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Editorial

Die vorliegende Ausgabe des REPORT ist in zweierlei Hinsicht eine Besonderheit – oder, um in der Sprache des Heftes zu bleiben, eine *special edition*. Zum einen zeichnet sie sich dadurch aus, dass alle Beiträge im Hauptteil des Heftes in englischer Sprache verfasst sind, zum anderen, dass sie in einem gemeinsamen Entstehungszusammenhang gründen: der Internationalen Ringvorlesung zur Weiterbildung. Diese Vorlesungsreihe findet seit zwei Jahren, jeweils im Wintersemester, in Kooperation zwischen der Universität Duisburg-Essen und dem Deutschen Institut für Erwachsenenbildung, Bonn, statt. Als Vorlesung ist sie ein zentraler und frei zugänglicher Teil der Angebote im Master-Programm *European Master in Adult Education*, das als kooperatives Studium von Universitäten in sieben europäischen Ländern angeboten wird.

Auf eben diesen Entstehungskontext der Vorlesungsreihe geht der einleitende Beitrag von Egetenmeyer/Strauch ein. Die Autorinnen differenzieren des Weiteren den zugrunde liegenden Begriff „Trend“, bevor sie die einzelnen, in dieser Ausgabe des REPORT dokumentierten Vorlesungen pointiert zusammenfassen und übergreifende Trends in der Erwachsenenbildung ableiten. Zugleich agierten Regina Egetenmeyer und Anne Strauch – daran sei an dieser Stelle dankend erinnert – als Moderatorinnen der gesamten Ringvorlesung.

Die hier nun vorliegenden Texte basieren auf den Vorlesungsskripten von fünf der insgesamt sieben Vortragenden. Die Internationale Ringvorlesung umfasste aber nicht nur die klassische Präsentation *ex cathedra* im Auditorium, sondern auch eine medial zusammengeführte Diskussion, an der insgesamt mehr als einhundert Interessenten aus zwölf europäischen Ländern teilnahmen, die ihre Fragen und Gegenargumente zum Vorgetragenen äußerten. Die ursprünglichen Vorlesungen und Diskussionen sind nach wie vor im Internet zugänglich oder als DVD an der Universität Duisburg-Essen erhältlich (mehr dazu im Beitrag von Egetenmeyer/Strauch).

Außerdem ist für dieses Heft auf die Rolle des Peer-Review-Verfahrens hinzuweisen. Die Überarbeitung der vorliegenden Vorlesungsskripte erfolgte nicht nur auf Grundlage der oben genannten Diskussionsrunden und der Hinweise der Studienleitungen, die Vortragenden folgten in ihrer Revision der Vorträge auch den Empfehlungen der Gutachter des REPORT. Allerdings konnte die grundsätzliche Anonymität der Beiträge im Peer-Review-Verfahren in diesem Fall nicht realisiert werden – die Ringvorlesung war eine der Fachöffentlichkeit über das Internet jederzeit zugängliche Veranstaltung.

Weder bei der Anfrage der Vorträge noch bei ihrer Bearbeitung für die Druckfassung war es unsere vordergründige Absicht, eine vergleichende Studie zu den Weiterbildungstrends in ausgewählten europäischen Ländern zu erstellen. Bei den hier vorgelegten Ergebnissen geht es uns vielmehr darum, wissenschaftlich begründete Schlaglichter

auf die jeweiligen Entwicklungstendenzen in den einzelnen Ländern zu werfen, die schließlich erst Grundlage für eine vergleichende Analyse bieten können.

Für die Zeitschrift REPORT aber stellt die Dokumentation dieser englischsprachigen Beiträge zugleich einen wichtigen Schritt in Richtung auf eine Internationalisierung der Forschung zur Erwachsenenbildung dar. Der REPORT wird auch in Zukunft – in unterschiedlichen Formen – diesem Ziel verpflichtet bleiben, nämlich die Öffnung der deutschsprachigen Weiterbildungsdiskussion voranzutreiben, um sie noch stärker an internationale Diskurse anschlussfähig zu machen.

Bonn, im Mai 2008
Für die Herausgeber
Ekkehard Nuissl

**BEITRÄGE ZUM
SCHWERPUNKTTHEMA**

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What's new in Europe? Recent Trends in Adult and Continuing Education

Colleagues from various European countries were invited to an international lecture series at the University of Duisburg-Essen to talk about trends in adult and continuing education. Looking back on this lecture series, we intend to examine different approaches to the term "trend" as well as to outline results of current research in adult and continuing education. We will then give an overview of main arguments of the essays presented in the following. Finally, common trends in European adult and continuing education are drawn out.

1. Research Activities in the Field of Adult and Continuing Education

The German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) and the Department of Adult Education at the University of Duisburg-Essen conducted research on recent trends in adult and continuing education in recent years. While researchers at the DIE worked on a trend analysis of adult and continuing education in Germany, the University of Duisburg-Essen addressed this issue together with colleagues from various European universities from an international point of view. The results of this research have just recently come out. Firstly, the DIE (2008) published its study on "Trends der Weiterbildung" which gained sizeable public interest, and secondly, the University of Duisburg-Essen held an international lecture series on the topic Trends in Adult and Continuing Education in Europe in the winter semester 2007/08.

In cooperation with the DIE, this course of lectures has been offered for the second time. It was developed in the context of the European Master in Adult Education (EMAE) which is part of the common core curriculum of the EMAE-universities.¹ Experts from various European countries were invited to present their research on the topic of adult and continuing education from their national point of view for the lecture series. The presentations were followed by an open discussion. At the same time, all sessions were streamed out live on the internet with open access to the public. This proved to be extremely successful as around 100 users from 11 countries followed the lectures².

1 Within the project European Master in Adult Education (EMAE), a curriculum for a European Master Programme in Adult Education has been developed between 2004 and 2007. A common core curriculum was implemented at the University of Duisburg-Essen (Germany) and at the West University of Timișoara (Romania). In 2008/09 further European universities plan to follow, e.g. the University of Florence (Italy). For further information on the EMAE-project see Egetenmeyer/Lattke (2007).

2 Videos of the International Course of Lectures are still available on the platform Moodle at the University Duisburg-Essen as well as on DVD (Nuissl/Egetenmeyer/Strauch 2008). Access to the internet platform is open to the public and can be obtained by contacting the authors: regina.egetenmeyer@uni-due.de or strauch@die-bonn.de.

Seven researchers from European countries took part in the series. These included Ekkehard Nuissl von Rein (Germany) from the hosting institution and Esther Oliver (Spain) who was guest professor at the University of Duisburg-Essen at the time. In addition, the following experts presented their research: Marta Ferreira (European Commission) on general trends in the European Union, Henning Salling Olesen (Denmark) on the Danish situation, Eero Pantzar (Finland) on political trends in his country, Simona Sava (Romania) on the difficulties of an educational system that is still in transition, and Alan Tuckett (Great Britain) on the state of art in British adult and continuing education. The experts' mission was to examine and describe some of the following aspects from their national points of view: legislation, educational institutions, financing, provision, participation, staff, research and higher education, and international contacts. What they finally all provided was an understanding of general trends in adult and continuing education.

In order to document these results, the participants were asked to submit their contributions for publication. It is with pleasure that we can now present some of these results in this volume of REPORT, with essays on Spain, Romania, Finland, Great Britain, and Germany.

In the following section, we will examine the term "trend" as it is used in colloquial language as well as in academic discourse, then continue by extracting some essentials from the research presented, and finally try to identify commonalities.

2. Exploring Trends in Adult and Continuing Education

In colloquial language, a trend is understood as a general directional tendency of movement such as a new view in society, economy or technology, triggering a new move or direction. Fundamental changes in trends as well as implementations of new trends are found regularly in the fashion industry, for example.

Due to the overall interest in the directions where specific processes or systems are heading, there are various means of tracking these, including trend observation, analysis and estimation. Trend estimation is the application of statistical techniques to make and justify statements about trends in a specific field. A series of measurements of a process has to be treated as a time series. It is possible to construct a model to explain the behaviour of the measurement in order to obtain information on increasing or decreasing moves.

Generally, trends can be observed, but they are more difficult to measure and identify in advance. Nevertheless, there are a number of approaches which address new directions and moves in nearly every sector as, of course, in the field of adult and continuing education, too. So what can be said about trends in adult and continuing education?

2.1 Who is dealing with Trends in Adult and Continuing Education?

There is a multitude of approaches to analysing trends in the field of adult and continuing education, and countries, institutions and policy makers all deal with trends. Most studies carried out to identify trends in the field of adult education and adult learning are based on existing studies and surveys. These include national efforts and trend reports as well as international studies which mostly examine the current state of the art in different fields of adult and continuing education. In these studies, the main trends in adult and continuing education are described and conclusions for the future are made.

Looking at who is dealing with trends in adult and continuing education on an international level, we can point to the study "Adult Education Trends and Issues" which was carried out by the members of the European Association for Education of Adults (EAEA) in 2006. In this study, experts from European countries worked together. The team included the Deutscher Volkshochschulverband (DVV) and the European Research and Development Institutes for Adult Education (ERDI).

One of the older studies in this context is the report on an international seminar on "World Trends in Adult Education Research" compiled by the UNESCO Institute for Education in 1994. In this study, research trends in the field of adult and continuing education in Africa, Arab States, Asia, Europe, North America and Latin America were analysed (UNESCO Institute for Education 1999).

In addition to these international studies, there are others analysing trends in adult and continuing education within one specific area or country. Many countries carried out some kind of trend report or trend analysis in the past few years, and there are a number of reports from various institutions and countries (e.g. for Canada: Peters 2004, for France: Isambert 2005, for India: Dutta 2005, for Germany: DIE 2008).

As showed above, there have been various efforts to analyse trends in adult and continuing education initiated by different bodies. Nearly all approaches regarding trends in adult and continuing education share a common method: the identification, collection and analysis of existing sources and data, either national or international. Another common factor is that these studies normally focus on the outcome, access and quality of adult and continuing education practices in dealing with challenges and perspectives.

2.2 Approaches on Trends in Adult and Continuing Education

If we look at existing approaches to trends in adult and continuing education in more detail, we can see that they differ according to the objectives and understanding of the term "trend". In consequence, a variety of approaches are to be found including

those analysing trends as development, attempting estimation of trends, seeing trends as trend-setting or deriving trend issues.

The analysis of different approaches regarding trends in adult and continuing education shows that the experts are working with various understandings of the term “trend” and stress different trends in adult and continuing education on different levels of abstraction. This essay will analyse different views on trends in adult and continuing education in Europe. It will explain the use of different approaches, and show the resulting variety of views on trends in adult and continuing education. For this purpose, we looked at the discourses mentioned above in the literature, the International Course of Lectures, and the essays in this volume of REPORT.

Trend as Development

One approach to trends is to look at the development in a specific area in the past years. By doing this, one can get an insight into the tendencies and look at direction(s) in a specific area. This approach is often used as a starting point for other approaches which we will describe later.

In the International Course of Lectures the experts looked at trend developments from several viewpoints: one view is based on political developments, which affects adult and continuing education, e.g. European and national policies during the last years. Another view on trend developments is based on the development of societies, e.g. the transition from plan to market in Romania. Yet another view on trend developments is based on the analysis of the statistical data available on adult and continuing education which shows the concrete development in one particular country.

Trend as Estimation

Trend estimation indicates a description of the further development in a specific field. Here, trends are understood as an outlook for future developments. Trend estimation is carried out in several ways, as examples in the literature and the International Course of Lectures show.

The study “Trends der Weiterbildung” (DIE 2008) looks at future trends in Germany based on former developments. The analysis of available statistical data in adult and continuing education in Germany is used as a basis for this. Trend analysis gives an estimation of which direction a specific development is going to tend towards.

As Marta Ferreira (2008) stated during her presentation at the International Course of Lectures, Europe faces a “demographic time-bomb” with plunging birth rates and an ageing population posing a real threat to economic prosperity over the next 20 years:

“14 million more older people, 9 million fewer younger people, 2 million fewer learners in Vocational Education and Training, future labour markets will rely more on older workers and migrants”. On the basis of these expectations future strategies for adult and continuing education are to be laid out.

Trend as Trend-Setting

This approach is best described as setting goals and targets to be reached in the next years. These set trends can then be understood as the desired outcome and thereby provide a starting-point for specific developments in adult and continuing education in the future.

In the literature one can find a variety of political approaches that deal with trends in a broader sense as trend-setting. Nearly all studies that give political recommendations can be mentioned in this context as they attempt to set targets. One of these is, for example, the OECD-study of 2005 “Promoting adults learning” (OECD 2005). The main purpose of this report is to gather the key policy lessons from 17 OECD country reviews. This notably identifies the different countries’ approaches to improving access to and participation in adult learning.

An analogous approach can also be found in the International Course of Lectures, for example, in the references to policy documents, e.g. to the Lisbon-Goal of the EU or to national strategies and development plans in lifelong learning. EU-Benchmarking provides other common goals. The EU sets concrete benchmarks for several educational areas, which should be reached in all European countries until 2010.³ Another example of a trend-setting approach is the target of changing adult and continuing education from a remedial to a transformative concept in Spain. Finally, an important perspective of trend-setting is that of identifying competencies that will be necessary in the future.

Trend as Issue

Another approach to trends is to show which challenges can be identified. Here trends present future perspectives, and from these perspectives, the challenges for societies are deduced and the impact of these challenges for adult and continuing education is assessed.

This approach can be found in the EAEA-study. Here, the objective was to carry out a review of national regulatory frameworks, structures and practices, including statistics

³ For example, according to such an EU-benchmark, 12.5 percent of adults participating in this survey are expected to have taken part in an AE-programme within four weeks prior to the survey. In 2000, average participation in the European Union was 7.1 percent, and in 2006 it was 9.6 percent (Commission of the European Communities 2007).

providing indicators on rates of participation and provision, the emphasis being on recent political statements on needs and priorities (EAEA 2006). The results of the EAEA are mainly political recommendations, implications and requirements for action.

In the International Course of Lectures experts identified the challenges which have arisen through immigration or emigration in their countries, as well as economic and social challenges.

3. Trends in selected European Countries

The approaches mentioned above regarding trends in adult and continuing education differ according to objectives and context. The same applies to the presentations the lecturers gave within the International Course of Lectures and their explanations in the following essays. It is important to note that trends must always be seen in the context of different countries' approaches and historical traditions with regard to adult and continuing education. An important factor, too, is that different values, priorities and the different use of terms influence the analysis of trends. However, although the backgrounds are different, it is possible to single out some major trends in adult and continuing education. Evidence for this is amply provided in the articles dealing with recent trends in adult and continuing education in this volume of REPORT.

Esther Oliver's contribution analyses the trend towards democratization in Europe. Her contribution is structured in three parts. The first deals with the theoretical framework of democratization as applied in adult and continuing education. In the second, research development is reviewed. Here she explains the process of democratization through adult and continuing education which is occurring in different contexts. In the third part she analyses the specific process of adult and continuing education practice in Spain. Esther Oliver demonstrates that various efforts towards democratization are being carried out worldwide, and as such, these can be seen as indicators of this trend. The aim is to overcome inequalities within decision-making processes in adult and continuing education. In addition, she gives specific examples of how democratic participation in adult and continuing education can be promoted in a specific context and how to achieve greater inclusion.

Simona Sava refers to the Lisbon process 2010, claiming that it will entail intensive changes and focused efforts in all sectors of society in Romania. The policy priorities here lie in the development of the vocational training system for adults. Simona Sava talks about trends in a diversified array of institutions in Romania, national systems of quality assurance and accreditation of prior experiential learning, increased funds and increased awareness and know-how for adult and continuing education. As in the other contributions, Simona Sava also denotes varying political aims, notably in the national plan against poverty and for promoting social inclusion. She also talks about the low participation of adults in education and learning, one of the lowest in Europe.

Furthermore, she explains the trend of a diversified range of institutions, the trend towards professionalism and a strong tendency towards internationalization of adult and continuing education. One of the main challenges and difficulties in Romania is that, at present, there is as yet no articulated policy for general adult and continuing education and no national strategy for lifelong learning.

Eero Pantzar analyses one particular trend in detail. Rather than identifying a series of trends in Finland, he has chosen one trend that seems to be most important for this country: the trend of citizens not being interested in participating in elections, in membership of political parties and further activities of representative democracy. From there, he derives the challenge of finding methods to foster civic participation and lifelong learning. He examines the guidelines and objectives of political and citizenship education in Finland and gives his attention to the question of how active and democratic citizenship is learnt and how it is taught.

Alan Tuckett introduces his essay by asking what is to be done about the education of adults in Great Britain. The background here, as in all countries, is the importance of giving adults opportunities to obtain vocational skills which will improve their lives, and a generous and inclusive government policy. Looking at trends in adult and continuing education, Alan Tuckett focuses on participation. Not only in Great Britain, but in other countries as well, participation in learning is strongly associated with social class groups. Here, he touches on a wider discussion of the participation trend in adult and continuing education. He observes that participation seems to depend not only on social class, but also on prior educational experiences, current work status, age, and migration issues. These aspects have a major impact on whether or not adults participate in informal, non-formal or formal learning. He talks about the challenge of creating a learning society and increasing social inclusion. A major part of his essay is dedicated to the verifiable health benefits of learning and the impact that these can have on society as a whole.

The benchmarking criteria of the EU, which set out targets in the Lisbon Goals, build the basis of the discussion on trends and policy in an international context. *Ekkehard Nuissl* refers to this in his essay when he talks about a relatively high participation target for continuing education for 2010. He describes different trends as trend estimation for Germany. With regard to financing he talks about significant changes due to the decrease in public funding. He also refers to increasing cooperation as well as competition between adult and continuing education institutions in Germany. Another trend he explains is the greater need for information and counselling which is the result of new forms of learning. The most important feature in this respect applies to the support of participants in the selection of, and decision to take part in programmes and courses. The need for more information and counselling appears to be gaining in importance as course structures of programmes in Germany change, generally providing more modules with shorter duration. Nuissl talks about two more important trends, to do with changes in employment in the adult and continuing education sector on the one

hand, and participation structures, on the other hand, in the light of social inclusion – especially for special groups such as the educationally disadvantaged and older participants.

4. Summary

Most of the studies included in this compilation share a common core that harks back to some major issues. The different aspects of trends in adult and continuing education refer most of all to legislation, financing and infrastructure, to participation in adult and continuing education, and to demographic challenges and migration. Nearly all the approaches aim to give an overview of different aspects of trends in adult and continuing education. The aims and challenges mentioned in the studies pinpoint lifelong learning requirements and stress that lifelong learning requires recognition from governments, and that needs must be embedded into appropriate policies.

Summarizing the trends the authors have identified, we can single out some common factors that can be denoted as main trends. All essays refer to participation in adult and continuing education in general, to social exclusion/inclusion, to professionalism in the field of adult and continuing education, to financing, to new forms of learning, and to internationalization.

All these references can be seen as ways to increase participation rates in adult and continuing education. In all contributions, low participation rates are noted, especially for two specific groups: the older and the unemployed. Against the background of the demographic challenges with which all European countries are confronted, increasing of the participation rate is equally a common and key mission for all. As Allan Tuckett states, this is an important task, not only in the context of a competitive global economy, it is also essential to ensure social cohesion in our societies.

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Adult Education as a Means of Democratization

Recent international trends in Adult Education (AE) mirror the diverse realities this field is experiencing around the world. This article discusses the trend towards democratization through a revision of existing knowledge in three main domains: theory, research, and practice. First, a theoretical framework of democratization as applied in AE will be outlined. Second, recent research developments will be reviewed as they inform the process of democratization through Adult Education which is occurring in different contexts. Third, an analysis of a specific process of democratization in the AE practice will be carried out, based on the situation in Spain.

1. Introduction

There are diverse trends in Adult and Continuing Education throughout Europe. These respond in different ways to the challenges which arise due to globalization and individualization processes, and have different approaches to the implementation of adult and lifelong learning policies. This is also connected to the increasing importance of knowledge, and to changes in the structure of knowledge in today's societies, which emphasize the need to govern knowledge acquisition processes (Arnold et al. 2000). As Arnold and colleagues stress in "Research Memorandum on Adult and Continuing Education" (2000), in spite of opportunities to acquire knowledge being promoted by equal opportunities statements, there is also a risk of new inequalities arising.

In addition, according to their particular contexts, each country has its own specific priorities with regard to the development of AE. Some European countries focus their attention mainly on promoting the acquisition of work skills for adult learners. Others prioritize the importance of improving the development of professional Adult Education as a way of improving the present and future situation in the field. Amongst these trends, a tendency towards democratization in AE can also be identified.

At the 5th CONFINTEA (International Conference in Adult Education) in Hamburg (1997), Adult Education was already defined as a way to promote democracy and to extend full participation of citizens in our societies. In addition, many authors argue that Adult Education has strong potential to transform societies (Freire 1970, Brookfield 2005a, Brookfield 2005b, Lindeman 1987, Cunningham 2000).

In Europe, but also in other regions of the world, the link between Adult Education and different ways of extending social and political participation in local communities, into society as a whole and into the field of Adult Education itself, has taken on different

forms. Therefore, this article provides evidence taken from theory and research, but also from practice, which demonstrates that AE can be an additional means of democratizing communities and, that, in some cases too, it is challenging its own basis by extending democratic AE practices, as the Spanish case illustrates here.

2. Theoretical contributions to democratization in AE

The role of education for democracy has been subject to reflection by several authors at different times. John Dewey (1966), for example, became an important international reference in different disciplines as he clearly contributed to defining the role of education in encouraging social change and in understanding how education could lead to the improvement of democratic life in societies. He considered that the way to create education for democracy was by promoting democratic education:

A society which makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustments of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. Such society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder (Dewey 1966, p. 99).

In the field of Adult Education specifically, other authors have theorized, particularly in relation to the role of AE in the democratization of societies. Eduard Lindeman (1987), for example, stressed, as early as 1944, that Adult Education should be prepared, amongst other things, to “reveal to people the nature of those democratic disciplines which describe the thought and conduct of persons living within a culture which is by affirmation and aspiration democratic” (Lindeman 1987, p. 158–159). In addition, Lindeman also considered Adult Education to be an instrument of social change, which should be oriented towards synchronizing democratic and learning processes.

Paulo Freire wrote extensively about education’s commitment to social transformation and about the popular movement’s struggle for emancipation through egalitarian, dialogic and democratic education (Freire 1970). He identified the consequences of banking education on adult learning. According to Freire, banking education involves learners being treated as passive recipients, as objects instead of subjects of learning, and educators being considered as the sole dispensers of knowledge. In contrast, Freire made very significant contributions to the dialogical character of democratic adult learning, in which educators also learn from the learners and support them to become active participants in their own learning processes and in society:

The important thing, from the point of view of libertarian education, is for the people to come to feel like masters of their thinking by discussing the thinking and views of the world explicitly or implicitly manifest in their own suggestions and those of their comrades. Because this view of education starts with the conviction that it cannot present its own program but must search for this program dialogically with the people, it serves to introduce the pedagogy of the oppressed, in the elaboration of which the oppressed must participate (Freire 1970, p. 105).

More recently, the dialogic character of AE has been analysed by Brookfield (2005a; 2005b), who carried out an analysis of the central role awarded to adult learning in Jürgen Habermas' theories. Based on his interpretations of Habermas' theory of communicative action, Brookfield explains how, due to the dialogic tradition in adult education, adult learners and adult educators can learn to create communicative actions based on validity claims and oriented towards reaching an understanding which supports deliberative and democratic societies. This is a way of trying to avoid conversations oriented towards exploiting or dominating others. He believes that democratic societies need to organize themselves in order to create mechanisms to enhance the freest forms of communication. According to Brookfield, this is the adult learning challenge in the contemporary era (Brookfield 2005b).

Indeed, Brookfield affirms that learning democracy is related to adult learning projects as it involves learning how to apply deliberative decision-making processes to different areas of our lives, and how to resolve contradictions and tensions in democratic societies. In this context, Habermas (1992) describes the rules of a discourse which is based on communicative reason and which provides the basis for democratic processes. These rules are focused on ensuring that all relevant voices are heard, that the best arguments provided are accepted and that only the non-coercive coercion of better arguments is what sustains the affirmations and negations of the participants (cf. Habermas 1992, pp. 260 s.s.). Following these rules can contribute to guaranteeing the legitimacy of decision-making in democratic societies, and this can be learnt through adult political learning (Brookfield 2005a; 2005b).

Along similar lines, Welton (2002) stresses the significance that learning has for political listening in AE, as this is a pedagogical practice of democratic citizenship. Indeed, this author highlights the importance of learning to listen in order to combat anti-listening forces in our societies and their effects which lead to the erosion of solidarity. Specifically, he argues in favour of the role that adult education can have in creating the conditions which enable women and men to speak and listen freely in public: "Commitment to educating the communicatively competent citizen has deep roots in adult education traditions" (Welton 2002, pp. 207). At the same time, Welton stresses the way in which adult educators can support communicative infrastructures in institutions and organizations to promote public debates. Finally, he also points out opportunities for adult educators to create innovative learning processes in which adults can develop characteristics related to the development of democracies. These include self-reflection, moral commitment, resolving discrepancies due to differences of opinion in a respectful way, and being open to the possibility of changing one's mind. Great importance is thus placed on making efforts to learn to listen and to speak in AE in order to construct democratic civil societies, both individually and collectively.

