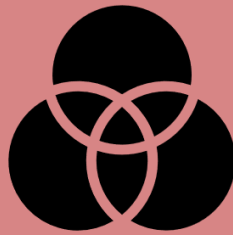




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**Intervention models of adult learning coordination and governance at local level in
Latvia and North Macedonia**



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Content

Context.....	2
Methodology for Preparing the Models	4
Intervention models	5
Model 1: Intervention on operative level	5
Model 2: Intervention on legislative level.....	7
Model 3: Path for the future	8

Context

In Latvia, there is a network of adult learning coordinators working in local municipalities which is supported by Ministry of Education and science. However, in Latvia is not set a specific job definition, tasks and specific adult learning coordinators, each municipality interpret their actions and adult learning policy in their own way. Most organizational activities are performed individually, assuming personal responsibility. The role and responsibility of Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia (VARAM), which is responsible for the network of municipalities, in discussions about the importance of adult education in the development of the local municipality and the functions of the municipality in the coordination of adult education should be strengthened.

While in Latvia preconditions for adult learning coordination and governance at local level is made, in North Macedonia adult learning is overseen by The Center of Adult Education, a government-formed public institution tasked with contributing to the socio-economic needs of the country, addressing labour market demands, and supporting individuals in their personal growth. However, by transitioning the coordination of adult education to the municipalities, a more direct link can be established between the needs of



local businesses, the local Employment Agency, and unemployed adults and therefore good experience of Latvia has raised discussions at North Macedonia within project survey, discussions and interviews. This change could help ensure that the provision of adult education in North Macedonia is better tailored to the specific needs and challenges faced by individual communities.

The comparative analyses showed that both countries have a legislation that is defining adult education under Education Law. There are both strengths and weaknesses in the process of implementation of the adult learning on local level, there are challenges in both countries mostly due to the lack of fundings.

In Latvia, the competence of local governments in the field of adult education is defined in several legal enactments. Planning, organizing and governance of adult learning is one of the functions of local governments in Latvia, which they perform in compliance with the requirements of legal enactments and planning documents. No specific adult policy document at national level is available; lack of concrete, targeted adult learning policies at municipal level in Latvia despite active discussions among stakeholders, new duties and tasks set by legal acts.

The Law on Adult Education in North Macedonia is adopted in 2008, was followed by amendments and number of sub-legal acts. In the Article 31 the budgeting of adult education from Municipalities is regulated for costs related to the implementation of the programs for institutions for adults education of which the local government is the founder,- current maintenance of adult education facilities where the local government is the founder and - investments in the institutions for the adults education in which the local government is the founder. The priorities for adult education and training are described in the National Strategy for adult education (2016-2020) and Strategy for Adult Education 2019-2023.

Challenges are raised by needs of building and supporting economic development in each region of the countries, where adult learning plays a crucial role and pre-condition. Common solutions are recognized in Latvia's and North Macedonia's country analyses and they are:

- To enhance the provision of skills development programmes and establishment of regional training centres as hubs for enhancing the links between education and the world of labour market and the provision of education and training in line with the regional and local labour market needs and responding to adults' upskilling/reskilling needs.



- To consolidate and expand stakeholders' cooperation at local and regional levels, and to consider the role of the regional training centres in promoting stronger collaboration with the private sector, social partners and other relevant actors, such as investment, development or innovation agencies, academics, non-governmental organisations.
- Regular analyses of skills supply and demand at local levels into the labour market and skills information system.
- Increasing access to and the quality of adult education at local level will be essential for creating an agile workforce that can adapt to changes in the labour market
- Provide state financial incentives for inter-municipal and public-private partnerships to deliver skills services.
- Consider improving mechanisms for local municipalities spending of education funds, also set funding for adult education.
- Strengthening of skills of adult learning coordinators by more active involvement in shaping adult learning policy, involvement in policy discussions, building training programs, common standards for them.
- Building adult learning coordinator network has to be strengthened and united platform for exchange of good practices, methodologies for adult learning coordinators supported.
- National legislation on adult learning quality criteria is needed to support local governments and provide common understanding of education quality.
- United local government register for registering permits for the implementation of non-formal education programs and information about adult programs.
- To improve understanding about adult learning among residents with a low level of education and qualifications.
- Strengthening of skills and competences of adult learning coordinators by more active involvement in shaping adult learning policy, involvement in policy discussions, building training programs, and common standards for them.
- etc.

Methodology for Preparing the Models



The models were prepared according to following steps.

