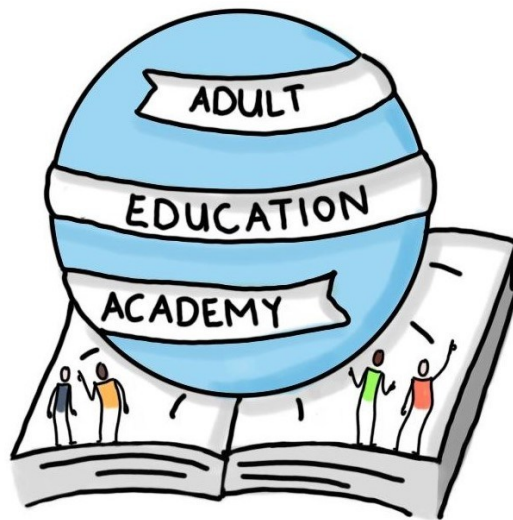


# Adult Education Academy

for master's students, doctoral students and practitioners

International and comparative studies  
in adult education and lifelong learning



**2 - 13 February 2026**

in Würzburg/Bavaria, Germany

+ Preparatory Phase Nov. 2025 - Jan. 2026

**In cooperation with**



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# Structure of the Adult Education Academy

Since 2014, the Adult Education Academy promotes international networks in adult education and lifelong learning, aiming to foster a connection between academic learning and the field of adult education.

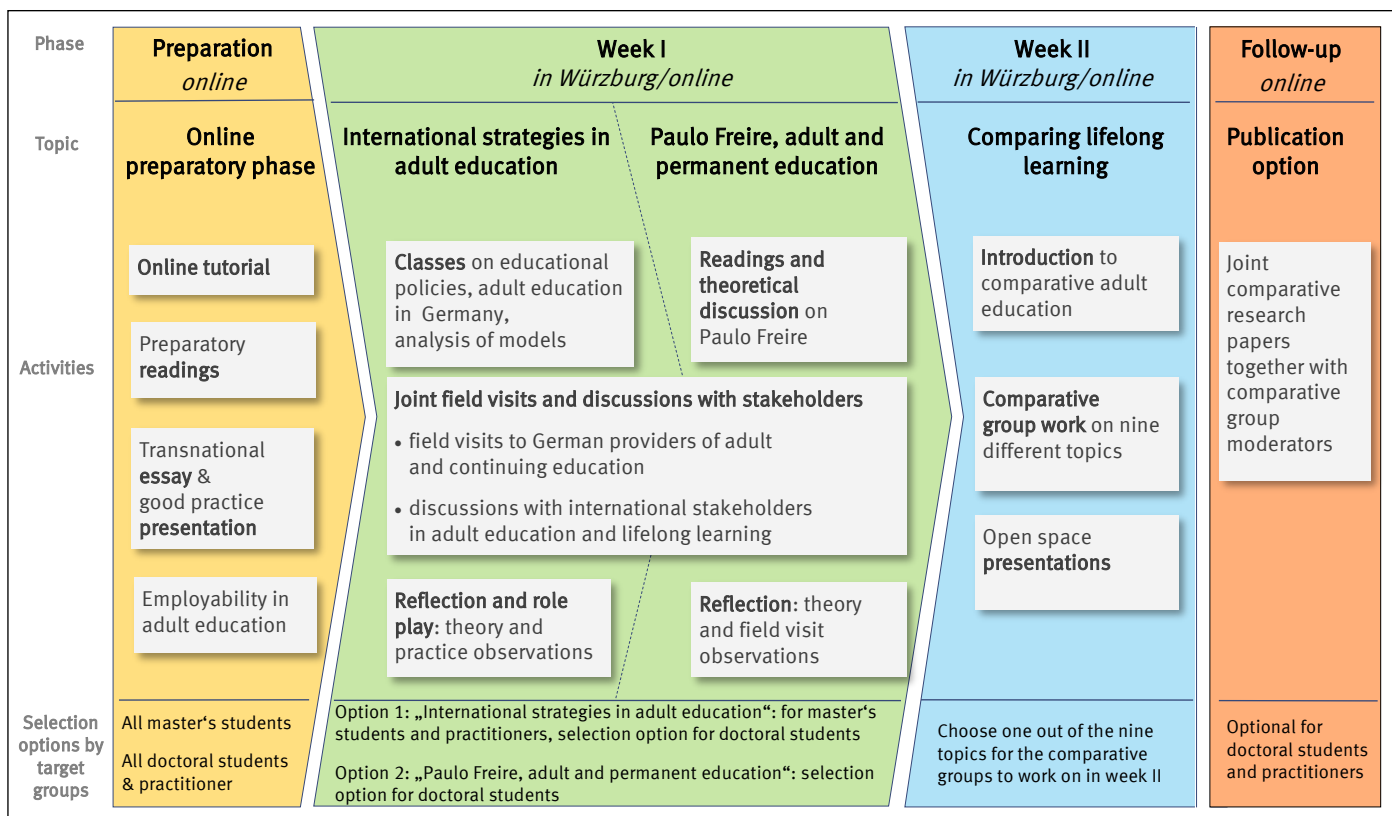
During the preparatory phase and the two-week intensive programme, participants develop and refine their analytical and comparative skills in adult education in an international environment. They gain an understanding of internationally relevant educational policies in the context of lifelong learning, while strengthening their communication, teambuilding and critical thinking skills by working together in this international setting.

## Target groups

Master's and doctoral students in adult education, as well as colleagues from the field of adult education and lifelong learning (hereafter "practitioners") are invited to join the Adult Education Academy in Würzburg. Practitioners should have experiences in adult education (e.g. teaching, programme planning, management in institutions of adult education associations). As a minimum requirement, all participants should hold a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) in a subject related to adult and lifelong learning.

## Structure

The Adult Education Academy is divided into an (1) online preparatory phase, (2) a two-week intensive programme featuring (2.1) the first week 2-6 February 2026 & (2.2) the second week from 9-13 February 2026 in a hybrid mode and (3) an optional follow-up. The two-week intensive programme will be organised online and on campus in Würzburg.





## Preparatory phase

The preparatory phase is essential for participation in the Adult Education Academy. It provides participants with the necessary knowledge and abilities for the two-week Adult Education Academy programme in February 2026. The preparatory phase, which begins in November 2025 and ends in January 2026, can be divided into three parts. During the first part, participants are divided into two groups: one consisting of master's students and practitioners and another consisting of doctoral students. The master's students and practitioners will address the topic "International strategies in adult education", whereas the doctoral students can decide whether they want to join the same group or rather work on the topic "Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education". The second part takes place within the comparative groups. Last but not least, the third part addresses employability in adult education.

The preparation will take place online. Materials provided during this phase include an online tutorial, readings and group sessions for discussions. At the end of the preparatory phase, master's and doctoral students submit a transnational essay; practitioners submit a good practice presentation. The topics of the essays will depend on the comparative groups chosen by the participants. Central to the successful completion of the Adult Education Academy is the active cooperation and independent preparation of the contents and materials in the preparation phase by the participants for the two-week intensive programme in February.



## Week I

The group "International policies in adult education and lifelong learning" (for master's and doctoral students as well as practitioners) will focus on a critical reflection of current education policies based on a theoretical model developed by Lima/Guimarães.

The option "Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education" (for doctoral students) is based on readings and discussions of selected texts by Paulo Freire.

During the first week of the Adult Education Academy, doctoral students have the opportunity to take a class on Paulo Freire's theories for "adult and permanent education". This class is based on readings and discussions of selected texts by Paulo Freire. The doctoral students will develop a theoretical-analytical perspective and will focus on more specialised theoretical knowledge to be able to synthesise different perspectives systematically and theoretically. If they prefer, doctoral students may also join the master's students and practitioners in the class on "International strategies in adult education".

The theoretical insights in both groups (International policies in adult education and lifelong learning & Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education) will be accompanied by field visits to adult education providers in and around Würzburg. Furthermore, presentations of international adult education associations (European Association for the Education of Adults, International Council in Adult Education, DVV International) are organised to serve as case studies for practicing the analytical models or the theories discussed in the two classes.



## Week II

During the second week, the participants will work in comparative groups divided by nine different topics in adult education and lifelong learning. Participants will choose the topic of their transnational essay based on the focus of the comparative group they will be assigned to prior to the Academy. On the last day of the Adult Education Academy, the results of the comparisons will be presented to all other groups.



## Certification and follow-up

After participating fully in the Adult Education Academy and submitting either a transnational essay or a good practice presentation, all participants receive a participation certificate. In addition, there are two possibilities for enrolled students to receive ECTS credits. For more information, see page 46.

Doctoral students and practitioners have the possibility to get guidance for publishing a joint comparative paper after the Adult Education Academy.

