

**Педагогика**

**УДК 378**

*Ольга Бересток*

*(Сумы, Украина)*

## **ADULT LEARNING POLICY AND LIFELONG EDUCATION IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

*Аннотация:* в работе рассматривается сущность понятия “обучение взрослых”, а также его роль в системе высшего образования стран Европейского Союза. Подчеркиваются умения, компетентности и способности, которые могут развиваться в системе непрерывного образования взрослых, и перспектива дальнейшего обучения взрослых в условиях современности.

*Ключевые слова:* образование взрослых, особенные качества, мотивация, образовательные программы.

*Annotation:* The article deals with the nature of the notion “adult learning” and its role in the system of higher education in the countries of the European Union. The skills, competencies and abilities developed in the system of the unremitting adult education as well as the perspective of the further adult education in the contemporary circumstances are underlined.

*Keywords:* adult education, specific qualities, motivation, educational programs

Adult education means entering university and further education college, publicly funded provision made by a local authority, with the Workers' Education Association (WEA), or in community settings. Adult education is also named lifelong learning. Within universities it has also been known as Continuing Education.

Adult education can be for leisure, skills, re-training, qualification, and progression. The definition of ‘adult’ varies from provider to provider.

Some forms of adult learning are called non-vocational education. Some recent European Governments initiatives were around 'informal learning' meaning in this respect learning which is not contributed by the state or institutions.

In the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education's Inquiry (in England and Wales) into the future for Lifelong Learning it is distinguished in the following way:

- in educational organizations, at work, at home and through leisure activities.
- people of all ages learning in a variety of aims

It concentrates basically on adults coming back to coordinated learning rather than on unplanned learning.

Adult Education in Europe has its own history and tradition. The focal point is on conveying democratic competence. In addition to information about the framework of the state and society, this also includes the qualification for personal engagement on behalf of the state and society.

*What is typical for Adult Education in Europe?*

Most adult education in Europe takes place in colleges of further education (FE) or universities providing higher education (HE). Many FE colleges now propose HE courses.

The stress in FE is in skills and vocational qualification. Publicly funded non-vocational education has traditionally been led by local government working with a 'safeguarded' budget.

Adult Education in Europe has brought about extraordinary things. The exchange of experiences and best practices between European countries is to be accepted. The EU encourages this by maintaining contacts and activities in the sphere of education which stretch out across borders and are almost always achieved by mutual interest and accompanied by the taking up of interesting ideas.

In Europe in which social and civic contacts across borders are routine, the requirements are of course present for imparting knowledge of positive experiences with citizenship education in other countries, which can in turn implement these as a source of encouragement and an enrichment of their own practices.

On the contrary, Adult Education of one country can also undoubtedly learn from the traditions, customs and different approaches in other countries and develop further.

*Responsible public institutions/ ministries.* Adult education in England is currently the responsibility of the Department for Business Innovation and Skills. It gives a set of policy branches - innovation, science, business sectors and law, economics and statistics, employment matters, trade and export as well as adult, further and higher education.

The Department for Education is in charge of education and children's services but also has responsibility for 16-19 education.

*Providers of Adult Education.* Local authority created and provided adult education of a non -vocational one is arranged through a protected fund (adult safeguarded learning) by Government.

This million provision has been stable for long period but was not brought down back in the very recent budget. Further education colleges and training institutions are basically engaged in vocational and skills related education.

*Employers create a lot of training.* Universities through their lifelong learning departments (which are usually called Continuing Education or Extra Mural departments) also arrange adult education with some Government subsidies.

'Informal learning' (Government definition) is supplied through libraries, galleries and museums as well as by community and voluntary organizations like University of the Third Age, The Women's Institute ( in England and Wales), Arts associations, clubs and societies. The media has also had a considerable part to play in promoting and providing adult learning.

*Finances.* Adult learning in Europe is funded from a huge diversity of public, private and voluntary sources.

The national Inquiry into the Future of Lifelong Learning (in the United Kingdom) is making an effort to evaluate the total scale of this expenditure. Its current work proposes that total expenditure from public sources exceeds £30 billion per year, but the National Employers Skills Survey suggests that employers spend £38 billion per year.

Of this total expenditure, some 95% is spent on an economic aim learning. The last decade has shown a very substantial increase in education expenditure in the United Kingdom.