The need to stress the collective dimension of critical adult education and its practice through social movements in civil society is also pointed out by Phyllis M. Cunningham

(2000). She highlights the need to promote democratization amongst adult educators, creating a concept of education which is more related to communitarian processes and goals.

Finally, developments in “dialogic learning” (Flecha 2000) have also provided the foundation for an exhaustive analysis of the characteristics of adult education based on dialogic procedures. Flecha looks at the way this approach to adult education is contributing to increasing democratic practices in AE and in society. Through the development of principles such as “egalitarian dialogue” or the “equality of differences”, for example, Flecha has elaborated on already existing practices in the field of AE. In these practices adult learners and educators organize their daily activities guaranteeing that all voices, especially the voices of the traditionally voiceless, are listened to and considered relevant in democratic decision-making bodies. In addition, social and cultural differences are managed in such a way that inequalities among people belonging to diverse social and cultural groups are not strengthened, but instead, are gradually overcome.

3. International research developments in the field

This tradition, within the Adult Education field, of enhancing the conditions for the democratization of societies, is also addressed by authors who analyse AE experiences implemented in different countries. Merrill (2003), for example, focuses attention on examples of active citizenship carried out in Catalonia, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Slovenia and Scandinavian countries, in order to demonstrate the differences between different models for the promotion of active citizenship and for reaching greater levels of democratization in societies. In Catalonia and in Northern Ireland, community-based learning is a feature in transforming people’s lives and tackling social, political and economic inequalities, while in Scandinavian countries and in Slovenia, activities such as study circles are also a form of learning democracy helping adults decide upon learning materials.

Specifically, the impact of study circles or public forums is also analysed by Gastil (2004) through two field studies involving deliberative forums. Gastil stresses the way the democratic character of societies can be promoted through deliberative civic education. He argues that “in civic educational contexts, participants can strengthen their political beliefs and develop democratic conversation habits” (Gastil 2004, pp. 311). This study focused on the National Issue Forums (NIF) in the US, where the research participants were learners from adult basic literacy courses and other learning programmes. Gastil states that adult participation in civic education can promote political deliberative conversations and strengthen speaker networks. These types of deliberative educational practices can hence facilitate the involvement of adult learners in democratic discussions, although some of the results also indicate scepticism regarding the effectiveness of some groups which are based on political discussion and action.

Subsequently, Gastil affirms that the effectiveness of these deliberative forums can vary according to the quality of the adult education programmes being implemented. So, deliberative civic education does have the potential to change the democratic involvement of adult learners, but its success cannot be taken for granted. On the contrary, its success depends on the way in which these forums are conducted and experienced by adult learners.

Amongst other experiences, Merrifield (2003) analysed some initiatives carried out in Scotland. She reflected on the levels of engagement and active participation of adult learners in Adult Education. Even though there are still only limited real opportunities for many adult learners to be fully involved in the negotiation of course content, in their evaluation or in consultation processes about which courses should be offered, some relevant experiences of democratization within AE are mentioned. One of these experiences is a Learners' Forum located in Edinburgh, called ALFIE (Adult Learners' Forum in Edinburgh), which is a voluntary organization run by adult learners who take part in community-based groups to share ideas and experiences, and to express their collective views to decision-making bodies. Learners' Forums in Wales, which also emerged in 2001 in order to promote the voices of learners in discussions with professionals and decision-makers, are also discussed.

In addition, Merrifield indicates the way NALA (The National Adult Literacy Agency) in Ireland is fostering learner's voices. Indeed, NALA has designed a quality framework to be used for literacy schemes as a tool to monitor the development of practices to define methods for improvement. The quality framework ensures the involvement of different stakeholders (tutors, managers, volunteers, learners etc.) in these processes, as this is considered to be a basic element in the creation of democratic education environments.

In Portugal, research findings indicate that, in recent years, the country's tradition of popular associations promoting democracy and active citizenship has undergone changes (Guimarães/Sancho 2005). Guimarães and Sancho reflect on the results of the PIAE (Popular Initiated Adult Education) research project (1997–2002) which was funded by the EU Socrates Programme and run by the University of Minho's Unit for Adult Education. The University of Linköping (Sweden) and the University of Cork (Ireland) also participated in this project. Based on its findings, some risks were identified which are associated with a trend observed in the country: an increase in the predominance of more pragmatic and market-oriented approaches. However, due to the fact that popular associations are developing important forms of welfare provisions not offered by the state, Guimarães and Sancho highlight the need to increase efforts to create radical forms of popular and adult education which can promote democratic practices (cf. Guimarães/Sancho 2005, pp. 59 s.s.).

The impact that AE can have on the democratization of societies has also been analysed in other regions of the world. Steven E. Finkel (2002), for example, examines

the effects of adult civic education programmes on political participation in the Dominican Republic and South Africa. Through survey data collected from participants in different civic education programmes and control group respondents, findings show significant results in four of the seven civic education programmes analysed. He found that the effects of democratic training and civic education on local-level participation depend on several variables: the frequency and nature of civic education “treatment”, the extent to which the programme focuses on participation or other democratic orientations, the participatory teaching methodologies implemented, as well as the individual’s store of prior political and participatory resources.

That is, we expect to find greater effects when individuals receive more frequent exposure to the mobilizing messages of civic education; when those messages are taught through more intensive, involving participatory methodologies; and when the individual has sufficient political resources to act on the messages received through civic education training (Finkel 2002, p. 1012).

These contributions demonstrate that there are difficulties with regard to extending democratic procedures within the field of AE or increasing their effects on wider society. However, they also show that efforts are being carried out worldwide, demonstrating the existence of a trend to address these issues. Indeed, based on scientific literature and research, a tendency can clearly be identified which is mainly oriented towards overcoming inequalities within decision-making processes in AE. This tendency also specifies the way in which more democratic forms of participation can be implemented in this field, becoming a real option for those who have been traditionally excluded.

In the next section, the Spanish case will be analysed to show how these aspects can be found in concrete AE practices. The case provides specific examples of how these forms of democratic participation in AE are promoted in a particular context and how they are achieving greater inclusion for those adult learners whose voices have hitherto remained unheard.

4. Trends towards democratization in AE practice: the case of Spain

In the following section I will focus on recent developments in democratization that occurred in the field of AE practice in Spain. Several facts and events, worthy of mention, have had an important impact on the progression of this trend.

The precedent set by La Verneda-Sant Martí School of Adults

This adult education school was founded in 1978 by local people from La Verneda, then a working-class area in the city of Barcelona, and is a point of reference in terms of democratic popular education in Spain (Puigvert/Valls 2005). As Sánchez-Aroca (1999) points out, the exceptional characteristic of the school is the level of involvement of adult learners in all of its structures, and in the democratic processes carried out in all of its spaces: from the class-room situation (e.g. taking into account the adult learners’

interests in decision-making processes with regard to scheduling or deciding on the content of teaching) to the development of didactic materials. This implies the definition of decision-making structures in which teachers, students, volunteers and members of the community are involved through egalitarian dialogue, in which everything is discussed and decided collectively, without hierarchies in the school's structures. This means that adult learners ("participants") are able to take part in decision-making at all levels of school organization.

This dialogic way of functioning is also manifested in two learner's associations, *Ágora* and *Heura*, for the participants in the school. These associations, along with the various decision-making bodies and assemblies on a weekly or monthly basis, allow decisions to be made collectively and are the mechanisms which contribute towards guaranteeing the democratic nature of this internationally recognized AE practice.

The Participants Bill of Rights (FACEPA 1999)

The Participants Bill of Rights in Adult Education (FACEPA 1999) is one result of the popular education movement which has been working to democratize AE practice in Spain and, also, at an international level. The Bill was elaborated by several forums involving adult education participants, in which, through dialogue and discussions, the basic rights for participants in AE which it contains were agreed upon. A preliminary draft circulated throughout Spain, and later on, the same procedure was carried out with participants from other European countries such as Belgium, the Netherlands, and Hungary (Puigvert/Valls 2005). This Bill has no statutory effects, but it has been used as a framework to request more commitment to recognizing the rights of participants in AE from organizations and governments.

Significantly, other countries have also carried out similar initiatives. Merrifield (2003) reports experiences in Scotland and the US, for example, where several Bills of Rights for Adult Learners have been agreed upon. These were, in many cases, defined according to the opinions of the adult learners' themselves, based on the need to ensure the rights of all adults who wish to learn in any setting. These experiences involve recognition of the learner's rights to be involved in designing and planning educational programmes, and in decision-making processes. In this sense they can be considered significant elements in helping to move towards societies aiming for more democracy.

The DAE movement

Although for many years, many adult learners' associations in Spain have been working to achieve democratic quality education and full participation in society, the Democratic Adult Education (DAE) movement which emerged in 2000 marked a shift in this area. The Confederation of Federations and Associations of Participants in Democratic Adult Education and Culture (CONFAPEA), which consists of different associations and organizations for adult learners who manage themselves, organized the 1st Tri-Confer-

ence for Democratic Adult Education in Barcelona that year. During the three-day event researchers, adult educators, and adult learners discussed how to democratize research on and the practice of AE. Since then, this event has been held every three years as a state-wide forum in which all parties are involved in the discussion on an equal basis. After the 1st Tri-Conference, an Ethical Code of Democratic Adult Education was drawn up and agreed upon by all the participants. This forms the basis on which collaboration between researchers, educators, and participants is constructed, guaranteeing that the interests and needs of the latter constantly occupy a predominant position (Puigvert/Valls 2005).

CONFAPEA works with the support of the REDA (Network for Democratic Adult Education), which consists of adult educators and the Spanish Network of University Professors and Researchers in Adult Education (Group 90), which includes professors from universities which support this social movement. As Puigvert and Valls stress (2005), CONFAPEA promotes ways to guarantee that participants in adult education can decide what kind of education they want for themselves. One of the most significant characteristics of this movement and of all the activities that it organizes is, in particular, the central role of participants who do not hold previous educational qualifications and would thus normally be at a higher risk of facing social and educational inequalities.

In order to ensure the maintenance of this central role, the participants organize different events in which they reflect on AE practice and its democratization: the Annual Adult Learner's Conference, Dialogic Literary Circles, Summer Schools and so forth. "This organisation has been central to the development of the democratic adult education movement in Spain, a platform for collaboration among participants, educators and university teachers and researchers" (Puigvert/Valls 2005, p. 92).

Indeed, the DAE movement is based specifically on the predominant position of those participants who do not yet hold a university degree, and on collaboration between them and adult educators and researchers. The three groups work together to improve and democratize AE, and to give a voice to those who had been voiceless in the field, particularly in decision-making processes. This way of organizing the movement achieves high levels of success as regards designing the means for these participants to lead the whole movement and guide the future of adult education.

5. Conclusions

This article has provided evidence of a trend towards democratization in the field of AE. Theories, research and practice demonstrate this trend, which is evident in more than one country. In addition, several authors have indicated obstacles arising from the difficulties associated with efforts oriented towards increasing democratic practices in AE and in societies in general.

Indeed, current international contexts are also affected by a number of tendencies which are moving in opposite directions to those which aim to address the problems of social exclusion or inequalities, and to democratize decision-making bodies in the field of AE. However, in spite of these difficulties, initiatives towards democratization in the field of AE either exist or are currently emerging worldwide. Some of the contributions analysed here clearly focus attention on the need to promote and improve the dialogic procedures used in the field, in order to guarantee real egalitarian participation for the speakers. Actually, further analysis of which dialogic procedures really do contribute towards promoting democracy in AE practice is needed. This would serve to complement scientific contributions which have already demonstrated the significance that the procedures and methodologies used so far have, with regards to achieving democratic AE practices.

At the same time, the impact which adult education practices can have on deliberative and democratic structures as well as on social transformation is highlighted, confirming the significance AE could achieve in democratic societies. In this sense, the importance of popular movements linked to AE has been pointed out, as they are crucial with regard to defining processes of democratization and emancipation.

The Spanish case provides a specific example of this, one which is set in a particular context but which illustrates the emergence of and the strength acquired by a participant's movement (adult learners). This movement is organized by people who face great educational and social inequalities. Yet, in spite of the difficulties which exist in society when developing these types of movements, these same people are at the forefront of the democratization of AE practices in their own contexts and by extension, they are thus promoting an improvement in the democracy being developed in their communities.

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Trends in Adult and Continuing Education in Romania, a Country in Transformation

*The Plan to market transition brought with it the restructuring of the labour market, but also unemployment, new job profiles, and ongoing reform of the education system. Within the catch-up process of joining the EU and harmonizing the legislative framework and developments with the *aquis communautaire*, the effort to set up and implement effective policies was relatively coherent. But the results achieved so far show that much more efforts are needed, as the participation rate of adults in education is still only 1.6 percent. Positive trends can be identified as well: a diversified range of institutions, a national system of quality assurance and of APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning), increased funds allocated in the last two years, and an increased awareness and know-how in the field of ACE¹.*

1. Looking back at the last two decades

Romania is one of the largest countries to have joined the European Union recently, with about 22 million inhabitants. Since 1989, the year of the revolution that ended communist domination, the country is undergoing a transformation from a centralized state communist society and ideology to a democratic pluralist one and market economy. This transition required the enablement of adults to cope with these changes, on the one hand. On the other hand, this transition meant the restructuring of the labour market since large industrial enterprises were closed down and many small and medium enterprises (SME) were set up. The closing down of the large, formerly state owned enterprises forced them to lay off large numbers of people. This resulted in unemployment – a phenomenon new to us, as in the over-planned communist economy everyone had a job guaranteed. A large number of dismissed workers received benefits that were often designed as “labour market exit benefits” (policies focused on assuring social security, hence creating a kind of dependency trap), rather than “transition into new employment”. Thus the policies focusing on stimulating flexibility in the labour market have developed, one can say, consecutively, rather than complementarily to the social ones, at least in the first part of the transition period (until about 1999 when the National Agency for Labour Force and Occupation, the public body implementing the action plan for employment and handling government

1 From a theoretical point of view there is no one official definition and acceptance on Adult Education as a term, those using the term normally creating their own delimitations. There is no clear distinction between *Adult Education* (AE) and *Continuing Education* (CE) and sometimes there is an overlapping with Permanent Education and Lifelong Learning. The notions AE and CE are used synonymously and reunite in the comprehensive term *Adult and Continuing education* (ACE), even though we should mention that AE has more obvious connotations with general cultural and personal development, while CE is focused mainly on the vocational aspects of Adult Education.

money for unemployed people, was set up). This can be also explained by the rather slow economic development, with a limited capacity of the Romanian market to offer attractive jobs, and thus difficult perspectives for those returning to the labour market. Many people have had recourse to the informal economy or have chosen cross-border labour movement.

To reduce the high unemployment rate, an early retirement scheme was adopted as social policy, which meant that many people could already opt for retirement at the age of 55 or even earlier. Because of this possibility, over the years the retired population has become almost as high as the active population, with negative effects from the economic, social and individual points of view.

Apart from the economic changes, there were professional ones regarding new job profiles. The rapid increase in the use of computers in job settings determined the need for further training, a need adults were more or less aware of. This was a new challenge for adults who had to cope with a kind of functional literacy, especially for those over 35 years old, who had been working within the stable communist regime for more than ten years, accustomed to the slow dynamics of job tasks, and who had not hitherto participated in further training. For this sector, being unemployed or retired was a life crisis most could not handle, not used as they were to taking initiatives or responsibility for learning paths. "Learned helplessness" was a major barrier for those in the situation of looking for a new job they were not sure to get.

Furthermore, the education system is experiencing ongoing reform since 1989. The structural, curriculum and managerial changes, the amendments and improvements of the changes, have also had their "successes", as the school drop-out rate of 19 percent in 2006 fell below 20 percent for the first time in many years, although still remaining higher than the EU average of 15.3 percent. This phenomenon goes hand in hand with the need for adult basic education and a second chance to education. Thus a new challenge for ACE has arisen, as existing provisions were not equipped to address this issue at a qualitative level, as it also involved new know-how. The solution of a second chance for education for young people between 15 and 24 was implemented by the Ministry of Education in a pilot phase since 1999 (but at the beginning only for marginalized groups, like Roma), and was extended at national level about two years ago.

A positive fact of school reform was the extension of the education period, due to increased offers for higher education. The percentage of 22-year-olds having achieved at least upper secondary education level (2006: 77.2 percent) is about EU average. These figures need to be seen in the context that at the end of the 1980s Romania's labour force had one of the lowest qualification levels in Europe (European Commission 2007, p. 53).

Taking into account only the most important traits of the transformations mentioned above, it is obvious that there is increasing demand for ACE and that new developments

need to be put in place. ACE status, as a dynamic component of the education system, is determined both by the fundamental changes taking place in domestic socio-economic and political spheres, and by the dynamics of the changes occurring at European and global levels. At the same time, however, many of the present-day dimensions of the Romanian AE system are a projection of traditions already existing.

2. Recent history

Until 1989, adult education was seen mostly as a mass centralized phenomenon mainly with cultural connotations aimed at spreading the (artificial) popular movement of the communist system, yet in the last seventeen years the main trait of AE has been its changing status due to new decentralized and flexible offers. The changes were explosive, diverse and in the first half of this period, rather anarchic, because of the lack of a coherent governmental strategy in this field. But in the last decade, the framework of development set up by the Romanian government (that is the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research and Youth) has been more coherent. The efforts in this area have mainly been focused on developing professional education in order to solve the phenomenon of unemployment, and address the major changes in the labour market and job profile.

At the same time, offers in general liberal adult education decreased dramatically because of the reduction in demand and financing, in spite of the well-developed institutional system all over the country before 1989. The state did not use its forming power in shaping the system of general AE (e.g. education for personal development, civic and political education etc.), neither by building up a coherent concept on the role of general AE, nor by supporting the activation of AE (e.g. for social inclusion). The changes that took place at a legislative level, due to EU requirements, were not internalized entirely in day-to-day life (e.g. gender issues or defence of civic rights), partly because the resources to implement politic and legislative stipulations were not foreseen accordingly. General AE was carried out mainly by the civic actions of the non-governmental sector that have developed rather slowly and were not strong enough to bring about a powerful change of mentality and attitude, or dynamic change in public opinion. Sociologists tend to argue that in a society with fundamental transformation (as from a communist ideology to a pluralistic democratic society), about 40 years are needed in order to build up a strong civic society and public opinion. So, a great deal of effort as well as practical experiences is still needed in order for the Romanian democracy to develop.

Another important player with strong impact on the education of adults is to be mentioned: the media. This has known an explosive development due to the opening up of society while embracing democracy. One of the main achievements of democratic society was freedom of expression and information. Adults increasingly make use of the media, especially television, and this phenomenon influences their decision to participate or not in educational programmes.

To sum up, analyzing the evolution of ACE since 1989, developments can be divided into three phases, reflecting the main traits and levels of evolution. However, this distinction is mostly a didactic one, because the evolution has a continuum logic, with interference of all the traits mentioned below (Sava 2002, p. 380):

(1) A period of strong decrease in preoccupation with AE (1989–1993)

This was due to general confusion and the search for a coherent policy, focused mainly on an economic and political level. In this period most of the necessary corrections from an ideological point of view were made, but no major action took place. On the contrary, this field of education seemed to be forgotten, and only a few rational changes were made, most things continuing as in the past, or even worse. Because of this lack of interest for AE, almost half of the related institutions belonging to the Ministry of Culture were closed down.

(2) A period of step-by-step rebuilding and looking for a strategy for development (1993–1997)

The state created the framework for decentralization and a more flexible offer, but did not allocate enough financial support. Since the state accepts and encourages plurality, the whole structure of adult education has been allowed to develop freely, and has become widely differentiated. In many fields, state regulations or subventions affect it only indirectly. At the beginning of this period, international cooperation and support for developing AE began, mostly on the German part: the International Institute for AE and the German Association of People's Universities (IIZDVV) opened a branch in Bucharest to coordinate their investments and to support AE in Romania.

During this period, intensive training seminars for adult educators were run, the staff working in institutions belonging to the Ministry of Culture, with German and Danish support. Thus, a slow shift from traditional up-front teaching to an interactive approach could be observed. A shift to a more professional way of running an adult education institution in a competing market could also be noticed. Looking at the situation of these institutions nowadays, one can say that the developments are disappointing, if we take into consideration the number of adults they manage to attract, the range and types of offers, their dynamic, or impact on community development.

Due to changes in the labour market, the Ministry of Labour and Social Care (MMPS) spent a significant amount of money on programmes for training the unemployed. In this respect, many institutions providing further education were created. In 1996, MMPS established 14 regional centres for continuing professional development all over the country. In addition, there is also a number of non-governmental institutions providing further education.

(3) A period of development, starting in 1998, and gaining momentum since 2000, once the "Europe 2010 process" and pre-accession negotiations had begun

Following up on the Hamburg Conference for AE (CONFINTEA 1997), the Ministry of

National Education (MEN) started to show much greater interest for AE as part of lifelong education. In 1998, the National Council for Continuing Education was established. MEN elaborated a strategy for AE where mainly universities were asked to develop programmes and offers for continuing education. In this respect, many departments for continuing education have been set up inside universities, with World Bank support as well. Unfortunately, this council has meanwhile disappeared. The developments of this period will be described in more detail in the following sections. Generally, there are positive changes and thus hope for clearly defined sustainable development, mainly due to the openness of educational politicians and practitioners to influences and trends at the European level.

3. The current situation in Romania, national strategies, and the EU-framework

The Romanian society is still experiencing ongoing reform and transformation, which is in turn affecting the whole of society as well, from the economic, cultural, social, and political point of view. The magnitude of these changes is producing many personal, social, and economic crises; the system of values is changing in a confusing way, and attitudes and mentalities have had to change, too. It is well-known that in all processes of change – even where transformations are for the better – in the first phase the results and performances tend to be lower. The changes create confusion and frustration, especially if the direction is not clear or followed in a systematic way, with a strong and focused effort.

The effort for setting up and implementing effective policies as well as for harmonizing the legislative framework and developments with the *aquis communautaire* during the last five years was more coherent, but the results achieved so far show that much more effort is needed. Not only for Romania, but for the whole Europe, the so-called “Lisbon process 2010” meant intensive changes in all sectors of society, aiming at the nations’ ability to meet the ambitious goals of turning Europe into the world’s most competitive economy and inclusive society. Thus, the political objectives of the Romanian government, which focused mainly on developing professional training policies, are more related to labour market restructuring. In the national strategy for human resource development for 2007–2013 as well as in the related National Programme of Reforms (April 2007) for the same period, the main aims stipulated (with direct impact on ACE) concern the following:

- improving access to the labour market with special focus on the participation of young people, facilitating the transition from school to work, and stimulating re-entry into the labour market
- more flexible labour market – e.g. more personalized support and counselling for the unemployed and other vulnerable groups, as well as improvements in the system for accrediting and validating prior experiential learning
- national framework of qualifications
- improving active life/active ageing, with a special focus on stimulating older people to re-enter the labour market and community life

- broadening access to education for all and promoting social inclusion
- better rural ACE
- improving quality (of higher education, for example) and quality assurance
- developing education and professional training – improving the capacity of related institutions, setting up “community centres of (educational) resources”, extending the use of ICT
- promoting CE – to establish better awareness of employers and employees about the importance of ACE and better links between work and ACE

A noticeable factor is that the current liberal government is focused more on active participation in the labour market and on quality assurance, than on equal access and inclusion. The issue of equal access was more the focus of the social-democrat government (2000–2004); in 2002, it set up the National Plan against Poverty and a programme to promote social inclusion, drawn up for ten years. During this period, Law 116/2002 regarding the prevention and combating of social marginalization was passed.

Nevertheless, it should also be stressed that in all these policy papers and in the priorities set, there is still no clearly defined policy for general adult education. Romania still does not have a national strategy for LLL, in spite of EU recommendations that all countries should have one by the end of 2006.

The benchmarking system put in place to monitor the progress towards the goals to be achieved is a clear mirror for comparing and showing the evidence of the data gathered.

The main benchmarking indicators

Benchmark	EU average in 2007	EU target for 2010	Ro in 2007 (in 2000)
Early school leaving	15,4 %	10 %	19 % (22 %)
Completion of upper secondary education	77,4 %	85 %	77,2 % (76,1 %)
Participation of adults in learning	9,7 %	12,5 %	1,3 % (0,9 %)
Low achievers in reading literacy (see also PISA results)	19,8 %	15,5 %	40,3 % (Place 47)
Total public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP	(in 2000/2004) 4,68 %/5,09 %	–	(in 2000/2004) 2,88 %/3,29 %

Beside the first three main benchmark indicators set for education at European level, other figures were added to the table that can better explain the efficiency and effectiveness of

the education system. The figures for Romania do not look very good, but it is noteworthy that the ongoing under-financing of the education system has produced these low results, all of them somehow interdependent. It is known that in periods of reform, the budget for education should be even higher than usual, due to the additional costs that changes incur. So, too little money put into education means that the results are accordingly low. Coming last in Europe in the results of the PISA evaluation in 2006 should really be a matter of serious concern for Romania, as even pupils that are in schooling do not perform well with regard to basic competencies for life. The same situation regards teaching staff, because low salaries, irrespective of education level, resulted in a decrease in the attractiveness of the teaching profession. Of course, of all public expenditure on education, the percentage allocated to Adult Education is even lower, with similar results.

