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# **THE POLITICAL DIMENSION OF THE WORK OF ADULT EDUCATORS IN CYPRUS, GREECE, CROATIA AND GERMANY**

Work Package 2 – Research Study

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The "The Political Dimension of the Work of Adult Educators in Cyprus, Greece, Croatia and Germany" research study was crafted within the framework of the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership "ATTACH – Adult Education addressing today's Challenges". The project's primary goal is to bolster the ongoing professional growth of educators working with adults, with a particular focus on skills that encourage active involvement in civic and societal matters among adult learners. This report seeks to attain a deeper comprehension of the political aspect of adult educators' responsibilities in the collaborating nations. It examines to which extent this political facet is incorporated into the tasks of adult educators, considering both contextual and individual elements. This scrutiny encompasses not only national policies but also the educators' competencies. This report intends to establish a starting point for upcoming project endeavours, which revolve around creating pertinent educational resources for adult educators within the partner countries.

We are focused on giving an answer to the following key research inquiries:

- First, to what degree and in what manner does the political aspect of civic education feature within adult education programs across partner countries? Additionally, what prospects exist for incorporating or enhancing the political dimension within the practices of adult educators?
- What are the primary proficiencies, abilities or competency domains adult educators should enhance to integrate the political dimension into their teaching effectively?

This research is grounded in four chosen methods: literature analysis, policy analysis, stakeholder consultation and survey. Combining these four methods allows a comprehensive understanding of prior research in this area, the policy context of adult education in project partner countries and the needs of adult educators for the development of their civic engagement competences.

The report's structure is the following: First, we present a theoretical foundation for the political aspect, followed by a concise summary of the pertinent policy environment of the European Union. Subsequently, the second section reveals our research conducted within the partner countries. Lastly, we offer conclusions consisting of recommendations for this project's subsequent phases and undertakings.

## 2. What does the political aspect of Adult Education encompass?

The political dimension of adult education can be comprehended through the lens of "being civically engaged", one of the seven competency domains defined within the European Training Strategy (ETS) Competence Model for Trainers (SALTO, 2014). Within this competency domain, four distinct competences exist: connecting policies and educational programs, integrating values and beliefs, supporting learners in developing critical thinking, and applying democracy and human rights principles. Our approach to the political aspect centres around citizenship education and the different aspects of the competence area of "being civically engaged".

Building upon this foundation, this chapter aims to establish a conceptual groundwork for the political facet of adult education. It emphasizes the substantial body of literature regarding the concepts of citizenship and citizenship education. This chapter provides the contextual backdrop for our research in the collaborating nations and the subsequent endeavours of the ATTACH project.

### 2.1. Citizenship as a concept

Citizenship is a complex and multifaceted concept that plays a vital role in shaping the relationship between individuals and the state. It encompasses legal, political, social and cultural dimensions, delineating individuals' rights, responsibilities, and privileges within a particular political community.

The concept of citizenship can be traced back to towns and city-states of ancient Greece, where it generally applied to property owners but not women, enslaved people or poorer community members<sup>1</sup>. A citizen in a Greek city-state was entitled to vote and was liable to taxation and military service. The Romans used citizenship as a tool for distinguishing the residents of the city of Rome from those peoples whose territories Rome had conquered and incorporated. As their empire continued to grow, the Romans granted citizenship to their allies throughout Italy proper and then to peoples in other Roman provinces. By 212 CE, citizenship was expanded to all free inhabitants of the empire, providing legal privileges within it. The American and French revolutions in the 18<sup>th</sup> century crystallized

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<sup>1</sup> *Citizenship*. (2023). From Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/citizenship>

the modern concept of citizenship, with the term citizen coming to suggest the possession of certain liberties in the face of the coercive powers of absolutist monarchs.

Encyclopedia Britannica defines "citizenship" as the most privileged form of nationality. The Encyclopedia focuses on the legal aspect of citizenship, noticing that citizenship is the relationship between an individual and a state to which the individual owes allegiance and, in turn, is entitled to its protection. Citizenship implies the status of freedom with accompanying responsibilities. Citizens have certain rights, duties and responsibilities that are denied or only partially extended to aliens and other non-citizens residing in a country. Full political rights, including voting and holding public office, are predicated upon citizenship. The usual responsibilities of citizenship are allegiance, taxation, and military service<sup>2</sup>.

As defined by T.H. Marshall in his seminal work "Citizenship and Social Class" (1950), citizenship is often categorized into civil, political and social dimensions. Civil rights encompass freedoms like freedom of speech, assembly, and religion, ensuring that individuals can participate in society without fear of arbitrary repression. Political rights pertain to participation in the political process, such as voting and engaging in public discourse. Social rights involve access to social services like education, healthcare, and social welfare programs, aiming to mitigate inequalities and ensure all citizens' basic standard of living<sup>3</sup>.

The idea of citizenship has evolved over time, reflecting changes in political, economic and social landscapes. For example, sociologist Zygmunt Bauman's perspective on "liquid modernity" offers insight into the contemporary challenges to traditional notions of citizenship, as modern society's fluid and dynamic nature renders established boundaries and identities more permeable<sup>4</sup>. This dynamic is also echoed in the works of theorists like Saskia Sassen, who explores the implications of globalization on citizenship and the emergence of new forms of transnational belonging.

Bryan S. Turner's "Outline of a Theory of Citizenship" (1990) has significantly contributed to our understanding of citizenship. This work provides a concise framework for comprehending citizenship's

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<sup>2</sup> *Citizenship*. (2023). From Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/citizenship>

<sup>3</sup> Marshall, T. (1950). *Citizenship and Social Class*. Cambridge University Press. From [http://www.iura.unibielefeld.de/lehrestuehle/davy/wustldata/1950\\_Marshall\\_Citizenship\\_and\\_Social\\_Class\\_OCR.pdf](http://www.iura.unibielefeld.de/lehrestuehle/davy/wustldata/1950_Marshall_Citizenship_and_Social_Class_OCR.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Bauman, Z. (2000). *Liquid Modernity*. Polity Press. From <https://giuseppicapograssi.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/bauman-liquid-modernity.pdf>

multifaceted nature, highlighting key dimensions and implications. Among other things, Turner traces the historical development of citizenship from ancient times to contemporary society, explores the three core dimensions of citizenship – civil, political and social- and considers how citizenship contributes to a sense of belonging and self-identification. Moreover, Turner highlights the role of citizens in shaping societal norms and policies through activism and offers a critical examination of citizenship's limitations and exclusions.

In recent years, discussions about citizenship have intersected with debates about multiculturalism, integration, and identity politics. The works of political theorists such as Will Kymlicka and Bhiku Parekh explore the tensions arising from the coexistence of diverse cultural, religious, and ethnic groups within a single nation-state. Balancing the preservation of cultural identities with fostering a shared civic identity remains a central challenge for contemporary societies.

## 2.2. What do we define as "Citizenship Education"?

Citizenship education has become a crucial pillar of a well-functioning society in an ever-evolving world where interconnectedness transcends geographical boundaries and cultures. Beyond the conventional realms of reading, writing and arithmetic, the development of responsible and active citizens has taken centre stage in educational discourse.

UNESCO (1998) defined citizenship education as "educating children from early childhood to become clear-thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society"<sup>5</sup>.

In academic literature, various definitions of citizenship education refer to formal, non-formal and informal Education. Citizenship education is an essential component of modern educational systems. It aims to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills and values necessary to actively participate in their communities, societies and the global world. This type of Education goes beyond traditional academic subjects and focuses on cultivating informed citizens who deeply understand their rights, responsibilities and roles within the societal framework. An informed citizen is better equipped to analyze information critically, discern between fact and misinformation, and make reasoned decisions in a world of information overload.

At its core, citizenship education seeks to impart an understanding of the principles of democracy, human rights, social justice and ethical decision-making. It involves teaching individuals about the

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<sup>5</sup> (2019). *ADULT EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP*. European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA).



structure and functioning of government systems, the rule of law and the importance of civic participation. This knowledge enables individuals to make informed decisions, critically analyze information, and engage in meaningful public discourse.

Moreover, citizenship education is the incubator for nurturing active participation and social responsibility. This includes voting in elections and engaging in community service, advocacy for social issues, and collaborative problem-solving. Citizenship education empowers individuals to voice their opinions, contribute to policy discussions and work towards positive societal change.

In a time where globalization and digital connectivity have expanded the horizons of interaction, citizenship education takes on a global dimension. It encourages individuals to see themselves as members of their immediate communities and as interconnected members of a global village. This awareness fosters a sense of empathy, intercultural understanding, and a recognition of shared human values, contributing to a more peaceful and cooperative world.

There are three primary methodologies for fostering citizenship education:

- **Education or Learning *about* citizenship:** instruction or acquisition of knowledge related to citizenship.
- **Education or Learning *through* citizenship:** learning by means of engaging in citizenship activities.
- **Education or Learning *for* citizenship:** learning for the purpose of effectively practising citizenship.

Acquiring knowledge *about* citizenship traditionally falls within the domain of formal Education, spotlighting citizenship as a status. This involves furnishing learners with information and ample comprehension of cultural and historical insights and social and political frameworks and processes. In contrast, *learning through citizenship* encompasses participatory and active involvement (learning by doing), feasible in both formal and educational settings and daily routines. This form of learning emphasizes citizenship as a practice, focusing on active participation and involving "deliberate contemplation and discussion of diverse citizenship experiences in daily life. On the other hand, Learning *for* Citizenship combines the two aforementioned learning approaches and revolves around "equipping students with a toolkit (comprising knowledge and comprehension, skills and capabilities, values and inclinations) that empowers them to actively and judiciously engage in the roles and responsibilities they encounter as adults". Kalekin-Fishman contend that this form of citizenship education is particularly suited for adult learning.

In conclusion, citizenship education is a dynamic and essential component of modern education systems. It equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to participate meaningfully in their communities and the wider world. As societies continue to evolve, the cultivation of informed, engaged, and socially responsible citizens remains a cornerstone in building a just equitable and harmonious global society.

### 2.3. Citizenship education and adult learning

While citizenship education is often associated with formal schooling, being integrated into curricula through subjects like social studies, civics and political Science, it is equally important to recognize its significance within the realm of adult learning. Adult learning programs provide a platform for individuals to access citizenship education even after formal schooling. This is particularly important for adults who may have missed out on these topics during their youth due to various reasons.

