Internationality of Higher Education: The Case of Adult Education

Vanna Boffo & Gaia Gioli

Internationalisation and Higher Education: The Case Study of a Master's Degree Course in Adult Education

Abstract: The paper provides an overview of the concept of internationalisation and of how it is challenging higher education policies. Through the case study developed by the Universities of Florence and Würzburg, the authors reflect on internationalisation as a central strategy for the construction of a global scientific community and labour market.

Introduction

Why internationalisation? This could be considered the research question that guides the work on which the following short contribution is based. It is not a research question that involves only one specific sector of studies in the field of adult and continuing education, but it is the theme of the great space of European Higher Education. We might deal with the discourse from multiple points of observation: at the macro, meso, and micro levels. Each of these perspectives address different aspects. The macro level concerns university policies and the ability to create a supranational space involving research, teaching, and the third mission; the meso level affects the actual programs that the universities build to develop the transnational level in concrete terms, such as Erasmus; the micro level relates to specific study courses and hence people, students, professors, and administrative staff to create personal but also local, regional, and national knowledge.

However, at the heart of national and local university policies that affect, through good practices, the virtuous behaviour of students and professors, there has been a radical economic change that has accelerated and modified study paths and the way people follow them. In the beginning, the university as an institution was born as a universal institution, as a global place of research and of the highest knowledge, as will be discussed later. The Italian Universities of the High Middle Ages were born open to the world, to a borderless territory. The research itself had no affiliation, and the top scholars passed from one court to the other, crossing borders before nation states were even born. Today, the international dimension has become a necessary imperative if we want to support the future, develop new professions, expand the sense of democracy, and guide human well-being. If we really want to work for the growth of countries, if we want to cut down on cultural

and linguistic barriers, if we want peace to be an achievable goal, then internationalisation will be accessible to the highest number of citizens in the world and synonymous with a better life for all. In a recent paper, Paolo Federighi (2014), with extreme clarity, emphasised how the relationship between material goods production, the global value chain, knowledge innovation, process and product transfer, and the improvement of human well-being conditions is related to the global context in which the whole world has found itself at least since the end of the twentieth century. It seems very important to stress the link between production and internationalisation and between internationalisation and globalisation, because without this connection, we will not understand the fundamental reasons for the strategic importance of internationalising higher education.

Concerning educational research, Federighi writes:

> Globalisation processes take on a more pervasive dimension when, at the end of the last century, the strong decline in commodity costs and freight transport allows a different and more integrated organisation of production activities on global scale and, then, the globalisation of the value chain […]. Production of the same product is subdivided according to the phases and the components between many countries and companies. Consequently, they do not trade the products only, but the tasks, the functions that lead to their realisation. Organisations and people play a role in the Global Value Chain in reason of the tasks which they have acquired in the global comparison and know how to play better than others. It does not matter what a country exports, the production of that good is the result of the competition of various companies of different nationalities. Almost everything is "Made in the World" and little "Made in Italy". What matters is the added value that every single enterprise (and hence each country) brings to the Global Value Chain and how it can work with other partners. The interdependence of national economies is increased and the competition is played on the ground of the competence of persons and organisations, on their ability to attract those that ensure the best performance. If a country or an undertaking are not capable of enhancing a person's skills, it is the worker who must engage himself in growth and mobility paths. The activities which lead to the production of a product are dispersed in the world and create a global labour market in which circulate both immigrants and expatriates brought by their skills (the more efficient Italian companies of local transport have the management of the RATP, French). (Federighi, 2014, p. 31).

In fact, what applies to markets, products, and companies also applies to the educational and training processes that underlie the internationalisation policies which the world's universities have looked at and which European universities in particular are looking at.

From the meso to the micro level is a short step. With this in mind, we want to propose a case study of a transnational character that has both micro and meso effects, and therefore we think is suitable for some reflections on educational research.

Overview of the internationalisation process
at the European level

As many authors point out, the impulse to internationalise higher education has its roots in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period, when professors and students were 'pilgrims or travellers (*peregrini*) of another kind also a familiar sight of the roads of Europe. […] Their pilgrimage (*peregrination*) was not to Christ's or a saint's tomb, but to a university city where they hoped to find learning, friends, and leisure.' (de Ridder-Symoens, 1992, p. 280)

This description emphasises many of the points that are still brought forth today to promote mobility: the broadening of experience and research, new ideas, the search of a common language, new networks, and collaborations. Because nations did not exist at the time as we now consider them, we can talk about a 'medieval European space' (Neave, 1997, p. 6) characterised by some basic and common principles.

> The use of Latin as a common language, and of a uniform program of study and system of examinations, enabled itinerant students to continue their studies in one 'stadium' after another, and ensured recognition of their degrees throughout Christendom. Besides their academic knowledge they took home with them a host of new experiences, opinions, and political principles and views. (de Ridder-Symoens, 1992, pp. 302–303)

It is not by chance that the European Commission named its most famous mobility program after the philosopher Erasmus, who was a medieval pilgrim.

Indeed, the process of the internationalisation of higher education is not new in the global scenario. After its initial phase, it emerged as a process and strategy in the 1950s when 'the international dimension of higher education began to move from the incidental and individual into organised activities, projects and programs, based on political reasons and driven more by national governments than by higher education itself' (de Wit & Merkx, 2012, pp. 52–53). Later, it dramatically expanded in the 1980s and 1990s thanks to the educational policies and initiatives that pushed in this direction, especially the Erasmus and Research Framework programmes funded by the European Commission, which aimed to develop a common and diffused European identity.

The process of the internationalisation of higher education can be interpreted in many ways (Yang, 2002; Deardorff, De Wit, Heyl, & Adams, 2012; De Haan, 2014), as experts in the field of internationalisation have identified numerous different definitions and nuances. For example, it can overlap with the process of globalisation because the difference between the two concepts 'cannot be regarded as categorical. They overlap and are intertwined in all kinds of ways' (Scott, 2005, p. 14). The definitions proposed in this work are in line with De Wit and

Hunter (p. 343) and Knight (2008), who see globalisation as 'a social, economic and political process to which higher education responds and in which it is also an actor. Internationalisation is the way in which higher education responds and acts.' (De Wit & Hunter, p. 343)

According to Jane Knight's definition, globalisation is

the process that increases the flow of people, culture, ideas, values, knowledge, technology, and economy across borders, resulting in a more interconnected and interdependent world […] Education is one of the sectors impacted by globalisation. (Knight, 2008, pp. x–xi)

Internationalisation, by contrast, is

the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society. (Knight, 2008, p. 21)

This latter definition can be called a working definition, since it gives the higher education system some input intentionally on how to properly implement internationalisation.

Knight's definition is based on four main concepts and terms carefully chosen:

1) 'Process': Internationalisation is seen as a continuous effort. The concept of 'process' refers to a tri-partite model of education made up of input, process, and output – terms that are intentionally not used in the definition to maintain a flexible and general approach that can be adapted to any country, institution, or stakeholders, without reflecting any particular priority or viewpoint.
2) 'International, intercultural, and global dimension': These terms are intentionally used as a triad, where 'international' refers to the relationship between and among nations, cultures, or countries; 'intercultural' refers to the diversity of cultures that exists within countries, communities, and institutions (i.e. at home); 'global' refers to a worldwide scope.
3) 'Integrating': The term refers to the will of embedding the international and intercultural dimension into policies and programmes.
4) 'Purpose, function, and delivery': These terms are intentionally used as a triad, where 'purpose' refers to the mission or mandate of a single institution; 'function' refers to the tasks of a national postsecondary education system; 'delivery' refers to education courses and programmes offered domestically or in other countries by higher education institutions or by companies. (Knight, 2004, pp. 11–12)

Indeed, the definition focuses not only on mobility but on the integration of education and research at a global level. The ideal tools can be seen in curricula, mobility, and learning outcomes that, intertwined, can help to link the concept of formation to the development of the human being and society. Internationalisation is not a goal in itself but a means to the development of the human being.

The internationalisation of higher education is a central strategy for the formation and the construction of a global scientific community. The steps that can lead to that goal can be identified as (1) construction of international links for cooperation among European institutions; (2) modification of higher education curricula in order to reach a common educational path for the formation of future professionals; (3) activation of common study paths.

Internationalisation processes are based on two main pillars: internationalisation at home and abroad.