4. Current trends in Adult Education

School reform processes

The objective of recent revisions was to emphasize the relevance of initial and vocational education and training, and to increase the quality of school outcomes. The curriculum has been revised with focus on assuring basic competencies. The system of higher education as well as specializations offered at technical universities has been revised, too. The process of decentralization now provides increased autonomy to schools in defining their curriculum and enables them to strengthen their links with local companies and institutions.

Low participation of adults in education and learning

From an ACE perspective, it is interesting to examine the reasons for such low participation – one of the lowest in Europe, in fact. It is obvious that, if in seven years the increase in the participation rate is so low (1.6 percent in 2005, and 1.3 percent in 2006), the European objective will not be reached by 2010, and neither will the national one of 7 percent. Some possible explanations might be:

- Heavy media consumption – Informal education that is not counted in the participation rate, which only covers participation in organized educational settings.
- About half of the population lives in rural areas, with poor education offers and infrastructure for training provision. Village cultural houses still represent the majority of the educational infrastructure, but they are not an attractive option for adults.
- Dramatic decrease of the institutional infrastructure and offers for general adult education (e.g. cultural houses) – Until 1989, in Romania there were more than 200 cultural houses and almost 3000 popular universities, among a national network of libraries, museums, popular art schools, and centres for popular art coordinated by the Ministry of Culture and Cults. Popular universities have decreased to 152. What is more, these institutions did not manage to profile an attractive education provision for non-formal education (Sava/Matache 2003, p. 24).

- Lack of state/regional/local support for non-formal education – As a result of the public administration decentralization process, the institutions mentioned above are subordinate to the local authorities and financed by town halls. Adults are not encouraged to participate in civic and political, or personal development education, as the state did not put any stimulating measures or resources in place with respect to these areas. Even in the National Programme of Reforms (2007), the same narrow approach in national policy could be noticed. The main and almost exclusive focus was on “skills for work” rather than on “skills for life”, on professional rather than personal development in a wider sense, and strategies for social inclusion and community regeneration were less than convincing.
- Public efforts mostly for vocational ACE – Up to 1.2 percent of the overall 1.3 percent participation rate is in professional adult education. This is due to, on the one hand, adults being interested in relevant certificates that allow them to find a (better) job, and, on the other hand, to the state having developed stimulating mechanisms for the unemployed to participate and public policies related to employment being well-defined.
- Lack of investment of employers in continuing professional development – CPD of their staff (about 6 times less than the EU average). The reasons might be that, on the one hand, employers rely on the qualified work force already available on the market, and on the other hand, that a high percentage of employers are SMEs, with limited capacity (and interest) for human resource development and organizing workplace learning.
- Low income, extra jobs – The need for a better life and income force many adults to go for a second or even third job, limiting their free time and leaving even less time for learning. Low income does not allow for a large personal investment in learning.
- A still weak civic society – With NGOs not strong and vocal enough to attract people to other kinds of education, or to make them aware of the need for ongoing learning, not solely related to their jobs. Trade unions are also still not very focused in arguing for opportunities in workplace learning.
- Migration – There are, unofficially, about 4 million Romanians working abroad, being excluded from participation in education in Romania.
- Home-oriented mentality of South-(eastern) Europe – For example, in Greece the participation rate of adults in education is even lower; in most Mediterranean and Latin countries the participation rate is quite low, one possible explanation being socio-cultural patterns.

Of course, other reasons may be listed, all of them lead to the conclusion that there is a need and challenge to build up a culture for lifelong learning.

Diversified range of institutions

Many institutions were set up with the help and know-how of member states of the EU, and were comparable in concept with existing institutions in the EU. The new institutions that have been set up to foster professional training of adults can be seen as an

example of good practice. The government put its largest effort into developing facilities for vocational training in career, mostly for those at risk of (long term) unemployment, due to low qualifications. On 31 Dec 2007, the unemployment rate was 4.1 percent.

Two institutions have to be mentioned as main public bodies that are promoting and implementing the national strategy for dealing with professional training of adults:

The National Agency for Labour Force and Occupation that handles government funds for training the unemployed and also implements the National Plan for Employment within its institutional county and regional network. Since 2000, special stipulations, affirmative measures and facilities for employing individuals from groups at risk of marginalization and unemployment were implemented (e.g. for young adults newly-graduated, single parents, adults over 45, the Roma population etc).

The National Council for Adults' Professional Training (CNFPA, in RO) that recently also incorporated the Council for Occupational Standards and Accreditation and became the National Authority for Qualifications, responsible for setting the National Qualifications Framework (there is, at present, a great deal of effort in this respect).

The CNFPA accredits professional training providers, based on the national system of quality criteria. Romania is the first Eastern European country to develop and implement (since 2004) a system and guidelines for the recognition and accreditation of competencies acquired in a non-formal and informal way, and also designed the framework for setting up evaluation centres and professional evaluators in this respect. 31 evaluation centres have already been set up. But if vocational training is a dimension of adult education which has known significant positive developments – due to the pressure of the economy and labour market –, the same cannot be said for developments of other dimensions of adult education.

AE does not only refer to professional training, but rather is oriented towards personal development, active citizenship, and social inclusion. The Ministry of Culture and Cults with its institutional network as well as cultural houses and homes (which now belong to local authorities, due to the process of decentralization) play an important role in promoting general AE. The figures previously shown speak of the dramatic decrease in this dimension of AE as well as of low state involvement in supporting this aspect, in spite of its importance for accompanying political and social transformations and for enabling adults to cope with these. The private initiative of adults to participate in liberal education, in all dimensions, is low, objective factors being limited financial resources and professional pressures.

Institutions dealing with the education of adults include those within the Ministry of Education and Research network, the main features of which are the initial training of young people. In the last years, the average age of individuals graduating from these has increased continuously, due to the greater participation of adults in formal (higher) education.

In spite of existing research institutes with a direct focus on ACE (the National Scientific Research Institute for Labour and Social Protection, the National Institute for Educational Sciences, the Romanian Institute for Adult Education etc.) as well as research interest at university level, research on Adult Education needs consistent development, from data collection to the development of the theory of AE. This is especially so as one of the reasons for inconsistent concepts at the political level is the level of provision from research.

The number of NGOs has also been increasing consistently. The range of NGOs acting for adults' learning, empowerment and participation is very broad, from those very specialized, focusing on distinct target groups (e.g. women as victims of domestic violence, the elderly, Roma in the context of social inclusion, adults with various special needs etc.) to those that are content-oriented (e.g. promoting intercultural education, human rights education, gender equality, ecological education etc., either through courses or national campaigns aimed at raising awareness of the issues, or through RD projects including international cooperation). Unfortunately, the power of impact of these NGOs on a large scale is rather restricted, because of the limited financial and human resources of the target group.

Day by day, the number of private suppliers offering continuous training is increasing, especially in ITC, foreign languages and management, but also in other vocational fields such as building, tourism, cookery etc. All these offers are advertised during "Adult Learner's Week", a yearly national event initiated in 2000, under the slogan "Festival of Your Chances".

However, market offers have self-regulatory mechanisms. Beside the national mechanism for quality assurance with respect to the accreditation of the offers, adults themselves, paying for their own education, have become critical clients, more aware of their own rights, needs, and quality criteria. The institutions themselves have been able to improve their services and offers through the experience they have acquired. Collaboration between institutions is also improving and increasing (irrespective of whether they are public or private), the offers for courses tend to be tailored more in accordance with adults' needs with more module-based courses, and the focus for quality assurance is more systematic.

Increased awareness of ACE and increased know-how in the field of ACE

Several factors point to an increased awareness of ACE and increased know-how in the field of ACE. At the end of 2006, the first national official diagnosis on the state of the art of Adult Education from an LLL perspective was carried out (by the Institute of Educational Sciences). Since 2005, there is a special chapter on ACE in the yearly report regarding the state of the national system of education. Recently, a competition for setting up the national strategy for LLL was launched. Also, in the last two years the budget for education has been considerably increased (i.e. in 2008, for the first time,

more than 6 percent were allocated to education), with positive consequences for ACE, too. The ESF are also supporting more investment in ACE, with possibilities for covering the “less economically attractive” areas of ACE. Last, but not least, there is a strong tendency towards internationalization of ACE, due to EU programmes in which Romania is a partner, and because of the Romanian government’s preoccupations with developing ACE in accordance with international tendencies.

All these trends are signals for positive developments, but much effort is still needed in order to improve the status of ACE and ACE professionals, and to increase adult participation in education.

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Aims of Political and Citizenship Education in Finland

This article examines the guidelines and objectives of political (societal) and citizenship education in Finland during the past 40 years approximately. During this relatively short period, different programmes have arisen which aptly reflect changes which have taken place, in viewpoints, in the social atmosphere, and in citizens' political interests. The article is concerned with the reports of two committees, the Adult Education Committee and the Lifelong Learning Committee, since the beginning of the 1970s, the Government's Policy Programme (2003–2007), and the aims of political and citizenship education defined in these committee reports and policy programmes.

1. Roots of Finnish adult education

The birth of Finnish adult education in its present form in the 19th century was affected by a variety of ideologies and movements. The idea of Enlightenment had come from Europe and created the intellectual foundation for spreading education more extensively among the population. Not only did the effects of industrialization change the existing infrastructures, they also created a need for learning. Apart from these influences, there were other national factors with solid connections to the promotion of education among the common people. The labour movement, the youth association movement and several others were active trailblazers of popular enlightenment. The role and importance of nationalism (in terms of national awakening) has often been seen as the empowering factor that ignited and strengthened the provision of popular education for adults. The idea behind educating the masses was that, once they became educated, the less fortunate would increasingly be motivated to engage in the development of society as a whole (e.g. Toiviainen 1999, Lahtinen 2006, Pantzar 2007).

Naturally, the protagonists of these various ideologies and social movements also had their own aspirations arising from their views of life and conceptions of the world. Their common goal can be seen as the promotion of enlightenment among citizens. In addition to several other objectives, the intention was to create a sustainable basis for democracy and participation. This can be seen as a preliminary phase of modern societal engagement and citizen participation. At that time, educators' aspirations were still predominantly bound by their ideological background. This situation continued for a relatively long period in some adult education activities. A strong division along political and ideological lines continued among educational organizations associations up until the 1970s, in study circle activities in particular. In other liberal adult education sectors, the need for and more extensive public provision of social and political education had become a theme of discussion as early as the 1920s. This

type of education had its heyday in the period that extended from the end of World War II to the 1970s.

In this article, I shall examine the guidelines and objectives of political and citizenship education during the past 40 years more closely. During this relatively short period, different programmes have arisen, which aptly reflect changes that have taken place in viewpoints, in the social climate and in citizens' political interests.

2. The changing challenges of political and civic education

During the history of organized adult and lifelong education, the role of political and civic education has varied in significance. This education has been carried out with diverse goals, contents and ideological backgrounds for different target groups, in various educational settings. I venture to claim that, since the beginning of the 1970s, the significance of political and other society-oriented adult education has decreased in all industrialized countries. The statistics which show that adult participation in these kinds of courses, classes and lectures in formal and non-formal education has fallen support this argument (Blomqvist et al. 1997 and 2002). But this development does not necessarily mean that citizens today are less interested in political and societal topics than they were some 40 years ago. The present situation can be explained in two ways.

First, it is important to realize that the present so-called information society we are living in has meant that the role of institutions and organizations of formal education has diminished relatively since the 1970s. Simultaneously, the significance of other learning environments (such as informal learning settings) and information sources has grown. At present, for instance, both conventional (electronic and printed mass media) and novel media (Internet etc.) give today's citizens excellent opportunities to seek up-to-date information and knowledge, and also to ask questions about politics, society and other topics relevant to them. According to Klein an information-rich society offers powerful new means to exercise the right to political participation. For example, as the technology of voting changes, electronic voting systems offer both benefits and risks for elections (Klein 2005).

From the perspective of informal learning as a field of civic (citizenship) education, the media constitutes an extremely difficult field to assess. It should be remembered that one of the basic features of informal learning is that the source, or producer, of information and knowledge does not primarily act like formal educational institutions, which systematically strive to support the target group's learning. In principle however, all products of the media are of a type that can be seen as activators of (informal) learning, but the "non-planned" nature of informal learning supported by the media means there is also a risk of achieving unwanted learning results. From the perspective of the aims and contents of lifelong learning (e.g. active citizenship)

it is also essential to realize that developing media competence must be realistic and appropriate (Pantzar 2006).

Secondly, there is no doubt that formal education institutions are too inflexible in the face of the challenges of contemporary society, which is changing with increasing speed. One of the main tasks of the formal education system in a modern society is to carry out the socialization process. This process is unquestionably good at retaining rather than breaking the traditions, values and beliefs of the nation.

3. Adult education policies and the changing conceptions of citizen participation

The political essence of adult education, its independency, tasks, structures, financing etc., its role in society as a part of the whole education system has not been globally uniform. In the Nordic countries, the significance of the State and political parties as background forces and ideological leaders of adult education has been very strong historically. In Finland, as in other Nordic countries, the State has given strong financial support to the education of adults, especially in adult education centres, residential folk high schools (*folkhöskola*), study circles of study centres and public institutions of vocational adult education, for some 80 years.

The parliamentary Adult Education Committee (1971–1975) defined four main tasks for Finnish adult education policy:

- (1) educational equality
- (2) development of vocational skills
- (3) development of political (societal) preparedness
- (4) cultural development – personality development

The Committee defined the objectives of political and societal education as follows:

Independent and critical societal thinking of citizens, preparedness and competence of collaboration, skills to recognize own political and societal rights and responsibilities, participation in decision-making, preparedness for internationally shared responsibility, to be conscious of needs for societal changes (Kom 1975).

The Committee stated that political education is the central task of the whole societal education system, aiming at the peoples' general preparedness to participate in and influence democratic decision-making, both in public affairs and in workplaces, organizations and other communities. The Committee defined the education of persons elected to a position of trust as one of the central tasks of adult education. In the 1970s, the public sector had no difficulty in recruiting citizens to different positions of trust, although at that time, the number of positions, for example in local government, was higher than today. Now this recruiting work seems to have become much harder. This development is related to a decreasing interest in party policy and party membership on the part of citizens.

A deeper analysis of the long history of Finnish liberal adult education reveals that, until the end of the 1980s, the political education organized by study centres, especially in open lectures, courses and study circles, was also used as a tool of narrower ideology-based party political as well as labour organizational purposes. During the last twenty years, study centres have been obliged to liberalize the aims and contents of education aimed at different population groups. This development has theoretically provided a better starting point for pluralistic political and citizenship education. One can justifiably go so far as to argue that these tasks and aims of political education defined by the Finnish Adult Education Committee (Kom 1975) have begun to function, but very slowly, some 15 years after publishing the final report of the Committee. There is no doubt that the report of the Adult Education Committee had been influenced by the thoughts presented in the International Education Commission report "Learning to be" (UNESCO 1972). This report emphasized the importance of political education, but also stressed the citizenship-centred nature of educational aims. These aims have been seen as the opposite of the strict dogmatic use of political or other ideological elements in education.

The Finnish Government set up a committee in 1996, which was tasked to prepare a national strategy for lifelong education. The final report of the committee was published in the latter half of 1997. From the point of view of educational policy this report diverged from the lines of former educational committees. The most essential change was the very strong orientation towards the economy. The role and significance of economic questions, in the field of education as well, was now found to be more important, central and dominant than ever before. One of the most interesting consequences of this ideology was the back-seat role that it gave to the former priority. It is very difficult to find any references to the political and citizenship education of adults in the pages of the report. In addition, its understanding of the essence of the individual was very one-sided. The tasks and significance of education and learning were seen primarily from the point of view of the individual's roles in working life, rather than in the community, the family or private life (Kom 1997).

In the strategy report the aims of contents in education were briefly defined. The aims of lifelong education are: "supporting personality development, strengthening of democratic values, maintaining of active communities and social togetherness, and promotion of innovations, productivity and national competitiveness" (ibid.).

In the report there is no detailed information on the implementation of these aims. On the other hand, the report brings out the significance of non-governmental activities as producers of educational and social capital. It suggested, for example, that non-governmental organizations are links between individuals' needs and political decision-making. These organizations keep up discussions about the aims of societal development. From the point of view of life management it is important for all people to have the possibilities to learn to recognize societal changes and to assess influences of those changes in their individual life (ibid.).

As the Adult Education Committee, this Strategy Programme also emphasizes the importance of the education of individuals elected to a position of trust. This has been found to be one of the cornerstones of functioning democracy.

4. Government's cry for help – the Citizen Participation Policy Programme

4.1 Background – Decreasing political activity as the headache of policymakers

In Finland, participation by citizens has always been characterized by a certain degree of formality or institutionalization. As such, the definition of Finland as a “country of tens of thousands of societies” is correct. However, this has no direct bearing on citizens’ activity in societal decision-making, public discussion, or the expression of opinions. Informal societal discussion and criticism takes place in various forums (pubs, market squares, among friends, etc.) – in places where speech and action generate minimal impact on society. Nevertheless, the individual’s sense of satisfaction at “having actually spoken one’s mind” is naturally positive.

With this background, the Citizen Participation Policy Programme is one of four policy programmes adopted by Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen’s I government (2003–2007). According to the Programme, its purpose is to strengthen Finnish democracy. Within the framework of this Policy Programme, different development processes have been launched in the fields of education for active citizenship, societal participation and civic society (Policy Programme 2004).

According to the Programme director, Seppo Niemelä, the main reasons for the creation of the Policy Programme were:

- *problems with representative democracy* – manifested as falling voter turnout in elections, dwindling number of party memberships and weakening confidence in the institutions of society
- *active citizenship and civil society* – civil society has been understood as the social foundation of democracy; active citizenship is the essential goal of lifelong learning policies
- *the radical change in the position of the nation-state* – citizenship has to be understood in the context of its local, national, European and global role (Niemelä 2005)

4.2 Problems with representative democracy

The decreasing interest and lower participation in party policy or political activities connected with so-called representative democracy (e.g. elections) at local, national and EU-level has been a phenomenon recognized in almost all European countries for some 20 years. In this situation, the most important question from the point of view

of a democratic society and active citizenship should be expressed as follows: Why is it that citizens are not interested in participating in elections, membership of political parties and further activities of representative democracy?

Statistics on voting activity among different parts of the population show, for example, that the younger generations have been more passive than the older. How could we interpret this lack of interest? Does it have something to do with level of knowledge or education? The answer to the latter question is simple: the passivity of the younger generation has nothing to do with their level of education, because they have a longer, wider and more diverse educational history than the older generations. Besides that, the opportunities for getting information and knowledge about political structures and decision-making systems are extremely adequate today. The younger generations, especially, have more interest in other ways and channels to political and societal participation and influence.

So, without doubt, there are other motives for non-participation in traditional political activities. Perhaps the younger generations, and other so-called passive citizens of the rest of the population, have experienced the political infrastructure, decision-making systems and societal power of politicians as ineffective and insignificant in their own immediate daily life.

In these circumstances, socially excluded citizens such as the less educated, the unemployed, the poor, and even some pensioners and others have the weakest tools for solving personal and social problems. These socially impoverished groups and citizens, who do not perceive any meaning in societal or political participation, are, almost without exception, also educationally passive. In other words, they are not interested in participating in different formal and non-formal educational settings. If society continues to be interested in these citizens and in their rights and well-being, the decision-makers and those socially responsible will have to find new ways to try and activate these people.

Based on the data compiled from the "World Value Survey" (WVS) material, it may be stated that, considering the four institutions examined, Finnish people have the highest confidence in the police, and the second highest in their legal system. Their confidence in the nation's parliament and civil servants is distinctly lower.

From 1992 onwards, national attitude surveys have included citizens' ideas regarding the role and significance of social movements in political activities. These have been examined using the statement: "In present-day Finland, social movements are much more effective in conveying citizens' opinions to decision-makers, compared to political parties". Currently, the great majority of Finnish people seem to trust social movements' ability to convey citizens' opinions to the political decision-making process. In the 1990s, more than 50 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement, either completely or to a certain extent. However, the proportional share of those who agree

has decreased over time. In the opinion surveys conducted in 2002 and 2004, the share of those who agree had fallen below 50 percent. In 2004, however, the number of people agreeing with the statement was still three times higher than that of those disagreeing (Paloheimo 2006).

4.3 What can we do to foster active citizenship?

According to the Policy Programme, civil society is the social foundation of democracy, and active citizenship is the essential goal of lifelong learning policies. The latter means that different educational settings would also have a prominent role in trying to reach the set goals (Policy Programme 2004).

One of the most profound questions in the Policy Programme is: What can the State do to foster citizen participation? This is a clear, but at the same time very odd question, assuming as it does, that it should be the business of the State to activate citizens. And this is a good example of the traditional relationship between the State and citizens in the Nordic countries, a legacy of the Nordic welfare-state idea. The consequences of this tradition are varied. One of them is the relatively weak ability or willingness of citizens to display spontaneous and independent societal activities in informal settings.

Two fundamental questions regarding the active role of the State in increasing the participation of citizens have been defined as follows: (1) How is active and democratic citizenship learned and how is it taught? (2) How can old and new methods for citizen participation be developed and combined? (ibid.)

The project leader, Niemelä, has considered methods to foster civic participation. He has identified three fields of methodology:

- access to information and public debate as prerequisites
- representative democracy
- direct participation

In the first field, Niemelä sees the importance of media and access to information as a foundation of democracy. Thinking about this alternative from the perspective of lifelong learning as a possibility to increase civic participation, we can easily conclude that learning of this kind will happen within informal environments (Niemelä 2005).

Opportunities for informal learning have changed radically since the 1970s. Especially learning and information-seeking environments based on modern information and communication technologies have created a space, where citizens and diverse interest groups can independently form opinions on society, politics and decision-making. This space also gives excellent possibilities for novel types of educational interaction and networking which could be called "modern net-based study circles", for example.

The essential activities of representative democracy are party activity connected with ideological-political goals, election arrangements and voting (encouraging people to vote). Representative democracy has, in the Nordic countries, strong traditions and a central status in the whole political system and decision-making process – which is why every citizen needs to be familiar with the basic elements of this part of the political system.

And how will this be realised? Knowledge about political systems, about local, national and supranational decision-making processes, and about the interdependences between political and other systems of society must form the core of formal (and non-formal) education in the framework of lifelong learning.

In the papers on the Citizen Participation Policy Programme the means and forms of direct participation have been mentioned as follows:

- consulting citizens (events and use of digital networks)
- public participation
- influence (initiatives, panel discussions for citizens and referenda)

In comparison to participation in direct democracy, the Finns come out as among the laziest participants in Europe. Norwegians and Finns, who contacted their representatives most actively, are clearly more passive in this respect. This means that Finnish people are genuinely prepared for direct participation in politics and that we contact our politicians or civil servants more frequently in comparison to other nations. On the whole, the Finns' participation is fairly conventional, with demonstrations excluded from our standard repertoire. On the other hand, however, research results indicate that we do not totally abandon direct means of influence. The Finns' modest readiness to engage in practical demonstrations can also be interpreted as the cause of the non-existence of major conflicts in this country. In addition, conflicts are solved locally by means other than active expressions of opinion (Pantzar 2006).

It is obvious that direct participation is only one way to realize direct democracy or political participation. In the Policy Programme participation has been understood as participation in initiatives organized by active policy makers such as parties, other political organizations etc. Thus the concept of direct participation does not include any different spontaneous civic activities, which could rather be called direct action or influence. But what are the roles of formal education or informal learning environments when trying to help citizens increase their abilities to participate in independent direct action? The purpose is to educate politically critical, societally active citizens, who have a high disposition and skill (cognitive and practical) for information-seeking and processing, and therefore produce politically independent and societally fearless people.

4.4 Concrete action

It appears that the concrete action taken to implement the Citizen Participation Policy Programme can be divided into three operating strategies and three forms of operation:

- various seminars and publications that deal with the prevailing state and development of citizen participation
- familiarizing student-teachers and comprehensive school pupils with the forms of representative democracy in particular
- developing the type of infrastructure that enables people's participation in decision-making using the means and methods now available in an information society

Although these projects have consumed a significant amount of resources, their results have been rather modest. One may even go so far as to argue that nothing has been achieved in terms of citizen participation during the Programme's 4-year implementation period. From the lifelong learning viewpoint, it is quite interesting that adult education was left with a practically non-existent role in the development of citizen participation. Was it the intention to look into a distant future where present-day children and young people will be living the prime of their adulthood? Was it believed that the adult population's civic capabilities were already complete and beyond the reach of education?

