

# Research and Development in Adult Learning and Education in Hungary

Balázs Németh (Editor)

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The reports, studies and materials published in this series aim to further the development of theory and practice in Adult Education. We hope that by providing access to information and a channel for communication and exchange, the series will serve to increase knowledge, deepen insights and improve cooperation in Adult Education at an international level.

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70

**IPE**  
International Perspectives  
in Adult Education

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# Editorial

Hungary has a long and strong tradition as a country based in the heart of Europe. This can be seen by looking at the history of the Hungarians and Stephen I, their king from around a thousand years ago, or at the time when it was a major part of the Habsburg Empire, or during the period of the divide into Eastern and Western blocs, and now as a member of the European Union. It has never been an easy and comfortable tradition for the people, and even today we observe a conflicting situation within the country, and within the EU.

The adult education traditions are therefore also quite similar to many other parts and times of Europe. Exactly a hundred years ago the first folk high school was founded in Bajaszentivan, in orientation very close to the Nordic enlightenment. And around the same time the first national adult education conference took place in the city of Pécs. If you go back even further you will find that Comenius taught at a college in Sarospatak for a time.

Hungarian and German cooperation in the field of adult education also covers a substantial amount of common experiences in quantity and intensity, especially in recent decades. The system change after the fall of the Berlin Wall opened new avenues for an in-depth information exchange and collaboration between the German folk high schools (Volkshochschulen, VHS), spearheaded by the VHS in Mannheim, Munich and Reutlingen, as well as their national association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, DVV), and its Institute for International Cooperation, today called DVV International.

In 1990 already, the office of DVV International was started in Budapest, with Jakob Horn as the first Director, who had wanted to go back to his own roots in the region. The President of DVV, Prof. Dr. Rita Süßmuth, paved the way for smooth running by opening an exhibition on folk high school traditions. This was also the year when the Hungarian Folk High School Society (MNT) was founded. Other major partners were the Society for the Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge (TIT), the Hungarian Government and their Ministries responsible for Education and Culture, Work and Vocational Training as well as a number of Universities in Budapest, Debrecen, Pécs, and Szeged. I myself was fortunate to serve as Director in Budapest for several years, a truly enriching experience.

Cooperation with our Hungarian partners continued even after the intense period of time DVV International maintained an office there. It now has different forms, but many opportunities are taken up each year: In 2014, DVV International was represented by its Director, Dr. Anton Markmiller, at the 25th anniversary of MNT; the Deputy Director, Mr Uwe Gartenschlaeger, joined an important conference on democratic citizenship; the former Deputy Director, Dr. Michael Samlowski, participated in the ninth historical and comparative conference for Central Eastern Europe. Many other pathways of cooperation are taken up in the context of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), in joint projects or in other functions like boards, studies, academies, summer or winter schools debating the future of lifelong learning.

Fortunately there has been intense interest in documenting and publishing the respective theories, policies, and experiences. Matyas Durko, Pal Soos, Kalman Rubowski, Andor Maroti were some of the scholars of the early generation, followed by Janos Toth, Mihaly Sari, Denes Koltai and Sandor Stricker in diverse writings. However, as can be seen from the co-authors of this volume, a good mix with the younger generation looks at the current trends of local, regional and national developments – which nowadays have to be seen within the contexts of Europeanisation and globalisation.

DVV International appreciates the fact that our Hungarian colleagues have offered their material to be published in this series on International Perspectives in Adult Education, which actually already has two volumes on Hungary. Previously, the office in Budapest edited a number of books, and other media in Hungarian, German and English, and thereby added to what our Hungarian partners published, including three journals which today provide opportunities for further exchange.

We wish a wide readership for this collection, and DVV International and its partners will go a long way to ensure distribution and dissemination that reaches into the adult education and lifelong learning sector across Europe. This should help in further cooperation between Hungarian and German adult educators as well as in other European countries, and internationally.

DVV International would like to thank all those who made their special contribution to help bring this volume into existence.

**Heribert Hinzen**

DVV International

# Traditional and experimental methods of electronic learning support in Hungarian adult education

*In the field of Hungarian education, including adult education, there are relatively few open online trainings, especially with human support and assessment, and they are mainly identified in the field of foreign language learning. Moreover, there is also a rare application of flexible online trainings based on learning groups, only on occasion or by pilot courses. The most frequently used variation is face-to-face training and online curriculum with formative assessment to determine outcome measures. The majority of online courses are not open and not flexible enough regarding their content, and are generally based on individual students. The article will argue that the reasons for this situation come partly from Hungarian regulations on adult education and partly from the type of specific educational preparedness of educators and, also, partially from the local learning socialisation process, which highly influences an Hungarian adult learner's learning habits.*

## Electronic learning support in Hungary – on the roots of distance education

The public definition of e-learning is changing in Hungary. For most pedagogy and andragogy professionals, it became clear only around the millennium that e-learning should be defined much more widely than only as a modern, online form of distance education (Hutter-Magyar 2007). In the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, analyses have even separated it from distance education and have set the place of Hungarian electronic learning support in Europe (Radácsi-Benedek 2005). Although the term, still new at that time, has since become naturalised in professional papers, its definition once pointed in a direction which based it on the characteristics of electronic distance education – even though the study referred to above, and other studies, regularly cited the very broad European Union (EU) definition of e-learning<sup>1</sup>.

This was the context into which the concept of electronic learning support was introduced in the Hungarian educational scene, in the context of distance education, open education and blended learning. E-learning (or its more Hungarian equivalents) is not a separate category in Hungarian education regulations, including the texts of laws and regulations of public education, higher education, adult education or vocational education; at that time, even the emergence of distance learning as an education management category was new.

In the second half of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, more and more projects were initiated in Hungary which aimed at going beyond the e-learning definition bound to classical distance education, moreover, to the vision of isolated students. The spread of these projects was propelled not only by the slow crystallisation of knowledge about distance education and digital pedagogy but also by web2 technologies, and the ways to use this technology spread exponentially. The emergence of the latter in Hungary coincided with the boom of internet penetration along with wireless and mobile internet access, and the spread of mobile hardware tools, especially smartphones. Thus in Hungarian learning support one had to cope – in parallel – with the sudden increase in the number of internet users as a result of network access and easier-to-use web2 services needing less direct technical knowledge and, as a result, with the

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1/ In this definition, e-learning is “defined as the use of new multimedia technologies and the Internet to improve the quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services as well as remote exchanges and collaboration”. The eLearning Action Plan. Designing tomorrow’s education. Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 2001. Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/1qBGjCE>

emergence of content generated and delivered by users (no matter what quality). Since internet access for adult students – and even educators! – was strictly limited until recently, a widespread routine use of the internet could not establish itself. Related to this, one of the preceding steps of e-learning, the experience and fun of Computer-based Learning/Training (CBL/CBT) was unknown to both educators and students (good examples can be found in distance education but it was far less typical in traditional presence education). To help people acquire routine use as fast as possible, one of the main directions of teacher further education became digital literacy development; however this was often limited to general use of tools and affected pedagogic/andragogic fields less. In parallel, a new type of advanced education was launched where methodological education also included the focused use of tools, with the tasks of the learning and educational environment also kept in mind. On the side of the student, the same is necessary.

On the educators' side, another problem needs to be faced when talking about using these tools: web platforms and software change rapidly and there is usually no time nor a way to explain the proper pedagogic methods for using these tools with the different target groups; and this makes choosing the proper tools hard for the educators. Irrespective of the field of education, mature and motivated students already using the internet have significant resources and they even help educators with their experience, however most adult students do not have these competences yet, and usually they do not show self-confident, motivated online activity either.

There was a dynamic increase during this period in the development of study material in adult education, especially in several key areas like language teaching or Information Technology (IT) courses, and in those areas where students in certain professions are obliged by law to regularly do advanced studies. But the aim and way of using the study materials developed for these courses was not properly determined in all cases. The initial concept regarding these study materials hardly contained any aspects for their use or for the further support of activities beyond the study material itself, nor did it offer any customising options.

## **Typical forms for electronic learning support**

### Email

It is easy to see how many e-learning courses are linked to distance education: despite modern electronic tools, some are simply tradition-

al correspondence distance education through digital channels. One of these is email-based 'distance education' replacing classical correspondence education, just organised to use a faster solution: email. In time, this form partially overlapped with offline versions but focused on target groups with stable internet access, regularly using the internet but with an uneven connection quality. Moreover, they were inexperienced internet users as regards security requirements and knowledge of the different internet software and platforms. Today, this solution is not used by many; it has been replaced by web2 frameworks and platforms for dialogue and group communication and/or content editing, publication and delivery.

### Learning Management System (LMS)

LMSs, which need an individual web server, represent another category because expertise and infrastructure needs to be provided by the educator for their operation (either servers from the market or with open source code). These have typically spread in bigger institutions and adult education organisations of smaller size with an IT profile and, of course, in higher education and enterprises with no educational profile but where internal training is considered important. When using them, one has to tackle three main tasks (beyond running them):

- the system should be designed to be user-friendly and, from a methodological point of view, customised for the training;
- the trainers' team should be prepared for using the system both from a technical and a content perspective;
- the heterogeneous student groups should be prepared for using the system technically and for the learning methodological side of electronic learning support (which is similar but not identical to the one of distance learning).

This is a special situation, since these three are (pre)conditions of each other. Given the Hungarian circumstances at the beginning and in the middle of the 2000s, only a small proportion of the professionals were properly educated from a technical point of view. As for the methodological preparation and its three main parts: adult education skills, distance education skills and CBL e-learning skills were also present in small, but not overlapping groups. As for student target groups, technical unpreparedness was a small problem; a bigger challenge was, on the one hand, the lack of knowledge and uncertainty related to e-learning seen as distance learning, on the other hand, creating independent and solitary distance learning habits (or assessing the lack of such learning habits).

Most educational institutions more or less managed to exploit the opportunities of LMS systems when supplementary options like web2 services were also available because the first mass digital literacy trainings had been successfully finished and, as mentioned above, the proportion and experience of internet users among the adult population increased and developed. Meanwhile, in some cases, the training programmes of the educators also covered the field of didactics, although this was more typical at the end of 2000s and the beginning of the 2010s. Nowadays, the questions which arise are more like: Is it worthwhile for a given organisation or training to use a classical LMS or is it more advisable to use more popular platforms also used by students on an everyday basis? Although these popular platforms are presumably (not certainly!) widely known by the target group – but not always for educational purposes – like community portals, sharing or mediator sites, blogs or microblog platforms; moreover, in some cases, these can be used for educational purposes only to a limited extent. Recently, several tools have been made available to resolve the dilemma: platforms like Open Courseware (OCW), Open Class and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC); designed for educational purposes but also extensively built with web2 tools.

Initially, the strategies of institutions using LMS were quite mixed. Typically, study materials were collected in a central place without any local interactive option. This was meant as a pleasant addition to education and was aimed at creating a more structured learning time at home. The opposite of that was the pursuit of clear distance education through a way of using LMS which was maximally automated. The most rare among these is that of online dialogue, or one built on teamwork and communication where LMS is a tool for keeping in touch and also an agora as well a platform to access content and do exercises.

## Web 2.0

Initially among Web 2.0 platforms, it was the blog which stood out, whereas nowadays (as for learning support in Hungary, we consider the last 5 or 6 years as the era of web2) it is the community portal which stands out, supported by both the emerging video-sharing and video-watching platforms. The third big segment is joint document editing; other applications were not really able to spread widely in learning support, however, many of them were the basis for further impressive developments, like the presentation sharing app (and joint presentation editor) e-portfolio, e-document sharing and online education publication platform – nevertheless these typically remain supplementary.

Unlike the others, Facebook, for example, is the home of a rising number of open online, collaborative courses<sup>2</sup>; these typically also use the services of Google Drive as well as video-sharing sites. The community portal serves as a place for discourse and keeping in touch, which is also a task which needs to be carried out during such courses. Content development itself takes place with the free choice of other applications or on other platforms and the result of that can be published for the group on the community portal. This model implies that students and educators 'meet' on the community portal, start discussions, get to know the syllabus and schedule as well as the current tasks of the course. To carry out the tasks, it is always necessary to search, edit, create content and share it with fellow students and teachers. The point is to present the results to each other and, as a second part of the task, to discuss their work and findings. But Facebook is less suitable to enable users to find the work again later on or to organise it. To do so, other organising platforms are needed where course organisers, the students themselves or all of them together may form their collection into a database and retain it there.

If a blog is used as a central platform, different structures can be chosen depending on the methods applied. In the case of a shorter cycle and a less experienced 'e-student' target group, courses can be organised exclusively on a blog, where linear course lessons are equal to blog entries built up as micro contents or chains of such with hyperlinks or multimedia content elements; and answers, tasks or even the whole evaluation can be presented as comments (with attached or hyperlinked files) or in a new blog entry edited jointly. Similar to a community portal, this solution also forces participants into discussions inevitable for teamwork, but it is also potentially fruitful for studying 'alone'. However, if participants themselves write their own blogs and perform tasks like seeking, collecting and producing content, a central blog can also function as a message board surface belonging to a community platform<sup>3</sup>. In this case, group members are usually expected to regularly read and comment on each others' entries. Above a certain number of blogs, regular visiting and commenting on all of them located in different platforms can reduce the transparency and ability of planning of the learning process and thereby the time management of the students.

In recent years, seeing the very high penetration and popularity of web2 tools, new LMS versions point to the integration of these tools and

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2/ For example the courses of János Ollé starting with KONNEKT. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/konnekt2012/?fref=ts>

3/ For example in the first Hungarian connectivity course, HTK01. Retrieved from <http://htk01.osztalyterem.hu/>

content. They tend to contain blogs and portfolio-type summaries; group functions are gaining ground and there are more and more options to embed external content. Recent frameworks (especially MOOC platforms) are explicitly designed to follow the web2 platforms (community portal, wiki, sharing portal, blog) both structurally and technically.

Learning on small-size mobile tools is a special area of e-learning. Segments of the latter are: multimedia micro content (e.g. sound files, video clips, and casual development games), task handling, and communication within the group. These still have a marginal role in Hungarian adult education, partially because of the lack of knowledge in the educational sector, partially because of financial reasons.

As we can see, in the case of electronic learning support – similar but not equal to distance education – the target group as well as the type, level, topics and length of the training is strongly tool-determined, also including how much the individual hardware and software tools, online applications and platforms are already known and used. Hungarian adult education practice was very strongly influenced by the distance education boom, which was influenced by the spread of knowledge about e-learning and partially by the expansion of internet access, the parallel introduction and congestion of mobile access, as well as the spread of mobile devices and web2 services, resulting in rapid changes and also significant heterogeneity in device-using habits. In addition, adult students (and educators!) shaping their learning habits in Hungarian public education mostly accept the alternation of periodical personal presence and the relatively short, solitary learning times at home relatively easily; not many of them have the necessary skills needed to be realistically used for distant, individual learning management for a longer period; whereas team-based, distant learning management may make them explicitly suspicious (Fodorne Toth 2012).

## **Good practices and well-meaning initiatives – some examples**

Online study material, solitary student, online evaluation

Short-cycle courses primarily providing lexical knowledge (e.g. basic definitions, basic knowledge, legislation updates) are characterised by the parallel presence of study material, self-check and tests with automatic evaluation, accompanied by the minimal presence of a tutor. These students enter their own course surface(s) where they follow a predetermined, linear study path, usually with an online performance diary, controllable at any time, which registers course milestones and training levels achieved.

The system does not include indispensable tutor support. This is used if it is about the annual compulsory health and safety course (theoretical part) or road traffic regulation course during driving license education.

Interactive, flexible, synchronous and asynchronous support

Various blended and combined forms can be typically found in language teaching, with several levels of electronic learning support to be chosen according to the need of the student. For example, a network of language schools present throughout the country offers the following form:

- a) electronic study materials and tests in LMS institutions with no teacher contact,
- b) electronic study materials and tests in LMS institutions with individual tutor support and/or online contact lessons,
- c) electronic study materials and tests in LMS institutions with individual contact lessons,
- d) online contact lessons in small groups, traditional presence tasks, traditional or digital schoolbook and digital (offline or online) audio materials,
- e) online contact lessons in small groups on a virtual reality platform, traditional presence tasks, traditional or digital schoolbook and audio materials.

This offer aims at meeting a variety of different student needs, provides strong human support and (except for one version) puts a big emphasis on synchronic occasions and dialogue between students and teachers.

An experimental project among best practices

There are several more promising Hungarian practices also beyond the connectivity and MOOC initiatives. One of these is the TeNeGEN (connect the teachers to reach and teach the net generation) project<sup>4</sup>, which was carried out between 2008 and 2010 and coordinated by a small IT enterprise in 3 countries in 3 languages. This teacher-advocated 3-module training programme also used electronic learning support and was realised exclusively online with strong tutoring and vivid participant discourse. The central platform of the programme was the particularly well-designed Moodle framework and, as well as forums, tasks and databases operating there, a number of web2 applications were also used (among others:

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<sup>4</sup>/ Retrieved from <http://www.tenegen.eu/>

blogs, an exercise framework, e-portfolio, RSS message board, community surface and online game area). The study material also aimed at learning about and practising the use of these applications as well. Most tasks demanded collecting and creation efforts, intensive communication with the other participants, and reflections on their work, where tutors and instructors were also actively involved as partners. Besides its connectivity characteristics, the course can be distinguished from other connectivity courses by its topics and study material, all pre-prepared in detail, the external group schedule, and the standard groups of limited size (max. 10 persons for 1 tutor) as well as stable and classical tutor work. Since then, a number TeNeGEN programmes were started for children (SME 2.0<sup>5</sup>), and the basic project was selected as one of the best Leonardo da Vinci cooperation projects<sup>6</sup>. If one is seeking a well-functioning solution, TeNeGEN has also proved that electronic learning support is not able to reduce costs unilaterally; but it is a good solution if one needs effective planning and realisation, although it demands a large amount of work and human resources and also goes beyond the success of traditional courses.

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<sup>5/</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.tenegen.eu/en/content/111209/tenegen-continues-on-sme-20>

<sup>6/</sup> Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/best\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/best_en.htm)

Teréz Kleisz

## The state of profession-building in the field of Andragogy in Hungary

*The article aims to shed some light on the state of adult education in Hungary from the aspect of profession-building. A more pointed phrase would be: The faint rise and the start of the decline in andragogy during the decades of the social-political transition since 1989. The article is going to highlight how the profession of adult practitioners has evolved historically, how andragogy is perceived in the country and describe what state of legitimacy has been created so far. A special country-specific contextual factor: overpolitisation hinders building professionalism by creating dependencies and existential fears.*

# “We Make the Road by Walking”

Horton & Freire 1990

Contrary to the Anglo-Saxon professionalisation pattern, in Hungary the profession of adult education was created largely by the state after World War II. The political forces were explicitly dominant in shaping the steps towards professionalisation and this feature seems to be a constant component even today.

Non-formal adult education, cultural and community education was the main domain in Hungary in the second half of the 20th century, this was the sector entering the route to professionalisation in the sixties, focussing on launching advanced levels of training. The first university level programme for adult educators (cultural and community workers) at the Eötvös-Loránd-University of Budapest (ELTE) was established against opposition from the university board, which was being coerced by the Ministry of the one-party state.

From the late seventies and eighties, stemming from social and political criticism, the culture practitioners started to revive older civic learning traditions and create new opposing ones. The cultural-community education domain experienced splits and rivalries resulting from separate professionalism-paths in non-formal learning. Specialists engaged in community empowerment have been building clusters of community development-oriented adult learning practice since the eighties.<sup>1</sup> The Hungarian Folk High School Society became a national level Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). Both camps did very valuable work developing professionalism and feeding the knowledge-base of non-formal adult learning.

The branch that has explicitly used the name “Adult Education” is the one that has made formal adult education offers (workers’ schools) for adults. In 1963 this sector was the one which organised a conference entitled *First nationwide conference of adult education*. The great impetus to expand the field and create a paradigm shift came with the political-economic system change, the transition from socialism to a market economy after 1989. The large-scale economic transformation generated a sudden and sizable level of unemployment and consequently the need for retraining. The training offers for the unemployed were soon supplemented with a new (state-created) complex system of employment-related services and institutions (9 regional training centres operating since 1993), that changed the whole nature of the field. Foreign models were learnt, new innovative

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<sup>1/</sup> The Hungarian Association for Community Development was founded in 1989

methodologies and learning tools were introduced for upgrading skills and competences for employability. Over the years a training market has evolved with private training organisations as well, that in 1992 triggered the foundation of the Union of Adult Training Providers with 42 member organisations. This professional body is still functioning – with 5 times more members – and aims to advocate issues of interest and influence policy.

The fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in Hamburg (1997) was a triggering international event affecting the profession. In preparation for it, a national workshop was organised, 1200 invitations were sent out and 310 people turned up as members of the profession “adult educators”. The composition of the group was: 27 university lecturers, 40 primary and secondary school teachers, 2 free-lance practitioners, 39 representatives of civic groups, 43 from training companies, 57 from cultural-community centres, 21 of cultural companies, 11 people arrived from government authorities, 13 from HR departments of companies, 19 from government and local authority employment offices. The group included 2 priests, a prison officer and other individuals (Csoma, Herbai et al. 1997: 9). Andor Maróti, a keynote speaker, presented a very critical view of the state of professionalism in adult education (formal and non-formal), listing the deficiencies in terms of the lack of adequate adult learning institutions, research capacities and funds, the accumulated body of professional knowledge and resources of literature, even the lack of a professional journal and contacts to international projects. These evaluative statements kept repeating themselves in subsequent professional meetings and published materials. The Adult Education Sub-Committee of the Committee of the Educational Sciences of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is still discussing each year (according to the 2012 and 2013 annual reports) the need and the opportunity to finally launch an academic journal of *Andragogy Studies*.

### **Recent policy level interventions, impacts of overpolitisation**

The first Act on Adult Education that solely concentrated on labour market-related adult learning was passed in 2001. Beyond the state institutions, business firms appeared to be gearing up to get involved in adult education. Developing quality standards was one of the aims of the legislation requiring service-providers to fulfill requirements. Accreditation of both programmes and institutions was required. The National Adult Training Council was founded and the Adult Training Accreditation Body

was set up by the state. These were the years of building the profession in terms of building an institutionalised occupation.