The term 'Internationalisation at Home' (IaH) was published for the first time by Bengt Nilsson (1999), who tried to find an answer to the fact that even though ten years had passed since the introduction of the ERASMUS programme, only 10 per cent of students went to study abroad. He did not identify Internationalisation at Home as a didactical concept but rather as an instrument, created on didactical concepts and comparative methodology,

> to give greater prominence to campus-based elements such as the intercultural and international dimension in the teaching learning process, research, extra-curricular activities, relationships with local cultural and ethnic community groups, as well as the integration of foreign students and scholars into campus life and activities (Knight, 2008a, p. 19).

In other words, in his vision, Internationalisation at Home could guarantee staff and professors an ad-hoc training, and the mobile minority an education that could embrace an international dimension, a better understanding of people from different countries and cultures, and respect for society-at-large as a multicultural context in order to introduce to the curriculum an embedded intercultural education that could increase students' interest for experiences abroad.

Internationalisation at Home could guarantee the mobile minority an education that could embrace international curricula and programmes/activities, teaching and learning processes based on international elements or persons, ad-hoc faculty education, internationally related extracurricular activities, and a connection with the various aspects of society.

Internationalisation at Home was later defined as 'any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility' (Wächter, 2000, p. 5) and as

> a system of international education [that] offers the possibility of finding a new way in which higher education mainstreams the international dimension in all segments of the universities, reforms the curriculum, mobilises community resources, institutionalises international education and focuses on relevance to the global job market (Mestenhauser, 2006, p. 70).

Both definitions identify Internationalisation at Home as a matter for the individual higher education institution that**,** while preparing students to study abroad, can enhance the quality of students' learning experience in a very flexible way.

'Internationalisation abroad', by contrast, refers to exchange mobility programmes that may involve students, staff, and professors in the medium and long term at a partner university linked via scientific and/or cultural agreements to the home university.

The strategies for internationalisation

The strategies for the internationalisation of European universities have developed in recent decades as a result of the need to integrate the international dimension into the policies and strategies that lie behind curriculum development. Knight (2004, pp. 14–15) summarised them in four programme strategies (categories defined in the table below).

Table 1: Programme strategies for internationalisation (based on Knight, 2004, pp. 14–15)

Programme strategies/ categories	Examples
1) Academic programmes	• student exchange programmes • foreign language study • internationalised curricula • work/study abroad (e.g. internships) • international students (e.g. presence on campus) • *joint/double degree programmes* • study programmes in languages of international circulation • cross-cultural/intercultural training programmes (e.g. orientation for foreign students, etc.) • faculty/staff mobility programmes • guest lectures and visiting scholars (fellowships) • link between academic programmes and other strategies

Programme strategies/ categories	Examples
2) Research and scholarly collaboration (e.g. activities and common research projects)	• Area and theme centres • Joint research projects • International conferences and seminars • Published articles and papers • International research agreements (e.g. PhD in cotutelle) • Research exchange programmes (e.g. with universities and companies)
3) External collaboration: domestic and cross-border (e.g. international relations)	Domestic • Community-based partnerships with non-governmental organisation groups or public/private sector groups (e.g. NGOs) • Community service and intercultural project work Cross-border • International development assistance projects (e.g. strategic partnerships with universities abroad) • Cross-border delivery of education programmes (commercial and non-commercial) (e.g. joint teaching activities in winter and summer schools, distance courses, development of campuses abroad) • International linkages, partnerships, and networks (e.g. membership and active participation in international academic consortia and associations • Alumni abroad programmes
4) Extracurricular activities	• student clubs and associations • international and intercultural campus events • liaison with community-based cultural and ethnic groups • peer support groups and programmes (e.g. international summer schools)

The first category, 'academic programmes', is the easiest to understand and the one that has received most attention, especially when thinking about the Bologna Process and the convergence towards the creation of a European Higher Education Area. It is linked to the creation of cultural and exchange programmes, double and joint modules, double and joint degrees, and the like.

The second category, 'research and scholarly collaboration', refers to international academic research, its methodology, channels (international partnerships, agreements), and tools (conferences, seminars, workshops).

The third category, 'external collaboration', is linked to an institution's international relations, collaborations that can be developed in house and across borders with foreign universities and other international organisations, possibly resulting in joint projects, winter and summer schools, online courses, and the like.

'Extracurricular activities' are complementary to the scope of internationalisation and support students in the concretisation of a full and satisfying international experience at home and abroad (Agoston & Dima, 2012, p. 52).

The aforementioned categories are examples and not exhaustive of the process and tools for curriculum internationalisation. Indeed, if we refer to Schuller and Vincent-Lancrin (2009), we can identify other internationalisation categories, recently adopted by the OECD, which are: internationalisation (1) among people (students and university personnel), (2) among higher education institutions, and (3) by programmes and projects.

In conclusion, it is important to point out that there are no clear indications on how to internationalise the curriculum; there is not one way that fits all universities, although most universities are aware that international experience can foster the development of specific international competences requested and acknowledged in the labour market and required for the long-term employability of graduates (PRIN EMP&Co. project).

The COMPALL project: How to foster internationalisation at a global level

Internationalisation, abroad or at home, is becoming an essential part of higher education. Academic partnerships at the global and European level are essential to reach this goal, which is in line with the European Commission's strategy 'European Higher Education in the World'.

The activities that can be developed within partnerships are manifold and may include mobility exchanges, research cooperation, the development of common curricula, joint or double degrees, international projects, and all the other activities indicated in Table 1.

Indeed, as indicated by European legislation, universities can work together in the development of special degrees, such as double and joint degrees. The process is facilitated if universities share a strong tradition of cooperation, because such a background can strengthen the mutual interest in signing an agreement for the definition and activation of a common educational path.

Double degrees should follow some simple and basic rules:

- Double degrees should be developed on the basis of strong international collaborative links and of a common will to develop a study programme shared between two higher education institutions from different countries.
- A double degree corresponds to two qualifications issued by the two institutions offering the shared study programme.
- The double degree is a tool for encouraging the effective implementation of the Bologna Process at all levels (institutional, political, strategical, individual), strengthening international, inter-institutional cooperation and innovation in curriculum development and research.
- Double degrees must receive legal recognition in all European member states, as mandated by the Bologna Process.

The Winter School in 'Comparative Studies in Adult and Lifelong Learning' (COMPALL) goes in this direction. It takes place every year at Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg as part of its internationalisation strategy and that of the universities of Lisbon (Portugal), Padua (Italy), Florence (Italy), Pécs (Hungary), Aarhus (Denmark), and Helmut Schmidt University (Germany), all members of the COMPALL strategic partnership.

All the above-mentioned universities offer master's degrees and PhD programmes in adult and lifelong learning. The Winter School is part of these study programmes.

At the same time, the Winter School is supported by some important associate partners, which collaborate in the study programme[1].

From a didactical point of view, the winter school can be seen as a joint module organised in two different phases:

1) a first preparatory phase organised as an online and/or on-campus preparation guided by partner universities, supported by specific materials (online tutorials), and aimed at the composition of a transnational paper to be discussed in the second phase;
2) a two-week intensive phase at the Würzburg campus in Germany, during which, based on the transnational papers written by participants, international policies in adult and lifelong learning are discussed, field visits to adult and continuing education providers are arranged, and comparisons between selected issues in the field of adult and lifelong learning are made. The comparisons

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1   The associate partners are: Universidade do Minho (Portugal), University of Delhi (India), Jawaharlal Nehru University (India), International Institute of Adult & Lifelong Education, New Delhi (India), Pädagogische Hochschule Ludwigsburg (Germany), Obafemi Awolowo University (Nigeria).

are organised in two main parts. The first part focuses on theories and approaches to European and international lifelong learning strategies, directly by key European stakeholders in lifelong learning (e.g. EAEA, Cedefop, etc.). The second part focuses on small work groups comparing specific aspects of adult education (e.g. professionalisation, policies and practices for the development of young adults' employability, etc.).

The COMPALL partners have included the joint module in their own study programmes. In particular, the University of Florence and Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg worked towards the construction of a Double Degree in Adult Education as an extended version of the joint module, or as the natural extension of exchange and mobility programmes.