5. In search of new means

Following the completion of the Citizen Participation Policy Programme, Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Government, 2007, has embarked upon further action. These projects are further away from the field, means and methods of lifelong learning than the preceding Policy Programme. The decision-makers' sincere confidence in the capacity of an infrastructure of information technologically alone to solve problems appears naive. In other words, this attitude may indeed further diminish Finnish people's currently modest concrete participation in societal decision-making. The results of the United Nation's most recent e-Government Survey are downright paradoxical for Finland – a country that was previously regarded as a model of information society development. With regard to the three partial areas included in the analysis, Finland received the weakest rating concerning its citizens' opportunities to wield influence via the Internet. Receiving the 45th place on the global scale should wake up the decision-makers whose idea of education's role and significance in participation appears to deviate from the view held by lifelong learning professionals (UN 2008).

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They march you up to the top of the hill, and they march you down again – Trends in adult learning in England

The paper reviews trends in adult learning in England in the ten years from the election of Labour government in 1997. It highlights an initial focus on expanding and widening participation in a wide range of initiatives in the years to 2002. From 2003 there has been a dramatic narrowing of focus giving priority to funding qualifications related to the labour market. Throughout the period it highlights restless change in institutional structures.

Introduction

What is to be done about the education of adults? The state in Britain has wrestled with the problem now for a century and more. It always recognizes the importance of giving opportunities for adults to get skills for work. However, who gets them varies over time – or, rather, the educationally privileged consistently get opportunities, others only sometimes. But learning for its own sake is a different matter. Governments periodically call for an enquiry to advise on the actions needed to stimulate adult participation across a wider range of activity. They follow this with a short burst of initiatives, then with a period of benign neglect. After a time they intervene to reassert utilitarian and economic priorities, often through a combination of regulatory and financial levers, arguing that if adults want education for leisure they can pay for it. After a while there is a call for another enquiry. Indeed, one was published this January (DIUS 2008).

It is a cycle that leaves policy affecting adult learners continually in flux. This has created a curious guerrilla mentality among adult educators, who have adapted to feeding on scraps, and making unlikely alliances across the social policy landscape. More often than not, too, the arrangements adults make for their own learning bear only a tangential relationship to the purposes ascribed to them by providers and policy makers alike, and they are largely invisible in public debates about education.

The case for investing in adult learning

We have recently seen a dramatic narrowing of government priorities to focus on skills for work. Yet, there has never been a time when it has been more urgent to settle on a generous and inclusive policy, and to stick with it. The case for an inclusive strategy is simply put. Two in three of the new and replacement jobs of the next decade need to be filled by adults currently outside the conventional workforce since there are just enough young people to fill only a third of them. Many posts will be filled by migrants,

women currently outside the labour market, and older people, often with poor previous experience of structured learning. The route to successful vocational education for these groups will often start in developing skills for learning in other settings – acquiring the key skill of learning to learn, and the confidence to take on other challenges in a variety of settings.

Organized learning also supports older people in shaping active, creative and meaningful lives after work, when many can look forward to thirty years or more, after their main working lives, and when many will need to adapt and develop skills to continue to earn to supplement inadequate pensions.

Learning has positive health effects, prolongs active life and shortens the period of morbidity. Participation in adult education is recognized in the UK's National Mental Health Strategy as an effective preventative health measure for people at risk of mental illness. Classes offer safe places for people wanting and needing to rebuild relationships – and needing low risk environments to do so, where no one will feel let down if you don't feel well enough to turn up to every meeting.

Adult learning has a powerful impact, as well, on families. Parental enthusiasm for learning spills over onto children, and vice versa. Government departments recognize that there is a pressing need for effective financial education; they recognize the role of learning in community regeneration; they acknowledge its place in effective strategies to reintegrate offenders, in combating drugs misuse, in developing sustainable ways of living on the planet. They are, however, recurrently uneasy about the role of the state in supporting learning that is for pleasure, for personal fulfilment, learning that satisfies an idle curiosity, or informs dissenting citizenship. Some of this work receives some public backing through a modest safeguard – but ten years into the life of the current British government utilitarianism holds sway once again, as post-compulsory education is funded primarily as a supplier of qualifications, which are seen as the best available proxy for skills for a rapidly changing labour market.

Of course, the swings in public policy are not just a matter of whim. Across the industrialized world there has been an intensification of investment in the skills of workers. The impact of global competition, the growth of international markets in education and training, coupled with increased economic migration combine to reinforce the human capital dimensions of industrial policy. There is an emphasis given to developing services and products with high value added for a global market, taking advantage of technological innovation and improved communications. This puts a premium on highly skilled people to develop, design and market these goods and services.

The central argument in this paper is that twin forces shape lifelong learning policy – the search for advantage in an increasingly competitive global economy, and the concern to secure social cohesion through the creation of learning societies where everyone can participate as informed and critical citizens. Yet in the UK, despite a

brave attempt at the end of the 1990s to develop policies hand in hand, vocational goals have more recently decisively won the battle for public resources. The resultant instability in British, but especially English policy affecting adult learners is, I believe, a mistake – not least when the knowledge economy guarantees that we have not yet imagined many of the jobs we will be doing fifteen years from now, just as a generation ago we would not have foreseen web design or biotechnology as major areas of employment now. Lifelong learning policy needs to encourage a breadth of curiosity, met by a variety of programmes offered in a variety of ways. Stop-go policy is no better for lifelong learning than it was for the British economy. There is, after all, more to life than work, and we diminish ourselves if we narrow our educational offer only to those things we already know the need for. Indeed, we prescribe what constitutes “useful learning” at our peril.

New government – new direction

When the New Labour government came to office in 1997, and combined education and employment in a single ministry, the effect was to make adult learning of all sorts much more central to policy making than it had ever been in the old education department. David Blunkett, the Secretary of State signalled this change, by making his first public speech after the election at the launch of Adult Learners’ Week. Much of his analysis drew on NIACE’s (The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education) work over a decade on behalf of those communities currently under-represented in education and training, on the findings of *Learning Works*, and the report of a task group on widening participation chaired by Helena Kennedy, and the work of the Fryer committee that he commissioned in that speech.

NIACE’s work shows clearly that social class, prior educational experience, current work status, and age all have a major impact on whether or not adults participate in informal, non-formal or formal learning after the completion of their initial education, and little has changed over the last decade. In his Preface to the government Green Paper, “The Learning Age”, produced in 1998, Blunkett argued:

As well as securing our economic future, learning has a wider contribution. It helps make ours a civilised society, develops the spiritual side of our lives and promotes active citizenship. Learning enables people to play a full part in their community. It strengthens the family, the neighbourhood and consequently the nation. It helps us fulfil our potential and opens doors to a love of music, art and literature. That is why we value learning for its own sake as well as for the equality of opportunity it brings (DES 1998, p. 2).

To achieve the learning age he suggested, “we must all develop and sustain a regard for learning at whatever age”, (DES 1998, p. 4) and he recognised that for many people this would involve overcoming past experiences that had put them off learning. He was determined that the cultural breadth previously available to the affluent and well educated should be everyone’s right and expectation.

“The Learning Age” (1998) launched a host of new initiatives to realize this vision. Two had been promised in Labour’s manifesto. Individual Learning Accounts, which put £ 150 for learning in the pockets of a million people prepared to contribute £ 25 of their own money were an instant success, but poor control processes led to the sudden closure of the scheme, when several fraudulent organizations found ways to claim large sums for little or no provision. As a demand side measure, accounts demonstrated how quickly people could be stimulated to participate in learning; but the experience showed that unless well targeted the dominant beneficiaries would be already well educated adults.

The University for Industry (Ufi) was a brave initiative to use web-based technologies to make learning available for people at home or work, and to back this with an online information and advice service, and telephone helpline for adults wanting to know what to study, and where. Ufi was conceived as an institution for further education and work-based learning, notably for small and medium sized enterprises, to complement the great success of the Open University in opening distance-based higher education to millions of adult learners. Since its creation by the labour government of 1964–70, Ufi has enjoyed well over a billion pounds of public investment, but is still searching for the cost neutral business plan government was hoping to see in place after three years.

Two further initiatives, the Union Learning Fund and the Adult and Community Learning Fund, sought to use trade unions and the voluntary sector as intermediaries to stimulate participation, and to foster new curricular initiatives. Both were successful, and the role of union learning representatives has been backed by subsequent legislation, whilst funding for trade union learning initiatives has expanded throughout the last ten years. The Adult and Community Learning Fund, by contrast, was allowed to die quietly, once responsibility for it transferred from central government to its funding agency – not because the work was ineffective, but because it did not lead to measurable outcomes that contributed to national targets.

A cross-government study looking at deprived communities saw value in adult education, but highlighted the need for patience, since the transformation of communities was a twenty-year task. However, inter-departmental initiatives always struggle to secure intra-departmental priority; the Skills Policy Action team report was shelved. Nevertheless, social inclusion has become a recurrent concern for the government overall in the last decade, if not for its post-compulsory education policies.

Skills for Life

Whilst Labour carried over the Conservatives’ commitment to, and enthusiasm for national targets, they added a very welcome participation target in recognition that addressing non-participant groups was a key task for government. A further advisory

group reviewed the scale of poor literacy and numeracy skills among Britain's adults, and led to the adoption of a cross-government Skills for Life strategy, backed by a high-profile media campaign to secure literacy, numeracy, and language skills for all who needed it (Moser 1998). If the other flagship initiatives had their difficulties, the Skills for Life Strategy was an unqualified success. Well over a million and a half adults and young people have secured a first qualification. But its great strength was to recognize that the suite of national qualifications developed could only meet a fragment of the literacy and numeracy learning needs of people attracted to participate. Funding enabled providers to help three times as many adults who did not go on to gain certification strengthen skills, in the early years of the Strategy. The growth of demand for English for Speakers of Other Languages has been striking, as migration expanded, notably from the states joining the European Union. That expansion squeezed other provision, and produced a reverse of policy in 2007, as the government capped public investment in ESOL, introduced fees and a form of rationing to give priority to settled groups. Here, as elsewhere, government felt employers should be paying a higher proportion of costs, without establishing a mechanism to ensure that they did so.

Changing the institutional landscape – The Learning and Skills Council

There has been continual re-engineering of arrangements and institutions for funding and supporting the work throughout the period. Most importantly, the 2000 Learning and Skills Act nationalized local authority adult education budgets, abolished Training and Enterprise Councils and the Further Education Funding Council, and replaced them in 2000 with a network of local Learning and Skills Councils, backed by a national office. The Learning and Skills Council was charged with planning and funding post-compulsory education and training to secure economic competitiveness and a fair and inclusive society.

The junior minister for Adult Learning and Skills, Malcolm Wicks, set it an early challenge. To stimulate wider participation, Wicks encouraged the Council to launch an initiative to persuade people to sign up for courses of three to six hours. Initially, these were to be funded from colleges' and other providers' existing resources, but the initiative was so successful in increasing participation by people over sixty in particular that the Council agreed to fund many of the learners engaged in subsequent short-course programmes.

Bodies created at arm's length from government to carry out its remit take on a life of their own, and from the beginning the national council of the LSC gave a dramatically lower priority to learning for personal and community development, and civic engagement than the politicians had asked for. This was the era of national targets. For adult learning these were a Skills-for-Life target, new goals for technician level qualifications, and for higher education, a target of 50 percent participation in higher education by the age of thirty. This had the perhaps unintended consequence of halting and then

reversing the growth of mature student participation that had been a feature of English Higher Education since the late 1980s.

The targets adopted by government were for whole qualifications gained, and the bulk of adult study is incremental. Where a unitized curriculum and a credit accumulation and transfer system is in place, this mode of study presents no inhibition to qualifications gain. Yet despite major innovations in the development of credit-bearing courses in further and in higher education in the UK – where Scotland's SCOTVEC is a shining example – progress to a nationally recognized system in England has been painfully slow, in part at least because of the power of awarding bodies to inhibit the adoption of transferable credit. As a result the targets regime adopted by government has further privileged young people over adult participants, since institutions' performance is measured by their contributions to targets, and however valuable an adult's programme of study, if it does not help in the achievement of challenging targets, it risks receiving lower priority.

It is impossible to look back on the first term of the Labour government without reflecting that the blizzard of new initiatives unleashed often had contradictory effects to those intended. Despite commitment to widening participation, government was anxious to see robust evidence on impact of its policies. To address this, government established a Centre for the Economics of Education, and also the Wider Benefits of Learning research centre in 2001 which produced a powerful range of evidence of the impact of investing in education on other social policy goals of government, and on the acquisition and maintenance of social capital. It showed how learning served both to help some people to sustain independent lives and for others, the way learning led to transformation of life chances. Using major national longitudinal population cohort studies it established some surprising and powerful data. It found that comparing adults, interviewed at 33 and again at 42 who reported having taken part in some episode of learning over the period with those who reported not actively learning:

- Learners were 13 percent more likely to give up smoking.
- 34 percent of learners reported an increase in racial tolerance.
- Learners were much less likely to be politically cynical.
- Learners over forty were significantly less dissatisfied with their lives than those not reporting learning.
- There were modest differences in the likelihood of contracting cervical cancer among women.

What was most striking about the findings was that these changes were consistent whatever the learner's prior educational experience, and whatever the level of study engaged in. This is in marked contrast to the participation data illustrated above. They drew on medical data which shows that whilst learning does not inhibit the onset of Alzheimer's it does slow the rate of deterioration of other healthy cells in the brain. People who develop Alzheimer's but maintain active neural networks manifest its effects at a later stage, reducing the period of their lives where they are helplessly dependent on

others. Literally, it is better to use it than lose it. Taken together, these findings make a powerful case for modest public investment in adult learning of all sorts, and go some way towards meeting the challenge of one civil servant who argued that adult learning is an evidence free zone.

When launching “The Learning Age”, Blunkett talked of the time it takes to turn round an oil tanker. Overall investment in further education sector budgets grew quickly – fuelling the expansion of the Skills for Life programme and short courses, and a major expansion of participation by people over sixty. By 2003 adults accounted for some eight in ten of all learners in the further education system.

The Skills Strategy

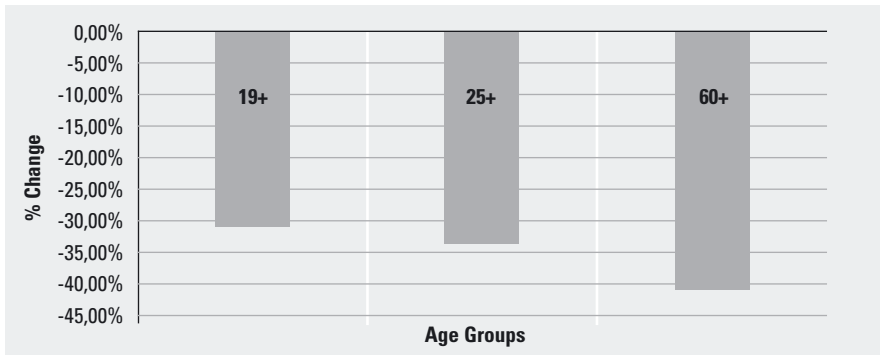
Now, whilst total investment continued to grow, a sharp redistribution began. It privileged younger students up to 25, and people learning at or for work. Gone were the short courses, and with them many of the older learners who found them so accessible. From 2003 when a new Skills Strategy was adopted, a new utilitarianism reasserted itself. There was no talk now of the time it takes to turn round an oil tanker. The primary task of post-school education was to service the economy, to respond to the challenges of globalization. To be fair, and largely because of the intervention of successive junior ministers, the “Skills Strategy White Papers” of 2003–05 did also recognize that adult learning serves purposes other than the narrowly economic.

The Skills Strategy established an entitlement to learning at level 2 (what a successful 16 year old might achieve) to complement the literacy, numeracy and language entitlement, (but only for people able and willing to study for the full qualification) and established Sector Skills Councils in yet another attempt to woo employers to play a shaping role in the system. Whilst a protected budget was identified for adult education in local authorities, college provision was to be radically reshaped, following a review of colleges by Sir Andrew Foster, which relegated their community development role to at best an optional extra.

As a result budgets spent on adult learning outside explicit vocational courses has plummeted over the last two years, with the loss of 1,400,000 adult learners from publicly funded provision, and the prospect of further dramatic losses to come, as the Government aligns public spending with the recommendations of its latest report on the skills needs of the British economy in the year 2020.

There are, of course, insufficient budgets to do everything, and there is widespread recognition that government, employers and individuals alike need to invest more to create a learning society. However, employers continue to spend well below the OECD average for investment, and access to learning opportunities at work is skewed heavily in favour of those who already have the most qualifications. Government is reluctant

Change in Learner Numbers 2004/05–2006/07



(drawn from Learning and Skills Council statistics)

to enact legislation requiring employers to train all their staff. Yet, to repeat, two thirds of the jobs of the next decade will be filled by adults.

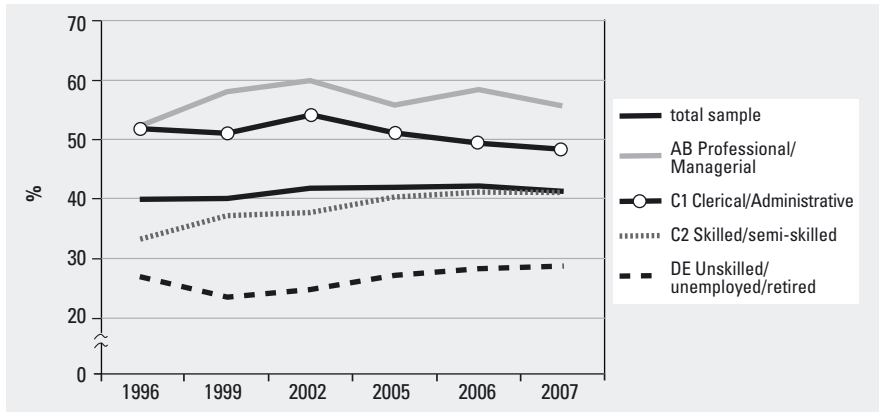
The Leitch Review

Government has taken some comfort from surveys, like NIACE’s which show that overall participation has held up, even when publicly-funded provision has fallen sharply. Indeed, since 2002, numbers reporting current or recent participation have dropped. However, participation affects different groups differently. This table shows dramatically that participation in learning is strongly associated with more affluent social class groups. Unskilled, unemployed and retired people’s participation has scarcely shifted in the last decade. Those with extended initial education are far more likely to continue learning than those who left school at the first opportunity.

There has been a levelling up of participation between 25 and 55 in the last few years, but older people are significantly less likely to participate. And current or recent participation is the most powerful predictor of future study. Less than one in eight of those who say they have done no learning since school plan to take up learning in the next three years.

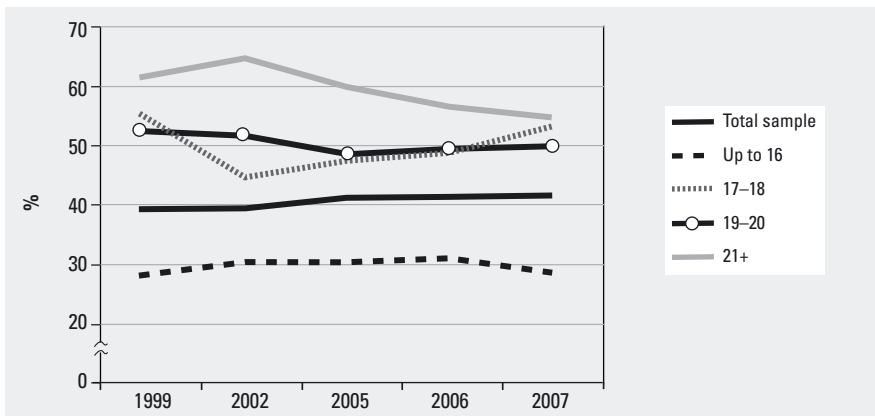
The shift in public spending priorities was endorsed and reinforced with the publication of the Treasury review of the skills needs of the British economy in 2020, chaired by Lord Leitch. “Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills” (2006) looked at the comparative skills of the UK workforce at that time, and at the skills levels needed to be competitive in an ever more competitive global market in 2020. Like earlier reports it recognized that qualifications are only a proxy for skills, and that productivity gains rely on the interplay of innovation, capital investment, managerial capacity as well as workers’ skills. Nonetheless, it argued that by 2020 almost all adults

Current or recent participation in learning by socio economic class: 1996–2007 compared



(Aldridge/Tuckett 2007, p. 13)

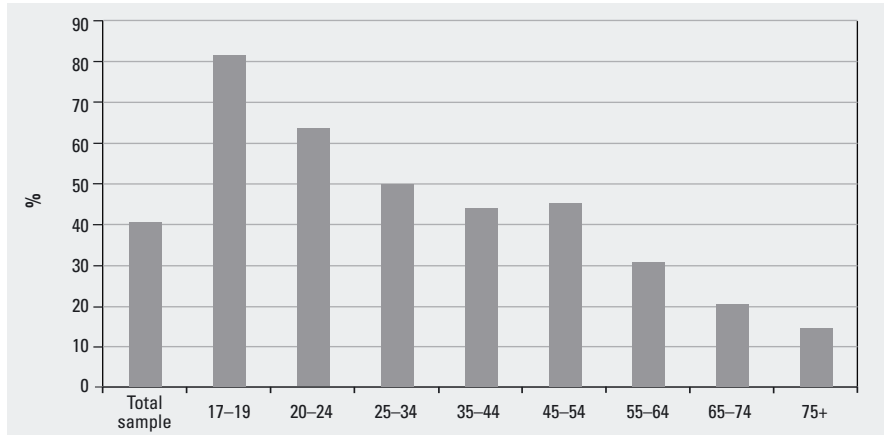
Current/recent participation in learning by terminal age of education 1999–2007



(Aldridge/Tuckett 2007, p. 17)

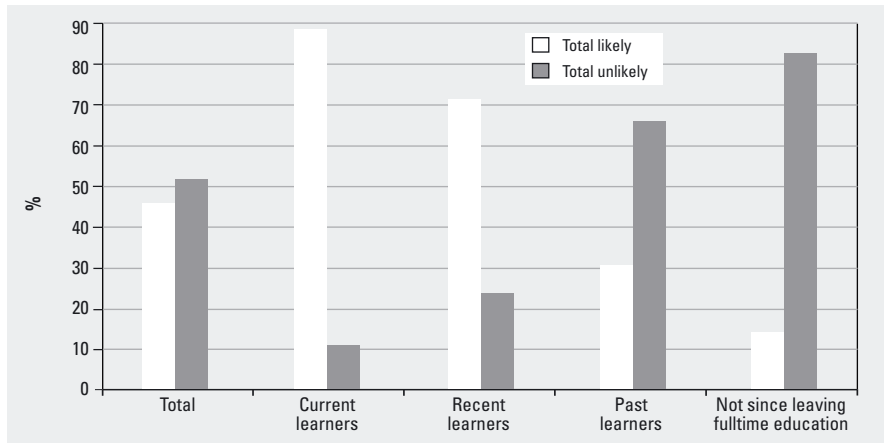
should achieve basic skills of functional literacy and numeracy; that nine in ten adults should acquire level 2 qualifications; and that four in ten adults should have a higher education qualification. Leitch was convinced that the education and training system should be employer-led, and that reformed Sector Skills Councils should play a lead role in overhauling vocational qualifications. There was to be a dramatic increase in workplace learning, notably through the Train to Gain programme launched in 2006. Demand was to be stimulated by giving individuals learning accounts to choose where and how to study. Skills brokers were to help employers identify skills needs among their workforce. It recognized that employers needed to invest more, but gave them

Current/recent participation in learning by age, 2007



(Aldridge/Tuckett 2007, p. 16)

Future intentions to take up learning 2007, by learning status



(Aldridge/Tuckett 2007, p. 23)

until 2010 to show that they would increase investment voluntarily. If not, the State should take powers to secure workplace learning for employees.

Despite the changing demography of the country, Leitch had little to recommend about mid-career or late career re-skilling, nor, despite an ambitious government target of securing 80 percent participation in the economy, did he say much about the learning needs of people currently outside the labour market or about how they were to be

equipped for a labour market making increased demands for skills. Nevertheless, the government accepted the report and set about implementing it.

Leitch also said nothing about the dramatic increase in migrant labour into the UK since 2000, both skilled and unskilled. Their arrival has had a dramatic impact on the demand for English classes, and once again government would like employers to pay the costs of their employees learning English; many refuse but Leitch offered no advice on how to make them comply. The result of the changes deriving from Leitch, exacerbated by the needs of new arrivals has been to squeeze dramatically opportunities for learners to choose to study part-time the subjects of their choice. Adult education programmes comparable to the range on offer in Germany's *Volkshochschulen* are now hard to find in Britain.

Impact on liberal adult education

Language courses have declined dramatically in the last five years; information and communications technology course enrolments have been hit by major fee rises, as public subsidy has been withdrawn, and the numbers of people over sixty have halved in publicly-funded courses in under three years.

But does this reduction in community-based adult education matter? Since I have worked in adult education, Hampshire has cut its adult education budget entirely more than once, without consciously reinstating the funding. Yet adults are like the weed, ground elder, hard to get rid of, and there is always provision around to cut the next time budgets tighten. I have no doubt that adults determined to find somewhere to learn will find what they need. But is that all you need to usher in the learning age? Clearly not for the people who benefited least from education the first time round, and for those working for the third of employers who do no training.

