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EUROPEAN DIMENSIONS OF ADULT EDUCATION POLICY

Abstract. *The article defines and analyzes the leading factors, mechanisms and tendencies of the European adult education policy formation. It is determined that the leading factors of the European adult education area formation are processes of globalization, integration, democratization, and informatization. It has been revealed that international conferences on adult education (CONFITEA) have a special significance in shaping the strategy for the development of adult education. International and European documents and programs are the main mechanisms for the implementation of European education policy. It has been shown that although European documents on the development and functioning of adult education systems are advisory, each country has an opportunity to relate them to national traditions and adapt to their needs. The trends in the context of the European adult education area formation are identified, which include: the gradual transformation of adult education into a key factor of sustainable economic and social development in European countries; strengthening of the European dimension and integration of educational systems; convergence in adult education, which provides «mitigation» of the influence of megatrends and the development of mechanisms for the preservation of the national component and national specificity of adult education systems; glocalization which enables to optimally harmonize the global and national needs for ensuring the competitiveness of the national economy and education; complementarity, harmonious coherence of adult education systems in European countries. It is shown that the European dimension in national education policy is able to provide an adult individual with equal opportunities and competitiveness in the European labour market. Therefore, it is advisable to form the Ukrainian education policy in the field of adult education in accordance with European approaches that should be considered as a necessary measure which is able of responding to current challenges and ensuring the entry into a single European educational space.*

Key words: *adult education, education policy, factors, mechanisms, trends, European adult education area.*

ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКІ ВИМІРИ ОСВІТНЬОЇ ПОЛІТИКИ У ГАЛУЗІ ОСВІТИ ДОРΟΣЛИХ

Анотація. *У статті визначаються та аналізуються провідні чинники, механізми та тенденції формування освітньої європейської політики у галузі освіти дорослих. З'ясовано, що провідними чинниками формування європейського простору освіти дорослих є процеси глобалізації, інтеграції, демократизації, інформатизації. Виявлено, що особливе значення у формуванні стратегії розвитку освіти дорослих мають міжнародні конференції з освіти дорослих (CONFITEA), а до основних механізмів реалізації європейської освітньої політики належать міжнародні та європейські документи та програми. Показано, що хоча європейські документи стосовно розвитку та функціонування систем освіти дорослих носять рекомендаційний характер, кожна країна має можливість співвіднести їх з національними традиціями та адаптувати відповідно до своїх потреб. Виокремлено тенденції в контексті формування європейського простору освіти дорослих, серед яких: поступове перетворення освіти дорослих у ключову детермінанту стійкого економічного та соціального розвитку країн Європи; посилення європейського виміру в освітніх системах, їх зближення та інтеграція; тенденція конвергенції в освіті дорослих, яка забезпечує «пом'якшення» впливу мегатенденцій та розробку механізмів збереження національної складової, національної специфічності систем освіти дорослих; тенденція глокалізації, яка дає змогу оптимально гармонізувати глобальні та національні потреби для забезпечення конкурентоспроможності національної економіки та освіти; тенденція когерентності – взаємодоповнюваності, гармонійної узгодженості систем освіти дорослих європейських країн. Доведено, що європейський вимір у національній освітній політиці здатен забезпечити дорослій людині рівні можливості та конкурентоспроможність на загальноєвропейському ринку праці, тому українську освітню політику у галузі освіти дорослих доцільно формувати згідно з європейськими підходами, які необхідно розглядати як сферу, яка здатна відповісти на виклики сучасності та забезпечити входження до єдиного європейського освітнього простору.*

Ключові слова: *освіта дорослих, освітня політика, чинники, механізми, тенденції, європейський простір освіти дорослих.*

Introduction. European education policy is one of the leading priorities affecting all spheres of public life and ensuring European integration processes. At the same time, special attention is paid to adult education in European education policy, which is an important lever for social change. It is the success of overcoming the economic, social, and education crisis. The specific objectives of European adult education policy are implemented in the activities of UNESCO, the Council of Europe, EAEA and other organizations, which ensures the creation of a coherent European position and the formation of leading guidelines in the educational policy of each European country.

In this context, the relevance of research acquire into trends of European adult education policy. The analysis of the European educational policy features has been highlighted by S. Kalashnikova (2012), V. Luhovyi (2009), L. Lukianova (2017), A. Sbruieva (2010), A. Hrin (2011), S. Hriffin (2013), P. Jarvis (2007), S. Borh and P. Mayo (2010), M. Milana and J. Holford (2014), E. Prosku (2008) etc. However, the European integration processes in the field of adult education are developing very dynamically, which leads to new approach of this problem.

The aim of the study – identifies and analyzes the leading factors, mechanisms and trends in European education policy in the context of European adult education area creation.