Over the decade from 1995-6 to 2005-6 total expenditure by the education departments enlarged in real terms (corresponded to inflation) by 46%, to a total of £67.1 billion (a rise from 4.9% to 5.5% of GDP), of which 29% is given to post-compulsory education and training.

Nevertheless, the majority of this 29% is consumed on the fundamental education of young people (16-19 year olds in Further Education and 18-22 year olds in Higher Education), and it is impossible to indicate this from expenditure on adults, since much teaching is in age mixed classes and institutions.

The NIACE investigation estimated that the total spending on adult learning provision by investor could be no less than £55 billion with a further £38 billion per year expended on the time invested in learning.

They consider both figures to be under evaluated. Of the £55 billion £34.65 billion (63%) was spent on development of employee with £16 billion which the private sector had provided.

On the other hand, their basic conclusion from their analysis enclose the following: 65% of total public spending in 2007-8 on post-compulsory education (£9.75 billion) was expended on higher education, three quarters of which was evaluated as gone to learners under age 25.

*Participation level.* NIACE annual adult learning participation survey gives data on learning by age, gender, previous education experience, regional variations, and ethnicity. Its 2009 survey proposed an increasing learning divide:

- ethnic minority adults overall report higher current participation (26%) than white adults (17%).

- people in full time (47%) and part-time (49%) are more likely to report current or recent participation in learning than unemployed people (40%), and far more likely than people who are not in paid employment (27%) or who are on pension (16%).

- the older you are the less probably you are to take an active part in learning with 20-24s (61%) nearly twice as likely as 55-64s (31%), and more than three times as likely as 65-74s (18%) - but the Government's Foresight investigation on mental well-being showed how learning has positive benefits on health of older people.

- new or recent participation among unemployed adults dropped by 3 percentage points between 2008 and 2009, from 43% to 40%, while the quantity of unemployed have risen,

- current or recent participation among full-time workers enlarged by 2 percentage points between 2008 and 2009, but since 2002 it has fallen from 52% to 47% NIACE's 2010 investigation stated that:

- the proportion of people reporting no learning since leaving school has dropped dramatically from 37 per cent in 2009 to 31 per cent in 2010 (marking a total four percentage points below any previous study) and making understandable that the rise in participation is getting adults previously untouched by adult learning;

- the overall numbers planning to study has increased in 2010 to almost half (47 percent), the highest figure reported in a 20-year sequence of NIACE surveys. Nearly as significant is the drop - from 47 per cent in 2009 to 34 per cent in 2010 - who say they are very improbably to take up learning during the following three years;

- 56 per cent of ABs, 51 per cent of C1s, 37 per cent of C2s and 30 per cent of DEs report current or recent learning.

There are rises of three to four percentage points for ABCs but a jump of six percentage points in DEs is unparalleled.

In previous studies DEs have never shown more than a single percentage acceleration, and have always reported within the 24-26 per cent limit. In spite of this ABs stay almost twice as probably to participate as DEs;

- three in five (60 per cent) full-time workers are eager to take up learning - an upheaval of 13 percentage points since 2009; 58 per cent of part-time workers are going to study – an increase of nine percentage points on 2009; and for people seeking work there is a rise of 17 percentage points, with 67 per cent planning to study;

- current participation, having fallen to its lowest line for a decade in 2009, increased by three percentage points to 21 per cent - less than the highs experienced between 1996 and 2003, but pertaining recent reductions;

- women (23 per cent current and 44 per cent current/recent learners) go on taking part in larger numbers than men (20 per cent and 41 per cent correspondingly).

*Adult Education Workforce in England.*

The total HE academic staff (2005/6) was 164,870 persons. More than that there were 80,930 "atypical" staff - people who got some form of academic role but not under a usual academic contract.

By comparison, the total school workforce (at 2005-6) was 429,600 individuals. The total FE teaching staff enlisted (in England at 2005/6) 125,400 persons, of whom 50,180 were full time educators, and 75,220 part-time ones.

This is equal to 74,000 full time staff. Besides, there were 32,000 "support" staff, who undertake some form of teaching role. Informed observers propose that Private Training Organizations may also employ

about 25,000 staff (including teaching related staff such as assessors and advisers), but no national data is gathered.

Most teachers in Further Education are well experienced in their sphere, and many of them have undertaken definite roles as supervisors, mentors or workplace trainers before starting on their formal training as teachers.