Adult learning, or andragogy, recognizes that adults have distinct learning needs and motivations compared to non-adults. Adults often come to the learning process with a wealth of experiences, a readiness to apply new knowledge, and a desire for relevance. When it comes to citizenship education, adult learning principles can be effectively employed to create meaningful and impactful learning experiences.

Citizenship education for adults offers several benefits that contribute to both individual growth and societal development. Engaging with citizenship education equips adults with the knowledge to make informed decisions about social, political and civic matters affecting their lives and communities. Citizenship education encourages adults to actively participate in civic activities, such as voting, community volunteering and advocacy, thereby strengthening democratic processes. Also, by promoting understanding and tolerance among diverse groups, citizenship education contributes to building more cohesive and inclusive societies. Moreover, when adults gain the skills to analyze information and engage in constructive dialogue critically, they become empowered to address societal challenges and advocate for positive change. Finally, citizenship education can ignite a passion for lifelong learning, encouraging adults to continue educating themselves about their changing societies and global dynamics.

In a rapidly evolving world, where societies face complex challenges ranging from environmental issues to social inequalities, citizenship education becomes increasingly important. While formal Education plays a significant role in imparting these values and skills, the inclusion of citizenship education within

the realm of adult learning is equally vital. Adult learners, with their diverse experiences and motivations, have the potential to be active agents of change in their communities and beyond. By employing adult learning principles, designing relevant content and offering flexible learning formats, citizenship education programs for adults can empower individuals to become responsible, informed, and engaged citizens, fostering the growth of vibrant and democratic societies.

Given the absence of a universally accepted method for teaching citizenship and a widespread agreement on the exact terminology, we interchange the terms "citizenship education" and "political dimension" in this report.

As we comprehend it, citizenship education encompasses an awareness of rights and responsibilities and their practical application relevant to everyday life. This includes grasping social and political processes, understanding the workings of various structures, fostering critical and introspective thinking, and emphasizing the active role of learners – their dynamic involvement and contribution to their community and society as a whole.

## 2.4. Exploring the Role and Competences of Adult Educators

### **Adult Educators' Role in Citizenship Education**

Adult educators are instrumental in equipping adults with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to participate effectively in democratic societies and contribute positively to their communities. Their role encompasses various competencies that enable educators to create meaningful and impactful learning experiences.

Adult educators must be able to employ a range of teaching methods, such as experiential learning, participatory approaches and reflective discussions, to engage learners in exploring complex citizenship concepts. Moreover, citizenship education requires individuals to critically analyze information from various sources, discern fact from opinion, and navigate the vast media landscape. Adult educators help learners develop critical thinking skills and media literacy, enabling them to make informed decisions and participate actively in civic life. In today's globalized world, intercultural competence is essential for understanding diverse perspectives and collaborating with individuals from different backgrounds. Adult educators foster intercultural competence by creating inclusive learning environments, promoting cross-cultural dialogue, and addressing issues related to identity, diversity and tolerance. As mentioned above, citizenship education extends beyond legal frameworks; it encompasses ethical and moral dimensions. Adult educators must facilitate discussions on values, ethics, and responsible citizenship, helping learners reflect on their roles as active contributors to

society and as stewards of ethical behaviour. Educators provide learners with a solid foundation of civic knowledge, including understanding political systems, human rights, social justice and the roles and responsibilities of citizens. This knowledge empowers individuals to engage in meaningful civic actions and make informed decisions. Citizenship education involves open and respectful dialogue about diverse perspectives, even where opinions differ. Adult educators' responsibility is to create spaces for constructive conversations, allowing learners to share ideas, challenge assumptions and develop effective communication skills. Effective adult educators empower learners to become advocates for social change by teaching them how to voice their concerns, engage in public discourse, and influence policy decisions. This competency allows citizens to address societal challenges and promote positive transformations.

### **Adult Educators' skills and competencies**

The skills and competencies frequently mentioned in literature as essential for adult educators align closely with the competencies or aspects within the political dimension of the ETS Competence Model. The report "Key Competencies for Adult Learning Professionals" identifies a set of competencies, categorized into two groups, applicable to all professionals working in the adult learning sector. These competencies are<sup>6</sup>:

- Being a fully autonomous lifelong learner
- Being a communicator, team player and net-worker
- Being responsible for the further development of adult learning
- Being an expert
- Being able to deploy different learning methods, styles and techniques in working with adults
- Being a motivator
- Being able to deal with heterogeneity and groups
- Being able to assess adult learners' learning needs
- Being capable of designing the learning process
- Being an advisor/counsellor
- Being a program developer

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<sup>6</sup> Buiskool, B., Broek, S., Lakerveld van, J., & Zarifs, G. (2010). *Key competences for adult learning professionals: Contribution to the development of a reference framework of key competences for adult learning professionals*. Zoetermeer: Research voor Beleid.

In the same pattern, the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career and Adult Education (OCTAE) through the project "Promoting Teacher Effectiveness in Adult Education" developed the "Adult Education Teacher Competencies" to identify the knowledge and skills needed by adult education teachers to improve student learning and performance. According to the project, four domains represent broad areas of activity for an adult education teacher:

- ✓ Monitors and manages student learning and performance through data
- ✓ Plans and delivers high-quality, evidence-based instruction
- ✓ Effectively communicates to motivate and engage learners
- ✓ Pursues professionalism and continually builds knowledge and skills.

Within those four domains of activity, seventeen individual, observable competences represent the knowledge, skills and abilities that an adult education instructor should possess to be effective within that domain. Each domain has four to five competencies.

The Erasmus+ project "Extending and developing adult educators' competencies" (EDEC) provides a list of competencies that adult educators need to effectively navigate and address a wide array of challenges encountered in adult education across various European Union countries. The identified skills and competencies are the following:

- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Negotiation skills
- ✓ Teamwork
- ✓ Active Listening
- ✓ Focus on the learner-educator relationship
- ✓ Diversity management
- ✓ Assessing learning and creating learning paths for learners

### 3. The European Framework for Citizenship Education and Adult Learning

#### 3.1. The State of Citizenship Education in the E.U.

For over twenty years, citizenship education has stood as a key focus within E.U. policies for Education and training. In response to the directive from the Feira European Council to establish consistent strategies and tangible actions for promoting lifelong learning for everyone, the European Commission adopted a Communication on "Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality" on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2001. This document identified active citizenship as one of the four "broad and mutually supporting objectives" of the lifelong learning strategy<sup>7</sup>.

The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union released 2006 the "Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning", in which the importance of strengthening active democratic citizenship through Education was emphasized. It achieved this by incorporating civic competence into the key competencies for a lifelong learning framework. This competence enables individuals to actively engage in civic affairs founded on an understanding of social and political principles and a dedication to active and democratic involvement<sup>8</sup>.

In the 2018 updated revision of the framework, citizenship competence is outlined as "the ability to act as responsible citizens and to participate in civic and social life fully, based on the understanding of social, economic, legal and political concepts and structures, as well as global developments and sustainability".

As stated within the European Agenda for Adult Learning (2010), active citizenship is recognized as a primary rationale for boosting the involvement of adult learners in formal, non-formal and informal endeavours. This objective is placed alongside the acquisition of occupational proficiencies, as well as personal growth and self-fulfilment.

Moreover, the Education and Training Monitor 2018 from the European Commission has centred on citizenship education. This report underscores how Education plays a pivotal role in imparting essential values, civic responsibilities and rights while also fostering social inclusivity, critical reasoning and active participation in democracy. With a notable emphasis on the youth, the monitor proposes that

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<sup>7</sup> (EC), E. C. (2001). *Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality*.

<sup>8</sup> (2019). ADULT EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP . European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA).

when individuals gain these values and skills through Education, it holds the potential to enhance the unity of European societies.

The "Paris Declaration on Promoting Citizenship and the Common Values of Freedom, Tolerance and Non-discrimination through Education", signed by all E.U. education ministers in Paris in March 2015, is a milestone for citizenship education since it focuses specifically on the need to educate young people to become adults capable of critical thinking and of engaging actively in society. More specifically, the Declaration defines common objectives for Member States and urges the E.U. to ensure the sharing of ideas and good practices with a view to "ensuring that children and young people acquire social, civic and intercultural competencies, by promoting democratic values and fundamental rights, social inclusion and non-discrimination, as well as active citizenship". The Paris Declaration, drafted in 2015 right after the terrorist attacks in France and Denmark, was an effort to support fundamental values such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. The Declaration was a concrete call for increased cooperation to promote European society, adhering to pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality.

From then onwards, member states have been dedicated to incorporating citizenship education into school curricula. 2017 Eurodice Report "Citizenship Education at School in Europe" offers a comparative assessment of the approaches to citizenship education adopted throughout Europe, concentrating on the prevailing regulations and recommendations governing this area within public educational institutions.

Even though the report primarily concentrates on formal learning and school-based Education, it explores whether citizenship skills can be cultivated beyond the confines of the classroom. This inquiry holds special significance for adult education and learning, often occupying a marginalized position within the broader educational landscape. It appears to introduce an avenue for elevating the importance of lifelong learning in European education discourse. This is achieved by explicitly addressing participatory and democratic competencies that should be nurtured across the entire population<sup>9</sup>.

### 3.2. Skills and competencies for active citizenship

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<sup>9</sup> ADULT EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP . European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA).

In the European Union context, citizenship education relies heavily on citizenship competence, one of the eight key competencies for lifelong set out by the Council of the European Union in 2018. As defined in the relevant document, citizenship competence is "the ability to act as a responsible citizen and to participate fully in civic and social life, based on the understanding of social, economic, legal and political concepts and structures, as well as global developments and sustainability<sup>10</sup>.

Citizenship competence is established upon a foundation of grasping basic concepts and phenomena relating to individuals, groups, work, organizations, society, economy and culture<sup>11</sup>. This encompasses a deep comprehension of the shared values inherent in Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. It entails familiarity with current affairs and a discerning comprehension of pivotal advancements in national and European history. Knowledge of the European integration, coupled with recognition of diversification and cultural identities within Europe holds paramount significance. This involves appreciating the intricate interplay of multiculturalism and socioeconomic facets within European societies and comprehending how national cultural distinctiveness contributes to the broader European identity<sup>12</sup>.

Skills for active citizenship:

- Proficiency in engaging with others for a common or public interest, including society's sustainable development.
- Nurturing critical thinking and holistic problem-solving abilities.
- Acquiring skills to formulate compelling arguments and contribute positively to community engagements.
- Active involvement in decision-making across various scales: local, national, European and international.
- Competence in navigating both conventional and modern media, with a critical grasp of media's role in democratic societies.

