the counselling and welcoming services provided:

- Information: specific information regarding training courses, legal matters, etc.
- Welcoming: mechanisms to help people interpret information, tools for identifying specialised support services, assistance with course selection, etc.
- Counselling: activities aimed at increasing adult learners’ awareness of their personal resources that will enable them to overcome transitional

phases, to improve competencies and ability, to take advantage of opportunities and to embrace challenges in a positive way, assuming responsibility for their decisions.

- Design a similar survey to analyse the counselling and welcoming services provided in an AE organisation that serves migrants in your community.
- Be sure to include questions about specific challenges the staff of this organisation faces in serving migrant students and ways to overcome them.
- Visit the AE organisation and ask staff to participate in your pilot test.
- Compare your results with those of your classmates and reflect on the following question: What are the main challenges AE providers serving migrant participants or clients typically face? How are they addressed? Based on your research, how should they be addressed?

## *Task 2*

On the following website, you will find a collection of articles published in the *Convergence* journal (from ICADE). Read the following article: Duke, C. & Hinzen, H. (2007). Adult education in migration and integration. *Convergence*, 40, 203-209. What are the authors' main conclusions?

*Resource:*

Duke, C. & Hinzen, H. (2007). Adult education in migration and integration. *Convergence*, 40, 203-209. Retrieved from <http://www.icae2.org/files/convergence34.pdf>.



## 5. Main Areas of Research in AE at the International Level: Research on Inclusion, Access and Participation

### 5.1 Overview of main contents

At the beginning of this chapter, the work of Paulo Freire, an influential Brazilian educator, needs to be pointed out. Freire's seminal study *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) is arguably one of the most important references in the field of AE because of its major contribution to promoting an understanding of education as a means of strengthening democratization and overcoming social marginalization. He wrote about the crucial role that popular movements related to adult education can play in the process of emancipation and in the transformation of societies. Most importantly, Freire identified the consequences of "banking education" on adult learning. In a system of banking education, according to Freire, learners are treated as passive recipients, as objects instead of subjects of learning, whereas educators are considered to be the sole dispensers of knowledge. Freire's critical pedagogy, in contrast, emphasized the dialogical character of democratic adult learning, in which educators also learn from the learners and support them in becoming active participants both in their own learning processes and in society.

#### **Keyword: Banking education**

Banking education (...), through the following attitudes and practices, (...) mirror(s) oppressive society as a whole:

- the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
- the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- the teacher talks and the students listen;
- the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
- the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
- the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;

- the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it.
- the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of students.
- the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects.

Freire (1970, p. 54)

Optimism about the role that AE may play in overcoming inequalities and promoting social inclusion was also voiced at the 5<sup>th</sup> CONFINTEA in Hamburg, where adult education was defined as a means of promoting democracy and extending participation in our societies to all citizens<sup>6</sup>. There is a long way to go in this direction, however. This chapter will present a number of research projects that explore the issues of inclusion, access, and participation.

## 5.2 Threats to equal opportunities and social inclusion in AE

Several authors point out the difficulties that AE programmes designed to promote social inclusion typically face in today's society. Grummell (2007), for example, argues that the current discourse of individualism, consumerism, and market competitiveness led to a colonisation adult education by neo-liberal discourse and political logic. In this context, adult education is often described as a "second chance"

offering adults a chance to re-access education systems or to re-train in new educational skills and knowledge. This view of adult education's contribution to society has been promulgated in state discourses, most recently through the adoption of the concept of life-long learning. (Grummell, 2007, p.183)

According to this view, each individual is responsible for their educational development and training in adulthood. Indeed, this author also indicates how many discourses link this individualisation of learning with people's employability. Collective action, in contrast, is often limited to the efforts of

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6 *The Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning* (CONFINTEA V, Declaration, link list)

marginalised groups themselves. Governmental or societal responsibility for social exclusion, in other words, is largely negated in this kind of discourse.

Grummell specifically explored adult education policies in Ireland, where adult education is understood as emphasising individualism, productivity, institutional control, and a separation of the economic and social roles of adult education. Grummell concludes that the current focus on individual autonomy, economic competitiveness, expertise and consumerism significantly constrains adult education's emancipatory potential (Grummell, 2007, p.197). In addition, he explains how equality of opportunity in education, especially among populations with low levels of participation, is negatively influenced by a neoliberal discourse that emphasizes individual choice and market needs. As a consequence, emancipatory forms of learning that, according to Grummell, should also be considered by the political and economic system, are largely neglected.

Along similar lines, Appleby and Bathmaker (2006) explain how, in recent years, the adult education sector in England has made several efforts to promote basic literacy skills on a national scale, in response to results obtained from a survey conducted among the British adult population. They go on to explain how a commitment to providing wider access to foundation skills for adult learners served to reinforce these efforts as part of a comprehensive lifelong learning agenda. However, these authors also point out that this strategy is more likely to respond to the skills demands of a knowledge-based economy set to become globally competitive than to issues of social inclusion or the need to increase opportunities for lifelong learning (Appleby & Bathmaker, 2006, p. 703). As a consequence, new inequalities may emerge, especially affecting older women and adult students enrolled in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes. Indeed, these authors conclude that, because of its focus on the knowledge-based society discourse, adult learning policy throughout Europe mainly favours participation in higher levels of training which enhance employability instead of widening access to lifelong learning for all.

Similar conclusions can be found in Briefing Paper n°40, *New Perspectives for Learning: Towards the Learning Economy?*, which collects the main conclusions from 29 research projects realised under the FP4 and FP5 RTD, integrated in a cluster (2001-2003) coordinated by Dr. Michael Kuhn (University of Bremen) (Pjb, 2004). Here are some of the ideas which emerged from this cluster:

- The humanistic tradition of education is overshadowed by an economic justification for lifelong learning. The European debate includes the need

for assigning education a relevant role for achieving success in the labour market and increasing productivity, but also for addressing social exclusion.

- There is a lack of analysis regarding the extent to which technocratic and instrumental views of knowledge and learning have dominated the debate on lifelong learning.
- We need increased recognition of knowledge and skills acquired in different organisations on an ongoing basis and of the beneficial role of interaction in people's learning processes.

With a similar focus on inequalities in the development of AE, Merrill (2004) stresses the need for adult educators to listen to the voices of working class adult learners and challenge the structures, policies, and practices in their institutions in order to improve learning processes. Specifically, this author points out that class issues and class inequalities continue to be of key relevance in the lives of adult learners. Indeed, Merrill's argument is based on the biographies of working class learners obtained from two studies. The first of these studies was "Education for All", commissioned by the Scottish Executive and developed in the Scottish context from 1998 to 1999. Its main aim was to identify practices to encourage those who have traditionally been excluded from further education (FE) to participate. The second study was an EU-funded project (4<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme), involving 6 European countries, focused on analysing the widening access for non-traditional adult learners to higher education. In this case, the main aim was to identify policies and practices across Europe which would enhance the participation of adults traditionally excluded from university undergraduate programmes. Based on the data obtained in both projects, Merrill states that the centrality of class in the learning process, and in some cases its intersection with gender and race, was highlighted in the biographies of adult learners and non-participants in the two studies. In conclusion, this author affirms that:

lifelong learning and social inclusion, through adult education rather than the government's agenda, has the potential to address and transform democratically the lives of working-class adult students through the utilisation of "really useful knowledge" and active citizenship in communities. (Merrill, 2004, p. 92)

A 2006 Grundtvig project called "Strengthening Participative Democracy through Collaborative Learning" sought to respond to the threats posed to social cohesion by globalisation, modernity, and individualisation. It tried to counteract the increasing shift away from joint cooperation, solidarity, and common values towards a more individualistic search for interests. The



project thus sought to redefine and reinforce local and regional participative democracy, embracing a concept of citizenship related not only to local, regional, and national democracies, but also to European society.

Finally, it is important to mention another relevant project featured in the 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme. “LLL2010. Towards a Lifelong Learning Society in Europe: The Contribution of the Education System” (2005-2010) is notable mainly for its unusually international dimension. 13 countries are part of this project, which is coordinated by Tallinn University (Estonia): Estonia, Belgium, United Kingdom, Ireland, Norway, Slovenia, Hungary, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Russian Federation, Czech Republic, Lithuania and Austria. The project picks up on the debate mentioned earlier regarding the different meanings that may be assigned to the concept of lifelong learning, both as a means of contributing to economic development and of achieving social cohesion. Thus, this consortium is focused on developing comparative research on the manifestations of lifelong learning policies, practices, and relevant individual experiences at the European, national, and local levels. The consortium develops a joint research agenda

- to better understand the tensions between the knowledge-based society, lifelong learning, and social inclusion in the context of the European Union’s enlargement and globalisation;
- to provide an empirically based analysis of lifelong learning policies in Europe and their implications for different social groups;
- to develop relevant policy proposals for lifelong learning strategies to decrease social exclusion at the European and national levels and identify their implications to relevant areas of social and economic policies.

Regarding the methodological tools developed for the projects presented in this section, the Grundtvig project “Strengthening Participative Democracy through Collaborative Learning”, deserves special emphasis. In this project, a research study on potential elements of and barriers to active citizen involvement in the participating countries was developed. A needs analysis was conducted for determining the conditions that serve to strengthen participative democracy and active citizenship. As a result, a pilot model for active citizen involvement was designed, with special focus on including citizens with an immigrant background. In addition, a special training course was developed.

Another interesting example of a specific research tool is found in the “Education for All” study (Merrill, 2004), in which 70 biographical interviews were conducted with members of three different groups:

- early entrants: adults who had participated in learning prior to the study
- new entrants: learners who were in the early stages of returning to learn
- non-participants: identified through a snowballing approach as friends or relatives of participants, or through community centres and job centres.

Biographical interviews were also the method of choice in the EU project on “University Adult Access Policies and Practices across the European Union”, used, in this case, to link past and present lives.

### **5.3 Fostering participation in adult learning**

Another group of studies has focused on analysing the circumstances around non-participation in adult learning and the existence of specific participation patterns in order to promote the inclusion of non-participants in lifelong learning paths. Starting from two biographical studies of new entrants to Scottish further education colleges, Crossan, Field, Gallacher, and Merrill (2003), for example, went on to develop the concept of the “learning career” as a framework for understanding processes of participation in education for non-traditional adult learners. One of the conclusions these authors derived from their research was that learning careers tend to be complex and multi-directional, and can be vulnerable to sudden changes in the social context of the learner.

Another project within the 4<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (1994-1998), focused on finding ways to widen access to education for socially disadvantaged persons, deserves pointing out. The project entitled “Looking at Innovations in Education and Training” was designed to deepen our understanding of educational innovations, learning arrangements, and specific methodologies required for increasing access to higher education. These innovations included forming networks of public centres such as museums and libraries and facilitating access to such resources for home-based students. Other recommendations obtained from this project highlighted the need for improving the positions of organisations and community centres in providing training and other services to the unemployed and disadvantaged. Finally, the need for defining quantitative and qualitative measures as indicators of performance in the training schemes provided is also pointed out (Pjb, 2001).

We can also find Grundtvig projects which address the need for promoting social inclusion through adult education. The “Parenting in a Multicultural European City” project (2001), for example, was focused on adult educa-

tion for socially excluded and marginalized indigenous citizens, refugees, asylum seekers, migrant workers, and Roma families. The main aim of this project was to involve parents from socially disadvantaged backgrounds in education in order to promote their social inclusion. This project was based on these parents' need for information and support when arriving to a city as newcomers. The final aims pursued included promoting equality, supporting integration and cultural awareness, and combating racism and xenophobia.

Other AE projects have targeted prisoners as a social group requiring concrete efforts to promote their opportunities for further social inclusion. The project "The Will to Dream" (2006), for example, illustrated the benefits of using theatre and video in adult prison education as a way of promoting these adult learners' confidence, realising their potential, avoiding recidivism, and finding new careers. This project gave rise to "The European Prison Art Network", a trans-national network of organisations involved in adult arts education for prison inmates and ex-offenders across Europe, composed of a group of partners who have presented prison art using different technologies.

Other projects seek to address the phenomenon of ageing societies, studying the way exchanges between members of different generations can enrich adult learning processes. "The EAGLE Project" (2006), for example, studied the promotion of learning across age groups and generations, in order to encourage new, innovative and alternative pathways of adult education. Similarly, the "Senior Learning" project (2006) was concerned with the group of older adult learners who are at risk of being left behind because of their unfamiliarity with ICT-based and digital services.

There are several projects that address the vulnerability of people with very low levels of education who tend to be the most underrepresented group in the field of AE in many countries. An example of this is the project on the "Promotion of Social and Personal Skills in Socially Unprivileged Persons as Basic Condition for Lifelong Learning" (2006), which aimed to develop a training concept to support social and personal skills in socially disadvantaged adults as a basic prerequisite for self-regulated lifelong learning.

