

# Developments: Adult learning and education are seen in a twofold way

According to EAEAs member, the University of Pcs, the situation of adult learning and education (ALE) in Hungary has stayed the same in comparison to last year.

In Hungary, ALE is considered in a twofold way. On the one hand, it is seen as a tool for vocational education and training (VET), in order to integrate adults into the labour market. This is done by retraining/upskilling for a new job.

On the other hand, ALE is considered an informal way. Adult learning is facilitated by cultural community centres where there is a focus on identity and citizenship, based on local and regional values and traditions. This form of education is mainly done through civil society activities and voluntary work, in which intergenerational, intercultural, sustainability and inclusion aspects are important.

## Policy developments

According to the University of Pcs, there were some changes in ALE in Hungary last year. In 2022, there was a new amendment to the Act on Training of Adults to regulate vocational education and training for adults regarding content, examination and enrolment.

Quality concerns mainly refer to initial vocational education and training (IVET) and continuing vocational education and training (cVET) for adults, which is mostly provided

in VET centres.

In Hungary, civil society is rarely consulted in decision-making on ALE policies. If the University of Pcs could give some policy recommendations to the Hungarian government it would be: Reintroduce the bachelor's degree in adult education to help adult educators develop basic skills of adults, help to upskill in vocational education and training to promote the development of transversal skills of adult learners.

## Advocacy

Last year, a consultation was organised by the International Council for Adult Education. Moreover, the University of Pcs has participated in campaigns for ALE through the Learning City Movement in Pcs.

## Country reports of the European Commission

The University of Pcs states that the Country Reports of the European Commission reflect the Hungarian situation to some extent. In the country reports, ALE is mainly explained as a tool for developing employability through upskilling and reskilling.

The University of Pcs argues that improving transversal skills in adults relies heavily on non-vocational adult education to support workforce competitiveness and promote community and life skills, including active citizenship and critical thinking. These aspects of adult education are more strongly represented in community learning environments.

## Financing of adult education

The funding situation for adult learning and education has slightly improved in comparison to last year. According to the University of Pcs, this is mainly due to changed

priorities of the Hungarian government, as more attention has been paid to adult education through special funding schemes which are administered locally by government agencies.

Furthermore, adult education is mainly financed through programme funding, formula funding and operating grants.

## Learners voice

In Hungary, the legislation does not currently require adult learners voices to be included in decision-making processes. The learners voice is made visible through communication activities. Adult learners currently do not have any representing body or the possibility to have a voice in national or regional ALE policymaking.

## Sustainability

University of Pcs is recognised as the [greenest university in Hungary](#). It has a strategy to promote sustainability in its work procedures at the operational level. In learning programmes, they are promoting sustainability through specific classes on green skills.

In Hungary, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals varies in the ALE sector. It is mainly reduced to developing decent jobs and sustainable cities and communities.

## CONFINTEA VII

Civil society in Hungary tried to get involved in the CONFINTEA VII process or participate in CONFINTEA VII, but it was not possible to reach the relevant stakeholders to be included. The University of Pcs considers CONFINTEA as an important process from a

civil society perspective, but it is not sufficiently taken into account in national policymaking in ALE

## The digital gap increased during the pandemic

In Hungary, the digital gap has increased during the Covid-19 pandemic and ALE providers have downsized to smaller or fewer premises as some of the learning offers will remain online. However, the shifting of learning activities to a digital environment has also attracted new groups of learners.

In addition, adult learning providers had to reduce their staff, but funding for adult learning in Hungary has increased to mitigate the effects of Covid-19 on the economy.

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