# Key

## Groups of people



Master Students



Doctoral Students

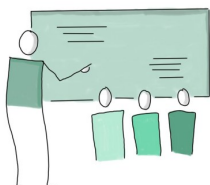


Practitioners

## #AEAcademy phases



Preparatory phase



Week I



Week II

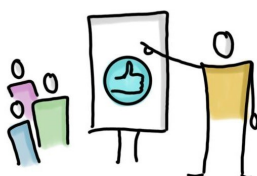


Certification & Follow-up

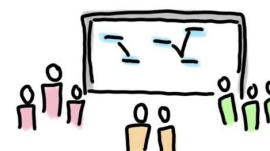
## Activities



Field visit



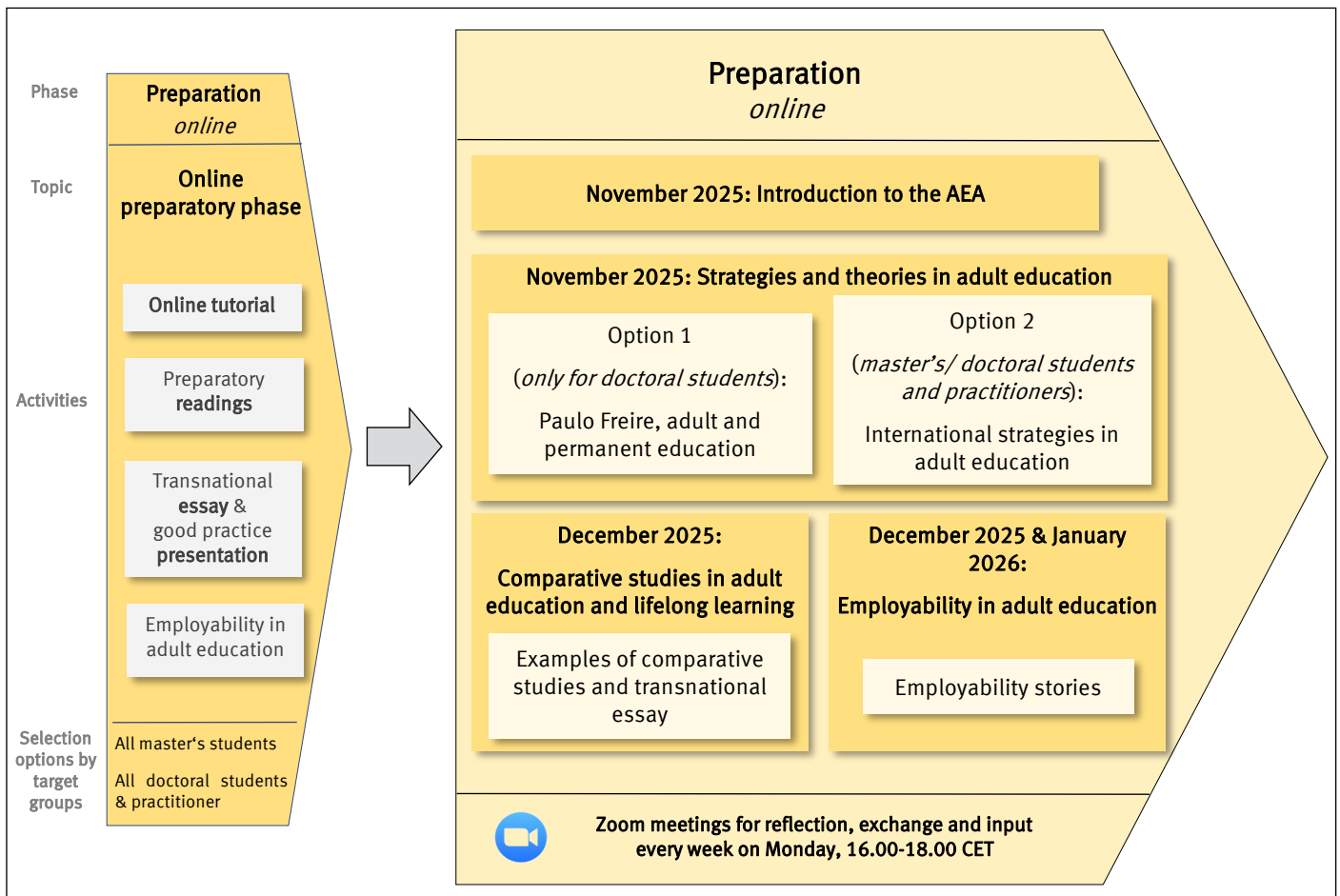
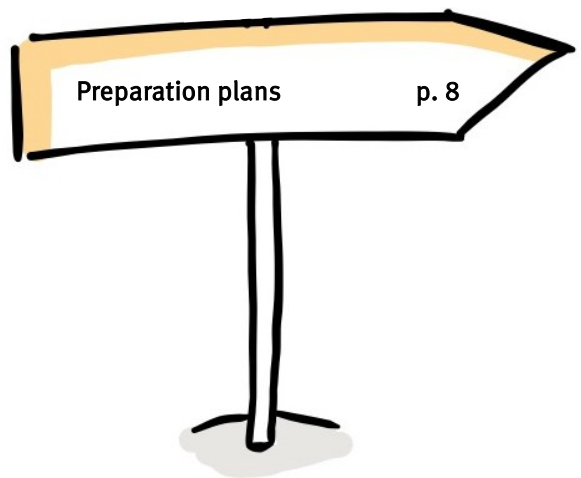
Good practice presentation



Comparative group presentation

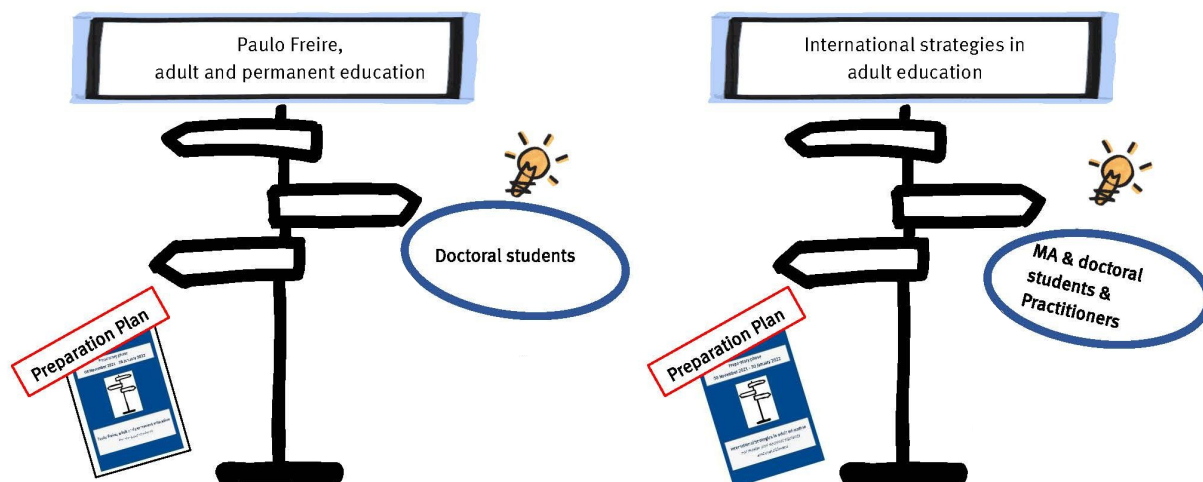
# Preparatory phase

## 03 November 2025 - 25 January 2026





## Preparation Plan: International strategies in adult education and lifelong learning & Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education



More detailed information about the online preparatory phase will follow in your **individualised preparatory guide**.

Zoom sessions during the preparatory phase:

### International strategies in adult education & Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education

#### November 2025

Monday	03.11.2025	16.00-18.00 CET	All participants
Monday	17.11.2025	16.00-18.00 CET	Only Freire group
Monday	17.11.2025	16.00-18.00 CET	Only Strategies group
Monday	24.11.2025	16.00-18.00 CET	Only Strategies group

#### December 2025

Monday	01.12.2025	16.00-18.00 CET	All participants
Monday	08.12.2025	16.00-18.00 CET	All participants
Monday	15.12.2025	16.00-18.00 CET	All participants

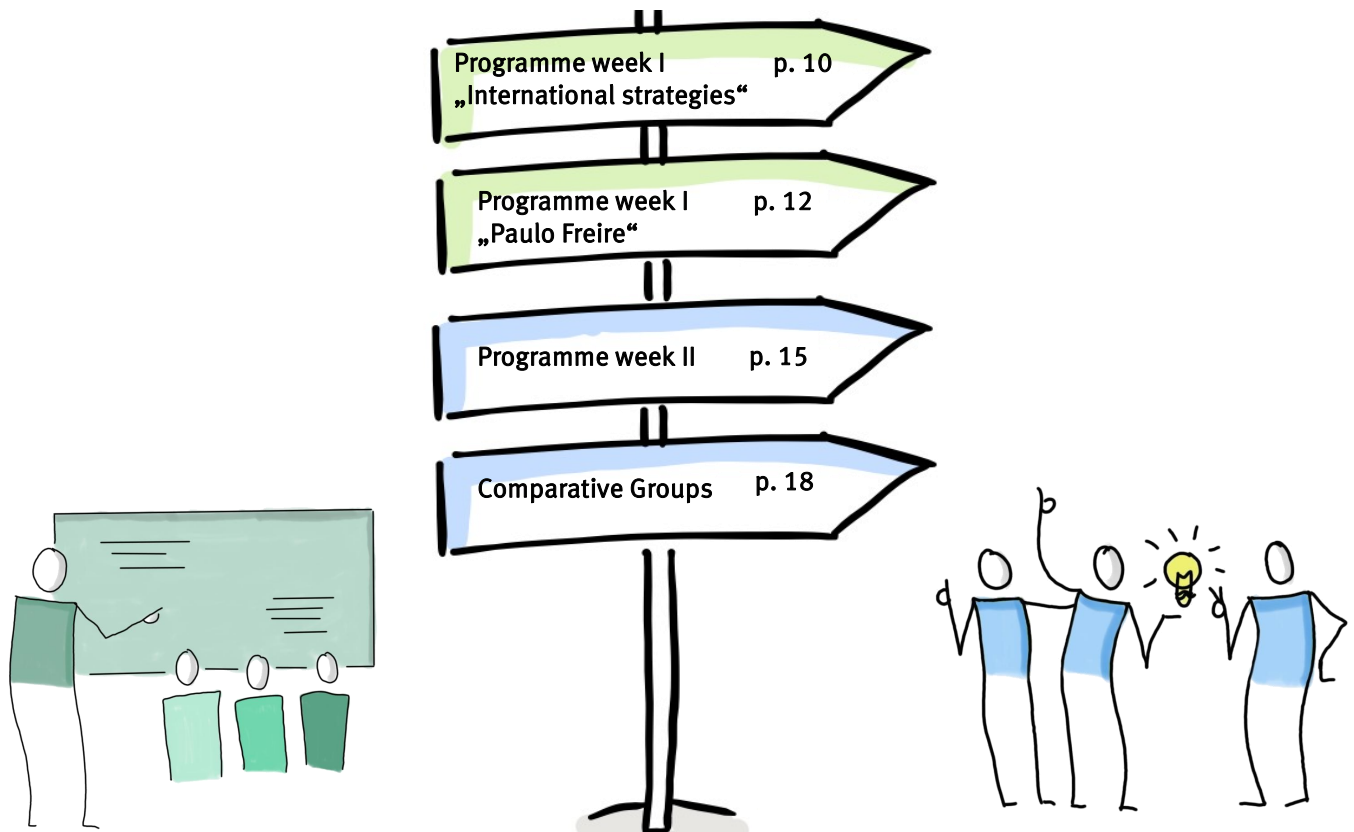
#### January 2026

Friday	09.01.2026	16.00-18.00 CET	All participants
Monday	12.01.2026	16.00-18.00 CET	All participants
Monday	19.01.2026	16.00-18.00 CET	All participants



# Programme of the Adult Education Academy

## 02 - 13 February 2026



Phase	Week I <i>in Würzburg</i>		Week II <i>in Würzburg</i>
Topic	<b>International strategies in adult education</b>	<b>Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education</b>	<b>Comparing lifelong learning</b>
Activities	<p><b>Classes</b> on educational policies, adult education in Germany, analysis of models</p> <p><b>Joint field visits and discussions with stakeholders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>field visits to German providers of adult and continuing education</li> <li>discussions with international stakeholders in adult education and lifelong learning</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflection and role play:</b> theory and practice observations</p>	<p><b>Readings and theoretical discussion</b> on Paulo Freire</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> theory and field visit observations</p>	<p><b>Introduction</b> to comparative adult education</p> <p><b>Comparative group work</b> on seven different topics</p> <p><b>Open space presentations</b></p>
Selection options by target groups	<p>Option 1: „International strategies in adult education“: for master's students and practitioners, selection option for doctoral students</p> <p>Option 2: „Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education“: selection option for doctoral students</p>		<p>Choose one out of the nine topics for the comparative groups to work on in week II</p>

## Week I: International strategies in adult education



Master's students, doctoral students and practitioners working on "International strategies in adult education and life-long learning" in the first week of the Adult Education Academy will use a policy analysis perspective. This perspective will enhance their analytical skills by integrating and analysing different perspectives. The theoretical analysis perspective is accompanied by field visits to adult education providers in and around Würzburg. Presentations of international adult education organisations (EAEA, ICAE, DVV International) will complete the programme. These insights will be applied to the analytical models as case studies.