Regarding the methodological tools implemented in those projects, the innovative use of theatre (drama) and digital video to explore and analyse personal and group reactions and relationships in prison, as in "The Will to Dream" and the "PAN European Network", is especially noteworthy.

Finally, in the "EAGLE project", the research team developed 31 practical case studies on intergenerational learning in Europe, following a variety of selection criteria, including geography, intergenerational learning activities, and a selection of different user groups. For these case studies, researchers designed an in-depth data collection and analysis process built upon

a multi-dimensional approach employing different techniques such as desk research-based content and report analysis, interviews with stakeholders (face to face, focus groups, etc.) and observation and study visits at the actual learning sites.

## 5.4 The dialogic approach in AE to promote social inclusion

### **Keyword: Dialogic approach**

Present-day societies are becoming increasingly more dialogic. The informational societies constitute the symbolic context in which dialogue is penetrating social relations, from international politics to coexistence within our home. Sociological analysis finds dialogical transformations in all fields. Descriptive sociological analyses show that dialogue plays a greater role now than in the industrial society, and even more considerable one than in the pre-modern societies (...) Dialogic societies generate dialogic theories. The fundamental task of sociological theories in the twenty-first century is twofold: one the one hand, to analyse the dialogic dynamic in our societies; on the other hand, to find out what factors promote or hinder such dynamics.

**Source:** Flecha, Gómez, and Puigvert (2003, pp. 128-131)

Some authors view the role of dialogic procedures and dialogic spaces in AE as a means of enhancing adult learners' inclusion in AE practices and in society as a whole. Based on the results of "The Tuition Project", a South African adult education case study, Rule (2004), for example, proposes to analyse the possibilities of dialogue in an adult education practice with an emancipatory agenda. The "Tuition Project" was designed to give young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity of completing their secondary schooling. From the analysis of this case, this author develops the idea of dialogic space in the AE context, which he thinks could have a wider application.

Flecha has made a major contribution to the field by developing his theory of dialogic learning (Flecha, 2000), which offers an exhaustive analysis of the characteristics of adult education practices based on dialogic procedures. This approach to adult education helps to increase social inclusion in AE and in society as a whole. By developing principles such as "egalitarian

dialogue” or the “equality of differences”, for example, Flecha theorises on existing practices in the field of AE such as dialogic literary circles.

**Keyword: Dialogic Literary Circles**

The Dialogic Literary Circle is a reading programme geared towards adult learners without academic education. Programme participants only read classic literature. As a consequence, people who never read a book and were labelled “illiterate” now read Kafka, Lorca, Woolf, Cervantes, and Joyce. This is just the most visible result of a learning process that has many dimensions and whose complete description requires a broader understanding of the reading event.

**Source:** Soler (2002, p. 1)

Through dialogic learning, adult learners and educators organise their daily activities in a way ensuring that all voices, especially those of the traditionally voiceless, are heard and considered relevant in democratic decision-making bodies. In addition, social and cultural differences are managed to the effect that inequalities among people of diverse social and cultural groups are not strengthened, but gradually overcome.

There are several projects which are based on this approach. The “Citizenship for Everyone, from Participation, Basic Education of Adult People and Voluntary Enlistment” project (2006), for example, was designed to create dialogic spaces for strengthening literacy and basic adult education, as contexts for building an active citizenship in solidarity. The main result of this project was the *Manifesto for Our Literacy*, which combines proposals, requests, and priorities expressed by participants in basic adult education.

Regarding methodology: In one of the studies outlined earlier, Rule (2004) conducted a case study of a specific AE project, using qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection (a survey, the reflection on the researcher’s participation, interviews with key participants, and an analysis of documents and exams results).

## 5.5 Conclusions

From our analysis of some of the projects dedicated to “Inclusion, Access and Participation”, a number of key conclusions and questions for further research may be derived.

First, it is important to consider which policies designed to promote lifelong learning contribute to economic growth and, at the same time, to social cohesion, or how lifelong learning policies can respond to the challenges of globalisation.

Second, it is also relevant to know which AE practices are more successful in enrolling low-skilled learners in lifelong learning projects of quality or what elements in AE practice favour the inclusion of people belonging to groups with a higher risk of social exclusion from decision-making bodies.

Third, radical education theory such as the one proposed by Paulo Freire, with its promise of increasing democracy in the field of AE, is another interesting field to study in greater depth. Similarly, it is essential to know which factors (in terms of methodologies, didactics, or forms of organisation) contribute to the non-participation of low-skilled learners or which transformations in AE organisations have the potential of changing non-participation patterns.

Finally, the role of local communities in promoting successful and socially inclusive AE practices should be studied in more detail.

## Exercises and Tasks

### *Exercise 1*

Based on the information provided in this section, write an essay discussing the ways in which research projects may help to overcome inequalities in society.

### *Exercise 2*

Based on the information provided in this section, explain the main difficulties that research projects designed to promote inclusion and increase participation typically tend to encounter today.

### *Task 1*

Explore some of the Grundtvig Compendia (see website in the link section).

- Select projects related to the topic of “Inclusion, Access and Participation”.
- Identify the following elements, if possible:
  - Objectives of the research project
  - Main activities
  - Main results/products
  - Target groups/beneficiaries

### *Task 2*

Read more about the way “LLL2010. Towards a Lifelong Learning Society in Europe: The Contribution of the Education System” (2005) is structured and about the different methodological tools that are used. Compose a short essay answering the following questions:

- What are the main research methods used in this project?
- How do they complement each other in obtaining an overview of lifelong learning policies and initiatives across Europe?

*Resource:*

<http://lll2010.tlu.ee/about-project/specific-objectives-for-subprojects>





## 6. Main Areas of Research in AE at the International Level: Professionalization, Assessment and Counselling

### 6.1 Overview of main contents

Adult education programmes come in many different styles and formats, depending on the context and the specific sector in which AE institutions operate. This complexity is mirrored in the professional profile of the adult educator.

This chapter is primarily based on the conclusions of “The European Research Group on Competences in the Field of Adult and Continuing Education”, a group established by the German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) in 2005 to define a professional profile for adult educators to be shared throughout Europe. In addition, contributions from the conference “Qualifying the Actors in Adult and Continuing Education: Trends and Perspectives” (Q-Act Conference), organised by DIE in May 2007, were used to inform this section. [For both sources, see Nuissl and Lattke (2008).] The Q-Act Conference was designed to highlight the key role of staff in adult and continuing education in terms of ensuring the high quality of programmes in formal, non-formal, and informal learning. One of the conference’s main goals was to initiate a European-wide debate on professionalization and to stimulate policy initiatives to improve the professional development of adult educators in Europe.

Additional sources and research projects, some of which address AE issues outside of Europe, are considered to give an international dimension to this overview of existing “Research on Professionalization, Assessment and Counselling.”

Furthermore, it is important to point out the existence of various professional networks in the field. One of these networks is the ESREA Network on Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professional Development (ReNAdET9), dedicated to issues of quality assurance in the education and training of adult educators in Europe. One of the main tasks of this network is to explore the different roles and tasks of adult educators and trainers and the ways in which their work is assessed. Its general scope is creating a framework for providing

input (both theoretical and empirical) on how to improve the conditions required for the personal and professional development of adult educators, for enhancing the attractiveness of their profession, and for strengthening the concept of quality in adult education in Europe.

Another noteworthy network is the ASEM Network (Asia-Europe Meeting. Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning), which provides opportunities for collaboration between Asian and European countries, emerging as a platform for producing knowledge and exchanging experiences in the field of LLL between these two regions. This network directs its attention primarily to becoming a key resource on sustainable human resource development and to providing policy recommendations with regard to competency development and effective strategies in LLL (Nuissl & Egetenmeyer, 2009).

Before looking at specific studies or projects in this area, it is important to point out that the debate on professionalization has mainly been taking place in individual countries rather than at the European level:

The existing competence profiles vary enormously from country to country, sometimes being more differentiated, sometimes of a more generic character. Reference is made to “core skills” in some cases, and more to instrumental skills in others. However, in no case have the identified competencies been made a compulsory prerequisite for receiving a job in adult education in general. (Nuissl & Lattke, 2008, p. 12)

Nuissl and Lattke (2008) repeatedly emphasize how little is known and how much more research is needed on what they call the “hidden” group of adult educators, i.e. those professionals working in AE only on a part-time basis or those who are not even considered adult educators although they are doing relevant work in this field.

## **6.2 Preparing professionals for lifelong learning**

Professionals in adult education face the challenge of having to design programmes that meet the changing needs of society and of adult learners. Nuissl (2008) argues that rapid changes in society need to be balanced by stability and continuity in the work of adult educators, describing four key fields in which this balance must be achieved: work content, work activity, work context, and work identity. Regarding work content, for example, Nuissl highlights changes in the target group, the contents and the methods of adult education. Demographic processes help to explain an increase of migration, greater life expectancy and a growing number of older learners willing

to acquire higher levels of education. As seen in the previous chapter, disadvantaged groups also become a new focus for adult educators. The emergence of new target groups forces adult educators to acquire new intercultural competencies and to redefine their role as teachers, placing greater emphasis on counselling, supervision, and coaching. The topics of AE have been undergoing major changes as well. New issues related to the environment and health, or to management, economics and the new media have gained greater importance. Finally, teaching methods are also being transformed. According to Nuissl, open classrooms and student-centred teaching methods or the combination of different learning locations and methods become more and more important. Equally significant, he highlights how new work contexts for adult and continuing education have emerged in different countries, such as commercial enterprises providing services in the field. This means that teachers are no longer “free” educationalists but employees of institutions organised along business principles (Nuissl, 2008, p. 104).

Further interesting thoughts on this topic can be found in the *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education*, in which Imel, Brockett, and Blue James (2000) examine three different elements that have had an effect in the process of professionalization of AE: knowledge base, graduate education, and professional associations. In trying to recognise problems and limitations in conceptualizing these areas, they first describe the way scientific literature has influenced the field’s understanding of itself. By giving an account of which perspectives and which voices are represented in the literature and why, the authors highlight the fact that many voices have been left out and that some assumptions about adult learners, which claim to be universally true, have led to some serious errors. One of these mistakes is the fact that “the dominant literature on teaching and learning conveys the idea that the same process can be applied in the same way to all learners, regardless of race and gender” (Imel et al., 2000, p. 631). In other words, they point out that the knowledge base in AE still largely reflects a white, Western European, male way of thinking. As a consequence, they claim that the process of professionalization is neither representative of the field nor of the learners it serves.

Second, the authors argue that graduate studies in adult education have contributed to the professionalization of the field in at least three major ways: by playing an important role in forging an identity for adult educators; by serving as a focal point for scholarship in adult education; and by becoming a key mechanism for people who seek to improve their knowledge and skills in the study and practice of adult education. They also examine different factors that limit the potential impact of graduate programmes in adult education, however, such as the lack of specific credentials required for entrance into the

adult education field or the marginalization that adult education programmes have traditionally suffered within the university context.

Third, the authors highlight several important points with regard to existing professional associations in adult education. Among these, the fact that the current diversity of associations and debates on professionalization sometimes serves to diminish the influence of these associations is particularly relevant. Other major problems identified in the article include the voluntary nature of participation and operation as well as unclear definitions of purposes and lack of funding:

In conclusion, professional associations represent both contributions and limitations to the broader field. The contributions include the individual professional development role, opportunities for networking, an outlet for dissemination of professional literature, and occasional impact on policy. The limitations include failure to serve as a unifying voice for the field; exclusion of certain voices—both unintentional and deliberate; lack of vision; and limited impact on national social policy or decision making. (Imel et al., 2000, p. 639)

Other authors stress the increasing need for defining harmonized degrees in adult education based on clearly defined skills and competencies. Kasworm and Hemmingsen (2007), for example, developed a comparative analysis of two master-level programmes for graduate professional preparation in two countries, Denmark and the US. Their main discussion concerns the overall outlook that should guide graduate-level education of teachers and trainers in AE. Of the two perspectives the authors highlight, one views professional preparation programmes as practitioner's degrees, designed to develop expertise with an eye on today's real-world problems and best practices in the field. The second perspective, in contrast, assumes that academic preparation should be forward-looking and focused on preparing innovative leaders and designers for new and different kinds of leadership.

In this context, establishing competence profiles and standards in the adult learning sector becomes a very relevant concern. At this point, the EU initiative of creating a European Qualification Framework (EQF) comes into play, as Bechtel (2008) points out. This framework provides a shared reference point for defining competence profiles and standards for adult education staff in different countries. The main principles built into this framework include a de-emphasis of formal qualifications in favour of learning outcomes, which can be obtained in formal, non-formal, and informal learning contexts, and descriptions of learning outcomes based on the competencies learners have acquired.

With regard to competencies and skills needed for adult educators, it is important to highlight the European Master's Programme in Adult Education (EMAE) project, initiated by the University of Duisburg-Essen and the Ger-

man Institute of Adult Education (DIE) in 2004. In this project, seven European universities have been working together to develop a curriculum for a master's programme in adult education consisting of a set of common core courses (70 ECTS) and university-specific courses (50 ECTS), all characterised by a strong European dimension.