Theoretical framework and research methods. The theoretical basis of the study is the fundamental basis of the education theory, educational management, the conceptual position of pedagogical comparative studies, the theory of educational reform and innovation. The following research are based on main approaches, as: system and synergistic, which made it possible to consider European adult education policy as a complex phenomenon whose development takes place in the context of dynamic societal change based on the principles of interconnection and interaction; structural and functional, which allowed to determine the essential characteristics and features of the education policy of the EU countries in the field of adult education; comparative that helped to identify common and different educational policies in EU countries. To achieve this goal, we used a set of methods and techniques of scientific knowledge, including methods of system analysis and synthesis, logical generalization and comparison.

Results. The analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature and European documentation proves that the problem of adult education in European educational policy, importance of its

development is conditioned by the leading challenges of today: demographic, economic and socio-cultural changes.

It should be noted that the last two challenges are due to the processes of globalization and internationalization. Therefore, in the creation of a European educational space, the need to find common ways in the development of national adult education systems becomes more acute in order to address such important social problems as: providing equal access to education for adults when they have different opportunities and needs; improving the quality of education in accordance with the requirements of the modern economy; training people for changing conditions of life and work, etc. In this context, education policymaking is strongly influenced by international organizations that focus on expanding international cooperation and takes place at interstate and inter-parliamentary levels through regional coordination of governmental and non-governmental organizations; to develop programs and organize adult education research.

In the context of identifying specific tasks and initiating profound practical reforms on adult education worldwide, the key role were decisions and documents of the Fifth (Hamburg, 1997) (UNESCO, 1997) and the Sixth (Belen, 2009), (UNESCO, 2010) of the International Conferences on Adult Education. The Hamburg Declaration on Adult Education outlines a conclusion on prospects for the world adult education development, in particular emphasizing that “adult education is not just a right; it is one of the keys that opened the door to the 21st century. This education is the result of an active civic position and a condition for full participation in society. It is a powerful concept that promotes environmental sustainability, democracy, justice, equality between men and women, scientific, social and economic development ... Adult learning can help to form personality and make life meaningful” (UNESCO, 1997).

We believe that the Hamburg Conference had set new approaches, a new understanding of the essence of adult education as a system of lifelong learning and retraining of the entire adult population employed in the labor market. In addition, it has become a new stage in the development of adult education. The ultimate goal of adult education was to recognize a learning society.

According to the identified pathways for adult education in 2002, the International Conference "Lifelong Learning - Towards the Implementation of the UNESCO Goals "Education for All" and the Decisions of the International Conference CONFINTEA V, were highlighted the relevance

of the EFA program on Adult education. This is the need to develop a system for recognizing and certifying the results of non-formal and informal adult education, the key component of which should be accreditation of prior human experience and knowledge (UNESCO, 2002).

European Summit held in Lisbon, adoption of the Memorandum of lifelong education (Commission of the European Communities, 2000), European Commission Resolution "Creating a European Space for Lifelong Learning" (Commission of the European Communities, 2001), Action Plan to 2025, proposed by the Commission on Qualifications and Mobility, have become not only the mechanisms for the implementation of CONFITEA V solutions, but have also laid down the benchmarks of European adult education policy. They focused on the equality of formal, non-formal and informal adult education and the need to develop a strategy for recognizing the outcomes of non-formal and informal education, both within countries and at European level. In 2004, the Europe Council has approved a paper on "Common European Principles for the Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Education" (The Council conclusions, 2004), which was further developed in an indicators development context of the Council Action Plan 2007 (The Council conclusions, 2007).

Therefore, in 2008 was actively pursued the search for best practices and approaches to assessing the outcomes of non-formal education. In 2009, training programs were introduced, and experience and staff exchanged at European level were exchanged. In 2010, the first conclusions and generalizations were made regarding results. It were obtained that the validation process requires need the involvement of a relevant stakeholder and social partners in this process (Ogienko, 2018).

However, the analysis of European documentation shows that with the development of non-formal adult education and the search mechanisms to recognizing its results, the important problems of adult education policy can be identified. The main problems are: adult literacy, recognition of the right for education, the right for lifelong study, women's rights for education, world culture, diversity and equality, transformation of formal and non-formal education, social economy, access to information (Hubert, & Kai, 2009). It is a new vision of the mission, role, and function of adult education that is seen as an effective factor in contemporary global social development. The Commission of European Communities on Implementing the European Area of Lifelong Learning (2001) (Commission of

the European Communities, 2001) and the Decision on Lifelong Learning (Commission of the European Communities, 2002) has been emphasized that adult education is capable of providing not only competitiveness and employment of the adult population, but also has a decisive influence on the personal development of the adult, the formation of its active civic position, the development of a civil democratic society.

