



EUROPEAN  
AFFAIRS

**One in four EU citizens is looking for information on learning possibilities**

The European Adult Education Survey asked citizens whether they searched for information about any learning possibilities, such as courses, seminars or lectures. ▶

**EU Commission: Maroš Šefcovic will be responsible for education, training, culture and youth**

Following the resignation of Mr Ján Figel', who has been elected as chairman of the Christian Democratic Movement in Slovakia, Mr Maroš Šefcovič has been designated by the Slovak Government for appointment as member of the Commission, in agreement with the Commission president José Manuel Barroso. ▶

The European Commission appointed Jan Truszczyński as Director-General of the Education and Culture DG. ▶

The European Commission has launched a public consultation to improve funding for the next generation of EU-programmes from 2014 on. All citizens and organisations are welcome to contribute to this consultation. ▶

New Grundtvig Workshops catalogue released ▶

The European Commission has published its general call for proposals for the lifelong learning programme on 15 October 2009. ▶

Lifelong Learning Info-days 2009 in Helsinki and Brussels ▶

Qualifications: expanding their power, overcoming their limitations - CEDE-FOP-Conference ▶

# Active Citizenship in Europe – “Bring Europe to the local level!”

*The active citizenship in Europe conference was a unique European conference for non-formal adult education institutions, other civil society organizations and decision-makers at all levels held in Gothenburg 29 to 30 September 2009.*

(Simone Kaufhold) The conference was organised by the Swedish Association for Adult Education (SAEA) and the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA). In several seminars and plenum sessions methods for active citizenship via non-formal adult education were discussed. InfoNet was present at the conference and promoted with great help of the Swedish partner Studienfrämjandet and EAEA the InfoNet network.

**Appeal to EU: non-formal adult education promotes active citizenship**

During the conference an appeal to the EU institutions was handed over highlighting the fact that non-formal adult education and informal learning promote active citizenship in Europe and that non-formal learning emphasizes empowerment, grass root participation and is a driving force in civil society. Maicen Ekman, secretary general of SAEA, handed over the conferences appeal to the EU minister of Sweden, Cecilia Malmström who agreed that non formal adult education can play an important role to promote active citizenship in Europe.

**“We have to bring Europe to the local level”**

Malmström emphasised that Swedish non formal adult education organisations are especially important as a channel between citizens and decision makers and explained that this is why the Swedish government has given extra funds to the organisations to arrange Europe related activities. The appeal will be handed over by SAEA and EAEA to the other EU institutions in November 2009.

**Communicating Europe in partnership**

The communication between EU and civil society is especially important to the EU representatives. Margot Wallström being the Commissioner in charge of the EU's Communication Strategy underlined that Europe should become part of everyday conversation all over Europe and underlined that especially in connection to active citizenship civil society organizations play an important role as a knowledgebase for schooling democracy. She pointed out that democracy requires commitments and that it is not static but should be safeguarded and developed. For her the conference was an important starting point for active citizenship.

Nevertheless the EU representatives admitted that there is a long way to go to realize these communication goals defining themselves as still being at the prehistory of involving citizens in the EU-level.

**Topic: Europe**

To fight against the fact that as Margot Wallström said that “We got more news about what is going on in the US than on EU-level” and to show how an intensive

exchange of information on adult education throughout Europe can take place, InfoNet handed out the last InfoLetter about Europe. Several participants as well as political representatives showed a great interest in the network. Full story in database ▶

**Preparation for the EU Presidency, with Training**

*Hungary. The success of the 2011 Hungarian EU-Presidency depends on the creation of a well-prepared core of staff that will undertake the Presidential tasks. Professional training has already been provided over the past year in the form of lectures, seminars and simulations, as well as English and French language training and competence development.*

(Eva Tanczos ) Hungary will provide the next EU Presidency in the first half of 2011, for the first time since they joined the EU. One of the conditions, and also the guarantee, of the success of the Presidency is the correct training of the staff undertaking the Presidential tasks. It is a common trend that a Member State during its first Presidency offers a longer period and more extensive financial framework for the general training of their staff, whilst the preparation for subsequent Presidencies is much shorter and the focus is on a more limited target group. As long as the Member State feels that the correct language training of the staff undertaking the Presidential tasks is not guaranteed, language training has the same priority as professional training.