The EMAE network's main goals include identifying the core competencies needed by professional adult educators in Europe today, developing qualifications of transnational relevance reflecting both traditional and emerging qualification needs, and taking advantage of the synergies and experiences in each European country to develop and implement a high-quality degree programme.

The new EMAE is currently offered at the following three European universities: the University of Duisburg-Essen (Germany), Universitatea de Vest din Timisoara (Romania), and the Università degli Studi di Firenze (Italy).

The VINEPAC project (2006) is an example of initial efforts to design systems for validating the pedagogical knowledge and competencies that adult educators acquire through non-formal and informal settings. This project sought to improve adult educators' public image, to consolidate their professional status, and to promote the compatibility, transferability and transparency of competencies and qualifications at the European level. Some of its main activities involved creating a common pedagogical competency profile for teachers and trainers working with adults and developing a list of standards and indicators for these pedagogical competencies.

Finally, studying the preparation of adult education professionals, Santoro (2005) developed a qualitative case study to investigate the professional identities of trainers in Australia's adult education sector. She analysed how these professional identities are shaped by the intersecting relations of social class, ethnicity, and gender as well as by discourses of vocational adult education. Her findings illustrate how social class, considered in relation to gender and race, shapes the relationships that trainers build with their students and the training strategies and practices they tend to prefer. As a consequence, this author suggests developing critical reflection practices for trainers that encourage them to interrogate themselves about how classed identities shape their views about learning for work and training for work.

The VINEPAC project used a variety of interesting methodological tools such as mapping the roles that adult educators have to fulfill in the knowledge-based society, defining a shared competency framework, defining standards based on a competency profile, and designing methods for validating pedagogical competencies acquired in informal and non-formal settings.

Santoro (2005), in contrast, conducted a qualitative case study using semi-structured interviews with trainers in adult education institutions asking them about classroom practices, their response to VET curricula and their understanding of their role as educators within the adult education sector.

### **6.3 Effective models of professional development**

Some authors have analysed the impact of professional development on teachers' practices and the challenges that the status of many adult educators brings to the field of professionalization. In the US context, Smith and Gillespie (2007), for example, compared K-12 and adult literacy education research literature in order to examine two main topics: a) what is known about what makes professional development for teachers effective; b) how do teachers change as a result of professional development. Although it was conducted in a different context, this study deserves mentioning here for its detailed analysis of the obstacles to professional development that many teachers in adult education have to overcome:

- Time constraints, as many teachers work part-time.
- Financial constraints, as often teachers are not paid to participate in professional development.
- Distance, as professional development is not always organised locally.
- Information gaps, as teachers often teach in decentralised locations and have infrequent contact with other practitioners in and out of the program.
- Lack of face-to face interaction
- Mismatch of goals, between the goals of professional development and individual practitioners' professional interests. (Smith, 2007, p. 212)

At the same time, these authors present various factors which determine the impact that professional development may have on teachers, including curricular content, organisational and system culture (understood as organizational patterns and norms), expectations and incentives for using new practices, etc.

They conclude their article by highlighting the need of further research (e.g. on the relationship between teacher preparation and teacher quality and on the optimal configuration of teachers' working conditions and their relation to teacher quality, student achievement, and teacher retention). According to these authors, more work should also be done to implement

more effective research-based professional development policies and practices.

In response to the need for monitoring quality in the AE practice of professionals, the “Managing Quality of Adult Education in Europe” project (2004) was designed to improve existing quality management systems for adult education organisations. The main objective of this project was to develop a European framework for quality management systems for small size adult education providers. Specifically, the project developed indicators of quality and different assessment tools for evaluating these indicators and for defining quality strategies adapted to the national needs of different partner organisations.

Another example of a project developed to address these issues with a European perspective in mind is the ACCED project (2005), which sought to provide a coherent training course for AE counsellors and practitioners which was to be compatible at the European level. The training course included materials providing an introduction to counselling, professional behaviour, interpersonal behaviour, individual and group learning, career counselling, and information and resource management. The project included two professional development events for trainers in Lithuania and Romania in 2007, designed to improve their counselling skills.

The AGADE project (2004) was another project dedicated to the importance of training adult educators at the international level. It focused on curriculum development, based on principles and criteria that define a good adult educator. The aims of this project included testing and improving the training curriculum for adult educators based on an improved definition of their professional profile, and developing teaching methods which allow for a combination of face-to-face instruction and distance learning.

Other projects have addressed the professional situation of other staff members in the field of AE. The PRO-SAL project (2005), for example, aimed to develop and implement training courses to promote the professionalization of administrative staff in adult and continuing education and to promote their cooperation at the European level.

The PRO-SAL project is also worth mentioning because of the research methods that were used. The research team first conducted a needs analysis with administrative staff at various adult education institutions throughout Europe, using telephone interviews and a printed questionnaire. Based on their findings, they went on to develop modular training courses involving input sessions, plenary discussions, group work, and creative activities.

## 6.4 Conclusions

This chapter was concerned with the main skills and competencies that adult educators should have and with the general conditions affecting the professionalization of the sector. An interesting issue to explore further is how these conditions may be improved.

Furthermore, it is important to learn more about which kinds of statistics should be collected to allow for comparisons between countries regarding the situation of AE professionals.

Another field of interest is the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and possible ways of including it in AE programmes. Specifically, it would be good to know which APEL provisions are most suitable to meet the demands of all adult learners and AE professionals.

**Keyword: Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)**

APEL is the formal acknowledgement (based on professional assessment) of learning acquired from previous experience, usually from experience unrelated to an academic context.

**Source:** Harvey (2004)

Defining a set of key international standards to ensure quality development in the field of AE is another ongoing concern in the field, as well as validating the competencies of adult educators and extending international and national recognition of AE credentials.

Best practices of involving adult educators in strategies of lifelong learning is another topic to be explored further. The same is true of identifying teaching and learning methods better suited to meet the demands of student-centred approaches.

Finally, another topic for reflection is related to the different tasks which are incorporated in the profile of adult education professionals: facilitating, coaching, moderating, planning, and so forth. Exploring best practices in obtaining quality management in the field of AE is another vital concern.



## Exercises and Tasks

### *Exercise 1*

Based on the issues presented in this chapter, write a paper discussing the main competencies and skills needed by professionals in the field of AE today.

### *Exercise 2*

Write a brief paper answering the following questions. What are the main challenges for the professionalization of the field today? How can these challenges be overcome? To answer these questions, you may want to explore the references pointed out in this study guide or consult other related sources for additional information.

### *Task 1*

Read the following article: Bron, A. & Jarvis, P. (2008). Identities of adult educators: Changes in professionalism. In E. Nuijss & S. Lattke (Eds.), *Qualifying adult learning professionals in Europe* (pp. 33-44). Bielefeld. Then answer the following questions: What are the main changes in the role of adult educators? What impact do these changes have on the methodologies used to further develop the profession?

### *Task 2*

*Working Group:* Based on the issues presented in this chapter, define a list of skills required of an adult educator today and describe different kinds of evidence an adult educator may present when making an APEL claim, for example. Explain your list of skills to the group and describe how these skills may be recognised.



## 7. Main Areas of Research in AE at the International Level: Learning in the Workplace

### 7.1 Overview of main contents

This chapter primarily explores the competencies and learning environments that serve to promote adult learners' inclusion in the labour market. Topics to be explored include a look at different procedures for analysing and validating these competencies, e.g. via in-house validation processes at companies as well as the challenges and/or benefits implied in such procedures.

Another important field in which the acquisition of relevant competencies for the labour market occurs is the voluntary sector. Through different kind of mechanisms, non-formal learning is recognised as a way of opening up new educational pathways for adults and for improving their access to European job markets.

Finally, key elements identified by researchers as having an impact on work-based learning include the ways organisations create and manage their learning environments and workplace learners' individual career trajectories.

### 7.2 Acquisition of skills for the workplace

A number of studies analyse the process of acquiring the skills and competencies needed to succeed in today's workplace. Vaatstra and De Vries (2007), for example, used data from a large-scale survey of higher education graduates in order to analyse the competencies acquired in different learning environments and the kinds of workplace-related training these graduates were pursuing. Based on these data, the "Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe" project (CHEERS) defined different kinds of learning environments and 36 different kinds of competencies identified among more than 1,200 graduates from 12 universities in the Netherlands. The research team found that activating learning environments such as problem-based learning and project-based learning are more conducive to the acquisi-

tion of generic and reflective competencies (valuable in the workplace) than conventional learning environments where the teacher is the main source of information and knowledge. They also found that the acquisition of learning skills, analytic competencies, as well as the ability to work independently and as part of a team contribute positively to the development of competencies in graduates' later careers.

Anne Strauch (2006) discusses the importance of developing systems to facilitate the analysis and validation of competencies for individuals and companies. Specifically, she argues for developing organisational systems of competency validation which support not only company competency management, but also individual competency development. She points out that the validation of competencies within companies is a complex process involving several difficulties that also affect individuals. However, she also indicates a number of advantages both at the company level (e.g. creation of greater competency transparency, contributions to internal competency management, etc) and at the individual level (e.g. opportunities for professional careers and employment planning within the company and beyond).

One European action focused on the need for recognising skills and competencies learned in the voluntary sector is the MOVE project (2006). This project studied the extent to which skills and competencies acquired by volunteering were recognised by different stakeholders from the voluntary, business, formal education, and government sectors. The main objective was to create a space for exchanging approaches and expertise between these actors. Participants were encouraged to debate the option of developing a "European Volunteer Pass", i.e. a portfolio of skills and competencies learned through volunteering that might contribute to European institutions' current efforts to find ways of recognising non-formal learning and, ultimately, to the European Qualification Framework.

Similarly, the EASTWARD project (2005) focused on developing accreditation systems for experiential learning acquired in non-formal settings as a way of opening new educational pathways for adults. This project was designed to develop opportunities for lifelong learning at community and workplace learning centres. Its outcomes included web-based support materials and course modules which, in combination, lead to a "European Certificate in Personal Skills".

Regarding the methodological tools used by some of these studies, the most elaborate research design is that by Vaatstra and De Vries (2007), who conducted an international comparative study of the labour market situation of graduates from tertiary education in eleven European countries and Japan as part of a EU Targeted Socio-Economic Research Programme.

About 2,610 graduates from 12 universities in the Netherlands were approached, of which more than 1,200 graduates participated in this survey. The data contains information with respect to 12 different “types of education items” and 36 different “competence items”. The figures obtained represented the graduates’ labour market situation three to four years after graduation.

### **7.3 Factors affecting learning in the workplace**

Peter Jarvis states that the workplace is one of the communities where learning becomes increasingly important (Jarvis, 2007). He highlights the relevance of learning through experience and practice, arguing that the accreditation of learning should not only occur in formal educational settings. He points out the importance of accrediting experiential learning for European job markets and the need for settling on a set of standards to facilitate mobility, such as the European Qualifications Framework.

Several research projects, however, have addressed other factors besides accreditation that have an impact on the development of learning opportunities in the workplace. Eraut (2007), for example, developed a longitudinal study of early career professionals in order to analyse the models and processes of learning they are pursuing. In his findings, several factors influencing workplace learning are highlighted:

- support and feedback (as these are very important elements for learning, retention, and commitment),
- real possibilities to enhance quantity and quality of workplace learning,
- the manager’s role in fostering a culture of mutual support and learning,
- awareness of the different ways through which people can learn in the workplace, ability to discuss workers’ learning needs.

Fuller, Unwin, Felstead, Jewson, and Kakavelakis (2007) identify several ways for organisations to create and manage their learning environments, distinguishing between expansive and restrictive ones. These authors argue that expansive learning environments foster work-based learning and the integration of personal and organisational development. Expansive learning environments are characterized by organisational recognition, support for employees as learners, management styles that encourage the creation and the distribution of knowledge, and mechanisms for valuing the knowledge and

skills of the whole workforce. Restrictive learning environments, in contrast, are typically characterized by a lack of opportunity for off-the-job-learning.

Emphasizing the importance of individual biographies in workplace learning, Hodkinson et al. (2004) identify four distinct dimensions that have an impact on workplace learning. They obtained data from four research projects that make up the research network “Improving Incentives to Learning in the Workplace”, which is part of the Economic and Social Research Council’s (ESRC) Teaching and Learning Research Programme. The work done by Hodkinson et al. is meant as a contribution to the theoretical debate on the relevance of the individual’s worker/learner perspective on the one hand and the relevance of the organisations’ view of work-based learning on the other. In this context, the authors identify the following four inter-linked ways in which biography is relevant to learning at work:

- Workers/learners bring prior knowledge, understanding, and skills with them which can contribute to their future work and learning.
- Workers’ habitus, including their dispositions towards work, career, and learning, influences the ways in which they construct and take advantage of opportunities for learning at work.
- Workers’ individual values and dispositions contribute to the co-production and reproduction of the communities of practice and /or organisational cultures and/or activity systems where they work.
- Working and belonging to a workplace community helps workers develop a habitus and a sense of identity (Hodkinson et al., 2004, p. 10).