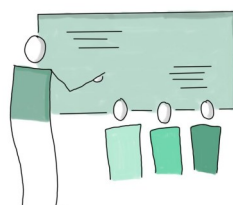
Participants who choose this topic will be divided in three groups. These group arrangements are not identical to the comparative groups. Each group will be assigned a course room. Prof. Egetenmeyer, Prof. Vicente and Prof. Košmerl will be rotating to lead the groups.

### Monday, 2 February 2026

8.00-9.00	Registration
9.00-10.30	Introduction and welcoming address
10.30-10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.45-12.15	Get to know each other
12.15-13.45	<i>Lunch break</i>
13.45-15.15	Plenary lecture: The politicity of education: politics, policies, strategies— Introducing Paulo Neves Reglus Freire (1921-1997): Biography and bibliography
15.15-15.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
15.30-17.00	Plenary lecture: The politicity of education: politics, policies, strategies— Introducing Paulo Neves Reglus Freire (1921-1997): Biography and bibliography
18.00	Guided City Tour

### Tuesday, 3 February 2026

9.00-10.30	Levels of an analysis: "Mega, macro, meso and micro"
10.30-10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.45-12.15	Levels of an analysis: "Mega, macro, meso and micro"
12.15-13.45	<i>Lunch break</i>
13.45-15.15	Social policy models
15.15-15.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
15.30-17.00	Social policy models



## Week I: International strategies in adult education



### Wednesday, 4 February 2026

- 9.00-10.30 Adult education providers in Germany
- 10.30-10.45 *Coffee break*
- 10.45-12.15 Adult education providers in Germany
- 12.15-13.15 *Lunch break*
- 13.15-14.45 Preparation for field visits
- 14.45-15.30 *Travel to the field visits*
- 15.30-17.30 **Field visits to providers of adult and continuing education in Würzburg**  
TO BE ANNOUNCED

### Thursday, 5 February 2026

- 9.00-10.15 Guest lecture (tba)
- 10.15-10.30 *Coffee break*
- 10.30-11.45 Guest lecture (tba)
- 12.00-14.00 *Lunch break & travel to field visits*
- 14.00-16.00 **Field visits to adult education providers beyond Würzburg**  
TO BE ANNOUNCED
- 16.00-18.30 *Free time in the field visits city*
- 18.30 Travel back to Würzburg

### Friday, 6 February 2026

- 9.00-10.30 Role play: Social policy models and adult education practice
- 10.30-10.45 *Coffee break*
- 10.45-12.15 Role play: Social policy models and adult education practice
- 12.15-13.45 *Lunch break*
- 13.45-15.15 **Field visits to international adult and continuing education associations**  
TO BE ANNOUNCED
- 15.15-15.30 *Coffee break*
- 15.30-17.00 Reflection of field visits

## Week I: Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education



In this heavily theory-based class for doctoral students, the participants focus on Paulo Freire's theories for international adult education. The participants will develop a theoretical-analytical perspective.

They will focus on much more specialised theoretical knowledge to be able to synthesise different perspectives systematically and theoretically. The theoretical insights during the first week are accompanied by field visits to adult education providers in and around Würzburg. Furthermore, presentations of international adult education associations are organised (e.g. EAEA, ICAE, DVV International).

### Monday, 2 February 2026

8.00-9.00	Registration	
9.00-10.30	Introduction and welcoming address	
10.30-10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>	
10.45-12.15	Get to know each other	
12.15-13.45	<i>Lunch break</i>	
13.45-15.15	Plenary lecture: The politicity of education: politics, policies, strategies—Introducing Paulo Neves Reglus Freire (1921-1997): Biography and bibliography	
15.15-15.30	<i>Coffee break</i>	
15.30-17.00	Plenary lecture: The politicity of education: politics, policies, strategies—Introducing Paulo Neves Reglus Freire (1921-1997): Biography and bibliography	
18.00	Guided City Tour	

### Tuesday, 3 February 2026

9.00-10.30	Why studying Freire today? The contributions of Freire to policy studies in ALE/LLL: critical encounters with Ettore Gelpi and Ivan Illich	
10.30-10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>	
10.45-12.15	Why studying Freire today? The contributions of Freire to policy studies in ALE/LLL: critical encounters with Ettore Gelpi and Ivan Illich	
12.15-13.45	<i>Lunch break</i>	
13.45-15.15	Adult education providers in Germany	
15.15-15.30	<i>Coffee break</i>	
15.30-17.00	Group work on Freire	

## Week I: Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education



### Wednesday, 4 February 2026

9.00-10.30	The opus magnum: the pedagogy of the oppressed and its main concepts. Radical democracy, liberation and participation; modernization and development. Extension or communication? Education as the practice of freedom.
10.30-10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.45-12.15	The opus magnum: the pedagogy of the oppressed and its main concepts. Radical democracy, liberation and participation; modernization and development. Extension or communication? Education as the practice of freedom.
12.15-13.15	<i>Lunch break</i>
13.15-14.45	Revisiting the pedagogy of the oppressed to analyse adult learning and education
14.45-15.00	<i>Coffee break</i>
15.00-17.00	<b>Field visits to providers of adult and continuing education in Würzburg</b> TO BE ANNOUNCED

### Thursday, 5 February 2026

9.00-10.15	Popular adult education and critical literacy: reading the world and reading the words
10.15-10.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.30-11.45	Paulo Freire as public manager of education in the city of São Paulo: "Pedagogy of the city"
12.00-14.00	<i>Lunch break &amp; travel to field visits</i>
14.00-16.00	<b>Field visits to adult education providers beyond Würzburg</b> TO BE ANNOUNCED
16.00-18.30	<i>Free time in the field visits city</i>
18.30	Travel back to Würzburg

## Week I: Paulo Freire, adult and permanent education



### Friday, 6 February 2026

9.00-10.30 The pedagogy of freedom: teaching and learning

10.30-10.45 *Coffee break*

10.45-12.15 The pedagogy of freedom: teaching and learning

12.15-13.45 *Lunch break*

13.45-15.15 **Field visits to international adult and continuing education associations**

TO BE ANNOUNCED

15.15-15.30 *Coffee break*

15.30-17.00 Reflection of field visits in a Freirean perspective

## The moderators and lecturers of week I



### Prof. Regina Egetenmeyer, Julius-Maximilian University Würzburg, Germany

Regina Egetenmeyer works on questions of lifelong learning, informal learning, and professionalisation in adult education and mobility for learning purposes. Since 2013, she holds the Professorship for Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Würzburg. She is a visiting Professor at the International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education, New Delhi. Her research emphasis is on international comparative research in adult education and lifelong learning.

### Prof. Licínio C. Lima, University of Minho, Portugal

Licínio C. Lima is a Professor em. of Sociology, of Education and Educational Administration at the Department of Social Sciences of Education at the University of Minho. He was Head of Department (1998-2004), Head of the Unit for Adult Education (1984-2004), Director of the Research Centre for Education and Psychology (1994-1997) and Director of the PhD in Education. Various European and Brazilian universities hosted him as a guest professor. Further is he an author of many academic works, which are published in nineteen countries, including more than thirty books.



### Prof. Nélia Vicente, University of Lisbon, Portugal

Nélia Vicente is a Guest Assistant Professor at Instituto de Educação, Universidade de Lisboa. She holds a Master in Sociology. She does a PhD on adult education.

### Prof. Tadej Košmerl, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Tadej Košmerl is an Assistant Professor of adult education at the Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. His research focuses on adult education policies, adult education for sustainable development, digital transformation in adult education, and transformative learning.



## Week II: Comparative studies in adult education and lifelong learning



Prior to the Adult Education Academy, all master's and doctoral students prepare a transnational essay that is linked to the topic of the comparative group they choose to work in. The transnational essay will comprise the perspective on adult education in their home countries. The writing process will be guided on WueMahara by the group moderators. Practitioners will hold their good practice presentation, which they have to submit prior to the Academy. The second week focuses on comparing the contexts and countries identified. The comparative group work will result in an open space presentation on Friday showing the results of the comparison.

### Monday, 9 February 2026

9.00-10.30	Introduction into comparative adult education
10.30-10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.45-12.15	Comparative group work: Introduction
12.15-13.45	<i>Lunch break</i>
13.45-15.15	Comparative group work: Participant presentations
15.15-15.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
15.30-17.00	Comparative group work: Participant presentations
18.00	Cultural Evening in Comparative groups

### Tuesday, 10 February 2026

9.00-10.30	Comparative group work: Participant presentations
10.30-10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.45-12.15	Comparative group work
12.15-13.45	<i>Lunch break</i>
13.45-14.30	Good practice presentations I
14.30-15.15	Good practice presentations II
15.15-15.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
15.30-17.00	Comparative group work



## Week II: Comparative studies in adult education and lifelong learning



### Wednesday, 11 February 2026

9.00-10.30	Comparative group work
10.30-10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.45-12.15	Comparative group work
12.15-13.45	<i>Lunch break</i>
13.45-14.30	Good practice presentations III
14.30-15.15	Good practice presentations IV
15.15-15.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
15.30-17.00	Comparative group work
17.00-17.30	Information on examination and grading possibilities

### Thursday, 12 February 2026

9.00-10.30	Comparative group work
10.30-10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.45-12.15	Comparative group work
12.15-13.45	<i>Lunch break</i>
13.45-15.15	Comparative group work
15.15-15.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
15.45-17.00	Comparative group work
17.00-17.30	Information about the possibility of publication (doctoral students and practitioners)

