

Adult Learners' Weeks in Ukraine Join Forces in Promotion of Lifelong Learning

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Abstrakt

Príspevek vymezuje nejdôležitejšie ciele ukrajinských Týdnů vzdelávání dospělých, které se konají za účelem realizace konceptu celoživotního učení; během Týdnů účastníci diskutují a schvalují hlavní doporučení. Význam mezinárodní výměny zkušeností z podobných akcí, různé akce, které se o tomto festivalu konají, např. prezentace, výstavy, workshopy, semináře, diskuze, jsou veřejně přístupné. Prezentují se aktuální problémy vzdělávání dospělých na současné Ukrajině včetně vzdělávání pro nezaměstnané.

Abstract

The report determines the most important objectives of the Ukrainian Adult Learners Weeks which are carried out in order to realize the concept of lifelong learning, the main recommendations discussed and approved by the participants during the Weeks. The importance of foreign Weeks experience exchange, the different events which take place in the festival such as presentations, exhibitions, workshops, seminars, discussions are disclosed. The actual for adult education in present Ukraine problems including the unemployed learning are shown.

The significant economic and social changes in present Ukraine, the rapid development of knowledge-based economy and the demographic problems caused by the aging of the population, all these factors call for a new approach to the general and professional education, based on the concept of lifelong learning. The continuing education must be attractive to all people. Only by pursuing of lifelong learning people will be able in the future to organize their lives, to secure and keep the employment and to make a successful career.

The Adult Learners' Weeks tradition in Ukraine began in 2000 with a number of different activities and events. A conference took place in Kyiv to address a wide range of adult learning issues: language and culture, professional qualification, politics and civic education. Non-governmental organizations, ministries, private corporations, universities, and the media joined forces in setting up a festival for a distinct week during the year. ALW took an initiative to generate a national conversation on future directions for lifelong learning in Ukraine.

The Week's participants also debated the memorandum on Lifelong Learning issued European Conventions. A common declaration was adopted at the end of the Conference. In parallel a number of different events were organized all over the country during the Week.

Since that every year hundreds of organizations join forces to raise the awareness of learners and employers on the importance of learning throughout adult life during the Ukrainian Adult Learners' Weeks. So, each year ALW is celebrated with hundreds of events and activities designed to promote the benefits of learning – in the home, at work and in the community – and to highlight the many options available.

But starting in 2000, the activities carried out in the capital of Ukraine Kyiv and regions all over the country have been systematically prepared and centrally coordinated by the

Ukrainian Coordination Bureau of Adult Education Program in Ukraine headed by Serhiy Boltivets, Ph. D., Deputy Director of the Institute of Psychology of the Academy of Pedagogical Science of Ukraine.

The most important objectives of the Ukrainian Adult Learners Weeks are: information and motivation of the general public, promotion of the lifelong learning and continuous education through the Weeks' events, where all participating institutions present their work and activities; assisting to closer cooperation between the participating organizations and institutions; creation of a continuous adults learning lobby in the political circles and in the related ministries in Ukraine; spreading knowledge of lifelong learning in the society.

The concept of lifelong learning in Ukraine is developed by the Ukrainian Adult Education Program and is based on the following approaches. It is not only the acquisition of basic professional qualifications, but the constant upgrading of complex variety of skills, notions, knowledge and interests during the whole life. Lifelong learning is all kind of learning activities including the formal learning (acquisition of vocational skills or foreign language skills) and the non-formal learning. It can be defined as every purposeful learning activity, undertaken on the ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence. Lifelong learning should be open to all citizens, although its contents, the teaching methods and location can vary depending on the learner. Lifelong learning seeks to promote active citizenship, employability, adaptability, social integration and personal development.

The Ukrainian learning festivals also aim to give a voice to learners, to reach out to excluded and marginalized adults, to strengthen the partnerships between all providers, in particular between government agencies, and to assist in promoting the culture of lifelong learning. Ukrainian ALW also provides an opportunity for discussion about the current provision of adult learning in Ukraine and to consider what improvements are needed to take Ukraine forward.

The week was set up to bring all institutions, organizations and public together to develop regional programs and to promote adult education. One of the aims was also to raise awareness of the public and the state the problems in AE. So dialogue between the state organs and NGO together with the new ideas and jobs also marked the success of our festivals.

In the festival, several presentations, exhibitions, workshops, seminars and social events always take place. The participants are able to take part in workshops on different topics, and upon termination of the week they are given a certificate confirming that they have upgraded their skills in the field of adult education.