The training for the Hungarian Presidential tasks started in the autumn of 2008. During the formation of the training concept the Ministry of Foreign Affairs analysed and processed the training plans of various Member States, summarised the experiences and the applicable best practices. In order to assess the available training possibilities more precisely, the Ministry contacted various European institutes that offer Presidential training. The Ministry initiated pilot projects for their staff with the assistance of these institutes. On the one hand, the professional training offered a comprehensive basic knowledge for all the relevant staff on EU and Presidential matters, and, on the other hand, specific knowledge required for actual tasks were often provided in a tailor-made format. Every member of staff will receive English and French language training based on the EU language training system and this is expected to be completed by the beginning of 2010. A staff competence study was also completed. The competence development, which was initiated on the basis of the results, aims to prepare the staff to be able to handle unexpected situations. A number of short-term practical programs have been organised by the European Committee for the staff to deepen their knowledge on EU institutions. The training sessions are financed by EU funds. Staff training is also a long term investment, which contributes to the modernisation of Hungarian public administration. Full story in database ▶

## Sweden: Continued State support in spite of the financial crisis

**Sweden.** *Liberal adult education in Sweden which is conducted in study associations and adult education centres will continue to receive undiminished State support during the coming budgetary period. At a time of economic crisis with high unemployment there is a broad political consensus on the importance of adult education.*

(Hetty Rooth) Swedish liberal adult education has played an important role in supplementing the state school system for over 100 years. During the second half of the 1800's large-scale popular movements grew up in the country, such as the labour movement, the temperance movement and the peasant movement. There was a growing awareness of the importance of knowledge and the need to create new opportunities for those sections of the population who had little or no access to higher education. People met up to study together in study circles and seminars. They did this on their own terms, driven by their commitment and thirst for knowledge.

Adult education thus became an important driving force for democracy as Sweden evolved into a modern and more egalitarian state. Adult education gave people the opportunity to take control of their lives. The Government has recognised the importance of this by supporting it in both ideological and financial terms.

### Free and voluntary

But although the State currently supports adult education to the tune of over 3 billion Swedish kronor, this does not actually give it any right to control the content of the adult education or influence the forms it may take. The basic principle of adult education is that it is free and voluntary and divorced from the State.

This does not prevent State funding being earmarked for specific purposes from time to time and the State may require adult education to give priority to certain areas which are important to the democratic process and which favour disadvantaged groups in society. The State also conducts regular inspections to ensure that adult education maintains a high standard.

### State guidelines

In 2006 the Swedish Parliament passed an adult education bill "Learn, Grow, Change" with a large majority, which drew up the guidelines for the adult education projects that would receive State support over the coming years and which consequently are still of relevance today. The Swedish Parliament established seven priority areas for adult education qualifying for State funding:

#### 1. Shared values

Adult education must help to reinforce and develop democracy and influence everyone's basic values about the equal worth of all people.

#### 2. The challenges of a multi-cultural society

The opportunities of adult education must be open to all people in Sweden. People must be able to develop methods of intercultural dialogue and reflection in the

adult education centres and study associations.

#### 3. The demographic challenge

In their endeavour to meet the demographic challenge, study associations and adult education centres need to offer diversity of choice and a variety of channels for making contact. It is a challenge to get young people involved in an activity which meets the needs and engages the interest of a younger generation.

#### 4. Lifelong learning

Adult education is an obvious aspect of lifelong learning which enjoys a unique position through its strong connections with the organisations of civil society and its role both as an institution and as an independent, non-aligned player.

#### 5. Cultural activity

Adult education centres and study associations can act as a driving force at local and regional level for amateur culture in its various forms, in collaboration with local authority and State cultural institutions.

#### 6. People with disabilities

There has been extensive provision within adult education for people with disabilities for many years. Adult education requires a high level of skill in dealing with disabilities.

#### 7. Public health, sustainable development and global justice

In order to promote fair and sustainable global development there has to be an understanding of the effect our actions have on conditions affecting others. A large number of players need to establish an initiative to increase knowledge of the issues of global development.

### Call for Government action

The Swedish National Federation of Study Associations (SAEA), which is the umbrella organisation of the nine study associations would however like to see a more energetic focus on a wide skills promotion which should not only be restricted to Swedish adult education but also be extended to the EU states.

"We think that the Government should seize the opportunity during the Swedish presidency to push for a widespread skills promotion initiative. The financial crisis has no boundaries. We need a common initiative to cope with the crisis and raise European competitiveness in the world. Let us use EU cooperation to improve the skills of European citizens", says Maicen Ekman, the General Secretary of the Federation.