This approach to policy-making in adult education has been confirmed in the "Learning & Training 2010", "Socrates" and "Grundtvig" programs, the Commission of the European Communities on "Adult Education: Never Late to Study", etc. All these programs focuses on adult learning, starting with from the acquisition of basic education to the formation of professional and social mobility. In this context, the Commission of the European Communities on Efficiency and Equal Opportunities (European Commission, 2006), is emphasizes the need for reform and the creation of more effective and equitable education systems.

The analysis of European papers proves that European countries in their national development programs focus on pan-European guidelines for adult education policy-making, take active part in many EU-initiated projects, and the existence of the European Social Fund. European Structural Funds provides financial and infrastructure support and empowering adults in continuing education.

An important event in the world arena was the 6th International Conference on Adult Education CONFITEA VI, which took place in Belen (Brazil, 1-4 December 2009). The main slogan was "Living and Learning in the Name of a Worthy Future: the Importance of Adult Education". At this Conference has been adopted "Belene Action Program". If the past five conferences have focused the world's attention on adult education as one of human rights, CONFITEA VI views adult education as an important means of empowering people and communities, and as an important resource for the peoples well-being (UNESCO, 2010).

The analysis of European documents on adult education is not exhaustive, but even it provides an opportunity to identify key directions in the formulation of European adult education policy, including:

– recognizing the value of adult education, which is in line with the concept of lifelong learning, according to which any education, regardless of its form, has value. A cornerstone of this global strategy is the recognition of the non-formal and informal education value. The devel-

opment of a validation and recognition program is embedded in the general context of the European Qualification Framework and the European countries are tasked with developing appropriate mechanisms for its implementation;

– Efforts to remove barriers of participation in adult education programs. A characteristic feature of all European countries is that adults with a low level of education and training, as well as the elderly and disabled, are the least involved in the adult education system. The obstacles to their learning are different: professional nature, lack of access to information, financial problems, self-esteem, lack of motivation and self-confidence (Cedefop (2004).

– Therefore, the European community has a double task: increasing the number of participants in adult education programs, and to create conditions for those who most in need of involvement in the adult education system. As a decision can be offering targeted, individualized financial assistance and providing advisory, information system;

– Guaranteeing the quality of adult education. The quality of education is closely linked to many aspects: providing information and advice; relevance of curriculum content to the needs of learners; availability of grants, effective monitoring, etc. One of the way to improve the quality of adult education is to introduce European quality assurance systems, improve the quality of training for andragogs and increase investment in modernizing adult education systems;

– Providing investment in the education and training of older people and immigrants. Due to the demographic crisis, the education of elder people should become the norm of life, so in the Communities on Universities, the European Commission has recommended to universities "be more open, organize courses for elder students" (European Commission, 2003) thus ensuring their connection with the social environment. Equally important is the social and economic integration of immigrants with the maximum use of their competences and professional skills. This requires the implementation of subsidy policies through appropriate programs for these categories of population.

Conclusions. Identification and analysis of the leading directions of implementation in European educational policy on adult education has revealed the following trends in the formation of

the European adult education space: gradual transformation of adult education into a key determinant of sustainable economic and social development in Europe; strengthening the European dimension in education systems, their convergence and integration. It has found out that the main mechanisms for the implementation of European educational policy include various multi-annual programs financed from the European budget; ensuring adult choice and mobility, flexibility and diversity in content and teaching methods, decentralization of management in the context of global change (emerging technologies, demographic, economic, social and cultural shifts); European documents and programs focusing on the trend of convergence in adult education aimed at "softening" the impact of megatrends and developing mechanisms to preserve the national component and national specificity of adult education systems; the tendency of transparency, as evidenced of the European Comparative Education Policy Survey results (OECD, 2003; EAEA, 2006), for example in developing mechanisms for recognizing the outcomes of non-formal and informal education; a glocalization trend that optimize the global and national needs to ensure competitiveness of the national economy and education; tendency of coherence - complementarily, harmonious coherence of adult education systems in European countries.

It should be noted that although the European documents on the development and functioning of adult education systems are advisory, each country has the opportunity to reconcile them with national traditions and to adapt into their needs. This is a time requirement because the European dimension in national education policy is able to provide at least equal opportunities and competitiveness to the adult in the pan-European labor market. Therefore, it is advisable to form Ukrainian adult education policy in line with European approaches, which should be seen as an area capable of responding to the nowadays challenges and securing entry into a European educational space.

The further research prospects in the detailed analysis and generalization the constructive ideas of European experience in the field of adult education with a view to their national educational space implementation.

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