Here, the relationship between individual workers/learners and workplace and organisational practices and cultures appears complex and significant. These links illustrate the risk of either over-emphasizing the impact of individual agency in the learning process or assuming some kind of organisational determinism. By contrast, the authors propose an alternative approach:

To improve workplace learning entails enhancing opportunities to learn in the workplace. This may involve constructing more expansive learning environments for workers, based upon a detailed assessment of what workers would want, respond positively to, or need, in a particular setting. This often involves changes to normal working practices, and also to wider structural factors such as pay, promotion and status recognition. Within such an approach, the positions and dispositions of workers should be taken seriously, for example by providing some of the learning opportunities which they value, rather than those which managers assume they either need or should want. (Hodkinson et al., 2004, p. 22)

Along similar lines, Wojecki (2007) explores the relationship between identity and learning for adults enrolled in work-based vocational education and

training programmes. For his study, the author analysed three significant pedagogical practices of workplace training programmes involving adult learners from a regional Australian town. It became clear that adult learners, depending on their previous experiences and biographies of learning, bring particular dispositions to workplace learning. These different backgrounds, therefore, may help to define the dispositions towards learning in the workplace of these adults.

Regarding the methodology of some of these projects, Erault (2007) used observations, conversations, and interviews, including interviews with significant others (managers, team leaders, and mentors). The project on “Improving incentives to learning in the workplace”, which consisted of several sub-projects, implemented a variety of methodological tools such as literature analysis, interviews with representatives of training organisations, and a comparison of the personal histories of research participants. In addition, a multi-level case study methodology was used which included tape-recorded individual and group interviews, observations of employees' workplace activities and of apprentices being assessed for competency-based qualifications, surveys of employee attitudes towards learning at work, an analysis of organisational documentation, and employee learning logs (Project 3).

## 7.4 Learning in the workplace from a critical perspective

Some researchers emphasize the effects of social, cultural, and situational factors when analysing the development of learning experiences in the workplace. Billett (2002), for example, argues for developing a “workplace pedagogy” aimed at developing robust vocational practices in individuals.

**Keyword: Workplace Pedagogy**

Workplace pedagogy is “the development of the capacities that permit individuals to liberate their practice from particular circumstances in which it was initially learned in to apply it elsewhere and to new tasks.”

**Source:** Billet (2002, p. 28)

In order to promote this kind of workplace pedagogy, Billett stresses the need for strengthening the following elements in the workplace: clear guidelines

for work-based learning secure and appropriate guidance from experienced co-workers, and engagement of workers in novel tasks that enable them to expand their capacities.

However, the author also highlights the fact that access to these opportunities is not always distributed equally across the workforce and that inequities can be reproduced through workplace relations. Then he goes on to identify the relevant role of individual agency in explaining workers' engagement in workplace learning activities, while also highlighting the impact that norms and practices in the workplace have on distributing real learning opportunities among workers. Social, cultural, and situational factors should also be taken into account because they interact with individuals' preferences, interests, and possibilities (Billett, 2002, p. 41).

Along similar lines, this same author developed the idea of co-participation at work (Billett, 2004), a concept that understands learning as a reciprocal process. It promotes a more interdependent view of work-based learning, recognising the relevance of both the social world and individual development in the learning processes occurring at the workplace.

Focusing her attention on a particular group of workers, Fenwick (2008) studied the learning process of immigrant women employed in a garment manufacturing plant in Alberta, Canada. Her study is based on a concept of learning that is embedded in everyday practices and social relations:

Learning itself is understood here to be an expansion of capacity, with focus on action that builds individual and collective agency, particularly to enhance workers' well-being and critical awareness of work structures, to foster more equitable structures, and to increase workers' control over their activity. (Fenwick, 2008, p. 112)

The study shows the situation of women, mostly new immigrants or members of other socially disadvantaged groups, who labor in what are often exploitative conditions permeated with racism and sexism. Fenwick highlights how these women are often deprived of the opportunity to bargain for their collective rights and how female garment workers are typically relegated to the lowest paying jobs. What is more, their skills are usually not recognised.

Fenwick explores collective and critical learning among these workers and the options for forging solidarity amongst them as a way of transforming oppressive work conditions and structures. She goes on to point out the role that critical learning can play in engaging workers collectively to question control mechanisms in work processes and to reclaim their agency in work structures. The Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, Tennessee (USA), where, from the 1930s to the 1960s, workers and labour organizers in the textile industries learned through group dialogue and demo-



cratic decision-making, is cited as one example of an institution that has been helping disadvantaged individuals regain control of their lives, both socially and economically.

Fenwick's study provided relevant information about immigrant women's work activities and conditions, about the way they have changed over time, about their relationship with other workers, about their involvement in the union and about earlier learning experiences. Her conclusions highlight the emergence of processes of survival learning and possibilities for critical learning in the workplace. These women, after all, had to negotiate their work conditions, based on what they learned from their experience. The learning spaces where these women interact with their colleagues and superiors allow for the emergence of social networks which generate different forms of solidarity and collective identity:

Yet within them and the solidarities emerging from them, some critical and even transformative learning occurred as women developed a sense of personal worth, collective identity, and strategies to survive and even resist oppressive conditions. (Fenwick, 2008, p. 126)

The issue of creating access to workplace learning opportunities for different social groups is also addressed by Cassell and Lee (2007), who examined the role of trade-union learning representatives (ULRs) in enabling access to learning for those groups traditionally less likely to have these opportunities. First introduced in the UK in 1998, these ULRs work to address different kinds of tasks: to organise learning for other employees, to analyse their learning needs, to advise employees on learning matters, to arrange learning opportunities and to promote the value of learning. In their article, Cassell and Lee provide an overview of different approaches to the implementation of learning opportunities in organisations. They emphasize the great extent to which previous research was focused on strategies exclusively associated with knowledge management and the institutionalization of learning to learn, renewing the importance of self-direction and individuals' personal responsibility in these processes. Much of the existing research on organisational learning, therefore, has addressed the issue of managerial learning instead of focusing on learners with fewer opportunities for self-development. Cassell and Lee investigated the ULR initiative from the perspective of the social actors involved in order to find out whether this experience really creates mechanisms for facilitating access to workplace learning. They conducted an empirical study which concludes by highlighting the way this initiative makes learning accessible to those who may be disempowered, placing learning activities in a context of self-diagnosed learning needs and in a supportive environment.

The SCALA project is an EU project based on similar principles. It is designed to promote the effectiveness of the work developed by adult activists across Europe who are developing a significant leadership role in the promotion of disadvantaged and under-represented communities. One of the ways of doing so is by encouraging new ways of optimising, recognising, and validating their learning outcomes. The aims of this project were to provide community work supervisors with the understanding, knowledge, and skills needed to optimise the work and learning of community activists within the workplace and to ensure the formal recognition of this learning within national education/training qualification frameworks.

The project was primarily targeted at supervisors, leaders, and activists working to improve education and development within disadvantaged or under-represented communities. Ultimately, of course, the members of these communities were the main target group.

In this context, it is interesting to mention the oral history approach, used by Tara Fenwick (2008), for example. Oral history is defined as the collection and preservation of individuals' narrated experiences:

The important thing is capturing the insights into the complex negotiations and strategies of everyday life offered by purposeful actors in ways that enrich broad analytic categories such as hegemony or transformation. Analytic methods for oral history resemble those employed in interpretive qualitative research, privileging the individual's meanings of experience and then layering and contrasting the various voices surrounding this topic or theme under investigation. (Fenwick, 2008, p. 117)

In Fenwick's study, 26 female garment workers were interviewed using semi-structured conversations to explore their memories of everyday work and learning experiences. Foreign language support was provided to those women who asked for it.

In the study by Cassell and Lee (2007), semi-structured interviews were done with full-time trade union officials in charge of learning and enhancing access to learning opportunities in their trade unions. The documentary evidence collected for the study included model and actual learning agreements as well as briefing materials and other learning materials. In addition, informal conversations and a collection of data from different sources and types were also developed, allowing for method and data triangulation to check the validity of each source and to build up a multi-dimensional picture of the phenomena studied.

## 7.5 Conclusions

This chapter presented a number of key questions regarding strategies to make workplace learning more effective. After an initial discussion of the main challenges and opportunities regarding the acquisition of skills in the workplace, the distinction between restrictive and expansive learning environments, which may either favour or hinder the acquisition of these skills, was introduced.

Second, one of the issues more widely explored in this research field is the development of different kinds of mechanisms for recognising and accrediting learning outcomes obtained in formal, non-formal, and informal contexts. Implementing these mechanisms for recognising competencies acquired in the workplace is likely to open up new possibilities for adult learners.

Third, a number of studies pointed out in this chapter address different factors which affect learning in the workplace, e.g. workers' individual trajectories and backgrounds or an organisation's institutional characteristics.

Finally, some authors discuss the need for developing a critical approach for analysing learning in the workplace, designed to address inequalities in workers' enjoyment of lifelong learning opportunities.

## Exercises and Tasks

### *Exercise 1*

How do you think research on “Learning in the Workplace” can contribute to the practice of AE?

### *Exercise 2*

As mentioned above, some researchers explore the differences between expansive and restrictive learning environments. How do you think these different environments can affect the way learning in the workplace takes place?

### *Task 1*

Read the following document: “The Future for Lifelong Learning: An Independent Commission of Inquiry” (IFLL 2008).

*Resource:*

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education. (2008). *Briefing: The Future for Lifelong Learning: An Independent Commission of Inquiry: Inquiry into the Future for Lifelong Learning*. Retrieved from National Institute of Adult Continuing Education website:

<http://www.niace.org.uk/lifelonglearninginquiry/docs/InquiryBriefing2.pdf>

Write a brief paper answering the following questions:

- What is the demand for learning by employers and employees? How can it be measured, encouraged, and supported?
- What is the role of different types of qualifications and levels of qualifications at different stages of the life-course, and what is their value to individuals and employers?

*Task 2*

Research further information about those projects mentioned in this section which are focused on the recognition and accreditation of prior knowledge or competencies and write a brief essay answering the following questions:

- What are the main advantages of these mechanisms for recognising and accrediting prior learning for adult learners?
- What may be the main disadvantages of these procedures? Do you think all social groups will benefit from them?

## 8. International Organisations and Networks with an Impact on Adult Education

This chapter will explore a number of main topics which emerge from analysing the work done in the field of AE by relevant international organisations beyond Europe in order to provide students with a broader perspective on adult education activities at the international level. Again, it is not the intention of this study guide to offer an exhaustive overview of all the debates and trends at the international level, but to highlight some of the relevant topics which are addressed by organisations active in AE or in fields related to AE. At the same time, this chapter is intended to briefly introduce readers to some of the international bodies active in launching initiatives related to adult education and lifelong learning.

### 8.1 Looking beyond Europe's borders

*UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation*

UNESCO is the United Nations' specialised agency for education. Created in 1945, it has been working to improve education worldwide. Its strategy is characterized by understanding education as a key to social and economic development, celebrating diversity and defending human rights in its efforts to provide education for all.

In April 2000, 164 governments and partner institutions came together for the World Education Forum in Dakar. The Dakar Framework for Action committed the international community to reach Education for All (EFA) via six goals, all of them designed to expand educational opportunities for children, youth and adults by 2015. Two of these goals are directly relevant to the field of adult education and training:

3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.
4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for adults. (UNESCO, Education for all Goals, link list).

According to the Summary Report of the EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2007), there are 774 million adults who lack basic literary skills, about 64% of whom are women.

With regard to goals number three and four quoted above, this report highlights the fact that governments mainly respond to the educational needs of young people and adults by expanding formal secondary and tertiary education. It also points out, however, that people acquire very relevant skills in non-formal settings which also deserve attention since these skills, in many cases, are the ones which are better suited to reach out to disadvantaged youth and adults. These non-formal programmes are frequently linked to community development. The report goes on to emphasize the urgent need for improving existing systems of monitoring the supply and demand of non-formal education at the national levels.

Moreover, the report highlights the fact that large-scale literacy programmes, which encompass life skills (health, civic rights, etc.) and livelihoods (income generation, farming, etc.) are quite common in poor areas of countries such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Nepal, and Senegal. In other countries such as Brazil, Cambodia, Egypt, or Indonesia, so-called “second chance services” are often linked to literacy programmes to increase the opportunities of young people. Finally, in countries such as China, Ghana, South Africa, or Vietnam, national programmes are focused on skills development in the informal economy.