### Local problems

But the process of convincing politicians at all levels can take time. At a local level the grim economic reality has led to a reduction in support for adult education in many Swedish local authorities, funds which notwithstanding the state subsidy are vital to the organisation. In contrast to the situation in national politics there are clear ideological differences between the local authorities. To a certain extent, local authorities with red and green majorities invest more in adult education than those with a conservative majority.

Full story in database ►

### EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

#### EU and consumer empowerment:

[www.dolceta.eu](http://www.dolceta.eu)

Only one EU citizen in five realises that they have the same key consumer rights in all Member States and only one third are aware of EU-wide guarantees for the safety of their purchases.

To fight against that the EU has established DOLCETA: Development of online consumer education tools for adults – a web based consumer education tool with many different interesting modules. ►

#### Elearningeuropa.info portal received with great interest

The elearningeuropa.info portal forms a collection of information on the use of multimedia technology and the Internet for education, training and lifelong learning in Europe. ►

### NATIONAL AFFAIRS

#### The impact of economic crises on adult education

**Germany.** The financial and economic crises place the foundations of our economic activity in question and deeply unsettle the public. The result of this is a great need for information and, above all, public discourse on business ethics. Education has a great potential to meet this need and contribute towards public discussion of the issue. ►

#### Initiatives by the Directorate for Lifelong Learning in Malta

**Malta.** Setting up a new LLL Directorate was a clear sign that lifelong learning needs to be at the centre of every educational initiative. One of the major institutions within the Directorate is the Lifelong Learning Centre which is a learning centre for adults. This has lately moved to a new, larger premises to provide more programmes. ►

**NATIONAL  
AFFAIRS****The Fairy Tale of Adult Education Law in Serbia**

**Serbia.** Once upon a time, there was a country... In the recent years the development of adult education and learning in Serbia was dynamic, but not regulated or accompanied by quality assurance measures. ▶

**IPA-money flowing into second chance education**

European Commission is investing 4,5 million Euros to the Second chance project in Serbia. ▶

**A Major Challenge: Basic Training for Poorly and Non-Qualified Adults**

**Switzerland.** In Switzerland the importance of continuing adult education is recognised. Financial aid is consistent with this, but it essentially benefits those who have already had good basic training. Continuing adult education for the poorly and non-qualified still only receives little financial and political support. ▶

**Norwegian tendencies in adult education**

**Norway.** Who's asking for adult education in Norway? The people? The providers of adult education? The public authorities? The companies? There is no simple answer to these questions. But some answers there are. ▶

**A Glance at Hungarian Adult Education**

**Hungary.** Under difficult economic conditions and in an often changing legislative system, members of the Hungarian adult education sector take serious steps to catch up with the most advanced countries in this sector - explains Mr. Anildo Vedovatti, the editor of the Adult Education newspaper. ▶

# The Ghost of Transition

**Romania.** *Adult educators in Romania are faced with a large number of challenges highlighted by the crisis, which alarmingly resemble those of the transition period. Since there are no national strategies following up on the past experiences, each educator must use his intuition and the few resources at hand. Solutions are thus often found on a grass roots level in a diminutive way.*

(Christoffer Støerup) The last strategy for adult education in Romania was formulated during communism, emphasis then was not only on paying lip service to an ideology with few convinced adepts, but also on subjects desired by the learners then as today; learning foreign languages, painting and theatre, usage of technology and practical courses like tailoring or interior design.

**Informed citizenship**

In 2009 the common goal of educating for democracy and an understanding of the society (national as well as global) encompassing the individual, has not yet crystallized neither as an end nor in a set of means.

At cultural houses, one of the main providers of adult education, throughout the country focus is, as it was, on traditional folk and high culture. This cements the institutions' backwards orientation and does not address the increasing alienation of the population in the rural areas from a city life which is aligning itself with the trends of globalization.

**Transition-like restructuring**

Adult education and vocational training are still treated as one discipline in Romania, and both are most often being provided under the same roof. Therefore the challenge of retraining victims of structural changes on the labour market, has been an obvious but unmet ambition for providers of adult education. Such a challenge is again approaching, and though details are still clouded it seems certain that Romania conforming to the obligations of the loan packages negotiated with the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and EU has to lay off 20% of its public servants in a time of increasing unemployment.

In the mid-nineties Romania found itself in a similar situation, with falling standards of living and a huge budget deficit forcing the government to slim down state enterprises and thus add to the unemployment. Too much of the generation entering the chaotic labour market of the nineties, was "lost" and never acquired the basic competencies necessary for reentering the labour market successfully once times got better.