Also established in 2002, by 12 Hungarian higher education institutions, was the MELLearn Network (Hungarian University Lifelong Learning Network).

EU-funded or guided projects and initiatives were very beneficial to the adult learning field. Joining the EU and the popularisation of the concept of lifelong learning has affected the evolution of the profession. In 2005 the document *A National Strategy for Lifelong Learning* was accepted. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences was asked to evaluate proceedings after 2005. Their report (LLL Report 2008) noted that by international comparisons adult learning has a relatively low representation in the Hungarian professional and scientific community.

Since May 2010, the newly elected government has outlined actions to change the legislation in all forms of education. The Orban-government enacted a new law on Adult Training in June of 2013 that gives authority to the National Labour Office (part of the National Economy Ministry), in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, to exercise stricter control over all of the provision of Vocational Education and Training (VET). The new law modifies nearly everything that was initiated by the previous laws from 2001. The 2013 law classifies those categories of adult learning that are entitled to be funded by the state budget. The “supported” forms are mainly vocational and qualification-oriented. The only exception is language learning and the category “other”, that contains personal development and general skill-upgrading leading to vocational benefits.

The power of professional associations has rather weak self-regulation and practitioners tend not to pursue projects which would strengthen their collective authority – rather, they are inclined to engage in informal negotiations with political actors.

Political pressures and actions – and politicians themselves – have never respected the professionalism of practitioners (not only in the field of adult education) very much, but the recent centralising political mechanisms undervalue consensus-making even more.

In Hungary in 2013 a highly political debate started about university reform issues with the intention of reducing both the size of the student population and some of disciplines and practice areas taught. A very influential figure championing this new trend, the president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, publicly lashed out against Andragogy, saying that it is too easy a qualification to obtain and too general, that students think they can use it to find employment anywhere. He stated in the interview (Parragh, *Népszabadság* 2013) that he couldn't be persuaded that Andragogy is a significant degree.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry is one of the key players in shaping vocational education and employment training. Now, influencing higher education is on their agenda. As a very close supporter of the prime minister, the position of the president and his views are not just part of a debate in the media but they can seriously affect adult learning practitioner-training at universities. There wasn't any organised resistance. The only opposition came from the representative of the nationwide university consortium offering Andragogy BA and MA programmes who published a critical letter (Farkas 2013) to the president of the Chamber on an educational platform and his point of view was refuted as having no evidence-based proof. Later in 2013, heightened entry level-points were required and market-driven fees were introduced by the government, targeting the 16 most popular university degree programmes – the assumption being that they will remain attractive even though the burden of costs has to be shouldered by would-be students. The Andragogy BA degree is among these.

This fact shows that although the programmes had enjoyed success and popularity in previous years, last year's enrollment data immediately dropped, and a lot of higher education institutions couldn't run the programme. In 2013, out of 114 students of Andragogy nationwide, only 11 were financed by the state.

### **The entry to academia: BA and MA degrees in Andragogy**

In the early 90s the only degree with the explicit name "adult education" was a 5 year long university programme "adult education and cultural manager". It was terminated by the advent of the Bologna process. Previously, the Hungarian Accreditation Board (MAB) had approved several hundred majors, but now merely one hundred basic majors were approved in the first rounds. (Kraiciné, 2008). Instead, an Andragogy BA was established by a consortium of 16 tertiary educational institutions (accredited in 2005) offering four specialisations: cultural organiser, human personnel manager, adult training organiser, employment counselling specialist. This way, previous degrees and their viability were 'saved' and used for further successful recruitment. An MA degree programme was developed by the same partnership and received accreditation in 2007. The consortium evolved into a quality network for cooperation, organising meetings and conferences, sharing knowledge in creating and reviewing the curricula and trying to raise common interests. This improved state of professional allegiance is a positive element. The contemporary and up-to-date competence development in the programmes opens up access channels for students in several directions, but the number of occupational positions

hasn't grown that much. Andragogy doctoral programmes have been missing for a long time and even now they have a fragile position as a sub-branch of Pedagogy or Educational Sciences doctoral programmes.

## **Public perception**

The key element here is that 'being professional' correlates with performing or perhaps more importantly being seen as performing. The comments after the public "attack and response" showed another typical feature: the naming of the professions and the discipline itself. The title Andragogy is still unknown to the wider public. (Negative comments ridiculed andragogy, there were cynical remarks about "universal geniuses", "worse than cricket-degree", "demagogy-andragogy", "whale-hunter degree" etc.). It was claimed these "cricket degrees in higher education" didn't have real discipline, an argument posed by an old professor appointed by the government to work on the new higher education strategy due in 2014. (Klinghammer, Népszava, 2013)

The potential users are still confused as to what to expect from these professions. Deficits in a clear-cut image of these professions do not help actors in the professions to identify with them.

## **Planning the new national Lifelong Learning strategy**

In order to ensure effective and efficient use of EU Funds, each member country needs to deliver plans and strategies that should be fulfilled by the time the final EU programme is approved. The so-called position paper regarding Hungary takes account of the lessons learnt during the period 2007-2013.

According to this document lifelong learning has not been sufficiently addressed and promoted. The new lifelong learning strategy has yet to be finalised but the blueprint material is accessible on the internet. Strangely, it never mentions the term "adult educator" or "andragogy practitioner", or "adult learning professional" or the fact that 16 higher education institutions have established the BA and subsequently MA level degree programmes in this field over the last 10 years. The lifelong learning strategy of Hungary for future years only considers "teachers" as the reliable key personnel in this area and accentuates the potential merits of the new "reformed teacher training system". The task of working out the (innovative) methodology of adult education is proposed to be given to the research units of teacher training institutions that are currently involved rather thinly

with issues of adult learning, if at all. The themes of supporting learners with structures that strengthen multi-professional cooperation in the diverse forms of adult education or that create opportunities for professional bodies to voice their interests and needs – these are not addressed at all.

## **Whom is the profession for? Comparative Participations rates in Adult Learning**

Participation rates in formal and non-formal adult learning in Hungary are low compared to other European countries. The 2005 Eurostat survey findings show that Hungary scored the lowest in any kind of learning (formal, non-formal, informal) with its 12 % participation rate, compared to Austria's 89 %, Luxembourg's and Slovenia's 82 %.

In 2013 the Directorate General responsible for Education and Culture (DG EAC) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) jointly published the results of two skills assessments, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) "Combining formal and non-formal education and training, only a minority of adults participate in such activity over a year across OECD countries as a whole (40 %), even when 'education' is widely understood to include short seminars, lectures or workshops. The proportion ranges widely however, from more than 60 % in New Zealand and Sweden to less than 15 % in Greece and Hungary." (Education Today 2013, 2012: 72).

In spite of the need for dramatic social and political change in the country, the majority of the Hungarian population has shown very low levels of participation in civic and cultural domains.

## **Professional Identity-building**

The practitioners in the field of adult learning demonstrate multiple identities when asked. Either they define themselves by their disciplines or the specialised context or organisation they work for. It is very rare that terms such as "adult educator" or "andragogy specialist" categories are used when they describe their professional identities. Emphasis on their accumulated experience and competences are frequently mentioned as a reference point, sometimes even moral and emotional components, but theoretical knowledge much less so.

The younger and trained generation does not feel the unity of the profession either. They are not attuned to the profession as a community,

do not identify with the idea of a lifelong professional career. Their commitments tend to become provisional. Andragogy students dominantly don't engage in specific career planning but feel alert to respond to opportunities as they arise. The ability to provide a service is still seen as an attractive value. As a reaction to the unpredictability and uncertainty of the social environment, they prefer to invest in themselves, they accumulate experiences into an individualised package of skills and try to sell themselves as individual experts for a fixed period of employment, planning and joining projects.

## Conclusion

Professionalism has developed a lot in Hungary, especially from the scope of institutionalisation in the past few decades. There was definitely room for improvement and there still is for more. The different branches of the adult learning field still live on and reproduce themselves separately; so far the fragmentation hasn't been bridged. Developing professionalism is a must for providing quality service and maintaining standards. This needs organising the adult learning profession and making its voice heard within and beyond the field, because without this, other stakeholders get unproportionate or excessive control that could ruin the potential outcomes in delivering broader social functions. A special country-specific contextual factor: overpolitisation hinders building professionalism by creating dependencies and existential fears.

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# Is foreign language teaching for adults an adult learning profession?

*Adults, who did not learn a foreign language at a sufficient level during their studies in the formal education system, look for the possibility of intensive additional learning offered by language courses within the system of adult education. Is adult education able to professionally support the efforts of these adults? Is teaching foreign languages for adults an adult learning profession, i.e. the professional support of adult learning by adult educators acting professionally? This article will analyse questions based on relevant publications from the international literature of professionalisation trends in adult education, as well as on the findings of Hungarian empirical studies.*

## **Globalisation and the current issue of the professionalisation of adult education**

Our age is characterised by dramatic changes in the field of education, work and even our everyday lives. Processes of globalisation affect the professional learning of adults, the professional support of their learning and also foreign language teaching needs. The professionalisation of adult education is a global trend in the age of internationalisation and transnationalisation (ESREA, DIE, Universität Bielefeld 2013). The research findings regarding adult education as a discipline identify a significant growth in the scientific quality of the discipline (Schoger 2004), which has been registered in both Hungarian and international research (Feketéné Szakos 2002, 2010) at the start of this millennium. All adult educators who participated in the survey reported that internally they undoubtedly experienced a special identity as andragogs, both in the field of theory and in practice. The view widely maintained by them is that there exists a relatively consistent, credible discipline which differs from the discipline of schooling. Does that trend have an impact on teaching and learning foreign languages in Hungary? Is it necessary to promote the professionalisation process of foreign language teaching for adults in Hungary? Diagnostic studies and systematic empirical research should be conducted in order to prove the necessity of strengthening the professionalisation of foreign language teaching for adults. This paper will present some arguments for it.

The quality of the theoretical and practical study of adult education and its scientific results depend considerably on the qualifications and professionalisation of adult education personnel. After the establishment of the specialisation “Andragogy” at Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Master of Arts (MA) levels in university, and some experience in operating them has been gained, this issue has gained remarkable importance in Hungary. It is a new scientifically based way of developing the professional work with adults, which could also be utilized in the field of foreign language teaching. Recently the international discourse on professionalisation has intensified, so it is worth discussing the new developments of this topic and examining the possibility of their integration into the Hungarian adult education discourse. The question arises: What kind of future directions can be identified as new impulses for adult education in Hungary concerning the professionalisation of the field? According to the documents of the European Union (e.g. European Commission 2010), “smart growth” is the only possible scenario leading out of the crisis as the desirable orientation of future development. This approach calls attention to research into trends and future directions on the one hand, and into the possible realisa-

tion of the desirable scenario by learning and acting, i.e. active learning or experience-based learning on the other hand.

Only limited research has been conducted so far in Hungary in connection with the professionalisation of teaching foreign languages for adults. It may indicate the need to set up role categories depending on the range of duties and activities and to identify the variety of careers, since adult educators can help adults learn in various ways. One of these role categories could be the role of a foreign language teacher working with adults. We will try to identify the adult-specific characteristics of that role from the adult learners' perspective. Some of the current good and bad practices will be illustrated by extracts from interviews with Hungarian adults about their experiences during foreign language courses.

The term "adult learning profession" has been adopted into the official adult education terminology to express the current trend of adult education that emphasises the priority of supporting adult learning instead of the old term "profession of adult educators". (Research voor Beleid 2008) The new term indicates the new learning culture of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which also involves learning with new technologies in an international, transnational and globalised context. An essential component of the so-called international competence is foreign language communication skills, which depends on the quality of teaching in that new context. Due to these changes the teacher as an adult educator acts as a facilitator of the learning process through which adult learners activate their life experiences.

### **The specific adult education competence of foreign language teachers**

There is a growing need for teachers of foreign languages to add adult education competences to their existing professional skills and competences if they work with adults. They should possess a special set of theoretical knowledge, including the basic concepts of adult education, and on an upper level, i.e. the so-called "transformative" level of their career development, they can reflectively combine their practical experience with the basic concepts of adult learning. According to Knox and Flemming (2010), at the highest, the so-called "transcendental" level of their career development, adult educators are expected to participate collaboratively in the solution of global issues like the global economic crisis, war and peace, terrorism, unemployment, health, sustainability, etc. They must become lifelong learners themselves and thus they also promote the lifelong learning process of adults in solving these global issues. Jost Reischmann (2005), the German professor, prefers the term "andragogy" instead of

adult education, defining it as “the scholarly approach to the learning of adults, viewed as the science of understanding and supporting their life-long and lifewide education” (58).

Dealing with heterogeneity in groups, identifying learning needs and being responsible for the further development of adult learning, were aspects also identified as key competences of adult learning professionals in the framework of a European research study supported by the European Union (European Commission 2010). The European models of career development are more qualification-oriented than the American ones (see Knox and Flemming 2010), which are qualitative models. In Hungary there have only been a few empirical research projects on the professionalisation of adult education (excluding Farkas 2013) and there is a lack of models to define this type of professional knowledge. However, the international models can be adapted into foreign language teaching in Hungary, too.

In our increasingly globalised economy, more and more adults need to study foreign languages to seek better employment, improve their mobility and career prospects by adding language skills to their professional knowledge. Language teachers in Hungary are trained to be academically qualified in their subject and well-versed in the theory of education. However, they are not specifically trained to become specialised adult educators. How can they deal with adult language learners of not only different levels of language knowledge, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds but also of different ages with diverse professional and life experience? Our experience and research evidence suggests that adults in language groups feel extremely frustrated because of the limitations of their language skills. Therefore, teachers should create a stress-free and friendly atmosphere which can help them communicate with their peers. Adults with various good and bad language learning experiences are often very sensitive when it comes to evaluating their performance. Adult educators should be aware of these special characteristics of adult language learners.

### **Empirical data and real life evidence: learning experiences of adults in Hungary**

The following extracts are quoted from interviews recently conducted in Hungary with language teachers and adult learners at foreign language courses to show some typical characteristics of adult learning:

- “Adults mostly arrive at the language school straight from work totally exhausted (...) it gives me a great feeling of success when such **exhausted adult learners come to my language lesson** suffering from

the stress all day long at work and **they leave the lesson with smiles on their faces.**”( ...) “I think it’s extremely important to praise them.” (Language teacher) (Bodnár-Király 2013: 43)

- “It was mainly **the teacher’s behaviour** and friendly attitude that could create such a **pleasant atmosphere** where everybody became less shy and more open (...) everybody found it easier to talk to and in front of each other because **the teacher never told you off if you made a mistake.** (...) I even came to like this foreign language.” (a middle-aged language learner) (Bodnár-Király 2013: 47)

Evidence from our empirical research shows that the methods of andragogy can be applied very effectively in adult language courses and teachers are considered to play a major role in people’s language learning successes and failures. The following interview extract illustrates how a teacher’s wrong attitude can prevent learners from acquiring foreign language skills successfully and how it can make a negative effect on their progress in the long term.

- “My teacher of English **discouraged me from speaking** English so much that now I hardly dare to speak.” (a middle-aged language learner)
- As one of the learners put it, “everything depends on the teacher. If he/she doesn’t enjoy teaching, the students will lose their interest, too.” “A bad teacher can do a lot of harm and **can even spoil our interest in learning languages.**”

We are convinced that teachers are responsible for giving advice on learning strategies to all learners. They should be aware of the differences in students’ learning styles and should consider the application of varied methods to deal with the different types of learners. These findings are illustrated in the following extracts.

- “When I learn, it is very **important for me to visualise** things so that I can understand everything.”
- “I find it very helpful if **the teacher explains things, shows diagrams** and I can memorise things much more easily.”
- “Although I can learn well on my own I still **prefer learning with my peers.** The best method for me seems to be when we **talk, ask and answer questions** and test each other.”

Most of the learners seem to like innovative teaching methods which can give them positive learning experiences. If teachers make the learners

more actively engaged in the learning process, they will feel more motivated. This is described in the following extracts.

- “We dealt with the tasks in small groups which can be especially advantageous because all the members of the group can learn from each other in some way, **everybody is involved**. There was a **pleasant atmosphere** all through the lesson.”
- “The teacher uses very **creative teaching methods**. Time flies so fast because of the **great variety of activities**.”

However, we can detect just the opposite type of experience as follows.

- “The teacher’s **teaching style wasn’t adapted to adults**. I usually feel frustrated if I am forced to study too much too fast. (...) Whenever I made a mistake I was told off like a child” (a 58-year-old language learner at a language school)

In addition to better employability, communication and gaining knowledge in a foreign language, spending leisure time in a useful way, keeping contact, socialising and maintaining mental health are also typical reasons why older-generation adults take part in adult education language courses. Teachers must be able to develop a good teacher-learner relationship by setting relevant, customised and challenging tasks to engage learners in a pleasant experience.

In Hungary, as it seems, the culture and methodology of teaching adults differently because of their special learning characteristics have not yet been given enough attention. This is why – as some adults mentioned in the interviews – it often occurs that people enrolling in language courses specifically look for the opportunity to study with people of the same age, who probably have similar expectations. We shouldn’t forget that elderly language learners are aware of the fact that their learning characteristics have changed due to their age. It is commonly known that changes in perceptive and memory functions may cause difficulties for older people.

- “I specifically selected a language course where I could **study together with adults of my age-group**. I waited until the language school started a “senior” course. I didn’t want to compete with or feel embarrassed among 20-year-olds. I want to study for my own pleasure.” (a 62-year-old learner)

In our opinion, age-adapted methods can help to maintain or even increase adult learners’ motivation to learn. We think, the more positive

experiences the language lessons provide, the more the learners will want to learn and the more their language skills will develop.

We can see that in the case of senior language courses the teacher should first of all create a pleasant learning environment.

- “Our language teacher, is (...) an excellent teacher and a remarkable personality. The size of the group of 10 was ideal for all the members to become actively involved. We even became good friends.”

The findings of our interviews confirm our belief that teachers must find the best methods and style of communication to meet the expectations of all the people in a heterogeneous group of adult learners by identifying their common aim: they all want to have pleasant experiences and enjoy the activity of learning. This can lead to a higher level of motivation and efficiency in learning. Therefore, in our opinion, to deal with adults it is worth selecting language teachers who have professional adult learning knowledge and experience and a suitable teaching style.

## Conclusions

In Hungary language pedagogy is a well-known field of research. However, language andragogy, i.e. adult language education is not considered as a separate academic subject. In our opinion, as andragogy is considered a separate academic discipline, a new academic discipline of professional adult language teaching, maybe language andragogy, could also be developed. According to the results of our mini research, this would be greatly beneficial for adult language learners.

On the basis of both Hungarian and international research findings, we can conclude that Hungarian adult education specialists are expected to continue working hard in the coming years although

- now adults are more willing to accept the necessity to learn,
- the academic discipline of andragogy has become stronger and more prominent in recent years,
- the intensive research activity of andragogy experts in Hungary and abroad is expected to make a positive effect on the general practice of adult education and training.

In the field of adult education it is higher education that “ought to take a leading role ... by promoting quality-centred education and research, developing, for example, education and further training of teachers and

trainers in public education, adult education, community and cultural education” (Németh 2010: 332).

In our attempt to answer the question in the title: “Is foreign language teaching for adults an adult learning profession?” we conclude: Currently, teaching languages for adults is not considered a specialised adult learning profession in Hungary. However, on the basis of the latest trends observed in this field in the European Union, we think adult language learning should be integrated into the adult learning profession. Our interviews with language teachers and adult language learners confirm our belief that we should promote the professionalisation of teaching foreign languages for adults.

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# Democratic citizenship learning – the Hungarian perspective and its international relevance

*This article will review works in the field of democratic citizenship referring to the practice of adult learning in Hungary. It touches upon its international perspective, focusing especially on the so-called “new democracies” in Central Eastern Europe (CEE). The article focuses on the special macro qualities of the structure of society and how it has changed in the last two decades, also reflecting on the current situation. How could democratic citizenship learning work as a micro structure in such a macro framework? The article tries to summarize those particular experiences which can be useful in transitional societies in CEE and internationally.*

## **On the way to Democratic Citizenship and Learning: Challenges and Difficulties**

Hungary met the criteria of accession and, as a member state of the European Union (EU), is recognised as a democracy that has a multi-party parliamentary system and market economy with developed institutions. In 2004, before accession, there was much discussion in Hungary about whether or not existing member states would have been able to meet the accession criteria if they were to join when Hungary did. In 2014, this was very topical in Hungary. Were the right criteria set? Meeting the formal system of criteria for democracy does not imply that it actually functions in reality. This can be witnessed in a number of so-called “new democracies”. Is it the case that the criteria set by developed European countries and the EU has become outdated and need rethinking? The reformulation of European values seems to be inevitable in our globalised world. We were shocked by the sweeping power of the “Arab Spring”. But what is the concrete democratic surplus? The ongoing crises in Egypt and Syria show that democratic institutions that can function and develop cannot be introduced all at once. The dramatic civil war situation in the Ukraine indicates that there are complex processes under the surface, and their outcome may not fit desirable scenarios or meet the expectations of large social groups involved in the change. It is something that often becomes clear many years later. In the past few decades, Hungary was regarded as a country with a high level of openness that had made significant achievements in terms of democratic institutions and efforts toward a market economy in the Central European region, and was the first to demolish “socialism”. Perhaps all this was true. However, the perspective of time is a very important factor, and democracy and the system of institutions need to function for an unbroken period of time in order to preserve their stages of development and advance into the future. Crucial changes took place in 1990, so Hungary can serve as a good example to demonstrate that the deconstruction of the old social structure and the building a new structure can take a very long time. An overview of the development of this system, influenced by many factors, is not an aim of this paper; it is only an introductory note which serves as background to the context for a better understanding of our examples in the field of adult learning.

Though it might sound like a heavy statement, it has to be said: “Democratic citizenship or active citizenship education did not become an extensive, institutionalised activity in adult learning in the past few decades.” The place it took in school education is perhaps more promising. Our organisation, the Hungarian Folk High School Society works in the field of non-formal adult education. As part of our intensive activities

in the field of basic skills development, we organised a great number of “active citizenship” courses. However, it makes no difference in terms of the overall picture: Hungary’s adult education is somewhere in the middle compared to the EU 27. Participation in non-formal adult education of comparable cohorts is 6.8 % while the EU average is 33%.<sup>1</sup> This is strongly connected to resources available for learning in adult life. Taking a look at opportunities offered by international programmes is revealing. Grants provided by the EU give an impetus to activities in all fields. This has to be emphasised, even if some minor form of euro scepticism is in vogue or has become a state religion.