With respect to adult literacy rates, the report highlights the fact that more than three-quarters of the world’s illiterates live in only 15 countries, including 8 of the 9 countries with the highest population: Brazil, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Pakistan. Disparities between men and women are especially pronounced in South and West Asia (67 literate women per 100 literate men), in the Arab States (74) and in sub-Saharan Africa (76).

Looking at the measures implemented to change this situation, it is interesting to see how many governments make special efforts to develop literacy programmes and to strengthen the status of non-formal education for the most vulnerable groups of adults.

UNESCO claims that literacy is a human right and that educational opportunities depend on literacy. Literacy is also considered essential for eradicating poverty, achieving gender equality, peace, democracy, etc. For these reasons, UNESCO efforts promote literacy as a one of the core goals of the EFA campaign (link list). These efforts aim to provide all people with literacy skills for life, enabling them to engage in further learning and to adapt to changes in society. Migration and globalisation make the fight against illiteracy a top priority in the AE field in countries around the world.

In addition, the United Nations General Assembly decided in 2001 to launch the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012). This initiative aims to extend educational opportunities to those who are still deprived of literacy by providing them with access to literacy learning activities. It is mainly focused on the literacy needs of adults, especially from the poorest and most marginalised groups, in order to enable them to communicate with their own local communities and society as a whole.

The UN Literacy Decade's objectives include creating locally sustainable literate environments, which will provide people with opportunities for engaging in effective learning and participating in written communication. Proficiency in using electronic media and information technologies is emphasised as one of today's key skills for accessing knowledge.

In order to accomplish these objectives, an International Plan of Action was defined for the Literacy Decade, consisting of six lines of action to implement literacy:

- policy changes to promote suitable frameworks for local participation in literacy;
- flexible programmes to respond to different learners' needs;
- capacity-building on management and planning of programmes;
- research to obtain empirical results to sustain effective literacy policies;
- community participation, promoting good communication with governments and amongst communities;
- monitoring and evaluation procedures to assess the progress made in achieving literacy.

One further interesting feature of this initiative is the prominent role it assigns to learners themselves in the design of literacy strategies.

In addition, the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) (2006-2015) was conceived as a global strategy for achieving the goals and purposes of the UN Literacy Decade. With this strategy, UNESCO aims to empower learners through country-led and country-specific practices informed by evi-

dence-based research. The LIFE strategy is expected to be implemented over a 10-year period in 35 countries with a literacy rate of less than 50% or an adult population without literacy skills of more than 10 million.

Finally, the UNESCO online portal provides a wide range of resources on literacy and vocational training programmes in different regions of the world, such as manuals, videos, handbooks, and guidelines (see the links section below).

### *UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning*

In 2006, the UNESCO Institute of Education became the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). This change reflects both the Institute's long-standing focus on adult learning and the relevance of non-formal education in the context of lifelong learning. The UIL aims to support UNESCO priorities and programmes as well as the Education for All programme, the UN Literacy Decade, the UN Decade for Sustainable Development, and the new Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE). At the same time, its activities continue to focus on literacy, non-formal education and adult learning as a part of lifelong learning. Other UIL issues include the recognition, validation and accreditation of informal, non-formal, and experiential learning.

Amongst the many UIL projects, the following deserve special emphasis:

“Family Literacy”. A pilot project supporting the literacy skills of parents of migrant background and their children (UIL, link list)

This project was designed to enhance the literacy skills of migrant parents and their children. The main focus was on supporting parents in acquiring basic skills to enable them to support their children in acquiring written language skills at home. Moreover, this project provided support to teachers and aimed to intensify the co-operation between parents and teachers at school or kindergarten. Launched in the 2004-2005 school year, this two-year pilot project involved parents of 5-year old children at nine educational institutions in socially disadvantaged districts of Hamburg, Germany.

Literary Exchange: World Resources on Literacy (UIL, link list)

This project is designed to improve capacity building through knowledge creation and training and to provide assistance to governments and NGOs, mainly in the fields of planning and management, research, training of trainers, and development of training systems. The project's main activities in-



cluded creating an Internet platform called “Literacy Exchange: World Resources on Literacy” and an e-learning course called “Literacy and Basic Adult Learning Course”, focused on developing and implementing programmes for non-formal adult literacy and basic education.

Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN) (UNESCO, link list)

This initiative emerged from CONFINTEA V (Fifth International Conference on Adult Education) and aims to facilitate access to adult learning resources. This global network is designed to support capacity-building between adult-learning documentation centres and information services to make information on adult learning more accessible for policy-makers and researchers.

International Adult Learners Week IALW 2005 (UIL, link list)

This week-long event was held in Oslo in October 2005, hosted by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE). It was intended to be a transnational forum for exchange and policy dialogue on the importance of adult and lifelong learning. Three major themes were explored:

- Education for All
- Life Skills
- Diversity and Participation

One interesting feature of this event was the fact that adult learners played an active role in the conference, both as plenary and as workshops speakers. In addition, it is important to mention that the theme chosen for the event was “Education for All in an Era of Increasing Mobility: The Implications for Adult Learning”. The term mobility was used to refer to both the geographical movement of individuals and groups and to social and educational changes.

An interesting outcome of these Learners’ Weeks is the “Learning Festivals Guide” as a way of expanding participation in adult learning through learner-centred strategies. One way of achieving this goal is to develop initiatives that recognise and honour individuals who show, through their experience, how learning opportunities have transformed their personal lives and their communities. Another option is to create spaces in each community for diverse types of stakeholders to engage in a dialogue about these learning processes.

## *OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)*

At the OECD, adult learning is understood as an important factor for economic growth and social and personal development, based on the belief that adult learning can enhance the human capital of both individuals and nations. However, in spite of the benefits of adult learning identified at the social, economic and personal level, the OECD is concerned about insufficient participation in adult learning, which is generally concentrated on certain groups: the younger, the more educated, or those working in large enterprises. According to this organisation, participation in adult learning remains particularly low among disadvantaged groups for a number of reasons, such as lack of motivation, financial constraints, or lack of quality education programmes.

With its publication *Promoting Adult Education* (2005), the OECD provides policy recommendations for improving adults' participation in learning by promoting, amongst other measures, an increase in adult learning benefits, making them more transparent and easily recognised. Other recommended measures include providing economic incentives or co-financing measures which can raise the efficiency of adult learning and improve the quality of adult education programmes by tailoring them to adult learners' needs.

Overall, it is interesting to see how this organisation dedicates most of its efforts to analysing ways of broadening access to higher education and increasing the efficiency and quality of education programmes in order to ensure that adults are increasingly engaged in processes of learning throughout their lives. Its main aim is to help make lifelong learning a reality for an increasing number of adults by trying to understand the patterns that influence adults' access and participation in education and training. Special emphasis is placed on the need for finding ways of improving learning opportunities for the low-skilled to promote their employability. The OECD also works to enhance policies and approaches to increasing incentives for adults to undertake learning activities in OECD countries.

The methodology followed by the OECD consists of national analysis and cross country comparisons. Countries prepare a descriptive "Background Report" on the situation of adult learning. In addition, the OECD review team visits each country to analyse the state of adult learning through discussions with policy-makers, administrators, employers, trade unions, firms, and practitioners.. It also conducts site visits at educational institutions. After these visits, team reporters prepare country notes dealing with issues such as the purposes and priorities for adult learning, incentives to make learning more

attractive to adults, and improving the quality and efficiency of learning and policy coherence.

Finally, a comparative report is written. One of the barriers to increased participation in adult education identified in the 2003 Comparative Report is the fact that provision of lifelong learning opportunities is highly fragmented, does not adhere to a coherent logic, and fails to reach out to groups with greater needs. Policy responses range from general action plans to increase learning opportunities for all adults to more specific programmes designed to upgrade skills of concrete groups of the population in order to increase their training and labour opportunities. Many of these programmes are developed according to a holistic, learner-centred approach.

Measures pointed out in this report include the following (OECD, 2003)

- Developing pedagogical methods appropriate for adults, such as student-centred and contextualised learning to make learning experiences relevant, e.g. the craft school workshops, trade schools and employment workshops in Spain.
- Improving flexibility in educational provision in order to better meet adult learners' needs, e.g. the module systems developed in Denmark and Switzerland.
- Developing initiatives to reach adults who do not traditionally participate in adult learning, e.g. the Adult Learner's Week in United Kingdom.
- Recognising prior learning, e.g. Portugal's national system for the recognition, validation, and certification of school attainment and personal experience.
- Promoting incentives for workers to enrol in learning programmes, e.g. the training leave model implemented in Finland and Norway.
- Promoting skills development and assessment in firms for at-risk groups such as workers who are victims of restructuring or who have not had access to basic education, etc.
- Introducing quality assurance systems to assess the quality of the education and training offer.

Other OECD efforts address the issue of recognising non-formal and informal learning to promote lifelong learning for all. In order to do so, this organisation has developed the project "Recognition of non-formal and informal learning" designed to analyse the role of government and governance, the links to the qualification system, the links to the labour market, as well as personal and professional development. The methodology consisted of an analysis of country backgrounds reports, a thematic review designed to inves-

tigate what works and what doesn't in current practices and to capture innovative case studies, and a collaborative policy analysis.

The outcomes of this project are intended to provide policy-makers with useful recommendations for developing measures to recognise non-formal and informal learning and to implement the "Lifelong Learning for All" agenda effectively.

## **8.2 Adult education associations in Europe and beyond**

### *Adult Education Research Conference (AERC)*

The AERC is an annual conference in North America where adult education researchers share their experiences and the results of their studies. This conference is a key moment for the international adult education research community because it is designed to improve research and evaluation in adult education and to foster professional collaboration in AE research.

### *European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA)*

ESREA works to promote and disseminate theoretical and empirical research on adult education and learning in Europe. In legal terms, ESREA is a non-profit organisation governed by Swedish law, since the ESREA secretariat is located at the Department of Behavioural Sciences and Learning at Linköping University, Sweden.

Within ESREA there are several networks which regularly meet to discuss several research topics. Active ESREA networks include:

- ESREA Network on Access, Learning Careers and Identities
- ESREA Network on Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning
- ESREA Research Network on Working Life and Learning
- ESREA Network on Cross-cultural Influences in the History of European Adult Education
- ESREA Network on Gender and Adult Learning
- ESREA Network on Life History and Biographical Research
- ESREA Network on Between Global and Local: Adult Learning and Development
- ESREA Network on Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professional Development

- ESREA Network on the History of Adult Education and Training in Europe
- ESREA Network on Migration, Ethnicity, Racism and Xenophobia
- ESREA Network on Education and Learning of Older Adults
- ESREA Network on Policy Studies in Adult Education

In 2007, the ESREA General Conference was held in Seville (20-23 September) under the title “Adult Learning and the Challenges of Social and Cultural Diversity, Diverse Lives, Cultures, Learning and Literacies”. Papers were presented in different workshops, including “Understandings of diverse literacies in the process of European modernisation”, “Active citizenship and social participation”, “Narrative, life-story and biographical research”, “Migration, minorities and social exclusion”, “Learning and working life”, and “Local and regional sustainable development”.

### *Consortium of European Research and Development Institutes for Adult Education (ERDI)*

ERDI was established in 1991 as a network of national research and development institutes in the field of adult and continuing education in Europe. Members of ERDI serve different functions in this field: providing services, developing research, or providing policy advice. They are university or non-university institutes supporting the development of adult and continuing education in their countries. ERDI has member organisation from 16 countries.

In addition, ERDI is a space for regular transnational exchange between these countries regarding research results, developments in the field, or policy trends. ERDI members work together on transnational research and development projects and organise international workshops, expert seminars, and conferences. Main topics of past conferences were “Quality assurance” (1999), “Flexible learning environments (2000)”, and “Management of support institutions for lifelong learning” (2001).

Furthermore, it should be mentioned that ERDI coordinated the Grundtvig 4 network project “Supporting the Development of New Learning Pathways for Adults” (2001-2004), which sought to provide an overview of lifelong learning strategies which contribute to the transfer of information and practice between formal and informal approaches, and between different sectors of education and training and their associated professions. The strategies explored were mainly those related to improving promotion and marketing increasing participation especially of those who have not been participat-

ing traditionally, and to improving the quality of educational programmes. (More information is available at New Learning Pathways for Adults, link list.)

### *European Association for Education of Adults (EAEA)*

EAEA is a European non-governmental association composed of 120 organisations from 41 countries. While they are active in different fields of adult learning, most of them focus on non-formal education. EAEA primarily works to influence policy on lifelong learning at the European level, develop good practices through projects, publications and training, provide information and services, and promote international co-operation.

EAEA's advocacy priorities include monitoring and evaluating the work programme "Education and Training 2010" (see section 2.2), participating actively in the development of the Lifelong Learning Programme (see section 2.3), and contributing to the further development of AE in Europe. With respect to providing services and information, EAEA focuses on the professionalization of management and delivery, on identifying ways to improve knowledge sharing, on dissemination activities, and on stimulating innovation. Furthermore, EAEA's aims include providing services to different stakeholders related to the field of A E and increasing the visibility of the field, as well as encouraging networking amongst AE organisations.