When they embark formal training for national teaching qualifications, most of them are already employed as full-time or part-time FE teachers. Their initial teacher training (ITT) courses incorporate a mix of taught and practice elements. In 2001, new national arrangements were introduced compelling FE teachers to get a teaching qualification based on National Standards for teaching and supporting learning.

Qualifications established on the National Standards are suggested by both higher education institutions (HEI) and national granting organizations.

In response to a review of teacher training carried out by Inspectors from Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI), in 2003, the Department for Education and Skills (DES) initiated a basic national consultation on the reform of ITT in FE and the wider LSC sector, after which it stated major reforms to the system in the 2006 FE White Paper, *Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Changes*.

To be employed as a teacher in FE in England an individual must now have at least a level 3 qualification (ISCED 3) in the subject (for some academic subjects a University degree is necessary), as well as a teaching qualification recognized by the Sector Skills Council for FE (Lifelong Learning UK - LLUK).

LLUK is in charge for implementing the 2007 Further Education Workforce Strategy, which is created to support all colleges and learning providers in designing their own local workforce plans to keep up the delivery of provision for young people, adults and employers.

The new qualifications (and others under development) play the key role in this strategy.

The Teachers Qualification Framework which LLUK has created includes qualifications for different ways of teaching and non-teaching staff (in Learning Support, e-Learning, Assessment and in Leadership & Management).

There is no national demand for teaching staff in higher education to hold a teaching qualification, but over the last decade it has become the normal expectation for new staff, encouraged by the Higher Education Academy (HEA), who have been working in service and fundamental teacher training for academic staff.

The form of training and the requirements to teach are appointed by individual institutions, who commonly train their own staff through courses established by HEA.

Successful completion of HEA recognized courses gives an opportunity to get "Registered Practitioner" status (effectively a nationally recognized teaching qualification).

Quality system / insurance. Further Education and Higher Education have vivid quality assurance systems and institutions, nevertheless the basic principles are similar in both cases.

In Higher Education, quality is overlooked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), created in 1997, and owned and managed by the Universities themselves.

In Further Education it is the responsibility of the Office for Standards in Education (OSE) - which is also in charge of quality assurance in schools and children's services).

Most programs in publicly created institutions are described in outcome terms and these definitions are used in determining their quality. In Higher Education,



outcomes are evaluated by institutions as part of an affirmation process carried out with external specialists when courses are designed.

In Further Education, however, they are commonly characterized by external Awarding Bodies, often in cooperation with employers.

Personal learner performance is then carried out through testing and examination against those specifications. Activities are currently in progress to enlarge the effect on employers over the specification of qualifications through Sector Skills Councils.

Some definite problems about getting teaching qualifications.

There are particular problems about getting teaching qualifications on the large body of part-time teachers in higher education, and work is in progress in HEA to understand these messages, and develop necessary answers.

The Academy has determined a typology of part-time teachers, with each category having particular training needs:

- Part-time teachers play a very limited role
- Inexperienced teachers already present in the HEI (often postgraduate students) are ready to offer proper narrow data to teaching.
- Inexperienced teachers as new staff in the HEI deployed to suggest defined narrow data to teaching (e.g. with definite technical or specialized subject facility)
- Experienced part-time teachers who have other responsibilities which place limitation on their accessibility and who wish to undertake a restrictive set of teaching roles
- Inexperienced or experienced part-time teachers who yearn to carrying out all forms of teaching activity (but who also may have competing commitments)
- Fractional teaching staff who have the same title and access to the opportunities and infrastructure as full-time colleagues have. In the Private Training

Organization (PTO) department, subject qualifications of teaching and teaching coordinated staff differ from an apprenticeship to postgraduate qualifications. Teaching qualifications have a tendency to be within a narrow range - the City and Guilds Stage 1 and 2 qualification or the level 3/4 learning and development (L&D) awards. LLUK is currently overlooking the conversion of the old Training and Development Lead Body (TDLB) components to accommodate to the new requirements for teaching in FE.

Before answering the question of interactions in adult learning it is necessary to distinguish the main techniques involved in it.

According to the long-lasting research, fulfilled by the prominent scientists in the field of adult learning, it is possible to point out four key elements engaged in the educational process.

These elements, which function as a system, are:

Learner.

Educator.

Subject matter.

Technique.