The latest consultation paper on Informal Learning (2008) launched by the Secretary of State celebrates the extraordinary diversity of self- and mutually organized learning activities, from reading groups to universities of the third age. It highlights the value of family learning, for adults and young people alike, the importance of libraries, museums and broadcasters, and the powerful possibilities of web-based learning communities, but under-values the role of classes taught by skilled teachers, and of their importance to people returning to learning.

We know that learning of all sorts is not only good for your health, sanity, family and communal relations, but it is also good for the economy. As Ford's Employee Development Scheme has shown since the late eighties, investing in learning for its own sake can lead to improved industrial relations, improved retention, improved problem solving in the workplace, and lower absenteeism – all things that affect the bottom line. The Scandinavian countries, study circle democracies, continue to combine large

scale investment in learning for its own sake, with impressive capacity to learn their way out of economic difficulties. For, surely, it is learning that is the key industrial skill, one that leaks from one arena to another. Once it takes hold, it is hard to contain, and you do it best when you can choose the vehicle through which to develop the habit. It is remarkable how quickly the British government seems to have forgotten this, and reverted to policies close in many ways to those that failed its Conservative predecessor, albeit with higher levels of investment committed. Understanding the value of permissive educational policies for adults has never been sufficiently rooted in our policy culture, and is always fragile. In my view, each time Government narrows and prescribes provision it is at our peril.

What I have tried to show in this paper is that over the last decade government in England in particular has encouraged and funded a wide array of measures to create a learning society, and has then retreated to narrow human capital policies. This has left many adult educators, and hundreds of thousands of learners, feeling like the Duke of York's ten thousand men in the children's nursery rhyme: that they have been marched up to the top of the hill, and then marched down again. Nevertheless, there are once again most modest causes for hope. Demographic change will have an impact, and a new and enlightened Secretary of State understands the value of community learning, and pendulums do swing back. During the life of the Labour government a large number of initiatives have been taken to broaden the reach and to increase the volume of adult participation in learning. They have shown conclusively that it is possible to increase adults' engagement in learning – whether in the workplace or the community.

Over the same period there have been a number of changes to institutional infrastructure, a plethora of new measures, most of which have been short-lived, and there have been major shifts of focus for public funding. The net effect of this policy restlessness is that many of the gains of the early years have been sharply reversed.

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Trends in Adult and Continuing Education in Germany

This contribution summarizes the most important trends in adult education in Germany as they were elaborated in a secondary analytic research project of the DIE (Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung – German Institute for Adult Education) in 2007. According to the study, participation in continuing education in Germany is increasing after long years of decrease, even though, overall, financing of adult education has been further reduced. Cooperation as well as competition between continuing education institutions has increased. Course offers have become shorter, counselling and information have more significant roles than in the past, and those employed in adult education, especially teaching staff, have a higher level of qualifications than before. Adult education policy in Germany has varying aims as a result of the federal structure of the country. Incentives for vocational and workplace training predominate however.

1. Basic information

Comparing continuing education in Germany with other countries in Europe, one immediately notices a difference in how continuing education is defined. Adult and continuing education in Germany is defined more narrowly as “education following completion of initial professional or vocational educational training”. Trainees or university students who, for instance, have not acquired a professional or vocational degree (regardless of their age) are not considered to be participants in continuing education.

Another important aspect is that the sixteen *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany have sovereign power over the system of education (with the exception of certain aspects of vocational training) while, within the individual *Länder*, there are extremely different ways of organizing the educational system. On top of this, a wide range of ministries is involved with continuing education at the Federal and *Länder* levels, such as the ministries of education, labour, the interior, etc. Finally, the German situation is marked by a high degree of institutionalization of continuing education in comparison to other European countries, but it is also embedded in extraordinarily complex and multifarious plural structures, which means that there are not only horizontal differences between the *Länder*, but also vertical differences between different organizational areas.

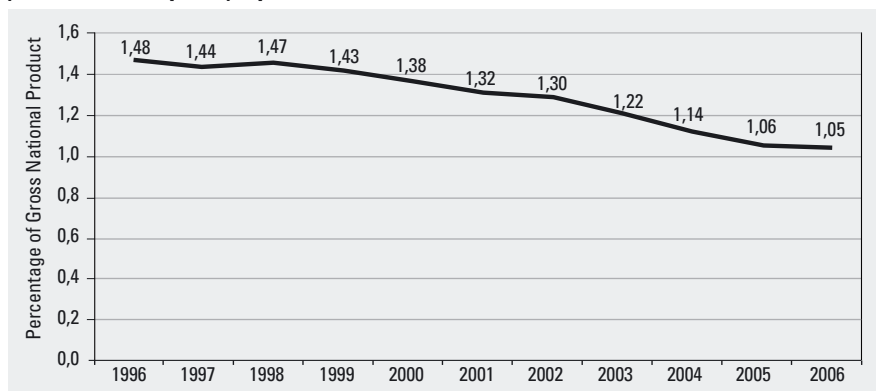
This becomes most evident when one examines general and vocational continuing education separately. In the area of general continuing education, adult education colleges and private institutes predominate, whereas in the area of vocational continuing education, it is business enterprises, economic chambers, together with private institutes once again, which are preponderant.

In view of the differentiated situation characterizing continuing education in Germany, it is difficult to identify general trends, as some of the *Länder* are pulling out of institutional promotion of continuing education, while others are investing considerable resources here. Nevertheless, some general trends can be identified and data produced bearing these out.

2. Decline in funding

Over the last ten years the amount of funding devoted to continuing education in Germany has declined in absolute and relative terms. Thus, for example, expenditures in this area were EUR 27.8 billion in 1996, but only EUR 24.1 billion in 2006. Funding has also decreased as a percentage of Gross National Product. In 1996 it accounted for 1.48 percent of GNP, whereas in 2006 this figure was only 1.05 percent.

Decrease in Public (by federal, *Länder* and local governments, and public agencies) and private (individual and corporate) expenditures



A significant part of this decline is also accounted for by the decrease in public funding. Thus the state (Federal, *Länder* and local governments) provided each person taking part in continuing education in 1996 a sum of EUR 23.68, but in 2006 this figure was only EUR 20.30. The same trend is also reflected in another statistic: EUR 1.86 per person was contributed in government funding in 1996, while in 2006 this amount was only EUR 1.60.

The decrease in the volume of funding for continuing education over the past ten years provides food for thought. It stands in stark contrast to the growing importance of continuing education acknowledged by actors responsible for educational policy. It appears, however, that the policy thrust is moving in a different direction; for

instance, public funding in the area of pre-school education has increased over this period.

3. More cooperation and competition

Interestingly enough, both cooperation and willingness to cooperate in the field of continuing education as well as competition have grown over the past ten years.

Continuing education institutions can more and more frequently be heard to claim that they work together with other educational institutions, but also with business enterprises, cultural institutions and government institutions in devising their programmes in order to reach target groups and provide information and counselling. Continuing education institutions are explicitly voicing a desire for even more cooperation, in particular with respect to regional cooperation. The impact of a major national programme known as "Learning Regions", in which cooperative procedures can be instituted and assessed on a trial basis, can be perceived in many cases.

At the same time, competition is growing among the approximately 19,000 continuing education institutions in Germany. The number of providers has grown, while institutions are increasingly seeking to create profiles focusing on individual segments and niches, but also on broadly ranged programmes (such as, for instance, those at adult education colleges, just as in the past). Globalization is having an impact on individual sectors; hence language programmes are gaining increasing currency in an international market. Programmes in the areas of health, management and economics are subject to increasing international competition.

In addition, there are growing financial constraints. These emanate to some extent from the decline in state promotion of institutions, but also from the growing quality and service demands of learners (the "customers"). Due to this, combined with a frequently tested "threshold" of the maximum fees which can be charged for certain programmes and certain target groups (that is to say, the maximum amounts which people interested in taking part in a programme are willing and able to pay), the latitude of action for institutions is shrinking.

4. Modules of shorter duration

In analyzing the trend in programmes and courses on offer, it is evident that the duration of these programmes and courses is growing shorter. This is especially the case with traditionally long-term programmes such as vocational training and languages. These are increasingly being carried out in short units – for instance on weekends – and with greater intensity. Programmes and courses tailored to meet the specific needs of entire groups, such as employees of individual enterprises, have grown considerably in

number. Here, courses and programmes are developed and carried out “on demand”. In these cases the continuing education facility also acts as a service provider specialized in education meeting a specified demand.

This is also associated with the development of modules. Progressive programme segments which have been developed in modular form and which award certificates upon completion, entitling but not obliging the holder to take part in additional modules, are becoming more and more common. The structure of programmes thus increasingly allows learners to pursue their specific interests by selecting appropriate modules and acquiring individual learning and educational profiles.

5. Counselling and information

This is linked to a greater need for information and counselling. The possibility of individual combination of single modules induces awareness of their availability and evaluation of their respective quality, the possibility of access and the work involved. Information on these is necessary as is targeted “educational counselling” which supports the selection of and decision to take part in programmes and courses.

Such information and counselling systems seem to be increasing in number. In many cases they are part of the respective educational facilities (when these are large), but there are also strategies, information and counselling on joint cooperative structures within a region. The individual interests of educational facilities frequently place constraints on the development of joint structures, but in some cases these have been developed and put into practice in an effective manner.

6. Employment

Over the past ten years the number of full-time employed persons has not increased in continuing education in Germany. It has even declined slightly which reflects the trend in funding of the area. The number of employees in related professions, voluntary staff and the number of free-lancers who work on their own account as “sole proprietors” has, on the other hand, increased. The problems resulting from this development are obvious. Standards for continuing education and qualification are all the more difficult to adhere to when the individuals involved are not provided with adequate job security.

This decline does not apply to qualifications which employees have when they begin working in continuing education, however. Here, it can be seen that compared to previous years more and more individuals can demonstrate qualifications in adult education (by having completed study courses or obtained additional qualifications) and hence that qualifications among teachers have, on the whole, improved. There is

still little information on the question of how the switchover of education at universities to a consecutive BA/MA system will change the situation of those working in the area of further education and their structure.

7. Amount of participation and structures

Following a decline at the turn of the century, participation in continuing education is on the rise again. The most recent figures from the Reporting System on Continuing Education as well as the Adult Education Survey for Germany show a slightly increased rate of approximately 43 percent at present. However, the level at the beginning of the 1990s – 48 percent – has still not been attained again.

In the analysis of participation structures, it can clearly be seen that there is still a gap between the social status and the qualification level of the participants in Germany, and that this gap may even be growing. Continuing education in Germany is still, and perhaps now even more so, an instrument with which those who are better educated with a higher social status have greater advantages over those who are less well educated with a lower social status. The probability of taking part in continuing education is at any rate significantly higher for this group than for those disadvantaged in education. So there is a perceivable gap which, if it widens, will mean that continuing education is not reaching out to include population groups, but rather strengthening their exclusion. It is also interesting that the difference between the genders in terms of participation is almost the same. Roughly equal percentages of men and women take part in continuing education with equal frequency today. The differences are merely in the content of the programmes and courses which are attended. While men focus on a narrow band of professional educational training programmes, women participate intensively in the entire spectrum of continuing education, especially in the language and health area.

Interesting developments can also be observed in terms of age. The participation of older groups in continuing education is increasing at a disproportional rate, including in age groups which are already in retirement (65 and over). Here there are also no doubt problems bringing appropriate programmes, access routes and strategies closely in line with the needs of these groups.

8. Educational policy goals

The Federal and *Länder* governments in Germany are pursuing the development of continuing education and in some cases developing programmes with the aim of improving certain sectors and aspects of these. The Federal government, for example, has initiated a better programme for basic education, while in many *Länder* special programmes are being sponsored, on, for instance, rural adult education, professional

educational training for young adults, the qualification of employees working in the area of continuing education, etc.

Continuing education policy in Germany is also increasingly being based on the benchmarking criteria of the European Union, which set out a relatively high participation target for continuing education for the year 2010 (Lisbon goals). However, there appears to be no coherent programme for the development of continuing education in Germany, no general strategies and no increased commitment on the part of the state. This may be due to the fragmentation of the German educational environment due to the control of the sixteen *Länder*, but it is no doubt also related to the specificity of German development and definition of continuing education.

References and data corresponding to the discussion herein can be found in summarized form in the recently published book "Trends der Weiterbildung" (2008).

Sources

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REPORT

FORUM

ORT

Weiterbildung der erwachsenenpädagogischen Professionals in Europa – Situation, Strategien, Systeme

Der vorliegende Text geht der Frage nach, wie weit auf der Ebene der Europäischen Union die Bemühungen um die Etablierung eines Kompetenzprofils für Erwachsenenbildner/innen im Zuge der Forderung nach einem Europäischen Qualifikationsrahmen gediehen sind. Den unterschiedlichen Definitionen und Strukturen von Weiterbildung in den verschiedenen Ländern geschuldet, kommt dabei ein eher weit gefasster Begriff von Erwachsenenbildung zum Einsatz¹, der berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung ebenso umfasst wie den non-formalen Sektor. Der Artikel fokussiert auf das lehrend tätige Personal, weil dort, „in den Kursen, Seminaren, Projekten, Arbeitskreisen, Beratungsgesprächen, Bildungsreisen usw. (...) letztlich entschieden (wird), ob die Adressaten der Weiterbildung die Lernorte mit einem persönlichen Gewinn verlassen“ (Nittel 1998, S. 3). Darüber hinaus ist der Anteil der lehrend Tätigen mit 83 Prozent der Beschäftigungs- und Tätigkeitsverhältnisse am größten (WSF 2005, S. 5). Der Gang der Argumentation beleuchtet zunächst (1) die aktuelle Situation um die Einführung eines Europäischen Qualifikationsrahmens, da dieser auch Auswirkungen auf die Professionalisierung der Erwachsenenbildung haben wird. Anschließend werden (2) Professionalisierungssysteme und -strategien in Europa vorgestellt und kritisch diskutiert, wobei institutionalisiert-formale Systeme ebenso berücksichtigt werden wie kleinere Projekte. Abschließend verweist ein kurzer Ausblick (3) auf offene Forschungsfragen, die sich angesichts der derzeitigen Entwicklungen ergeben.

1. Zur aktuellen Situation: Der Europäische Qualifikationsrahmen

Sichtet man die bildungspolitischen Dokumente und Programme auf EU-Ebene – genannt sei hier das im Zuge der Lissabon-Strategie aufgelegte EU-Programm „Allgemeine und berufliche Bildung 2010“ (Europäische Kommission o. J.) oder die im Zuge der Überprüfung der Ziele des Kopenhagen-Prozesses entstandenen Kommuniqués von Maastricht und Helsinki – so finden sich stets Forderungen nach einer Schärfung des Profils und Klärung der Kompetenzen des lehrend tätigen pädagogischen Personals. So heißt es im Kommuniqué von Maastricht, es gehe um das

Feststellen der spezifischen Lernbedürfnisse und der sich verändernden Rolle von Lehrkräften und Ausbilderinnen/Ausbildnern in der Berufsbildung sowie von Möglichkeiten, wie ihr Beruf attraktiver gemacht werden kann, einschließlich laufender Aktualisierung ihrer beruflichen Kompetenzen. Lehrkräfte und Ausbilder/innen sollen in ihrer wichtigen Rolle als Akteure und

¹ So definiert die Europäische Kommission, Erwachsenenbildung umfasse „alle Formen des Lernens durch Erwachsene nach Abschluss der allgemeinen und/oder beruflichen Bildung, unabhängig von dem in diesem Prozess erreichten Niveau (d. h. einschließlich Hochschulbildung)“ (Europäische Kommission 2006a, S. 2).

Innovatoren in der Lernumgebung unterstützt werden. Ein kohärenter Rahmen zur Unterstützung der Qualitätsverbesserung des beruflichen Unterrichts und der Ausbildung sollte vorgesehen werden (ebd., S. 5).

Darüber hinaus fordert der im September 2007 verabschiedete Aktionsplan Erwachsenenbildung bis 2009 die „Entwicklung von Standards für die Fachkräfte in der Erwachsenenbildung“ (vgl. Europäische Kommission 2007a, S. 9). Diese EU-Proklamationen korrespondieren mit aktuellen Entwicklungen auf Länderebene. So ist in Rumänien „vorgesehen, dass Weiterbildungsanbieter ab 2010 nur dann zugelassen werden, wenn sie über pädagogische, für die berufliche Weiterbildung Erwachsener ausgebildete Lehrkräfte verfügen (...) Gegenwärtig wird das professionelle Profil eines ‚Erwachsenenbildners‘ intensiv diskutiert und man erwägt, diesen Beruf in die Berufsklassifizierungsliste aufzunehmen“ (Sava/Matache 2003, S. 46).

Diese Strömungen werden unterstützt durch die Idee des europäischen Qualifikationsrahmens (vgl. Europäische Kommission 2006d), der eine hohe Professionalität des Erwachsenenbildungspersonals gewährleisten soll. Dieser sei nicht nur als Voraussetzung für die Erwachsenenbildung notwendig, um entsprechende (Fort-)Bildungsprogramme zu entwickeln, sondern biete auch einen Referenzrahmen für die pädagogische Qualität und die Kompetenzen pädagogisch Tätiger, die das Lernen Erwachsener im formalen, non-formalen oder auch informellen Bereich unterstützen. Das Fazit lautet daher: „Such a European framework is all the more necessary, given the very different situations and approaches to professionalisation across Europe“. Der EQR gilt gar als Mittel, um die große Zahl an Teilzeit-Tätigen zu erreichen und zu Fortbildung zu motivieren (EAEA 2006, S. 8).

1.1 Wie gestaltet sich der Aufbau des EQR?

Der Europäische Qualifikationsrahmen ist in acht Niveaustufen unterteilt, für die jeweils Kenntnisse (Theorie- und/oder Faktenwissen), Fertigkeiten (kognitive und praktische Fertigkeiten) sowie Kompetenzen (Übernahme von Verantwortung und Selbständigkeit) beschrieben werden. So bedeutet Kompetenz auf Niveaustufe 1 „Arbeiten oder Lernen unter direkter Anleitung in einem vorstrukturierten Kontext“, auf Niveaustufe 8 ist damit „Namhafte Autorität, Innovationsfähigkeit, Selbstständigkeit, wissenschaftliche und berufliche Integrität und nachhaltiges Engagement bei der Entwicklung neuer Ideen oder Verfahren in führenden Arbeits- oder Lernkontexten, einschließlich der Forschung“ intendiert (vgl. Europäische Kommission 2006b, S. 19 ff.). Ziel des EQR ist ebenso die Förderung von Mobilität. So wird der noch in Planung befindliche Deutsche Qualifikationsrahmen (DQR) als ein „Übersetzungsinstrument im europäischen Kontext“ beschrieben, der „wie in einem ‚System fester Wechselkurse‘ erworbene Qualifikationen und Kompetenzen korreliert. In Deutschland erworbene Qualifikationen und Kompetenzen werden damit transnational anschlussfähig“ (Jahnke 2007, S. 26). Eher kritisch äußert sich Grollmann:

Angesichts der (...) Vielfalt von Ausbilderprofilen in Europa, würde es zunächst einer großen empirischen und systematischen Anstrengung bedürfen, einen Rahmen zu kreieren, der die verschiedenen Profile unterbringen kann. Der hierfür zu betreibende Aufwand ist kaum zu ermessen. Auf der anderen Seite lockt die angenommene hohe Flexibilität eines solchen Rahmenwerks. Allerdings entsteht der Eindruck, dass diese Form der Lösung in erster Linie den spezifischen Fallstricken einer europäischen Bildungspolitik geschuldet ist, und nicht den beruflichen Aufgaben, die sich für Lehrer und Ausbilder in einer modernen beruflichen Bildung stellen (Grollmann 2005, S. 8).

Was Grollmann für die Gruppe der Ausbilder/innen zu bedenken gibt, gilt noch mehr für erwachsenenpädagogische Professionals, deren Tätigkeitsprofile noch vielfältiger sind.

1.2 Wie groß ist eigentlich die Anzahl derer, die „gerahmt“ werden sollen?

Möchte man die Zahl der in der Erwachsenenbildung lehrend Tätigen auf EU-Ebene bestimmen – die Kenntnis dieser Basis erscheint als Voraussetzung zur Diskussion der möglichen Konsequenzen eines Europäischen Qualifikationsrahmens – so bewegt man sich trotz des in der jüngeren Vergangenheit gewachsenen Zahlenmaterials² auf unsicherem Grund. So können strukturell gut aufgestellte Länder wie Finnland (vgl. Heinonen 2007) zwar auf Daten des Zentralamts für Unterrichtswesen und Statistics zurückgreifen und auf dieser Basis Zahlen über das Lehrpersonal ermitteln, allerdings schränkt Heinonen ein:

Es ist schwierig, genaue Angaben über das Personal in der Erwachsenenbildung zu machen. Dies liegt zum einen daran, dass die Lehrkräfte häufig sowohl in der Ausbildung Jugendlicher als auch in der Erwachsenenbildung beschäftigt sind. Zum anderen gibt es viele so genannte ‚Stunden-Lehrkräfte‘ in der freien Erwachsenenbildung, die nicht fest angestellt, sondern auf Honorarbasis tätig sind (ebd., S. 58).

In Österreich wird für das Jahr 2003 von etwa 50.000 Vortragenden, Kurs- und Seminarleitenden ausgegangen (vgl. Lenz 2005, S. 51), Nuissl und Pehl (vgl. 2000, S. 38 f.) schätzen das Feld der Lehrenden für Deutschland auf 400.000–800.000, wobei „einzelne Daten mosaikartig zusammenzufügen“ seien. Nach neuesten Erkenntnissen beläuft sich die Zahl der in der Weiterbildung Tätigen auf 1,6 Mio. (WSF 2005, S. 3), von denen sich allerdings nur 14 Prozent in einem sozialversicherungspflichtigen Beschäftigungsverhältnis befinden, d. h. der größte Teil arbeitet als nebenberufliche

2 Zu nennen sind hier die Länderporträts des DIE, Studien der Erwachsenenbildungsorganisation EAEA sowie die Datenbank Eurydice. Weitere Daten versprechen die angekündigten Studien ALPINE sowie zwei von der Europäischen Kommission in Auftrag gegebene Untersuchungen über Ausbilder in der Berufsbildung. Ergebnisse liegen jeweils noch nicht vor. Ziel der ALPINE-Studie (vgl. Europäische Kommission 2006c), die 32 Länder umfasst, ist zuvorderst eine Informationsbasis zu schaffen in Bezug auf Themen wie Rekrutierungswege und Karrierepfade, Beschäftigungssituation, Attraktivität und Trends – jeweils bezogen auf die allgemeine Erwachsenenbildung. Die beiden Studien über Ausbilder in der Berufsbildung, die vom ITB an der Uni Bremen bzw. dem Research voor Beleid an der Universität Leiden durchgeführt werden, erarbeiten einen Überblick über die Situation von Ausbildern, Tutoren und anderen Personen mit Ausbildungs- und Lehraufgaben in Unternehmen (LOS 1) sowie in privaten oder öffentlichen Berufsbildungseinrichtungen (LOS 2) (vgl. Europäische Kommission 2007b, S. 2).

Honorarkraft (ebd., S. 15). Berücksichtigt man hier die Doppelzählung von Lehrenden (die für mehrere Weiterbildungsanbieter arbeiten), so ergibt sich ein Wert von ca. 650.000 Beschäftigten. Je weiter südlich die EU-Recherche voranschreitet, desto weniger liegen selbst derartige plausibilisierte Schätzungen vor: Man muss sich auf beispielhafte Aufzählungen der Institutionenlandschaft beschränken, wie sich z. B. anhand der Länderporträts für Spanien (Gómez 2001, Jütte 1992), Griechenland (Papaioannou 1997) oder Rumänien (Sava/Matache 2003) belegen lässt. Dabei zeigt sich ein Trend, dass nämlich – ähnlich wie in Rumänien – „die eigentliche Kursarbeit in erster Linie von freien Mitarbeitern geleistet wird. Die fest angestellten Mitarbeiter sind vorwiegend mit Managementaufgaben (...) und Verwaltungsaufgaben betraut.“ (Sava/Matache 2003, S. 45). Die ländervergleichende Studie des NICAÉ konnte für nur sieben Länder Zahlen zum lehrend tätigen Personal ermitteln (französischer Teil Belgiens, flämischer Teil Belgiens, Zypern, Deutschland, Griechenland, Slowakei sowie UK, vgl. NICAÉ 2006, S. 33). Auf der Ebene der Institutionen ist das Datenmaterial zwar reichhaltiger (vgl. ebd., S. 27 ff.), da jedoch die durchschnittliche Beschäftigtenzahl extrem variiert (vgl. ebd., S. 111), bleibt man doch ratlos zurück.