## International programmes

A remarkable resource is offered in the dissemination brochure published by Tempus Public Foundation, which collects and provides an overview of activities implemented in granted projects in the framework of the *Europe for Citizens* programme.<sup>2</sup> Measures of this programme are the following:

- Active Citizens for Europe: Town Twinning Citizens’ Meetings, Thematic Networking of Twinned Towns
- Active Civil Society in Europe: Support to projects initiated by civil society organisations
- Active European Remembrance

In my opinion, the measure *Active Civil Society in Europe* is the most relevant to us. However, the measure *Active European Remembrance* is also not negligible as it focussed on spreading and raising awareness to knowledge we have of history and citizenship around a number of important topics such as deportations, holocaust, Roma holocaust, internment of members of the civilian population during the Soviet Union to do forced labour (“malenkij robot”/“little work”), the unknown clauses of secret agreements of totalitarian regimes, e.g. the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact.

*Town Twinning Citizens’ Meetings* are the least relevant to us in my view, although their significance in citizenship education cannot be doubted. *Town Twinning Citizens’ Meetings* offer an opportunity for citizens of different countries to meet. Such events included a traditional folk dance

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1/ Central Statistical Office, 2010, data taken in 2005-07.

2/ Tempus Public Foundation (2013) *Európa a polgárokért. Hogyan vehetünk részt aktívan Európa közös építésében? Disszeminációs füzetek, Európa a polgárokért Mozaik magyar koordinálású projektekről Bővített kiadás 2007–2013, Budapest: TKA*

festival, the celebration of Europe Day, *EU Youth Camp in Hungary – Building Bridges Between Generations*, *Street of Twinned Towns*, and the *International Festival of Children's Choir*, the *International Sports Meeting of Twinned Towns*, and the holiday exchange programme of twinned towns.

Some are important in shaping democratic citizenship because of their theme, e.g. issues related to the “protection of the environment or alternative waste collection”, others because of their target group and societal significance, e.g. *International Creative Camp for People with Disabilities* or *Enlivening and Liveable Rural Areas in Europe*, which aims to bring together smaller settlements and scattered small villages in order to implement sustainable rural development. The programme entitled *Improving the Living Conditions of Disadvantaged Groups in Rural Areas, People Living in Poverty and the Roma* can also be included here. The series of conferences delivered on the theme of “full rehabilitation and integration of people with disabilities” was also an important initiative in the *Thematic Networking of Twinned Towns*. Another workshop was entitled *Social and Economic Development of Disadvantaged Areas from the Aspect of Civil Society Organisations*.

An international conference and workshop on innovation, the *Networks for the Utilization of European Knowledge*, aimed at improving the quality of living and competitiveness of people living in the Southern Great Plain Region.

In the aspect of learning democratic citizenship, programmes initiated by civil society organisations in the framework of Active Citizens for Europe were the most important. For instance, the project *Creating Local Well-Being* offered an opportunity for the citizens from five countries to conduct a dialogue with each other, policy makers, and civil society organisations at the local, national and European Union level. *150 Journalists for European Citizenship* was organised by the Southern Great Plain Region Social Research Association, which was established by researchers and university teachers of social sciences, and aims to map social changes and transformation observable in their region and on national level. The *Active Citizenship: Collaboration Between the Civil Sector and the State Sector* is part of the *Civil Partner*, a programme launched in 2003, by the Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation. The programme aims to help the development of a legal and regulatory environment that promotes the development and sustainability of the civil society sector in Hungary. In collaboration with a wide circle of Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) leaders, legal professionals and experts from various fields, they develop concepts and proposals supported by research and analyses, and deliver them to decision-makers, representatives of public administration and legislation. The *Free Telephone Helpline for Elderly EU Citizens* internation-

al programme utilised the experiences of the DélUtán (AfterNoon) Foundation gained in providing helpline and counselling services. A public life conference entitled *In the Shadow of Industrial Disasters* was organised by TIT Kossuth Club Association, TIT Studio Association, the Hungarian and Central European editorial offices of *Le Monde diplomatique* and transform!, and the Clean Air Action Group. With an emphasis on finding solutions and prevention, the presentations focused on regulations to prevent industrial disasters in Central Europe, the role of nuclear energy, and new EU ambitions. *Black or White?* was a conference with a focus on how to tackle poverty. *Forum for European Pro Bono Legal Advocacy* – PILI (*Public Interest Law Institute*, USA) is an international non-governmental organisation that aims to promote the observance of human rights worldwide, especially by encouraging public interest advocacy and supporting institutions required to ensure public interest advocacy. *Civil Organisations in the Carpathian Basin* – Civil Radio is one of Central Europe's largest community radio stations, which has worked for nearly fifteen years to convey the main message of community media to everyone: 'Voice for the Voiceless!' In accordance with this message, it uses the tools of publicity to support self-organised groups and social organisations by publicising their activities and helping them to reach their goals. *Central European Trail-O Meeting* is a competition with the participation of physically disabled and healthy sportspeople.

The international conference and workshop series *Citizens' Learning Exchange for Community Development* aimed to establish contacts, exchange experiences and look for new ideas and solutions. It was organised by the Carpathian Foundation International in Noszvaj, northern Hungary.

An important performance was staged by the AHA Theatre, which is Hungary's first and so far only regularly performing theatre working with homeless and once homeless amateur actors.

In addition to dealing with issues related to the future and the fundamental values of the European Union, the project entitled *With Renewable Energy Against Poverty* addressed people's well-being with special emphasis put on the issues of social inclusion and sustainable development. Three million people in Hungary live below the poverty threshold, out of which 1 million live in extreme poverty. Further problems also arise in the case of the rural population living in villages far from urban areas.

The dissemination brochure published in 2012 presented projects that were coordinated by Hungarian organisations. The examples listed above show that civil society in Hungary has a powerful core of organisations capable of coordinating international programmes. At the same time, international projects (due to their number and proportion) cannot make up

for the democratic citizenship education that would embrace wider social groups in Hungary.

According to Costa Esping-Andersen, financial independence enables citizens in democracies to have the courage to speak out and form their sovereign opinion against economic and political powers. In other cases, like currently in the Ukraine, it is ultimate and extreme desperation that is in play. Existential independence creates a middle class, and one of the preconditions for functioning democracy is the existence of a substantial middle class. Values and qualifications are also important, which is obvious to all of us committed to adult learning. There are a number of reasons why extremism, populism and simplified world views are rapidly gaining ground. The price is high compared to the support that can be and should be spent on democratic citizenship education.

The criteria for a healthy democracy cannot be elaborated here. In the region of “new democracies”, one of the fundamental problems is posed by the lack of a strong middle class that has a say. There is a great degree of dependence on the state, which gives much scope to clientilism. According to data by the Hungarian Statistical Office (KSH) published in 2010, there are approximately 4 million people in Hungary living at or below subsistence level, that is, in physical privation. The population of Hungary is currently below 10 million. Democratic citizenship learning takes place not only through the conscious activities of adult education organisations but also through non-formal and informal learning by millions of citizens. NGOs make a substantial contribution. Mária Arapovics summarised the lessons learnt from the many years she spent with the analyses of civil society in her work “Learning democratic, active citizenship – the role of civil sector organisations and NGOs in learning embracing all fields of life.” (Sándor 2013) This study is highly recommended if the reader wishes to gain a brief and relevant overview, based on a comprehensive empiric database, of the shaping of democratic citizenship in Hungarian civil society. Arapovics draws conclusions on the basis of data collection and analysis of statistics submitted by adult education providers to KSH, the Ministry cites just one of the conclusions based on facts and figures: “Civil society organisations themselves are hardly engaged in nurturing civic values, the target group and contents of their activities tend to indicate labour market orientation.” This is an illustrative example for market economy deformation. Instead of raising the question of what can be learnt from non-profit work, the author recommends that NGO competences should be acquired in a systematic and professionally verified way and relevant training courses should be introduced. This puts emphasis on another need.

## Conclusions

When it comes to the need for quick adaptation, citizens have learnt various modes of social behaviour informally and very skilfully and they practice these again and again. Masses of citizens collectively resort to previously acquired, adequate behaviour modes, which, in our case, mean hiding, adjustment, lip-service, withdrawal from public life, and the maxims of faked conformity. What is characteristic is distrust, the absence of interest, apathy and retreat into the private sphere. Speaking out freely is only practiced in a small circle of friends or in the family circle. The underlying intention is to take utmost precautions.

The concept of “small circles of freedom” introduced by István Bibó, a classic author in Hungarian political studies, has become widely known in Hungarian public thought in the past few decades. In Bibó’s evolution theory, development starts in the “small circles of freedom” and then spreads to wider and wider circles in society. Due to its historically developed ability, Hungarian society can be extremely flexible in terms of contracting and expanding. Although today’s phenomena indicate regression, they also reflect amazing experience and knowledge on the part of citizens. Assuming social roles becomes restricted to the “small circles of freedom” in given circumstances. The knowledge and attitudes passed on from generation to generation are activated and utilised. Then new impetus will be gained, and society will embark on the road towards building an open democracy. Adult learning for democratic citizenship as a conscious activity is to understand and promote this process.

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Éva Farkas

# Financing the adult education system in Hungary

*Financing is the most important professional policy tool in the operation and functioning of adult education systems. In my study, I provide a presentation on the resource allocation system for adult education, the methodology, instruments and volume of financing. I shall also provide an overview on the provisions contained in the new act on adult education, which entered into force on 1 September 2013, and which has an impact on the costs and revenue sources of adult education in the future.*

## Quantitative features of the adult education system

According to generally accepted legal terminology in Hungary, adult education encompasses only general, language and vocational education, which is performed outside the formal school system. In compliance with this, my findings will refer to adult educational institutes which perform their activities outside the formal school system as well as to the general, language and professional training activities these institutes perform, furthermore, to the adults who participate in these training courses.

Quantitatively and qualitatively speaking, the dimensions of the adult education system are very similar to those of the vocational or higher educational system. According to OSAP<sup>1</sup> data, in 2011 720,460, in 2012 590,249 in 2013 748,962 adults participated in organised forms of general, vocational or language training. This figure, although it is lower than the

**Table 1: Number of persons participating in adult education and ratio according to types of training**

Type of training	2010	2011	2012	2013
Training providing vocational qualifications listed in the National Training Register (OKJ) recognised by the state	106,553 16%	113,851 16%	112,919 19%	140,482 22%
Training providing qualifications for specific jobs or occupations, not listed in OKJ	54,904 8%	51,937 7%	51,602 9%	45,523 7%
Vocational further training	229,629 35%	246,948 34%	212,694 36%	172,325 27%
Training for qualifications necessary in public authority functions	42,855 6,5%	48,052 7%	43,550 7%	33,234 5%
Foreign language training	96,634 15%	95,673 13%	68,376 11,5%	118,216 18,5%
General adult education	76,635 12%	77,469 11%	61,196 11%	73,471 11,5%
Information Technology training	31,724 5%	68,548 9,5%	26,085 4,5%	36,635 6%
Other training	13,653 2,5%	17,983 2,5%	11,830 2%	17,954 3%
Total	652,587 100%	720,460 100%	590,249 100%	637,840 100%

Source: OSAP 2010-2013, edited by the author

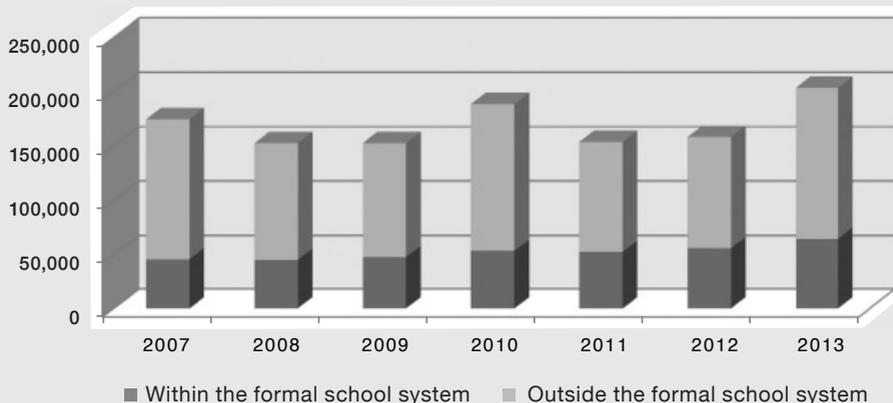
1/ National Statistical Data Provision Programme

average figure in the European Union, and also in respect of what would be required by the demographic and employment conditions in Hungary, cannot be regarded as insignificant since it amounts to 10 % of the active age population (persons aged 15-64 years), the total number of which was 6.67 million in 2013.

Based on the data in table 1, the most common form of adult education was vocational further training between 2010 and 2013 (27-36 % of persons involved in adult education participated in vocational further training courses). A significant number of adults (16-22 % every year) participated in vocational training courses, which are listed in the National Qualification Register (hereinafter: OKJ), and which are also recognised by the state. Language courses (participation ratio: 13-18 %) and general training courses (11-12 %) were also popular.

At this point I shall point out another significant fact: every year more than twice as many persons acquire vocational training qualifications in adult education in training provided outside the school system in state recognised training courses listed in the OKJ than within the regular school system, in other words, at vocational schools or at vocational secondary schools (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Number of adults, who acquired state recognised vocational qualifications within and outside the formal school system between 2007 and 2013**



Source: OSAP 2007-2013 and Ministry of Human Resources, 2012, author's own edition

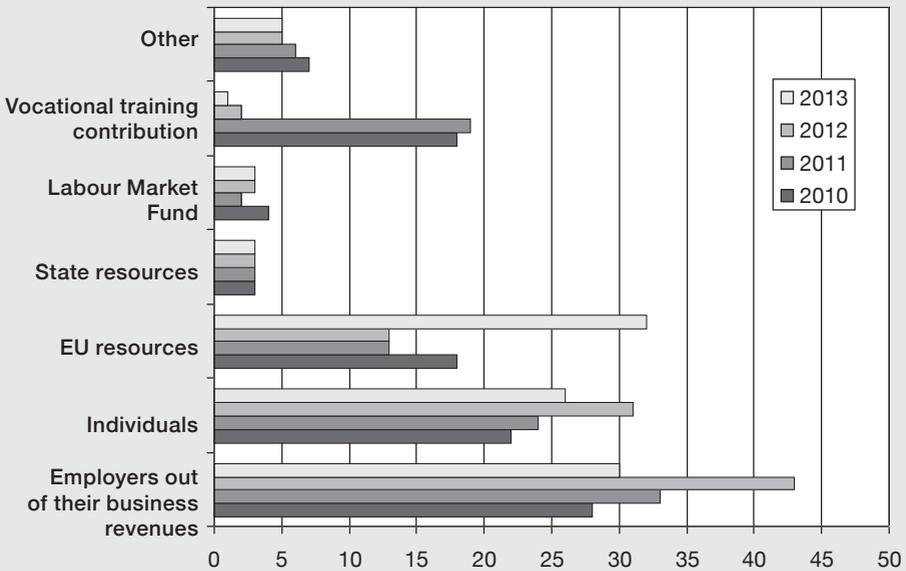
## Resources for financing adult education in Hungary

The financing systems for adult education have several similar as well as differing features in various countries. The methods and instruments used for financing adult education are influenced, among other things, by the ratio of tasks various state authorities undertake in this area, the level of economic development in these countries, cultural and economic traditions and the level of formal school education. The most important factor at any rate is the balance of resource sharing between the economic players and revenue owners (the state, businesses and the population). Operating a system – in this case operating the adult education system – is not the only function of financing. Financing is also a fundamental instrument for implementing professional policy objectives. The state is capable of fundamentally influencing the implementation of adult education as a professional policy through the allocation of financial resources.

In the sub-systems of state finances, the central budget and the National Employment Fund as separate state funds play a role in adult education financing. The rate of state funding fundamentally depends on what the state considers a state task. In order to complement these two sub-systems of state finances – as an institutional form of the link between the economic sector and the educational system – the system of vocational contribution was established in 1989, which directly and indirectly provides resources for the system of practical, vocational and adult training. For over a decade domestic resources have been complemented by funds allocated from the community budget of the European Union, which also serve the purposes of the development and accomplishment of tasks as prioritised by the state. Economic actors also contribute to adult education finances mainly through the tax system, but also through funds and public trusts, however also directly by financing practical training, direct support and the establishment of earmarked trusts. Expenditures paid by the population directly on education and training also contribute significantly to adult education financing.

Figure 2 on the analysis of budget actors indicates that – parallel with consistent cuts in the state budget – the employers covered the costs of approximately fifty percent of the participants in adult education between 2010 and 2012, which decreased by 31 % in 2013. Further training courses launched by employers in the form of training at workplaces, which are one of the most important components of adult education, are encouraged and supported by the state in several countries. Employers train their employees mainly out of their own revenues (in 2012 this happened in 43 %, while in 2013 in 30 % of all cases), and a portion of the vocational training contribution they are obliged to pay to the state budget is used to

Figure 2: Resources for financing adult education in Hungary (%)



Source: OSAP 2010-2013, author's own edition

train employees (in 2011 this was 19%, in 2012 it was 2%, in 2013 it was less than 1% of the contribution).

A peculiar resource for adult education financing is the vocational education contribution, which provides resources for the development of adult education on the one hand as part of the state finances and, on the other hand, as a resource outside the state finances. Resources outside the state finances for the vocational training contribution are practical courses organised by actors in the economic sector, the training of employees by businesses and the development support.

Act LXXXVI of 2003 on vocational education contribution and the development of the training system as replaced by Act CLV of 2011, which entered into force on 1 January 2012. According to provisions contained in the former Act, it was possible for businesses to turn part of the vocational training contribution they were obliged to pay on training their own employees. The amount of the vocational training contribution was 1.5% of the gross earnings, 60% of which small and medium-sized businesses

and one third of which other businesses could use for training their own employees. As it was set forth in the new Act, businesses were obliged to discontinue this practice as of 1 January 2012. In December 2012, however, the new Act was modified and, although with significant restrictions, the former system was reinstated.

The gross amount of the vocational training contribution is still 1.5 % of the health insurance and labour market contribution base. The costs of training their own employees, however, may be accounted for by businesses with vocational training contribution payment obligation which provide contractual practical training for at least 45 students per month. The ratio of the vocational training contribution usable for training own employees has been decreased by fifty percent compared to the amount usable earlier, in other words to 16.5 % of the gross amount of the contribution. Accounting for the costs of businesses providing practical training turned towards training their own employees out of part of the vocational training contribution they are obliged to pay is regulated by Decree 21/2013 (18 June) issued by the Minister of National Economy.

The second most important entities in financing participation in adult education are individuals (24 % in 2011, 28 % in 2012, 26 % in 2013). The number of training courses initiated and launched by individuals, the costs of which are also covered by the participants, is significantly high. A majority of individuals are not prompted to participate in these training courses out of direct necessity; they recognise their long-term interests, and use their own private financial resources to join adult education. For such persons the knowledge acquired during the training courses will yield financial benefits in their career paths in the future.

Hungary's accession to the European Union generated a situation in this country in which the importance of education and training grew significantly. After Hungary's accession to the European Community, an unprecedented abundance of resources became available for this country. Between 2004 and 2006 within the framework of the National Development Plan Human Resources Programme, and between 2007 and 2013 within the framework of the New Hungary Development Plan, Social Renewal Operative programme training and integration programmes were performed in adult education in which the goal was to improve the competences of groups, which were almost entirely excluded from the labour market, and which were multiply disadvantaged. In 2011 13 %, in 2012 15 %, in 2013 32 % of the training costs of such groups were covered from EU resources.

The amounts of state-provided resources remained low during the past few years, and consistently stagnated around 3 %.

## **New Act – new costs for starting and providing adult education**

Act LXXVII of 2013 on adult education, which entered into force on 1 September 2013, brought about fundamental changes compared to the former system of regulations and operations concerning the adult education sector. The new Act covers a narrower scope. It contains provisions only for adult learning programmes, for which the state provides professional guarantees and, financial responsibility. While the former Act on adult education (Act CI of 2001) covered the entire scope of adult learning activities the Act enacted in 2013 covers four types of training:

- vocational training with the purpose to acquire vocational qualifications recognised by the state as laid out in the Act on vocational training;
- other, supported vocational training – training with the purpose to acquire vocational qualifications not recognised by the state, and which provide competences necessary for specific jobs and occupations;
- general foreign language training and other, supported foreign language training;
- supported other training – training performed with the purpose of enhancing the level of general education, the development of competences, which are not linked to a specific vocational qualification or occupation or language skill, and which contributes to the personality development of adults and creates competences in the areas of social equality and citizenship.

Supported training can be interpreted as a type of training which is partly or entirely financed by the central national budget or by European Union resources. As contained in Paragraph 23 in the Act on adult education, the resources for support for adult education are as follows:

- Central, national budget (per capita support may be provided for training adults with disabilities)
- European Union resources
- As set forth in the Act on vocational training contribution and support for training development, the accountable part spent on the training of own employees of businesses obliged to pay vocational training contribution.

As of 1 September 2013 adult educational institutes can start and provide adult educational activities if they possess permission issued by a competent authority (National Employment Office) as set forth in the new Act on adult education (Act LXXVII of 2013). The acquisition of permits issued by this authority incurs significant costs for the adult educational institutions.

The amounts of administration and service fees payable by the educational institutions for the permits was determined in Decree 56/2013 (4 December) issued by the Minister of National Economy. As laid out in the decree mentioned above, the amount of basic fee payable by educational institutions for permission to perform adult learning activities for an indefinite period of time, including modifications in the future, is HUF 103,000 (~EUR 350) with a supplementary charge of HUF 68,000 (~EUR 230) per training programme.

An entirely new element in the regulation of adult education is the obligation of providing asset-backed security. A condition for the acquisition of permission from the competent authority is that adult educational institutes are obliged to prove that they are in possession of asset-backed security as required by the government decree. This asset-backed security serves the interests of adult learning participants. In case an educational institute is incapable of completing an ongoing course for any reason (e. g. because its permission is withdrawn), the adult learning participants can be indemnified out of this asset-backed security. In this way such participants can complete their courses at another educational institute, and acquire an appropriate certificate upon the completion of training courses.

