Intellectual Output 4

DIVERSITY-ORIENTATION AS A PROCESS IN ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

GENERAL GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM REFLECTING AND IMPLEMENTING DIVERSITY MEASURES IN THE „DIVERSITY CAPACITIES" PROJECT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Erasmus+ project Diversity Capacities (DivCap) focuses on the issues of inclusion and diversity in adult education.

In order to understand the focus of DivCap, it is important to know that its concept was developed as a follow-up to the Erasmus+ project "Refugees in Vocational Training / RevoT". RevoT collected and published good practice examples of vocational integration and education for refugees in seven partner countries. During the work in the RevoT project, it became apparent that the ability of adult education (AE) institutions to address people with heterogeneous backgrounds and to integrate them with their diverse needs is an essential prerequisite for continuing education that is truly open to all. In the RevoT project, the focus was on the characteristics of ethnicity, culture and religion that are relevant for the integration of refugees, which is why these were given central importance in the subsequent project "Diversity Capacities", without the other diversity characteristics being forgotten.

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1.1 The objective of the project

Adult education institutions operate in a changing and diverse society. This diversity should also be reflected at all levels of adult education institutions if they are to live up to the claim of being an institution for all citizens of a society. The aim of the DivCap project was to support and promote such opening processes of AE institutions. This was to be achieved by providing concrete instruments and measures that were tested in educational institutions. Based on the experiences of the case studies and pilot projects, recommendations and tools were developed.

The objectives at a glance:

- Raise awareness and know-how about diversity at the individual and organisational level in   adult education (AE) institutions.

- To implement concrete measures to promote inclusion and diversity at the organisational level.

- Strengthening the personal competences of staff members in dealing with diversity.

1.2 Project activities

In each country, the partner organisation worked together with a second educational institution with the aim of taking the first steps towards an opening process to enhance diversity in both institutions. The first step was to conduct surveys on diversity in the institutions, the results of which were incorporated into the respective case study. The case studies also contained recommendations on how and with which measures and goals a change process should be carried out in the respective institution. These results were discussed with the managers, short-, medium- and long-term goals were identified and the implementation of short-term goals was agreed upon under the supervision of the DivCap project as a piloting, and concrete implementation steps were planned according to the recommendations. The actual implementation then had to be changed, adapted, postponed several times, as the Covid19 pandemic often prevented the planned activities. The learning processes that took place during these processes in the institutions, especially under these difficult conditions, and the results of the pilotings led to the recommendations presented here for future diversity processes in adult education institutions.

1.3 Who was involved - the project partners

The project partnership consists of a consortium of partner organisations from different countries and backgrounds (higher education, adult education, vocational education). The Institute of Social Work at FH JOANNEUM is responsible for the overall coordination of the partnership.

The partner organisations:

- FH JOANNEUM - Institute of Social Work, Graz, Austria (project coordination)

- Cramars società cooperative sociale, Tolmezzo, Italy

- DAFNI KEK, Patras, Greece

- Foundacion Docete Omnes, Granada, Spain

- Obrtničko učilište - Crafts College, Zagreb, Croatia

- Participatie in Diversiteit, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands

- Volkshochschule Hannover, Germany

1.4 Which results are available?

The results of the project are published in several publications.

- Guidelines for the analysis of diversity in adult education institutions

- Applied Diversity Awareness Workshops" (description of the pilot workshops conducted and curriculum for a modular workshop)

- Case studies with results of the analysis in 14 AE institutions and overarching general recommendations

- Documentation of the pilotings in 14 AE institutions and resulting general recommendations for opening processes (the present publication)

All publications are made available to a broader public on the project's website https://www.diversitycapacities.eu/.