Bei den Lehrkräften hat es die Europäische Union mit einer höchst unterschiedlichen Situation der Ausbildung, der Tätigkeitsfelder und des Selbstverständnisses der Menschen zu tun, die in der Weiterbildung tätig sind. Bereits in nationalen Kontexten sind hier größte Unterschiede zu verzeichnen, die vom Status (nebenberuflich, ehrenamtlich, hauptberuflich) über den Organisationsbezug (Betriebe, Verbände usw.) bis hin zu den Qualifikationsstrukturen reichen (Bechtel/Lattke/ Nuissl 2005, S. 120).

Zu einem ähnlichen Ergebnis kommt die Untersuchung „Non-Vocational Adult Education in Europe“:

In general, the majority of countries have paid little attention to defining the content and processes for initial training for formal NVAE personnel and even less so for personnel in non-formal NVAE. Generally, the occupation of teacher or trainer of adults is not a regulated profession in the review countries (EURYDICE 2006, S. 56).

2. Professionalisierungssysteme und -strategien in Europa

Das Feld der Bemühungen um eine Professionalisierung des pädagogischen Personals lässt sich grundlegend dahingehend strukturieren, ob ein Studium angeboten wird oder ob ein System angeboten wird, das in anderen Kontexten erworbene Kompetenzen zertifiziert und durch „nachholende“ Fortbildung komplettiert. Im Folgenden werden beide Professionalisierungsstrategien, die auch in einem Land parallel verfolgt werden können, kurz vorgestellt und diskutiert.

2.1 Das Hochschulstudium als wissenschaftsorientierte Professionalisierungsstrategie

Der Bereich der Studiengänge ist im Zuge des Bologna-Prozesses und der Umstellung auf Bachelor- und Masterabschlüsse derzeit stark in Bewegung. Bechtel/Lattke beschreiben Studiengänge im Bereich Erwachsenenbildung/Weiterbildung in den Ländern Dänemark, Finnland, Frankreich, Großbritannien, Italien, Niederlande, Österreich, Schweiz, Schweden. Dagegen wurden Irland und Rumänien noch nicht berücksichtigt, gleichwohl es hier relevante Studienangebote gibt (z.B. Rumänien mit einem europäischen Masterstudiengang, vgl. www.emae-network.org). In anderen Ländern, wie z.B. Spanien sind solche Studienangebote gerade im Entwicklungsprozess. Folgt man der Einschätzung von Bechtel und Lattke, dann richten sich Studiengänge „in erster Linie an Interessent/inn/en, die eine hauptberufliche Tätigkeit in diesem Bereich anstreben, und damit nur an einen Bruchteil der tatsächlich in der EB/WB Tätigen. Gleichwohl stellen Hochschulstudiengänge als umfassende berufsfeldbezogene akademische Qualifizierung einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Professionalisierung des Feldes dar“ (Bechtel/Lattke 2007, S. 3). So ist, folgt man auch den Ergebnissen der zahlreichen Verbleibsstudien von Diplom- und Magister-Pädagog/inn/en in Deutschland, davon auszugehen, dass Absolvent/inn/en eines Studiums nicht nur einen beruflichen Platz im Feld finden, sondern diesen auch trotz der vermeintlichen Praxisferne eines Studiums versiert besetzen. „Eine strikt wissenschaftsorientierte Qualifikation und Theorieorientierung während des Studiums erweist sich u.U. als viel praxisrelevanter als das vermeintlich praxisnahe Studieren, das häufig mit bloßer Selbsterfahrung verwechselt wird“ (Nittel 2005, S. 74). Welche Auswirkungen die Umstellung auf das Bachelor- und Mastersystem hat, wird in den kommenden Jahren zu beobachten sein. Es zeichnet sich allerdings bereits ab, dass es kaum Bachelorstudiengänge mit einem hohen Anteil Erwachsenenbildung geben wird. Dies könnte zum einen negativ betrachtet werden, weil dadurch kaum Absolventen für anschließende Masterstudiengänge ausgebildet werden, zum anderen aber auch positiv, weil damit angezeigt wird, dass ein Bachelorstudium kaum für die Ausbildung in der Erwachsenenbildung ausreicht. So finden wir denn auch mehr Masterstudiengänge im Bereich der Erwachsenenbildung, allerdings mit ganz unterschiedlicher Ausrichtung (forschungs- oder eher anwendungsorientiert) und Schwerpunktsetzung. Diese Masterstudiengänge könnten aber eine Möglichkeit für Absolvent/inn/en anderer (Bachelor-)Studiengänge darstellen, die bereits im Feld der Erwachsenenbildung tätig sind, um sich über das Studium weiter zu professionalisieren. So wissen wir aus der „Erhebung zur beruflichen und sozialen Lage von Lehrenden in Weiterbildungseinrichtungen“ (WSF 2005), dass 73 Prozent eine Hochschulausbildung besitzen, allerdings nur 19 Prozent davon ein Pädagogikstudium. (Dies relativiert auch die Sorge über fehlende Bachelorstudiengänge in diesem Bereich). 34 Prozent der Lehrenden sind hingegen überhaupt nicht pädagogisch qualifiziert. Für dieses Drittel könnte somit ein erwachsenenspezifischer Masterstudiengang eine qualifizierte Weiterbildung ermöglichen. Diese Überlegungen verweisen darauf, dass ein Engagement vor allem in den Ausbau qualitativ hochwertiger Masterstudiengänge zu legen ist, mit gemeinsam zugrunde liegenden Qualifikationsstandards (der Vorschlag zu einem Kerncurriculum Erwachsenenbildung für

BA-/MA-Studiengänge weist hier bereits in die richtige Richtung, vgl. Faulstich/Zeuner 2005). Die Umstellung auf Bachelor- und Masterstudiengänge könnte somit auch als Chance genutzt werden, das Feld der Erwachsenenbildung noch stärker als bisher zu professionalisieren.

2.2 Zertifizierungssysteme als pragmatische Professionalisierungsstrategie

Zur Professionalisierung der primär lehrend Tätigen, die u.U. seit Jahrzehnten in der Erwachsenenbildung tätig sind und kein Studium mehr aufnehmen möchten oder können, haben die Systeme in der Schweiz und in Österreich wegweisenden Charakter. Sie sollen hier näher betrachtet werden, da sie als eher pragmatischer, aber dennoch formalisierter Weg auch als mögliche Referenzpunkte für ein entsprechendes Projekt in Deutschland gelten (vgl. Kraft 2006, S. 34). Ergänzt wird dieser Überblick durch die Darstellung einer weiteren Initiative in UK sowie aktueller Professionalisierungs-Projekte in Europa. Diese zeigen, dass es derzeit vielerorts Bemühungen gibt, Kompetenzstandards für Trainer und Ausbilder – also der Hauptgruppe der in der Weiterbildung Aktiven, den Lehrenden – zu definieren.

In der Schweiz findet sich mit dem Konzept „Ausbildungen der Auszubildenden“ (welches die in der Weiterbildung Tätigen mit einschließt) gewissermaßen ein Baukastensystem. Es umfasst drei Stufen – von einem Zertifikat zur Kursleitung im vorgegebenen Rahmen bis hin zu universitären Abschlüssen – die mit steigendem Komplexitätsgrad stärker Leitungsaufgaben und wissenschaftliches Wissen umfassen. Das System ist verknüpft mit einem Anerkennungs- bzw. Akkreditierungsverfahren für Anbieter dieser Module. Wer sich entsprechende Kompetenzen in anderen Kontexten angeeignet hat, kann eine Gleichwertigkeitsbeurteilung beantragen.

Als ähnliches System, das noch stärker informell erworbene Kompetenzen und den Portfolio-Gedanken betont, kann das Projekt „Weiterbildungsakademie Österreich“ (vgl. Kraft 2006, S. 31 f.) gelten. Erworben werden können zwei Abschlüsse: „Zertifizierter Erwachsenenbildner“ sowie „Diplomierter Erwachsenenbildner“, wofür eine Spezialisierung in Lehren/Gruppenleitung/Training, Bildungsmanagement, Beratung oder Bibliothekswesen und Informationsmanagement nötig ist. Das System wird gestützt durch eine Beratung, die der Standortbestimmung und der Erstellung eines Bildungsplans zum Erwerb fehlender Kompetenzen dient. Die Absolventen, die eine dreitägige Zertifizierungswerkstatt durchlaufen haben, werden auf der Projektwebseite www.wba.or.at veröffentlicht.³

Die Systeme wirken nur auf den ersten Blick ähnlich. So wird die Stufe 1 des Schweizer Systems modelliert als *eine* Handlungskompetenz („Lernveranstaltungen im eigenen

³ Die derzeit vom DIE betriebene Konzeptgruppe TQW (Trainer – Qualifizierung – Weiterbildung) möchte ein Qualifizierungs- und Zertifizierungs-System entwickeln (vgl. Kraft 2006, S. 34), das von den Entwicklungen in der Schweiz und in Österreich inspiriert ist.

Fachbereich mit Erwachsenen im Rahmen vorgegebener Konzepte, Lehrpläne und Lehrmittel vorbereiten, durchführen und auswerten“⁴, die aus verschiedenen Kompetenzen besteht und für die wiederum gewisse Ressourcen (Wissen, Fertigkeiten, Beziehungsfähigkeiten, kognitive Fähigkeiten, Ressourcen des Umfeldes, Selbstreflexion) nötig sind. Diese Grundstruktur findet ihre Entsprechung auf der Angebotsseite. Es werden zeitlich eher intensive Lehrgänge angeboten, die zum Erwerb dieser einen Handlungskompetenz führen, nur sehr wenige Personen durchlaufen die angebotene Gleichwertigkeitsbeurteilung zur Anerkennung bereits erworbener Kompetenzen (vgl. Epprecht 2006, S. 1). Anders in Österreich: Hier wird die Stufe „Zertifizierter Erwachsenenbildner“ in sieben Kompetenzen (in den Bereichen Gesellschaft, Didaktik, Management, Beratung, Informationsmanagement/Bibliothekswesen sowie soziale und personale Kompetenzen) und 30 Credit Points unterteilt. Zwar finden sich auch hier auf der Angebotsseite zeitlich intensive Angebote, jedoch häufig auch Tageskurse, die zum Erwerb von 1 oder 1,5 ECTS berechtigen. Erste Eindrücke von der Nutzung des Systems⁵ deuten darauf hin, dass gerade diese „kleinen“ Angebote genutzt und 2/3 der nötigen Kompetenzpunkte vorab im Rahmen der Standortbestimmung anerkannt werden. Evaluationen der Systeme liegen jeweils noch nicht vor. In Österreich ist eine solche geplant, für die Schweiz können die Absolventenzahlen in den Jahresberichten des Schweizerischen Verbands für Weiterbildung ersehen werden. Bis einschließlich 2006 haben 14.000 Personen die Stufe 1 absolviert.

Auch die Initiative „Lifelonglearning UK“, bestehend aus Mitgliedern aus Politik und Bildung, hat Standards u. a. für Erwachsenenbildner herausgegeben⁶. Für den Bereich Lehrender werden beispielsweise für die Domänen „Professional Learning and teaching“, „Specialist learning and teaching“, „Planning for learning“, „Assessment for learning“ sowie „Access and progression“ jeweils „Professional Values“, „Professional Knowledge and Understanding“ und „Professional Practice“ definiert. Geplant ist ein mehrstufiger Qualifikationsrahmen (vgl. Lifelonglearning UK 2007a), der als einziges der bislang vorgestellten Systeme die Anschlussfähigkeit an den EQR betont. Das System wird gestützt durch neue Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT). Bemerkenswert an diesem System sind zwei Elemente: Zum einen wird auf die Notwendigkeit einer ständigen Weiterqualifizierung verwiesen. So ist im Rahmen der Continuing Professional Development (CPD) vorgesehen, dass sich das Lehrpersonal⁷ mindestens 30 Stunden im Jahr weiterbildet. Zum anderen wird an zentraler Stelle die Wertgebundenheit des Handelns betont: „The practice of teaching is underpinned by a set of professional values that should be observed by all teachers, tutors and trainers in all settings.“ Als Beispiele werden die Wertschätzung von Lernenden, ihrer Ent-

4 Für die weiteren Stufen gilt dieses Prinzip ebenfalls.

5 Bislang (Stand Dezember 2007) gibt es 16 Absolventen.

6 www.lifelonglearninguk.org/documents/standards/professional_standards_for_itts_020107.pdf (Stand: 21.04.2008). Diese werden auf der Angebotsebene derzeit umgesetzt. So werden die bekannten „City & Guilds“ Kurse derzeit im Hinblick auf das neue System angepasst, vgl. www.cityandguilds7303.co.uk (Stand: 21.04.2008)

7 Auch hier wird der Begriff „Teacher“ in einem weiten Sinne verwendet: „Please note that the term ‘teacher’ is used here as a generic term to include tutors, trainers, assessors, verifiers, instructors and all who deliver learning across the sector.“ (Lifelonglearning UK 2007b)

wicklung, Ziele und Erfahrungen ebenso genannt wie Reflexion oder Diversität (vgl. Lifelonglearning UK 2007a, S. 3).

2.3 Punktueller Professionalisierungsprojekte

Losgelöst von der Situation in einzelnen Ländern lassen sich im Bereich der Grundtvig- und Leonardo-Förderungen Projekte identifizieren, die entweder Fortbildungsangebote darstellen (z.B. AGADE oder TEACH, vgl. hierzu auch das Metaprogramm TTVet⁸) oder sich der Aufgabe verschrieben haben, Kompetenzprofile aufzustellen und „zu ermitteln, welche Fähigkeiten diese angesichts ihrer sich verändernden Rolle in der Wissensgesellschaft überhaupt haben sollen, also eine Frage des Verhältnisses von Ausbildung und Tätigkeit im Kontext einer prospektiven Definition“ (Bechtel/Lattke/Nuissl 2005, S. 111). Hier sind die Projekte „Competent-Sys-Trainer“ (Analyse von Job-Profilen von Tätigen in der beruflichen Weiterbildung), VINEPAC (Validierungsinstrument zur Erfassung von pädagogischen Kompetenzen von Erwachsenenbildnern) und TEVAL (Erarbeitung eines Evaluationsansatzes, der sich aus Elementen der Selbst- und Peer-Evaluation zusammensetzt) zu nennen. TEVAL nimmt nicht nur das Feld der Erwachsenenbildung in den Blick, sondern ganz allgemein das Profil eines pädagogischen Professionellen, welches in vier Bereiche gegliedert wird: Learning Space, Organization, Community und – auch hier findet sich die Ebene der Werte – Professional Practitioner. „This area refers to all the efforts the teacher/trainer undertakes for its own professional development. Teaching and Training are reflexive activities, what means that new solutions have to be found by the professionals, because there are not given from external sources.“ (TEVAL 2006, S. 26) Als Unterpunkte werden hier auch der Beitrag zur Profession („Contributing for the professionalisation process means to collaborate with the professional community in order to establish a common professional ground. This is to be in accordance with the professional community's ideas, and contribute to its evolution as well as its formalization, intervene, communicate, and publish, individually or collectively, about debates, dilemmas, tensions within the professional community“, S. 39) und die Ausbildung einer professionellen Ethik („Being the nucleus of professionalism, having an ethical and deontological frame is one essential for the identity and cohesion of the professional group“, S. 39) genannt.⁹ Als Indikatoren für diese Kategorien werden beispielsweise die Teilnahme an Fortbildungen und Kongressen oder das (selbstreflexiv angelegte) Führen von Weblogs vorgeschlagen. Diese Projekte stellen im Moment punktuelle Bemühungen um eine stärkere Professionalisierung des Weiterbildungspersonals dar, die aber ohne eine formalisierte und institutionalisierte Struktur nur eine begrenzte Reichweite haben dürften. Sie können aber wichtige Referenzpunkte für die beiden zuvor beschriebenen Professionalisierungsstrategien (Kapitel 2.1 und 2.2) darstellen.

⁸ Links im Anhang

⁹ Neben dem bis hierhin Geschilderten (Studiengänge, Zertifizierungssysteme, EU-Projekte) lassen sich in zahlreichen Ländern Entwicklungstendenzen ausmachen, die in ihrer Reichweite zum derzeitigen Stand kaum abzuschätzen und noch nicht dokumentiert sind. Für einen Eindruck vgl. insbesondere die Dokumente der Q-Act-Tagung des DIE in Bad Honnef 2007 (www.q-act-conference.de, Stand: 21.04.2008; sowie Nuissl/Lattke 2008).

2.4 Klärungsbedarfe in den Professionalisierungsbemühungen

Betrachtet man die gegenwärtigen Entwicklungen, so lassen sich eine Reihe kritischer Aspekte aufführen, die für zukünftige Wege in der Professionalisierung erwachsenenpädagogischen Personals zu beachten wären. Diese Aspekte lassen sich auf drei Ebenen verorten:

1) Fragen auf der Systemebene

Das pädagogische Feld sieht sich einem Spagat gegenüber: Auf der einen Seite gilt die Instanz der Lehrenden als – potenzielle – Leitprofession für die Umsetzung und Förderung lebenslangen Lernens, was sogar, wie in dem Entwurf „Gemeinsame Europäische Grundsätze für Kompetenzen und Qualifikationen von Lehrkräften“ der im EU-Rahmen eingesetzten Expertengruppe „Improving the education of teachers and trainers“ in Forderungen nach einem Hochschulabschluss kulminiert (vgl. Europäische Kommission 2005, S. 2). Auf der anderen Seite wird im Zuge des Diskurses um Informelles Lernen, die Anerkennung informell erworbener Kompetenzen gefordert und gefördert, wovon das lehrend tätige pädagogische Personal schon aus logischen Gründen nicht ausgeschlossen werden kann. Daneben wächst der Druck, angesichts der Vielzahl an Beschäftigten in der Weiterbildung ohne spezifische pädagogische Qualifizierung, diese durch neu entwickelte Trainer-Ausbildungen im Praxisfeld zu professionalisieren. Es bleibt die Frage, ob diese unterschiedlichen Zugänge zur Profession: Hochschulstudium, Anerkennung informeller Kompetenzen, Zertifikatsysteme wirklich als gleichwertig gelten können und der Europäische Qualifikationsrahmen mit seiner strikten Kompetenzorientierung hier einigend wirken kann oder ob sich nicht dadurch innerhalb der Profession unterschiedliche Kompetenzniveaus mit letztlich einer ungleichen Entlohnungsstruktur etablieren. Wenn es das Ziel wäre, die Profession der Erwachsenenbildung zu stärken, so müssten letztlich alle Wege zu einem erwachsenenpädagogischen Professional auf einem Grundgerüst an pädagogischen Qualifizierungs- und Kompetenzstandards fußen.

2) Argumente zum Kompetenzbegriff

Einerseits lässt sich die Fokussierung auf Kompetenzkataloge prinzipiell kritisieren. Folgt man der Argumentation von Nittel, so sind zum einen die Anforderungs- und Kompetenzkataloge als solche weit weniger erhellend als die Darstellung ihrer Herleitung. Sorgfalt, Stringenz und Transparenz bei der Konstruktion von Kompetenzkatalogen bieten Hinweise auf ihre Qualität (Nittel 2000, S. 77). Zum anderen verweist er auf folgende Gefahr:

Sofern auf komplexe Herleitungen (...) verzichtet wird, drohen kompetenzorientierte Ansätze, da sie zur Seite des faktischen Berufshandelns hin blind sind, das Schicksal der sich auf reine Programmatik reduzierenden (Erwachsenen-)Pädagogik zu reproduzieren. (...) Das Widersprüchliche, Fehlerhafte, ‚Unreine‘ und Konfliktträchtige am beruflichen Handeln wird vom kompetenzbezogenen Verständnis von Professionalität tendenziell als Problem oder gar als Defizit schematisiert, ohne zu erkennen, dass damit eine Perfektibilität konstruiert wird, der kaum jemand gerecht zu werden vermag (ebd., S. 80).

Bedenklich ist zudem – und dieses Argument meint keine prinzipielle Kritik an der Kompetenzorientierung, sondern nimmt das spezifische Verständnis in den Blick, das in der aktuellen Diskussion weitgehend durchscheint –, dass Kompetenzen an sich überhaupt keine Aussagekraft haben, sondern stets die Umgebungsvariablen berücksichtigt werden müssen. Diese können eine Aktualisierung und Realisierung der Kompetenzen ermöglichen, aber auch behindern. Diese Umgebungsvariablen (vgl. Abschnitt 2) sind jedoch EU-weit extrem unterschiedlich.¹⁰

3) Professionalität und Profession

Mit ihrer Fokussierung auf Kompetenzkataloge hebt die aktuelle Diskussion recht einseitig auf den Begriff der Professionalität im Sinne von gekonnter Beruflichkeit (vgl. Nittel 2000) ab. Zudem findet sich in den Kompetenzkatalogen nur selten die Notwendigkeit der ständigen „Pfleger“ betont, so dass die Gefahr besteht, dass Weiterbildungs-bemühungen des erwachsenenpädagogischen Personals punktuell bleiben und sich keine „Kultur der Weiterbildung“ (Gieseke/Reich 2006) entwickelt. Diese suggerierte Punctualität würde mit dafür sorgen, dass die Frage der Rückbindung an gemeinsame Werte und mögliche Richtlinien, an der sich die einzelnen lehrend Tätigen ausrichten und damit eine Community (oder: Profession) zeitlich langfristig formieren, außen vor bleibt. Dieses Thema präsent zu halten und sich damit gegen eine ausschließliche Individualisierung auszusprechen, könnte im Sinne eines „Reflexionsmodus“ (Gieseke 1989, S. 225 f.) Aufgabe eines neu zu beschreibenden Arbeitsbündnisses zwischen Wissenschaft und Praxis (vgl. Nittel 2005) sein.

4. Ausblick und Forschungsfragen

Angesichts der geschilderten Situation könnte man Bechtel/Lattke/Nuissl (2005, S. 120) zustimmen, deren Einschätzung lautet: „Selbst mit größter Anstrengung wird es zum Zielpunkt 2010 schwerlich erreichbar sein, nennenswerte Fortschritte auf dem Gebiet der Lehrkräfte in der Weiterbildung und ihrer Qualifikation und Qualifikationsprozesse zu erreichen.“ Andererseits vermittelt die Vielfalt der Entwicklungen auf unterschiedlichen Gestaltungsebenen (Gesetze/Installation von Gremien, Erstellen von Kompetenzprofilen, Angebote, Feld beschreibende Forschung, Systeme aus Akkreditierung & Zertifizierung) den Eindruck, dass die auf EU-Ebene angestoßenen Entwicklungen tatsächlich „Wirkungen“ haben – wenn auch unstrukturiert und keineswegs im Sinne einer „Top-Down-Strategie“, die angesichts der unterschiedlichen Strukturierungen in den Ländern¹¹ auch langfristig schwierig erscheint. Der Europäische Qualifikationsrah-

10 Wie realistisch die Übertragung einer Argumentation aus der Personalentwicklung ist, bei der Barthel/Zawacki-Richter (2007) eine Multiplikation von individueller und organisationaler Kompetenz vorschlagen und damit zum Ausdruck bringen, dass beide Faktoren aufeinander verweisen, damit ein Ergebnis ungleich Null entsteht, sei an dieser Stelle offen gelassen.

11 Nuissl (2005, S. 51 f.) unterscheidet feld- und bereichsspezifische Abgrenzungen. Während sich in den Ländern Nord- und Westeuropas institutionelle Felder wie Volkshochschulen, private Anbieter oder Einrichtungen der beruflichen Bildung abgrenzen lassen, ist Erwachsenenbildung in Süd- und Osteuropa eher sozialen Bewegungen, Betrieben oder Verbänden angegliedert.

men (EQF) könnte zwar aufeinander abgestimmte Kompetenzprofile befördern, da er aber als Referenzrahmen primär auf Transparenz, Vergleichbarkeit und Übertragbarkeit der Qualifikationen ausgerichtet ist (im Hinblick auf die Erleichterung beruflicher Mobilität), liefert er keine verbindlichen Strukturen im Bereich der Kompetenzförderung oder des Kompetenzerwerbs.

Als Forschungsfragen tun sich auf:

- Lassen sich trotz unterschiedlicher Weiterbildungssysteme, Beschäftigungsstrukturen und differierender Tätigkeitsbereiche von Weiterbildungler/inne/n in Europa einheitliche Kompetenzstandards entwickeln?
- Wie lassen sich diese unterschiedlichen Kompetenzprofile „auf einen Nenner“ bringen und in den EQF einpassen?
- Wie lassen sich die unterschiedlichen Strukturen systematisieren und mit den Kompetenzprofilen relationieren?
- Wie gestaltet sich die derzeitige Weiterbildungsaktivität der Erwachsenenbildner/innen – welche Gemeinsamkeiten und nationale Unterschiede lassen sich identifizieren? (Informationen darüber wären wichtig, um die Frage zu klären, ob für ein Land ein Baukasten-System realisierbar ist oder ob dieses an den individuellen und länderspezifischen Berufsverläufen vorbei ginge. Für diese und weitere beschreibende Kategorien versprechen die angekündigten Studien nähere Information¹²).

Bis dahin (mindestens) bleibt es ein offenes Projekt, die Professionalität von Erwachsenenpädagog/inn/en so zu beschreiben, dass sich daran Qualitätsstandards pädagogischer Arbeit ermitteln ließen, die weniger als Gängelung, denn als Orientierung für die Aus- und Weiterbildung gedacht wären und damit einer stärkeren Professionalisierung dieses Feldes dienen.