The economic situation was then followed by an sociocultural trend of suspicion and alienation towards the globalization and a nostalgia towards village life and the social and material security from the communist times. The light xenophobia reached its peak at the 2000 presidential elections during which the nationalist champion Corneliu Vadim Tudor, to the fear of many came in second in the presidential elections. It is of course not adult educators' job to prevent voters from opting for certain political parties, but easing unavoidable economic and socio-cultural changes,

empowering citizens and countering alienation are. As usual this task falls upon the local adult educators and their initiative, if that alone will be enough to soothe the hard times ahead remains to be seen.

Full story in database ▶

## New: Grundtvig Database EVE

**Europe.** *The European Commission presented a new online tool called EVE (Espace Virtuel d'Echange) for the results and details of EU-funded projects in the fields of education, culture, youth and citizenship. InfoNet interviewed Gérald Colleaux (European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture) from EVE Helpdesk about the aims of this new database.*

(Simone Kaufhold) The database EVE was officially launched by former European Commissioner for Education Ján Figel' on 2 March 2009. It is an electronic platform for the dissemination and exploitation of results supported by programmes implemented by the Directorate General Education and Culture. EVE is freely accessible online. This database is a centralized vision of the majority of funded projects. The user is offered a single access point to results, amongst project specific databases such as EST for partnership programmes under the Comenius-Grundtvig sub-programmes and ADAM the database for multilateral projects from the sub-programme Leonardo da Vinci.

Gérald Colleaux belongs to the EVE helpdesk team. He works for the European Commission in the Directorate C Culture, Multilingualism and Communication in the unit Valorisation and Communication. InfoNet asked him which users the Commission would like to reach with this new database, how many users do actively use the website and if this new database can be considered as a success being one of several EU project databases.

**EVE is about to start**

Gérald Colleaux: EVE contains already around two thousands projects; that is one of the reasons to have it already online although some actions of our programmes don't contain any projects yet. EVE has to be born, bearing in mind that the current programmes started only in 2007. As many projects have duration of minimum two years, the flow of results into EVE only started this year.

**Something new and rather challenging**

Gérald Colleaux: EVE is a collaborative tool - it means that the information about projects is uploaded by each Project coordinator and then validated internally by the Institution.

Step by step we are now contacting the project coordinators to inform them about their role. It is something new for them and rather challenging, in particular when the project is already ongoing.

Full story in database ▶

# New Trends in Adult Education in France

**France.** *In France, adult education is part of 'popular education' along with all age groups. Informal and non-formal education methods are employed outside of the national curriculum, which is administered by local and national associations alike. As an inheritor of the humanist spirit prevalent during the Age of the Enlightenment, national education still carries the same agenda of emancipation and social promotion widespread when it was established, yet its content and methods have evolved considerably.*

(Renée David Aschlimann) Popular education was born in the 18th century in France and was conceived to give access to reason, to escape the dogma of the Church and to initiate the nation in encyclopaedic knowledge. This knowledge – intellectual as well as technological – was intended to ensure the social promotion of individuals and to allow them access to a profession without being a professional training activity per se.

French popular education has had two main golden ages. The first came in the 18th century when Marie-Jean de Condorcet, deputy of the National Constituent Assembly, instigated the creation of CNAM, the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts, which teaches professions enriched by the most recent techniques for the social promotion of individuals. The second belonged to the successive Popular Front (1936) and post-1945 French Communist Party government ministries for youth and sport, whose objective was to encourage cultural, social and political autonomy for the working class.

## Fresh knowledge

Nevertheless, since the nineteen seventies the economic, social and cultural landscape has widely evolved toward more individual freedoms and a voice for collective linguistic, ethnic and religious identities. During the late nineteen eighties, large associations such as CEMEA (association of training centres for active education methods) and the Leo Lagrange Federation, which were state-subsidised via the ministries for youth and sport, started to collapse and took with them the values which they upheld: transmitting general and technical 'non-bourgeois' culture and collective civic responsibility.

The continually poor subsidies are dedicated to the professional integration of young people particularly affected by unemployment in France.

In this context Bernard Cassen established Attac (Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens) in 1990. Its objective is to find alternatives to a liberalised global economy by promoting fair trade.

Since its creation Attac, which rapidly became a veritable think tank and place for education, has gathered an enthusiastic following with a petition of 110,000 signatures, 110,000 refugees of classic political and educational action.