The amount of asset-backed security for a given business year is 2 % of the net sales revenue of an educational institute from its adult education activities during the previous business year or a minimum amount of HUF five hundred thousand (~EUR 1,675).

Further costs are also incurred at adult educational institutions such as costs relating to the elaboration of training programmes, curriculum development, and professional administration, ensuring adequate personal and material conditions for performing training courses as well as communication and marketing activities, furthermore, business management.

As regards costs relating to starting and performing adult educational activities a question may be raised concerning what is the magnitude of revenues educational institutions may expect in the future? The resources provided by the state will certainly not grow. As regards individual cost-bearing: individuals are expected to pay less for their training if they attend courses with a high number of hours which provide vocational qualifications recognised by the state, and also because of the fact that the paying capacity of adult learning participants is diminishing. Businesses, in order to maintain their competitiveness, are expected to continue financing the training of their own employees. The magnitude of available resources from the European Union for the planning period between 2014 and 2020 has not been clarified yet.

## Conclusions

In this study I provided an overview on the financing mechanisms used during the course of the past few years. The year 2013 can be regarded as a milestone in many respects. On the one hand this year brought regulatory changes in adult education activities and, on the other hand, the 2007-2013 European budgetary period came to an end. Several years will pass before it can be determined what professional policy environment the new European regulations and development funds will create for adult education and what direction financing will take in this new environment.

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Klára Bajusz

## The second chance education system in Hungary

*This article focuses on changes in second chance education in Hungary in the last two decades. After a short analysis of the changes of schooling rates in Hungary (illiteracy, functional and digital illiteracy, the schooling gap), it raises issues about economic and social influences which dominate the status of primary and secondary adult schools. Also, the article takes a look at tertiary education as second chance institutions and, last but not at least, at non-formal learning possibilities for illiterate people in Hungary.*

## The school system

In Europe, second chance schools came into existence after World War II. As opposed to Western Europe, where these schools targeted adults whose education could not be completed because of the war, in Eastern Europe they exist to this day. In Hungary, after the political, economic and social changes in the 90s, the system changed in some ways, but the basic structure of adult education within public education remains the same:

- basic education: adults' primary school
- secondary education: adults' trade school and adults' grammar school
- tertiary education: there are no separate institutions but the part-time programmes of colleges and universities (BA, MA, PhD)

Second chance education school qualifications acquired in adulthood are legally equivalent to regular school-age qualifications. This means that the final exams and the subjects are similar too, but the methods, course-books and ways of learning can be different. Adults may study full-time or part-time until the age of twenty-three.

The main function of adult schools was changed in the 1970-80s. Between the 1940s and 60s the aim was to make up for the missing qualifications for adults who could not study due to the war or because of unequal social opportunities. From the 70s onwards 70% of adult students were under thirty years of age – a sign that the classical function changed to a correctional one: those young adults who could not be integrated into the Prussian educational system were now admitted to a different one: second chance schools. This was merely an attempt to cover up the functional disorders of the public education system. This correcting function is regrettably still the main function of Hungarian adult schools. One of the major reasons why older (30+) adults cannot find a real second chance in these schools is the age gap between them and their younger fellow students who are mostly aged 18-20. The other reason is the non-practical character of the curricula. The pressure of legal equality restricts it: if adults are expected to take the same exams, they are expected to study the same subjects. It means that topics which would be necessary for undereducated people to study (healthcare, economy, child rearing) are out of the curriculum, especially for part-time students. That means that undereducated students have less motivation to learn, because they find what they are expected to study less practical. Despite these difficulties

second chance education needs legal equality to guarantee adults competitive qualifications<sup>1</sup>.

In the last two decades most primary schools for adults have closed down in Hungary, mainly due to financial difficulties. The primary schools for adults which still exist receive a particularly low government subsidy, therefore their maintenance provokes a significant loss. The Ministry of Education does not regard functional illiteracy an elemental social problem, although it spends significant amounts of money on educating unemployed adults.

## **The target group**

In Hungary the rate of early school leavers is 11.4 percent. There are about 800,000 adults without primary school qualification. This figure amounts to 10 percent of the population, whereas there are 2,200 adults learning in basic formal education in the country each year – it means that less than 1 % of them are able to take advantage of their ‘second chance’. Those who live far away from educational institutions have no money to travel, cannot access information about learning opportunities, and most of them lack the motivation to complete primary level education. No adult beyond school age is obliged to participate in any form of education unless they themselves feel compelled to do so.

There is no real demand for this type of education in the target groups. In these families and communities it is relatively challenging to restart learning, the schools are usually far away in larger cities, and primary school qualification has no value in the labour market. Given these circumstances, only a handful of schools have survived, usually in the capital or in regional centres, and some of them in prisons.

Regrettably, Hungarian educational policy does not focus sufficiently on the question of illiteracy and ensuing problems. Programmes for disadvantaged people are not efficient in reaching undereducated adults.

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1/ A survey in 2011 aimed at comparing qualifications acquired at regular school age and in adulthood, and also discussed how these findings may affect formal adult education. The research explored this phenomenon on three levels: from the different angles of the labour market, the adult student, and his/her social environment. Three-quarters of adult learners in second chance education deem their degrees equal in value to a regular degree in the labour market but they are concerned about the prejudices of society. Three-quarters of employers ignore whether the adult has studied in full-time or part-time programmes. They place more emphasis on the knowledge and the motivation of adults and their previous experience. The respondents agree with the philosophy of the second chance schools. (Bajusz 2012).

A 2008 law in Hungary declares that all registered unemployed persons under the age of 35 are required to complete primary education. However, results are not satisfactory as most job centres are unable to ensure access to second chance schools without a well-functioning institution system. In 2012 a nationwide Roma education programme was launched focusing on remedial education, abolishing extreme poverty, and promoting equal opportunities<sup>2</sup>. Unfortunately the programme does not work in concert with the adult primary schools.

### **Illiteracy as an issue of education policy**

The 6th Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) took place in Belem, Brazil, in December 2009. The question of literacy has always been a recurring issue at such conferences, and after Belem it became obvious that it is still a problem waiting to be solved. Different degrees of illiteracy are found in different countries, from adult illiteracy to digital illiteracy, according to a country's economic development.

The Global Report of Adult Learning and Education (GRALE), a summary of the regional synthesis reports on adult learning and education emphasises the following points:

- Many developed countries, including Canada and the United States of America, are now identifying the continued need for adult literacy and basic skills programmes.
- Literacy is about the acquisition and use of reading, writing and numeracy skills, and thereby the development of active citizenship, improved health and livelihoods, and gender equality. The goals of literacy programmes should reflect this understanding.
- Reducing adult illiteracy rates by 50 % by 2015 is the Education for All (EFA) literacy target.
- The challenges remain immense – 774 million adults still lack basic literacy skills, two thirds of them women, and 45 countries have not yet achieved the developing country average of 79 % adult literacy.
- Globally, basic education (mainly adult literacy programmes) remains the dominant form of adult education, with 127 countries (82 %) declaring this as one of their programmes.

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2/ Retrieved from <http://www.ttki.hu/page.php?mid=119>

The Belem Framework for Action stresses the following:

- Literacy is an indispensable foundation that enables young people and adults to engage in learning opportunities at all stages of the learning continuum. The right to literacy is an inherent part of the right to education. It is a prerequisite for the development of personal, social, economic and political empowerment. Literacy is an essential means of building people's capabilities to cope with the evolving challenges and complexities of life, culture, economy and society.
- In Europe, almost a third of the workforce has only the equivalent of lower secondary education, whereas two-thirds of new jobs require qualifications at upper secondary level or above.
- In many countries of the southern hemisphere the majority of the population does not even attain primary school level.
- In 2006, some 75 million children (the majority of whom were girls) had either left school early or had never attended school. Nearly half of these children were from sub-Saharan Africa and more than 80 % were children from rural areas.
- The lack of social relevance of the curricula; the inadequate numbers and, in some cases, the insufficient training of educators; the paucity of innovative materials and methods, among other obstacles, undermine the ability of existing educational systems to provide quality learning that can address the disparities in our societies.

In the course of the past few decades the international policy of education has declared a number of rules and goals concerning illiteracy. The most important, and interconnected, programmes are:

- EFA, Education For All 2000-2015<sup>3</sup>
- UNLD, United Nations Literacy Decade 2003-2012<sup>4</sup>
- LIFE-program, Literacy Initiative For Empowerment Life 2005-2015 (UNESCO 2007)
- DESD, Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014<sup>5</sup>
- MDGs, Millennium Development Goals 2000-2015<sup>6</sup>

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3/ Retrieved from <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/efa/>

4/ Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/en/literacy/un-literacy-decade/>

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6/ Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

## **Illiteracy in the developing countries**

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) International Adult Literacy Surveys have made it clear that illiteracy is also a problem in developed countries: the percentage of adults practically unable to process a text or having only basic reading skills is between 25 and 75 %. In the European policy of education the term 'basic skills' has been replaced by 'key competencies' – referring to the fact that the meaning of literacy now has a much wider range (basic skills are not sufficient for community life, active citizenship, employability). Adult illiteracy, the inheritance of functional illiteracy, and the ongoing problem of early school leaving must be addressed on a European level.

## **Digital illiteracy**

In developed countries a new form of illiteracy is digital illiteracy. The digital gap stretches between those adult groups who are comfortable with Information and Communications Technology (ICT) tools and those who are not. 57 % of Hungarian adults are digitally illiterate. Digital illiteracy increases the chance of more and more adults falling behind in our digital society. It also highlights the fact that illiteracy is a multi-layered problem (European Commission 2010).

In adult education the expressions 'lifelong learning', 'learning society' and 'learning regions' are used every day. But what is the significance of these terms without learning rights, access to education and institutions? Undereducated people have no ability to manage their own lives or to make decisions on their own and are dependent on state support and care. They do not look for learning and working opportunities, they do not use information and communication technologies. In our view this means that they are not able to take advantage of their human rights. In their families, knowledge has no value and parents transmit their disadvantages to their children. There are many families where unemployment is transmitted to the third generation.

Conventional literacy is not enough for survival in the 21st century, despite the fact that it is a foundation for citizenship and learning on several levels (ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation 2006). For active participation in the community and labour market the population needs to be able to use ICT, foreign languages and complex abilities. If people are able to answer these challenges, then we can think about building up learning regions and lifelong learning.

If we really want learning regions to work, first of all we have to put undereducated adults in touch with learning opportunities. This, however, is certainly easier said than done.

Possible solutions would be involving more nonformal adult education institutions in second chance programmes: folk high schools, cultural centres, workplaces, etc. Higher education institutions could also contribute to the development of the necessary professional background. Such changes can only be expected if Hungarian educational policy recognises the real value of basic skills and the social benefits of adult literacy in the long run.

If we can reach undereducated adults and help them develop basic and learning skills, we will have a real chance to create a society which is a context for lifelong learning.

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## Regional differences in the light of competence surveys in Hungary

*Hungary has been involved from the beginning in each data collection for international measurements in the field of student assessments (PIRLS, PISA, TIMSS). These studies have promoted the professional self-reflection of educational policy-makers and teachers and, from the methodological viewpoint, they constitute a basis for the training of Hungarian education statistics experts. It has also helped the development of the competency assessment system and has become a comprehensive evaluating-certification instrument in public education. The international student assessment drew the attention of experts to the large differences between the capacity levels of Hungarian schools, and those of students. Namely, the Hungarian school system is territorially and qualitatively differentiated. The article will analyse these regional differences according to native and international measurement data.*

## Introduction

In the past three years, an overall transformation of public education has been in progress in Hungary. As for reasons, in the professional parlance, the following can generally be heard:

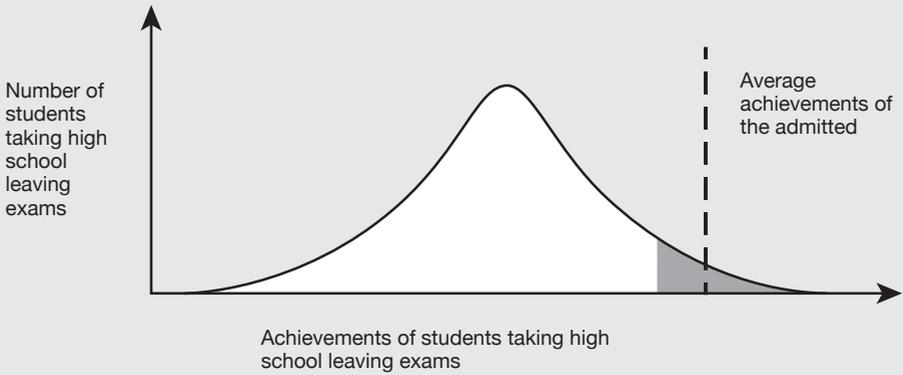
- the achievement level of students leaving the public education system is gradually decreasing;
- the decreases in achievement levels point to a need for correction of the content of curricula;
- professional differences among schools are gradually growing, depending on the financial conditions of the maintainers.

In seeking to handle the above-mentioned problems – irrespective of their being real problems or not – from the measures so far taken, the following are the most significant:

- from January 1, 2013 the state nationalised the schools, which used to be maintained mostly by local governments;
- from September 1, 2013 the state initiated new curricula;
- from September 1, 2013, in order to raise quality levels, the state organised a network of professional service providers and consultants; at the same time, it transformed the content and structure of teacher training and extension training.

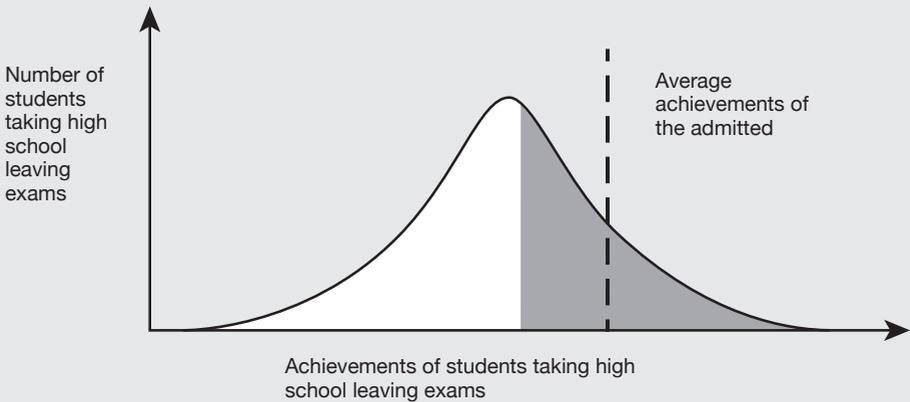
As regards reasons for such a transformation, we shall deal here with the gradual reductions in levels of student achievement. This issue primarily emerged in the period of absolute expansion which took place in the higher education system from 1991; then, from the year 2000 – in a period of relative expansion – it grew stronger among university professors and, now, it is generalised amongst decision-makers in educational policy. This view (the reductions in levels of student achievement) is not confirmed by international school survey findings. Its emergence is most probably based on the ‘illusion’ that the average achievement level of students entering higher education has seen a reduction owing to the fact that it has become mass education (see Figures 1 & 2).

**Figure 1: Average performance of persons admitted into higher education in connection with the entrance of 15 % of the age-group**



Source: Radó (2011)

**Figure 2: Average performance of persons admitted into higher education assuming the entrance of 45 % of the age-group**



Source: Radó (2011)

## Hungary in the international progress surveys of schools

Hungary joined and became a participant in such surveys from the beginning, that is, when international surveys – PIRLS<sup>1</sup>, PISA<sup>2</sup>, TIMSS<sup>3</sup> – were organised in the field of school progress surveying. Surveys and data generation occurred every third year in the case of PISA, every fourth year with TIMSS and every fifth in the case of PIRLS (see Table 1). These research projects have continually helped in the professional self-reflection capacities of our educators and politicians in charge of education, for there are comparable databases. At the same time, they have provided excellent scope for the preparation and expansion of capacities of Hungarian surveying experts from a methodological point of view. While the current surveying and assessment procedures of the above-mentioned international surveys took place according to a preliminary schedule, the so-called *system of competence surveys* developed and implemented in Hungary have become an overall means of assessment and qualification in public education today.

**Table 1: Hungary joins the international school progress surveys**

Programme	Age or age-group	Year of study
<b>PIRLS</b> (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study)	4th grade students	2001, 2006, 2011.
<b>PISA</b> (Programme for International Student Assessment)	15-year-olds	2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012.
<b>TIMSS</b> (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study)	4th and 8th grade students	1995, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011.

## Hungarian school competence surveys

The Hungarian competence surveys<sup>4</sup> which began in 2001 aim to investigate the current level of reading comprehension skills and practical mathematical skills. They do not assess the degree of progress specified by the curriculum – they examine to what extent students are able to apply the competences they have already acquired in public education to

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1/ Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

2/ Program for International Student Assessment

3/ Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

4/ Retrieved from <http://www.kir.hu/okmfit/>

cope with tasks taken from everyday life. It is their distinguishing feature that, unlike in the international studies, all of the 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students are involved and the surveys are repeated each academic year. The regulations determining our public education<sup>5</sup> took this obligation on board beginning with the academic year 2007-2008 onwards. This is complemented by regular surveys involving all students and done annually in 4th grades, which allows for diagnostic and criterion-oriented analysis of the current level of reading comprehension skills, writing skills, calculation skills, systematisation skills and combination skills. From the academic year 2012-2013 onwards, the examination of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students is not obligatory due to legal regulations – though it is within the authority of each institution (see Table 2).

**Table 2: System of Hungarian competence surveys**

Program	Grade	Year of study
Competence surveys	6th, 8th and 10th grade students	2001, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013.
Skill and knowledge surveys	4th grade students	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, from 2013: decided by the institution

### **National averages of the results of Hungarian school progress surveys**

The national averages for competence surveys within each competence and grade are relatively steady (see Table 3). The data in the surveyed period (during a temporal analysis of performances) does not point to any changes having a statistically supportable tendency. In both scopes, only slight deviations can be observed in different directions – and the values of differences are so low that they cannot be applied to support conclusions concerning improvements or declines in performance (Balázi & Szabó 2013: 7).

As with the tendency observed when we look at average results for national competence surveys in each studied scope and grade, our students seem to give relatively steady levels of performance in international school progress surveys (see Table 4).

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<sup>5/</sup> Currently §80 of the 2011 law CXC dealing with national public education

**Table 3: Average results from the past five years of competence surveys**

Year	Mean for reading comprehension			Mean for mathematics		
	6th grade	8th grade	10th grade	6th grade	8th grade	10th grade
2008	1500	1579	1609	1500	1601	1648
2009	1489	1564	1615	1484	1605	1618
2010	1483	1583	1620	1498	1622	1613
2011	1465	1577	1617	1486	1601	1635
2012	1472	1567	1603	1489	1612	1632

Source: Balázsi, Lak, Szabó, Vadász (2013)

**Table 4: Average results of Hungarian students' performance in the different international school progress surveys**

Programme	Year of study	Mean of performance	
PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study)	2001	543	
	2006	551	
	2011	539	
PISA (Program for International Student Assessment)	2000	480	
	2003	482	
	2006	482	
	2009	494	
	2012	488	
TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study)		4th grade	8th grade
	1995	508	537
	1999	-	552
	2003	530	543
	2007	536	539
	2011	534	522

Source: Balázsi, Balkányi, Bánfi, Szalay, Szepesi (2012); Balázsi, Bánfi, Szalay, Szepesi (2012); Balázsi, Ostorics, Szalay (2007)

The differences between average results for Hungarian competence surveys and international surveys presented so far within identical contexts of analysis – except for TIMSS – do not reach 3% in either case. This means that the performance of the Hungarian public education system has been relatively steady for over a decade, i.e. one of the characteristics of school-leaving age-groups is the stability inherent in the average of their achievement level that can be registered by surveys.

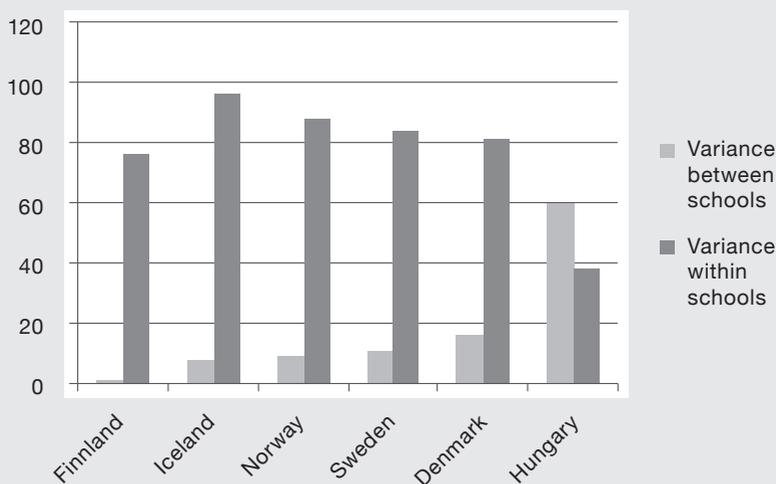
What has been presented so far also refers to the fact that certain elements of the debate surrounding the transformation process currently

going on in our public education system are professionally unfounded. Thus, educators' innovative energies are currently not engaged in the raising of school performance levels but are invested in adapting new foundation documents and forms of organisation.