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<sup>10</sup> *citizenship competence*. (2023). From CEDEFOP: Terminology of the European education and training policy: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-glossary/glossary/competencia-de-cidadania>

<sup>11</sup> European Commission. (2018). *Key Competences for lifelong learning*. From Publica: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/297a33c8-a1f3-11e9-9d01-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

<sup>12</sup> European Commission. (2018). *Key Competences for lifelong learning*. From Publica: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/297a33c8-a1f3-11e9-9d01-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>



Active citizenship requires the adoption of the following attitudes<sup>13</sup>:

- Human rights respect as a basis for democracy.
- Constructive participation and willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels and civic activities.
- Support for social and cultural diversity, gender equality and social cohesion, sustainable lifestyles, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, a readiness to respect the privacy of others, and to take responsibility for the environment.
- Interest in political and socioeconomic developments, humanities and intercultural communication to overcome prejudices, ensuring social justice and fairness.

### 3.3. Fostering Citizenship via Adult Education

The idea that adult education is crucial in promoting inclusivity, social unity, and engaged citizenship within the E.U. has consistently received backing and reinforcement through European policies. These policies have emphasized both citizenship and lifelong learning in general, as well as adult learning specifically<sup>14</sup>.

The primary policy strategies guiding the European Union's approach to adult learning encompass the **European Agenda for Adult Learning** (Council of the European Union, 2011), **Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults** (Council of the European Union, 2016), and the **European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience** (European Commission, 2020b). Although the latter two documents recognize the significance of adult and lifelong learning for active citizenship (or participation in society), they do not give prominence to citizenship education.

The **European Agenda for Adult Learning** outlines adult education's purpose as a means of enhancing skills of individuals impacted by joblessness, structural changes, and shifts in careers. Additionally, it significantly contributes to fostering social integration, engaged citizenship and personal growth. The Agenda aligns with the strategic goals of the ET2020 strategy during the 2012-2014 period, encompassing the key focus area of advancing fairness, societal harmony, and active citizenship through adult education. This emphasis involves primarily enhancing fundamental proficiencies and

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<sup>13</sup> European Commission. (2018). *Key Competences for lifelong learning*. From Publica: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/297a33c8-a1f3-11e9-9d01-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

<sup>14</sup> (2019). ADULT EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP . European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA).

diverse literacy forms (like digital, civic, cultural, political and media literacy) crucial for effective involvement in contemporary society. Simultaneously, it aims to enhance inclusivity in adult learning opportunities and cater to specific learning necessities. Although citizenship education isn't explicitly highlighted as a defined priority for the period between 2015 and 2020, it remains pertinent to these goals as a pervasive guiding principle.

### 3.4. European Parliament Resolution of April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022 on the implementation of citizenship actions (2021/2008(INI))

The **European Parliament's Resolution of April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022**, regarding the implementation of citizenship actions, marks a significant milestone. It provides renewed momentum for the adoption of tangible measures aimed at effectively nurturing the concept of citizenship.

The Resolution acknowledges that changes in European Union Member States, such as social divisions, distrust in institutions, declining democracy, weakening of the rule of law, exclusive nationalism, and the misuse of anti-EU sentiments for political gain, coupled with the rise of extremist groups, increased racism and xenophobia, authoritarianism and false information, can seriously endanger European democracies and the E.U. as a whole. Therefore, strengthening citizenship education through lifelong learning in formal, non-formal and informal settings can play a vital role in countering this trend. It can promote more open political discussions and encourage citizens to become more involved in national and European politics and laws.

Furthermore, the Resolution cautions that insufficient knowledge of or ignorance about the E.U. and inadequate understanding of its functioning may enhance the perception of a democratic deficit and lead to distrust, disinterest in civic matters and doubts about the E.U. in Member States.

The Resolution underlines the crucial pedagogical role of non-formal and informal learning, including volunteering, mentoring and debating in developing social and civic skills, competencies and behaviours, and shaping responsibly minded and active citizens.

The Resolution acknowledges that "the political consensus at the European level on the need to advance citizenship education and the teaching of common European values has not been translated into concrete objectives, targets, benchmarks and actions" and concludes that citizenship education policies are suffering from an implementation gap. Moreover finds that there is a lack of policy

The Resolution states that "a minimum understanding of citizenship education should provide a theoretical understanding of political, legal, social, environmental and economic concepts and

structures, including those pertaining to the European level, as well as global developments, commensurate with the level of education and training and coupled with practical experiences".

Hence, the Resolution, among others, encourages the Member States to support, review and update their education systems – and all levels of EU-related curricula content at all levels of Education and learning, including vocational Education and training – with a view to strengthening the E.U. dimension, while strongly encouraging regions and local authorities to do the same. Additionally, it calls for recognising and validating citizenship competencies acquired through non-formal and informal learning, including youth work and volunteering, and for strengthening links between formal, non-formal and informal learning in citizenship education<sup>15</sup>. Ultimately, it urges the creation of clear, "tangible and measurable" goals and standards for citizenship education, which includes learning about European citizenship. These goals should be part of the European cooperation in Education and training plan for 2021 to 2030. It's important to make these goals achievable by 2025, especially for learners facing disadvantages. These objectives should also be included in a dedicated plan for European citizenship education, considering learning opportunities throughout a person's life<sup>16</sup>.

## 4. Adult Education in Cyprus, Greece, Croatia and Germany

### 4.1. Adult Education Policies: A closer look to the National policy contexts for adult education

The policy framework for adult education and its Regulation differ among partner countries. Adult education's framework is more robust in **Croatia**, where adult education is considered a crucial element of the educational structure, reinforced by various significant strategic documents and concrete actions: *the Adult Education Strategy (2004)*, the decree and establishment of the *Adult Education Agency (2006)*, known today as the *Agency for VET and Adult Education (2010)*, the passing

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<sup>15</sup> Parliament, E. (2022, 4 6). *European Parliament resolution of 6 April 2022 on the implementation of citizenship education actions (2021/2008(INI))*. From European Parliament: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0114\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0114_EN.html)

<sup>16</sup> Parliament, E. (2022, 4 6). *European Parliament resolution of 6 April 2022 on the implementation of citizenship education actions (2021/2008(INI))*. From European Parliament: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0114\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0114_EN.html)

of the *Adult Education Act (2007)*. More specifically, the **Adult Education Act** provides the normative framework, laying the legal foundation for the continued growth of adult education as an integral component of the Croatian education system. The Croatian Parliament adopted, on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014, *the Education, Science and Technology Science Strategy*, placing adult education at the heart of a comprehensive education system and connecting it directly with the principle of lifelong learning. Within the Strategy, two main objectives of adult education are highlighted: developing an individual's cross-cutting competencies and acquiring knowledge and skills that facilitate employability, increased adaptability and mobility within the job market. The Agency for VET is a key institution in the realm of adult education in Croatia. It oversees the development of the adult education system through various aspects, such as analytical, developmental, and research activities; harmonizing proposals from relevant experts and working bodies within the adult education system; providing expert guidance and advice to adult education institutions; participating in evaluation, self-assessment and external assessment procedures in the adult education system; developing methodologies for adult education programs; promoting cooperation and involvement in implementing programs and projects related to adult education system development; and training and professional development for employees with the adult education system.

In **Cyprus**, Education lacks a comprehensive legislative framework for Adult Education and Training. Some of the main legislative and legal provisions regarding adult education and lifelong learning are Law 1/1987, which provides the basis for non-university public and private Education and is substituted by Laws 67 (I) 1966 to 1 (I) 2004 for the Establishment, Control and Operation of Institutions of Tertiary non-University Level Education and is substituted by Laws 67(1) 1966 to 1(1) 2004 for the Establishment, Control and Operation of Institutions of Tertiary non-University Level Education, Council of Ministers Decision 11.330 13 a–d establishing the Pedagogical Institute, under the Ministry of Education which among others provides training to secondary teachers, Regulations P.I. 45/1990 to P.I. 337/2010 for the operation of the Public Evening Secondary Schools, Council of Ministers Decision 82.311 29.3.2017 on the Regulations for the Operation of Training Centers of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

**The Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy of 2021 – 2027 (CY LLS)** is the principal strategic document addressing adult education and its function, developing a framework for lifelong learning. It reflects the government's vision for Education in Cyprus to assist citizens in pursuing their educational and training needs and goals in all educational settings, guaranteeing their personal development and well-being. The Strategy The CY LLS aligns with the five agreed strategic priorities of the "European Education Area and Beyond (2021-2023)", resulting from the collaboration between different ministries and governmental and non-governmental bodies. The strategic horizontal pillars of the

Lifelong Learning Strategy are the following: a) Digital Transformation, b) Green Transition and Sustainability, c) Inclusion and Equality, d) Validation of non-formal and informal learning, e) Health and Well-being and f) Lifelong Learning Culture. The CY LLS 2021-2027 assists national agencies and other bodies in Cyprus to reach the E.U. targets in the relevant fields. It focuses on the following strategic priorities and objectives: a) Governance, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; b) Decreasing Unemployment among youth and upskilling/reskilling of low-qualified and low-skilled adults; c) Increasing the participation of adults in Lifelong learning; and d) Enhancing the professional practice of youth workers, trainers and adult educators, and support a number of teachers of all education levels to develop lifelong learning skills.

In **Greece**, adult education is governed by a combination of national and European Union policies and strategic documents. The key policies and documents that address or are relevant for adult education in Greece include, at the European level, the European Agenda for Adult Learning and the Erasmus+ Program. The European Agenda for Adult Learning is a fundamental initiative that promotes adult education and lifelong learning across member states, including Greece. The agenda sets out key priorities and strategies to improve the quality, accessibility, and relevance of adult education throughout Europe. Greece actively participates in this agenda, aligning its national policies with EU objectives.

Regarding the Erasmus+ program, Greece benefits from this funding for various adult education initiatives, including staff training, strategic partnerships and capacity-building programs. These initiatives foster international cooperation and knowledge exchange in adult education. At the national level, Greece has developed a comprehensive National Lifelong Learning Strategy that encompasses adult education. This strategic document outlines Greece's approach to lifelong learning and adult education, emphasizing the importance of improving access to education and enhancing the skills of the adult population. It sets clear objectives for the development and implementation of adult education programs. Additionally, Greece has established a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that encompasses qualifications for adult education. This framework ensures that adult education programs align with national standards and that successful completion leads to recognized qualifications. It enhances the transparency and comparability of qualifications, facilitating lifelong learning.