Other new associations supporting education and popular action (e.g. the NGOs "Les enfants de Don Quichotte" (4) and "Droit au logement" (5)) have turned their backs on the law in favour of engaging in

brass-knuckle action which is seen as legitimate yet illegal (occupying private homes and banks, destroying genetically modified crops, etc.). The new identity they have inherited from the extreme left and various libertarian movements is largely sustained by direct political action that attracts those who are disappointed by trade unionism and activism within the traditional, social-democratic leftist parties.

Hélène Dubois, a press trade unionist, explains, "I have not been supportive of the fact that the socialist party and a reformist trade union such as the CFDT (French Democratic Confederation of Labour) participate in dismantling social protection and in the privatisation of public services. In my view, joining Attac represented an opportunity for political choice and access to non-formal education." Similarly, the new style of popular education has in a way become a political education orientated as much toward action as toward the dissemination of knowledge that is more or less exploited by said action.

New technology plays an important role in this mobilisation by enabling intensive circulation of petitions, the organisation of spontaneous collective action as well as support networks for illegal immigrants threatened with deportation and networks for exchanging goods and knowledge.

Since a wealth of experts in effect formed the foundation of the 21st century, a wealth of counter-experts has emerged in response. From a general civic and artistic aspect of culture operating within a legal framework, adult education now tends more towards providing the expertise necessary for direct political action - efficient but lacking structure. ▶

## Germany: The Economic Crisis is not (yet) a Crisis for Continuing Education

**Germany.** *The newest figures from German education research indicate that continuing education is affected in many different ways by the financial and economic crisis. While education institutions whose main source of income is company training expect fairly considerable losses, the economic situation for those who provide qualifications for the unemployed is good.*

(Peter Brandt) These are the findings of this year's „wbmonitor“ survey, Germany's largest survey for suppliers, which is carried out every year by the German Institute for Adult Education (Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung, DIE) and the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung, BIBB). The structure of the educational institutes surveyed roughly corresponds to the actual distribution of the types of institution in Germany. Of this, a good 40 per cent of the continuing education institutions are private; just over 20 per cent are adult education centres (Volkshochschulen). The remainder is made up of other institutions.

## German Division and Unification – Challenges for Political Education

**Germany.** The fall of the Wall between East and West in 1989 brought great changes to society. It also presents challenges for political education. For the whole of Germany, the question is opened up once again of how liberal democracy is to be understood. Multi-perspective teaching in political education currently needs to convey more values and be able to give people direction. ▶

## Services under pressure as demand for Adult Learning soars in Ireland

**Ireland.** One of the most striking aspects of the current recession is the huge increase in demand from adults for education and training courses. ▶

## People are flocking to adult education

**Denmark.** Economic problems seem to motivate the Danes to adult education whether formal or non-formal. Increases at the level of 37 and 46 percent have been registered. ▶

## Continuing education in the crisis – crisis in continuing education?

**Austria.** For the first time since the onset of the economic crisis an assessment has been made of the potential of and behaviour in continuing education. Conclusion: the crisis is definitely having a negative effect on personal continuing education. ▶

## Learning Through Life

**UK.** A new independent report - Learning Through Life - calls for a rethink of the way Government, employers and individuals spend an estimated £55 billion every year on lifelong learning in the UK. ▶

## PRACTICE

**Adult education mile starting to burn bright**

**Austria.** The first and unique adult education mile was brought to life throughout Austria in the middle of September. The education mile was made visible in the darkness by various moving or stationary light projections. ▶

**Self-esteem grows when people take notice of you**

**Sweden.** There are many teenage girls from Somalia living in the city suburb of Rinkeby outside Stockholm. The Swedish Study Promotion Association "Studieförbundet" has been running the "Projektverkstan" a pilot scheme for young girls and boys who live there. ▶

**From parish halls to the new-generation "study groups"**

**Italy.** Tuscany was one of the first regions in Italy to introduce "Circoli di Studio" (study groups), a successful form of informal adult learning. The groups, based on a well-established Swedish initiative, are now becoming a tool for transferring innovation in the workplace. ▶

**Surviving the recession**

**Ireland.** This Autumn (2009) AONTAS is holding a series of regional meetings across Ireland to assess the impact of the recession on the adult and community education service and to demonstrate how models of collaborative practice can address some of the challenges faced by providers. ▶

**Outcome and Influence of Adult Education**

**Netherlands.** The survey results from the doctoral research project "Leren voor Leven" (Learning for Life) provided insight into how successful educational programmes can be in helping people regain a place in society. ▶

# Further Training to Combat the Crisis

**Hungary.** *Hungary was most affected by the economic crisis in Europe. There is a great demand for employees with the correct competence to improve the economy. Individuals and companies are, however, only able to invest considerably less in adult education. Isn't this a vicious circle?*

(Eva Tanczos) According to economic indicators, Hungary was most affected by the crisis in Europe. Unemployment is at an all time high of this decade; it is almost 10% and further increase is forecasted. Employment is expected to reach its lowest rate in the first quarter of 2010. According to the domino effect, the operation of small and medium companies, but even that of the larger companies, has been shaken. The labour market is only expected to show any improvement after the start of the economic growth.