### Regional differences in Hungarian results relating to school progress surveys

International school progress surveys indicated to experts early on that the differences between levels of school performance in Hungary are larger than between students within schools (e.g.: Báthory 2002, 2003 ; Balázsi, Ostorics, Szalay 2007 ; Tóth, Csapó, Székely 2010). Thus, the Hungarian school system draws a regionally divided and qualitatively subtle picture. Consequently, our students' choices of schools determine their later results to a greater extent than, for instance, is the case in Scandinavian countries (see Figure 3). In the latter, variances of differences within

Figure 3: Variances in students' performance between and within schools in the PISA surveys in 2006

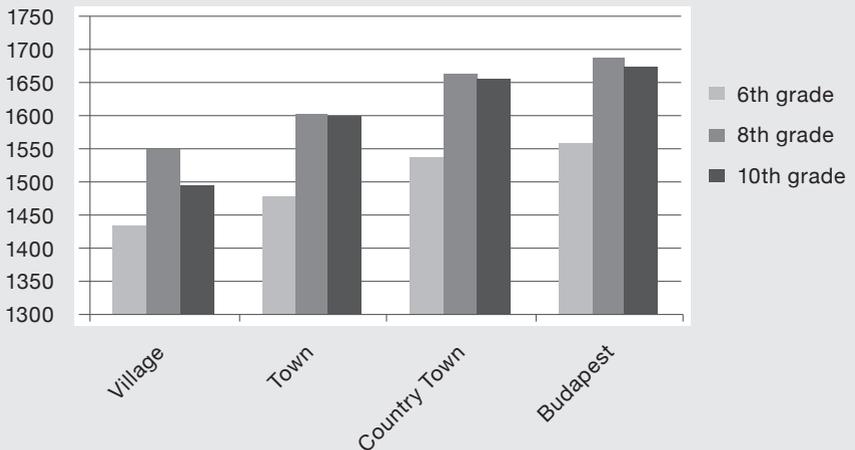


Source: Balázsi, Ostorics, Szalay (2007)

schools is significant – so, in essence, it does not make any difference which school a student is studying at. Naturally, the effect of so-called economic, social and cultural status (ref. the ESCS index)<sup>6</sup> also appears in the students' performance, while in Scandinavian countries their influence is negligible; such status factors explain a noteworthy proportion of differences among schools in Hungary (Balázsi, Ostorics, Szalay 2007: 50).

Average results for Hungarian school performance are significantly influenced by the types of community, i.e. the 'community slope'; while the already mentioned economic, social, and cultural status (ESCS) has an impact here, too. The qualification levels, economic power, and degree of infrastructural supply of people living in smaller communities – as experienced in other countries – is normally lower than of those living in big cities; yet the explanatory power of ESCS applies to approximately 2/3 of the differences existing in Hungary. The performance averages of 10th grade students studying in villages are exceeded by students' averages in Budapest by 17 % in the area of reading comprehension and by 12 % in the case of mathematics (see Figures 4 & 5).

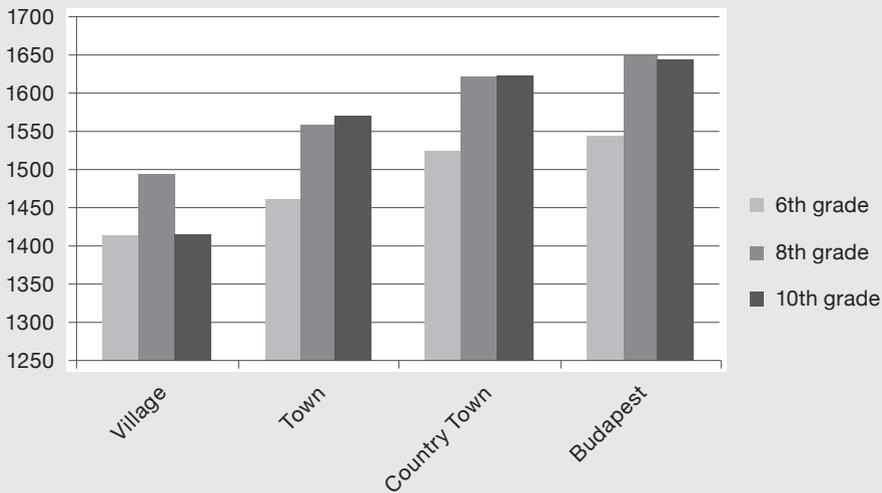
**Figure 4: Students' performance in reading comprehension in competence surveys according to the type of community in the 2012 study**



Source: Balázsi, Lak, Szabó, Vadász (2013)

<sup>6/</sup> Economic, social and cultural status

**Figure 5: Students' performance in mathematics in competence surveys according to the type of community in the 2012 study**

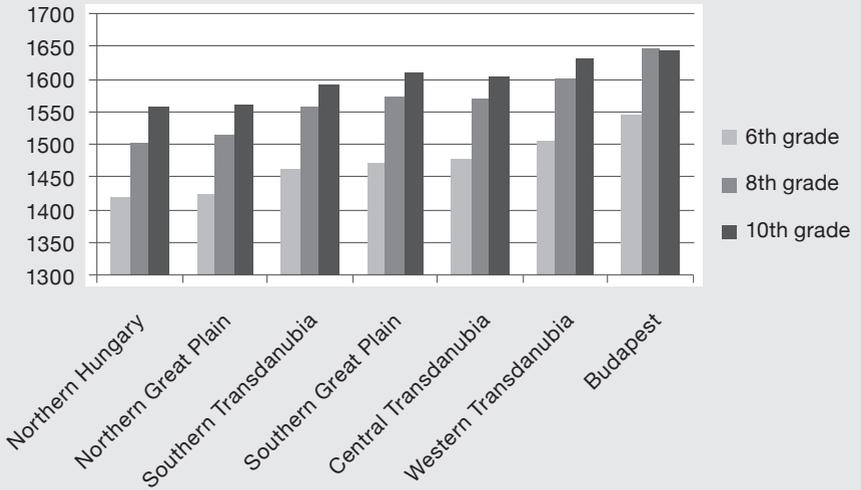


Source: Balázsi, Lak, Szabó, Vadász (2013)

School performance shows significant regional differences as well. The relatively high rate of village schools is a general characteristic of the Northern Hungarian region – and the registered averages there in the areas of reading comprehension and mathematics in the 6th, 8th and 10th grades fall behind the results obtained by other regions (see Figures 6 & 7). At the same time, the average performance of students in the surveyed areas in the Western Transdanubian region is notable. Here, the qualification level, economic power and degree of infrastructural supply of people living in the region plays a positive role. Yet again, the fact that the explanatory power of ESCS normally applies to approximately 2/3 of differences should be noted (Balázsi, Ostorics, Szalay 2007: 49).

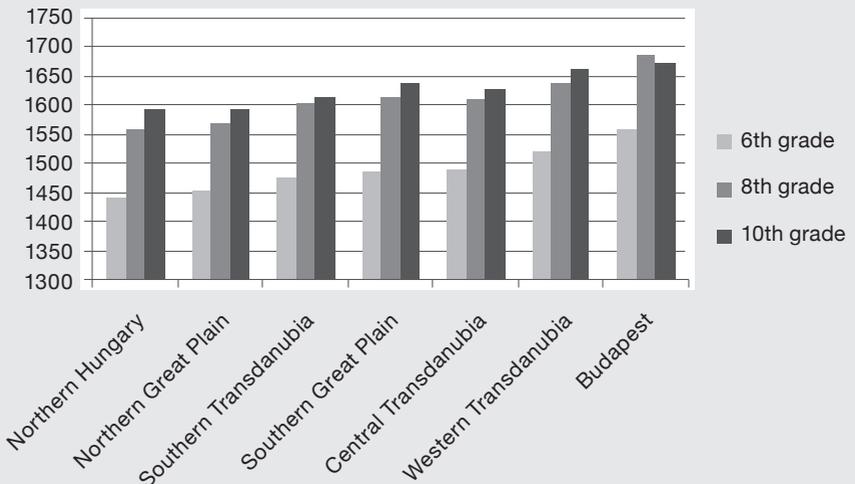
A comparative analysis of students' performance according to counties – due to the fact that geographical units are smaller than a region – shows greater differences (see Figures 8 & 9). Compared to the performance of 8th grade students attending schools in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, their peers living in Győr-Moson-Sopron county demonstrate a nearly 10 % performance advantage (Balázsi, Lak, Szabó, Vadász 2013: 54, 56).

**Figure 6: Students' performance in reading comprehension in competence surveys according to regions in the 2012 study**



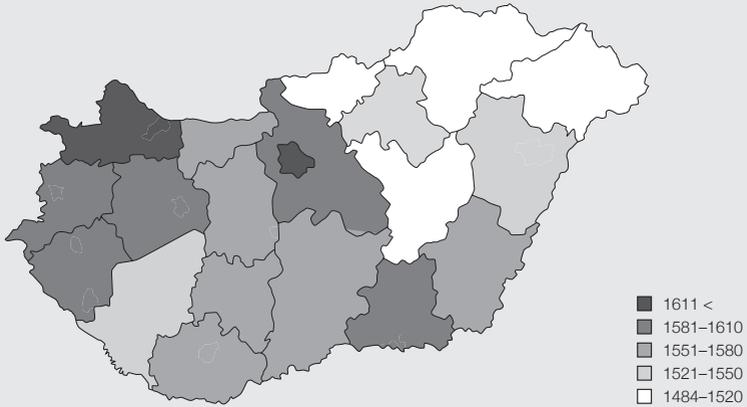
Source: Balázsi, Lak, Szabó, Vadász (2013)

**Figure 7: Students' performance in mathematics in competence surveys according to regions in the 2012 study**



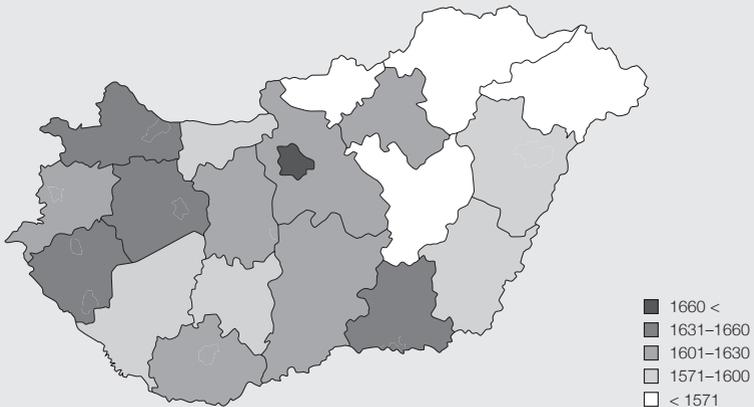
Source: Balázsi, Lak, Szabó, Vadász (2013)

**Figure 8: Performance levels of 8th grade students in reading comprehension according to counties in the 2012 competence surveys**



Source: Balázs, Lak, Szabó, Vadász (2013) (Map: Híves Tamás)

**Figure 9: Performance levels of 8th grade students in mathematics according to counties in the 2012 competence surveys**



Source: Balázs, Lak, Szabó, Vadász, (2013) (Map: Híves Tamás )

On maps representing students' performance levels in each county, poorer education achievement levels are indicated by lighter colours in both cases. The relative backwardness of the counties in the eastern part of the country can also be seen when we look at reading comprehension and mathematics figures – especially in the case of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Nógrád and Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok counties. Although differences in performance can be partly explained by the fact that the above-mentioned counties are also characterised by having small communities, it is the better infrastructure and the better labour market conditions and socio-cultural circumstances of people living in the western part of the country that are able to improve the success of schooling to a great extent.

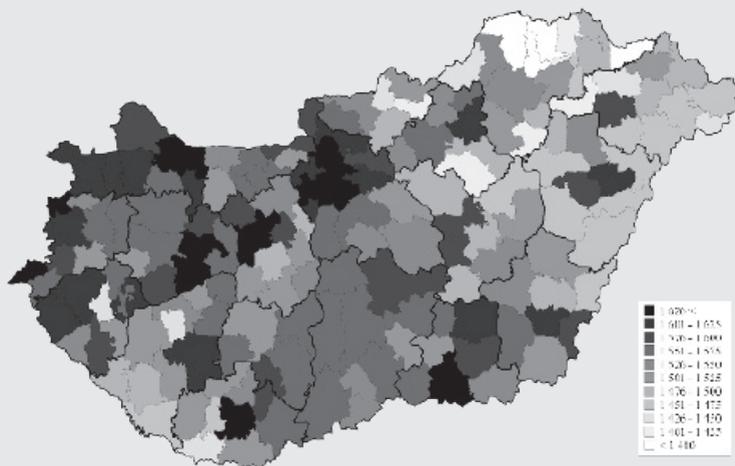
In Hungary, a small region represents the organisational level among certain institutions and counties – and their current number is 175. (In our present study, we will not discuss the level of institutions – which shows the largest deviations in performance – for the time being due to a need to protect individual rights.) In such geographical units, accumulated advantages as well as disadvantages appear more firmly compared to counties (see Figures 10 & 11). The advantages of performance owing to the favourable selection of schools may also reach 20 % here because of the relatively large amount of differences existing between small regions (Balázs, Lak, Szabó, Vadász, 2013: 57-62).

On the maps representing the level of students' performance in small regions, the darker the shading is, the better the results the given region produced are. The relatively poor performance of the eastern part of the country can also be seen in the case of small regions, out of which a few big cities, like e.g. Debrecen, Szeged, Miskolc and their surroundings are exceptions, i.e. the community slope applies here, too. The more favourable position of the western part of the country from the perspective of schooling can be easily observed on the maps of small regions as well; at the same time, the natural effects of big cities also apply here. We should also mention that the infrastructure differences existing between the two parts of the country have caused a fluctuation from east to west in Hungary, which primarily concerns more educated adults, though its impact can be seen today in the world of schools as well.

## Summary

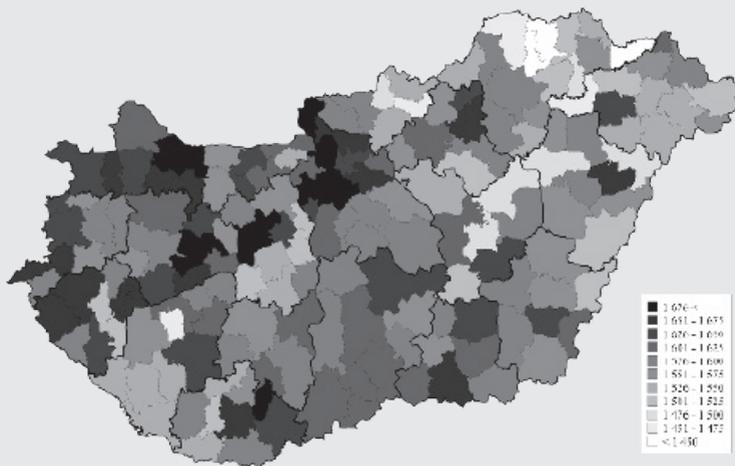
In the last decade, findings from Hungarian competence surveys and the international school progress surveys have continually indicated that while the performance of Hungarian students indicates a relative stability in the studied fields, there are major differences between schools within the

**Figure 10: Levels of performance in reading comprehension of 8th grade students according to small regions in the 2012 competence surveys**



Source: Balázs, Lak, Szabó, Vadász (2013) (Map: Híves Tamás)

**Figure 11: Levels of performance in mathematics of 8th grade students according to small regions in the 2012 competence surveys**



Source: Balázs & Szabó (2013) (Map: Híves Tamás)

country. Consequently, parents' choice of schools does play a greater role in the fact of a student's success than do their individual capacities or their socio-cultural background. Thus, the most important current task for the Hungarian public education system is to reduce the qualitative difference between schools and to have schools that are 'at a disadvantage' catch up. A solution here requires major interventions and special attention – the ideal means for which is probably *not* the nationalisation of schools.

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# Facts and trends in adult education and training in Hungary

*After the change of regime in 1989-90, Hungary was one of the first countries that voted Yes to the development of adult education. This article is a chronological overview of the main tendencies in the field of vocational/adult education as regards the labour market and the customer. While important consequences are to be drawn from an analysis of the data, there is a long list of positive, constructive facts as well as negative facts, faults and inconsistencies that characterise the past 20 years of adult education in Hungary. The conclusions of this review allow us to see some important problems, and the main tasks which Hungary urgently must carry out in order to support adult education so it can help overcome the economic crisis.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1/</sup> Whilst we underline that one must recognise that practically there are two basic types of adult education in Hungary: formal education and education/training outside the school system. In this present study I shall primarily focus on non-formal adult education and training.

After the change of regime in 1989-90, Hungary was one of the first countries amongst the newly associated states to develop a new system of adult education by transforming the structure of vocational training, creating a regulatory framework, and establishing and operating a high-quality public adult education system.

However if we look at the statistical indicators related to adult education from the European Union Statistical Office (EUROSTAT) it is clear that today Hungary shows a significant lag compared to the average values of other European Union (EU) states.

According to the statistics, a great majority of the registered unemployed are disadvantaged and under-skilled individuals, yet the participation of disadvantaged people in adult education is low. Though these somewhat contradictory facts are taken out of context, nonetheless they are thought-provoking.

Today, the importance of lifelong learning is obvious. Hence Hungary and other developed countries consider the improvement of training, education and research to be the way out of the crisis.

The abovementioned, obviously non-comprehensive set of problems have been intensified by the economic and financial crisis perceptible since 2008, noticeably bringing forward new challenges in the field of vocational/adult education in Hungary. The resolution of existing problems, tasks and issues to be solved has become urgent.

These challenges in Hungary are also way beyond those former professional analyses, which studied the responsibilities, tasks and roles of the actors in the market of adult education:

- the possibility of creating new jobs and occupations rapidly, since employment brings forward the opportunity of growth for the economy,
- the examination of current systems and methods in adult education,
- determining the functions and operation of vocational training and adult education in the economy of Hungary during/after the crisis,
- finding the most appropriate structure of adult education to fit new requirements,
- establishing a unified and coordinated line of conduct of the education system with other policies, instead of the current fragmented system existing for many years now, and at the same time addressing local problems as well,
- examining whether the approach of vocational training fits job requirements.

There is a long list of positive, constructive and negative facts, faults and inconsistencies that characterise the past 20 years of adult education in Hungary. Below, I shall attempt to bring light on certain fields I consider important.

## Trends

When reviewing the past 22-23 years of adult education, there are important consequences to be drawn.

- Between the end of the 80s and the publication of the Employment Act in 1991, training was one of the most frequently applied instruments amongst the so-called experimental employment tools applied by job offices, the predecessors of employment centres, in solving the labour-market related problems of economies tackling extremely high unemployment rates. At that time, the organisation of training programmes was mostly conducted by private training organisations, which were the successors of large training institutions operating formerly under the authority of various ministries.

Due to the unsettled legislative environment, the characteristics of the provided support, of selected applicants and target groups to be involved in training were determined by different conditions and regulations in each region/county.

A chaotic atmosphere characterised the so-called self-financed training programmes, as the significant demand for education was supplied by individual financing.

- The publication of the 1991 Employment Act and its implementing regulations brought forward a serious advancement, achieving something like a “regulated” order in the market of funded adult education, since it accurately defined the criteria on applicants, conditions of funding, etc.
- The period 1992-95 brought along important developments, such as the extension of the range of actors in the adult education market, and as a result, the appearance of quality elements. Regional training centres were established, which represented the adult education institution of the state. The institutional system covering all regions of the country was able to offer the most modern competence-based modular education and an infrastructure corresponding to the highest quality available at that time. The centres had an active role in the training of the unem-

ployed and particularly of those in a disadvantageous situation, however, it was also present in fulfilling the demand of corporations and in the field of non-funded training programmes. Being a state-owned non-profit organisation, it had a significant role in ensuring the quality and efficiency of adult education, and it was also responsible for extending this new type of culture in adult education to other institutions as well.

Hence, the institutional system of three poles that still exists today was born in the education market.

Adult education for the labour market was one of the most important instruments of employment policy, the number of participants enrolled in education increased year by year.

Besides positive tendencies, the faults of the system were also perceptible, mainly due to the lack of a comprehensive regulation of adult education. The extremely soft entry barriers to the adult education market, the practically complete lack of person, material and quality-related requirements, and the lack of knowledge of potential and actual players in the labour market frequently resulted in anomalies. The launched programmes were in many cases defined by the will of owners, their profit orientation and available instruments, instead of focusing on the objectives and interests of the labour market and the economy.

- The period 1995-2000 was defined by seeking a path, with attempts to have the market regulated. Legislation regulating the pricing of funded training was enacted in 1996, which was an important step and became the guideline for the field of market-based education. The national vocational training registry was transformed, resulting in a list of training programmes acknowledged by the state, which were also compliant with European systems. Discussions were started on the formation of a comprehensive act on adult education. At the same time, the transformation of the labour market also significantly influenced the statistical and structural characteristics of adult education: unemployment rates dropped considerably, the sectoral and regional transformation of the economy brought new requirements and challenges for adult education. The institution of the labour market has elaborated databases and projection systems, which better enabled the organisation of training programmes in order to suit labour market demands.

However, the situation in the field of non-funded education remained the same.

The impact of the preparation for the accession to the European Union, and later of the accession itself were perceptible in this period.

The demand of the economy for a ready-to-work quality labour force has intensified, which directed the attention of training providers on offering quality and on the development of services.

- In 2001 the Adult Education Act was enacted. It was an important step in the development of adult education because it regulated every key important issue of adult education in a complex form:
  - ✓ the right to education defined within the context of lifelong learning,
  - ✓ defined the role of the state in creating the conditions for adult education
  - ✓ defined the requirements for the development of institutions, and supported the promotion of new methods and procedures
  - ✓ defined the form and substance of interest between the actors of adult education
  - ✓ ensured the development of quality through a wide range of regulations for the implementation of different quality assurance systems, and control above all institutions
  - ✓ defined the opportunity to use a wide range of financing sources
  - ✓ ensured the opportunity to support the education of disadvantaged groups.

The implementation regulations intended to employ the law in practice were elaborated in that time:

- ✓ registration of adult education institutions
  - ✓ control of institutions and programmes
  - ✓ requirement on the accreditation of institutions
  - ✓ regulating professional and exam standards
  - ✓ creation of a unified data supply service
- The new National Qualification Register was issued in 2006. The content it defined conformed to the requirements of the labour market, the system ensured the operation of a competence-based, modular, interoperable, transparent structure, with groups divided by professions, and enabled the development of flexible training opportunities and the interoperability amongst various training programmes. Vocational training in Hungary and related exam requirements have become compatible with European systems.

Naturally several faults, contradictions and issues emerged throughout the actual implementation of the law and its regulations, and there has been

continuous professional consultation in relation to these. Nevertheless there is no doubt that considering the supply side of adult education in Hungary, these legislative instruments largely contributed to the birth of a regulatory framework conforming to European trends and quality management has become mandatory in the accredited institutions.

## **And the “results”?**

Numbers show the years between 2001 and 2010 were characterised by the dynamic growth in relation to statistical indicators within adult education.

By 2007, there were about three times as many people enrolled in adult education as in 1995. In 2010 there were 652,587 students participating in training programmes offered by non-formal institutions, despite the fact that by this time the formerly multi-channelled state funding system had been narrowed down to two channels.