They are offered as interdependent options which can operate at the same level. It is important to keep in mind that these four elements are integral part of one chain which are dynamic, non-repeatable and unique at any given point in time. Being changeable, they can't be constant and immovable.

Speaking about techniques, it has to be recognized that they have a defined lifecycle. One more essential thing for the educator is to have the opportunity to choose the most suitable techniques during the process of learning or investigation. In his book *The Courage to Teach* (1998), Parker J. Palmer stresses that a strong inner-sense of self-identity and integrity of an educator are extremely important.

He also underlines that the learning experience must reflect the very soul of the individual.

The author assumes that in our attempt to reform education we have forgotten that it will never be achieved by “rewriting curricula and revising texts if we fail to cherish —and challenge— the human heart that is the source of good teaching”. Palmer suggests our effectively using the techniques required for each point in time and space and possibility to manage both teaching and learning content.

He proposes not to forget about the intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects and their common implementation in the wholeness of reality.

He writes that “bad teachers distance themselves from the subject they are teaching—and in the process, from their students. Good teachers join self and subject and students in the fabric of life... Good teachers possess a capacity for connectedness.

They are able to weave a complex weave of connections, among themselves, their subjects and their students so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves.” (Palmer, 1998, P. 11).

Performing during the learning process and creating the conditions to help the students to learn, the teacher must take into consideration the following essential aspects: a clear sense of identity, a humble integrity, an educated heart, a spiritual quest, an authentic respect for the students, a welcome to the voices of truth, an aptitude for asking good questions and listening, a willingness to take the risk of inviting open dialogue.

The next important thing to be kept in mind is “building bridges” between the adult learner and the educator.

The first step to understand the student is to take the written information about him or her. Adult learners, as a rule, are very active participants of the process of learning, because they are highly motivated. They like to have their opinions

consulted and “enjoy having their talents and experience made use of in the teaching situation” (Mezei , 1991, p.10).

The influence of the adult learners in the selection of techniques should be discussed as two brief aspects. They are: the learning styles distinguished by the prominent theorists of the 20th century and the characteristics of the adult learner given by M. Knowles. He reflects four key aspects which display certain characteristics that govern the learning process. They are the following:

Orientation to learning.

The role of experience (adults “carry” a great inventory of experiences they can relate to).

Readiness to learn.

Changes in self-concept (as the human being evolves into adulthood).

Several experts in the field of adult learning point out the special tendency to manage knowledge and reflect, act, theorize about it in different ways. They also recognize four learner types such as:

Converger: individuals within learning style proficient at finding practical uses for ideas and theories.

Accommodator: ability to learn for hands-on experience. Learn by doing.

Diverger: best at viewing concrete situations from many different points of view.

Assimilator: best at understanding a wide range of information and putting into concise logical form.

The content of the adult learning is defined historically at macro-social levels. The experts in this field have observed three major tendencies of the content in the formal and non-formal adult education:

Social Focus: emphasis on social justice, democracy, citizenship, ecology, equal opportunities and non-discrimination issues.

Professional development and training: emphasis on corporate development, automation and training techniques for the professional achievements in the global age.

Self-actualization and Spiritual Development: emphasis on spiritual development and holistic views of daily life, work and education.

## ИСТОЧНИКИ И ЛИТЕРАТУРА

1. European Commission, 2010. Communication from the Commission. Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. COM (2010) 2020 final. [pdf] Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF> [Accessed 25 November 2014]
2. European Commission, Cedefop, ICF International, 2014. European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2014. Final synthesis report. [pdf] Available at: <http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2014/87244.pdf> [Accessed 9 December 2014].
3. European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2014b. The Structure of the European Education Systems 2014/15: Schematic Diagrams. [pdf] Available at: [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts\\_and\\_figures/education\\_structures\\_EN.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts_and_figures/education_structures_EN.pdf) [Accessed 21 January 2015].
4. Inbar, D. and Sever, R., 1989. The Importance of Making Promises: An Analysis of Second-Chance Policies. *Comparative Education Review*, 33(2), pp. 232-242.
5. McGivney, V., 2006. Attracting new groups into learning: Lessons from research in England. In: J. Chapman, P. Cartwright. & E. J. Mc Gilp, eds. *Lifelong Learning, participation and equity*. Dordrecht:Springer, Vol. 5, pp. 79-91.