Figure 1: Structure of the International Winter School
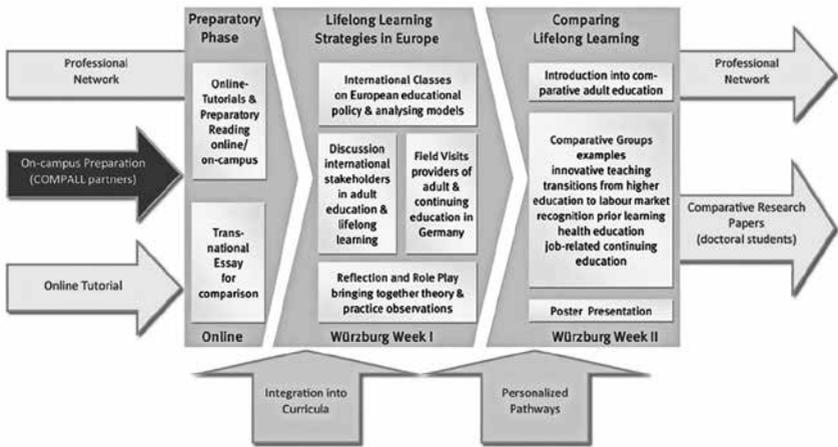
Source: https://www.hw.uni-wuerzburg.de/compall/joint_module/ (07/2017)

In other words, starting from the principles that guide the COMPALL joint module – integration into the curricula and personalised pathways – they developed a degree programme designed and delivered by both of them based on an agreed international curriculum that includes a mandatory mobility experience for all students in their third semester as well as classes, workshops, seminars taught in English in both countries, and the like. At the end of the programme, and after its completion, students receive two individual qualifications (one from each partner university) having the same value (Knight, 2008b).

The action of the two universities was based on three main components: 1. community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), 2. curriculum, 3. strategies and procedures, tools that help professors to connect to the curriculum internationalisation activity and to focus it on embedding internationalised inputs and learning outcomes in the study program.

For a conclusion, but not in conclusion

As we pointed out at the beginning of the essay, the problem of internationalisation interferes with higher education policies far beyond what one can think of. And it is not only a matter of changing the language of instruction or adopting texts in a community language, it is not even a question of implementing the good practice of the ERASMUS, which was, in reality, the model of internationalisation at European universities.

It is, once again, important to understand that:

> [t]he Global Value Chain entails a growing mobility of tasks between companies and people – especially of talents – within supranational labour markets. Policies and systems must acquire a growing openness to the global dimension of training, in all their joints. Globalisation affects all professional figures. From early childhood, the growth of interdependence on a global scale requires young people to live and grow in a world that asks them to adapt to new cultures and traditions and to manage all kinds of diversity. (Federighi, 2014, p. 32)

In the words above lies the real and profound reason for the importance of internationalisation. The COMPALL project has been the interpreter of this emergency and of this need. For almost five years, dozens of students have come together for a few weeks to study the themes of lifelong learning, adult and learning education topics in a myriad of English language descriptions, trying in a handful of days to share a project and ideas. This is a great challenge addressed through a multiplicity of small but no less important victories.

The Winter School project, which is part of the COMPALL project, is a good practice case for the internationalisation of adult and continuing education and lifelong learning because it 1) welcomes students from around the world, not only from Europe but also from India, Korea, Russia, the United States; 2) creates a space for dialogue and sharing ideas on topics, problems, and research of common interest; 3) allows for using English as the common language for exchange and communication; 4) builds bridges of theoretical and practical knowledge; 5) supports the development of communicative skills; 6) involves the activation of flexibility and problem solving; 7) fosters an entrepreneurial mind-set in each

participant; 8) opens up new horizons of different knowledge shared with each other; 9) implements innovative research methodologies; 10) broadens the outlook on adult and learning education.

Another benefit already mentioned, aside from the extensive but profoundly diverse construction and communication relationship, is about comparing research methodologies, behaviours, ways of being, and approaches to the study. There is nothing more gratifying than knowing how to build new communications. Indeed, we can really invoke the strength of the relationship, overcoming barriers, both spatial and linguistic.

Indeed, internationalisation is a problem for men and women who decide to come together to face the thorny theme of human understanding and the ethics of behaviour. If we do not look at the problem from this point of view, we will not be able to cope with the scope of education and training actions that will change our world of human beings into a world of automation and robots. Tomorrow is already among us, and we must act as citizens of the world, of time, and of space.

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Balázs Németh

International Adult Learning and Education: Trends reflected through Collaborative Actions of Higher Education in Research Programmes and Development Initiatives – an Evolutionary Scope

Abstract: This paper will provide a short overview of milestone efforts of higher education institutions to open up to the development of modern adult education. The paper will focus on the internationalisation of adult education and its influence on higher education to enhance research and development collaborations for professionalisation.

Short introduction

In an age of instability and a weakening impact of values and discipline, higher education has an enormously difficult role in the development of adult learning and education. Moreover, it has to make use of the potential of international academic collaborations. But this role is still surrounded by lots of challenges and demands. This paper will address some of those demands and challenges in the scope of adult and lifelong learning (Kálmán, 2016). One general issue for higher education institutions in this respect is how to balance the promotion of quality academic work of education and research and the growing demand for social engagement by higher education in association with local and regional stakeholders to promote and enhance adult and lifelong learning. This paper will analyse the impacts and roles of particular phases of modern adult education and, also, the changing missions of higher education in its development.

Why did adult education become important for higher education in its international dimensions? The early modern period (1870s–1920s)

Adult education first became an important issue for higher education institutions in the second half of the nineteenth century, when some leading universities in Britain and Germany formed academically led associations for urban communities in order to introduce higher-level lectures and related dialogues focusing on skills development for citizens facing emerging social and economic challenges.

This particular historical era reflected the growing roles of higher education in making modern nations and communities by extending the provision of education to groups of adults previously excluded from formal systems of education. That emerging wave of popular adult education reached the universities and, more particularly, university professors and lecturers, who played a significant role in effective knowledge-transfer, economic and social modernisation and, consequently, community development (Steele, 2007).

However, one must recognise that the impacts of internationalisation and transnational collaborations, as well as cross-border adult education movements, moved predominantly those kinds of institutions and organisations that were not rigidly tied up to national contexts and environments. Religious communities, labour movements, and bourgeois formations initiated a great variety of adult education offerings, both formal and non-formal. They moved across borders in case the learner and community development focus was strongly represented in their values and aspiration, enabling change and development by preparations for the new needs of traditional and new adult learners (Pöggeler, 1996).

The rise and fall of adult education organisations, movements, and institutions teaches us about the challenges of an ever-changing picture in which the preservation of some particularly solid values and principles towards humanism was affected by having to recognise cross-sectoral, cross-cultural and, accordingly, inter-regional and international influences in order to survive.

The survival of adult education meant and still means having to adapt to the needs and demands of people living in a local or regional environment. On the other hand, we should not forget that despite the many attempts in the promotion of adult education, it could not prevent nationalism and political extremes: fascism, Nazism and communist internationalism. The rise of liberal, democratic, and welfare-oriented societies was soon pushed aside after World War I, yet it took a decade for antidemocratic forces to take power on the continent.

The birth of modern adult education in international contexts (1918–1938)

British university extension and the German Urania movement clearly built on the principle of extramural knowledge transfer led by academic groups and profoundly helped establish a relatively solid ground for quality improvement in adult education – improvements that were channelled into academic discourses and reflections in the first half of the twentieth century. In the context of education and modern educational science, the teaching and learning of adults became the

focus of a growing number of researches. Relevant approaches were supported by the results and challenging factors of modern psychology and those of sociology.

The new understanding of adult education was represented, amongst other distinguished scholars, by Lindeman (1926, 1991), Thorndike (1928), and Rosenstock (1926). This indicated the impact of academic cycles engaged in the development of education and growing research activities in educational science using an interdisciplinary approach. The 1920s and early 1930s enabled universities mostly in Western and Northern Europe, but also in some countries of Central and Central-East Europe, to step forward in adult education-related research and innovative actions. Those regions in Europe were strongly influenced by modern scientific thinking, and innovative dimensions in the social sciences were clearly reflected in these regions' opening up to a liberal mind-set, collaborative social constructions, and critical thinking. These impacts were collectively channelled into the first aspiration in Britain and the Commonwealth to establish and develop adult education through the Commonwealth Association in Education and Training of Adults (CAETA) in the second half of the 1920s across nations in that community (Duke, 1996).