Let's have a look at the effects of the economic crisis on the participants in adult education in Hungary. According to the large adult education institutes, the interest of private individuals applying for training has decreased, as fewer and fewer people are able to pay the course fees. Companies are ordering shorter, competence-developing professional training and language training.

The "Akkreditált Felnőttképzési Intézmények Országos Egyesülete" (National Association of Accredited Adult Education Institutes) prepared a survey with the inclusion of about 300 accredited adult education institutes on the decrease in the number of students who do not finance their labour-market training from their own resources. 50% reduction was recorded; the crisis and its effects were identified as the clear reasons thereof. It can be established that employers are driven by cost reduction, and business interest has priority over human resource management, which was once regarded as strategic interest. It is clear to see that the amount of money allocated to staff training is reduced. However, according to economic-historical facts, those companies survive a major crisis that care not only for their business but also for staff development.

**Anavoidable training**

In Hungary, most small company managers only support the obligatory (health and safety, accident prevention, fire protection) and the unavoidable (the application of new technologies) training. In addition to perfecting professional knowledge, the economic crisis may also necessitate the development of rapid situation assessment, co-operation, stress-management and communication abilities. Characteristically almost everybody intends to finance this training from financial grants, because the possibility to finance it from their own, independent resources is very limited.

According to the unified opinion of the experts, the strengthening of the competitive edge of small and medium companies is the key of the development of the Hungarian economy, because they play an extraordinary role in employment. For this reason, this year the Budapesti Munkaerőpiaci Intervenció Központ (Intervention Centre of the Budapest Labour

Market) launched an experimental, free training program for small and medium companies. No previous qualifications are required to take part in the e-learning course. The organisers only expect commitment and the right motivation from the applicants. The content of the training is the immediately usable business and management knowledge, with special attention to company strategy, change and risk management studies. The training is recommended for the owners, professional and human resource managers, supply and outsourcing program managers of small and medium companies, as well as trainers and consultants involved in the subject matter. The participants for the course are selected from the applicants on the basis of personal discussions. So far about 100 managers have taken part in the training, which started in July. The purpose of the program is to increase the companies' competitive edge and workplace retaining strength by further management training.

In the case of private individuals, in this year normative-supported school-based training is preferred, as well as free, labour market training supported by job centres. Job centres often provide financial support from EU funds (for example: "Make One Step Forward" program). The financially supported labour market training for the unemployed is successful if the participants find a job at the end of their course. It is difficult to measure exactly the successful job seeking result, because any follow up is expensive and not always uniform. It is most likely to be possible if the labour centre recorded the individual who completed the course as a registered job-seeker. In certain courses the trainers agree to place a certain percentage of their students in employment. However, it is very difficult to guarantee the percentage of the participants in a course who will find employment within a certain time period. It can be established that during an economic crisis the adult education institutes that operate successfully in Hungary today are the ones that offer training by good teachers in jobs with a high demand for employment at an affordable price. ▶

**Economic crisis makes Estonians study more than ever before**

**Estonia.** *This summer has seen more mature students enrolling at Estonian universities, colleges and vocational training schools than any other over the last 10 years. The State, where unemployment is growing quickly has directed a considerable amount of money from EU structural funds towards supporting studies continuation and additional occupational training.*

(Agne Narusk) Thus at the beginning of August the Estonian Minister of Education and Research, Tõnis Lukas, spoke before the public and encouraged everyone whose studies were interrupted to return to the classroom. "I encourage everyone whose degree studies had been interrupted at some time to use the support offered by the government to get the qualification which will be necessary in future to find a job", said Minister Lukas. Full story in database ▶

## Democracy and Human Rights are not to be taken for granted

*The network Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning (DARE) was founded as a Europe-wide network of NGOs and other organisations devoted to promoting deeper understanding and commitment to democracy and human rights through education. The network was initiated by the Association of German Educational Centres (AdB) and other civic and human rights education NGO's from all over Europe. Georg Pirker is working for as a desk officer for international relations at AdB and is currently secretary for the DARE network.*

### "Please share your activities!"

(SK) DARE organizes several activities on European level. One of them are the so called synchronised action days (SynAct) which are implemented in order to gain more visibility for education to democratic citizenship through adult education from the grass root level. The network collects and presents the many different activities of adult education organizations in the field of Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, explains Georg Pirker.