Let's review the opportunities listed above in terms of their implementation, and examine whether the Hungarian adult education system meets the requirements regarding the national economy, employers, quality and cost efficiency.

For a long time now there have been two strong expectations regarding adult education from the point of view of our economy:

1. that it would make available a ready-to-work labour force which satisfies demand in accordance with the needs of employers;
2. that it would create an increase in employment and would result in the large portion of under-skilled, permanently unemployed of active age in the labour force getting access to work opportunities.
3. In this study I analysed the different statistics of EUROSTAT, and the Hungarian data basis OSAP.

Regarding the above expectations, the following requirements on quality and efficiency may be considered to be the most important:

- The adult education institution constantly seeks information about the needs of the economy, the society and potential students, and makes all necessary efforts to be able to fulfil these expectations.
- The reception of useful knowledge of students enrolled in education should be facilitated in an interoperable manner that suits their interest, and this information should be in accordance with the professional and

general fields of competences which are also demanded in the labour market.

- Supporting the need for self-fulfilment for the participants of adult education and each individual's successful performance in the labour market, an increase in what they learn in life, and an improvement in their of quality of life.

Hungary already committed itself strongly to the establishment of the system of adult education in the years right after the change in regime and in the years that followed by having its structure and regulations elaborated in accordance with European guidelines. A market-based model has been created, and on account of the market environment and the competition, it was necessary for training institutions to offer a wide range and plenty of opportunities. When inspecting the results of this competition, it is apparent that as a matter of fact there has been no improvement in the quality, characteristics and forms of the training programmes that would level with the labour market and its demands.

When reviewing the features of training programmes provided in the period between 1995 and 2012, one observes that the market is dominated by programmes similar to the types registered within the National Qualification Register (OKJ). Considering how the professional and exam-related requirements of the latest structure of the Register meet job requirements, this is an optimistic tendency and also a positive development. It is also supported by the fact that according to data, the market of training programmes outside the school system and funded by the labour market mostly offer professions which are in shortage. The data and reports of the national employment service show that the majority of successful graduates in the said period entered the labour market with skills necessary for professions in shortage. As a result, the market was dominated by training programmes providing skills which were in shortage, as sought by employers.

These characteristics however are only valid regarding data provided by the employment office and the training sessions they fund. Such comparisons and surveys are not available in the field of non-funded, self-financed training sessions.

Statistical data collection is significant in Hungary, but even in spite of the transformations implemented in the past years, the system is not able to provide comprehensive data, especially related to factors contributing to efficiency. One of the reasons for this is probably the voluntary nature regarding data supply in certain fields, and also the consequence of poor discipline regarding the supplying of data.

Nevertheless it is safe to draw conclusions from the fact that the said period was characterised by the high proportion of successful graduates who majored in special fields which were not considered to be amongst the popular professions of the time according to the data provided by the national employment service.

Another important element of the given period was the escalation of the proportion of professional training sessions in the final years, which demonstrates the stronger involvement of the economy in adult education.

Though the indicated problems of data collection and data content inhibits the drawing of appropriate conclusions, taking a look at the distribution of training programmes by their type, the low number of training opportunities for the multiply disadvantaged and of professional training opportunities supporting the acquisition of basic skills implies that the education of the multiply disadvantaged is being implemented in an inappropriately low proportion, not corresponding to the actual number of the unemployed and inactive part of the population.

The official data show the types of training and their distribution amongst the organisers. In the past 20 years, most of the training programmes were implemented by private institutions (Ltd, Inc.). When considering the fact that since 2001 the number of accredited and registered – thus conforming to quality standards – adult education providers represent only 12-15 % of the market, one might wonder whether to trust the perceived quality of the training being offered.

According to the review of the form of training programmes offered in the given period, the market is chiefly dominated by group-based, traditional forms. There has only been a slight shift towards distance learning, correspondence and individual training in the period 2008-2012. These non-formal training programmes were not included in statistical data prior to 2008, and their number is still exceptionally low compared to what would be optimal.

Subsequent to the non-comprehensive analysis of the above-mentioned field, we can come to the conclusion that issues raising questions about quality can only be answered positively in certain cases. Though the supply side of the adult education market in Hungary is well regulated and motivated towards offering quality services, it was not able to ensure the guarantees on quality standards regarding the complete range of training programmes. Should a wide range of atypical training forms have become popular, access opportunities could have been improved. Those institutions who supply data must have quality standards, yet these standards are not ensured regarding other institutions.

Naturally, efficiency is influenced by factors other than the ones I focused on, and these are cross-linked and emerge as each other's consequences, such as the high level of job-seekers, a low drop-out rate, cost efficiency and transparency of the funded training programmes, etc. Data are not available for the purpose of analysing the complete range of training programmes. I believe that in order to ensure efficiency, it is of key importance to examine whether the supply meets the demand of the labour market, whether the information provided is adequate for the individual to enrol and take part in the training programme and obtain a job, the motivations of adults for learning, and the ratios of participation.

It is obvious that the conclusions we may obtain from data are mixed. Is it because of the inappropriate regulatory framework of the supply side, or is only regulation of the supply side not enough?

The answer is clear: progress must be made on the supply side, and opportunities on how to influence the demand side must be sought.

As the role of the chambers representing employers and different regional committees became more important regarding vocational training in the past few years, one area on the demand side might hopefully be able to better validate its interest.

Nevertheless, the other actor on the demand side, the potential participant, is still in the background:

- There is no wide-scale education on the importance of learning, and on the rights and opportunities framed by the law on adult education. Consequently there is a strong information-related asymmetry between “service provider” and “consumer”.
- There is no motivation for the enrolment in adult education in terms of communication or financing, there are no financing schemes applied which would contribute to the increase in the participation levels of adult education.
- There is no obligation to implement and provide information regarding the assessment and crediting of existing knowledge and efficient training forms providing better access.
- There is no representation of interest for the “consumers” in adult education.

As a result, the duties to be resolved must include the following in the upcoming period:

- Selection amongst the actors in the market of adult education;
- By providing a wider opportunity of funding and incentives, achieving a

larger number of training programmes and participants in total, especially considering those in a situation that is multiply disadvantageous;

- Strengthening learning and service by providing forms that contribute to the improvement of efficiency and access;
- Simplification of over-bureaucratised and document-oriented implementation regulations, focusing on students instead;
- Setting up direct social control: both by employers and students;
- Determination of expectations and indicators on quality approved by the public and society, and the inclusion of these in the set of requirements;
- Improvements in assisting the “consumer” to be well-informed, strengthening their motivation by providing communication and finance-related incentives;
- The installation of a coordinated, mandatory statistical system within adult education in order to evaluate efficiency as well, improving statistical discipline.

The modernisation and transformation of the legislation regarding adult education is an ongoing process today. Amendments to the Adult Education Act in 2013 include elements such as: unified licensing instead of the registration and accreditation of learning institutions, making the evaluation and crediting of existing knowledge mandatory in certain fields that are intended to resolve the above detailed problems. We can already see the first results and problems arising from the new Act. Thus, modernisation is an ongoing process, and we will be able to measure its success through the results in the years to come.

Magdolna Tratnyek

# An international overview of the ethical regulations of Lifelong Guidance and recommendations for national regulations

*The aim of the article is to help in the compilation of a code of ethics for professionals working in the field of Lifelong Guidance (LLG) by providing a brief overview of international regulations and existing codes of ethics, and drawing conclusions and recommendations based on these.*

Lifelong Guidance (LLG) is basically understood today as a range of activities that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used.<sup>1</sup>

## Particular Approach to Lifelong Guidance

Besides reviewing the legal framework, a description of LLG counsellors' activities and mapping their network of relationships are needed in order to create a code of ethics for LLG counsellors.

International organisations providing LLG have been dealing with this issue for decades; therefore, several documents contain directives in connection with it. It is quite likely that besides those materials that deal explicitly with the ethical considerations of LLG, it would also be useful to examine those which discuss the nature of this activity, especially ones which examine competences needed for LLG. We cannot undertake to present all the recommendations put forward by every organisation within the framework of this current paper; therefore, we would like to present two of these in more detail. The first of these will be the guidelines proposed by the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG). IAEVG considers it their mission to make LLG delivered by professionals available to everyone in order to support the enforcement of social justice in the world of education and employment, and to urge cooperation with stakeholders. Their goals are: setting minimal qualification requirements for professionals providing LLG, supporting methodological developments, and the application and adherence to the ethical guidelines put forward by IAEVG.

The guidelines put forward by this international LLG organisation in 1995 have had great influence on the constitution of national codes of ethics to this date. IAEVG groups the ethical principles for professionals dealing with LLG in the following manner:<sup>2</sup>

- Ethical responsibilities to clients
- Attitudes to colleagues and professional associates

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<sup>1</sup>/ Source of definition: [http://www.euroguidance.nl/uploads/ELGPNGlossaryJune2012\\_20120702140349.pdf](http://www.euroguidance.nl/uploads/ELGPNGlossaryJune2012_20120702140349.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>/ Retrieved from <http://www.iaevg.org/iaevg/nav.cfm?lang=2&menu=1&submenu=2>

- Attitudes to government and other community agencies
- Responsibilities to research and other related processes
- Responsibilities as an individual practitioner

It was in the first decade of the new millennium that a competence-based approach of counsellors appeared in Europe. In 2009, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) in cooperation with the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC) published the summary of a research study presenting the competence profile of LLG counsellors. According to this, competences of LLG counsellors can be grouped as follows:

- Foundation competences
- Client-interaction competences
- Supporting competences

While previously counselling activities were exclusively connected to career selection, from the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century this activity became one that promotes the transition from education to employment and assists in the building of a successful career path.

Since career guidance is a human service, in formulating the ethical regulations we can also take into consideration the existing ethical principles of those areas that can be related to LLG. This means social, psychological and pedagogical areas.

As Klára Szilágyi put it, “human services are a type of service which has the individual at its centre: the person, the citizen with his personal interests, characteristic way of life, unique experiences and individuality.

Human service is an activity in which all the participants, both the service providers and the clients, are unique. At the same time, they share some general, common characteristics. In the case of the service providers, this concerns the area where they are employed (social services, employment, culture), while in the case of the clients it concerns the reason why they would like to avail of that particular service, e.g. they are terminally ill, somehow disadvantaged, have learning or financial difficulties, are unemployed or homeless. Therefore, the common characteristic of human services is that they require individual problem management.” (Szilágyi 2012: 41).

When drawing up the code of ethics, it also has to be kept in mind that LLG as a human service has:

- a lifelong approach

- a process approach
- it is supportive in nature (Szilágyi 2012)

The principles along which expectations towards counsellors and ethical expectations towards their activities can be defined originate from the principles laid down in the resolution<sup>3</sup> determining the developmental objectives of LLG in harmony with the strategic objectives of the EU.

These principles are the following:

1. Encourage the lifelong acquisition of career management skills.
2. Facilitate access by all citizens to guidance services.
3. Develop quality assurance in guidance provision.
4. Encourage coordination and cooperation among the various national, regional and local stakeholders.

The 2008 council resolution states in its recommendations that in order to realise the above objectives, the member states should make use of the programme of Lifelong Learning and the opportunities provided by the European structural funds in accordance with the priorities of the member states. Moreover, it calls the member states' attention to cooperation with European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). We can rely on the principles of LLG put forward by ELGPN in 2012, which will be reviewed below.<sup>4</sup>

It defines the *centrality of the beneficiaries*, which involves independence, impartiality, confidentiality, equal opportunities, and a holistic approach.

*Enabling citizens* means active involvement between the citizen and the counsellor and other significant actors and organisations. The approach within which the counsellor heavily relies on the active involvement of the citizen during the guiding process is greatly emphasised here.

*Improving access* involves ensuring transparency, availability, accessibility, continuity and friendliness and empathy. This is where the resolution discusses the necessity of using a wide range of methods as well.

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<sup>3/</sup> Council resolution 2008/C319/02 2008

<sup>4/</sup> Lifelong Guidance Policy Development: A European Resource Kit ELGPN 2012

*Assuring quality* refers to the appropriateness of guiding methods and the need for continuous improvement. The right of redress has a significant role here, as well as the employment of competent staff.

## **Possibilities and dilemmas in connection with creating a code of ethics for LLG professionals in Hungary**

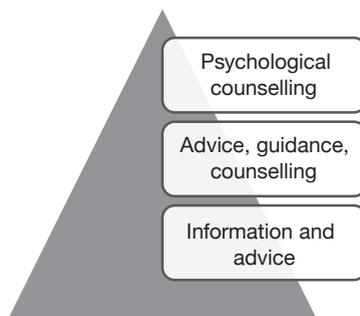
### Psychological counselling

Laws regulating the employability of LLG professionals in all walks of life are still missing. Thus, especially in the public education system, it is quite random what counselling qualifications and competencies a teacher in charge of developing Career Management Skills (CMSs) and dealing with students might have. The professional background of specialists providing LLG in employment, adult education and social spheres which are not financed by job centres is also random. Within the area of higher education, career tracking is the activity which is regulated by laws. Teachers working in higher education are rarely involved in LLG; the staff employed in career offices does not work in accordance with set standards.

Based on this, it can be established that the unification of competences and qualifications needed at different levels of LLG is badly needed. The method that could be applied to achieve this is activity analysis.

When performing activity analysis, it is expedient to start out from the three-stage LLG model:

1. *Information and advice*
2. *Advice, guidance, and counselling*
3. *Psychological counselling*



The above three stages can be identified in the different sectors as well, such as public education, vocational training, higher education, adult education, employment and social inclusion. The opportunity to make all these types of LLG available needs to be provided in every sector; however, in different stages of life, situations, and in the course of an educational and employment career, the importance of the different service types varies.

Based on an analysis of professional documents, it is the first two stages that need to be provided for a wider audience, keeping in mind that service providers' competences need to be differentiated and competence boundaries need to be determined. The latter is both a professional/training and an ethical issue, and probably this is the most difficult point in the training of service providers. Moreover, this is also the hardest to pin down within the framework of ethical norms.

In order to establish a unified professional approach, we recommend that an e-learning course about standardised fundamentals should be made compulsory for all professionals dealing with LLG.

The code of ethics regulating professional conduct is a document which covers the whole range of activities associated with LLG. Before drawing up this proposal, policy documents, best practices and similar documents existing abroad have been reviewed. It seems that professional guidelines not subject to legal regulations can only be applied successfully if:

- before their implementation, they are made open to discussion within the wider professional community;
- they are accepted at professional forums through consensus;
- their content is publicised for all of those concerned;
- observance of their rules is monitored, violations are met with sanctions;
- they are updated from time to time, according to the constant change and development of the field and the evolution of the institutional background and the sphere of service providers, in a way to harmonise with changing legal regulations.

It will probably be possible to refine issues concerning the details of implementation and specifying the authorities responsible for overseeing operation after the government decree on LLG is issued.

In the meantime, in order to satisfy the conditions listed above, the draft version of the code of ethics should be presented to the wider professional audience at professional conferences, through newsletters and internet portals, and also via the official channels of the institutions of each sector involved in LLG, which were described earlier in this paper.

Codes of ethics of different professions/areas are typically prepared in such a manner that a professional community, professional association, or an organisation/employer of the given professionals defines the behavioural, ethical standards expected in the given area. Then professionals signal their acceptance of these standards by joining the organisation/workplace.

In our case, the code of ethics was not drawn up on the initiative of a particular organisation or employer. It aims to serve as a set of guidelines for the professional conduct of LLG professionals in a changing policy environment.

Finally, we would like to recommend the following structure for the LLG counsellors' code of ethics:

#### Preamble

1. Basic principles
2. The role of LLG counsellors in the National Lifelong Guidance System
3. Expectations guiding contact and cooperation with clients
4. Expected competences of LLG counsellors
5. Commitment and responsibility
6. Accessibility and equal opportunities
7. Responsibility to provide LLG
8. Attitudes to colleagues and professional associates
9. Managing conflicts
10. Quality assurance
11. Privacy, handling information
12. Disclosure, publication
13. Closing regulations, legitimisation

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Valéria Illésné Kincsei

## How places offering apprenticeship take part in vocational training in Pécs, Hungary

*Vocational training by nature is closely intertwined with economics. Success in the labour market is largely determined by the right choice of education and trade. The future success of the school system and vocational training system will require adjustment with the changes in the social-economic field. This article will analyse the current and future state of vocational training with reference to the economic situation in Pécs.*

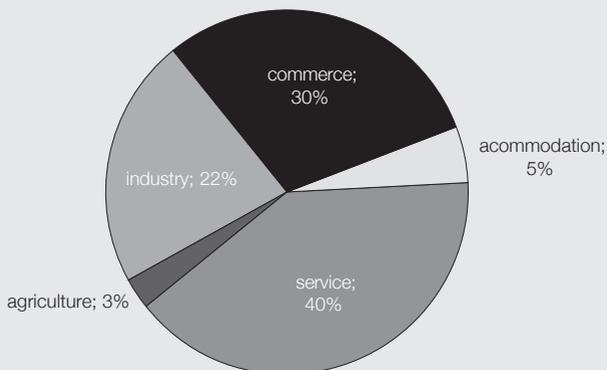
## Vocational training institutions and the economy

There is a strong correlation between economic and social processes with respect to vocational training. However, these processes are also influenced by the geographic setting in which they take place. As part of this overview we will examine the economic structure and demographics of Pécs and its catchment area.

Pécs is the capital city of Baranya County, which is located in the Transdanubian Region. This region mainly comprises small villages and can be considered mid-sized as concerns its territory. The central nature of the city is shown by the fact that 85 % of the county population lives in Pécs. With its network of institutions, Pécs also plays a central role in public administration.

Demographically, Baranya County has a declining and ageing population, with relatively high mortality and moderate fertility rates. The 0-14 age group represents only 15 % of the population of the region. Based on these trends, declining numbers of students are forecast to enter secondary education in the future. Due to the situation of vocational training in the education system this figure will result in an even more significant decrease in the number of students. The process of population decline has been aggravated by numerous changes in employment structure, which has caused an increase in work-related migration to other countries. Employment figures of the region indicate that most of the employed population works in Pécs. These workplaces are mostly micro and medium sized businesses within the commercial and service sectors (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Businesses and their divisions**



Source: KSH (Central Statistical Office, Budapest - Hungary)

Agriculture makes up only a small percentage of the local economy, and mainly comprises the production of grain and grapes. The service sector is dominated by finance, economics and commerce. Catering has a more modest share, although there is a high potential for growth in this field.

At the county level employment possibilities mainly appear to be situated in Pécs (75 % of workplaces).

### **The role of apprenticeship in the vocational training system**

Cooperation between businesses, companies and vocational training institutions is not always smooth. The willingness of companies to accept students for apprenticeships is not without problems. Employers also find it difficult to meet the requirements both at the city and county level.

According to the new vocational training Act, the number of apprenticeships to be integrated into the system should multiply within a few years. This is a large and complex task. A vocational training system should be developed which enables the placement of students at different levels of education. Existing apprenticeships should be maintained in the new system. At the same time, new companies which are willing to accept students will need to adapt to personnel, technical and technological changes. Workplaces will need to be integrated into the training process to a much greater extent than previously. Schools and apprenticeships need to develop clear communication systems in order to assist each other and adequately prepare students for vocational exams and the requirements of the labour market. Chambers have an important role to assist the involved parties in this complex process. Chambers have a wealth of up-to-date data regarding the economy, businesses, schools, students, and the need for apprenticeships.

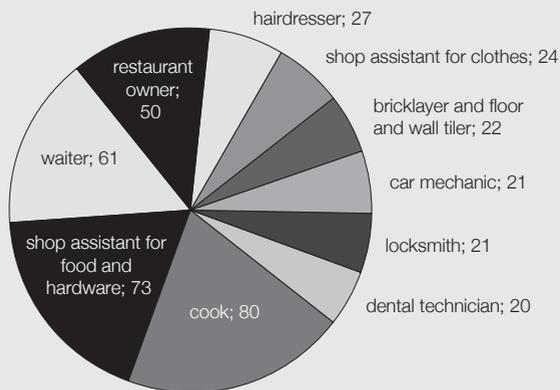
Businesses have a very important role in training and equipping young people for the future. To realise this goal it is essential that apprenticeships have proper technical equipment and training staff with quality vocational and teaching skills. With the introduction of the new vocational training system, apprenticeships will have a greater responsibility than previously. According to the new system, students will continue increasing their knowledge at apprenticeships after leaving school workshops during the last years of their vocational training. As such, apprenticeships will be responsible for preparing students for vocational exams. This presents a great challenge for them both in terms of personnel and technical preparation.

Vocational schools and the Chamber will provide professional help, support and supervision for businesses and companies which offer places

of apprenticeship in order to promote a uniform system which provides students with quality training. These businesses and companies should be trained in how to equip students with the theoretical knowledge and practical skills required for both vocational exams and industry. They should also ensure they have the correct tools, equipment and technical proficiency required for the process. They must be familiar with the professional, curricular, and examination requirements for a given trade. Vocational schools in Pécs accept students from the outlying catchment area as well. Most of these students commute to attend theoretical training. However, students choose a local place of apprenticeship if there is a business in the area which can offer a place meeting the requirements.

Several economic fields are represented in the existing places of apprenticeship in Pécs and the surrounding area, as shown in Figure 2. Currently the most numerous include cooks (80 places), shop assistants for food and hardware (73), waiters (61), and restaurant owners (50).

**Figure 2: Trades with the most apprenticeship**



*Source: Pécs-Baranyai Chamber of Industry database October 2013 (Pécs-Baranyai Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara adatbázisa - 2013 október)*

Comparing the division of places of apprenticeship with the ratio of economic sectors mentioned previously shows a strong similarity. The commercial and catering sectors dominate in both the economy and training. From among the places offering a low number of places we can see 6 trades where only very few businesses offer places of apprentice-

ship. These include bricklayer, wall and floor tiler, post office clerk and painter and decorator. Bookbinder and cannery worker have only 1 place. Post office clerk also has only one place due to its nature. It is notable that the places of apprenticeship of fashionable trades such as hairdressers and beauticians are present in a greater ratio; with hairdresser students accepted at 27 places while beautician students have 16 places.

The Ministry of National Economy and the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry have named 10 shortage occupations for the next school year. An overview of the vocational training for these trades reveals the following availability; carpenter (7 places), tinker (0 place), building and construction locksmith under the name of locksmith (21), CNC machine operator (0), machinist (14), welder (17), industrial mechanic (earlier called locksmith, 21 places), gardener (0), social worker and nurse (0), electrician (14).