- 1) Gathering data from country analysis for Latvia and North Macedonia made in the project. The project started with a desk research, survey of stakeholders about job duties adult learning coordinator job description, necessary skills and knowledge. Both countries have different experiences and good practices. At the moment, there is no job position of Adult Learning Coordinator at municipal level in North Macedonia. Following Latvian best practices and experience, in the framework of this project, a document with job description of adult learning coordinator was created which serves as bases for further discussions in both countries
- 2) Analysing data from country reports which consist of country situation analyses about adult learning coordination, governance models, legislation, and good experiences at local level, challenges and opportunities in each country.
- 3) Analysing data from comparative analyses focusing on recommendations and proposals for strengthening adult learning coordination and governance as well adult learning system in the countries.
- 4) Gathering opinions and feedback from stakeholders interviews, surveys and discussions in both countries.
- 5) Preparation of three intervention models.

Intervention models

Model 1: Intervention on operative level

The first model is made by description of the possible intervention at the operational level – actions which can be taken by those involved at local level, as well national level. The starting point for its description is a list of problems reported by stakeholders and their visions of adult learning coordinator work duties. We feel that these barriers should be removed in the first instance and the problems solved. Our findings are presented in the form of a table, which we propose to use during the consultation. Below is its working form.



This can be done by those involved in the consultation, coming from competent bodies, taking into account national and local specifics and opportunities. This will also create the conditions for dialogue and give all stakeholders the feeling that they have contributed to the improvement of the adult learning coordination system at local level.

<i>Model 1: Intervention on operative level</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Strengthening adult coordination at local level	This can be done by local municipality by setting responsible person for adult learning coordination, defining policy priorities and actions in municipality, as well by involved ministries and other national stakeholders– setting common standards, improvement of legal acts, policy actions, funds for adult learning coordination at local level
Providing more information about training possibilities at local social media, newspapers	Information can be gathered and published by responsible persons at local municipality, training providers who is involved in education, as well by national stakeholders- building common information campaigns, common platforms which supports outreach of adults
Providing concrete finances for organizing adult education at local level	Training providers owned by local municipalities or private, or private-public financial initiatives can be supported at local level.
Regular gathering of training needs of local	Surveys and interviews organized.



employers and inhabitants	Training offers, programs are made by recognition of local employers and inhabitants needs and possibilities.
Supporting adult learning coordinator network	By active participation and experience sharing in common discussions, trainings etc.
Strengthening of skills of adult learning coordinators	It can be done by more active involvement in shaping adult learning policy, involvement in policy discussions, building training programs, common standards for them
Strengthening cooperation of adult learning coordinators with the municipal social service and other participating institutions like career counselling, employment agency	Especially important is to informing vulnerable groups about educational opportunities though these canals

Model 2: Intervention on legislative level

Legislative solutions depend on the legal systems in force in each country and the acts governing the operation of education systems. In the table are proposals for actions within closest 1-5 years.

In our opinion, it would be desirable that, at the consultation stage, the opinions of the meetings, interviews enter in the table possible, i.e. in their opinion feasible to introduce or amend proposals for provisions in existing legal acts. It is likely that national consultations will result in a number of recommendations, which will be universal in nature.



<i>Model 2: Intervention on legislative level</i>	
Setting adult learning quality criteria by national level is needed to support local governments and provide common understanding of education quality in all municipalities	Changes in related legal acts
United local government register for registering permits for the implementation of non-formal education programs and information about implementation of adult education programs	Common data register would ensure easier data collection and analyses of adult learning implementation and accessibility at local municipalities.
Clearly defined role of local municipalities in adult learning coordination and implementation	In the countries is needed unified approach to the coordination of adult learning in municipalities
Setting common profession description for adult learning coordinator at local level	A profession of adult learning coordinator is needed to be included in Classification of Occupations

Model 3: Path for the future

In the third model are mentioned actions which can be done within 5+ years.

<i>Model 3: Model 3: Path for the future</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Analysis of the demand and supply of adult learning will be based on the local specifics and labour market and individual needs, as well as evidence of economic development trends. Data about training needs have to be collected regularly at local level.	National adult learning policy has to be made based on global and local economic development trends. Qualitative labour market needs analyses. Local level has to support this analysis with data.
Setting adult learning strategy in each municipality	Methodological and informative support needs be strengthened.



	Common platform for adult learning coordinators provided.
Developed common unified public information portal about training possibilities for adults	This could be great tool to support adult learning coordinator work.
Unemployed, social risk groups, employed and self – employed learn in the same trainings	Experience exchange can be also between adult learners with aim to improve their skills and employability
There will be developed mechanism for flexible responding to the needs of different (not only individual) target groups, providing additional support (for example, mobility, support for looking after a child during school, etc.), thereby promoting their involvement in adult learning.	Financial support and individual support measures are needed to increase adult participation in learning, especially for vulnerable groups.
Adult learning coordinators have gained career counsellor skills	

Prepared models are basis for further discussions with stakeholders about adult learning coordination and governance. Models are discussed with stakeholders and in next project phrase will be organized discussions with stakeholders about actions needed (recommendations).

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