In **Germany**, education policies are primarily the responsibility of the 16 federal states (Länder). Each state may have its own legislation, policies, and strategic documents related to adult education. The Weiterbildungsgesetz – Adult Education Act provides a legal framework for adult education in Germany. It outlines the responsibilities of the federal states (Länder) and the federal

government in supporting adult education, including funding and quality assurance. The Strategie des Bundes für Erwachsenenbildung/ The National Adult Education Strategy outlines the federal government's approach to adult education. It includes goals, priorities and measures to improve the quality and accessibility of adult education programs.

Moreover, the Bildungsbericht, the National Education Report, issued regularly by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, provides a comprehensive overview of the education system in Germany, including adult education. It assesses the state of adult education and identifies challenges and trends. As a member of the European Union, Germany aligns with the EU's objectives for adult education as outlined in the European Agenda for Adult Learning. The Agenda promotes lifelong learning and adult education as a means to enhance employability and social inclusion.

## 4.2. The Characteristics of Adult Education in Croatia, Cyprus, Greece and Germany

Adult Education in **Croatia** is defined as "a learning process for adults, focusing on exercising their right to personal development, enhancing their employability (gaining qualifications for an initial profession, retraining, acquiring and deepening professional knowledge, skills and abilities) and promoting active citizenship. Adult Education programs pertain to all educational forms for individuals over 15. According to the Adult Education Act, adult education is grounded in the principles of lifelong learning, efficient use of educational opportunities, regional accessibility and universal access to Education under equal conditions based on individual capabilities. Adult Education entails freedom and autonomy in selecting the content, form means and methods, respecting diversity and inclusion, professional and ethical responsibility of andragogical staff, ensuring the quality of the educational offerings; and respecting the individuality and dignity of each participant. In Croatia, any institution established exclusively to provide adult education can perform it: schools, universities, and any other institution that serves other activities besides adult education. Each such institution consists of an administrative council. Their composition, method of appointment, or selection of their members, the duration of their mandate and the practice of their decision-making are determined by the act of establishment and the statute of the institution. Furthermore, each institution must act following the instructions of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia (MSE) and the Croatian Agency for Vocational Education and Training. The MSE is responsible for verifying the different programs of formal Education based on specific criteria, such as the fulfilment of the spital, personnel and material conditions determined by the Regulation on standards and norms, as well as the method and procedure of assessing the completion of requirements in adult education institutions and the

positive opinion of the competent agency (AVET) and inspirations of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports.

The education system in **Cyprus** lies on the fundamental principle of equal opportunities for all: "Every person has the right to receive, and every person or institution has the right to give education or instruction". The formal adult education and training in Cyprus aim to provide citizens with career prospects by giving working people a chance to get qualifications, enabling them to reach their full potential. In the same pattern, non-formal continuing Education aims to improve the individuals' lives by offering them opportunities for self-development. In addition, vocational training aims to upgrade the capacities of individuals working in technical fields and train unskilled or semi-skilled workers in vocational trades. In Cyprus, a relatively centralized approach is employed regarding Education, with the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth (MESY) being the primary institution responsible for Education, supported by other governmental departments. Although the MESY is the main responsible for Education in general in Cyprus, concerning Adult Education and Lifelong Learning, as the two are conflated in Cyprus, the design and implementation of policies is a collaborative effort of many departments. At the same time, other relevant private-sector actors and NGOs play a consultative role in policymaking. The function of the Adult Education Centers falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Due to the Strategic Plan 2021-2023, the "European and International Affairs, Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office" was established in December 2019 and is responsible for coordinating programs in adult education and lifelong learning and developing and promoting relevant policies.

In **Greece**, various governmental bodies and agencies oversee and coordinate adult education efforts. These agencies, including the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs and the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP), play crucial roles in implementing adult education policies and ensuring their alignment with national and EU objectives. More specifically, The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs plays a central role in formulating policies and regulations related to adult education. It also oversees the implementation of these policies at the national level. In the same partner, EOPPEP is a central authority responsible for the certification of qualifications, including those related to adult education. It plays a critical role in ensuring the quality and relevance of adult education programs and qualifications. While there is centralized oversight and regulation at the national level, there is also room for regional and local implementation of adult education programs. Regional authorities and local educational institutions collaborate to provide adult education services that cater to the specific needs of their communities.

**Germany** does not employ a centralized approach to adult education. Germany's education system is decentralized, with responsibilities shared between the federal government and the 16 federal states, known as *Länder*. Education, including adult education, is primarily a state-level matter. The federal government sets some overarching policies and standards, but federal states have significant autonomy in shaping their education systems, including adult education. Simply put, each of the 16 *Länder* holds individual responsibility for adult education, governed by their own distinct legislation, policies, and strategic documents.

Consequently, a particular federal state can establish supplementary guidelines for adult education within its boundaries. In terms of central authorities, the *Federal Ministry of Education and Research/Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung* plays a role in setting the overall framework for education, including adult education, at the federal level. However, most regulations and oversight for adult education programs are conducted at the state level, where the state ministries of education or similar bodies are responsible for implementing policies and regulations specific to their regions. Furthermore, the *Federal Employment Agency/Bundesagentur für Arbeit* plays a significant role in supporting adult education through various programs and initiatives aimed at helping individuals acquire new skills and find employment. The *Volkshochschulen*, the community-based adult education centres, are an integral part of the German adult education system. While not formal policy documents, their activities and programs contribute significantly to adult education in the country.

#### 4.3. The Role and Status of Adult Educators in Croatia, Cyprus, Greece and Germany

In **Croatia**, adult educators' role is multidimensional, with the adult educators responsible for planning, preparing and conducting classes, following the relevant curricula, laws and regulations in adult education and particular tasks that arise from the organization of the work of the institution that implements programs intended for adult education. Elena Stančić and Anita Zovko's "Attitudes of Employees of Institutions for Education of Adults about the Needs Competences of Educators at Work With Adults" states that the role of adult educator is constantly changing and evolving. Educators are increasingly called mentors, counsellors, motivators and evaluators. A survey conducted with the participation of 91 people in Croatia, aiming to examine and analyze the attitudes of adult educators on critical competencies needed to work with adults and determining attitudes about the importance of certain groups, showed that adult educators believe that they need a wide range of generic and specific competencies to work within the field of adult education, understanding at the same time



their importance of working with adults. The results showed that adult educators consider the competence of knowing social relations to be necessary for working with adults, where more than 90% of respondents believe that it is essential to communicate and cooperate with others successfully and to behave responsibly due to the need for an individual approach and the possibility of achieving quality communication with adult participants. Moreover, the research results suggest that adult educators believe that working with adults requires social skills and counselling competencies, competencies for designing and understanding learning, teaching, and evaluation, competencies for developing educational programs, using new technologies and continuous professional development.

The level of adult education provided in Croatia is not satisfactory enough, in the sense that very diverse programs are now being implemented by methodically insufficiently educated teachers who are predominantly experts in the individual areas to which the program relates. Specialists have rich experience in a particular activity and are useful andragogic workers, but most of them need to be further educated in the methodology of working with adults. The lack of andragogy methodology is visible even among educated teachers. Namely, trainee teachers who want to work in an institution for adult education do their internship following the regulations that regulate the regular activity of upbringing and Education and pass the methodology of a particular field with young people and children within the framework of traditional Education, without special insights into the methods and approach to adult education.

In **Cyprus**, Adult Educators and Trainers often lack any predefined professional pathway, and their qualifications, credentials and expertise often stem from their academic backgrounds and practical experience. Although this diverse group encompasses a wide variety of qualifications, there are no official qualifications or background for delivering the education required to become an adult education trainer. Ultimately, the decision to invest time and resources in improving their teaching abilities is left to their discretion. The absence of a regulatory framework for Adult Education results in a limited level of professionalization and institutionalization. This leads to insufficient attention being given to adult educators' professional growth and working conditions<sup>17</sup>. In the same context, Strategic Priority 4 of *Cyprus LLLS 2022-2027*, which addresses Teachers, Trainers, Youth Workers and Adult Educators, admits that they need to be supported and trained and states that the teaching profession, aligned with the essence of lifelong learning, entails that teaching staff of all education levels should be equipped with lifelong learning skills and infuse them into their daily practice. Furthermore, the SP 4 recognizes that a focus must be placed on Educators' professional status, and they must be supported

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<sup>17</sup> C. Vrasidas & DIMA 2.0 Partners. (2020). *Transnational Report for Developing Strategies for Adult*.  
From [www.project-dima.eu](http://www.project-dima.eu)

by innovative approaches and resources, something that will increase the quality of the adult education sector.

Currently, only a handful of academic programs related to Adult Education are available from Cypriot Institutions. These include the "Med in Adult Education" from Frederick University, "Med in Education of Adult Educators and Vocational Education and Training Trainers" from the University of Nicosia and "Med in Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning" from the Open University of Cyprus. Small-scaled programs are provided by the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus to adult educators, but not regularly.<sup>18</sup>

The Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality of Adult Education and Training within the private sector. HRDA has established a quality assurance framework for the Assessment and Certification of Training Providers. AxioPistoSyn serves as a tool for ensuring the quality and effectiveness of vocational training delivered by the relevant stakeholders. AxioPistoSyn assesses and certifies the training providers in the following three domains a) centers – administrative infrastructure, b) facilities – specifications and relevant experience and c) training staff – human resources. Training Providers must apply for certification, followed by an evaluation conducted by experienced experts. This computerized system has been in full operation since 2015, ensuring that only certified Training Providers are authorized to offer training programs in collaboration with HRDA.

Regarding **Greece**, to become an adult educator, individuals typically need just to hold a relevant educational qualification, such as a university degree in a field related to adult education, pedagogy, or a subject area they intend to teach. Although not mandatory, adult educators often undergo pedagogical training to acquire teaching skills specific to adult learners. This training may cover adult learning theories, teaching methodologies and the design of adult education programs. Upon completing their initial training, aspiring adult educators can obtain a certification from the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) or other relevant authorities. This certification ensures that educators meet the required standards for teaching adults. The role of adult educators in Greece is intricately linked to the country's dedication to lifelong learning and its alignment with the broader EU agenda for adult education. Adult educators are essential agents in the implementation of Greece's National Lifelong Learning Strategy, playing a pivotal role in ensuring that adults across the nation have access to quality educational opportunities throughout their lives.

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<sup>18</sup> C. Vrasidas & DIMA 2.0 Partners. (2020). *Transnational Report for Developing Strategies for Adult* .  
From [www.project-dima.eu](http://www.project-dima.eu)

Their dedication to providing inclusive, high-quality, and relevant education contributes to the social economic, and cultural well-being of Greek society, empowering individuals and fostering societal progress.