## Week II: Comparative group presentations



### Friday, 13. February 2026

9.00-9.15 Welcome to the group presentation

9.15-10.40 Final presentations

10.40-10.55 *Coffee break*

10.55-12.20 Final presentations

12.20-13.50 *Lunch break*

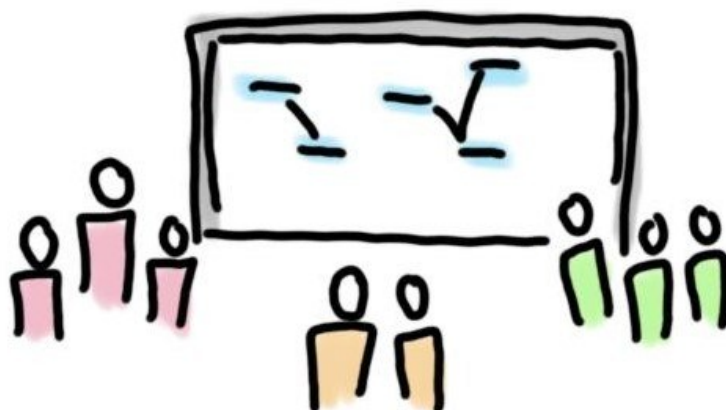
13.50-15.15 Final presentations

15.15-15.30 *Coffee break*

15.30-16.15 Evaluation

16.15-17.00 Closing session

18.00 Celebratory evening



## Week II: Comparative group overview



Topic	Moderators
<b>Group 1:</b> Peacebuilding and Intercultural Dialogue in Adult Learning and Education	<i>Amina Isanovic Hadziomerovic, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina</i> <i>Larisa Kasumagic-Kafedzic, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>
<b>Group 2:</b> Developing Learning Ecosystems through ALE - The Roles of Learning Cities and Communities	<i>Balazs Nemeth, University of Pécs, Hungary</i> <i>Heribert Hinzen, University of Pécs, Hungary</i> <i>Koltai Zsuzsa, University of Pécs, Hungary</i>
<b>Group 3:</b> Active Ageing in the Longevity World: Adult Education, LifeLong Learning and Competences	<i>Vanna Boffo, University of Florence, Italy</i> <i>Fabio Togni, University of Florence, Italy</i> <i>Debora Daddi, University of Florence, Italy</i>
<b>Group 4:</b> Programme planning and analysis in adult education: Dealing with power and going beyond power	<i>Borut Mikulec, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia</i> <i>Bernd Käßplinger, University of Giessen, Germany</i>
<b>Group 5:</b> Artificial Intelligence and Adult Education: Policies, Practices, and Challenges	<i>Emmanuel Jean-Francois, Xavier University of Louisiana, United States of America</i>
<b>Group 6:</b> National/regional adult education and lifelong learning policies	<i>Paula Guimaraes, University of Lisbon, Portugal</i>
<b>Group 7:</b> (Generative) Artificial Intelligence in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning	<i>Lisa Breitschwerdt, Julius-Maximilian-Universität Würzburg, Germany</i> <i>Jan Schiller, Helmut-Schmidt-Universität Hamburg, Germany</i>
<b>Group 8:</b> The Social Impact of Adult Education on Learners' Lives	<i>Mar Joanpere, University of Tarragona, Spain</i>
<b>Group 9:</b> Adult Education and Gender: Adult Education and Lifelong Learning policies for women	<i>Natalia Alves, University of Lisbon, Portugal</i>
<b>Group 10:</b> Curriculum Internationalization in Higher Education: Policies and strategies	<i>Joellen Coryell, Texas State University, United States of America</i> <i>Marica Liotino, University of Padova, Italy</i>
<b>Group 11:</b> Faculty development: Policies, Organizational challenges and professional development	<i>Monica Fedeli, University of Padova, Italy</i> <i>Laura Bierema, University of Georgia</i>
<b>Group 12:</b> Adult learning and education for all?! Issues of inclusion with regard to disability in the limelight	<i>Silke Schreiber-Barsch, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany</i> <i>Marina Rößner, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany</i>
<b>Group 13:</b> Time Matters: Exploring Temporal Challenges and Opportunities in Adult Education and Learning	<i>Sabine Schmidt-Lauff, Helmut-Schmidt-Universität Hamburg, Germany</i> <i>Miriam Douglas, West Liberty University (WLU), West Virginia, USA</i> <i>Jörg Schwarz, University of Education, Freiburg, Germany</i>

## Comparative Group 1: Peacebuilding and Intercultural Dialogue in Adult Learning and Education

### Intercultural learning in adult education • peace education • intercultural dialogue

Insecurity, violent confrontations, and societal polarisation are all becoming more prevalent in today's extremely complicated world.

Adult learning and education (ALE) should not evade its responsibility to contribute to peacebuilding and promoting intercultural dialogue as a way of facing these challenges. Peacebuilding features as a prominent topic in UNESCO's documents from 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms to CONFINTEA VII stressing ALE as an important mechanism for implementing, among others, SDG 16 dedicated to building just, peaceful, inclusive, violence free-societies. This role is also reaffirmed in the most recent GRALE 6 Working Paper, where ALE in conflict and post-conflict reconstruction is included among the four key topics. UNESCO's flagship report, *We Need to Talk: Measuring Intercultural Dialogue for Peace and Inclusion*, published in 2022, demonstrates the link between intercultural dialogue and peace. However, the intensity and modalities of implementation of ALE in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue vary across societies, starting with the conceptualisation of interculturality, which is shaped by the historical and socio-political landscape of each individual society.

The relevance of peacebuilding, understood as a core societal value, extends beyond (post)conflict societies and includes those facing political tensions and social polarization. This further reflects on modes of integrating peacebuilding into ALE, designing learning opportunities, thematic focus, and educators' competencies. ALE for peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue can take up different forms (education programs, initiatives, movements) and employ a variety of learning techniques (e.g., role plays, case studies, discussions, coaching, etc.).

The expected learning outcomes of this comparative group are: (1) to analyse approaches to peacebuilding and/or intercultural dialogue in ALE in different countries; (2) to understand how these approaches are shaped by the broader socio-cultural and political context of the given country.

### Role of practitioners

Practitioners should focus on: (1) presenting a case of implementing peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue in ALE, or (2) the main challenges they face in bringing adult learners from different backgrounds together for learning and joint activities

### Comparative research questions

1. How is the concept of interculturality defined in different societies?
2. What initiatives are there in different societies to support peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue as part of adult learning and education?
3. What topics are included in those initiatives, and what are their priority groups?



**Prof. Amina Isanović Hadžiomerović**, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Assist. Prof. Amina Isanović Hadžiomerović teaches Adult Education, Career Guidance, Evaluation in Education and Research Methods at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina). She is also head of the Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education Center at the same Faculty.

## Context of comparison

Comparative analysis of ALE in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue will be based on multilevel analysis considering:

- mega level (crises and conflicts)
- macro level (policies, laws, and national structures which govern and shape ALE),
- meso level (organisations implementing programs/activities) and
- micro level (programs, grassroots activism, initiatives, and partnerships).

The main unit for analysis will be the single national context that students choose. The analysis will start from the global context and documents, including peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue (primarily UNESCO and UN). The next step will be to describe the national contexts in order to prepare enough material for the comparative analysis of different countries that will take place during the second week of the Academy.

## Categories of comparison

- Historical and socio-political context of a country. What events shaped the main social dynamics and composition of the society?
- How is interculturality defined in a specific country?
- Position of peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue in education policy documents. Are there any specific documents (policies, recommendations, guidelines...) that deal with peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue topics?
- Organisations involved in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue. What kind of organisations are active in this topic (e.g., formal education, non-formal, civil society organisations, etc.)?
- Programs and initiatives. What specific education programs and initiatives are dedicated to implementing peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue in a given country?

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### Prof. Larisa Kasumagić-Kafedžić, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Larisa Kasumagić-Kafedžić is an Associate Professor at the University of Sarajevo- Faculty of Philosophy (English Language Teacher Education) with extensive international experience in various projects and education initiatives. Her teaching expertise and research interests are in the fields of intercultural education, peace pedagogy, language teaching, and teacher development. She is the founder and the president of the Peace Education Hub (<https://peacehub.ba>), which was established at the University of Sarajevo in early 2020.



## Comparative Group 2: Developing Learning Ecosystems through ALE – The Roles of Learning Cities and Communities

**Learning ecosystem • learning city-community • knowledge transfer  
• skills development**

Learning cities as ecosystems for promoting adult and lifelong learning are special models to integrate economic (Employment), social/community (citizenship) and environmental (green/climate) aspects to claim continuous development of knowledge and skills.

This topic may help turning attention of comparative studies and research to learning cities as ecosystems to discuss some key issue to influence the success of learning communities in urban environment.

Learning outcomes will relate to better understanding of:

- The roles and responsibilities of stakeholder collaborations in a learning ecosystem with sustainable structures.
- The impact of community learning in participatory actions to develop active citizenship through various forms of citizenship education.
- The role of the museum in fostering lifelong learning; the cultural and social roles of the museum today.

### Role of practitioners

Presentation of their experiences in ALE through learning city/learning community frames/models.

### Comparative research questions

What is the role of learning cities and learning communities as ecosystems in promoting adult learning?

### Context of Comparison

Contexts and cases for comparison:

- Stakeholders and their roles;
- forms and practices of community learning as a particular stakeholder for ALE development in a learning city by promoting ESD and/or GCE.
- Actions of cultural bodies (e.g. museums, libraries and galleries) in formulating LLL-opportunities to relate to choices and limitations

Interdependencies to other contexts will relate to:

- participatory, performance and partnership aspects of policies, laws and local/regional structures of learning ecosystem (economy – society/community – environment) referring to sustainability matters



## Categories of Comparison

What is the role of stakeholders (e.g. local/regional governments) in promoting learning city, learning community arrangements/models? (you may refer to initiatives, collaborations, programmes or projects)

What are the forms or concrete actions of developing learning communities? (you may show and analyse participatory actions, partnerships for outreach and engagement, etc.)

What initiatives, programs, and methods do museums implement to promote inclusivity and well-being, as well as to strengthen communities?

What is making difficult or constrain the development of learning cities and learning communities through ALE?

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### Prof. Heribert Hinzen, University of Pécs, Hungary

Heribert Hinzen is a senior consultant on adult education and lifelong learning for sustainable development. He worked for DVV International for almost four decades, both in headquarters and in offices in Sierra Leone, Hungary and Lao PDR. He is an Honorary Professor at the University of Pécs, and teaches comparative adult education in Würzburg. His research interests include the institutionalization and professionalization of ALE, global citizenship education as well as education for sustainable development.



### Prof. Balázs Németh, University of Pécs, Hungary

Balázs Németh is an associate professor and reader in Adult Learning and Education at the University of Pécs. He is also a founding member of the Hungarian University Lifelong Learning Network (MELLearn) and represents the University of Pécs in the European Universities Continuing Education Network (EUCEN) and in the Europe-an Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA). His research focus is on comparative analysis of policies of the member states of the EU on adult and lifelong learning.

### Dr. Zsuzsa Koltai, University of Pécs, Hungary

Dr. Zsuzsa Koltai is an Assistant Professor and Deputy Head of Department at the University of Pécs, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Institute for Human Development and Cultural Studies, Department of Cultural Studies, Hungary. She has been teaching courses related to museum education, cultural heritage and cultural history at the University of Pécs since 2004. Zsuzsa Koltai has been a lecturer at the University of Klagenfurt, Austria, since 2016, teaching the course Lifelong Learning in Museums: The Theory and Practice of Museum Learning.





## Comparative Group 3: Active Ageing in the Longevity World: Adult Education, LifeLong Learning and Competences

**Active ageing • Life skills • Competences • Adult Education • Lifelong Learning**

Active Ageing, if it wants to release all its potential, cannot be an emergency measure referring only to the elderly persons, but must be prepared throughout the Life Course. There is, in fact, a close correlation between the development of Life Skills in formal, informal and informal experiences and the enabling factors for active aging. To understand this transition (life-profession-skills development) it is important to pay attention to some aspects:

Policies of active ageing and transition care (Policy level)

The professional histories of workers and retired persons (Ideographical level)

Strategies that connect the demand for training and the care of the transition (Continuing educational level)

A comparative and transnational analysis between these levels can be of great interest in order to stimulate educational policy making processes.

### Role of practitioners

Practitioners will be asked to broaden the international perspective on active ageing presenting projects and experiences about it. Practitioners should explore roles of adult educators involved in active ageing education and should focus on national or local services and good practices, underlying the context, the target group, the implementation, and the results.

### Comparative research questions

- Which are the active ageing policies (including the educational ones) in your country?
- Which educational and training programs/services to promote active ageing?
- What are the Competences developed in the professional contexts that enable Active Ageing?