### *International Council for Adult Education (ICAE)*

This organisation was established in 1973 as a global partnership of adult learners and adult educators and their organisations in order to promote the use of adult learning as a tool for informed civic participation and sustainable development. Lifelong learning is understood as an important element in people's lives, as it helps to enrich their communities and democratic involvement. Adult and lifelong learning are seen as closely linked to social, economic, and political justice, equality of gender relationships, the universal right to learn, environmental protection, human rights, the recognition of cultural diversity, and the active involvement of men and women in the decision-making processes affecting their lives.

ICAE represents more than 700 literacy, adult, and lifelong learning associations. Its members are from Africa, the Arab Region, Asia and the Southern Pacific, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, and North America. One of its distinctive features is their strategic alliances and partnerships with

global social movements and organisations working in fields related to life-long learning, adult literacy, peace, human rights, primary health care, or gender justice.

ICAE members are committed to supporting people who have been voiceless in finding their own voice. In their *Ochos Rios Declaration* (link list), for example, they proclaimed adult learning a key instrument for promoting democratic citizenship and global action. In this declaration, they express their concern over the inequalities affecting specific groups of people as a consequence of economic globalisation. However, they also show their awareness of emerging forms of global citizenship and grassroots activities which challenge these negative consequences of globalisation.

In order to work for a more equitable world, ICAE promotes actions to support people who have been voiceless in finding their own voice by

- working to ensure that learners are present, heard and taken into account in policy-making at the global level
- supporting the development of the best learning opportunities for all adults, i.e. learning opportunities that are flexible and responsive to their needs
- supporting initiatives to strengthen popular and democratic decision-making
- building up capacity in advocacy for lifelong learning
- promoting networking to help people benefit from each other's experiences and gain access to relevant information
- identifying capacities to transform workspaces into learning sites that serve to fully develop individuals, their organisations, and their communities
- promoting the value of informal and non-formal learning for adults
- strengthening solidarity with adults deprived of the right to learn because of war, violent conflicts, or foreign occupations.

In addition, ICAE launched its “Campaign for the Right to Lifelong Learning” at the World Education Forum held in Porto Alegre on 19-22 January 2003, which understood the transformative potential of education to redress inequalities and discrimination. The ICAE campaign emphasised the need to extend basic education to adult men and women and link it to an ongoing process of lifelong learning.

### *Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults (SCUTREA)*

SCUTREA is a network of researchers working on adult education and training and on continuing education. It was founded 35 years ago, and has gradually become an open network of individuals and institutions with professional interests in the education of adults. SCUTREA organises conferences every year and collects past conference papers in the British Education Index (link list). Additionally, SCUTREA encourages the development of special interest groups to provide opportunities for sharing mutual concerns and developing theory and practice in specific aspects of adult education and training.

### *Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos (OEI)*

The OEI is an international body with a governmental character seeking to improve the cooperation of Latin American countries in a variety of fields such as education, science, technology, and culture to promote development, democracy, and regional integration.

Regarding AE, OEI member states have defined the common goal of giving literacy and basic education a universal character in order to provide educational opportunities to people who have not had them before.

In addition, this organisation has pledged to show respect towards previous experiences and public policies in each member country and to promote solidarity with international agreements on issues related to education, poverty and development

One of the most recent events organised by the OEI was the Congreso Iberoamericano de Alfabetización y Educación Básica para Personas Adultas (Latin American Conference on Literacy and Basic Education for Adult Learners), held in June 2008 in La Habana (Cuba). The conference was entitled “Por un mundo sin analfabetismo y con educación básica para todas las personas” (For a world without illiteracy and with basic education for all). It was designed as a forum for debating the main results achieved through the implementation of existing policies, programmes, methods and strategies of literacy and post-literacy. Another objective of the conference was to define new proposals and initiatives to address these issues. The main outcome was the definition of the “Plan Iberoamericano de Alfabetización y Educación Básica de Jóvenes y Adultos” (Latin American Plan on Literacy and Basic Education for Young and Adult Learners).



*Other relevant organisations include*

*EUCEN* (European Universities Lifelong Learning Network, link list)

*NIACE* (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, link list)

*IIZ/DVV* (Institute of International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association, link list)

*Observatory PASCAL* (Place Management, Social Capital and Lifelong Learning, link list)

### **8.3 Summary: Some of today's main topics in international AE**

This chapter sought to provide brief portraits of the main international organisations involved in the field of AE. The following list summarises the main debates that are on these organisations' agendas:

- Fighting illiteracy all over the world. Developing large-scale literacy programmes, including family literacy programmes and exchanges of resources and knowledge between countries. Understanding literacy as a human right. Developing post-literacy initiatives.
- Emphasising the relevance of skills acquired in non-formal settings, especially with regard to disadvantaged youth and adults.
- Recognising, validating, and accrediting informal, non-formal, and experiential learning.
- Strengthening the role of adult learners as relevant speakers and decision-makers in the field. Giving voice to the voiceless.
- Understanding adult learning as an important factor for economic growth and social and personal development.
- Analysing the reasons for low-skilled individuals' failure to participate in adult learning: financial constraints, lack of quality of education programmes, lack of motivation, etc.
- Finding ways of widening adult learners' access to higher education and increasing the efficiency and quality of educational provision.
- Finding ways of linking increasing levels of adult learning with employability. Strengthening potential connections between learning and work-life.

- Developing quality assurance systems to evaluate the quality of the education and training offer.
- Fostering professional collaboration amongst researchers in the field of AE and promoting international cooperation.
- Diversity and Adult Education: migration, minorities and ways of promoting active citizenship and social participation for all through AE.
- Creating flexible learning environments and transferring information and practices between formal and informal approaches and between different sectors of AE.
- Management of support institutions working in the field: developing new skills for AE professionals with regard to counselling, advising, monitoring, stimulating innovation, and networking.
- Adult learning as a tool for strengthening informed participation, local democracy, and sustainable development. Developing new understandings of adult learning within a globalised society.

## **Exercises and Tasks**

### *Exercise 1*

Select one of the topics listed in section 8.2. Write a brief description your chosen topic based on a quick review of the websites provided in this study guide. Present your description to your colleagues in class and discuss the possibilities of developing future projects on this topic.

### *Exercise 2*

Write a brief essay answering the following question: What are the main differences between the UNESCO's and the OECD's approach to adult education?

### *Task 1*

Explore the proceedings of the 2007 AERC and ESREA conferences. Have a look at the papers submitted. Write a short essay answering the following questions: What are the most intensely explored research areas according to the papers presented? Do you think that the areas you identified in the pro-

ceedings correspond to the main fields of AE research highlighted in this study guide?

### *Task 2*

Select one of the topics listed as relevant in one of these two conferences. Write an abstract in response to this topic, pretending you were a conference participant.



## 9. Summary

This study guide is designed to provide readers with a broad overview of the existing research in four selected fields of AE: “Migration”, “Social Inclusion”, “Professionalization” and “Learning in the Workplace”. The aim was not to give a comprehensive introduction into the entire body of AE research, but rather to present some of today’s main fields and trends in order to promote individual reflection and group discussions about the development of research in these four areas and to encourage critical thinking about the linkages between the general guidelines defined by European policy and concrete European research projects outlined for each research area.

In addition, the research projects highlighted in this guide are presented in a way to provide not only general descriptions of their main objectives and results, but also some information about their methodological design. This information is complemented by descriptions of the main EU programmes that provide a framework for AE research.

In the chapter on “Migration and Adult Education”, various trends were identified, including the need to explore possibilities for increasing the employability and social inclusion of migrant groups by helping them to acquire language skills and basic knowledge on cultural and social issues. The main outcome in many of the projects described above was the development or implementation of training modules and the dissemination of their research results, e.g. in the “New Educational Methods for an Integration of Migrants in the European Society” project (2002-2005). It is important to note that the process of identifying “best practices” and disseminating them through Internet portals, workshops, and conferences has greatly expanded in recent years. The MIGRANET project (2001), for example, worked towards a European-wide approach to ensure migrants’ equal access to lifelong learning opportunities by exchanging good practices in the field. Since migrant women without academic degrees make up one of the groups more likely to be affected by social exclusion, a focus on gender issues is another current research trend in this area. The 1998 comparative study of the situation of immigrant women

in Europe is one example of gender-oriented research, investigating the position of immigrant women and their access to formal and informal education in several European countries.

Many migrant learners coming to adult education centres require specialised support, which is why counselling and support is the focus of another group of research projects. These projects look at current management structures or educational methods and suggest ways of adapting them to migrant learners' needs. The 2002 MOSAIC study, for example, sought to improve welcoming and counselling services for adult immigrants by using experimental models and tools and by enhancing the skills of educational staff and trainers. Finally, the need for overcoming misunderstandings between ethnically or religiously diverse cultural groups is another important research trend because these misunderstandings often reinforce prejudice, fear, and intolerance between, for example, Christian and Muslim communities. It seems that inter-religious dialogue is a crucial vehicle for overcoming these obstacles to living together peacefully and should therefore be promoted in AE. Best practices of teaching and/or moderating inter-religious dialogue and communication between Muslims and non-Muslims have been studied in projects such as "Tolerance and Understanding our Muslim Neighbours in Europe" (2002). Similarly, other projects study dialogic spaces between migrants and non-migrants in order to promote exchanges between these communities. The main aim of some of these projects is to give greater voice to individuals and migrant collectives within adult education as in the "Who Speaks" project (2001) so they can express their needs and be involved in the management of AE centres and in the decision-making process.

The last trend identified in this research area is "Training adult educators in intercultural education". Related projects focus on analysing ways of providing intercultural training to adult educators. Promoting active citizenship and democratic values is another concern in AE projects focused on migrants groups. Some projects dedicate their efforts to training and retraining AE educators and to producing modules and publications containing suggestions and advice, as in the "Pathways to Democracy" project (1999).

In the chapter on "Research on Inclusion, Access and Participation", the following trends were identified. First, significant threats to equal opportunities and social inclusion in AE have been identified. Several authors point out the challenges that AE efforts designed to promote social inclusion continue to face. In his analysis of inequalities in adult education, Merrill (2004), for example, stresses the need for adult educators to listen to the voices of working-class adult learners and to challenge the structures, policies, and practices in their institutions to improve their learning processes. This author in partic-

ular points out the continued centrality of class and class inequalities in the lives of adult learners.

Another trend identified in this field is the need for fostering participation in adult education. Some studies analysed the reasons for non-participation in adult learning and the existence of participation patterns to promote the inclusion of non-participants in lifelong learning paths. Based on two biographical studies of new entrants to Scottish further education colleges, Crossan et al. (2003), for example, developed the concept of learning careers as a framework for understanding processes of participation in education for non-traditional adult learners. Another example is the FP4 project “Looking at Innovations in Education and Training”, which sought to promote educational innovations, improve learning arrangements, and provide specific methodologies for increasing accessibility in the higher education sector.

The dialogic approach in AE to promote social inclusion was also highlighted. Some authors emphasised the role of dialogic procedures and dialogic spaces in AE as a means of strengthening adult learners’ inclusion in AE practices and in society as a whole.

The chapter on “Research on Professionalization, Assessment and Counselling” started by pointing out that AE may take many different forms, depending on the social, political, cultural, or institutional context. This research area is characterised by a high level of complexity which is also reflected in the professional profile of the adult educator. Since AE professionals face the challenge of having to redefine the tasks and roles required to meet the changing needs of adult learners and society, the first important trend in this context is “Preparing Professionals for Lifelong Learning”. What is more, AE contents and topics are experiencing major changes. New issues related to health and the environment or to management, economics and the new media acquire greater importance. Teaching methods are also being transformed.

Another current trend is the development of research on professional development itself. Some authors have analysed the impact of professional development on teachers’ practices and the challenges that the status of an adult educator brings to the field of professionalization. One example of the efforts made to address these issues with a European perspective in mind is found in the ACCED project (2005), designed to provide a coherent training course, compatible at the European level, for counsellors and practitioners working in the field of AE.

In the chapter on “Research on Learning in the Workplace”, the following trends were identified. First, some of the studies presented in this chapter

seek to analyse the process of and preconditions for acquiring skills that are valid for the workplace. Vaatstra and De Vries (2007), for example, used data from a large-scale survey of higher education graduates to analyse the competencies acquired in different learning environments and the workplace training these graduates were pursuing. Another example is the study by Anne Strauch (2006), who discusses the need for developing systems to facilitate the analysis and validation of individuals' and companies' competencies. More specifically, she argues for developing organisational systems of validation.

Second, there are a number of factors affecting learning in the workplace. Several research projects have addressed different factors that have an impact on the development of learning opportunities in the workplace. Fuller et al. (2007), for example, identified different ways for organisations to create and manage their learning environments, distinguishing between expansive and restrictive ones. These authors argue that expansive learning environments foster work-based learning and the integration of personal and organisational development. Restrictive learning environments, in contrast, are characterised by a lack of opportunity for off-the-job-learning. Another research example in this area is Wojecki (2007), who explores the relationship between identity and workplace learning for adults in vocational education and training programmes.