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12 Vgl. die Aufzählung in Fußnote 2. Derartige Professionalisierungsstudien sollte im Übrigen nicht abwertend als „Checklisten-Soziologie“ abgetan werden: „Kein einziger theoretischer Gedanke lässt sich entwickeln, wenn man sich nicht darüber sicher ist, über was man spricht (...). Letztlich ist das Merkmalskatalogverfahren mit der Frage verknüpft, welche Berufe Professionen genannt werden sollten, und welche Kriterien für eine Abgrenzung von den übrigen Berufen dabei entwickelt werden müssen“ (Schmeiser 2006, S. 302).

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Ausbildung der Ausbildenden in der Schweiz: www.alice.ch

City & Guilds: www.cityandguilds7303.co.uk

Competent Sys Trainer: www.leonardodavinci.fi/events2000-2006/tapahtumat/CoHe04122006/materials/Dobbelaere_session1.ppt

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Qualifying the Actors in Adult and Continuing Education: www.q-act-conference.de

TEACH: www.teach.pl

TEVAL: www.teval.eu

TTvet: www.ttvvet.org

VINEPAC – Validation of informal and non-formal psycho-pedagogical competencies of adult educaors: www.vinepac.eu

Weiterbildungsakademie Österreich: www.wba.or.at

REZENSIONEN

REPORT

ORT

Kompetenz und Kompetenzentwicklung

Sammelrezension aktueller Literatur

Kompetenz und Kompetenzentwicklung sind in der Erwachsenenbildung nach wie vor populäre Begriffe. Sie stehen oft als Chiffren für eine sich verändernde Lernkultur. Mit Ansätzen zur Kompetenzentwicklung oder zur Kompetenzmessung wird versucht, einem Paradigmenwechsel vom Lehren zum Lernen Rechnung zu tragen. Die Zuwendung zum Kompetenzkonstrukt verspricht eine Orientierung am Output statt am Input. Im Gegensatz zum Qualifikationsbegriff gelingt es dem Kompetenzbegriff, tatsächliche Handlungsmöglichkeiten bildungspragmatisch funktionsfähig zu betrachten.

Lange Zeit hat man versucht, Kompetenzen zu charakterisieren und zu definieren, um sie überhaupt erst zugänglich zu machen. Parallel dazu gab es in den letzten Jahren eine Reihe von Veröffentlichungen, die sich der Fragestellung widmeten, wie Kompetenzen analysiert und gemessen sowie validiert oder gar zertifiziert werden könnten. Trotz der großen Anzahl von Ansätzen und Bemühungen, zu einer standardisierten Kompetenzdefinition zu gelangen, wird diese in vielen Zusammenhängen immer noch gewünscht. Kompetenzvalidierungsinstrumente wie z. B. der ProfilPass haben sich hingegen ihren Weg gebahnt und finden auch in der Praxis großen Zuspruch.

Die Vielzahl der Projekte im Kompetenzbereich in den vergangenen Jahren hat zu einer Flut von Publikationen in diesem Themenfeld geführt. Vor allem die thematische Verknüpfung von informellem Lernen sowie selbstorganisiertem Lernen und Kompetenzentwicklung bietet eine große Schnittmenge, zu der aktuell eine Reihe von Publikationen existiert; drei von ihnen sollen im Folgenden vorgestellt werden.

Kirchhof, Steffen

Informelles Lernen und Kompetenzentwicklung für und in beruflichen Werdegängen

Dargestellt am Beispiel einer qualitativ-explorativen Studie zu informellen Lernprozessen Pflgender und ihrer pädagogisch-didaktischen Implikationen für die Aus- und Weiterbildung (Waxmann Verlag) Münster u. a. 2007, 190 Seiten, 19,90 Euro, ISBN 978-3-8309-1824-0

Dem informellen Lernen kommt in der Diskussion um Kompetenzen und Kompetenzentwicklung eine besondere Rolle zu. Neben der Analyse der Kontexte, in denen informelles Lernen stattfindet, erhalten Fragen der Förderung, Unterstützung und Integration informellen Lernens eine zunehmende Bedeutung, wird doch davon ausgegangen, dass wichtige handlungsrelevante Kompetenzen häufig nicht formalen Lernprozessen entstammen, sondern informell erworben werden. In der empirischen Studie von Steffen Kirchhof werden die Bedingungen und Verläufe informeller Aneignungsprozesse für die berufliche Kompetenzentwicklung am Beispiel der Pflegeberufe thematisiert. Die Publikation wurde als Dissertation eingereicht und ist in einen theoretischen und einen empirischen Teil sowie eine Schlussbetrachtung der „päda-

gogisch-didaktischen Implikationen“ (S. 172) gegliedert.

In der Publikation wird dargestellt, dass informelles Lernen einen großen Beitrag zur Kompetenzentwicklung leistet und bereits in der Bewältigung des täglichen Lebens vielfältige Potenziale vorhanden sind, die kompetenzentwickelnden Lernvorgänge herauszufordern und zu unterstützen (S. 81). Dies ist per se keine neue Erkenntnis. Durch die Darstellung von Selbstbildungs- und Kompetenzentwicklungspotenzialen einschließlich ihrer Bedingungen am Beispiel der Pflgenden gelingt es dem Autor jedoch, das Konstrukt des informellen Lernens sowie dessen Unterstützungsmöglichkeiten anschaulich darzustellen. In seiner empirischen Studie zeigt er auf, dass offenbar ein großer Teil des notwendigen Fallverstehens und der Handlungskompetenzen Pflgender durch informelle Lernprozesse entwickelt wurde und Anteile des Theorieverstehens im Hinblick auf die wissenschaftliche Kompetenz der Pflege in ihrem Praxistransfer durch informelles Lernen unterstützt werden (S. 170). Hieraus leitet er Argumentationen für eine pädagogisch-didaktisch anzustrebende Synthese formeller und informeller Lernhandlungen ab. Im Ergebnis wird eine „didaktische Ermöglichungs-Triade“ zur

Förderung und Integration informellen Lernens in die berufliche Bildung entwickelt (S. 173), die an den Diskurs der Ermöglichungsdidaktik von Arnold anknüpft. Hier werden konkrete Möglichkeiten zur Förderung, Unterstützung und Integration informellen Lernens aufgezeigt. Durch die stringente empirische Vorgehensweise sind Ergebniszusammenhänge gut nachvollziehbar. Die Arbeit leistet vor allem durch den Bezug eher allgemeiner, theoretischer Hintergründe auf ein konkretes Forschungsfeld – das Berufsfeld Pflege als Handlungsfeld – einen Mehrwert für den wissenschaftlichen Diskurs um Kompetenzen und informelles Lernen. Wegen des Bezugs der Bedingungen und Verläufe informeller Aneignungsprozesse auf die berufliche Kompetenzentwicklung ist das Buch vor allem für Forschende im Bereich der Berufspädagogik interessant.

Dieckmann, Heinrich/Dittrich, Karl-Heinz/Lehmann, Burkhard (Hrsg.)

Kompetenztransfer durch selbstgesteuertes Lernen

(Klinkhardt Verlag) Bad Heilbrunn 2006, 192 Seiten, 19,80 Euro, ISBN 3-7815-1492-7

Bei diesem Sammelband handelt es sich um die Abschlusspublikation des Projekts „Meisternetz“ bei der Studiengemeinschaft Darmstadt (SGD). Mit dem Sammelband sollen Transferpfade für die professionelle Vertiefung und praktische Erprobung von Selbstlernkompetenzen im Rahmen ganzheitlich orientierter Didaktik aufgezeigt werden (S. 8).

Der kompetenzorientierte Zugang ist auch hier in Abgrenzung zur Qualifikationsorientierung zentral: Im Zentrum des Interesses steht nicht prüfungsrelevantes Wissen, das in abgegrenzten Prüfungssituationen abgefragt werden kann, sondern stehen Fähigkeiten, die in realen Handlungssituationen einsetzbar sind. Im Sammelband wird eine für die Berufsbildung zentrale Fragestellung aufgegriffen, die sich auf handlungsorientierte Didaktik bezieht: wie können für die Ausübung des Berufs notwendige Handlungskompetenzen herausgebildet werden unter der Berücksichtigung der Tatsache, dass sich die Bedingungen des Erwerbslebens in immer kürzeren Zyklen ändern? Dabei rückt die Hinwendung zum selbstorganisierten und handlungsorientierten Lernen in den Vordergrund des pädagogischen Interesses.

Die einzelnen Beiträge des Sammelbandes gehen der Frage der didaktischen Gestaltung von Selbstlernprozessen sowie den Anforderungen an die Lern- und Arbeitsumgebung nach. Es werden sehr unterschiedliche didaktische Modelle vorgestellt, die verschiedene Lernkontexte in den Blick nehmen. Dazu gehört die Fernlehre, der Präsenzunterricht, das arbeitsplatznahe Lernen sowie auch das informelle Lernen in online communities. Hier wird Selbstlernkompetenz nicht nur als Voraussetzung für selbstgesteuertes Lernen genannt, sondern auch der Erwerb von Selbstlernkompetenz direkt thematisiert, wie z. B. im Beitrag von Arnold/Gómez Tutor „Selbstgesteuertes Lernen lernen: Erfahrungen mit handlungsorientierten Seminaren zur Entwicklung von Selbstlernkompetenz“ (S. 53–78).

Durch die Mischung unterschiedlicher anwendungsbezogener Beiträge gelingt es, ein breites Spektrum von Unterstützungsmöglichkeiten selbstgesteuerten Lernens aufzuzeigen. Auch weil konkrete Transferbeispiele aus praxisorientierten Modellprojekten im Bereich der Berufs- und Erwachsenenbildung vorgestellt werden, ist das inhaltliche Spektrum ebenso vielfältig wie aufschlussreich.

**Arbeitsgemeinschaft Betriebliche Weiterbildungsforschung e. V./Projekt Qualifikations-Entwicklung-Management (Hrsg.)
Kompetenzentwicklung 2006**

Das Forschungs- und Entwicklungsprogramm „Lernkultur Kompetenzentwicklung“. Ergebnisse – Erfahrungen – Einsichten (Waxmann Verlag) Münster u. a. 2006, 402 Seiten, 19,80 Euro, ISBN 978-3-8309-1782-1

Von 2001 bis 2006 war das Forschungs- und Entwicklungsprogramm „Lernkultur Kompetenzentwicklung“, das aus Mitteln des Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung sowie aus Mitteln des Europäischen Sozialfonds gefördert wurde, Grundlage für umfangreiche Forschungs- und Gestaltungsaufgaben. In dem Sammelband werden die Ergebnisse der Programmbereiche der Arbeitsgemeinschaft Betriebliche Weiterbildungsforschung der letzten Jahre zusammenfassend dokumentiert.

Grundannahme des gesamten Programms war, dass Kompetenzen sich implizit innerhalb von Rahmenbedingungen entwickeln, die als „Lernkultur Kompetenzentwicklung“ beschreibbar

sind (S. 11). Schon in den Veröffentlichungen vorausgegangener Jahre wurde deutlich, dass sich dies nicht nur auf einzelne Menschen, sondern Gruppen, Netzwerke innerhalb und außerhalb der Erwerbstätigkeit, Betriebe oder ganze Regionen übertragen lässt. Ziel über die Jahre war dabei, Kompetenzentwicklung zu initiieren und lernförderliche Bedingungen zu gestalten.

Der Sammelband stellt eine Bündelung der herausragenden Erkenntnisse aus allen Forschungsfeldern des Programms dar. Dabei handelt es sich zum Teil nicht um neue, erstveröffentlichte Erkenntnisse, sondern vielmehr um ein Resümee, das übersichtlich dargestellt wird. Die Beiträge nehmen Bezug auf die drei grundlegenden Forschungsaufgaben, die das Programm von 2001 bis 2006 beschäftigten. Dazu gehört die Darstellung von Modellen zur Förderung von Kompetenzentwicklung, Lernkultur und Selbstorganisation, Grundlagenforschung zu Bedingungen und Strukturen von Kompetenzentwicklung sowie die Aufzeichnung von Möglichkeiten zur Kompetenzerfassung, Kompetenzbewertung und Kompetenzzertifizierung. Die Forschungsfelder, die im Rahmen dieses Programms berücksichtigt werden und auf die hier in den einzelnen Kapiteln Bezug genommen wird, beziehen sich auf Lernen im Prozess der Arbeit, Lernen im sozialen Umfeld, Lernen in Weiterbildungseinrichtungen und Lernen im Netz und mit Multimedia. Ebenso findet Grundlagenforschung Berücksichtigung sowie ein Graduiertennetzwerk und das Projekt „Kompetenzentwicklung in vernetzten Lernstrukturen“.

Über die Jahre hinweg sind die Jahressbände der Arbeitsgemeinschaft Betriebliche Weiterbildungsforschung zu einschlägigen Werken im Kompetenzbereich geworden und auch diesen Band zeichnet wieder eine Fülle von Informationen zu unterschiedlichen Forschungsfeldern im Bereich Kompetenzentwicklung aus. Darüber hinaus bietet gerade dieser Band einen guten Überblick der Aspekte, mit denen sich die Forschung in dieser Zeit beschäftigt hat. Dies reicht von Hintergrundinformationen zur veränderten Weiterbildung und von Ergebnissen in der Forschung zur neuen Lernkultur über Aspekte der Kompetenzwahrnehmung und -erfassung bis hin zur Kompetenzentwicklung in der organisierten Weiterbildung oder im Bereich des multimedialen Lernens.

Anne Strauch

Rezensionen

Bergold, Ralph/Gisbertz, Helga/Kruip, Gerhard (Hrsg.)
Treffpunkt Ethik

Internetbasierte Lernumgebungen für ethische Diskurse

(W. Bertelsmann Verlag) Bielefeld 2007, 508 Seiten, 36,90 Euro, ISBN 978-3-7639-3538-9

Keine Frage: Ein wichtiges, interessantes und politisch relevantes Thema für die Erwachsenenbildung – aber auch ein schwieriges Thema. Der einleitende Artikel von Mitherausgeber Ralph Bergold ist deshalb auch ein Plädoyer dafür, sich den Fragen ethischer Bildung aus einer explizit erwachsenenpädagogischen Perspektive zuzuwenden und sich den daraus ergebenden Herausforderungen sowohl theoretisch als auch praktisch zu stellen. Das Spannungsfeld, in dem sich ethische Bildung bewegt, beschreibt Bergold anschaulich mit dem Verweis darauf, dass die meisten Bücher ausgerechnet in den rechtswissenschaftlichen und theologischen Bibliotheken „abhanden“ kommen. Die Diskrepanz von Wissen, Werten, Einstellungen und dem tatsächlichen Verhalten wird dort zwar besonders augenfällig, ist aber ein allgemeines gesellschaftliches Phänomen, das nur um den Preis der Unmündigkeit gelöst werden könne. Zu Recht knüpft er moralisches Handeln an die Kategorie der Verantwortung und richtet ethisches Lernen am Ziel der Selbstbestimmung und der Fähigkeit zur Verantwortungsübernahme aus. Appellative Maßnahmen der Erwachsenenbildung, die direkt Einfluss nehmen wollen auf das ethische Handeln Erwachsener, greifen laut Bergold ins Leere. Vielmehr müssten Teilnehmende durch geeignete Bildungsangebote in die Lage versetzt werden, bestimmte Sachverhalte bewerten und auf ihre Bedeutsamkeit für die eigene Biografie überprüfen zu können. Die Annäherung an ethische Fragestellungen kann somit in einer pluralistischen, gar postmodernen Welt nur diskursiv verlaufen. Insofern erscheint es ausgesprochen sinnvoll, dass ein Projekt ethische Bildung mit den Möglichkeiten moderner Kommunikationsmedien verknüpft. Die katholische Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft für Erwachsenenbildung (KBE) hat sich mit ihrem Projekt „Nachfrageorientierte Lernumgebungen für ethische Diskurse“ dieser Herausforderung gestellt und legt nun die dazugehörige Projektdarstellung vor.

Die umfangreiche Publikation beginnt vielversprechend mit Bergolds Einleitung. Weit dahinter zurück bleiben jedoch bereits die Ausführungen von Neuhoﬀ und Fricke zum Blended Learning in der Erwachsenenbildung. Der etwas hölzerne und nicht den aktuellen Stand der Mediendidaktik berücksichtigende Text der beiden Autoren greift auch die Ansätze von Bergold leider nur ungenügend auf und bietet insofern einen unbefriedigenden Rahmen für die konzeptionelle Verknüpfung von ethischem Lernen und dem Einsatz neuer Medien. Vielleicht zeigt sich hierin aber auch das Problem, ein so bedeutsames Thema wie die ethische Bildung mit einem zweiten großen Thema wie dem Blended Learning zu verknüpfen. Das Fazit der Herausgeber, dass mittlerweile immer mehr Menschen multimediaal vernetzt seien und Bildungsangebote deshalb an diesen neuen Alltagsgewohnheiten ansetzen müssten, erscheint banal und wird der spannenden Ausgangsfrage nach den Möglichkeiten ethischer Bildung im Zeitalter von Multimedia nicht annähernd gerecht.

Dies ist umso bedauerlicher, als die Publikation durchaus auf spannende Projekte zurückgreifen kann, wie z. B. auf die Kursprojekte „Blauer Planet“, „mensch.denke.selbst“ oder die „Frauenplattform Burgenland“, deren pointierte Darstellungen als wirkliche „Best-practice-Beispiele“ zu lesen und besonders zu empfehlen sind. Denn in den vielen Beschreibungen der einzelnen Projekte gibt es leider keine Bewertungsmaßstäbe, die dem Leser helfen würden, das für ihn Lesenswerte herauszufinden. Und wer kämpft sich schon durch gut 500 Seiten einer Projektdokumentation, die zwar mit einigen theoretischen Beiträgen beginnt, sich im Wesentlichen aber doch als Handreichung für die Praxis versteht? Die schlichte Wahrheit ist: Das Buch ist zu dick! Man hätte sich z. B. das Kapitel 4: „Blick über den Tellerrand“ sparen können, zumal die langatmigen Ausführungen keinen Erkenntnisgewinn mehr bringen. Man wird den interessanten Praxisbeiträgen damit nicht gerecht und es wäre sinnvoller gewesen, an ausgewählten Beispielen die Probleme, aber auch die Möglichkeiten ethischer Bildung mit neuen Medien detailliert herauszuarbeiten. Dies hätte den Herausgebern allerdings jene Entscheidungsverantwortung abverlangt, die in der Einführung als Grundlage ethischen Handelns herausgearbeitet wird.

Fazit: „Treffpunkt Ethik“ ist ein wichtiges Buch, weil es sich einem wichtigen Thema widmet. Mit seinen Schwierigkeiten zeigt es aber nicht nur die Grenzen ethischer Bildung auf, sondern macht auch deutlich, welch großes Theorie- und Praxisfeld darauf wartet, bestellt zu werden. Keine Frage: Der Ökonomisierungsdruck der letzten Jahre hat ethische Themen in den Hintergrund treten lassen. „Treffpunkt Ethik“ verweist darauf, dass es Zeit ist, die Reihenfolge zu ändern.

Gertrud Wolf

Federighi, Paolo/Abréu, Carina/Nuissl von Rein, Ekkehard (Hrsg.)

Learning among Regional Governments – Quality of Policy Learning and Policy Transfer in Regional Lifelong Learning Policies

(W. Bertelsmann Verlag) Bielefeld 2007, 132 Seiten, 24,90 Euro, ISBN 978-3-7639-3577-2

Weiterbildung europäisiert und internationalisiert sich zunehmend. Dieser Erkenntnis trägt der englischsprachige Sammelband „Learning among Regions“ Rechnung. Er ist das Ergebnis des Entwicklungs- und Forschungsprojekts PREVALET, welches sich zwischen 2005 und 2007 mit der Kooperation und dem Transferlernen regionaler Bildungsadministrations in Andalusien, dem Baskenland, der Toskana, dem bulgarischen Vidin, dem dänischen Vejle und in Wales beschäftigt hat. Das Projekt wurde durch die Universität Florenz, die Örebro Universität und das Deutsche Institut für Erwachsenenbildung wissenschaftlich begleitet und von EARLALL Brüssel koordiniert. Der nun veröffentlichte Band zeigt die Projektergebnisse und stellt ein Modell der Kooperation zwischen regionalen Bildungsadministrations in Europa im Anschluss, aber auch im Kontrast zur bereits eingesetzten Methode der Offenen Koordinierung vor. Ein zweiter Band mit Tools ist 2007 ebenfalls erschienen. Er enthält das empirische Material, das methodische Vorgehen und das Unterstützungssystem.

Im ersten Sammelband finden sich fünf Einzelbeiträge. Paolo Federighi von der Universität Florenz führt eingehend in das Thema ein: Er definiert den Rahmen regionaler (Bildungs-)Politik und stellt in fundiert aufbereiteter Form Schlüsselkonzepte der Kooperation vor. Die wissenschaftlich orientierten Leser/innen erhal-

ten dabei einen guten Überblick über den aktuellen Forschungsstand. Carina Abréu von der Örebro Universität fokussiert dann mit ihrem Beitrag auf die wechselseitigen Lernprozesse von Bildungspolitiker/innen und wie man erfolgreich Bildungspolitiken von einer Region in eine andere transferieren kann. Dabei bietet sie sowohl grundlegende Orientierungspunkte als auch konkrete Hinweise zum Praxistransfer. Info-Boxen illustrieren anschaulich die Darstellung. Ekkehard Nuissl von Rein von der Universität Duisburg-Essen und dem Deutschen Institut für Erwachsenenbildung konzentriert sich in seinem Beitrag besonders auf die Bedeutung eines prozessorientierten Qualitätsmanagements. Er hebt nach einer grundlegenden und differenzierten Einführung zu den verschiedenen Facetten des Qualitätsmanagements besonders auf den Qualitätsentwicklungsprozess ab. Das in PREVALET angewandte Konzept, das sehr gut auf andere Kooperationsprozesse übertragbar sein dürfte, wird dabei anschaulich und überzeugend vorgestellt. Der vierte Beitrag (erneut von Federighi) positioniert programmatisch das im Projekt entwickelte Konzept einer Soft Open Method of Coordination: sowohl im Anschluss an bestehende Koordinierungskonzepte auf EU-Ebene als auch im Kontrast zu diesen. Die große Stärke des vorgestellten Konzeptes scheint dabei zu sein, dass es in der Praxis wissenschaftlich begleitet entwickelt wurde und laufend fortentwickelt wird. Insofern handelt es sich um kein am Schreibtisch entwickeltes Konzept sondern um bereits gelebte und lebendige Praxis der europäischen Regional Kooperation. Das abschließende Nachwort versammelt sechs Kurzbeiträge der am Projekt beteiligten Regionalregierungen. Dies bietet noch einmal besondere und interessante Einblicke. Zudem kontrastiert es die vorherigen Beiträge der Wissenschaft mit der Sicht von Politik und Verwaltung. Insgesamt kommt dabei die große Zufriedenheit mit dem Projekt und seinen Ergebnissen deutlich zum Ausdruck.

Der Sammelband steht in der europäischen Entwicklungslinie hin zu einer Regionalisierung. Das Europa der Regionen wird hier plastisch und greifbar. Zudem steht – nicht zuletzt seit PISA – in Deutschland die Frage des Lernens von anderen Regionen weit oben auf der bildungspolitischen Agenda. In diesen aktuellen Zusammenhängen ist es den Autor/inn/en sehr

gut gelungen, eine sowohl wissenschaftlich fundierte als auch in der Praxis entwickelte Methode der Kooperation vorzustellen, welche dieses Transferlernen aus seiner Zufälligkeit und Unwissenschaftlichkeit herausführt. Es ist dem englischsprachigen Band sehr zu wünschen, dass viele Bildungspolitiker/innen und in der Bildungsverwaltung tätige Menschen sich mit ihm intensiv auseinandersetzen. Allerdings vermisst man in diesem Zusammenhang eine Kurzübersicht zu den zentralen Projektergebnissen in verschiedenen Sprachen. Aus wissenschaftlicher, aber auch aus politischer Perspektive ist der zweite Band zum PREVALET-Projekt des weiteren sehr interessant, da man hier noch empirische und methodische Anregungen bekommen kann. Jeder/m an europäischen Prozessen und am Transferlernen Interessierten ist dieser Sammelband sowohl als Grundlage als auch als Vertiefung und Veranschaulichung zur Lektüre ausdrücklich zu empfehlen.

Bernd Käpplinger

Knabe, Ferdinand (Hrsg.)/Bundesverband Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung e. V. Wissenschaft und Praxis in der Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung.