### Context of Comparison

- Policy (regulations/laws at regional & national level) that support transition between work and retirement
- Continuing education programmes that develops competences for good transition and for Active Ageing
- Professional Biography of workers & retired persons to discover the competences that promote Active Ageing

## Categories of comparison

- Policy for transition from work to retirement
- Continuing Education Programmes
- Competences for Life and Citizenship

## References

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### Prof. Vanna Boffo, University of Florence, Italy

Prof. Dr. Vanna Boffo, Ph.D, is Full Professor in Adult and Continuing Education and Head of the Department of Education, Languages, Interculture, Literatures and Psychology at the University of Florence, Italy (2021-2025). She is Coordinator of Education and Psychology Doctoral Course (2019-2025). Her research focuses on the transition to work at the Higher Education level. She is Coordinator of the Transversal Board Learning, Education and Active Ageing in the Resilience and Recovery Plan Programme “Age-it. Consequences and challenges of ageing” (2023-2026).



### Prof. Fabio Togni, University of Florence, Italy

Prof. Fabio Togni, PhD, is Associate Professor in General and Social Pedagogy at the Department of Education, Languages, Interculture, Literatures and Psychology, University of Florence, Italy. His research focuses on Philosophy of Education, Longevity and Quality Education at the Higher Education level.

### Dr. Debora Daddi, University of Florence, Italy

Debora Daddi, PhD, is junior researcher in General and Social Pedagogy at the Department of Education, Languages, Interculture, Literatures and Psychology, University of Florence, Italy. Her research focuses on Active Ageing and Longevity, Professionalization and Adult Education.



## Comparative Group 4: Programme planning and analysis in adult education: Dealing with power and going beyond power

### Programme planning • organisations • adult education

Although adults can learn independently and in self-directed way, many of them learn in an organised way through (formal, non-formal) educational offers available to adults. Both ways can even support each other mutually. Different types of organisations therefore provide learning opportunities for adults through their educational programmes, and programme planning and provision of programmes represent a core activity of professional practise in adult education.

Programme analysis refers to the analysis of educational programmes. Programmes in adult education: (a) serve as a hinge between potential learners and the provision of learning offers; (b) mean a wide variety nowadays, ranging from printed catalogues, leaflets, posters, websites, downloadable pdf documents, databases on the internet or posts of learning events on social media; (c) can be seen as everyday documents or temporary marketing tools, but are much more than that; (d) often include a brief description of the aims and content of a course, how the learning will take place, who the teachers are, target groups of learners, location, time, cost, etc. Programmes often illustrate the current “zeitgeist”.

Classification of the organisations where the programme can be found: 1) Public providers by the state (e.g. folk high schools), 2) Private providers by communities (e.g. voluntary work by actors or activists), 3) Market providers (e.g. commercial institutes selling education as a product), 4) Enterprise-based continuing training (e.g. adult learning offered within enterprises solely for the own employees).

Programme planning should address three core dimensions of planning, which means that we can use programme analysis to analyse the following three domains of programmes: (1) technical domain (e.g. structure and components of the programme), (2) sociopolitical domain (e.g. power relations) and (3) ethical domain (e.g. ethical issues).

### Role of practitioners

Practitioners should focus on (1) examples of good practise of AE organisation in programme planning, and (2) the main challenges they face in planning educational programmes for adults.

### Comparative research questions

- Which are the main organisations providing adult education in your country?
- How are technical, sociopolitical and ethical domains addressed in the analysed programmes of selected adult education organisation in your country?

### Context of Comparison

The main context (cases) of comparison will be educational programmes distributed in the form of catalogues, brochures, leaflets/flyers, posters, websites, annual reports, etc. In addition, the interdependencies (cooperation) between the analysed adult education organisation and other organisations as well as with (local, national) policy will also be examined.

## Categories of comparison

Organisations offering adult education: Which are the main organisations providing adult education (e.g. public by the state, public by private actors, commercial by market actors, non-public by enterprises for their employees)?

Domains of the programmes are:

- technical (e.g. do the programmes contain all the necessary information, are they attractive and stimulating, are they well-structured),
- sociopolitical (e.g. who is addressed by the programmes and who is not, how are adults (re-)presented and target groups framed, which values and power structures are explicitly and implicitly addressed by the programmes),
- and ethical (e.g. how fair are the programmes, have the planners done their work in a responsible, conscious and professional way when considering adult education theories) domains of educational programmes adequately and simultaneously considered in the analysed adult education organisation?

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### Prof. Borut Mikulec, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Prof. Borut Mikulec is associate professor of adult and continuing education at the Department of Educational Sciences at the University of Ljubljana. His research areas include the role of international organisations in education policy, international and comparative adult education, the policy in adult education, professionalisation of adult educators, continuing vocational education and training, and citizenship education.



### Prof. Bernd Käßplinger, Justus-Liebig-University Gießen, Germany

Prof. Bernd Käßplinger, Full Professor for Continuing Education at Justus-Liebig-University Gießen. Member of ESREA and RWL. His research areas include program planning, professionalization of adult educators, history of adult education.

## Comparative Group 5: Artificial Intelligence and Adult Education: Policies, Practices, and Challenges

### AI • equity • adult learning • accountability • ethics

During the last five to six decades, the utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been an integral part of the curiosity and lives of many people, especially in industrialized and urban spaces. The emergence of Generative AIs such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Adobe Firefly, and AI Meeting Assistants (just to name a few) has uncovered both the benefits for efficiency and the threat to various aspects of humanity and work associated with the development and utilization of AI. Recently, AI has integrated most industrial and occupational sectors, including Adult Education. Many governments are bracing for a future that involves AI as part of lifelong learning and the reskill of adult learners who will integrate the global marketplace. International organizations such as UNESCO, the European Union, and universities in many countries have issued guidance and guidelines for the use of AI in education and research. Scholars argue that GenAI carry potential to support adult education, especially with respect to accessibility and inclusivity, skill assessment and gap analysis, lifelong credentialing, adaptive learning systems, content generation and curation, personalized learning, and AI tutors and assistants. However, critiques have raised concerns about the ethical challenges posed by the development and utilization of AI, as well as its potential to exacerbate the digital divide in education and society, especially for adult learners. This module aims to empower participants to critically discuss and analyze various types of AI, development platforms, applications, policies/guidelines, as well as the equity and ethical challenges posed by their utilization in Adult Education and Learning. More specifically, participants who attend this comparative group will be able to:

Identify and discuss Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools for adult education and learning;

Analyze the policies/guidelines related to the utilization of GenAI tools in adult education and learning;

Compare the equity and ethical challenges related to the utilization of GenAI tools in adult education and learning between two or more countries.

### Role of practitioners

Practitioners should focus on diverse aspects related to the utilization of GenAI tools in Adult Education in relation to applicability, policy/guidelines, values, and challenges (e.g., equity, ethics, privacy, accountability, integrity, etc). They could focus on a case or multiple cases at the micro, meso, macro, or mega level and in intersection with their national or cultural contexts.

### Comparative research questions

- In what ways GenAI tools are more likely to affect teaching and learning in adult education in your country?
- What are the institutional (i.e., mega, macro, meso, or micro) policies and guidelines regarding the utilization GenAI tools for adult education in your country?
- What are the equity and ethical challenges posed by the development and utilization of GenAI tools in adult education in your country?

## Context of Comparison

- Adult educational institutions and programs in different countries.
- Equity and ethical challenges associated with the utilization of Artificial Intelligence across different national contexts.
- GenAI policies and guidelines for adult learning in different national contexts.

## Categories of comparison

The categories of comparison will include, but not limited to:

*Programs:* Comparing the utilization of GenAI tools for teaching and learning in different types of adult education programs.

*Organizations/institutions:* Comparing equity and ethical challenges associated with the utilization of GenAI tools for adult education in different types of institutions/organizations.

*Policies and guidelines:* Comparing the policies and guidelines for the utilization of GenAI tools for adult teaching and learning in different countries.

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### Prof. Emmanuel Jean-Francois, Xavier University of Louisiana, United States of America

Prof. Emmanuel Jean-Francois is Associate Professor of Educational Leadership at Xavier University of Louisiana (New Orleans). His most recent books include: “Transnational perspectives on innovation in teaching and learning technologies” (2018), *Perspectives in Transnational Higher Education* (2016), “Building global education with a local perspective: An introduction to global higher education (2015)”, “Financial sustainability for non-profit organizations (2014)”, “Trans-cultural blended learning and teaching in post-secondary education (2012)”, “DREAM model to start a small business (2011)”, and “Global education on trial by U.S. college professors (2010)”. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the peer-reviewed journal *The African Symposium*, the Chair of the African Educational Research Network (AERN), and is the Past-President of the Transnational Education and Learning Society (TELS).





## Comparative Group 6: National/regional adult education and lifelong learning policies

### National/regional policies • adult education • lifelong learning

The analysis of national/regional adult education and lifelong learning policies can follow the models proposed by Lima and Guimarães (2011): democratic emancipatory model; modernisation and state control model; and human resources model. This analytical proposal includes several criteria allowing the identification of political orientation and priorities, organisational dimensions and conceptual elements and the interpretation of main subjects underlying adult education policies in recent decades. These models seek to embrace a wide range of adult education policies adopted in different countries and regions, many of these reflecting the impact of the European Union or other international governmental organisations. Built on a continuum, these analytical models are not exclusive but can show hybridisation, as a national or regional policy can present characteristics of different models. Some countries or regions favour policies based on upskilling of the workmanship through learning programmes, its adaptation to the labour market needs and the raise of productivity and economic competitiveness; others are more directed at developing education and training systems, favouring formal education and training, school certification and professional qualification of adults that are part of more formalised and ruled labour markets; others still are oriented towards democratic and emancipatory principles, fostering participation and equality of opportunities within liberal adult education and popular education programmes.

The expected learning outcomes of this comparative group is to gain insights on: 1) different as well as similar national/regional adult education and lifelong learning policies in several countries or regions, and 2) understanding such similarities and differences according to national/regional historical and contextual aspects.

### Comparative research questions

According to analytical policy models proposed by Lima and Guimarães (2011):

- How can recent national/regional adult education and lifelong learning policies adopted be interpreted?
- What national or regional historical and contextual aspects can be used to understand such adult education and lifelong learning policies?

### Context of Comparison

The main cases that will be compared are:

- The national/regional adult education and lifelong learning policies of countries to which students belong; and

In comparing these cases, the comparative group will engage with a number of relevant interdependencies between:

- Political priorities (political orientations, ends targeted by these policies, domains of programmes and forms of provision, target groups and funding allocated),
- Theoretical references of adult education and lifelong learning (aims of programmes, pedagogic methods favoured, adults' forms of participation and assessment).



## Categories of comparison

Political priorities of specific programmes or forms of provision (domains included such as formal, non-formal or informal education and training domains, specific target-groups, funding allocated)

Theoretical references of adult education and lifelong learning considering:

- democratic, emancipatory and humanistic aims and practices
- modernisation and State control aims and practices — stressing formal education and training
- human resources management aims and practices — favouring learning relevant for productivity and economic competitiveness, referring specifically to pedagogic methods favoured, forms of participation of adults involved, adults assessment.