Efforts in this period to educate and train professional adult educators were relatively isolated and embryonic because academic recognition of adult education as a profession and as a scientific field was at a rather early stage. However, university-based research activities emerged throughout the 1920s and 1930s in Chicago and New York, soon leading to contacts with some universities in the UK, including Oxford, Glasgow, London, and Manchester. Another influential wave was the integration of liberal adult education into the academic missions of higher education institutions in Scandinavia, such as the cities of Lund, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Turku, and Helsinki. The Scandinavian road of integrating practice with scientific research and development work enabled universities to effectively open up to new dimensions of educational science in order to raise the professionalisation and quality skills development of educators providing planning and achievements in organised adult education (Toiviainen, 1998).

A special trend in developing the professional skills of adult educators was the quality improvement of social work and community development in order to address the needs of masses of people having difficulties in their lives because of migration and immigration, marginalisation, job loss, or broken families because of the negative impacts of World War I. The sector of social work grew rather quickly, reaching a point when national policies on social work organisations employing trained staff were needed. These efforts were also blocked both by emerging political extremism in continental Europe and by the esca-

lation of World War II. It did not take too long until social work orientations were embedded in the foundation and rise of andragogy, understood as social work, especially in Dutch adult education – for instance at the University of Amsterdam through the valuable efforts and scientific work of Professor Ten Have and the establishment of the Department of Social Work (van Gent, 1996). The Dutch, later 'BeNeLux' orientations signalled a strong influence of some academic groups to underline the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to theorizing the teaching and learning of adults with regard to socially marginalised groups, connecting this issue with emerging questions of social and economic developments and stability.

Another dimension in the development of adult education by higher education institutions was the systemic development of extramural activities to raise the knowledge and skills of the masses of people who, right after World War I, had to understand the complexity of the economy, society and, especially, the changing nature and contents of labour, vocations, and employment. In the Western world, many universities turned towards combining their traditional educational and research efforts with new focuses, such as special training programmes, public campaigns for democracy, and an understanding of welfare. But such activities were made difficult by challenging social, political, and economic times throughout the 1930s. The realities of that era did not support the spreading of those open, liberal approaches.

The rebirth and short-lived phase of the welfare state and its impact on modern adult education: New roles for higher education (1945–1975)

Nearly the whole world changed after the end of World War II. In many countries, this period generally meant the rebirth of democracy, humanism, and survival to rebuild countries and to reorganise nations, cities, localities, and families.

Adult education was slowly but surely integrated into national educational programmes. It is also well known that formal education institutions – namely, schools for adults – were established and re-established from the primary to the secondary level in order to realise a concrete second-chance form of education for those formerly excluded or those having left schools before completing their studies. Universities also had to start supporting this wave of modern adult education, a fact that was strongly emphasised by the new or reborn welfare-state and its various formations in Western and Northern or in Central and Central-Eastern Europe, regardless of political orientations. The shared approach to adult education, contrary to Nazi and fascist regimes, was to open up public, higher, and adult

education to masses of people. This welfare perspective became a common ground for democratic development in education, although it is also a fact that communist regimes soon moved away from this mutual platform by excluding learners from the abovementioned educational sectors by sex, social status, family background, and so on. Internal phases of this period clearly show that the emergence of the bipolar world made it rather difficult to insist on a common international ground. However, UNESCO was an exceptional body to make members of the international community step forward in the development of adult education. Countries in the Soviet bloc had to take a separate route in welfare orientations and lost most constitutive elements of democracy (Németh, 2013).

It was UNESCO that established an international platform through CONFINTEA in 1949 to indicate the importance of development in adult education and, moreover, to show a direction for adult educators fighting global illiteracy amongst adults. In the following quarter of a century, most countries in Europe, North America, and Japan could achieve relative success in the development of adult education, while the need for professional development and for the implementation of modern information and communication technologies accelerated the involvement of higher education to provide necessary responses to those challenges occurring in and around adult education to reduce illiteracies and to continue modernising adult education with effective theoretical, methodological, and practical innovations (Pöggeler, 1996).

Higher education institutions started to strengthen their activities in the development of adult education by the following dimensions:

- opening new grounds for academic discourse and theoretical modelling by founding new departments and institutes to research the teaching and learning of adults;
- initiating interdisciplinary research actions to investigate the changing nature of adult education and adult education practices;
- responding to governmental calls to develop the skills and methods of adult educators engaged in the development of schools, programmes, and other identical community activities for adult learners;
- participating in collaborative actions to extend the provision of adult education through extramural courses in regular and irregular forms of education and training;
- initiating local and regional events to collect and share valuable knowledge in the community.

This period, however, was also constrained by the limits of a nation-state focus and its impacts on the realisation of international recommendations and declarations.

UNESCO's first real 'break-through' conference in adult education was in Montreal in 1960, where CONFINTEA II indicated a significant step forward towards systemic developments in adult education. There was a clear commitment amongst UNESCO member states that they should have a responsibility and a key role in the achievements of CONFINTEA goals and aspirations (UNESCO, 1960; Németh, 2015).

It is also obvious that the first internationally driven analytical work to investigate education, involving several university partners, was launched in the second half of the 1960s in order to understand post-work education and its relation to time (Ottesen & Eide, 1969).

Likewise, UNESCO invited some distinguished researchers and developers from several universities to work on its literacy campaigns and thematic conferences in and after 1965. This era was rather challenging because of many regional conflicts, wars, and tensions, which lead to more difficulties and obstacles. But the biggest obstacle for adult learners to overcome was the economic crisis of 1973, which put welfare programmes and reforms in education on hold and re-oriented adult education and the roles of higher education directly towards new methodologies, towards non-formal and informal directions, resulting in less attention being paid to school-based adult education. In the Federal Republic of Germany, this period was reflected in the introduction of more laws in adult education and structural planning to move adult education closer to non-formal grounds, calling for training programmes based on labour market needs (Nuissl, 2000).

Still in 1972, UNESCO directly geared up the role of higher education in the development of adult education and through its CONFINTEA III declaration at its Tokyo world conference. (UNESCO, 1972). The declaration gave a clear signal that adult education needs the professional input of universities in order to reach a better performance in learning through quality education. Unfortunately, most governments of Western democracies thought that they should move most of their development funds from education to training programmes because of the impacts of the economic crisis and because of obvious technological changes affecting industries, agriculture, and the service sector, too.

The appearance of the OECD in the world of adult education also indicated a shift in the traditional roles of adult education at the beginning of the 1970s. UNESCO's famous Faure Report (Faure-UNESCO, 1972) and the mind-boggling papers of Lengrand and Husén about understanding lifelong education were very influential (Lengrand, 1972; Husén, 1974) in their educational dimensions, reflecting the fact that a new era would have to start. But higher education institutions also indicated that many of them had come into a crisis period and were

looking for new dimensions in their educational and research focuses. It is not at all a surprise that the Faure Report demonstrated how much the language and the topics of policy may influence educational thinking and the way the problems of the sector are understood.

It is one of the key argument in this paper that it was the crisis period of the early 1970s that made the sector of education, and higher education as part of that sector, respond to new needs of society and the economy by designing new and complex majors in order to educate and train professionals as adult educators, trainers, and mentors helping adults to achieve quality adult learning in challenging learning situations.

Another factor that accelerated professionalisation in adult education was the emergence of critical thinking, which considered the problems of education a result of overestimated beliefs in institutional constructions, the loss of learner-centred approaches and, as a rewind perspective, the devaluation of humanistic principles. We should recognise that the critical voices of Illich, Freire, and later of the Club of Rome (Illich, 1973; Freire, 1970; Club of Rome, 1979) resembled the rejection of over-institutionalised ways of education. The Club of Rome and its learning-centred paper, contrary to programmes, systems and policies, critically signalled unlimited perspectives for learning to open new directions for educational and brain research with a need to rethink the human dimensions and the benefits of education and learning.

Researchers dealing with this period also note that the European Economic Community, established in 1957 by the Treaty of Rome, turned its attention towards education and training and, accordingly, established its Council of Education as part of its Council of Ministers in order to respond to challenges brought on by the crisis. The Council started its activities in 1973 and opened some new routes for European training programmes, such as PETRA and FORCE in 1976, and later initiated collaborative actions amongst the member states of that time. With the participation of Denmark, Ireland, and the UK, several programmes started to fight unemployment, social exclusion, and poverty, and began to raise participation and performance in learning.