Georg Pirker

Be it a public event, a workshop, a seminar, a campaign, an arts project, a roundtable, a local, regional or international project - the examples can be added on the DARE website in an "activity report sheet" and a choice of 50 to 60 projects of good practice will be published in a brochure that will be distributed to stakeholders on the local, regional, national and European level.

### "We don't have to reinvent the wheel!"

- Georg Pirker thinks, so the idea for SynAct is based on the Austrian and German action days for citizenship education (Aktionstage politische Bildung). These action days have been implemented in the German speaking community of Belgium, Austria and Germany for five years now based on the motto of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg) "Education for Democratic Citizenship" as well as the European Year 2005 of "Citizenship through Education".

You are invited to submit your project and the activities will be published on Hu-

man Rights Day 10 December 2009 on DARE's website ([http://www.dare-network.eu/synact\\_2009.htm](http://www.dare-network.eu/synact_2009.htm))

### Other Network Actions

Action and research, lobbying at EU level and common projects are the three action lines of the network. One common project is for instance a complete manual concerning the subject "Understanding the Mechanisms of 1989 in Europe – a Simu-

lation on Regime Change for Use in Youth and Adult Education".

To link project partners' expertise and recommendations back to European policy making, representatives of DARE were invited to a hearing to exchange views at the European parliament in April this year. The numerous interesting actions and events of the project can be found on their website [www.dare-network.eu](http://www.dare-network.eu)

Full story in database ►

## EURvote – EURvoice. Gateway to a social Europe

*During the countdown before the European Election this year 1.786 European Citizens took the opportunity to give their opinion on questions of social justice in Europe. For this a multilingual internet platform with a barometer that dealt with questions of social justice had been established in the project EURvote-EURvoice coordinated by the KAB Deutschlands (German Catholic Workers' Movement) in cooperation with different Christian Workers' movements.*

(SK) From March 2009 until the European Elections people from all over Europe could give their voice to a more social Europe on [www.vote-europe.net](http://www.vote-europe.net) answering questions in the field of education, social security, cohesion, migration and work. Especially Germany, Belgium, Austria, Italy, France and Spain got very actively involved in the project.

### Give Europe a social face

One successfully accomplished goal in the frame of the project was to fight against the negative attitude of citizens towards the EU and its institutions as well as a providing a deeper knowledge. More participation should lead to active citizenship and democratic responsibility. So, local, regional and national institutions of the project partners have been focusing more intensively in their information and education classes on European subjects. The national organizations also collected relevant information from partner organizations dealing with social issues and revised this information for an international / European readership.

One example for a good public relation event was the presentation of the project

in Germany at the Europe Day in May 2009. Numerous citizens from Cologne could use the project's notebooks to get acquainted with subjects from EURvote - EURvoice. They could log in on the [vote-europe.net](http://vote-europe.net) website and get into action and vote actively for the different fields of social policies. Thanks to participation the interest in Europe has been increased due to positive experience, exchange and cooperation.

### Social Security should be expanded

The evaluation of the opinion poll shows very clearly that safety needs are very strong in the participating countries. The Social Aspect is the most demanding and important factor for all participants no matter which country they are from.

Interestingly recoverable social claims were not top-ranking in the opinion poll which was surprising to the project coordinators as one of their main aims as workers' movement is to promote the recoverable claims in the field of worker's rights.

### No fees for education

A majority of participants answered "yes" when asked if the EU should be developed into a knowledge-based society. Then it is especially important to them that education should be free of educational charges or fees and qualifications should be acknowledged in Europe.

In addition to the opinion poll the internet platform also provides important basic information on the European Elections and the positions of the participating workers' organisations. In this connection didactic material dealing with social questions for adult education has been established.