The special ALW website <http://ua-ed.narod.ru>, launched in 2002, acts as a gateway for those interested in learning communities, and provides resources to support the initiation and development of such communities. The set up website further facilitates the communication, monitoring and information sharing among national learning festivals and towards a larger public. The website is meant to be dynamic – under “permanent construction”, as it is developed by our partners in the country and regions. The website is instrumental in mobilising and responding to requests for support from educators wishing to engage adults to the movement. It is helpful in collectively debating and developing the further direction and activities in the framework of ALW. Now we make efforts to translate the main parts of the web-site content into English and German to make it accessible to foreign language speaking visitors. So we are very appreciable when visitors share their comments and forward any information on activities undertaken or planned in our country.

During the Weeks, the conference participants discuss and approve many important recommendations. As usual these recommendations are presented to Governmental and local authorities, leaders and representatives of public organizations, scientific institutions, educational establishments and enterprises to consider in their activities and to provide implementation of the recommendations. ALW formulated and submitted proposals for

implementation to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, as well as to other bodies: the Ministry of the Culture and Art, the Ministry of the Industrial Policy, the Ministry for Family, Children and Youth Affairs and others. The main recommendations are such as:

- to work out and represent for debates in the Supreme Council of Ukraine “The Law on Adult Education”, and “The Law on Staff Professional Development” with the purpose to create adult education legislative basis and to determine the sources of funding for above-mentioned laws;
- to extend Adult Education Program to remote towns and villages with the help of local authorities, mass media, association “Znanie” ('Knowledge');
- to work out an integrated scientific psychological and pedagogical concept of the adult education, and also to develop the perspective scientific research plan on adult education problems; to create Adult Education scientific centre on the base of the Academy of Pedagogical Science of Ukraine;
- to improve staffing of the educational system, including the institutions for adult education; to create an educational network for training, retraining and improving of professional skills of scientific and pedagogical staff engaged in adult education activities; to promote advanced experience exchange in staff training field,
- in view of keen demand for foreign languages skills among adults, to set a task upon institutions concerned to develop appropriate education programs, including programs for employed persons;
- to promote spreading of self-education activities among adults; to draw attention of secondary and higher educational institutions to necessity of development of students' (adults' in future) self-educational skills;
- to promote experience exchange with foreign countries concerning church-state relations development; to propose settlement of religious organizations development programs; to provide evening educational TV programs (theological lectures) for adults with the help of Orthodox Church for the purpose of people regeneration, clarification of concepts of faith, conscience and choice;
- to promote solving of the problems, concerned to professional education for unemployed;
- to create magazine “Adult Pedagogic” in order to coordinate methodical and organizational work of adult educators;
- to promote ecological education of adults and children, etc.

The information about the Ukrainian Adult Learners' Weeks are always widely covered by mass media, in particular the magazines “Safety of Vital Functions” and “Labour Protection”, “Practical Psychology and Social Work”, newspapers “Education”, “Education of Ukraine” and other editions.

The Ukrainian Coordination Bureau and the Program "Adult Education in Ukraine" learn with great success from good experience abroad. For this aim we regularly get familiarized with the foreign websites: of UNESCO Institute for Education, Great Britain's NIACE, Canadian, Slovenian, Australian websites etc. In November, 2001, The National Coordinator of the Ukrainian Coordination Bureau of Adult Education Program in Ukraine was invited and took part in the International ALW in Brussels, Belgium, and got experience in conducting national Adult Learners' Weeks, developing lifelong space in Ukraine. During the joined Weeks and different educational events Ukrainian educators and all involved in adult problems, acquire knowledge and practical skills from the foreign achievements.

Some Weeks' educational events are carried out with the aim to enable adult educators to upgrade their pedagogic and andragogic knowledge, acquire basic knowledge and skills needed for their work with adults. For example, in the frame of work the Adult Education Program in

Ukraine the “Step by Step Foundation” acts and organizes teachers’ training and practice in different themes, including adult education methods.

The different Weeks’ events also target the wide public – learners, students, pupils, teachers, employed and unemployed people, marginalized groups etc. Unemployment in Ukraine is still very high; many people have lost their jobs more than once during the last ten years and have nothing in prospect at present. On the other hand, in the new employment spheres knowledge of foreign languages and good computer skills are a must. Other new qualities such as entrepreneurs and social competence are also necessary. All this presents a great challenge to the national education system. The programmes and projects in this sphere should aim at the effective promotion of lifelong learning for all people and the future-oriented transformation of the educational structures in Ukraine. This calls for closer coordination of the different governmental, educational and social spheres and institutions in the country, such as the Social Service of Youth, the Institute of Pedagogies and Psychology of Vocational Training of Ukraine, the State Institute of Professional Training and Retraining of the Ministry of Industrial Policy, the Pan-Ukrainian Association of Post-Graduate and Lifelong Professional Education, Kyiv Institute of Social and Cultural Relations, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Ukraine, Industrial Policy Ministry, and others, and also for a more intensive their exchange of adult education experience. The mentioned problems are supposed as an important to be settled by the Coordination Bureau of the Ukrainian ALW and also the Weeks.

Zdroje:

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