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### **Prof. Paula Guimarães, University of Lisbon, Portugal**

Prof. Paula Guimarães, PhD, is an assistant professor at the Instituto de Educação, Universidade de Lisboa (Portugal) since 2012. She holds a PhD in (adult) Education Policies and still researches this topic at a local, national and supra/international levels. Her research interests also include the links between adult education policies and adult educators work and jobs.

### **Lucas Pacheco Campos, University of Juiz de Fora, Brazil**

Lucas Campos has been a Public Administrator Specializing in Education at Fluminense Federal University (Brazil) since 2023 and served as an Assistant Professor at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (Brazil) from 2018 to 2023. He holds a PhD in Public Policies and Human Development from Rio de Janeiro State University (Brazil), completed in partnership with the Institute of Education at the University of Lisbon (Portugal).



## Comparative Group 7: (Generative) Artificial Intelligence in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning

**(generative) artificial intelligence (AI) • adult education • lifelong learning • policies • organisations • approaches**

Artificial intelligence in education (AIED) is fundamentally changing and transforming educational practices and the delivery and implementation of teaching-learning settings. The development of a wide range of technologies, especially generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) based on large language models (LLMs), is progressing rapidly and there are now numerous AI systems used in education and learning (Holmes & Tuomi, 2022; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). Addressing the social impact of GenAI on our coexistence and our education systems is a central concern of international (education) policy development strategies (e.g. EC, 2024; UNESCO, 2019, 2021). At the same time, (education) policy developments that define the framework for the use of GenAI in (adult) education are only gradually taking place, most recently with the introduction of the AI Act (European Parliament and the Council, 2024), which sets out the framework conditions for the use of GenAI in (educational) organizations and the skills required for this. In the fields of adult education, the use of GenAI is developing in a rhizome-like and needs-oriented manner. To date, there are hardly any studies that examine the use of AI in adult education in a scientifically supported manner. Also, regulations regarding AIED are scarce and offer a fast-evolving field for exploratory comparative work.

Thus, the aim of the Comparative Group is to obtain an initial overview of available usage practices and policy guidelines of GenAI in adult education and lifelong learning through a multi-level approach. To this end, we will determine a common conceptual understanding of GenAI for adult education, and adopt it to the conceptual framework of Lima & Guimaraes (2011, 2016) for policy analysis in adult education. Based on this, we offer to look at the use of AIED from the mega or macro level to the micro level based on the availability of documents and data in the country cases: identify policies and guidelines that regulate the use of GenAI in adult education in the various country contexts; ask about the use of GenAI in organizations and fields of adult education in the different countries; look at concrete practices and approaches of GenAI use in adult education in the different county contexts.

### Role of practitioners

Practitioners should focus on AIED they use to support adult education/ lifelong learning (e.g. in teaching but also in planning or organisational tasks). They can provide insight into their practices, experiences and knowledge with the usage of AIED in adult learning and education on all levels (policy, organisation, programmes, teaching).

### Comparative research questions

- What are the policies and guidelines in adult education that inform the usage of AIED in your country
- What is the extent of availability, access, and utilization of AIED for teaching and learning in adult education in your country?
- What are the approaches and practices of AIED used by adult educators in your country to support adult teaching and learning?



**Dr. Lisa Breitschwerdt, Julius-Maximilian Universität of Würzburg, Germany**

Dr. Lisa Breitschwerdt (JMU Würzburg, Germany) is a research associate at the Professorship for Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Würzburg. She works on digitalisation in adult and higher education, among other things on the didactic-technical conception and design of synchronous hybrid settings, questions of the impact of digital transformation on adult education organisations and the beliefs of adult educators towards digitalisation and the use of digital media. Other areas of her interests lie in professionalisation in adult education, didactics and methods of teaching and learning and dialogical perspectives in adult education research.

## Context of comparison

As the field of AIED is evolving fast and regulations are still scarce, the contexts of comparison will be narrowed in the group preparation phase. Possible are:

- Adult education policies, guidelines, strategies, laws related to AIED: Comparing AI-oriented policies, guidelines, strategies and/or laws in (adult education) in different countries
- Adult educational organizations or/and institutions: Comparing AIED frameworks in adult education organisations or specific areas of the adult education field (e.g. VET)
- Adult education programs (approaches, practices, initiatives): Comparing the use of AIED within adult education programs

## Categories of comparison

Following the possible contexts of comparison, the categories follow the levels described above:

- Adult education/lifelong learning policies related to AIED or AIED policies related to adult education and lifelong learning (macro/mega level)
- Adult education/lifelong learning organisations or fields related to AIED (meso level)
- Adult education/lifelong learning programmes and practices related to AIED (micro level)

It must be expected that in some or several country cases, only one level / category might be applicable.

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### Dr. Jan Schiller, HSU Hamburg, Germany

Dr. Jan Schiller has been a research assistant at the Professorship for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning since November 2016 at Helmut Schmidt University/University of the Federal Armed Forces Hamburg. He currently researches and teaches primarily on questions of digitalization in adult education/further education, time-related issues in the context of education in connection with educational sociological and contemporary philosophical approaches, European and national educational policy as well as formats, didactics and target groups of academic continuing education. Jan Schiller did his doctorate on the subject of Education for an Uncertain Future. Temporal Agendas in the Context of Continuing University Education, and was awarded the 2022 Dissertation Prize of the German Association for Continuing Education and Distance Learning (DGWF). He worked on international comparative issues and those of open education in the completed ERASMUS+ joint project INTALL, previously COMPALL. He is currently working with the dtec-bw project DigiTaKS\*



## Comparative Group 8: The Social Impact of Adult Education on Learners' Lives

**Social impact • Adult education • Lifelong learning • Empowerment • Inclusion**

The social impact of adult education extends far beyond economic or professional benefits, influencing participants' well-being, empowerment, civic engagement, and inclusion. This comparative group will analyze how adult education initiatives contribute to social transformation at individual and community levels across different countries. The topic is relevant for understanding how educational experiences shape life trajectories, particularly for marginalized or underrepresented groups. Expected learning outcomes include the ability to identify and compare indicators of social impact, understand contextual differences, and reflect on the role of adult education in promoting equity and inclusion.

### Role of practitioners

Practitioners may be involved as co-moderators or providers of good practice examples through short presentations or interviews. Their real-life insights will ground the comparative analysis in practical experience.

### Comparative research questions

How does adult education contribute to the social impact experienced by learners in different national and institutional contexts?

### Context of Comparison

This group will compare local, national, and international adult education programs in diverse European and global contexts. These might include formal and non-formal institutions, NGOs, public initiatives, and university programs. Attention will be paid to how international policy agendas (e.g., Sustainable Development Goals, EU lifelong learning strategy) and local socioeconomic conditions influence the perceived and documented social impact of adult education.

### Categories of comparison

- **Learner Empowerment:** How do programs enhance participants' self-confidence, agency, and voice?
- **Social Inclusion:** In what ways do they reduce social exclusion and promote belonging?
- **Civic Participation:** Do learners become more engaged in community and political life?
- **Intergenerational Impact:** Are benefits observed across learners' families or social circles?
- **Recognition and Validation:** How is the social value of adult education acknowledged or rewarded?

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### Prof. Mar Joanpere Foraster, University of Tarragona, Spain

Mar Joanpere Foraster, PhD in Sociology. She has developed a diverse and impactful career as a researcher with a focus on social impact and co-creation.

She is a member of the consolidated research group "Social Impact and Education" (IMSE), led by Dr. Oriol Ríos at Universitat Rovira i Virgili. And she is a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Business Management at the same university. Over the years, she has contributed to seven major research projects, including three within European frameworks and three under the National R&D&I Plan.



### Prof. Elisabetta Ghedin, University of Padova, Italy

Prof. Elisabetta Ghedin PhD. is Associate Professor in Inclusive education at the dept. FISPPA (Philosophy, Sociology, Pedagogy and Applied Psychology), University of Padova. Since 2022 she is Master's Degree Coordinator of Management of Educational Services, Adult and Continuing Education and since 2025, Director of the Postgraduate Specialisation Programme in Educational Support for Students with Disabilities". She is also the Coordinator of the curriculum RIWSE "Research on Inclusion, Well-being, and Sustainability in Education", PhD. Course on Pedagogical, Educational and Training Sciences – SPEF, University of Padova.



## Comparative Group 9: Adult Education and gender: mature women in Higher Education

Higher Education • non-traditional students • mature women

Over the past decades, there has been a significant growth in the number of non-traditional students attending higher education worldwide. Governments and higher education institutions encourage underrepresented students to enrol. Widening their participation is often directed at two main goals: enhancing the national economic competitiveness and the social inclusion within higher education for traditionally excluded groups such as the working classes, ethnic minorities, older students and the disabled.

In this comparative group, we will focus on a particular group of non-traditional students: the mature women.

The definition of mature undergraduates varies among countries according to age criteria. In some countries, they are defined as those aged 21 and over; in others, as 23 or 25 and over. In spite of these age differences, there is a common agreement among the academic community: mature students are those who are older than 'traditional' students (18 years old).

The research conducted to explore mature women's motivation for participation in higher education shows that entry into tertiary education was influenced in some cases by the state of their relationship with their families. In other cases, the desire to attend higher education has been present for a long time, but the implementation of this desire was delayed because of situational, institutional and dispositional barriers.

Based on the analysis of interviews conducted by the participants of this CGW with mature women attending higher education institutions, we expect students:

- to compare mature women's motivations to attend higher education;
- to compare the barriers they had to overcome;
- to compare the mechanisms of support they could count on.

### Role of practitioners

Based on their experience practitioners can focus on women's motivation to attend adult education, the barriers and the challenges they have to overcome and the mechanisms of support provide by their organization.

### Comparative research questions

What are the motivations and the challenges mature women have to deal with to become higher education students?

To answer this general question, the following questions must be asked:

What are their motivations?

What kind of situational, institutional, and dispositional barriers did they have to overcome to enter into higher education?

What kind of mechanisms of support could they count on?



## Context of Comparison

At a macro level, the comparison will focus on the national legal framework to facilitate access and attendance of non-traditional students in general and mature women in particular.

At a meso level, the comparison will focus on higher education institutions' barriers and mechanisms to support mature women.

At a micro level, we will focus on mature women's motivations, barriers and mechanisms of support.

## Categories of Comparison

Access to higher education – based on the analysis of national/regional laws and regulations, identify pathways to access higher education targeted at non-traditional students.

Mature women's motivations – based on the interviews, identify their motivations.

Barriers to enter higher education – based on the interviews, identify the type of barriers (situational, institutional, and dispositional) that women faced to enter higher education.

Mechanisms of support – based on the interviews, identify the mechanisms of support that mature women students can count on, e.g. higher education institutions, family and friends, employers.

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### Prof. Natália Alves, University of Lisbon, Portugal

Prof. Natália Alves, PhD, is an associate professor at the Institute of Education, University of Lisbon. She holds a PhD. on Sociology of Education. Her main fields of research are school to work transitions and IVET and CVET policies, forms of provision, and practices.