Full story in database ►

# Becoming Adult Educators in the European Area

*Seven higher and adult education institutions from Estonia, Denmark, Italy and Sweden are working together in a research project called Becoming Adult Educators in the European Area (BAEA). This Grundtvig project (2009-2011) aims at analysing processes of professional qualification and identity building among adult educators-to-be.*

(SK) Each project partner compiles a national research report that provides insights into opportunities existing for initial education and training for adult educators-to-be as well as into analysis of policies that frame national contexts. The finding from the desk research activity undertaken in Denmark, Sweden, Estonia and Italy follow a common structure: It starts with the status and provision of adult education and training followed by a chapter offering an overview of national policy strategies for adult learning. One chapter deals with the current opportunity structures for (prospective) adult educators and at last the current socio-economic status of adult educators is explored.

The findings are constantly communicated and discussed with the four national user groups consisting of policy-makers and practitioners in the field of initial education and training for adult educators-to-be.

## Empty field in Sweden

The reports for Sweden, Estonia and Den-

mark are already online on the BAEA website. In these reports you can find interesting facts such as "Despite the increased emphasis at the national level on the need for high quality adult education and training, the question of how to ensure that those who earn their living by educating adults acquire the pedagogical qualifications they need [...] is rarely addressed" (Danish national report) and also the Estonian national report underlines that "there is a significant lack of educational research, which leads to weaknesses in the development activities for lifelong learning and adult education"

The Italian national report is going to follow within this year. All national reports will be put together into a synthesis report of comparative nature.

## Aims and Objectives: "Analysing processes of professional qualification and identity building among adult educators-to-be"

Is one of the aims the project likes to investigate among the questions:

1. Which social and cultural factors influence the individual formation of initial competences and qualifications in the field of general adult education, vocationally oriented adult education and liberal education?
2. Which factors influence the construction of a professional identity among adult educators-to-be?

3. How may adult education policies and initial education and training practice affect professionalization processes in the field of general, vocationally oriented and liberal education?

BAEA aims at creating a better understanding of what governs the formation of initial competences and qualifications in the field of general, vocationally oriented and liberal education. Future needs that are not properly addressed in current initial education and training of adult educators-to-be should be identified. To provide adult educators-to-be with better chances to qualify themselves, thus to improve the quality of future adult education supply policy recommendations are going to be formulated. And furthermore to create tools aimed at supporting final beneficiaries to improve their practices.

The projects' target groups are researchers in the field of adult education, policy makers in field of general adult education, vocationally oriented adult education and liberal education and of course adult education practitioners, with special reference to educators and trainers of adult educators-to-be.

Full story in database ►

## Seniors in Action

*In times of increasing demographic changes it is of great importance to activate seniors and prevent their marginalization. This problem is addressed by the "Seniors in Action" Programme which promotes the integration of seniors into the education process, thus making use of the seniors' indispensable experiences. The following part will give a short insight into the project and its realisation.*

(SK) While connecting project partners from old EU Member States (Greece, Spain, France) with newer ones (Latvia, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria), the "Senior in Action" Programme also encourages the interaction between different generations. This twofold aim is realized by the project through the creation of a model promoting the seniors active participation in informal education. In addition to that, this model intends to raise the awareness about the initiative in senior communities as well as to provide supportive training and tutoring sessions for seniors on creative, story-telling presentations for pupils, transnational partners' meetings. Furthermore, transnational gatherings of seniors from partner countries for sharing experiences and best practices take place on a regular basis. Full story in database ►

## Learning by art about homeless people: The Power of Local Community Arts Project

*Learning about other cultures through intercultural dialogues – this is one of the objectives of the Grundtvig project Power of Local Community Arts project, POLCA. Using art as a means of communication, POLCA provides its participants with new skills which further help to stimulate European intercultural dialogue for the target group of learners who risk social exclusion.*

(SK) Three local projects are implemented in the frame POLCA: One is called "The Joker" coordinated by Maurice de Greef from Spectrum Gelderland who is at the same time InfoNet correspondent from the Netherlands.

The project's target group are homeless people as actors and visitors. To raise more awareness to practical and psychological problems of homeless people a play called "The Joker" has been developed in the project.

The premiere of the play was a realistic perspective on the life of homeless people and their problems concerning the local social infrastructure and its institutions. After the play a debate was organised between professionals working with homeless people. Broad conclusion was that most of the time it is hard to offer good help because of the problems with rules and policy-making of our society. Circa hundred people visited the play and tried to understand the situation of the homeless people. Most of them were shocked about their situation and gained more respect for them.

Community Arts is a method of learning by art with its goal to make experience and value the local culture in comparison with the other cultures (to create an intercultural dialogue). It is a form of art where members of a community come together to express issues and concerns through artistic methods.