This particular political dimension of European integration helped trigger concrete transnational research and development programmes in adult education involving the participation and commitment of some distinguished universities across Europe in comparative studies. One such partnership for developing adult education research was a collaborative action initiated by Franz Pöggeler from Aachen Hochschule and Walter Leirman from the Catholic University of Leuven. They were joined by several other distinguished colleagues from universi-

ties across Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and Italy. This kind of collaboration helped improve and advance interdisciplinary studies and discourses on both theoretical and methodological problems in adult education and curriculum development.

The term 'andragogy' was also revisited and reconfigured for several reasons. But terminology issues mostly reflected a clear but stormy shift from traditional school-based adult education towards non-formal and informal, more concretely, a rather vocationally oriented and training-centred focus, which started to dominate the international discourse in and after 1973. This was plainly reflected in the development of adult education laws, institutional changes, and post-1973 regulations in most Western and Northern European countries, from France to Finland and from Austria to Ireland.

In the Soviet bloc countries, adult education was still tied to state monopolies and hegemony. However, some countries, including Poland, Hungary, and the non-aligned county of Yugoslavia, allowed higher education institutions to develop research and professionalisation in adult education under the term of andragogy in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Sewczuk, 1964; Durkó, 1968; Savicevic, 1985) This umbrella term had to unite approaches to adult teaching and learning either on a formal, non-formal, or informal basis. In those communist countries, universities, although under strict state control, enjoyed relative autonomy in promoting general adult education and vocational education and training for adults, together with cultural and community developments. The theory and practice of adult education was influenced by major international trends in the second half of the 1970s and throughout the 1980s, when communist rule obviously underwent radical changes.

From Nairobi to Hamburg: Major steps of internationalisation in adult and lifelong learning through the involvement of universities (1976–1997)

This period of adult learning and education was greatly influenced by the 1976 UNESCO Recommendation on Adult Education, issued when UNESCO held a special session in Nairobi, Kenya, to demonstrate the need for concentrated action both in terms of fighting illiteracy and in terms of further developing adult education programmes for special groups in adult learning who were marginalised by economic changes, political upheavals, civil wars, or simply conflicts in the regions, local communities, or settlements where they lived (UNESCO, 1976).

This recommendation highlighted the roles of higher education institutions in the professional development and institutional modernisation of adult education

with an emphasis on research activities to be conducted by universities and other higher education institutions (UNESCO, 1976). At the same UNESCO meeting, the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) was established and became a flagship non-governmental organisation to coordinate intercontinental actions of aid and development work, together with professional developments in adult education from the developed West and North, geared especially towards the underdeveloped South and East in global perspectives (ICAE described by Németh, 2017).

The UNESCO Recommendation of 1976 and the 'No Limits to Learning' paper of the Club of Rome increased nation-state attention to the development of adult education and training. In Europe, welfare services were formally extended, but the VET focus and labour market demands successfully dominated policy discourses, in which the OECD became a key player, shaping the actions related to education and training in the European Economic Community. Yet the European Community created a balanced set of programmes for partnership-based developments amongst national educational systems. The Socrates, Lingua, Comenius, and Tempus programmes were launched in 1987 to promote collaboration between member states and associate members to enhance the compatibility of national systems of education and training with the aim of developing exchanges and mobility among European citizens.

On the other hand, we have to recognise the influence of the special climate of that era, namely, that academic people were still had the power and influence to move adult education research and development focuses towards becoming an integral part of educational and training policy discourses. European and international conferences referred to opening access and opportunities to both traditional and new groups of adult learners and, likewise, to strengthening their social positions through the right to learning. The 1985 UNESCO CONFINTEA IV helped some engaged nations and NGOs to fight for expanding participation in education and learning. The Paris Declaration insisted on the role of universities in leading research and development work in adult education and kept the problem of special groups at the forefront of adult education debates (UNESCO, 1985).

This was a very special period, since nearly all milestone actions happened in Europe, and Europe did make use of this advantageous situation in order to get adult education integrated into educational and training policy planning and programmes. That particular process was formulated by advanced leaders of UNESCO and its Institute for Education (UIE), OECD CERI (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation – both headquartered in Paris), the European Commission (led by Jacques Delors for two terms of office), and the leadership of EAEA

(European Association for the Education of Adults). Many leading figures of those organisations, especially professional experts working with those organisations, had enough significant academic expertise in research and development practice to be aware of the realities of adult education in different parts of Europe and in different regions of the world.

The European Commission represented not only the educational orientation but also a strong belief in the positive social and economic benefits and rewards of education, especially in the making of a new Europe – a Union to unite Europe to become strong and competitive in a globalised world.

The global context has not only enabled but also forced us to recognise that today we are not talking simply about adult education – we are talking today about adult learning and education. This – a more inclusive way of understanding the collection and sharing of knowledge and skills – makes us reflect on the importance that universities and academic researchers and educators have in raising professional levels and research standards in adult learning and education.

Although the emergence of lifelong learning started with the founding approach of the OECD in 1973 (OECD, 1973), an overall policy perspective was established by the European Union when it chose lifelong learning in 1995 to indicate that lifelong learning should be put into the focus of debate around how to make European citizens engage in learning throughout their lives in order to develop their communities in peace and prosperity (EC, 1995). This orientation was first established legally in the Maastricht Treaty and its focus on quality, accessible, and partnership-based education and training across Europe (European Council, 1992), and secondly in the White Paper on Education to indicate how Europe could become a learning society (EC, 1995).

At the same time, the European Association of the Education of Adults (EAEA) and its leadership, comprised of some distinguished academic personalities, including Federighi and Carlsen, was pressured by academic groups and universities to raise the quality of professionally managed adult education and to provide collaborative actions amongst civil society groups in adult education and at the universities.

By this time, several university-oriented groups were actively engaged in the promotion of research and training programmes to promote adult education-related professional developments and, at the same time, to increase research in adult education. To provide some examples, let us mention that the efforts of Pöggeler and his involvement in the research on the history of adult education with a group of distinguished scholars (e.g. Zdarzill, Siebert, de Keyser, Leirman, and later Jarvis, Fieldhouse, van Gent, Reischmann, Jug, and Friedenthal-Haase)

were very influential through the Peter Lang series in Andragogy, Pedagogy, and Gerontagogy. The Dutch-British-German research partnership was also strong through academically driven themes represented by Hake, Steele, Marriot, Titmus, and Taylor, who produced the so-called cross-cultural studies in the education of adults in the 1980s and early 1990s (Leeds Studies in Continuing Education).

Likewise, Belgian, German, and Austrian universities became strongly involved in developing a curriculum for the education and training of adult educators. Moreover, the rise of this focus could be observed at some influential universities in the UK, Sweden, and Finland, across universities in Estonia and Lithuania but also in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and in the former Yugoslavia, especially in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Ljubljana.

A new Central and Eastern European university partnership started to emerge between university-based researchers in adult education, which formed the basis for later generations to build on with the help of European funds and exchange programmes. In Central Europe, researchers such as Lenz, Gruber, Kips, Bezensek, Koltai, Medic, Sz. Tóth, Jelenc, Mohorcic-Spolar, and Krajnc, together with the support of DVV International, and Horn, Hinzen, Filla, and others influenced each other, and most of them were actively involved in the development of adult education studies at universities, action researches, and publications in their home countries. From the mid-1980s until 2014, another influential cycle of scientific discourse was the so-called 'Salzburg-talks' in adult education, in which several researchers and professionals with a university background could reflect on their activities in the development of adult education in transnational, national, regional, or local contexts.

National institutes of adult education have also been rather influential in the representation of research and development projects in association with universities in their own national contexts and beyond. NIACE in the UK, DIE in Germany, SVEB in Switzerland, and SIAE in Slovenia initiated projects in research and development and, accordingly, involved many university-based scholars and researchers with both national and international backgrounds to investigate the theory and practice of adult learning and education.

The Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (IIZ-DVV, later DVV International) played a key role in professionalising the field of adult education and, from the early 1990s onwards, helped to develop partnerships with countries in need of modernising their adult education provision and services. In that context, it helped partnerships to emerge not only with adult education providers but also with universities researching adult educa-

tion and developing professionalisation in national contexts. Examples of those efforts are described in the organisation's publications (DVV International – IPE and AED series).