## Comparative Group 10: Curriculum and Learning Internationalisation in Higher Education

**University internationalisation • curriculum internationalisation • global perspectives • international/cross-cultural skills development**

The group will analyse and compare how faculty and instructors across different universities and organisations develop competencies related to teaching and learning. This will include an exploration of institutional policies, organisational challenges, and the individual motivations behind skill development for improved teaching practices. Faculty development programs will be examined, and various opportunities for professional growth will be discussed collaboratively during the group work.

The relevance of this Comparative group work is to understand the efforts made by the different countries for transforming and innovating teaching and learning through faculty development strategies and practices.

Therefore, the expected learning outcomes of this CGW are related to:

- Knowledge about HEIs policies related to professional development of faculty.
- Organisational and institutional strategies to promote faculty development.
- Programs, actions/practices implemented for promoting professional development and teaching innovation.

### Comparative research questions

- What is the state of art of faculty development policies and practices in different universities?
- What are the organisational and institutional challenges that universities are facing for promoting faculty development?
- What programs, actions/practices do HEIs implement to realise to develop faculty competences?

### Context of Comparison

The comparative analysis will be carried out:

- at the micro level, programs, strategies and practices implemented for faculty development will be investigated through the analysis of the different faculty development offer in the countries involved.
- at the meso level, the institutional policies and organisational strategies implemented and adopted for supporting the professional development of faculty

## Categories of Comparison

- Professional development programs and activities of faculty and recognition
- Analysis of organisational professional factors that determine better and innovative teaching in different academic contexts
- Governance Policies to support faculty development in Academia

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### Joellen Coryell PHD, Texas State University, United States of America

Joellen E. Coryell, PhD, is Associate Dean for Educational Partnerships and Enrollment for the College of Education and Professor of Adult, Professional, and Community Education in the Department of Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education, and School Psychology at Texas State University. She holds a PhD in educational human resource development and adult education from Texas A&M University. Across her career, she worked in executive business management and corporate training, in faculty development for learning and teaching, and as program director for master's and doctoral programs in two universities. In her current role as Associate Dean, she provides direction for creating and sustaining educational partnerships in the public and private sectors.

### Marica Liotino, PHD, University of Padova, Italy

Marica Liotino, PhD., is a postdoctoral research fellow and lecturer of teaching and learning methods and organizational development in the Department of Philosophy, Sociology, Pedagogy, and Applied Psychology at the University of Padova. Dr. Liotino is an e-tutor in the Management of Educational Services and Lifelong Learning master's program and a member of the organizing committee for the professional master's program in Organizational Coaching: Leadership and Lifelong Learning. Her research interests include adult education, organizational and faculty development, diversity management, gender equity, technology-enhanced learning, online learning, and digital competencies. She has published over ten contributions in books, national, and international journals, and she is a member of the editorial board of the Excellence and Innovation in Learning and Teaching journal.



## Comparative Group 11: Faculty development: Policies, Organisational challenges and professional development

### Teaching and learning • professional development • organisational development

This topic includes how higher education institutions and academic programs, including but not limited to, programs in adult education, education sciences, and human resource development, incorporate global perspectives and international/cross-cultural skills and understanding development in their curricula and directed learning experiences.

Internationalisation in adult higher education is important because it strengthens academic programs, increases cultural understanding, and prepares students for the global economy. It also fosters global leaders who can work across borders and cultures. Furthermore, it expands opportunities for collaboration, research, and networking for both students and faculty.

The expected learning outcomes of the comparative group include, but are not limited to, gaining a better understanding of global trends, identifying best practices for curricular innovation and learning experiences, informing policy and advocacy, and stimulating transformation and collaboration.

### Comparative research questions

- What are the current practices and policies of curriculum development and international learning opportunities for developing global perspectives and international/cross-cultural skills and understanding in university programs (adult education, education sciences, and human resource development, or other related fields)?
- What are the challenges that universities and programs are facing regarding internationalisation of curriculum and international learning experiences?

### Context of Comparison

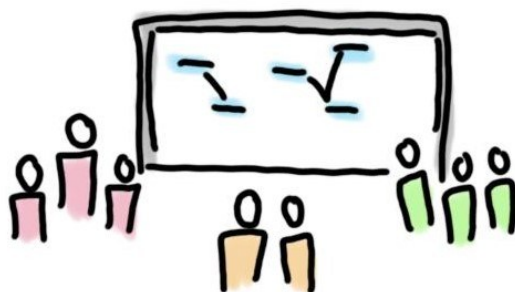
- Contexts: Institutions of higher education and their academic programs
- Institutional practices will be analysed and compared according to the WIA approach. The following dimensions will be investigated: curriculum, vision, degree and certificate programs, double degree programs, study abroad and other mobility opportunities for students and faculty, and institutional and national internationalization policies

## Categories of Comparison

- Policies: Internationalization policies at the national and institutional levels
- Practices: Academic program curriculum internationalization and international mobility practices
- Challenges: Challenges that programs and institutions face promoting internationalization

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### Prof. Monica Fedeli, University of Padova, Italy

Prof. Monica Fedeli PhD, currently Vice-Rector at Third Mission and full professor at University of Padova. She has been Adjunct Professor at Boston University, at Michigan State University, at Julius-Maximilian University of Wurzburg, Germany, and Visiting Professor at California University Berkeley, School of Education. Her research interests include: active teaching, participatory teaching and learning, faculty development, university business dialogue, women leadership, and professional development. She published more than 70 articles, books, and book chapters in variety of national and international journals, and book series.



## Comparative Group 12: Adult learning and education for all?! Issues of inclusion with regard to disability in the limelight

### disability • inclusion • accessibility

The ideology of social inclusion is one of the major leitmotifs of adult education, claiming to provide education for all—and especially for some across adult education's histories worldwide. However, in particular since the mid2000s, due to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), for example, inclusion as a terminology and conceptual approach has increasingly been used to focus on the context of disability and impairment. This has strongly intensified the quest for better access to adult learning and education (ALE). Yet, what learning means in the context of disability/impairment, how it is framed in a nation-state architecture and in ALE institutional settings, and how it is experienced in a certain geographical place and at a given time are very likely to vary.

Taking this as a point of departure, the comparative group will elaborate commonalities and differences. Disability/impairment will serve as the main lens of analysis; nonetheless, intersections with other categories will also be considered according to the multi-layered features of inclusive adult education (Schreiber-Barsch & Rule 2021, 553). Practitioners enrich the comparative group with their unique knowledge and experience with regard to the meso-level of institutional settings and strategies of access.

The outcome will be a deeper understanding of the buzzword inclusion, greater expertise in analysing the multidimensional concept of inclusive adult education through a comparative lens, and extended experience with strategies of institutional accessibility.

### Comparative research questions

Participants are asked to implement a small field study (see further information below).

The small field study is designed to focus your attention on issues of disability/impairment in your daily context and surroundings by taking notes, pictures and asking 2-3 adults about their experiences or perceptions with regard to inclusion or inclusive adult education in its widest sense. Take a closer look: is your university / workplace / institution accessible, and, if so, how (financially accessible, physically accessible, socio-emotionally accessible, ...)? Is your favourite place (restaurant, park, gym, etc.) accessible? And are there any inclusive adult education opportunities in your hometown or neighbourhood? You might also share aspects of self-reflection on the relevance you personally assign to aspects of inclusion and the reasons why you are interested in this topic.

This small field study prepares the group work, which is guided by three comparative research questions:

1. What would you share as your own experiences and observations with regard to the encounter of disability/impairment and aspects of ALE?
2. Which conclusions do you draw from the results of your field study with regard to the core features of inclusive adult education?
3. Considering issues of inclusive adult education with a focus on people with disabilities on the policy level, which definitions, strategies and/or guidelines are adopted or used in your country?

## Role of practitioners

Practitioners are very welcome to contribute to the comparative group with their experiences and professional expertise on institution-related pitfalls, challenges, and good practices with respect to providing inclusive access to ALE as much as possible.

## Context of Comparison

The context of comparison is focused on issues of inclusive adult education for people with disabilities in your country, whether these already exist or need to be brought forward in the context of ALE. Within this context, the comparative group work will focus on the individual micro level of ALE access under conditions of disability/impairment, and, on the macro level of policy papers and strategies of inclusion.

## Categories of Comparison

Data collections on inclusive adult education for people with disabilities at the policy level

- What is the officially or widely used definition of disability / impairment in (adult) education policy papers, ministerial guidelines or the like in your country?
- How are disability / impairment and inclusive (adult) education defined in these documents? (Is it possible to identify specific models or concepts of disability in the definitions?)
- What relevance is given to inclusive adult education at this policy level?
- Are there any strategies mentioned or launched for implementing and strengthening inclusive adult education?
- What kind of ALE practice reports and / or data collections exist in your country with regard to issues of inclusive adult education?

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### Prof. Silke Schreiber-Barsch, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany

Prof. Silke Schreiber-Barsch, PhD, is Professor in adult and further education at University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany. Moreover, she has been appointed as Research Associate at the Centre for Higher and Adult Education, Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Her research interests include international and comparative adult education, lifelong learning, issues of participation and social inclusion/exclusion, global citizenship education, and adult education and disability.



### Marina Rößner, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany

Marina Rößner is a researcher at the Professorship for Adult Education at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Prior to this, she studied education and special education at the Julius-Maximilians-University Würzburg (bachelor's degree) and educational science with a focus on 'Participation and Lifelong Learning' at the University of Hamburg (master's degree). During her studies, she was a student assistant at the Professorship of Adult and Continuing Education at Julius-Maximilians-University Würzburg and a research assistant at the Department of Special Needs Education at the University of Hamburg.





## Comparative Group 13: Exploring Time and Temporal Patterns in Adult Education

### Time • Rhythm • (De-)Acceleration • Programme planning • Learning

Time is inextricably intertwined with human existence and our experience. Temporality – a more neutral yet multifaceted concept – is widely regarded as a constitutive dimension of all human action and being. Time functions not only as a quantitative measure for describing physical phenomena (motion in place and substance), but also, akin to space, as a categorical framework through which relational aspects of sociality and individuality are constructed.

*"Time,"* as Immanuel Kant stated, *"is a necessary concept that underlies all our perceptions."* (Kant KrV B 52).

*Learning as action in time.* Learning invariably unfolds over time (a) In a chronometric sense (learning always takes time<sup>6</sup>), and (b) situated within various phases of the lifespan in a chronological sense (learning to become a parent<sup>6</sup>).

Furthermore, educational theories and concepts are inherently embedded within *historical* contexts. For instance, the notion of lifelong learning has emerged as a modern imperative in response to the accelerated transformations characteristic of contemporary society and the broader narrative of modernization (learning towards the future<sup>6</sup>).

However, these cultural assumptions on the relations between time and learning have become *institutionalized* in educational legislations (*Paid Educational Leave*), organisations and programs (*informal learning on demand*) and thus fundamentally shape the ways of adult educational practice.

This comparative group will research the patterns of learning time inscribed in the institutions of national adult education systems, focusing on the level of national / regional laws, organizational processes and program structures. By comparing these patterns, we will be able to highlight different cultural assumptions on the relation between time and learning in adulthood and at the same time, we will become more sensitive for the peculiar temporal qualities lying within them. This sensitivity may also be seen as a "professional time sensitivity" (Schmidt-Lauff & Bergamini, 2017) thus enriching our professional capacities as adult educators.