In **Germany**, adult educators' role is diverse and multifaceted. Their responsibilities can be summarized as follows: A) Facilitating the Learning process for adult learners. This can include, among other things, designing and delivering instructional content and organizing learning activities. B) Promoting Lifelong Learning. The educators encourage adults to continue their education and skill development throughout their lives, helping them acquire new knowledge and competencies. C) Assessment and Evaluation: adult educators assess learners' progress and evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching methods. According to the national research results, adult educators in Germany are highly respected and valued for their contributions to lifelong learning and skill development. They are widely seen as crucial facilitators of personal and professional growth. Moreover, there is a growing recognition of the importance of adult education in addressing workforce development needs, promoting inclusivity, and addressing social issues like literacy and skill gaps.

#### 4.4. Political dimension of Adult Education in Cyprus, Croatia, Greece and Germany

Although the political dimension is addressed in plenty of national strategic documents and legislation, it is not considered a priority of adult education in any partner countries. The main reason for this is that the main strategic objectives of adult education systems are directed mainly towards increasing participation in educational activities and employability with a strong vocational focus.

The political dimension of adult education in **Croatia** encompasses various elements, including citizenship education, civic engagement and relevant policies and strategic documents. Between 2000 and 2010, Croatia introduced the "Strategic Framework for the Development of Adult Education 2005-2010" and the enactment of the "Adult Education Act" (2009). Both of these documents emphasize the importance of adult education in promoting active citizenship, social integration, as well as personal professional growth. Both Strategic Framework for the Development of Adult Education 2005-2010 and Adult Education Act 2009 propose methods for creating and executing adult education programs that encourage civic involvement, political knowledge and comprehension of democratic principles.

In 2013, Croatia implemented the "Strategy for Education, Science and Technology", which recognized lifelong learning as a fundamental pillar of the national education system. This strategy aimed to

endorse civic and democratic principles, nurture critical thinking and foster active citizenship and societal participation. The strategy details specific projects or programs to achieve these objectives and offers ways to assess their success.

As part of the European Union, Croatia participates in multiple EU initiatives and programs associated with adult education and civic involvement, such as the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL) and the Council of Europe's Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE). These initiatives stress the value of citizenship education and democratic ideals in adult education settings. Non-formal adult education often provides citizenship education through programs like workshops, seminars, and courses arranged by civil society organizations, NGOs, and other institutions. These programs seek to encourage civic participation, political awareness and democratic principles among adult learners.

When it comes to **Cyprus**, Adult Education has not given much emphasis to the political aspect for years. This aligns with the intentions outlined in key policy documents on Adult Education in Cyprus, such as the National Strategy for Lifelong Learning 2014-2020, which primarily oriented Adult Education towards enhancing employability rather than addressing citizenship education and other political concerns. This shift in focus was quite understandable, especially in the aftermath of the 2013 economic crisis, which resulted in unprecedented levels of unemployment, prompting the government to prioritize crisis mitigation efforts. While it's worth noting that the National Strategy of 2014-2020 did touch upon the political dimension of Adult Education in scattered references, it did not explicitly concentrate or allocate dedicated attention to this aspect.

The Lifelong Learning Strategy for the period 2022-2027 represents a modest departure from the prior situation, where the political dimension was largely absent in the realm of Adult Education. While the primary focus of this strategy remains on enhancing the skills of young adults, emphasizing upskilling and reskilling to promote personal development and economic well-being, it introduces a slight political aspect to adult education. Within the LLLS 2022-2027 framework, one of the overarching pillars is Inclusion and Equality, emphasizing that lifelong learning opportunities should be accessible and open to all citizens, irrespective of their social class, gender, ethnicity, religion, etc. This national pillar aligns with the first strategic priority of the Council of the European Union, which aims to enhance quality, equity, inclusion and success for all individuals in Education and Training.

Citizenship education, civic engagement and the political dimension are indeed included in relevant policies and strategic documents in **Greece**, reflecting the country's commitment to promoting active citizenship and democratic participation among adult learners. However, these aspects are considered priorities within the field of adult education in Greece. Greece's National Lifelong Learning Strategy

indeed emphasizes the importance of citizenship education and civic engagement as integral components of adult education, and It recognizes the role of adult education in promoting active citizenship and social cohesion, in practice, though no conquered steps and measures have been taken for the embodiment of civic dimension into adult learning. Community Learning Centers consists the exception to the rule, since they offer courses and workshops specifically focused on citizenship education, helping adults become informed and engaged citizens.

The political dimension is not an adult's education priority neither in **Germany**. The policy documents of Germany may highlight the importance of promoting critical thinking skills among adult learners and recommend the integration of civic education components into the curriculum of adult education programs, but again there is currently no robust formal context in which political dimension can be fostered.

## 5. Results of Stakeholder Consultation

The feedback received from the stakeholder consultations provides insightful, practical information on Adult Education in general and its political dimension in particular in the four partner countries; it sheds light on its strengths and weaknesses and paves the way for further reflection and improvement.

In Croatia, although a relatively strong adult education framework exists, which encompasses, even to some extent, the political dimension, stakeholders stress the lack of funding and support for adult education programs that prioritize the political dimension. An explanatory reason for this might be the chronic unwillingness of governments and private institutions to add the political dimension formally into adult education since they view such programs as too controversial or risky.

It is encouraging that educators in Croatia seem to be equipped with basic competencies and have a solid understanding of political concepts and issues relevant to adult education. This includes knowledge of political theories, governance structures, civic engagement, and public policy. Educators are also skilled in designing and implementing instructional strategies that effectively engage adult learners in political topics: fostering discussions, analyzing real-life examples and encouraging critical thinking. Educators also mentioned that they are well aware of ethical aspects that need to be considered while integrating the political dimension into adult education. This includes promoting fair and unbiased discussions, respecting diverse opinions, and encouraging informed and responsible citizenship among adult learners. During stakeholder consultation, adult educators indicated their familiarity with different educational resources such as the one offered by the Croatian Agency for

Vocational Education and Training under the title "International Organizations in Adult Education", and the book "Key Competences in Adult Learning" published by the Croatian Andragogic Society.

On the other hand, the reality of Adult Education and its political dimension is not encouraging in Cyprus. Although most educators are aware of the relevant training programs, this expands only to the general form of adult education and not specifically to the political dimension of it. However, they seem to compensate for the gap through personal experience and self-learning. The educators express their dissatisfaction with the lack of an adequate number of resources on the topic. Furthermore, incorporating the political aspect of adult education into training programs can present significant challenges. Since there is no concrete policy document at the national level, adult educators frequently turn to European Union resources as an alternative. While this approach is not inherently negative, the absence of national coordination results in a more flexible yet less concentrated approach to the political dimension of adult education.

In Germany, many recognize that integrating the political dimension into adult education offers opportunities to empower individuals to become informed, engaged citizens who actively participate in the democratic process. This can lead to a more active and responsive civil society. The stakeholders acknowledge that a well-informed and politically engaged citizenry can contribute to the health and vitality of democratic systems by promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance. They further state that integrating the political dimension into adult education encourages critical thinking skills, helping learners evaluate information, analyze issues and make informed decisions.

Conclusively, stakeholders in partner countries recognized the significance of citizenship education in adult education, highlighting the political dimension as a crucial asset for adult educators. Despite this acknowledgement, many stakeholders expressed a somewhat pessimistic perspective regarding the feasibility of integrating the political dimension into the work of adult educators without proper systematic incentives. They underscored that the current vocational training programs, primarily focused on employment, lack space for the political dimension unless it is the explicit theme of an adult learning initiative. Nevertheless, they suggested that by approaching the political dimension with a broad understanding, opportunities exist to incorporate it into adult education and training, even without an ideal policy context.

## 6. Survey Findings on the Competencies Required by Adult Educators in the Political Aspect

We administrated a survey among adult educators in our partner countries to assess their competency levels and requirements regarding the political dimension. The primary objective of this survey was to

gather information that would aid the subsequent phases of our project, particularly in pinpointing key areas for the development of educational materials for adult educators. The survey was conducted between January and April 2023 and garnered 35 responses: 15 from Cyprus, 8 from Croatia, 6 from Greece and 6 from Germany.

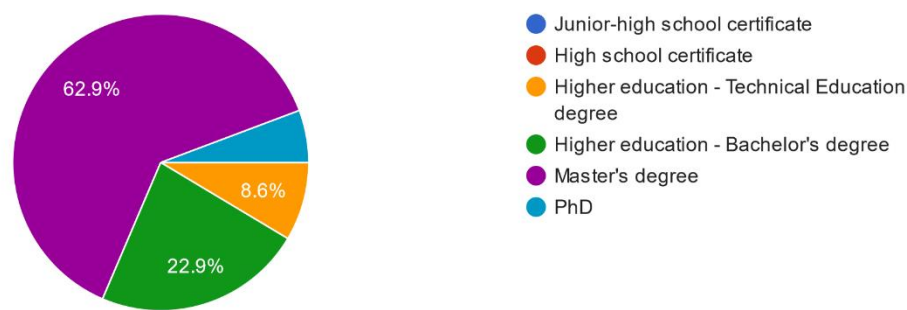
It's important to note that the data gathered is not reflective of the broader population or individual countries within the group of four. Given the research design and sample size, the survey is not meant to generate universally applicable findings regarding the backgrounds or skills of adult educators in the partner nations. The survey's primary objective is to offer insights into the requirements of adult educators in the realm of citizenship education and to gather pertinent input for the project's future endeavors. Consequently, the findings and inferences should be viewed in light of these objectives.

### *Background Information*

Of the respondents, nearly 62% are female, while approximately 37.1% are male. While the educational qualifications of the participants range from Technical Education degrees to PhDs, it is evident that, on the whole, the level of education is quite high: out of the respondents, 85.8% have obtained at least a bachelor's degree, with nearly 63% of them having also achieved a master's degree. Their studies subject varies from Economics to Gender Studies and from Philosophy and Education to Computer Science. As for their participation in Adult Education, the data indicates that over 70% of the respondents have been working as adult educators for over 4 years, and 31.4% have been engaged in adult education for over a decade. Most of the participants (68.6%) are part-time adult educators, with their primary professions spanning various roles, such as primary school teachers and EU Project Managers. The majority of the participants stated that they work as Adult Educators at the International level (Graph 4).