Third, learning in the workplace is approached from a critical perspective. Some studies underline the effects of social, cultural, and situational factors in analysing the development of work-based learning experiences. The issue of facilitating access to workplace learning opportunities for different social groups is addressed by Cassell and Lee (2007), for example, who studied the role of trade union learning representatives in enabling access to learning for those groups traditionally less likely to have these opportunities.

Finally, the chapter on "International organisations and networks with an influence on Adult Education" served to highlight some of the key topics addressed by organisations working in AE or in fields related to AE from an international perspective. At the same time, the chapter was designed to give readers a brief overview of the main international bodies active in launching initiatives related to adult education and lifelong learning.



## List of Abbreviations

<b>ACE:</b>	Adult and Continuing Education
<b>AE:</b>	Adult Education
<b>APEL:</b>	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
<b>CIP:</b>	Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme
<b>DAE:</b>	Democratic Adult Education
<b>DG Research:</b>	Directorate General Research
<b>EC:</b>	European Commission
<b>EQF:</b>	European Qualification Framework
<b>ERA:</b>	European Research Area
<b>ERC:</b>	European Research Council
<b>EU:</b>	European Union
<b>SME:</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises



# Annotated Bibliography

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London.

In this seminal book, Paulo Freire, one of the world's leading educationalists, develops his concept of the pedagogy of the oppressed and defines "banking education" as a key instrument of oppression, as opposed to dialogue-oriented education as a practice of freedom. Freire goes on to develop his theory of dialogic action, which is characterised by cooperation, unity, organisation, and cultural synthesis. In the context of this study guide, his contributions are particularly relevant for understanding the role of AE in fostering social inclusion.

Nuissl, E. & Lattke, S. (Eds.). (2008). *Qualifying adult learning professionals in Europe*. Bielefeld.

This collection of articles is very relevant for gaining an in-depth understanding of the research done with regard to the professionalization of the adult-learning staff in Europe. It identifies current research developments and important opportunities and challenges for the future. The book is the result of the combined outcomes of the European conference "Qualifying the Actors in Adult and Continuing Education" (2007) and the work of the "European Research Group on Competences in the Field of Adult and Continuing Education", set up by the DIE (German Institute of Adult Education). Contributions in this volume are organised in two parts: (1) Aspects Concerning the Professionalization of Adult Learning; and (2) Professionalization of Adult Education Staff in Europe: Current Developments and Future Prospects.

Jarvis, P. (2007). *Globalisation, lifelong learning and the learning society*. Abingdon.

In this book, Peter Jarvis analyses the impact of globalisation on our understanding of lifelong learning. As a consequence of globalisation, learning becomes more work-oriented, for example. In chapter 8, Jarvis provides interesting insights in terms of the different forms that the process of learning can adopt: incidental learning, self-directed learning, and learning in communities of practice. The workplace is highlighted as one of these communities of practice, and major changes resulting from the impact of globalisation on these different types of learning are examined.

Osborne, M., Gallacher, J. & Crossan, B. (2004). *Researching widening access to lifelong learning: Issues and approaches in international research*. London.

This book provides a compelling overview of research efforts that seek to widen access to lifelong learning. With contributions from several authors, this collection comprises research studies from around the world, reflecting the diversity of contexts in which the issue of widening access is studied, including different understandings of the concept of access, organisational and structural change, curriculum development, or labour market outcomes. In addition, this volume includes various innovative methodological approaches implemented by researchers in the field. One of the aims of this book is to inform the ongoing debate on ways of researching the phenomenon of widening access to lifelong learning.

To complement the resources listed above, here is a list of important periodicals and a book series dealing with adult education and lifelong learning.

*Adult Education and Development* (dvv international, Germany, link list)

*Journal of Adult and Continuing Education* – JACE (University of Stirling, United Kingdom, link list)

*International Journal of Lifelong Education* - IJLE (Editors: Jarvis, Peter; Holford, John, Brooks, Rachel, United Kingdom, link list)

*Lifelong Learning in Europe* – LlinE (KSV Foundation and Finnish Adult Education Research Society, Finland, link list)

*Andragogical Studies* (University of Belgrade, Serbia, link list)

*Convergence* (International Council for Adult Education and National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education, Uruguay and United Kingdom, link list)

*Revista de științe ale educației/Journal of Educational Sciences* – RES-Journal (Romanian Institute for Adult Education, Romania, link list)

*Education Alliance Quarterly* (Danish School of Education/University of Aarhus, Denmark, link list)

Relevant book series:

Peter LANG Series – Studies in Andragogy, Pedagogy and Gerontology;

Peter LANG Series – Labour, Education and Society;

Peter LANG Series – European Studies in LLL and Adult Learning Research;

IIZ-DVV Series – International Adult Education

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- Communication of the Commission: Adult learning: It is never too late to learn. Brussels, October 23, 2006. COM (2006) 614 Final.
- Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Action plan on adult learning: It is always a good time to learn. Brussels, September 27, 2007. COM (2007) 557 final.



Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 on establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning. Official Journal of the European Union (November 24, 2006).

Lifelong Learning Programme. Part 1. Priorities of the 2007 General call for proposals. (EAC/61/2006). Brussels, December 20, 2006.

Decision No 1982/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of December 18, 2006 concerning the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013). Official Journal of the European Union (December 30, 2006).

*List of projects explored in this study guide (in alphabetical order)*

*Title:* A Comparative Study of the Situation of Immigrant Women in Europe

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 1998

*Project Reference:* 56453-CP-1-98-1-NL-ADULT EDUC-ADU

*Website:*

[http://www.isoc.siu.no/isocii.nsf/FR\\_print/4CBD2F1B15C432A2C1256CA6004F19AC](http://www.isoc.siu.no/isocii.nsf/FR_print/4CBD2F1B15C432A2C1256CA6004F19AC)

*Title:* ACCED: Continuing Education Designed for Counsellors Working in Adult Education

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2005

*Project Reference:* 225646-CP-1-2005-RO-GRUNDTVIG G1.1

*Title:* AGADE: A Good Adult Educator in Europe (curriculum development project)

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting year:* 2004

*Project Reference:* 114092-CP-1-2004-1-EE-GRUNDTVIG-G11

*Website:* <http://www.folkbildning.net/agade>

*Title:* ARTEMIS: Adult Regional Training for Education in Multicultural and Interactive Study Circles

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2003

*Project Reference:* 110789-CP-1.2003-1-AT-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* Committed Fathers: Optimising Concepts for Family Education for Fathers with a Migration Background

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2002

*Project Reference:* 1013111-CP-1-2002-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* EMAE: European Master in Adult Education  
*Type of Action:* Erasmus. Socrates Programme  
*Starting Year:* 2004  
*Website:* <http://www.emae-network.org:8080/>

*Title:* ERMES-Educazione Radiofonica con i Migrati Europei e I loro Saperi  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2005  
*Project Reference:* 225854-CP-1-2005-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* ETGACE. Education and Training for Governance and Active Citizenship in Europe  
*Type of Action:* Research Project, 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme  
*Starting Year:* 2000  
*Project Reference:* HPSE-CT-1999-00012  
*Website:* <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/politics/ETGACE/>

*Title:* EULLEARN: European University Lifelong Learning Network  
*Type of Action:* ERASMUS  
*Starting Year:* 2004  
*Project Reference:* 109783-CP-2-2004-1-ERASMUS-TN

*Title:* European Women-Images of Interaction  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig-Learning Partnership  
*Starting Year:* 2002  
*Website:* [http://www.european-women.de/fs\\_pro.htm](http://www.european-women.de/fs_pro.htm)

*Title:* European Dream for Immigrants (E-DRIM)  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2005-2006  
*Project Reference:* 225684-CP-1-2005-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-G1  
*Website:* [http://www.tehne.ro/projects/edrim\\_european\\_immigrants.html](http://www.tehne.ro/projects/edrim_european_immigrants.html)

*Title:* FIRST STEPS: Autonomous Learning for Immigrants  
*Type of Action:* Development of Grundtvig training courses  
*Starting Year:* 2006  
*Project Reference:* 229517-CP-1-2006-1-GR-GRUNDTVIG-G1  
*Website:* <http://www.firststeps-project.eu/web/content.asp?lng=en&parent=PROJECT&section=Overview>

*Title:* Greek Language Training for Immigrants  
*Type of Action:* ESF project. Priority Area: Social Inclusion  
*Starting Year:* 2001-2003  
*Website:* [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/esf/docs/el4\\_1\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/docs/el4_1_en.pdf)

*Title:* IMED: Training of Immigrants thus Assisting their Integration into the Host Country Society

*Type of Action:* Socrates, Adult Education.

*Starting Year:* 1998

*Project Reference:* 56406-CP-1-98-1-GR-ADULT EDUC-ADU

*Title:* Immigration as a Challenge for Settlement Policies and Education: Evaluation Studies for Cross-Cultural Teacher Training

*Type of Action:* RTD Project-4<sup>th</sup> FP

*Website:* <http://www.pjb.co.uk/npl/bp1.htm>

*Title:* Improving Incentives to Learning in the Workplace

*Type of Action:* Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)

*Starting Year:* 2000

*Website:* <http://www.tlrp.org/proj/phase1/phase1csept.html>

<http://www.tlrp.org/project%20sites/IILW/index.htm>

*Title:* Integrating Immigrants into the Swedish Workforce

*Type of Action:* ESF project. Priority Area: Social Inclusion

*Starting Year:* 2001-2002

*Title:* IRIS: Training Module for Members of Minority/Refugee Communities to become Learning Advocates and Intercultural Mediators

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2005

*Project Reference:* 225299-CP-1-2005-1-UK-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* LLL2010: Towards a Lifelong Learning Society in Europe: The Contribution of the Education System

*Type of Action:* RTD Project. 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme. CITIZENS-2002-2.1.4 Prompting the Knowledge Society Through Lifelong Learning.

*Starting Year:* 2005

*Website:* <http://lll2010.tlu.ee/>

*Title:* Looking at Innovations in Education and Training

*Type of Action:* RTD Project. 4<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme

*Website:* <http://www.pjb.co.uk/npl/bp7.htm>

*Title:* Managing Quality of Adult Education in Europe

*Type of Action:* Leonardo da Vinci project

*Starting Year:* 2004

*Project Reference:* CV/04/B/F/PP-172.003

*Website:* <http://www.managingquality.lv/main.html>

*Title:* MIGRANET: Benchmarking for the Educational, Social and Cultural Inclusion of European Immigrants  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2001  
*Project Reference:* 90700-CP-1-2001-1-NO-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* MIMEX: Mediation in Museums and Exhibitions-Migration and Work  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2002  
*Project Reference:* 100099-CP-1-2002-1-AT-GRUNDTVIG-G1  
*Website:* <http://www.dillmulli.feek.pte.hu/mimex.htm>

*Title:* MOSAIC: Models of Synergetic Activities in Immigrant Counselling  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2002  
*Project Reference:* 104252-CP-1-2002-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* MOVE: Mutual Recognition of Skills and Competences Gained Through Volunteering – Towards a European Debate  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig Training Courses  
*Starting Year:* 2006  
*Project Reference:* 229786-CP-1-2006-1-BE-GRUNDTVIG-G41  
*Website:* <http://www.cev.be/data/File/CEV-MOVEconferenceReport.pdf>

*Title:* New Educational Methods for an Integration of Migrants in the European Societies  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2002  
*Project Reference:* 100912-CP-1-2002-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* New Ways of Adult Education in Multicultural Societies  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig 2-Learning Partnership.  
*Starting Year:* 2003  
*Project Reference:* 03-DEU03-S2G01-00015-1  
*Website:* <http://www.ifs.lu/Pages/grundtvig.html>

*Title:* NILE: Network on Intercultural Learning in Europe  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2002  
*Project Reference:* 100273-CP-1-2002-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-G4  
*Website:* <http://www.intercultural-learning.net/>

*Title:* OBIS:Orientierungs-Bildungs-und Integrations Service für Migranten  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2001  
*Project Reference:* 89875-CP-1-2001-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-G1  
*Website:* <http://www.isoc.siu.no/isocii.nsf/projectlist/89875>

*Title:* PAN European Network  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2007  
*Project Reference:* 230423-CP-1-UK-GRUNDTVIG-G4  
*Website:* <http://www.panproject.org/>

*Title:* Parenting in a Multicultural European City  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2001  
*Project Reference:* 229977-CP-1-2001-1-UK-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* *Pathways to Democracy: An Opportunity and Challenge for European Adult Education*  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 1999  
*Project Reference:* 70760-CP-1-1999-1-FI-ADULT-EDUC-ADU  
*Website:* [http://www.iris.siu.no/isocii.nsf/FR\\_projectlist/70760](http://www.iris.siu.no/isocii.nsf/FR_projectlist/70760)