### Role of Practitioners

Practitioners can clarify participants' understanding of the connection between laws and regulations, organisational processes and programme planning, and raise awareness of the importance of time in the everyday practice of adult educators.

### Comparative research questions

1. Which cultural patterns on the relation of time and learning are institutionalized on the level of:
  - (a) National / regional laws and regulations
  - (b) Typical processing structures of adult education organisations (e.g. working hours, planning periods, rhythms, ...)
  - (c) Program structures (e.g. course schedule, yearly rhythm, innovation cycles, ...)



2. Which peculiar time qualities of adult education have developed within these cultural, collective patterns (learning promotion just in time and on-demand)?
3. How is this mirrored in programs, learning offers (e.g. rhythmic semantics, to set a contrast to acceleration, technical and social dynamics; as space for contemplation, maturation)?

For practitioners: What are the approaches and practices (including digital and on-site learning spaces) used by adult educators in your country to time-sensitively organize adult education and learning?

## Context of Comparison

The context of comparison aims at:

- Cultural, collective time patterns in relation to adult education and learning
- national or regional laws and regulations addressing time in the context of adult education and learning
- adult educational organizations (incl. mission statements) and their programs (incl. offers)

These contexts should be analyzed also with regard to their embeddedness in international policies and regulations on time and adult education and on overarching change (acceleration, digitization o.a.) processes on the one hand and to the concrete practices of adult learning and education on the other.

## Categories of Comparison

The categories of comparison will include, but are not limited to:

- *Schedules*: How do cultural patterns control when good times for learning in adulthood take place – in which age and biographical phase, but also on which times of the year, on which days of the week and on which times of the day?
- *Rhythms*: Which cultural patterns exist for specific rhythmicity of adult learning and education such as very consistent and regular vs. needs-based and selective, more circular or more linear rhythms of learning.
- *Paces*: How do these cultural patterns configure the pace of adult learning and education – is it thought of as a slow and steady process or as a quick spontaneous movement, as uniform or as variable and characterised by phases.

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**Prof. Sabine Schmidt-Lauff, Helmut Schmidt University/University of the Federal Armed Forces Hamburg, Germany**

Prof. Sabine Schmidt-Lauff holds the Professorship for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning. A special focus of her research and numerous national as well as international publications is on temporal and time-related challenges for learning throughout the whole lifespan in a globalised and virtualized world. Other research interests are on professionalisation and professional identity, and, on international-comparative research on lifelong learning.



**Prof. Miriam Douglas, West Liberty University, West Virginia**

Dr. Miriam Roth Douglas is Coordinating Director Community Education Program; Advisor MAED/Community and Organizational Leadership. Professor of Education

**Dr. Jörg Schwarz, Marburg University & University of Education Freiburg, Germany**

Dr. Jörg Schwarz' research areas are adult learning and education, organizational research and organizational education; time and temporality in pedagogical fields, adult education professionalism, practice theory and field analysis, research methodologies.



## Certification and follow-up

### Participation certificate and grading possibilities

After successfully participating in the Adult Education Academy and completing a transnational essay, students receive a certificate of attendance (10 ECTS). All formally registered students can opt to participate in an examination for receiving a formal transcript including a grade (15 ECTS).

Participation is considered successful after **attending the complete programme** and either **submitted a transnational essay and passed the plagiarism check (master's and doctoral students)** or **if you gave a good practice presentation during the Academy (practitioners)**.

Please be aware that **participation is only possible if you complete the preparations during the preparation phase and attend the full programme**, which starts on 2 February 2026, 8.00 CET and ends on 13 February 2026 at 17.00 CET. In exceptional cases, which will be considered individually, it is possible to receive individual certificates for one of the two weeks or a good practice presentation.

#### Option 1 (10 ECTS)

Participation in the online preparatory phase + full attendance at the Academy in february

Submission of a transnational essay/ good practice presentation

#### Option 2 (15 ECTS + grade)

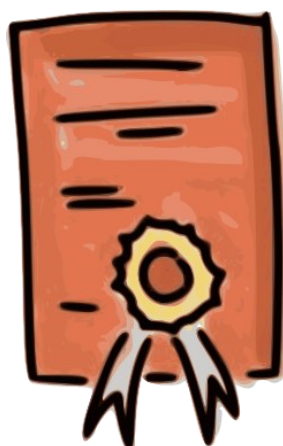
Participation in the online preparatory phase + full attendance at the Academy in february

Submission of a transnational essay/ good practice presentation

Submission of the transnational essay/ good practice essay for grading and a plagiarism check

### Publication option

Doctoral students and practitioners have the option to get guidance for publishing a joint comparative paper together with their comparative group moderators after the Adult Education Academy. Further information for those interested in this option will be provided during the Adult Education Academy.



## Join us on social media

# #AEAcademyWue

### LinkedIn Network

The LinkedIn Network for adult education and lifelong learning is one of several features of the annual Adult Education Academy. Our aim is to connect students, researchers, experts and professors interested in adult education and lifelong learning. We offer the “professional network” LinkedIn group. As a (future) participant with a LinkedIn account, we invite you to join the professional network.



### The “Professional network for adult education and lifelong learning”

The professional network is a group for professionals, whose jobs, studies or interests link them to adult education and lifelong learning. For this reason, we have set up our public LinkedIn group for participants from all former Adult Education Academies and also for professionals working in the field. Not only will you be able to connect with fellow students and professionals, you will also get information about international conferences, fellowships/scholarships, research projects, recently published papers, calls for papers, professional newsletters, online presentations and, of course, member’s thoughts about various topics in adult education and lifelong learning. This group already has over 1400 members from all over the world.

Join our professional LinkedIn network

[go.uniwue.de/linkedin-network](https://go.uniwue.de/linkedin-network)

### The Professorship for Adult and Continuing Education on Social Media

Follow us on X (@EBWuerzburg) so you don’t miss any news regarding our Professorship. Use [#AEAcademyWue](#) when you tweet about your experiences in relation to the Adult Education Academy! We are looking forward to reading from you.



Follow us on Instagram (@ebwuerzburg)! In addition to the Twitter channel, we post information about the Chair of Adult/Continuing Education on our Instagram account. You can also reach us here for general questions via direct message.

## Exchange Programme Winter Semester 2025/26

Course title	Lecturer
Academic writing in Adult Education	<i>Julia Saam, Julius-Maximilian-Universität Würzburg, Germany</i>
Lifelong Learning: International Strategies in Lifelong Learning	<i>Heribert Hinzen, University of Pécs, Hungary</i>
Lifelong Learning: Participation, and the pursuit of social justice and cultural democracy in adult learning	<i>Alan Tuckett, University of Wolverhampton, Great Britain</i>
International Aspects on Inclusion	<i>Johanna Brünker, Julius-Maximilian-Universität Würzburg, Germany</i>
Media education in an international Perspective	<i>Silke Grafe, Julius-Maximilian-Universität Würzburg, Germany</i>
Global and Transcultural Understandings	<i>Emmanuel Jean-Francois, Xavier University of Louisiana, United States of America</i>
Community Education	<i>Emmanuel Jean-Francois, Xavier University of Louisiana, United States of America</i>
Leadership for Adult Education and Organizational Learning	<i>Emmanuel Jean-Francois, Xavier University of Louisiana, United States of America</i>
International perspectives on Education, Ethics and Sociality	<i>Jens Dreßler, Julius-Maximilian-Universität Würzburg, Germany</i>

### Exchange programme

<https://go.uniwue.de/exchangeprogramme>

## Scholarships and funding

### Scholarships

Unfortunately, we do not currently have any information on financial support or scholarships.

### Students from the European Union

An ERASMUS Blended Intensive Programme has been applied for. Students from European universities should contact their International Office regarding the possibility of ERASMUS funding.

## JMU platforms

### Catalogue University Library Würzburg

In the catalogue you will find books and other media that are printed or available electronically from us. At the same time, you can also search many databases and other sources for independent literature, such as articles from magazines. This literature is not always available with us.



[Searching the catalogue - University Library \(uni-wuerzburg.de\)](https://uni-wuerzburg.de)

### Outlook / Microsoft Exchange

You can retrieve the e-mail address that you receive from the university at any time without a special mail client from the browser (<name.surname>@stud-mail.uni-wuerzburg.de).



[JMU Mail \(uni-wuerzburg.de\)](https://uni-wuerzburg.de)

### WueCampus

WueCampus is the university-wide online learning platform that provides the learning content, the organisation of learning units and learning processes, and serves as a communication platform.



[WueCampus \(uni-wuerzburg.de\)](https://uni-wuerzburg.de)

### WueMahara

Mahara is an e-portfolio software with community functions. The system supports the documentation and reflection of the learning process and the learning outcomes.



[Home page - Mahara \(uni-wuerzburg.de\)](https://uni-wuerzburg.de)

### WueStudy

WueStudy is the campus management system of the JMU and supports the entire student life cycle for all participants. On the platform you can find application management, student management, course management, event and room management and audit management.



[Home page - WueStudy \(uni-wuerzburg.de\)](https://uni-wuerzburg.de)

### Zoom

Zoom Meetings is a video conferencing tool with recording and screen sharing features.



[Video conferences, web conferences, Webinars, Screensharing - Zoom](https://uni-wuerzburg.de)

## Team of the Adult Education Academy



**Prof. 'in Dr. Regina Egetenmeyer**  
Head of the Professorship for  
Adult and Continuing Education



**Julia Saam, M.A.**  
Contact for the Adult Education  
Academy programme



**Dr. Lisa Breitschwerdt**  
Contact for the Adult Education  
Academy programme



**Christina Hümmer, M.A.**  
Contact for hybrid teaching



**Vanja Bogdanović, B.A.**  
Contact for ERASMUS+



**Eva Schiffner, M.A.**  
Contact for the Double Degree  
Master in Adult Education



**Kilian Troidl, M.A.**  
Contact for the Double Degree  
Master in Adult Education

### Contact information

Julius-Maximilian University Würzburg  
Institute for Education  
Professorship for Adult and Continuing Education  
Oswald-Külpe-Weg 82  
97074 Würzburg, GERMANY

Phone.: +49 931-31 85226  
lifelonglearning@uni-wuerzburg.de  
www.lifelonglearning.uni-wuerzburg.de  
X: EBWuerzburg  
Instagram: ebwuerzburg

### Venue

University of Würzburg  
Z6 building "Zentrales Hörsaal- und  
Seminargebäude"  
Winter School Office: Room 2.010 (2nd floor)  
Campus Hubland Nord  
97074 Würzburg

**We wish you all the best and stay healthy!**



## Adult Education Academy 2026

International and comparative studies  
in adult education and lifelong learning

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Julius-Maximilian University Würzburg  
Institute for Education  
Professorship for Adult and Continuing Education  
Oswald-Külpe-Weg 82  
97074 Würzburg, GERMANY  
Tel.: +49 931-31 85226  
lifelonglearning@uni-wuerzburg.de  
[www.lifelonglearning.uni-wuerzburg.de](http://www.lifelonglearning.uni-wuerzburg.de)

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