Highest level of education

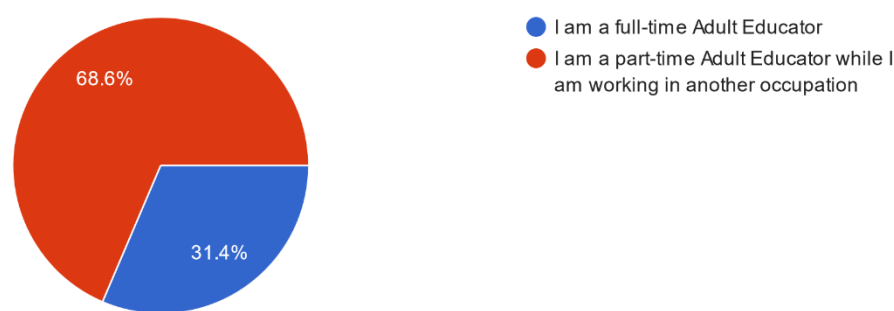
35 responses



Graph 1: The education level of the survey participants

Your involvement with Adult Education

35 responses

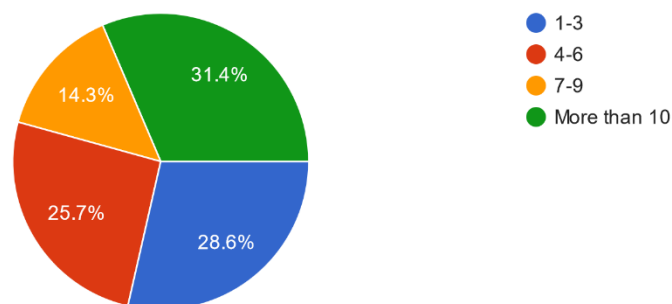


Graph 2: The degree of the survey participants' involvement in Adult Education



How many years have you been working as an Adult Educator?

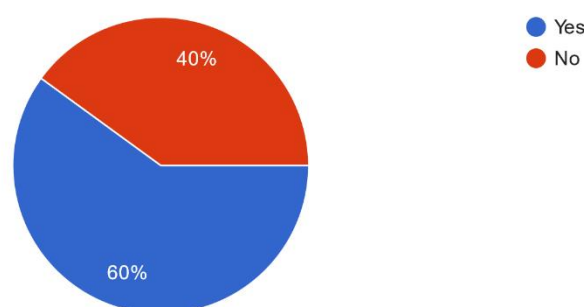
35 responses



Graph 3: The total number of years of work experience as Adult Educators

Do you work as an Adult Educator at the International level?

35 responses



Graph 4: The percentage of Adult Educators who work at the International Level

When asked whether they underwent a particular educational program or training to become Adult Educators, nearly half of the participants (48.6%) responded affirmatively. Conversely, 51.4% of the participants entered the field or adult education either through practical experience or as part of their formal professional studies and training. Moreover, when asked about their engagement in any political organization and the extent of their involvement, the majority (74.3%) responded in the negative. Among the remaining respondents, 40% stated that they hold an official position within the organization, 20% reported active participation in its activities of the organization and 40% identified themselves as mere members.

### *Being Civically Engaged*

The assessment of political involvement initially involved questions into respondents' affiliations with political or civic organizations, probing both membership status and the nature of their engagement. Only 25.7% of respondents reported being members of such organizations. Among them, 40% had an

official role/post within the organization, 40% were mere members without active involvement and 20% actively participated in organizational activities.

### *Competences of the political dimension*

The primary focus of the survey centered around the competencies within the political dimension, specifically aligning with the competency area of “being civically engaged” as outlined in the ETS Competence Model for Trainers (SALTO,2014). Within this domain, there are four key competencies: **connecting policies and educational programs, integrating/incorporating values and beliefs, supporting learners in developing critical thinking, and applying democracy and human rights principles**. Utilizing the adapted Self-assessment Form from the ETS Competence Model designed for adult educators, participants were prompted to evaluate the significance of these four competencies in relation to their professional roles. Additionally, they were asked to self-assess their proficiency levels across the 39 indicators associated with these competencies.

### *Relevance of the competences for adult educators*

The data indicates a distinct trend in terms of the significance or correlation of competencies to the professional roles of adult educators.

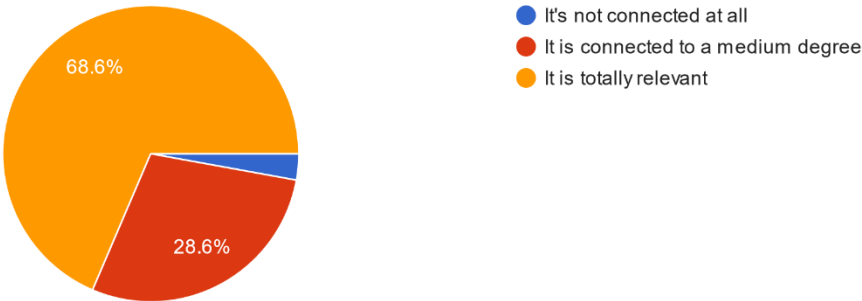
The competence deemed most pertinent to the respondents’ work is aiding learners in cultivating **critical thinking**, with 68.6% of them viewing it as totally relevant, 28.6% as connected to a medium degree and only 2.9% as not connected at all.

The competence **to apply democratic and human rights principles** is highly emphasized, with 57.1% of the survey participants mentioning that it is totally relevant, while only a percentage of 5.7% of respondents answered that this skill is not connected at all. 37.1% of respondents answered that applying democracy and human rights principles is connected to their work in a medium degree.

The majority of the respondents considered the aspect of **integrating values and beliefs** totally relevant to their work as adult educators. On the other hand, 8.6% declared that this aspect is irrelevant at all, while 42.6% believe that it is connected to a medium degree.

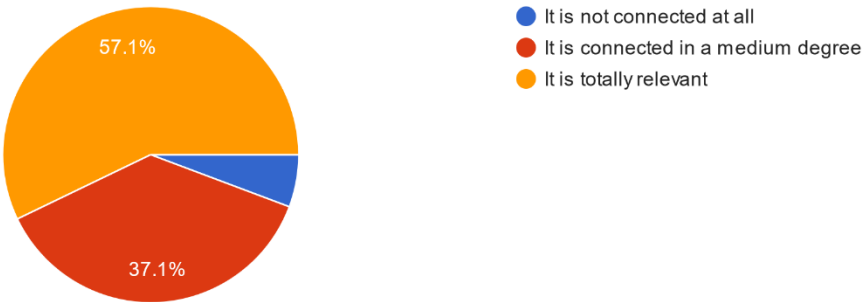
**Connecting policies and educational programs** emerges as the least relevant competence, with 8.6% stating it has no connection to their work and 65.7% reporting it is totally relevant to their work as adult educators.

How connected is your work as an Adult Educator the aspect of Supporting Learners in developing Critical Thinking?  
35 responses



Graph 5: The degree of relevance of Adult Educators' work to the aspect of Supporting Learners in developing Critical Thinking

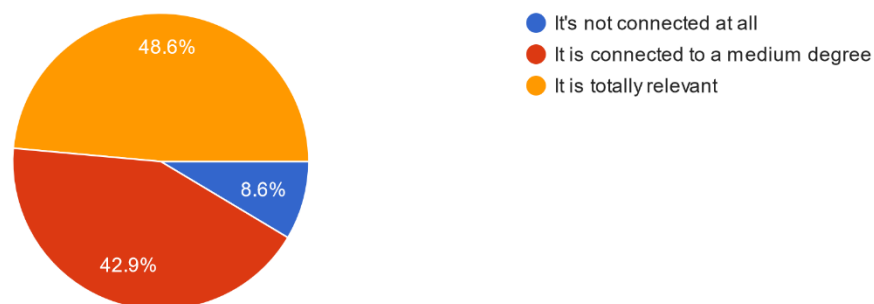
How connected is to your work as an Adult Educator the aspect of Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles?  
35 responses



Graph 6: The degree of relevance of Adult Educators' work to the aspect of Applying Democracy and Human Rights principles

How connected is to your work as an Adult Educator the aspect of Integrating Values and Beliefs?

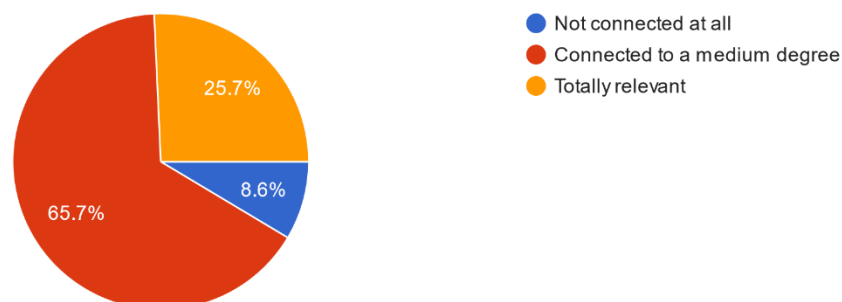
35 responses



Graph 7: The degree of relevance of Adult Educators' work to the aspect of Integrating Values and Beliefs

How connected is your work as an Adult Educator to the aspect of Connecting Adult Education Policies and Educational Programmes?

35 responses



Graph 8: The degree of relevance of Adult Educators' work to the aspect of Connecting Adult Education Policies and Educational Programs

#### *Level of competences for the political dimension: self-assessment*

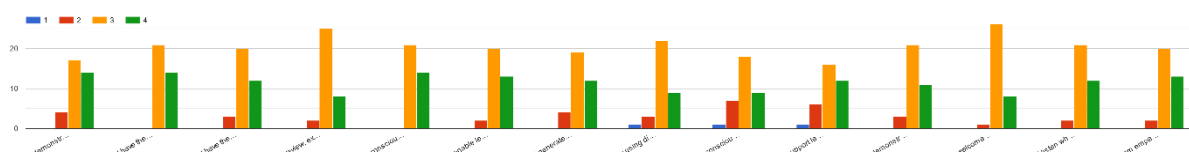
Survey participants who are educators were tasked with evaluating their competencies using a four-item scale aligned with the ETS competence model indicators. A higher numerical value on the scale corresponds to a greater level of competence. In general it can be asserted that the self-assessments were predominantly favorable. Across almost all indicators, a minimum of 55% - often even exceeding it – of participants indicated an acceptable level of competence, scoring three on the scale. Conversely, the percentage of respondents expressing a lack of specific competence or the need for improvement (scores 1 and 2 on the scale) was consistently below 25% for most indicators, with the highest being 2.8% for score 1 across all indicators.