UNESCO's famous Delors Report from 1996 and CONFINTEA V. in Hamburg in 1997 resulted in preparations for a new era with a special focus on learning and the adult learner (Delors-UNESCO 1996 and UNESCO, 1997). The Hamburg Declaration and the Agenda for the Future reflected the special role of higher education in the development of quality adult learning and education. The roles of universities were again tied to both lifelong learning and, especially, to adult learning and education. In this respect, university-based lifelong learning started to mean that universities had to move forward towards a new dimension of education involving a more profound use of ICT, already called for by Arnold in 1991, and towards improving the social dimensions of higher education, for example, in the context of third-age learning and in the area of community and citizenship development.

This latter aspect became rather influential in Belgian adult education research through the input of Wildemeersch, Baert and their BeNeLux research community, which started researching active citizenship, identity, and governance. Those orientations were channelled into some key European surveys on education and training in governance and active citizenship (Wildemeersch & Bron, 2005; Baert, 2003; ETGACE, 2003 and RE-ETGACE, 2006 projects).

This kind of collaboration was also active and became much wider in ESREA, the European research society dealing with adult education and its professional development. In the following period, it facilitated university-led discourses on relevant research topics of the network through conferences, projects, and publications (ESREA website).

Towards professionalisation in adult education: Universities working for quality adult educators in a European project environment (1997–2017)

The newly formed European development programmes in education, Erasmus in higher education, and Grundtvig in adult education enabled some distinguished universities to participate in several research and development projects in order to develop common European curricula for adult education at both the BA and MA levels.

There were two EU-funded programmes to develop university curricula for the education of adult learning professionals: one in Erasmus, focusing on a European Masters in Adult Education (EMAE), and another in Grundtvig to develop both

a BA and an MA curriculum for studying adult education (EMAE – Pätzold & Bruns, 2006; TEACH, 2006). The aim of the European Commission was to form a purely university-based project and a project with mixed partners in order to look into the potential of innovation with regard to theory and practice. When the two projects came to an end, the idea was to merge the useful outcomes of both project into a later project.

It is necessary to mention the influence of specific comparative European surveys on adult learning and education in Europe that the European Commission ordered from Research voor Beleid about several topics, including the development of adult learning professionals (Research voor Beleid, 2006, 2008). There were also some distinguished university researchers who provided research know-how to provide an overall insight into the conditions and criteria of how to develop the profession of the adult educator with the help and input of higher education institutions with regard to the key competencies of adult educators.

We also have to point out that there have been some other types of innovation to develop non-academic training programmes for adult education providers and professionals. In this respect, the AGADE project's curriculum and the Curriculum GlobALE programme are significant. (AGADE, 2007; Curriculum GlobALE, 2016) Curriculum GlobALE (CG) is a cross-cultural core curriculum for the training of adult educators worldwide. It was developed jointly by the German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) and DVV International. In five modules, it describes the relevant skills needed to lead successful courses and provides guidance on their practical implementation (DVV International website).

The development of adult learning and education was rather ambitious after the year of 2000, and the so-called Lisbon goals clearly reflected those sometimes unrealistic dimensions of European integration. Although lifelong learning was connected to employment and citizenship development, adult learning and education were not given enough time and resources to get effectively integrated into education and training systems. Again, the rise of adult education slowed down relatively quickly when the financial and economic crisis hit Europe in 2008.

While the lifelong learning agenda accelerated significant research activities on specific dimensions of learning (e.g. basic skills, guidance, and counselling), human resources development, assessment and measuring, local and regional developments, ICT and e-learning, financing, quality measures, and the roles of higher education were also analysed to investigate the changing climate for learning, which was dramatically constrained by new social and economic challenges of migration, mobility, demography, and skills mismatches (Council of the EU 2011; CEDEFOP, 2014)

In closing this short overview of the evolution of higher education participation in adult education research and development, two specific project-based efforts must be mentioned. The first one is a recent European project that tried to continue EMEA (). This was the Erasmus ESRALE project (European Studies and Research in Adult Learning and Education). This project was co-ordinated by TU Kaiserslautern and provided not only a renewed curriculum for a European Masters in Adult Education, it also published three manuals of studies in adult education research and a special series of ESRALE webinars dealing with the theory and practice of adult learning and education across Europe (ESRALE website).

The other innovative endeavour is the European Erasmus+ COMPALL project, which is a combination of studies in a Winter School format and the development of a Joint module involving several member universities. Those are valuable examples of international collaboration amongst universities or partnerships with several types of practitioners, including universities (COMPALL website).

The recent impact of CONFINTEA VI in 2009 in Belém, Brazil, and the influence of the renewed UNESCO recommendations on adult learning and education from 2015 still support the direct involvement of universities in the development of adult learning, because the obvious challenges of skills shortages and illiteracies may involve difficulties and traps when it comes to attaining growth, at least sustainable growth (UNESCO 2009; UNESCO 2016).

Conclusion

In order to expand the roles of higher education in the development of adult learning and education, the conditions of three 'Ps' have to be recognised: place, people, and purpose. After examining the evolution of how great university-based scholars tried to help adult education get modernised, one may come to the conclusion that university engagement in relevant research and development is beneficial if universities provide a good place for collaborative actions and encourage researchers to engage in such work. A second aspect is people, without whom there is no living place and no foundation for academic work creating an adventurous intellectual climate. And the third aspect is purpose, or in other words, courage, which makes universities a mystical place of scientific advancement. Several recent developments have been collected by UIL in its recent collection dealing with the role of higher education in promoting lifelong learning (Yang, Schneller, & Roche, 2015)

What makes it possible? If we want to get a good answer, we only have to visit the EPALE platform and find lots of inspiring examples of adult learning across

Europe. Universities can help to develop this further and take their messages to our own localities to understand that learning is just the beginning of a great journey. And, at the same time, we should not forget about our recent European past. The Grundtvig initiative and programme helped integrate adult learning and education into lifelong learning policy thinking both at national and transnational levels, and university scholars, researchers, and students have done a lot to reach its valuable achievements (Lima & Guimaraes, 2011).

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Katarina Popović

Teaching Curriculum GlobALE: Mission Impossible or United in Diversity

Abstract: 'Curriculum GlobALE – Curriculum for Global Adult Learning and Education' is a transnationally compatible training programme for adult educators that was created as a joint project of DIE and DVV International. Curriculum GlobALE is meant to address a shortcoming in the global agenda, which does not recognise adult education as a specific field of practice and professional activity.

Purpose of the programme

The professionalisation of adult education in the 1970s and 1980s, during the 'golden age' of adult education, had its important moments – based on a series of research results, it was defined as an autonomous area and constituted as a scientific discipline and an academic field. UNESCO and especially UIL, OECD, World Bank, and other global policy actors recognised the importance of adult education and the role of professional staff and trained personnel in the development of the field. Even at the beginning of twenty-first century, professionalisation was seen as a crucial factor for quality assurance and for fostering a culture of quality in adult learning, as mentioned specifically in the Belem Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2009, p. 6). With the 'shift' from adult education to the concept of lifelong learning, the professionalisation of adult education is experiencing a decline, and employees in this area started losing their professional role and identity.

The current global agenda, featured in the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 4 and the Education 2030 programme, gives great importance to teachers – their role, professional preparation, continuous education, and working conditions (UN, 2015). Their key role in achieving the quality of education that the global agenda seeks is very much emphasised. However, this applies mainly, or almost exclusively, to teachers in formal education and teachers involved in the education and upbringing of children. It does not recognise the need for professional preparation and professional standards in adult education. Education 2030 formulates goal 4 and target 4.c. as follows:

> 4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States […] [Training should be measured as:] Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary;

and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organised teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country (Tawil, Sachs-Israel, Le Thu, & Eck, 2016, p. 32).

The strong focus on early childhood and formal, school education has completely eliminated concern not only for staff working in adult education but also for informal education: the global agenda does not recognise trainers, facilitators, and instructors either. Only 'educators' are mentioned sporadically. The indicators for the global targets are developed only for teachers up to the level of upper secondary education, and even when non-formal and informal learning are mentioned, the professionals in these areas are not considered at all.

It is only at the European level that we still find some efforts to improve the field through professionalisation, but even in the EU, there are cuts for programmes and initiatives of this kind. In the previous period, numerous projects were conducted with the objective to identify common ground, common values, or common competencies among adult educators. Now, there are no attempts to approach the topic more systematically and to try some more systematic solutions. Likewise, there are almost no attempts to connect some of the existing experiences at the global level, to enable an exchange of knowledge, and to achieve more impact on the professionalisation and improvement of practice.