Other trades which are considered to be in shortage within Baranya county are: carpenter, makers of handcrafted leather goods, Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machine operator, practising nurse, meat industry worker, vehicle spare part maker, bricklayer, wall and floor tiler, agricultural mechanic, and fine china and porcelain maker. Carpenters are offered 16 places, bricklayers and wall and floor tilers 22 places, and meat industry workers a further 9 places. It is startling to see that the other 6 shortage trades currently have no places in Baranya County.

A review of the economic past of the area should give cause to re-think training strategies in these areas. Leather-making and other attached industries such as makers of handcrafted leather goods, gloves and leatherwear production in Pécs have earned a worldwide reputation. The Zsolnay Porcelain Factory is also world famous, and yet they do not train students.

On the other hand, these fields mainly employ a female workforce. The variety of employment options for female students is narrow for those who do not desire to work in commerce or catering. Consequently, it would be beneficial to have more options for apprenticeship in these fields. It would be a great loss to allow these important and historical trades to disappear completely due to a lack of skilled workforce.

## **Vocational training schools in Pécs**

Training of the future workforce is currently being provided for many areas of the economy in Pécs. In the 2013/2014 school year, 15 schools accepted students for full-time vocational training (evening schools are not count-

ed). These schools offer vocational training as well as a colourful student life and a selection of extra curricular programmes.

Almost half of the vocational schools in Baranya County are situated in Pécs, and a bit more than half of the County's 5684 students study in Pécs, as shown in Table 1. This ratio is consistent with population data and the fact that Pécs is the centre of the County.

**Table 1: Hungarian VET in Spatial and Demographic Relations – South-Trans-Danubian Trends**

Area	Population	%	Vocational schools	%	Students	%
Hungary	9,937,628	100.0 %	838	100.0 %	139,160	100.0 %
South Transdanubian Region	937,229	9.4 %	88	10.5 %	15,973	11.5 %
Baranya County	390,181	3.9 %	36	4.3 %	5,684	4.1 %
Pécs (city)	157,261	1.6 %	17	2.0 %	3,201	2.3 %

*Source: KSH data (Central Statistical Office, Budapest – Hungary; year 2011)*

Due to changes in the structure of vocational training, apprenticeships have a larger role to play than previously. It can be forecasted that within a few years schools will have a high demand for apprenticeships, which cannot be met without intensively involving additional resources such as a network of businesses. The number of students enrolling in apprenticeship will definitely increase. Training institutions will need to embrace change in order to meet growing needs. Additional counselling services will be required from schools and the Chamber.

### **The role of the Hungarian Chamber of Industry and Commerce in vocational training**

The scope and influence of the Hungarian Chamber of Industry and Commerce have been modified many times since its establishment. It is responsible for regulating vocational training in industry and commerce in a uniform manner across the country.

The role of the Chamber is also to ensure that training programmes meet the demands of the labour market by promoting effective cooperation. The Pécs-Baranya Chamber of Commerce and Industry has an integral role in vocational training in the county. It has an important role in assessing local economic conditions and making suggestions about changes to vocational training. While closely watching the needs of the labour market, it also works as a communication channel between businesses and schools, passing on positive and negative feedback in a constructive manner.

The Chamber is also responsible for overseeing student contracts. It countersigns and files compulsory contracts for an average of 1600-1800 students. The Chamber also reviews all the conditions in the contracts, and assesses whether the conditions among which students are trained have been met in terms of personnel, facilities, equipment and safety requirements, prior to issuing trainers and apprenticeships a certificate. Where conditions are not adequately met, the Chamber offers professional assistance.

Through its network of professionals, the Chamber takes part in organising level and final vocational exams. It organises examination chairmen and examiners, and also manages the student database which contains the results. The Chamber also trains professional examiners and provides them with up-to-date information.

The Chamber organises the “Best Student of the Trade” competitions where students are given the opportunity to display their dedication and skill both in practice and in theoretical knowledge. Students who score 60 % and above in these competitions are exempt from passing certain parts of the vocational exam.

In summary, the Chamber works as a mediator between training institutions and economic stakeholders in order to create uniform and quality training programmes.

## **Counselling in career choice and vocational education**

Choosing a career is one of the most significant steps in the life of a student. A quality education can be the foundation of a successful career. It is very important that students are encouraged to make these decisions with care. There are many resources available to assist young people in this process.

Most students consider that personal experience and first impressions are very important. In this generation, websites are often the first place students will turn to for information. In this way they can gain an insight into the student life at a given school through web pages. As such, photos made public on websites greatly influence their decision. They are also able to find helpful information in booklets about trades offered by various schools. The opinion and experience of friends, acquaintances and family members (siblings, cousins) is also very important.

Career choice programmes for students are organised in the city on a regular basis. The Job Centre of Baranya County Government Office has started the “What’s up with your future?” (“Mi a playa?”) programme. Here secondary schools have the opportunity to introduce themselves, and students can easily compare several schools at one location (Szivárvány Gyermekház).

For elementary school leavers and their parents “Open Days” are provided. During these events, schools introduce various trades by exhibiting their products and give students the opportunity to visit some classes and even try out certain trades on the day. These programmes are proving to be quite popular, with students visiting 3 or 4 schools on average.

Secondary schools also take part in career choice parent-teacher meetings at elementary schools. The role of parents is significant as career choices begin at a young age in this system of training.

There is a series of events called “Open Gates” which is organised by Pécs-Baranya Chamber of Commerce and Industry. At these programmes, businesses in the county offer students the opportunity to get an insight into various trades. Several trades are introduced by businesses ranging from small to multinational companies. Elementary school leavers as well as secondary school students are welcome at these programmes.

Career counselling services are offered by the Centre of Pedagogy and Professional Services of Baranya County (Baranyai Pedagógiai Szakszolgálatok és Szakmai Szolgáltatások Központja). They aim to help students in career and school choice, and accept students up to the age of 14. Several experts work with the students, who make suggestions for school/trade choice after testing the competences, skills and abilities of students. This service seems to be the least known by students, and is mostly used by students who struggle with some kind of learning difficulty or behaviour problem. A successful education is based on a careful choice of school. Obtaining all the relevant information for this choice is essential. As has been discussed, information is passed on to students in the city of Pécs at a variety of levels.

## Conclusions

Pécs offers students a wide range of choices for training and career development. The city's existing education system can develop a good basis for meeting the demands of a changing economy and labour market. At the same time, creating more apprenticeships is essential for the continued development of the city and the region. Starting new businesses, attracting businesses from other areas, and also developing existing ones would be beneficial for vitalizing the local economy.

With the new reforms to the vocational education system and other changes, as discussed previously, we can see that more apprenticeship places will be needed in several trades, particularly in those occupations with a shortage of skilled labour. It is also important to widen the range of available trades for female students.

After successful completion of vocational exams, many young people currently face unemployment, with associated feelings of rejection and failure. We need to intervene in this cycle to provide better alternatives. A strong vocational training and education system, and a diverse economy which is open to innovation are the keys to giving the next generation success in the job market. We should enhance cooperation and partnerships between these parties in order to achieve this goal in Baranya County.

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## The European Capital of Culture project of Pécs reflected by public opinion

*What has actually remained after the first European Capital of Culture (ECOC) programme in Hungary? Can it be considered a success story? Recent research findings may shed a different light on professional views, introducing the results of a questionnaire survey administered to local inhabitants. Expectations of the population, having been documented in 2008, were met. According to the majority of the respondents, the emerging image of Pécs is positive both locally and nationally, and also in the international arena. This article is mainly based on the responses to the author's own empirical survey, as gleaned from the more than three thousand respondents in Hungary between 2008 and 2012, many of whom are learning adults who consider Cultural Capitals as places of learning as in the core intention of ECOC, namely, to form a learning city.*

## Introduction

### Competitiveness of Big Cities in Hungary

What has actually remained after the first European Capital of Culture (ECOC) programme in Hungary? Can it be considered a success story? Taking the findings of our former research as a basis, the following hypothesis can be stated for our questions: The advantages mentioned about big cities are usually related to the supply of high quality commerce and services and to better employment conditions, whereas disadvantages include the impersonality of big cities and their crowdedness, their polluted environment and finally their worse public safety. (In our interpretation, big cities are settlements with more than 100,000 inhabitants, while small towns are settlements with a population of less than 20,000. Kovács 2010)

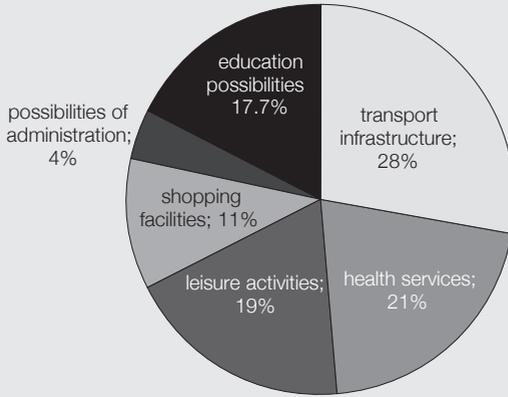
The biggest advantage of big cities is their abundance – in both quantity and quality – of retail businesses and their supply of services. Of all the answers given by those questioned in the survey, 75 % are related to this, while the remaining answers mentioned good employment conditions (24 %) and other factors (1 %).

Within the group of services, most respondents mentioned advanced and well established transport infrastructure and available local public transportation (27.6 %). This is followed by the full range of high quality health services (21.2 %), diverse leisure and entertainment facilities and the access to culture and sports (19.2 %). Further factors, in order of importance are the wide range of (further) education possibilities, high quality educational structure (17.7 %), the access to retail networks offering good prices and adequate opening hours (10.8 %), and finally (at 3.5 %) the complexity of possibilities of administration (see Figure 1).

Regarding the further breakdown of employment conditions, higher wages were mentioned, as was the wider supply of better jobs.

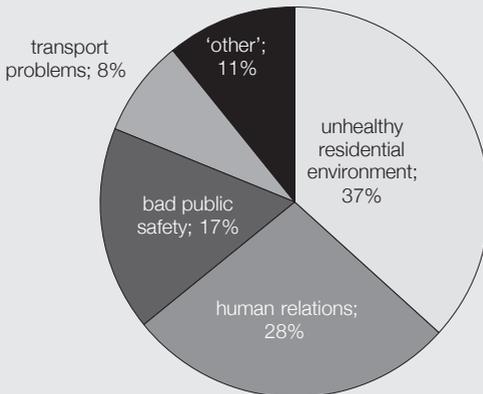
What partially contradicts our hypothesis is that the list of disadvantages associated with big cities is led not by impersonality but the polluted and unhealthy residential environment. This was stated as a critique in more than one-third (36.6 %) of the responses. A quarter of respondents (28.2 %) feel that alienated, indifferent human relations are a problem, while bad public safety was mentioned by slightly fewer people (16.5 %). A separate category, unlike in our previous research, is transport problems, negative phenomena coming from traffic jams, the lack of parking places and crowded public transportation (8.1 %). We also made a category called 'other' (10.6 %), including ethnic problems, high costs of living – expensive real estate, obsolete residential buildings and a hectic, stress-filled life (Figure 2).

**Figure 1: Level of supply and services as factors of the advantages of big cities in the responses of the Hungarian population, 2012**



Source: Questionnaire survey of the author (2012)

**Figure 2: Breakdown of the disadvantages of big cities in the responses of the Hungarian population, 2012**



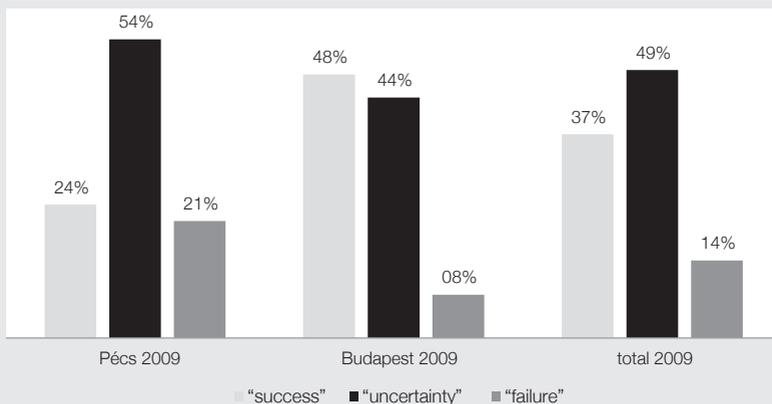
Source: Questionnaire survey of the author (2012-2013)

## History of the European Capital of Culture project of Pécs

Pécs won the European Capital of Culture title in 2006, competing with ten other Hungarian cities. The city of Pécs is the first holder of this title in Hungary. We can clearly say that the award of the title filled the – understandably proud – citizens of Pécs with optimistic expectations and hopes for the development of the city. This is also why the following chaotic years resulted in so much disappointment; the chaos was primarily due to the personal conflicts within the organisation responsible for the management of the event, the continuous fluctuation of the staff, communication problems and belated tendering and implementation activities. The initial phase of euphoria was replaced by disillusionment.

In the representative questionnaire survey conducted in 2008 and 2009 (the breakdown of the respondents by gender and school education reflected the composition of the inhabitants in the cities with county rank and the capital city) a total of 2,000 persons were asked in Pécs and Budapest about the European Capital of Culture – Pécs 2010 programme. The research was carried out jointly with the students of the Faculty of Adult Education and Human Resources Development, University of Pécs.

**Figure 3: Associations related to the expression European Capital of Culture – Pécs 2010, in Pécs, Budapest and total, 2009**



Source: Questionnaire survey of the author (2008-2009)

Knowing the mostly negative events of the previous years, it is not at all surprising that the idea which most people associated with the title European Capital of Culture – Pécs 2010 was “uncertainty” (48.8 %), the word “success” came to the minds of fewer respondents (37.1 %), while “failure” was mentioned by 14.1 % of the respondents (see Figure 3). The respondents in Pécs were especially critical; it is interesting that in Budapest the majority were those who expected success, both in 2008 and 2009 – it is true, on the other hand, that their proportion decreased by more than 10 percent in a year (from 59 % to 48 %).

The majority opinion was that “the programme will be implemented but not become a success story”. It is worrying that the number of those local citizens who assumed the cancellation of the programme almost doubled in one year.

## 2010 – the Event Year

As a preliminary fact, we have to make clear that the events were implemented, and the continuous offer of programmes resulted in a growth of the number of participants day by day. This was promoted by the construction of a motorway right into Pécs, and the investments realised. Although success propaganda has begun, we cannot hush the opinions criticising the programme series for the lack of character, the gradual depreciation and quality loss – also, many believe that the fragile and short-term success is only due to the originally low expectations coming from disappointment accumulated through the years.

In such a large scale event it is of course impossible to make a complete list of achievements, even for the short-term ones. There are only a few facts and figures about the event year that we want to elucidate, about the programmes implemented, the international relations, tourism and the new investments.

In the framework of the European Capital of Culture series, more than four thousand programmes were realised in Pécs, from which approximately 2,700 were subsidised cultural initiatives (Müller 2011). During the year 2010 the programme organisers invited artists and participants from 56 countries of the world. The events in Pécs were realised in 230 venues, with the active participation of almost 200 stakeholders (Pécs 2010, Európa Kulturális Fővárosa, 2010, Évi programok értékelése).

As regards the enrichment of the international relations of Pécs, the cooperation with Germany is of special importance. In addition to the co-organiser city of Essen, it was, among others, Stuttgart, Karlsruhe and Berlin with whose cooperation almost fifty programmes were organised. The winning bid of Pécs also resulted in successful cooperation with the

countries of the southern cultural zone, with Croatia in the first place, but also with Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the whole there were over a thousand articles mentioning Pécs in the major foreign press organisations (Ágoston 2011).

The number of visitors arriving at Pécs grew by a considerable 25.7 %, the increase of guest nights spent in the city was even more spectacular, in 2010 exceeding by 27.5 % the figure of the previous year. Over a quarter of the visitors to Pécs (27.8 %) came from abroad; they spent no less than 32.65 % of all guest nights realised in the city (Pécs 2010 Európa Kulturális Fővárosa, 2010. Évi programok értékelése, 2011).

The touristic impact of the ECOC after the year of the event – more precisely, the lack of such an impact – is reflected by the number of guests in the city in 2011 and 2012 (Tájékoztatási Adatbázis). Already in 2011, the figures show a significant decline in the number of guests, a decrease of 20 % (which was even larger, 30 % for foreigners) resulted in a return to the numbers of the year before the event, 2009. A decline of similar magnitude can be observed if we look at the number of guest nights spent in the city of Pécs (an almost 15 % fall as regards domestic guests and an over 25 % decline for foreigners).

Let us return for a while to the key projects of the winning bid of Pécs. The programme of the renewal of public squares and parks was, all in all, successful, as the urban spaces and parks were revitalised over more than 31 hectares, offering a suitable location for the planned new uses of space. As regards the renewal of the public spaces, 94 % of the respondents were satisfied with this (Kovács 2011).

The thirteen thousand square metre modern building of the Knowledge Centre is deservedly popular with the visitors. The project offered a framework for the complete service integration of the three libraries of the city; the knowledge centre function is completed by research rooms and internet workstations, while the uppermost level houses the children's library, connected to the roof garden. In 2013 the number of registered users was over 26,000, of whom almost 21,000 can be regarded as active readers<sup>1</sup>.

The Zsolnay Cultural Quarter and the Kodály Centre together resulted in the birth of 44,000 m<sup>2</sup> of new cultural space (Kovács 2011:99).

The outer and inner design of the Kodály Centre and the technical solutions of the building all deserve recognition. The complex includes a state-of-the-art concert hall of international rank and a conference centre with an area of over 11,000 m<sup>2</sup> <sup>2</sup>. At the 131 events organised in 2012, a total

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1/ Retrieved from [www.tudaskozpont-pecs.hu](http://www.tudaskozpont-pecs.hu)

2/ Retrieved from [www.kodalykozpont.hu](http://www.kodalykozpont.hu)

of 79,368 visitors were registered, which is over the figures expected in the European Union bid (which was 50,000 paying guests for the whole year).

The Zsolnay Cultural Quarter was home to a total of 1100 events in 2012. Of the more than 245,000 visitors, almost 205,000 were paying guests (the expected number of paying guests specified in the European Union bid was 150,000 persons).<sup>3</sup>

### Evaluation of the ECOC – Pécs 2010 programme events

The question is how these developments were experienced by the citizens of Pécs. What has been achieved from one of the major expectations of the ECOC title, i.e. that the series of programmes as a large community experience would strengthen local identity and would make a positive contribution to the image of the cultural capital city. Is it possible that the disappointment of the stakeholders resulted in processes opposite to what had been expected?

In the framework of our repeated data collection in 2011-2012, another questionnaire survey using a sample of 1000 people, representative for the country as a whole, was done (the breakdown of respondents by gender, age groups and school education reflected the Hungarian population).

We sought the answers to the following questions in 2011:

- How closely is the expression ‘ECOC’ related to the city of Pécs?
- How did the assessment of Pécs change in the year of the programme series?
- What positive and negative impacts can be felt in the city as a consequence of the series of events?
- On the whole, what is the people’s judgement of the programme series?

The following hypotheses were stated prior to the processing of the questionnaires:

1. The expression ‘ECOC’ has become part of the image of the city both locally and at national level.
2. The judgment of Pécs has somewhat improved over the last year. A positive change was experienced both in the city and in the country. In Pécs there is an even larger proportion of those who think that the image of the city has improved a lot.

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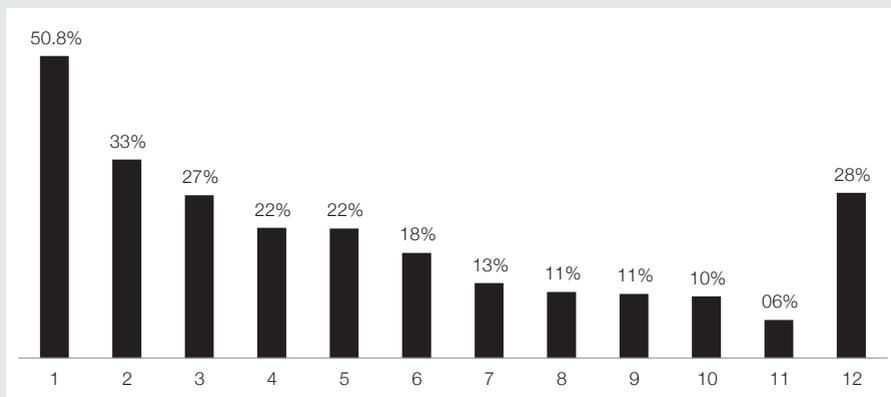
<sup>3/</sup> Retrieved from [www.zsokkft.hu](http://www.zsokkft.hu)

3. Among the achievements of the event series, most people mention the development of tourism, the improvement of infrastructure, the better domestic and international judgement of Pécs, the more liveable city and the more open people because of the event, the more positive attitude towards culture and the birth of adequate cultural institutions. The frequently mentioned negative consequences include the growing indebtedness of the city, and the further penetration of corruption.
4. On the whole, the programme series of European Capital of Culture – Pécs 2010 was more positively experienced by respondents.

#### Appearance of ECOC in the image of Pécs

Regarding the question of what expression comes to their mind when they hear the name of Pécs, 21.8 % of respondents mentioned ECOC. This is the fourth or fifth most frequent mention (see Figure 4), but if we calculate with the expression “European Capital of Culture” and the category “culture, museums, theatre” as one common category, the frequency of mentions is almost 50 %.

**Figure 4: What expressions come to mind about Pécs?**



*Legend: 1 = sight of interest in Pécs (Djami, TV tower, Cathedral, Széchenyi Square), 2 = University of Pécs (student city), 3 = culture (museums, theatre, National Theatre Days of Pécs), 4 = Mecsek (zoo), 5 = ECOC, 6 = Mediterranean atmosphere (a milieu), 7 = Zsolnay, 8 = public services (clinics, public administration, shopping centres), 9 = locations of the industry of Pécs (mining, brewery, tobacco factory), 10 = entertainment and fun, 11 = sport life of Pécs (women's basketball, PVSK), 12 = other*

According to previous surveys, the city of Pécs has no powerful symbols and a distinguishable character, it is most frequently (6.6 %) linked to the university (Mészáros, Orosdy 2012).