In the following, we spotlight the indicators where participants noted the highest and lowest levels of competence within each of the four aspects of the “being civically engaged” competency area. These findings will significantly guide the subsequent phases of the project, pointing towards specific areas where adult educators may benefit for further improvement.

In the competency of **Supporting Learners in Developing Critical Thinking** – particularly relevant to the respondents’ work – over half of the surveyed adult educators believed they possessed the skills to facilitate discussions where learners draw upon their values and beliefs. This includes creating an environment for reflection and exchange, fostering self-exploration, linking concepts to learners’ work and daily life, and being empathetic and truthful in allowing space for exploring values and belief-related thoughts. In these instances, the percentage of respondents expressing a low self-assessed skill level was below 10%, a pattern observed in four additional indicators, albeit with a slightly lower proportion of respondents marking the highest ratings.

The indicators that demonstrated the highest self-reported demand for enhancement were the educators’ capability to exhibit an understanding of the learners’ sociopolitical context, the (inadequate) level of support for learners in becoming active change-makers and understanding the consequences of their choices, and the (lack of) educators’ ability to integrate different narratives.

You are asked to rate your competencies from 1 - 4. Please, use 1 to indicate the lowest degree and 4 to indicate the highest degree you possess for each competence.

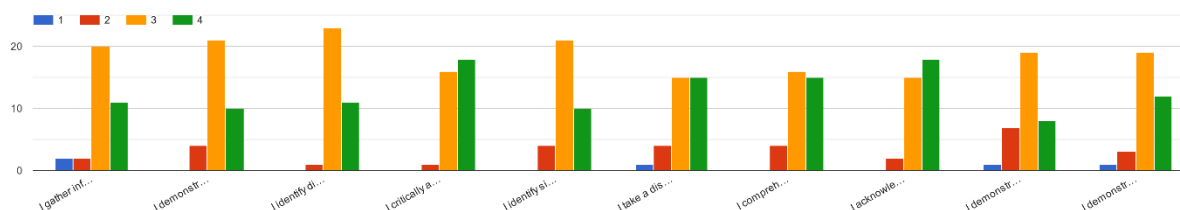


Graph 9: How Adult Educators evaluate their competencies on a scale from 1-4

When it comes to the application of **democracy and human rights principles**, educators seem to have similar – relatively high – levels of competence, unlike in other areas. The majority of the educators seem to hold a great understanding of human rights and democracy principles in a non-formal/training context (91.3%). In response to the question about actively seeking opportunities to address democracy and human rights principles, the replies varied. Approximately 14.2% of respondents expressed that there is room for further improvement and development, while approximately almost half of the responders (51.4%) indicated that they possess this skill to an adequate degree. The indicators for the following two questions closely mirrored those of the previous one. The majority of survey participants (54.2%) expressed sufficient focus on ensuring that the overall process within the training course aligns with the principles of human rights and democracy.

Conversely, only 11.4% of participants indicated a lack of competence in this area. Furthermore, educators seem to have the skill of highlighting moments and situations to explicitly illustrate those principles and their importance well developed (94.2%). In response to the query about whether they facilitate participants experiencing a democratic learning community in the context of the course, 48.5% answered that they do so to a sufficient extent, while 8.5% lack competence in this regard.

You are asked to rate your competencies from 1 - 4. Please, use 1 to indicate the lowest degree and 4 to indicate the highest degree you possess for each competence.

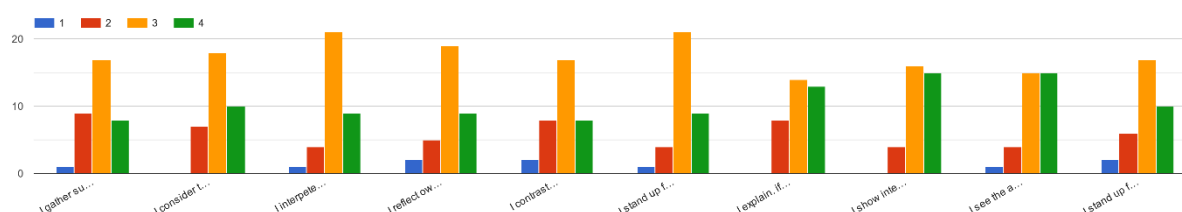


Graph 10: How Adult Educators evaluate their competencies on a scale from 1-4

Regarding the competence of **Integrating Values and Beliefs** the reported level of competences shows variation compared to other areas. The survey findings reveal a gap among educators concerning the fulfillment of “gathering sufficient information about the political context and its different dimensions tackled by the training course”. In this regard, 25.7% of the respondents acknowledged the need for improvement, while 8.5% of them expressed a total lack of competence in this area. Regarding the consideration of “the impact of the different realities for and within the group of learners” more than the half of the respondents expressed that they possess this competence. However, a significant percentage, 20%, mentioned a need for further improvement. The majority of respondents (85.7%) stated that they interpreted own values and beliefs in relation to the content of the training course. Responses to the question of whether educators reflect their own values and beliefs without dominating the training course and the group of learners, again, vary. A notable 20% indicated a need of improvement within this area or admitted to lacking this competence entirely. Meanwhile, 54.2% expressed confidence in possessing this competence sufficiently and 25% affirmed that they definitely fulfil it. Additionally, when educators were queried about their ability to compare and contrast their own opinions with those of the learners and other team members within the context of the training course, a notable 28.5% indicated that they either possess the competence but require improvement or lack it entirely. On the other hand, 71.2% of the survey participants affirmed that they have this competence to a moderate or high extent. Most respondents indicated that they sufficiently stand up for their values and beliefs with respect and responsibility (85.7%). Participants’ responses to the subsequent question showed an even distribution. The query pertained to their ability to articulate their own position when necessary or relevant without overshadowing those of the group of learners. Specifically, 37.1% of the participants stated that they unequivocally exhibit this competence, 40%

expressed a moderate level of fulfilment, and 22% acknowledged possessing the competence but identified a need for improvement. Ultimately, educators appear to display a keen interest in and sensitivity toward the values and beliefs of both individual team members and the group of learners. They recognise the enhanced value of this openness for their personal and professional development and actively advocate for and align their work with their own values.

You are asked to rate your competencies from 1 - 4. Please, use 1 to indicate the lowest degree and 4 to indicate the highest degree you possess for each competence.



Graph 11: How Adult Educators evaluate their competencies on a scale from 1-4

Concerning the last aspect of the survey, which pertains to **“Connecting Policies and Educational Programmes”** respondents rated their competences highest in terms of the ability to *identify diverse and independent sources of information, contrast them in the context of the training course, critically assess the sources of information, the ability to demonstrate an understanding of the different policies relevant to the training course and gather information about policies and programs relevant for the training course*. In both cases, at least 90% of respondents indicated that they are either satisfactory or definitely proficient in these areas.

However, the indicators rated lowest within this competence included demonstrating the civic/political dimension of the work, taking a distance from own when necessary, comprehending other political perspectives and demonstrating the ability to reflect on the policy context from European to local level and vice versa. In each of these instances over 20% of respondents acknowledged lacking such skills or needing improvement.

In summary, the indicators with the lowest assessments generally encompass skills and competencies related to explicitly addressing **aspects of citizenship education** (such as the civic dimension of work or the principles of democracy and human rights). They also involve reflecting on and integrating different contexts and narratives – encompassing individual perspectives, broader European considerations and political dimensions. Consequently, the survey identifies these skills as the key areas requiring development for adult educators in the partner countries within the realm of the political dimension.

## 7. Conclusion

The adult education landscapes in the four partner countries exhibit significant variations in their national context. Nevertheless, a common thread among them is a discernible emphasis on employability as the primary goal of adult learning. Notably, the political dimension does not hold a prominent position in the priorities of adult education across these countries, with no explicit mention in policy or strategic documents. The absence of systematic incentives for incorporating the political dimension into the realm of adult education poses challenges. However, citizenship education retains its importance within adult learning, whether manifested as a horizontal principle or explicitly addressed. Three distinct forms of adult learning have been identified as potential values for integrating the political dimension: basic competence development training, training programs targeting the unemployed and low-skilled individuals, and non-formal sector offerings in adult learning.

The analysis of the survey data for adult educators reflects an overall positive sentiment regarding their current competencies in the realm of the political dimension. The competency most closely aligned with the respondents' work is the ability to assist learners in developing critical thinking skills. Conversely, connecting policies and education programs emerged as their least relevant competence.

According to the self-assessment of respondents' competencies, the primary need for development pertains to two key areas: actively seeking opportunities and explicitly addressing aspects of the political dimension within training frameworks and comprehending, reflecting upon, and integrating various levels and types of contexts and narratives.

In light of the research findings, the educational materials intended for the continuous development of adult educators within the ATTACH project should:

- Enhance the significance of the political dimension in and for adult education.
- Sustain a broad understanding of the political dimension to make the materials relevant across all partner countries.
- Adapt to potential opportunities for integrating the political dimension into adult education in each partner country, encompassing training programs for basic skill or competence development, programs for the unemployed and low-skilled, and courses within the non-formal sector of adult learning.
- Concentrate on disadvantaged learners as end beneficiaries, aligning with the project's objectives and considering the national contexts of the four partner countries.



- Address competences related to supporting learners in developing critical thinking and applying principles of democracy and human rights, acknowledging these as areas closely tied to the work of adult educators in partner countries.
- Emphasize skills pertinent to contextualization and understanding different narratives.
- Provide tools for explicitly addressing various aspects of the political dimension within the training course and for identifying opportunities and space to do so.
- Be as practical as possible, considering the characteristics of the types of training where the integration of the political dimension is viable and addressing the needs of the main target groups.