This tendency to neglect adult educators as a group in the Education 2030 agenda may have drastic implications for the further development of adult education, which is already experiencing massive cuts in funding and a lack of recognition. As far as global policy is concerned, adult education is in a process of retrogression – in terms of discourses, concepts, strategy, and finances (including its absence from the agenda of development cooperation), which is detrimental also for the quality of staff and personnel in adult education worldwide. Therefore, additional efforts are needed to overcome the shortcomings in the global education agenda with regard to adult educators and to prevent a further decline of the field.

GlobALE: Characteristics of the programme

There are plenty of researches on the professionalisation of adult education and many programmes and projects, especially in Europe. Curriculum GlobALE – Curriculum for global adult learning and education, which will be presented in this paper, is the training programme that provides a basic qualification for adult educators. It is a transnationally compatible curriculum that was created as a joint project of the German Institute for Adult Education – Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Education (DIE) and the Institute for International Cooperation in Adult Education (DVV International).

> The objective of the project […] was to develop, test and disseminate a core curriculum for training adult educators outside of the university sector which, being in line with the basic principles of Adult Education, satisfies international scientific standards and is suitable for use on a transnational scale (Lattke, Popović, & Weickert, 2013, p. 5).

The benefits of this programme were seen in its potential to (1) enhance the professionalisation of adult educators by providing a common reference framework, and by specifying core competencies as a framework for the qualification of adult educators, which would help in creating standards and references in the knowledge and competencies adult educators should have; (2) support adult education providers in the design and implementation of train-the-trainer programmes, thus contributing to the practice of adult education provision; (3) foster knowledge exchange and mutual understanding between adult educators worldwide and to support the creation of a global adult educators' learning and professional community.

The starting point of the curriculum was the idea that adult educators, trainers, and facilitators have a lot in common, despite the diversity that characterises adult education worldwide. Based on numerous projects, initiatives, and activities, a set of knowledge and competencies was identified that might be recognised as crucial for adult educators wherever they work and whatever the geographical or institutional context of their educational activities is. But it was of utmost importance to be explicit about the underlying values – as there is no neutral education, and hence, no neutral adult education. Curriculum GlobALE thus needed a clear value basis, which at on the one hand makes it universally applicable (based on the values that are common across the countries) and on the other hand creates limitations in applicability (through the limits set by cultural differences related to these values). It includes emancipatory, humanistic, and democratic values and is designed to develop participants' ability to work in a democratic, open-minded, interculturally open and sensitive manner, including a strong ability to contextualise the concrete educational work with adults and to consider framework conditions.

> Curriculum GlobALE is unambiguous about the idea of the adult educator who stands at the end of the training process. It is not a neutral location, but is based on a clear value system, with roots in a human rights-based approach. These values are mentioned several times in Curriculum GlobALE – sustainable development, peace and democracy, gender and cultural sensitivity, etc. The values are visible not only in the description of the curriculum, but also in the cross-cutting issues and in the set of competencies, and they are expressed in the basic principles Curriculum GlobALE is based upon competency–oriented, action–oriented, participant–oriented, and aimed at sustainability (Käpplinger, Popović, Shah, & Sork, 2015, p. 434).

Curriculum GlobALE is structured through one optional introductory module, five thematic core modules, and one to three optional elective modules. Core modules

start with an overall introduction to the field of adult education, its main ideas and concepts, the variety and diversity of adult education, issues related to adult education in the national and global context, and adult education as a profession. The second module is mainly devoted to learning theories and the psychological understanding of adult learning that serves as the basis for didactical actions, and the motivation for and barriers to adult education. The third module develops communication competencies as well as competencies needed for group dynamics. The fourth module is the most practical one, as it offers a variety of methods for different subject areas, different groups and phases of trainings, and other educational activities. The last module brings together previous competencies and uses them for other phases of andragogic cycles – needs assessment, planning, organisation, and evaluation – and additionally deals with quality assurance in adult education.

One of the main characteristics of the curriculum is the combination of (1) core topics and competencies that should be common and universal and (2) content and competencies that are flexible, optional, and specific to the country, region, target group, or content type. It allows for an adaptation to local needs by offering 70 per cent core content, leaving 30 per cent to specifics, such as regional-geographic aspects, target group-specific aspects, subject-specific aspects, management tasks, situation-specific and regulation-specific aspects (Lattke, Popović, & Weickert, 2013, pp. 16–17)

The whole curriculum is structured in the following way:

Figure 1: Curriculum GlobALE
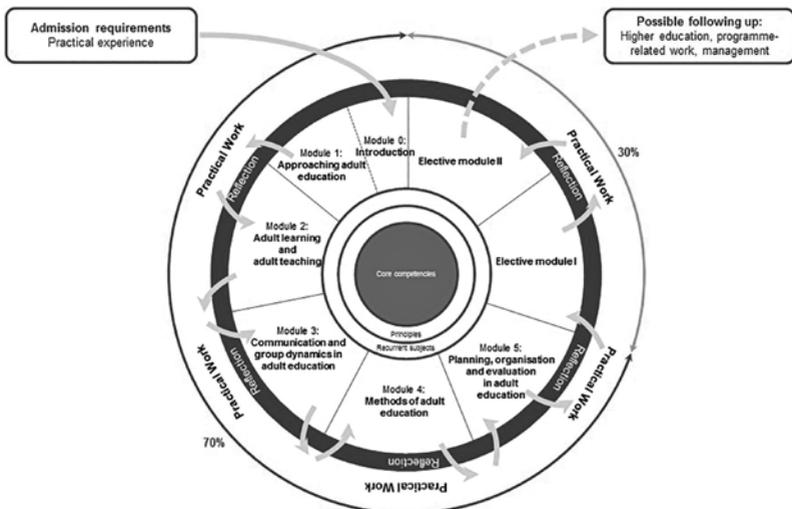
Source: Lattke, Popovic, & Weickert, 2013

There are also some cross-cutting topics that may be explored in greater depth in the elective modules, but they are important for the whole curriculum und should be considered whenever possible: the human rights approach, the gender-sensitive approach, the development of critical thinking, sustainable development and environmental protection, and the contribution of adult education to the development of peaceful and democratic societies.

Self-reflection is among the most essential characteristics of adult educators and should be included in each module and in different phases of the training.

In practical terms, the curriculum's modular and outcome-based character enables flexible implementation, a combination with other programmes, and the recognition of previously gained competencies.

> Curriculum GlobALE can also be considered to include a kind of meta competence framework for adult educators: The learning outcomes defined in the curriculum represent exactly those competences which all adult educators should possess, no matter in what geographical, institutional or domain-specific context they work (Lattke, Popović, & Weickert, 2013, p. 6).

The defined topics, clearly formulated principles, notes on implementation, and suggestions for practical application and reflection after each module ensure that the process of implementing the curriculum also becomes important, together with the outcomes and competencies that need to be achieved.

The challenges of implementation

There is hardly a book, research, or speech that does not mention the diversity of adult education in some way. This is a common perception, a standard, and a fact that adult educators and activists are proud of. Comparative approach in particular offers a range of arguments to prove it and to illustrate how much adult education depends on the context, on the cultural, social, political, and even religious framework, on the regional, national, and local circumstances, culture and habits.

With that in mind, the idea of creating a common curriculum that presumes a common understanding of the profession (tasks, knowledge, competences, identity) may seem like a 'mission impossible'. If adult education is so diverse, multifaceted, and specific, what could be possible common features? Is the work of every adult educator and trainer so specific and different from the other's? What could be the universal core and common denominator? Does the universal global approach run counter to culturally specific efforts to improve adult education – are they on the same side, or opposing each other?

Cultural differences seem to be a particular obstacle. The main questions are: Which elements and dimensions of regional and national cultures should be taken into account and reflected in the common curriculum? Which are more relevant than others? Are we dealing only with the top of the 'cultural iceberg' and looking for commonalities among the visible (and thus easier-to-deal-with) cultural dimensions? And the main question that each curriculum has to answer, because of its prescriptive and normative character, is: what are the values that will be respected in each individual culture, and what changes is the curriculum aiming at? What should be done in the case of a clear conflict of values, norms, and practices? Is 'cross-culturality' still possible in the field of adult education?