(Reihe: Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung, Bd. 1)

(Waxmann Verlag) Münster u. a. 2007, 203 Seiten, 14,90 Euro, ISBN 978-3-8309-1864-6

Aktuell fördert das Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF) 127 Projekte im Bereich Grundbildung und Alphabetisierung, verbunden mit der Hoffnung, die Praxis der Grundbildungs- und Alphabetisierungsarbeit wie auch die öffentliche Wahrnehmung des Phänomens Analphabetismus durch Grundlagenforschung, innovative Konzepte zur erhöhten Effizienz und Qualität in allgemeinen und beruflich geprägten Vermittlungssituationen sowie verbesserte Professionalisierung der Kursleiter/innen und Berater/innen zu unterstützen. Diesem Förderschwerpunkt gingen u. a. die langjährige Unterstützung des Bundesverbandes Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung e. V. voraus, die auch die Ausrichtung jährlicher Fachtagungen einschloss.

Bei den Fachtagungen des Bundesverbandes Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung treffen drei Gruppierungen aufeinander: Zum einen

die der Praktiker/innen, meist Fachbereichs- oder Kursleiter/innen an den Volkshochschulen, die Theoretiker/innen – Linguist/inn/en, Psycholog/inn/en, Sozial-, Kultur- und Erziehungswissenschaftler/innen an den Universitäten sowie die Gruppe der Kursteilnehmer/innen und Betroffenen. Es ist ein Anliegen der Fachtagung, alle drei Perspektiven zu berücksichtigen, wodurch eine Nähe von Theorie und Praxis entsteht, die im Bereich der allgemeinen Erwachsenenbildung sicherlich ihresgleichen sucht. Und so folgt hieraus, dass die nun erstmals erschienene Dokumentation der Fachtagung, die im November 2006 in Bonn stattfand, ganz unterschiedliche Beiträge zum Tagungsthema „Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung in Deutschland: Fragen und Antworten in Wissenschaft und Praxis“ umfasst.

Diese Dokumentation ist sicherlich keine inhaltlich abgestimmte Analyse unterschiedlicher Aspekte des Phänomens Analphabetismus. Allerdings hat das Buch andere Stärken, da Praxiskonzepte (wie das Internetportal „Zweite Chance Online“, Berichte von Briefreundschaften zwischen zwei VHSen, Anregungen zum Vorlesen u. a.) und Erlebnisberichte von Lernenden, die an der Fachtagung teilgenommen haben, einen schnellen Überblick über die Alphabetisierungsarbeit verschaffen. Aus wissenschaftlicher Sichtweise sind vor allem die Beiträge von Prof. Wagner interessant, der in seinem Beitrag „Analphabetenzahlen – Mythos oder wissenschaftlich fundiert?“ darstellt, wie das Forschungsprojekt PASS Alpha in Dresden zu einer Bezifferung des Analphabetismus in Sachsen auf 200.000 Personen gelangte. Auf das gleiche Projekt geht der Beitrag zurück von Prof. Ulrich Ginzler und Johanna Schneider, die das Konzept des „Lokalen Bündnis Alphabetisierung“ erläutern, ein „strategisches Netzwerk“ mit dem Ziel, „alle beteiligten Akteure verschiedener Handlungssysteme (Bildung und Erwachsenenbildung, Arbeitsförderung und Grundsicherung, Soziale Arbeit und Kommunale Verwaltung) zu verbinden im Interesse der Verbesserung der Lebenssituation von Menschen mit unzureichenden Schriftsprachkompetenzen“ (S. 138). Dieser Zugang scheint vielversprechend zu sein, da eine Befragung der Akteure jener Einrichtungen ergeben hat, dass 92,8 Prozent das Problem unzureichender Schriftsprachkompetenz erkennen, jedoch nur 42,86 Prozent dies als Aufgabe ihrer Organi-

sation ansehen (S. 142). Wieder vereinigen sich hier Theorie und Praxis – in diesem Fall theoriegenerierende Forschung als Gründung regional angesiedelter Interventionsnetze.

Weitere lesenswerte Beiträge behandeln den Blick nach Frankreich („Low levels of literacy in France“ von Jean-Pierre Jeantheau), „Orthographie in Wissenschaft und (Alphabetisierungs-)Unterricht“ von Carl Ludwig Naumann, „Erwachsenenalphabetisierung als Neue Soziale Bewegung“ (Ulrich Steuten und Jens Korfkamp) und „Wie lernt ein erwachsener Mensch? Neurologische Erkenntnisse und Folgerungen für Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung“ von Martin Korte; diese Beiträge zeigen die Vielschichtigkeit und Mehrdimensionalität sowohl der Wahrnehmung wie auch der Interventionsformen des praktisch-theoretischen Phänomens Analphabetismus auf.

Andreas Meese

**Nuissl, Ekkehard/Lattke, Susanne (Hrsg.)
Qualifying adult learning professionals in Europe**

(W. Bertelsmann Verlag) Bielefeld 2008, 177 Seiten, 24,90 Euro, ISBN 978-3-7639-3623-6

Angesichts der hohen Bedeutung, die dem lebenslangen Lernen in den politischen Programmen der Europäischen Union beigemessen wird, ist es nicht verwunderlich, dass der Kompetenz des Personals im Bildungswesen EU-weit besondere Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt wird. Dies gilt insbesondere für das Personal in der Weiterbildung, dem der EU-Kommissar für allgemeine und berufliche Bildung, Kultur und Jugend, Ján Figel', sogar eine Schlüsselrolle in der Bildungs-, Arbeitsmarkt- und Sozialpolitik der EU zuspricht (vgl. Figel' im Vorwort). Dieses hohe Interesse an der Kompetenz des Weiterbildungspersonals liegt jedoch nicht nur in seiner Bedeutung für das Gelingen lebenslanger Lernprozesse begründet. Das Weiterbildungspersonal ist im Vergleich mit anderen Berufsgruppen im Bildungswesen (z. B. in der Schule oder der beruflichen Erstausbildung) zugleich die Gruppe mit den schwierigsten Rahmenbedingungen für professionelles Handeln, wie die präsentierten Beiträge eindrücklich belegen. Ein nicht unwesentliches Teilproblem besteht darin, dass der empirisch gesicherte Kenntnisstand über das Handlungs-

feld, die Zugänge, Entwicklungswege, Arbeitsbedingungen, Arbeitsanforderungen etc. des Weiterbildungspersonals in den EU-Mitgliedsstaaten (aber nicht nur dort) äußerst dürftig ist. Selbst wenn es also den politischen Willen gäbe, länderübergreifend strukturierend in das Handlungsfeld einzugreifen, so müssten diese Initiativen doch ohne fundierte Informationsgrundlage auskommen.

In den Kontext dieser (bildungs-)politischen Diskussionen und der damit verbundenen Forschungsfragen ist das Buch „Qualifying adult learning professionals in Europe“ einzuordnen. Der von Ekkehard Nuissl und Susanne Latke herausgegebene Sammelband stellt Ergebnisse eines vom Deutschen Institut für Erwachsenenbildung initiierten Diskussionsprozesses vor, der insbesondere in der Einrichtung einer europäischen Forschergruppe im Herbst 2005 und der Durchführung einer Tagung im Mai 2007 seinen Niederschlag fand. Das Buch richtet sich sowohl an Weiterbildungswissenschaftler/innen, wie auch an Bildungspolitiker/innen und Praktiker/innen. Die Adressat/innen finden im ersten Teil des Buches die eher theoretisch-konzeptionell angelegten Beiträge von Mitgliedern der europäischen Forschergruppe versammelt, im zweiten Teil werden Tagungsbeiträge, insbesondere „good-practice“-Beispiele und politische Empfehlungen, dokumentiert.

In ihrem einleitenden Beitrag geben Nuissl/Latke einen ersten Überblick über die sehr heterogene Situation des Weiterbildungspersonals in Europa und stellen Kriterien für die Entwicklung von Professionalität zur Diskussion. Hier wird bereits deutlich, dass etwaige Professionalisierungsstrategien nicht nur mit Unterschieden zwischen den einzelnen Ländern, sondern auch innerhalb eines Landes zwischen den verschiedenen Tätigkeitsfeldern der Weiterbildung zu kämpfen haben. Dies gilt vor allem für die große Gruppe der Teilzeitbeschäftigten in der Weiterbildung, also z. B. den nebenberuflichen Lehrkräften oder den nur teilweise mit Weiterbildung befassten Personen in konfessionellen oder kulturellen Einrichtungen. Vor diesem Hintergrund werden in diesem und auch in den folgenden Beiträgen vor allem die Begriffe Professionalität und Kompetenz theoretisch-konzeptuell diskutiert und – soweit dies möglich ist – auf die empirische Weiterbildungsforschung bezogen.

Agnieszka Bron und Peter Jarvis unterscheiden beispielsweise zwischen der Identifikation mit professionellen Rollen und Professionen im berufspolitischen Sinne und kommen im Hinblick auf diese Unterscheidung zu dem Ergebnis, dass sich übergreifende Rollen für das Weiterbildungspersonal erkennen lassen. Mark Bechtel analysiert in seinem Beitrag kompetenzorientierte Standards für das Weiterbildungspersonal am Beispiel Großbritanniens, Frankreichs, Deutschlands und der Schweiz und zeigt damit zugleich die aktuell wohl bedeutsamste Strategie zur Systematisierung von Berufsbildern auf. Theo van Dellen und Max van der Kamp legen ihren Ausführungen zwar ein anderes Kompetenzmodell als Bechtel zu Grunde, knüpfen jedoch an den Gedanken an, dass Kompetenzprofile anforderungsbezogen analysiert werden müssen. Als Ergebnis des Austauschs in der europäischen Forschergruppe schlagen sie eine Einteilung von Tätigkeitsfeldern vor.

Zu den genannten Themen kann das Buch kaum auf empirische Ergebnisse zurückgreifen, durch die begrifflichen Klärungen auf der Basis der Kenntnis unterschiedlicher nationaler Weiterbildungssysteme leistet es aber einen wichtigen Beitrag für die zukünftige Forschung. Dies allein macht es schon lesenswert. Die durchgängig englisch verfassten Beiträge sind gut verständlich und in ihrer Argumentation nachvollziehbar, was sicherlich zu einer breiten Rezeption (sowohl hinsichtlich der Adressat/inn/en als auch geografisch) und hoffentlich auch zu einer intensiven Diskussion beitragen wird.

Carola Iller

Siebert, Horst **Konstruktivistisch lehren und lernen**

(Reihe: Grundlagen der Weiterbildung)
(ZIEL-Verlag) Augsburg 2008, 208 Seiten,
16,90 Euro, ISBN 978-3-940562-04-3

Der neue „Siebert“ ist da. Einer der produktivsten Autoren der Erwachsenenbildungswissenschaft legt zu Beginn des Jahres 2008 seine nächste Monographie zum Zentralthema der Pädagogik – Lehre und Lernen – vor. Seine Betrachtung erfolgt aus konstruktivistischer Sicht und bedient sich der Erkenntnisse vieler Bezugsdisziplinen, ist – wie immer – kenntnis-

und facettenreich geschrieben, anschaulich und zugespitzt.

In sechs Kapiteln bearbeitet Horst Siebert sein Thema. Nach einer kurzen Verortung des Konstruktivismus (1) werden fünf Schlüsselbegriffe konstruktivistisch geprägter Analyse eingeführt und erörtert (Beobachtung, Selbstorganisation, Systemik, Viabilität, strukturelle Kopplung) (2). Im Anschluss daran werden neun Strömungen bzw. Denkrichtungen vorgestellt und kritisch gewürdigt. Dabei kommen die Protagonisten des Konstruktivismus aus unterschiedlichen Fachwissenschaften ausführlich zu Wort (Maturana/Varela, von Glasersfeld, Luhmann, Watzlawick u. a.) (3). Den Tücken der Wirklichkeitskonstruktion wird im vierten Kapitel nachgegangen: Dabei werden unterschiedliche „Kanäle“ ins Blickfeld genommen wie zum Beispiel Bilder, Sprache, Erfahrungen (4). Das Kernstück des Buches ist die Anwendung des konstruktivistischen Denkens in elf Handlungsfeldern (u. a. Lehre, Beratung, Supervision, Wissensmanagement). Es wird deutlich, wie eine konstruktivistisch inspirierte Praxis aussehen könnte oder müsste (5). Abgerundet wird der Text durch den Rückgriff auf die frühen Bezüge von Sieberts Schaffen und ihre Verknüpfung mit den aktuellen Theoriepositionen: es geht um den Entwurf einer konstruktivistischen Bildungsidee (6).

Das Buch handelt nicht nur vom Konstruktivismus, sondern „lebt“ ihn. Angeboten werden nicht nur wissenschaftliche Quellen, sondern auch literarische; das Geschriebene wird durch Grafiken unterlegt; Exkurse zeigen Kontinuitäten und Kuriositäten, wecken Assoziationen; Beispiele verdeutlichen und problematisieren; Humor und Ironie würzen den Text und verhindern die ehrfürchtige Distanz vor den Geistesgrößen der Moderne. Selbst das konstruktivistische Fundament wird erschüttert: „In der Tat ist es ein Selbstwiderspruch des Konstruktivismus die ‚kognitive‘ Unzugänglichkeit der außersubjektiven Welt mit ‚objektiven‘ Forschungsergebnissen der Gehirnforschung beweisen zu wollen“ (S. 61).

Horst Siebert schafft auch (wieder) die Balance zwischen wissenschaftlichem Anspruch und Praxisrelevanz. Seine fundierte wissenschaftliche Recherche korrespondiert mit der Bodenhaftung des Praktikers, macht seinen Text zu

einer Fundgrube von Reflexionsanstößen und Handlungsorientierungen. Das Buch weckt an vielen Stellen auch Widerspruch, stellt „Wahrheiten“ in Frage, bricht mit Erkenntnisgewohnheiten und Denkatraditionen. Der Autor hat für die Empörten und Aufgebrachten Tröstendes parat: „Bildung ironisch betrachtet ist optimistisch: es ist mehr möglich, als wir bisher wahrgenommen haben. Es kann zukunftsweisend und befreiend sein, die Welt ganz anders zu betrachten“ (S. 199).

Dieter Gnahn

Wagner, Birgit/Schmid, Alfons/von der Meden, Barbara
Allgemeine Arbeitsweltbezogene Weiterbildung

Ergebnisse eines Innovationsprojekts
(Rainer Hampp Verlag) München und Mering
2007, 140 Seiten, 22,80 Euro, ISBN 978-3-86618-160-1

Das Anliegen erscheint vernünftig: auf der einen Seite besteht durch den technischen und organisatorischen Wandel in der Arbeitswelt ein verstärkter Bedarf an überfachlichen Qualifikationen bei den Betrieben und deren Mitarbeiter/inne/n, auf der anderen Seite gibt es Institutionen wie Volkshochschulen und Bildungshäuser, die Spezialisten im Bereich der allgemeinen Weiterbildung sind. Die Lösung erscheint einfach: beide Seiten finden zusammen und decken das Bedürfnis nach einer allgemeinen arbeitsweltbezogenen Weiterbildung ab.

Wenn dies so einfach gelänge, bedürfte es keiner Projekte, wie dem im vorliegenden Buch dokumentierten. Aber – so die These des Innovationsprojektes – zwischen betrieblichem Bedarf an überfachlichen Qualifikationen, den Angeboten an solcher Weiterbildung und deren Inanspruchnahme besteht ein „Mismatch“. Das heißt, Betriebe und Beschäftigte bräuchten mehr allgemeine Weiterbildung als sie tatsächlich in Anspruch nehmen. Gleichzeitig gibt es seitens der Volkshochschulen und Bildungshäuser ein großes Angebot an Schlüsselqualifikationen und allgemeiner Weiterbildung, das aber von den Betrieben und Beschäftigten nur in geringem Maße nachgefragt wird. Es liegt auf der Hand, nicht nur die Ursachen für diese Schiefelage zu analysieren, sondern vor allem Chancen und

Möglichkeiten der Institutionen auszuloten, um den betrieblichen Weiterbildungsbedarf nach allgemeinen Qualifikationen zu decken.

Dies geschieht im vorgestellten Projekt, das in Kooperation des Instituts für Wirtschaft, Arbeit und Kultur (IWAK) mit dem hvv-Institut des Hessischen Volkshochschulverbands entstand, in einem Zwischenschritt. Im ersten Teil wird eine Synopse über das bisherige Angebot an allgemeiner arbeitsweltbezogener Weiterbildung erstellt. Den Kern bilden Ansätze, Konzepte und Beispiele – neu-deutsch würde man diese als „Good-Practice-Modelle“ bezeichnen –, die zeigen, wie die Vermittlung von allgemeiner arbeitsweltbezogener Weiterbildung gelingen kann. Die Auswahl erfolgt exemplarisch, neben Konzepten auf Bundes- und Landesebene werden auch internationale Beispiele vorgestellt. Die Darstellung ist rein deskriptiv und bietet nur Eckdaten.

Schwierig erweist sich in diesem Zusammenhang die Eingrenzung des Begriffs der allgemeinen arbeitsweltbezogenen Weiterbildung. Da es keine einheitliche Definition gibt (aber wo gibt es die schon im Bildungsbereich?) greifen die Autor/inn/en zu einer Hilfskonstruktion, die sie im Konzept der Schlüsselqualifikationen sehen: mit seiner Hilfe versuchen sie die allgemeinen arbeitsweltbezogenen Qualifikationen zu definieren. Allerdings können sie damit das Problem der unzureichenden Fassbarkeit auch nicht lösen, da bekanntlich Schlüsselqualifikationen ebenfalls nur schwer abgrenzbar sind. So bleibt nur, diese Vorgangsweise als den pragmatischen Versuch zu werten, eine halbwegs plausible Kategorie für die Untersuchung zu definieren. Befriedigen kann diese Vorgangsweise nicht.

Im zweiten Teil des Buches werden die Ergebnisse eines auf der Synopse aufbauenden Modellprojektes vorgestellt, dessen Ziel es war, Strategien zu entwickeln, wie das Angebot der Volkshochschule und die Nachfrage der Betriebe und Beschäftigten nach allgemeiner arbeitsweltbezogener Weiterbildung besser aufeinander abgestimmt werden kann. An diesem Modellprojekt beteiligten sich sechs Volkshochschulen aus verschiedenen Regionen Hessens. In einem ersten Schritt wurde eruiert, welche Erfahrungen die Volkshochschulen bisher mit der Akquisition von Betrie-

ben gemacht haben und welche möglichen Verbesserungen es dafür gibt. Es folgte eine Aufstellung der möglichen Angebote, bevor in einem nächsten Schritt an Betriebe herangetreten wurde. Geplant waren weiterhin eine Feststellung des Bedarfs seitens der Betriebe sowie die Erarbeitung eines effizienten Abstimmungsverfahrens von Angebot und Nachfrage. Da sich die Akquise der Betriebe als schwierig herausstellte, musste ein Perspektivenwechsel im Projekt vorgenommen werden. Zum einen wurde versucht, durch das Einbeziehen von wirtschaftsnahen Bildungsträgern das Interesse der Betriebe an einer allgemeinen arbeitsweltbezogenen Weiterbildung zu erhöhen, zum anderen wurde mit Hilfe von Interviews in Betrieben erfragt, unter welchen Bedingungen das Matching von Angebot und Nachfrage verbessert werden könnte.

Auch wenn das Fazit des Buches eher ernüchternd ausfällt („Firmenschulungen werden voraussichtlich in absehbarer Zeit nicht wesentlich ausgeweitet und sie werden auch künftig keinen Schwerpunkt der VHS darstellen.“ (S. 134)), bietet das Buch – trotz der oben angeführten Schwachstellen – interessante Einblicke in die Arbeits- und Wirkungsweise von zwei unterschiedlichen Systemen, deren Dach zwar durch das lebenslange Lernen „aufgesetzt“ ist, deren Logiken aber doch sehr unterschiedlich funktionieren.

Elke Gruber

Schreiber-Barsch, Silke
Learning Communities als Infrastruktur Lebenslangen Lernens

Vergleichende Fallstudien europäischer Praxis (W. Bertelsmann Verlag) Bielefeld 2007, 348 Seiten, 34,90 Euro, ISBN 978-3-7639-3332-7

Silke Schreiber-Barsch setzt sich in ihrer Dissertation das Ziel, drei Learning Communities, „Lernende Regionen“, in Großbritannien, Norwegen und Deutschland systematisch zu erfassen und zu strukturieren. Damit geht sie der Frage nach, wie die Programmatik Lebenslangen Lernens in Lerninfrastrukturen umgesetzt werden kann.

Ausgangspunkt ihres Vorgehens bildet eine sorgfältig recherchierte und ausführlich dargestellte Analyse von Konzepten Lebenslangen

Lernens. In dieser konzentriert sich die Autorin auf international rezipierte Schlüsseldokumente, beginnend mit einem Verweis auf Comenius, über die Diskurse internationaler Organisationen in den 1970er Jahren, weiter über die Diskurse in den 1990er Jahren bis hin zu aktuellen Diskursen seit dem Jahr 2000. Als Ansatz dient ein Rahmenmodell bildungsprogrammatischer Konzepte Lebenslangen Lernens. Dieses Rahmenmodell lenkt die Analyse auf Inhaltsdimensionen, theoretische Klassifikationen, gesamtgesellschaftliche Rahmenbedingungen sowie auf die Generation der Konzepte.

Im darauf folgenden Kapitel wird der Begriff Learning Communities erarbeitet. Hier schlägt Schreiber-Barsch eine Kategorisierung in vier Grundvarianten vor, die auf bildungspolitische Konzepte verschiedener internationaler Organisationen zurückgeführt werden: (1) „politisches Konzept regionaler Governance“, (2) „ökonomisches Cluster-Konzept“, (3) „kognitives Konzept regionaler Innovationsfähigkeit“ und (4) „sozialräumliches Konzept soziokultureller Regeneration“ (S. 157f).

Für die empirische Erhebung entwickelt Schreiber-Barsch ein vergleichend angelegtes Forschungsdesign. Den Erhebungskontext bildet der europäische Raum. Ausgewählt wurden drei Learning Communities, die in drei unterschiedliche Grundvarianten eingeordnet werden. Damit entwickelt sie im strengen Sinne keine international vergleichende Studie, deren Variable möglichst auf die Internationalität begrenzt bliebe. Vielmehr liegen der Studie mehrere Variablen, wie Nation, regionale Besonderheiten oder konzeptionelle Grundlagen zugrunde. Eine Konstante bildet einzig eine internationale Programmatik Lebenslangen Lernens. Mag dies unter Kriterien klassisch-komparativer Forschung irritieren, unter der Prämisse, Europa als einen gemeinsamen Forschungsraum zu betrachten, indem internationale Organisationen Einfluss auf regionale Entwicklungen haben, ist dieser Ansatz innovativ.

Forschungsmethodisch liegen der Erhebung eine Dokumentenanalyse, Leitfadeninterviews sowie eine standardisierte Fragenbogenerhebung zugrunde. Während mit letzterem Instrument alle jeweiligen Netzwerkpartner befragt wurden, wurden Leitfadeninterviews mit aus-

gewählten Personen aus den Netzwerken und aus deren Kontexten geführt.

In den Kapiteln sechs bis acht erfolgt die Auswertung dieser Daten in einer Juxtaposition. Diese wird – soweit die jeweiligen Daten vorlagen – mit folgenden Vergleichskategorien durchdekliniert: Einführung und Überblick in die Learning Communities; Charakteristik der Community und Netzwerkgeschehen; Bedeutungseinschätzung des Lebenslangen Lernens und des Community-Potenzials; Herausforderungen und Zukunftsperspektiven sowie die Darstellung des jeweiligen Schwerpunkts der Learning Community. Diese Darstellungen sind ausführlich (S. 178–290) und, wie bei vergleichenden Studien so oft, sehr komplex. Als Leserin hätte ich mir an der einen oder anderen Stelle eine graphische Aufarbeitung gewünscht. Die Falldarstellungen haben den Charakter von Exempla. Ein Wert dieser Kapitel für die Diskussion um Learning Communities liegt demzufolge in der deskriptiven Aufarbeitung von internationalen Beispielen – und kann eine Gedankenanstrengung für andere darstellen.

Die Vergleichsstudie stellt keine Komparation im strengen Sinne dar. Sie geht nur ansatzweise über die Juxtaposition hinaus, was in der Intention der Studie begründet liegt. Gleichzeitig verfällt die Studie auch keinen „Best-Practice“-Beschreibungen. Sie liefert vielmehr deutliche Hinweise dafür, dass bildungspolitische Konzepte internationaler Organisationen leitend für die Entwicklung der Learning Communities waren. So kann von „übergeordneten Gemeinsamkeiten“ (S. 302) außerhalb der nationalstaatlichen Einflüsse gesprochen werden.

Auch forschungsmethodisch ist die Publikation interessant: Sie zeigt eindringlich die Abhängigkeit des vergleichenden Forschungsdesigns von den Sprachkompetenzen der Forschenden auf. Schreiber-Barsch wählt die Fallstudien aus diesen drei Ländern, da sie über deutsche, englische und norwegische Sprachkompetenzen verfügt. Dies kann als Verweis auf die Bedingungen internationaler Forschungen verstanden werden: Sollen internationale Forschungen einen Einblick in die Strukturen, Diskurse und die Empirie anderer Länder leisten, so stellt die Ausbildung von Sprachkompetenzen hierfür eine unabdingbare Voraussetzung dar.

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