

## DIVERSITY Project

In the last decade, migration put the European educational systems to the test: the large influx of migrants from different educational, economic and cultural contexts created mechanisms of rapid response to emergency situations and contingencies. Those emergencies have been dealt with in a plethora of language and cultural awareness courses to promote integration. By the same token, those emergencies polarised the Adult Education system in most European countries, leading to a differentiation within AE actors between “AE for migrants” and “traditional AE” long the entire cycle of the Adult Education value chain (i.e. from policy formulation, programme development, implementation, curriculum development, service delivery, etc.). In many cases, “AE for migrants” is even further subdivided into “AE for refugees” and “AE for other migrants”. Thus, migrants have been considered as a “special” target group of AE, with specific AE solutions. While appropriate to manage needs and emergency stemming from the contingency of sudden migrants’ inflows, this approach left migrants outside the mainstream AE provision, generating a vacuum. The next step must be a “normalisation” of work inside provider organisations and a strategic integration of migrants into the established pool of target audiences. The DIVERSITY project supports this process by providing training resources to enable AE to graduate from the contingency approach and move towards an operational model for a more diversity-informed AE. This process of “normalisation” will require AE systems across the EU to readjust and to create a new model of AE planning and provision, considering migrants (or even sub-groups of this category) not as a special cohort of participants in the context of contingency/emergency, but as a regular target group of a more diverse audience for AE.

To address these needs, the principal objective of the project is to accompany the EU AE system(s) in the mentality shift from focussing on migrants as very specific target groups and preparing them for integration into the society around them, towards including migrants into the AE providers' regular programmes as an equal target group to actively and directly foster diversity and inclusion in AE and in society. The project considers management and planning processes in adult education providers to be key to reaching this overarching objective. Hence, further objectives in this context are:

- a) Raising awareness for migration related diversity, its challenges and its opportunities (referring to cultural and pedagogical but equally to economic aspects) with managers and planners in AE as well as policy makers;
- b) Equipping managers and planners with the skills needed to open AE providers to migrants as a regular target group.

Hence, DIVERSITY:

1. Extends and develops competences of AE personnel
2. Improves and extends the supply of high-quality AE opportunities tailored to the needs of low skilled adults
3. Supports social inclusion of AE

The project’s primary activities directly target management and programme planning staff in AE providers across Europe, for whom the training will be developed. They are key to achieving the objectives, since clear commitment to the opening of institutions for migrants made from the managing levels as well as structural and strategic decisions to reach these aims are essential for processes to work out. The consortium will also consult learners (migrant and non-migrant) in reference with their needs, thus including the group most affected by decisions taken at management level. This is a highly



innovative approach, since thus far, the group of learners has mostly been talked about instead of to. This specific perspective, however, will crucially inform the results of the project in order to create solid results based in the reality of learner choices. Furthermore, policy makers are targeted since they decide on parameters for these efforts. All these efforts are guided by the needs of adult learners. They make up a secondary target group that directly benefits from the improvements brought about on management and planning levels of the AE providers.

The interplay of a multicultural consortium ensures a high amount of cultural sensitivity which is vital to developing a training curriculum and policy recommendations that will have a multicultural setting and openness to intercultural processes as their very core. Furthermore, migration within the EU plays a large role within European society and hence also for this project. Therefore, the constellation of partners from across Europe ensures the representation of trans-European perspectives in the conception and design of the project outputs. Finally, the (sub-)focus on European policy is necessary as many policy decisions concerning AE are taken at European level.

The participating organisations of the DIVERSITY Project are:

Project Leader:

- ❖ Agentur für Erwachsenen- und Weiterbildung (AEWB) - Germany

Project Partners:

- ❖ European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) - Belgium
- ❖ Hellenic Adult Education Association (HAEA) - Greece
- ❖ Grunnet & Petersen, Facilitering og Udvikling (G&P) - Denmark
- ❖ National University of Ireland Maynooth (MUIM) - Ireland
- ❖ Institut de Haute Formation aux Politiques Communautaires asbl (IHF) - Belgium
- ❖ IDP European Consultants - Italy