Andragogic principles say that the trainer's work and teaching should be flexible and adapted to learners' needs, life, and work experience, to personal and institutional circumstances. Is insisting on commonalities a betrayal of scientific principles?

All these questions were not a 'blind spot' for the authors of the curriculum; they were the challenge – but a challenge of the kind that has to be accepted and worked on if any improvement of the field is wanted. The answers to these questions were not easy, but they pave the way for an approach that might make a change.

> In view of the very different background conditions for Adult Education in the different countries and regions, this standard consciously refers only to the output factors – the competencies that are to be developed and are defined non-specifically in the curriculum as regards context. With regard to the input factors, i.e. specific content and examples, when implementing a training programme, the curriculum offers enough room to incorporate local, cultural and other specific details into the conceptual design. The variable parts of the curriculum help to contribute towards this (Lattke, Popović, & Weickert, 2013, p. 12).

Some solutions for the cultural challenges are given through the formal structure of the curriculum: 30 per cent variable content, possibilities for adding further modules, the open character of the introductory module (where social, political, and economic framework conditions can be discussed with the implementing partners), and the ways of including and considering these conditions in the implementation. Furthermore, Curriculum GlobALE is flexible in terms of 'input': competencies previously obtained in other contexts can be recognised and combined with those in the Curriculum GlobALE. Likewise, the 'output' is left to the country level: EQF level 5 is recommended, but it may be positioned very differently in other regions. So formally, 'cross-cultural mobility' is not a possibility, but through the clearly described competencies it is enabled.

> The values, principles and competencies should enable worldwide application, but also the fact that Curriculum GlobALE offers, besides the common core, sufficient scope for variability, allowing for different needs to be met in individual cases, for various fields and dependent on the social, political and economic framework. The scope of design freedom within the five core modules is broad […] (Käpplinger et al., 2017, p. 435).

Next, and maybe even more importantly, the authors of the Curriculum GlobALE recommend that dealing with cultural issues in the implementation should be left to the teacher and trainers, which makes them crucial for the success of the implementation. But are they not always crucial– as proven by numerous researches and pointed out in policy documents? The methods that teachers and trainers apply in the trainings, the examples they use, the tasks they give to participants, the materials they bring, recommend, and share, and of course, the whole field of discussion, reflections, dialogues, and debates is a huge space for all specific issues, views, topics, and understandings. The trainer can very much add local 'colour' to the trainings, not only to the 'visible' parts but also to the deeper layers that influence the learning culture, communication, use of methods, group dynamics, and broader issues like setting goals and objectives and working with diverse participants and target groups. Trainers can add specific content, while at the same time developing competencies defined in the curriculum. This enables them to follow andragogic principles, to be flexible and adaptable, while keeping the focus on the main content and the core competencies.

Of course, the question of 'clashing values' remains, but Curriculum GlobALE is very clear about it. Since there cannot be a 'neutral curriculum', this one is based on the values that are the precondition for its full implementation. They are about human rights, equality, emancipation, respect, empowerment, democracy, and the like. Some elements of the curriculum could be used in any context (such as methods or learning theories), but only a valued-loaded implementation can claim to be a universally valid, common approach as defined in the Curriculum GlobALE. Thus, its universality is *de facto* limited to the cultures that would embrace these values as part of their educational agenda, or that recognise them and try to shape their development guided by these values.

The potential of implementation

The abovementioned diversity of adult education – described, pointed out, and celebrated – at the same time became 'the sacred cow' and therewith the curse of adult education. It hindered more connections, cooperation, solidarity, and joint actions among adult educators, researchers, and activist worldwide. It was

also a serious obstacle to advocacy and lobby actions at the global level. The lack of some common approach, understanding, and definitions, and the insistence on differences and nationally or regionally valid concepts led to weaker argumentations and a particularisation of interest. A strong presence in the advocacy arena was impossible, and a united global voice of adult education was missing.[1] Unfortunately, all efforts aiming at professionalisation were limited, and there were hardly any common global actions, researches (as in Europe), and appearances in the global advocacy arena. Individual areas of adult education made improvements, came together, and cooperated, but the general 'body' of adult education, which comprises various field and areas, was seldom seen. Professionals in the field – even less so. The idea of a common approach and common efforts towards professionalisation was rejected even by actors and representatives of the field, which, surprisingly, could even be observed in civil society – undermining the role of adult educators, only implicitly mentioning them under 'other education workers': 'Despite the apparent consensus around the centrality of the teaching profession to quality education, undervaluing of teachers and other education workers continues to prevail across the continents.' (UNESCO, CCNGO 2017, par. 9).

Overall acceptance of and enthusiasm about the concept of lifelong learning did not improve the situation with regard to training personnel or increasing their competencies. It turned out to be the Trojan horse that resulted in the factual disappearance from the global agenda.

> Supposed to be based on inclusive, emancipatory, humanistic and democratic values, lifelong learning remains a content-empty phrase, decorative notion, an empty shell in the function of the neoliberal discourses. Such concept, emptied of the critical blade, emancipatory potential, solidarity and power for social transformation, reduces learning to an individual psychological process and responsibility (Koulazides & Popović, 2017).

Such lifelong learning became a very vague concept, more suited for rhetorical use than for identifying a specific field of practice, an 'elastic concept tailorable to any needs' (Dehmel, 2006). For professionalisation, it was a knockout – even with the best possible understanding of the concept of lifelong learning, and with the recognition of its main messages, it is impossible to imagine a professional for lifelong learning. It would be difficult to define (and to standardise) the competencies valid across all fields and target groups that 'lifelong learning' covers and to describe the job; it is even more difficult to think about a common profes-

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1   The International Council for Adult Education was and still is the only representative body of comprehensive adult education at the global level.

sional identity and to claim the rights related to the professional group. As much as 'lifelong learning' embraced the idea of ability and the right of every person to gain knowledge and competencies throughout the lifespan, it dissolved the idea of a specific field of practice and a profession. Accompanied by the broad deprioritisation of adult education in the policy sphere, this development results in the worrisome fact that adult education faces serious crises at the global level, and adult educators are confronted with the disappearance of professional understanding, concept, and recognition.

This is exactly where the biggest potential of Curriculum GlobALE comes from – it has the unifying power of a common professional identity based on a solid foundation, enabling joint actions, activities, projects, and advocacy. As much as actors in adult education stick to the idea of diversity, it is possible, without giving it up, to have a strong connecting field, a base for advocacy, for a powerful presence in global advocacy arenas. To train people through Curriculum GlobALE and to connect them in the global learning community or the advocacy network would strengthen the voice of adult education at the national, regional, and global levels – it would be the voice of a clearly defined professional group, supported by practical experiences and grassroots level actions, as well as research data and evidence.

A set of globally accepted traits and features of a professional group, recognised knowledge and competencies, and a clear profile based on certain values –all that would help to distinguish adult education as a profession, to lobby for improving its position on the global agenda, and to increase the visibility of the whole field, which is now jeopardised through the replacement of adult education by lifelong learning.

Furthermore, such a common approach has the potential to foster a transnational process of exchange and mutual learning, to enable countries and regions to benefit from experiences and developments in other countries, to cooperate and to be more independent in the context of international cooperation and fundraising. Equally important, this would enable more solidarity and cooperation among adult educators worldwide.

At the national level, it means investing in capacity development and networking, which is the most sustainable way of supporting adult education in the country. Finally, the curriculum itself is based on numerous existing programmes that were carefully consulted before it was created, and it is based on the experiences of the best implemented programmes and on scientifically proven approaches.

Perspectives of Curriculum GlobALE

Still in the piloting phase, Curriculum GlobALE is a 'work in progress'. But several years of implementation proved its contribution to the improvement of national adult education and its potential for global networking.[2] Some experiences and lessons learned are already available, and some possible steps of further improving it: cutting some of the topics, for the example, since it is a very ambitious programme, creating two versions of it (two levels), and – most importantly – including topics, authors, theories, and experiences from non-European countries and regions. This was identified as one of the important tasks at the very beginning, but there was a need to create a starting point, a milestone that will help explore the next steps and pave one of the best ways of global support to adult education. Although the implementation is going on, there is a need for careful monitoring, revisions, and improvements, as well as for further support. The ambitious goal of improving adult education globally requires ambitious tools. Curriculum GlobALE has the potential to be one of those tools.

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2   See: https://www.dvv-international.de/en/materials/curriculum-globale/

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