## 8. APPENDIX: Good Practices

### Cyprus

#### Adult Education Centers

<b>More information</b>	<a href="#">Adult Education Centers in Nicosia   EPALE (europa.eu)</a>
<b>Brief description of the best practice</b>	<p>The Adult Education Centres, established in 1952, serve as a program in Cyprus dedicated to providing lifelong learning opportunities and general education. Their primary objective is to foster the personal development of adults while promoting the social, financial, and cultural growth of individuals and society as a whole. This mission aligns with the broader goals of the Ministry of Education and Culture, which aims to ensure “Lifelong Learning” opportunities are accessible to all citizens of the Republic of Cyprus. The Adult Education Centres also strive to address educational disparities, enabling citizens to participate in a united Europe effectively. They offer a range of interdisciplinary courses, with a focus on teaching foreign languages, arts and crafts, cultural programs, health, and other topics of general interest. Furthermore, they provide instruction in professional and vocational skills. Each year, the Adult Education Centres organize free learning activities targeting various groups, including individuals with literacy challenges, those with special needs, enclaved Cypriots, prisoners, the mentally ill, and elderly individuals. They also extend free Greek language courses to the children of repatriated Cypriots, political refugees, and Turkish Cypriots, while offering complimentary Turkish language courses to Greek Cypriots.</p>
<b>List of partners involved in this best practice</b>	<p>Ministry of Education and Culture Adult Education Centres</p>
<b>Justification of Good Practice</b>	<p>The adult education centres offer a diverse range of training programs and boast a wealth of researchers. Moreover, they provide courses at highly affordable rates. While the centres currently do not offer specific courses addressing the political dimension of adult education to trainers, establishing a partnership to deliver such courses free of charge through a project could prove advantageous. Adult Education Centres have been recognised by the citizens of the Republic of Cyprus as the most important programme of general adult education.</p>

DIGCIT – Strategic partnership to develop open educational resources for teaching digital citizenship.

<b>Description</b>	<p>The project's overall aim is to advance digital citizenship through youth workers who are also adult learners.</p> <p>Objectives include enhancing the pedagogical skills of 80 youth workers in using innovative MOOC methodologies, fostering civic competences and online safety for 400 young people (including 20 with fewer opportunities), and increasing awareness among 800 young people and 160 youth workers in partner countries. The project involves a collaborative partnership of 4 NGOs from Romania, Greece, Cyprus and Germany along with 21 associated partners for effective dissemination and sustainability.</p>
<b>Justification of good practice</b>	Digital citizenship seeks to equip individuals with the values, attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to effectively use today's and tomorrow's digital tools, enabling them to actively contribute to shaping the future. These skills are crucial for social inclusion, as they determine how information and communication technologies impact one's ability to participate fully as a member of society.
<b>List of partners involved</b>	<p>Asociatia TEAM 4 Excellence</p> <p>ATHENS LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE ASTIKI MI KERDOSKOPIKI ETAIRIA</p> <p>CYPRUS ORGANIZATION FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION AND ACTIVE LEARNING (S.E.A.L CYPRUS)</p> <p>Arbeitskreis Ostviertel e.V.</p>
<b>More information</b>	<a href="https://sealcyprus.org/partnerships/digcit/">https://sealcyprus.org/partnerships/digcit/</a>

## Croatia

### Handbook for Educators - Assisting the Implementation of Civic Education

<b>Name or Title of the best practice</b>	Handbook for Educators – Assisting the Implementation of Civic Education
<b>More Information</b>	<a href="https://www.cms.hr/system/article_document/doc/37/GOO_prir_FINA_L.pdf">https://www.cms.hr/system/article_document/doc/37/GOO_prir_FINA_L.pdf</a>
<b>Brief description of the best practice</b>	<p>The Handbook considers the significance of every functional and structural aspect within the intricate field of Civic Education. It advocates for collaborative learning and participatory work methodologies, integral to the objective of nurturing active citizens. The aim is to facilitate intersectoral cooperation among schools, community stakeholders, and civil society organizations. Their collective efforts contribute to the democratization of communities and society by fostering citizen engagement and diminishing social inequality.</p>

<b>List of partners involved in this best practice</b>	The Handbook is developed within the project "New Era of Human Rights and Democracy in Schools" funded by the European Union and the Office for Human Rights of the Republic of Croatia, with additional support from the Office for Cooperation with NGOs.
<b>Justification of Good Practice</b>	The handbook distills and communicates the insights of experts and activists who, through both theoretical understanding and practical efforts over many years, have played a pivotal role in advancing democratization in specific domains by fostering active civic involvement. Aligned with the core principles of the curriculum, the Handbook is driven by its overarching objective: the cultivation and education of active citizens – individuals who serve as catalysts for social change. These citizens possess a nuanced understanding of socio-political processes, engage in critical thinking, and advocate for non-violent actions aimed at diminishing social inequality and promoting social inclusion.

### **Guide: How all Teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: A Framework for the development of competencies**

<b>Name or Title of the best practice</b>	How all Teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: A Framework for the development of competencies
<b>More Information</b>	<a href="https://rm.coe.int/kako-svi-nastavnici-mogu-poduprijeti-odgoj-i-obrazovanje-za-demokratsk/16807434b9">https://rm.coe.int/kako-svi-nastavnici-mogu-poduprijeti-odgoj-i-obrazovanje-za-demokratsk/16807434b9</a>
<b>Description</b>	<p>The publication outlines the fundamental skills essential for educators involved in implementing EDC/HRE across various educational settings, including classrooms, entire schools, and the broader community. It is designed for teachers at all educational levels. Within the guide, someone can find 15 competencies organized into four distinct development categories. These competencies, along with the accompanying topics, address challenges faced by educators implementing the EDC/HRE program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and comprehension of EDC/HRE.</li> <li>• Teaching and learning activities that foster EDC/HRE within the classroom and school context, covering aspects such as planning, classroom management, teaching, and assessment.</li> <li>• Teaching and learning activities that promote EDC/HRE through partnerships and community engagement (EDC/HRE in action).</li> <li>• Implementation and assessment of the participatory approach to the ODG/HRE program.</li> </ul>

<b><i>Justification of Good Practice</i></b>	This handbook consolidates a comprehensive collection of materials generated over the last decade as part of the Council of Europe's EDC/HRE program. Simultaneously, it tracks three other significant EDC/HRE publications released by the Council of Europe.
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## Greece

### National Center for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA) – Civic Education for Adult Educators

<b><i>Name or Title of the best practice</i></b>	National Center for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA) - Civic Education for Adult Educators
<b><i>More Information</i></b>	<a href="https://www.ekdd.gr/en/the-school/esdda-profile/">https://www.ekdd.gr/en/the-school/esdda-profile/</a>
<b><i>Description</i></b>	EKDDA offers a specialized training program for adult educators in Greece that focuses on civic education and active citizenship. This program provides educators with the knowledge and tools to incorporate political and civic content into their teaching. Topics covered include democracy, human rights, participatory citizenship, and current political issues. The program combines workshops, seminars, and online resources to support adult educators in their professional development.
<b><i>List of partners involved in this best practice</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training Institute (INEP)</li> <li>• Trainers' Registry</li> </ul>
<b><i>Justification of Good Practice</i></b>	EKDDA's Civic Education for Adult Educators is a best practice because it addresses a critical need in adult education – the integration of civic education and the political dimension. By offering structured training, practical resources, and a commitment to lifelong learning, the program empowers educators to play a vital role in fostering active citizenship and democratic values among adult learners.

## Greek Adult Education Association (GAEA)

<b><i>Name or Title of the best practice</i></b>	Greek Adult Association (GAEA)
<b><i>More Information</i></b>	<a href="https://adulthoodeduc.gr/enintro-d76/">https://adulthoodeduc.gr/enintro-d76/</a>
<b><i>Description</i></b>	The Greek Adult Association (GAEA) is a prominent organization dedicated to advancing adult education in Greece. GAEA plays a significant role in promoting lifelong learning, adult literacy and continuing education for adults of all backgrounds and ages. The association collaborates with educational institutions, governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, and international partners to develop and implement adult education programs and initiatives. GAEA is committed to enhancing the skills, knowledge, and opportunities of adult learners, contributing to personal development, social inclusion, and economic growth in Greece.
<b><i>List of partners involved in this best practice</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GAEA</li> <li>• Adult Educators</li> </ul>
<b><i>Justification of Good Practice</i></b>	GAEA embodies principles and strategies that promote lifelong learning, inclusivity, advocacy, collaboration and continuous improvement.

## Germany

### Volkshochschulen (VHS) – Adult Learning Centers

<b><i>Name or Title of the best practice</i></b>	Volkshochschulen (VHS) – Adult Learning Centers
<b><i>More Information</i></b>	<a href="https://www.volkshochschule.de/verbandswelt/dvv-english/adult-education-centres-germany.php">https://www.volkshochschule.de/verbandswelt/dvv-english/adult-education-centres-germany.php</a>
<b><i>Description</i></b>	<p>The VHS often known as Adult Learning Centers, are a major supplier of non-formal adult education. These institutions, which are spread out over the nation and strive to build on the liberal foundations of the adult education system, are given varying local or regional responsibilities and authorities. The courses available span a range of but frequently emphasize languages, culture, and general education. Although, these extracurricular topics have historically dominated, there is rising enthusiasm for providing vocational education. VHS tapes organized at the level of federal states into Land-level associations, coordinated by the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (DVV) as the federal organization.</p>
<b><i>List of partners involved in this best practice</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VHS</li> <li>• Adult Educators</li> </ul>
<b><i>Justification of Good Practice</i></b>	<p>What makes this a good practice is its decentralized and flexible approach. VHS centers are spread throughout the country, allowing for local or regional adaptation to meet the specific needs and interests of adult learners in different areas. Whether supported by regional authorities, Länder, or independently, VHS centers offer a wide range of courses, from languages to culture and vocational education, fostering inclusivity and catering to diverse learner populations. The coordinator of VHS centers at the federal state level through DVV ensures a cohesive and organized approach to adult education, contributing to the overall success of the system.</p>

## The German Institute for Adult Education – DIE

<b><i>Name or Title of the best practice</i></b>	The German Institute for Adult Education
<b><i>More Information</i></b>	<a href="https://basicskills.eu/current-members/german-institute-for-adult-education-die/">https://basicskills.eu/current-members/german-institute-for-adult-education-die/</a>
<b><i>Description</i></b>	The German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) serves as a focal point for lifelong learning in the academic and professional realms. They focus on research and serve as a “go-between” for theory and practice in adult education, encouraging the creation of tactics based on that research. Along with conducting research, they also pursue to create a network and support global endeavors for both experts and researchers in the area.
<b><i>List of partners involved in this best practice</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DIE</li> <li>• Adult Educators</li> </ul>
<b><i>Justification of Good Practice</i></b>	The DIE exemplifies a best practice in the field of adult education due to a holistic approach to lifelong learning. By serving as a bridge between academic research and practical application, DIE promotes evidence-based strategies in adult education. Its dedication to fostering a network and supporting global initiatives facilitates collaboration and knowledge sharing among experts and researchers. This comprehensive approach not only advances the understanding of adult education but also contributes to the development of effective, research-informed teaching methods and policies, ultimately enhancing the quality and impact of adult education efforts both in Germany and internationally.



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