Our first hypothesis, i.e. that the expression 'ECOC' has become part of the image of the city, is justified.

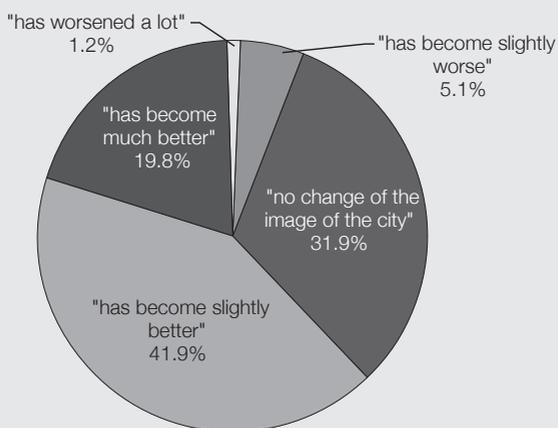
Our survey revealed an improvement in the judgement of Pécs both locally and nationally as a result of the year 2010 (see Figure 5). In contrast to the 61.7 percent of more positive thinkers at the national level, 66.4 percent of the local residents were also positive in their opinions.

Not surprisingly, there is a more positive image in the participants of the events of the ECOC than in those who did not take part in any form in the series of events in 2010.

The most frequently mentioned results were the growth in the tourism sector, the birth of new cultural institutions, the positive change in the image of the city, the development of infrastructure, the more positive attitude of people towards culture, the development of Pécs into a regional cultural centre by international standards, and in general, the fact that the city became more liveable.

The fact that the "city is more liveable" was mentioned by three times more respondents after the event than the number of people who had pre-

**Figure 5: How has the opinion about Pécs changed in you over the last year? (breakdown of responses nationally, 2011)**

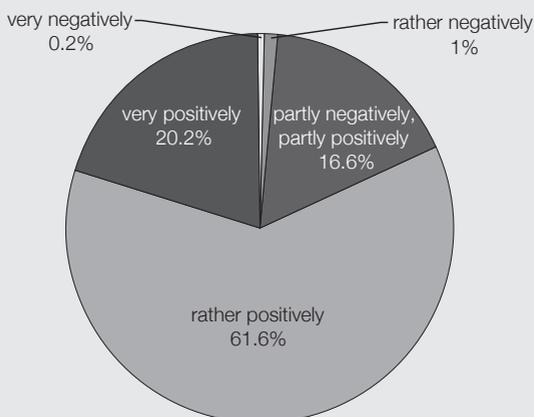


Source: Questionnaire survey of the author (2011).

viously expected it (Koltai 2012). The reason why our hypothesis was only partially verified is that the negative consequences (growing indebtedness, penetration of corruption) were less frequent than had been expected among the responses.

The last question of our questionnaire survey sought the answer to how respondents saw the event on the whole, after its closing. The breakdown of the responses received clearly shows that almost 82 % of respondents experienced the programme as a positive phenomenon (see Figure 6). The result on a five-grade scale (4.0) supports our last hypothesis.

**Figure 6: How do you assess the programme series European Capital of Culture – Pécs 2010 on the whole?**



*Source: Questionnaire survey of the author (2011)*

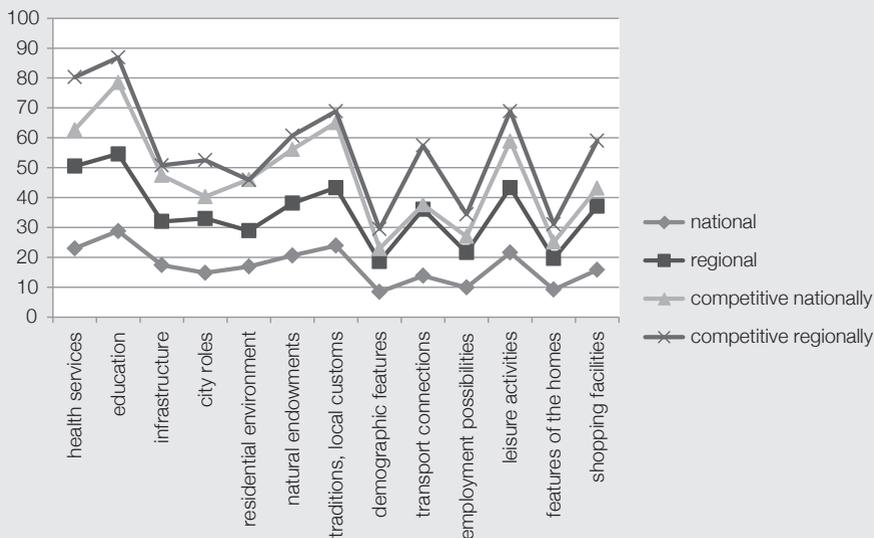
### **Assessment of the Attraction of Pécs at National and Regional level**

We analysed the data recorded in the following way:

- we compared the opinions of the 1,000 respondents of the national sample to the answers received from the inhabitants of the respective region home to the town, as a result of which the characteristic features of the respective settlements could be seen (in Figure 7 they are marked with “national” and “regional”);

- on the other hand, we narrowed down the survey to those respondents who considered the respective settlement competitive, and so the subject of analysis was now the breakdown of “competitive responses”; in other words, we were looking for the factors underrated at national or regional scale (marked with “competitive nationally” and “competitive regionally”).

**Figure 7: Assessment of Pécs by the responses of the Hungarian population, 2012**



Source: Questionnaire survey of the author (2012)

Regarding Pécs, the following remarks can be made:

- In its assessment at the national level the city has marked competitiveness in the rank of Hungarian cities in five factors: educational structure, history of the city, health services, leisure facilities and natural endowments.
- This was supplemented by two further factors mentioned by South Transdanubian respondents (transport relations and retail network).

In accordance with our hypothesis, there are some factors mentioned much more frequently than in the national sample (the growth was in excess of 20 percent in several cases).

- Analysing the responses, Pécs is a competitive city. We can say that transport relations, health care, the development level of the retail network and the complexity of urban functions are considerably overrated categories in the region, and to a smaller extent this is also true for leisure facilities.

## Final conclusion

Before anyone expects me to make a balance of the ECOC – Pécs 2010 programme series, I must admit that now, after more than three years following the event, it is still not possible to do it objectively.

The publication of our research findings may put a different light on the professional views by introducing the results of a questionnaire survey done with the inhabitants. The expectations of the population stated in 2008 were met, the series of events still lives as a positive experience in the majority of the respondents, and so the judgement of Pécs has changed for the better both locally and nationally, and also in the international arena. The key projects seem to be viable; numbers of visitors to the newly established cultural institutions are far above the values defined in the project expectations.

Does it make sense to talk about a clear success or failure? I do not think it does. Could more have been realised from the original ideas of the winning bid? Probably yes. Was the programme year less successful than had previously been expected, leaving a lack in almost all stakeholders? It certainly was.

Do not forget, however, the statement of József Takács (author of the winning bid) who described the bid of Pécs as a convincing fiction, sort of putting the ways and depth of implementation into the hands of the citizens of Pécs.

“The ECOC created the foundations for the further steps.” (Kovács 2011:113). The development potential is given and although the change of cultural scale that had been dreamt of has not yet been achieved, by a shift of scale in our thinking we may get closer to the so attractive ideal and the already weakened spirit of “The borderless city”, perhaps implementing in this way a real cultural decentralisation (A határtalan város 2005).

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# Challenges to the development of adult education and the need for social capital in post-war Europe

*This article will examine and address key issues and reasons which made adult and continuing education in 20th Century Europe strongly depend on particular social patterns and norms reflecting the status and perspectives of autonomy and intervention. However, it will demonstrate a correlation between underdeveloped markets, open societies and that of closed, autocratic politics. Therefore, this article critically marks the need for more integrated policy developments in European adult learning and education and, also, for more cooperation for the promotion and the dissemination of good practices and quality research in order to balance the economic with a more social approach.*

## Introduction

In the last two hundred years, adult education has become an advocate of modernity, namely, of organised social and economic development of liberalised societies and regulated economic production, and the case of the history of modern British adult education, for example, underlines this argument well (Fieldhouse 2000). Historical research of adult education in Europe has revealed that even the semi-developed, modestly democratised states, for a while, favoured the spread of adult education and its movements (Kulich 1984). However, Steele argued that a special rise and fall could be identified in the period from 1848 to 1939, therefore, one must recognise that development of adult education institutions, organisations and movements have always been non-linear (Steele 2007).

## Historical, political and social dimensions and patterns

Even post-modern societies are not completely aware of the implications of negative effects on the basic rights of their fellow members. Therefore, it is necessary to turn one's attention to the examples of attempts to make adult education a part of educational policies during the period when the process of democratisation reached some states. It began mainly at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries when most of the Nordic countries passed laws on education that recognised adult schooling and education and gave them rights equal to those of public and higher education. In the final year of World War I, the British coalition government set up a special commission to make use of adult education in order to prepare for a dramatically changing post-war social and economic environment. The famous *1919 Report* was seen as an outstanding document which recognised adult education as a permanent national necessity and as an inseparable aspect of citizenship and, for this reason, it should be universal and lifelong in order to promote an intelligent public (Ministry of Reconstruction - The 1919 Report).

A second significant moment for the role of adult education in society was the argument from Lindeman who, in a very important period between the wars, said that adult education would have a role in the development of effective learning, moreover, in social change and, also, in the building of democracy (Lindeman 1926; Brookfield 1987). At the same time, in the Weimar Republic of Germany, Rosenstock and Picht underlined a need for a more systematically structured teaching of adult education, and they used the term *andragogy*, so as to differentiate the education of adults

from pedagogy and, simultaneously, from demagogy (Picht & Rosenstock 1926).

After 1945, in the post-war environment, it took roughly two decades for European countries to go through a significant democratisation process, even countries of Central-East Europe implemented mass education for adults, though the systems of education were under strict state control. From the late 1960s or from the early 1970s, depending on the countries, a more social-oriented and fairly social-democratic policy shift strengthened adult education in the Western and Northern part of Europe. There was an attempt to provide wider access with 'second chance' education, compensatory education, community-orientation, further education and inclusive policies, etc. Also, the recognition of the social functions of adult education and training reached the public policy environment in Europe in the 1960s and 1970s, roughly at the time when – according to Coombs – education was in a crisis in the West (Coombs 1968). Adult education became interesting and a direct means of implementing government policy, a compensatory social mechanism. This process could be understood as a temporary collaboration of social democratic forces to achieve educational reform in a period when business groups wanted to accomplish a modernising shift towards industry and services.

The British example is outlined in the famous *Russell Report on Adult Education*<sup>1</sup> which considered adult education as if the economy did not exist (Jackson 1997), whereas, new policies later considered adult education and training for the economy as if society did not exist. The Russell Report was researched and written during the final years of the welfare-state, when engagement of attention to popular education dramatically changed. Two decades later, social cohesion declined, full employment, as a cornerstone of consensus, was dropped from the political agenda of all parties in the United Kingdom (UK). As Russell indicated, in order to link personal, community and vocational interests in civil society, there needs to be cooperation, collaboration and alliances across public institutional patterns and between the state and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Later on, the market model pushed education providers to defend institutional interests in order to compete and, consequently, make people choose alternative provisions where service and combination of time and space were more appropriate (ibid 1997).

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1/ <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1973/may/23/adult-education-the-russell-report>

The other example of the period is the internationally well-known Faure Report<sup>2</sup> which appeared at a time before the crisis of the welfare state. It implied a conceptual differentiation between policy and strategy, and this had not yet been explored in the adult and lifelong learning literature. In reality, the conceptual frame, according to policy, defined the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) approach to describe adult and lifelong learning as a way of thinking about educational policies of member states (UNESCO, 1972). The Faure Report took a definitely clear position and called attention to potential threats imposed by mass media and communication and called for the promotion of democratic citizenship, environmental protection, and international solidarity. Adult educators and researchers of adult education policy development have to recognise it as a weighty document in favour of progressive policy orientated towards welfare tasks and responsibilities which views adult education as part of the system of education. It signalled a need for a higher level of state intervention and, also, a higher degree of national sovereignty (Griffin 1999; Rubenson 1999).

Finally, one must indicate the role of the Club of Rome and its famous paper on *No Limits to Learning*. That document called for a more enthusiastic support for learning to allow societies to resolve their problems and open up to new dimensions of growth in more holistic and immaterial aspects. Also, the same document called attention to the changing nature and scales of state intervention into education (Club of Rome 1979).

Research on the history of adult education, which was mainly organised and coordinated by a few scholars in Europe from the early 1980s, by such researchers as Pöggeler, Leirman, Zdarzil, Joachim Knoll, Fieldhouse, Field, Turos, Friedental-Haase and Samolovcev, took particular themes into the focus of research in order to reflect the limits and divisions of the very divided field of adult education and training in Europe. Those research projects revisited some major documents and policy papers on adult learning and education with a more holistic and interdisciplinary approach. Researchers of adult learning and education today, in my understanding, ought to recognise that the evolution of adult education mirrors the changes in society, therefore, unusual/atypical forms of adult learning must be considered as important and new forms of learning spaces and communities are to be considered. It is rather mistaken to think only in traditional settings and structures while the history of adult education reflects a process of on-going preparation for change and change for developments in social, economic, political, etc., settings. Recognising

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2/ <http://eric.ed.gov/?q=Faure+Report+&id=ED070736>

this may teach us to turn the limits and divisions of adult learning of the 20th century into benefits for new forms of adult education today (English & Mayo 2012).

Accordingly, Hake stressed that in contrast to public education, the historical expansion of adult learning and new learning spaces used by adults has cemented an alternative channel of social mobility through non-formal routes (Hake 2006). Early forms of modern adult education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries formed an alternative path to social mobility distinct from formal education. In some cases, however, non-formal routes enabled entry to formal qualifications which remained a prerogative of public education systems (Arvidson 1995).

### **Adult education, the state and social issues**

Pöggeler pointed out that “in the history of adult education, the interdependence between education, politics, economy, and social life must be considered” (Pöggeler 1996). When researchers of European adult learning and education examine the modernity features of systems of adult education in the countries of Europe, they have to realise that the evolution of the state has strongly influenced the impact and roles of adult education on the development of autonomy for individuals and their communities, depending mainly on political and economic interests (Pöggeler 1990). In the development of adult education, a significant point was the emergence of the welfare state as it started to form its educational policy based upon the expansion of basic rights to its citizens, generally from 1850 onwards. For adult education, it took until 1950, in Central and Eastern Europe even later, that the process of democratisation made most states recognise that adults would have a basic universal right to learn and be educated. It is a peculiar paradox that there are individuals in many parts of Europe today, who cannot implement this right of theirs, although they would formally have every right to do so. According to this context, Bélanger rightly underlined the impact of non-working time referring to the development of new social space with new issues. (Bélanger 1995)

The rather obvious over-polarisation of educational demands on the constraints and claims of work has generated, in the last five decades, an anachronistic situation as adults participate in learning activities in multiple ways and for various reasons, therefore, one must recognise that the development and changes of educational demands can only be understood through paying attention to the social participation and to the new social actors which tend to be fairly autonomous from direct labour conditions,

such as feminists, environmental activists, and other new social movements of particular regions throughout Europe.

The relation of current educational policies to adult learning and education has a strong correlation to certain demands, the demand of the labour market, and that of society. These two demands are rather difficult to meet at the same time, since the first one aims at raising capacities and performance in work, while the other considers production of goods and the maintenance of infrastructures as one and not the only task for citizens. That is why Gelpi pointed out some educational and cultural realities as regards the aspect of struggles for development, since he argued that a kind of contradiction between the institutional offer and the educational demand was a significant fact about education. Also, he pointed out that a major impasse in the world of education, likewise in adult education, was reflected by the fact that most disadvantaged countries and social groups had the most unmet needs, without benefiting from contemporary civilisation, for example, in the field of education (Gelpi 1984).

Adult education is a form of social policy, the product of deliberate action by organisations to influence society. Youngman underlined that this policy affects a variety of bodies, including the state and organisations of civil society, prompting them to meet the needs, claims and interests of different groups (Youngman 1999). Also, he referred to Griffin to explain that the policy-making processes involving those organisations were shaped by, for example, competing definitions and narrations of what kind of interventions are useful in society, consequently, what forms of adult education should be undertaken (Griffin 1987). In his famous book on adult education as social policy, Griffin argued that the policy perspective of adult education drew attention to the part played by adult education in particular progresses: the degree to which it legitimated cultural goals, in particular those having to do with patterns of consumption and leisure, or with domestic, community and social roles. He also highlighted the impact of incorporation of adult and continuing education into manpower policies of the state (Griffin 1987).

Jarvis called attention to the role of adult education in the development of democracy, and he underlined that the relationship between adult education, learning and democracy was extremely complex. Neither adult education, nor formalised learning appear essential to the establishment of whatever democracy was, even in the aspect of critical thoughts appearing in the manner of questioning the decisions of elites. I think he was just partially right to underline that adult education and democracy are political phenomena, so in this respect, only when the content and method or process, the products of adult education are directly political that a direct and significant relationship between them can be traced, and

such a relationship, according to Jarvis, is rather rare (Jarvis 1990). On the other hand it is, therefore, obviously remarkable how recent research on the history of adult education and policy developments indicate that “the diverse formulations throughout Europe of the ‘social question’ as one of the key issues in the development and organisation of adult education.” (Hake & Laot 2009). Field, interestingly, pointed out the reflections of Alheit who called for a rethink of politics in the light of the learning society (Alheit 1999). I think that the same ought to be done for the role of lifelong learning policies and the role of EU institutions in rebalancing the social and the economic within adult education programmes for member states (Field 2006).

## Conclusion

This paper comes to the conclusion that it is not at all surprising that the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), other civil society groups in European adult education and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) are critically marking the urgent need to return to more integrated policy developments in European adult learning and education with a non-vocational approach and, also, for more cooperation between European states to promote the dissemination of good practices and quality research in order to expand the limits and heal the divisions in adult education and advocate for better adult learning with more participation and better performance.

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# Closing Remarks

The previous articles have drawn a detailed picture of the past five years of research work around adult learning and education in Hungary. Adult education research work has dramatically changed since the country became a full member of the European Union ten years ago. Hungarian researchers of adult learning and education have changed their approach toward addressing some of the key aspects of development, as well as the choices or barriers to the particular subject(s) or topic(s) they were investigating, not only because of the well-known international research orientations and focuses of some of the distinguished international organisations like UNESCO, OECD, or EAEA and ESREA, but also because of changes in the tools and methods available, and the institutional settings to promote adult learning, etc., in the national context.

It must be clearly emphasised that the studies in this collection were chosen to demonstrate the changes and evolution of research work reflecting approaches to basic conditions, contents and specific structures in adult learning and education, with specific orientations, for example, the use of e-learning, understanding professionalisation, exploring the specific aspects of foreign language teaching for adults, and pointing out key issues regarding the financing of adult learning. At the same time, those studies clearly reflect the fact that recent years have been difficult for adult learning and education in the context of second chance education, as well as in the context of skills and competence development actions in regions of the country and, also, in the context of the constant changes to VET, while all those orientations and actions have tried to promote an increase in participation and better performance in adult learning.

This collection of articles also has another aspect, to show how Hungarian adult education has established a very valuable path toward institutionalisation and has also established adult education movements which have particular aims in respect of citizenship development. In addition, this volume also hosts writings on the challenging aspects of current trends and issues regarding developments in citizenship education and the integration of public opinion into the cultural capital model for collecting and sharing knowledge and skills through cultural activities. Key questions which call for some basic challenges to sustainable devel-

opments in the field and to cooperation both in local, national and international contexts were also addressed: What are the appropriate methods to be used in order to successfully increase participation and performance in adult learning? What choices should be made in order to implement new learning technologies and methods so as to reflect the changing learning habits of adults? In what ways can the professionalisation process for adult educators be best promoted by key stakeholders in Hungary? What are the barriers to the planning and implementation of an appropriate VET system referring to adult learners? How could financing of adult learning and education be harmonised with good practices from leading EU-member countries? What are the choices for second chance schooling in the Hungarian system of education?

After having read the articles of this IPE volume, the following conclusions are evident:

- Hungarian adult learning and education must be given adequate and more holistic policy attention in order to be able to integrate formal, non-formal and informal learning and, at the same time, to promote collaboration amongst relevant educational sectors in making lifelong learning a kind of “reality”.
- Research and development in adult learning and education ought to be given a distinct national platform through the partnerships of key actors from educational, academic, cultural, training and labour institutions and organisations as well as professional organisations representing practice in education and training for adults with specific interests. Therefore, relevant ministries, and other government policies should signal a balance between social claims and economic interests and make every effort to pay as much attention to the non-vocational dimensions of adult learning and education as it currently does to VET, which it supports in a dominant way.
- Adult learning and education need increased academic and professional recognition, with appropriate laws, financing structures and incentives. Also, a more concentrated set of actions must underpin the educational programmes so as to increase the number of adult learners and, simultaneously, help adults to be able to perform better in their learning through quality methods and curricula in community-oriented programmes, either in formal or in non-formal settings. New locations for adult learning must be explored and introduced as challenging actions, for example, through civil society organisations, museums, libraries, economic stakeholders in business, through chambers and SMEs.

- Hungarian adult learning and education must be more active in European and international fields as regards comparative analysis and the exchange of results as well as the planning and development for the provision of programmes for adult learners. The National Development Plan ought to signal the need for inclusive dual-action skills-development projects for adults to help in their employability and social integration through the continuation of some currently successful incentives (e.g. the “I learn again” programme), but expanding the orientation toward citizenship education in cooperation with civil society groups, churches, etc.

Finally: It has been an honour for me to be part of this project, and I would like, here, to express my gratitude to DVV International for paying attention to developments – not only in Hungary – through its ongoing engagement in publishing materials describing actual situations and conditions for learning and education for adults and relevant matters which influence it in many countries in Europe and beyond.

The core aim of this collection was to provide a look at some recent research focusing on adult learning and education in Hungary, but not necessarily on Hungarian adult education. We hope the papers and studies of this special issue will help the reader to get a more realistic picture of Hungarian adult learning and education and, likewise, serve as a complement to the official reports of intergovernmental organisations.

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