*Title:* Promotion of Social and Personal Skills in Socially Unprivileged Persons as a Basic Condition for Lifelong Learning  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2006  
*Project Reference:* 230054-CP-1-2006-1-LU-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* Pro-SAL: Professional Administrative Support for Adult Learning  
*Type of Action:* Grundtvig  
*Starting Year:* 2005  
*Website:* <http://www.est.iq.pl/prosal/project.php>

*Title:* RE-ETGACE. Reviewing Education and Training for Governance and Active Citizenship in Europe- a Central and Eastern European Perspective.  
*Type of Action:* Accompanying Measures, Framework Programme  
*Starting Year:* 2003  
*Project Reference:* HPSE-CT-2002-60054  
*Website:* <http://www.socsci.kun.nl/re-etgace/>

*Title:* SCALA: Support and Assessment of Community Based Work Practice of Adult Workers for Learning & Accreditation

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2004

*Project Reference:* 1168839-CP-1-2004-IE-GRUNDTVIG-GI

*Website:* <http://www.deis.cit.ie/scala/index.html>

*Title:* SeniorLearning: Adapting e-Learning Techniques for Integrating Senior Citizens in the New Digital World

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2006

*Project Reference:* 229756-CP-1-2006-1-ES-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Website:* <http://www.seniorlearning.eu/>

*Title:* Strengthening Participative Democracy through Collaborative Learning

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig-Training Courses

*Starting Year:* 2006

*Project Reference:* 229984-CP-1-2006-1-DK-GRUNDTVIG-G11

*Title:* TEACH: Teaching Adult Educators in Continuing and Higher Education

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2004

*Project number:* 114093-CP-1-2004-PL-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Website:* [http://www.eaea.org/index.php?k=7058&%20projekti\\_id=3364](http://www.eaea.org/index.php?k=7058&%20projekti_id=3364)

*Title:* The EURO-Identity: European Identity Training Module for Immigrants

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2000

*Project Reference:* 88150-CP-1-2000-1-FI-GRUNDTVIG-ADU.

*Website:* <http://www.isoc.siu.no/isocii.nsf/projectlist/88150>

*Title:* The Will to Dream: Promoting Drama & Video in Prison Education

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2006

*Project Reference:* 230424-CP-1-2006-1-UK-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Title:* Tolerance and Understanding: Our Muslim Neighbours in Europe

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2002

*Project Reference:* 100715-CP-1-2002-1-DE-G1

*Website:* <http://www.dialogue-education.org/activities/>

*Title:* Trobada: Citizenship for Everyone, from Participation, Basic Education of Adult, People and Voluntary Enlistment

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2006

*Project Reference:* 229984-CP-1-2006-1-DK-GRUNDTVIG-G11

*Title:* WAYTOUE: The Way to United Europe

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2000

*Project Reference:* 87759-CP-1-2000-1-BG-GRUNDTVIG-ADU

*Website:* <http://www.die.upit.ro/waytoue.php?limba=ro>

*Title:* Who Speaks: The Voices of Immigrants on Adult Education

*Type of Action:* Grundtvig

*Starting Year:* 2001

*Project Reference:* 89756-CP-1-2001-1-ES-GRUNDTVIG-G1

*Website:* <http://www.neskes.net/whospeaks/>

*Title:* University Adult Access Policies and Practices across the European Union: Their Consequences for the Participation of Non-Traditional Adults

*Type of Action:* RTD Project. 4<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme

*Website:* <http://www.pjb.co.uk/npl/bp8.htm>

*Title:* VINEPAC: Validation of Informal and Non-Formal Psycho-Pedagogical Competencies of Adult Educators.

*Starting Year:* 2006

*Project Reference:* RO/06/C/F/TH-84201

*Website:* <http://www.vinepac.eu>





# Links

**Adult Education and Development:**

[http://www.iiz-dvv.de/index.php?article\\_id=121&clang=1](http://www.iiz-dvv.de/index.php?article_id=121&clang=1)

**Adult Education Research Conference (AERC):**

<http://www.adulterc.org/>

**AERC Proceedings:**

<http://www.adulterc.org/>

**Andragogical Studies:**

[http://www.dvv-soe.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=549:qan-andragogical-studies-12009&catid=173:publications-serbia-journals&Itemid=558](http://www.dvv-soe.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=549:qan-andragogical-studies-12009&catid=173:publications-serbia-journals&Itemid=558)

**Asia-Pacific Literacy Data Base:**

<http://www.accu.or.jp/litdbase/>

**British Education Index (BEI):**

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/bei/index.html>

**Conference on Qualifying the Actors in Adult and Continuing Education in Europe (Q-Act):**

<http://www.q-act-conference.de/english/description/index.asp>

**Committee of the Regions:**

<http://www.cor.europa.eu>

**Confederation of Federations and Associations of participants in Democratic Adult Education and Culture (CONFAPEA):**

<http://www.neskes.net/confapea/ANG/indexeng.htm>

**Conferences Internationales sur l'Éducation des Adultes (CONFINTEA) V:**

<http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/confintea/index.html>

Documents: <http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/confintea/documents.html>

Declaration: <http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/confintea/declaeng.htm>

**Congreso Iberoamericano de Alfabetización y Educación Básica para Personas Adultas:**

<http://www.oei.es/CongresoAlfabetizacion/index.html>

**Convergence:**

<http://www.niace.org.uk/publications/academic-journals/convergence>

**Consortium of European Research and Development Institutes for Adult Education (ERDI):**

<http://www.die-bonn.de/erdi/>

**Community Research and Development Information System (Cordis):**

<http://www.cordis.lu>

**Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-Based Society:**

<http://cordis.europa.eu/citizens/home.html>

**Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-Based Society, Links:**

<http://cordis.europa.eu/citizens/links.htm>

**CSR Europe:**

<http://www.csreurope.org/>

**DG Research and 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm)

**Education Alliance Quarterly:**

<http://www.quarterly.dpu.dk/>

**Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency:**

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/static/en/Bots/condocs.htm>

**Socrates TCP Document Library:**

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/static/en/Bots/condocs.htm>

**Education-line Collection:**

<http://brs.leeds.ac.uk/~beiwww/beid.html>

**EU-supported Educational Research 1995-2005. New Perspectives for Learning:**

<http://www.pjb.co.uk/npl/>

**Europe for Citizens Programme:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index_en.html)

**European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA):**

<http://www.eaea.org/>

**European Centre for the Development of Vocation Training (CEDEFOP):**

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu>

**European Commission**

*Agenda 2000:*

<http://ec.europa.eu/agenda2000/overview/en/agenda.htm>

*Calls for Lifelong Learning Programmes:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/call\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/call_en.html)

*Education & Training:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/et\\_2010\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/et_2010_en.html)

*Education and Culture:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/allprogrammes/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/allprogrammes/index_en.html)

*EU policies:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/policies/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/policies/index_en.htm)

*Tempus Programme:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/tempus/back\\_en.html#1](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/tempus/back_en.html#1)

*The Culture Programme:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm)

*The Grundtvig Programme:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc86\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc86_en.htm)

*The European Qualification Framework:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc44\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc44_en.htm)

*The Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 – Glossary:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/glossary\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/glossary_en.html)

*Lifelong Learning Programmes:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm)

*Glossary of Terms:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/valorisation/glossary\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/valorisation/glossary_en.htm)

**European Parliament:**

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu>

**European Research and Development**

*European Research Area:*

[http://cordis.europa.eu/era/concept\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/era/concept_en.html)

*Seventh Framework Programme, Funding:*

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/what\\_en.html#funding](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/what_en.html#funding)

**European Science Foundation:**

<http://www.esf.org/>

**European Social Fund:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/esf/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/index_en.htm)

**Education and Training:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/esf/fields/education\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/fields/education_en.htm)

**European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA):**

<http://www.esrea.org/>

**European Universities Lifelong Learning Network (EUCEN):**

[www.eucen.org](http://www.eucen.org)

**European Vocational Training Association (EVTA):**

<http://www.evta.net/home/index.html>

**EURYDICE:**

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php)

**FP7. Tomorrow's Answers Start Today:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/pdf/fp7-factsheets\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/pdf/fp7-factsheets_en.pdf)

**International Council for Adult Education (ICAE):**

<http://www.icae.org.uy/>

**Ochos Rios Declaration:**

<http://www.icae.org.uy/eng/ordeceng.html>

**International Journal of Lifelong Education (IJLE):**

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/tf/02601370.html>

**Institute of International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association, (IIZ/DVV):**

[www.iiz-dvv.de](http://www.iiz-dvv.de)

**Migration and Integration:**

<http://www.migrationandintegration.de>

**Journal of Adult and Continuing Education (JACE):**

<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/niace/jace>

**Lifelong Learning in Europe:**

<http://lline.fi/>

**National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE):**

[www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk)

**New Learning Pathways for Adults:**

<http://www.ergonkek.gr/pathways/>

**Observatory Place Management, Social Capital and Lifelong Learning (PASCAL):**

[www.obs-pascal.com](http://www.obs-pascal.com).

**Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD):**

<http://www.oecd.org/>

**Thematic Review on Adult Learning:**

[http://www.oecd.org/document/3/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_39263238\\_11997955\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/3/0,3343,en_2649_39263238_11997955_1_1_1_1,00.html)

*Education:*

[http://www.oecd.org/topic/0,3373,en\\_2649\\_37455\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_37455,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/topic/0,3373,en_2649_37455_1_1_1_1_37455,00.html)

**Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos (OEI):**

<http://www.oei.es/>

**Popular Education Links:**

<http://www.catalystcentre.ca/Mapping/mapindex.htm>

**Revista de științe ale educației/Journal of Educational Sciences (RES-Journal):**

<http://www.resjournal.uvt.ro/>

**Socrates Projects Databases:**

<http://www.isoc.siu.no>

**SOLIDAR:**

<http://www.solidar.org>

**Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults (SCUTREA):**

<http://www.scutrea.ac.uk/>

**The European Youth Forum:**

<http://www.youthforum.org/>

**United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO):**

<http://portal.unesco.org/education/>

**Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN):**

<http://www.unesco.org/education/aladin/>

**Education for all Goals:**

<http://www.unesco.org/en/efa-international-coordination/the-efa-movement/efa-goals>

**Education for All International Coordination (EFA):**

<http://www.unesco.org/en/efa-international-coordination/>

**United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012):**

[http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=5000&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=5000&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

**UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL):**

[http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/index\\_uie.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/index_uie.shtml)

**Family Literacy:**

<http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/news/familiteracy.shtml>

**International Adult Learners Week (IALW) 2005**

<http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/InternationalALW/>

**Literary Exchange: World Resources on Literacy:**

<http://www1.uni-hamburg.de/UNESCO-UIE/literacyexchange/>

**Youth in Action Programme:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm)

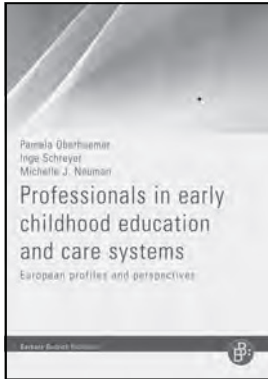


## About the Author

Dr. Esther Oliver is the Ramon y Cajal Researcher at the Department of Sociological Theory at the University of Barcelona, Spain. Phd in Sociology. From 2006 to 2008, she was a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Warwick (United Kingdom) and a Guest Professor at the University Duisburg Essen (Germany). She is the main researcher in the I+D research project “The Mirage of Upward Social Mobility and the Socialization of Gender Violence”, funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (2010-2013). Her most recent publications include the co-authored article “Opening Schools to All Women: Efforts to Overcome Gender Violence in Spain”, published in the *British Journal of Sociology of Education* in March 2009.

Esther Oliver started her scholarly career as a grant recipient at the Centre of Research in Theories and Practices to Overcome Inequalities (CREA) at the University of Barcelona in 1997 and since then has been engaged in several CREA research projects covering a variety of fields: adult education, gender issues, and the analysis of social and educational inequalities. Her involvement with CREA, an institution which promotes the research training and internationalization of all its members, has put her on the international research track. She participated in several research projects, e.g. the ETGACE research of the 5<sup>th</sup> FP, attended international conferences (e.g. SCUTREA 2006 in Leeds, EUCEN 2008 on Lifelong Learning in Edinburgh, or the most recent European Sociological Association (ESA) 2009 Conference in Lisbon), and is an active member of international research networks such as GEA (Gender and Education Association).

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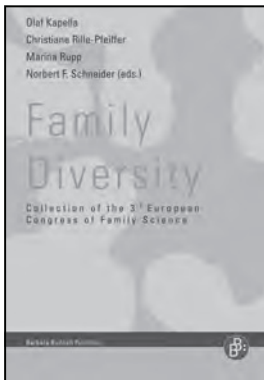
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