2. THE DIVERSITY PROCESS IN THE ORGANISATIONS

2.1 The "case study" as a central starting point of the diversity process

Before change and diversity processes can be initiated in an institution, an analysis of the current situation, the binding framework conditions, the objectives and the possible strategies should be carried out. For this purpose, it is advisable to draw up a "case study" of the institution based on findings from publications and documents on the one hand and an individual survey of staff from different functional areas (management, administration, teaching staff) on the other[1]. In addition to gathering information, the survey has the benefit that employees are involved in the process at an early stage and are sensitised to the topic. This can lead to an increased willingness to participate in the change process. The focus of the case study and the concrete design should be based on the specific situation of the institution and its objectives. However, the following issues should be addressed and included in the analysis:

- Institutional Framework: size and economic possibilities play an important role, is the institution public and thus bound to administrative and political guidelines or has to fulfil a certain educational mandate, in which environment and for which population does the institution work, is there already experience with diversity, is there a mission statement and/or a diversity policy, how does the institution present itself to the public.[2]

- Human resources: does the organisation work primarily with freelancers, is there already a diversity officer, how many staff members does the organisation have and with what background?

- Networking: which intercultural networks is the institution involved in, how does the institution cooperate with them?

- The educational process: which target groups are addressed, which topics are taught, is teaching more formal or informal, who are the teachers?

On the basis of this survey, an analysis is then carried out, which should clarify the following points:

- Personal statements of interviewees

- Identification of what should be changed and what not

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[1] One example for a questionnaire which can be used for the analysis, can be found on the DivCap Website. This tool was developed and used in the project: https://www.diversitycapacities.eu
[2] In smaller institutions, professionalisation and a general lack of equipment often play a role, i.e. diversity orientation is embedded in the context of an overall quality/professionalisation process or diversity orientation is seen e.g. in connection with improving IT equipment and improving access in the Corona pandemic (the crisis also as an opportunity).

- Power-relations in the institution

- The communication in the institution

- Motives and motivations to start a change process

- And the possible benefit for the learners, they are in the centre of AE.

For examples of case studies, see the 14 case studies conducted during the DivCap project and the general recommendations developed. They are available for download on the project's website https://www.diversitycapacities.eu/.

2.2 Objectives of the process

"Already since the beginning of the 1980s, parts of the professional staff of migration social work and selected academics have been demanding an opening of the institutions with the claim to recognise the growing plurality of society and thus its diversity as a normal case and as a resource and to deal with it exclusively in segregated special areas". (Heinemann 2018, p. 33)[3] Here, two objectives of adult education institutions or their management for their diversity processes are already named: on the one hand, the plurality of society should show itself in the institution and thus make the social responsibility of the institution visible; on the other hand, one also wants to use the resources of the diverse society, be it as participants or as professional staff. These views were also evident in the case study interviews. At the level of the teachers, the first goal is reflecting their personal social responsibility, as formulated here by a teacher: "It is a duty of VHS Chance with its social responsibility to support migrants in their process of integration. We have to empower them to step into the job-market. For this reason, we have to educate and train them with subject matters and with the knowledge about "Does" and "Don't" in the German working environment. However, we have to integrate them into our institution for doing so." (Case Study VHS Chance).

The discussion about the goal and expectations needs to be held at the beginning of the process. It should be clarified, who expects what from an institutional opening. This needs to be done on two levels: on the one hand for the institution as a whole, but also what this means for the specific work environment of the employees within the institution. The discussion should be conducted with broad participation in order to avoid wrong directions and expectations.

It is also important to define at the beginning of the process which diversity dimensions are of particular importance for the institution. Knowing that they are all inextricably linked, an over-aged institution will probably focus on age diversity, a male-dominated institution on gender, and an institution in a multicultural

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[3] Heinemann, Alisha M.B. (2018): Institutionelle Öffnung und Migrationsgesellschaft – einige rahmende Anmerkungen. In: Heinemann, Alisha M.B.; Stoffels, Michaela; Wachter, Steffen (ed.) (2018): Erwachsenenbildung für die Migrationsgesellschaft. Bielefeld, p. 11-39, translated into English for this report

environment on cultural background. It is also important to ask whether a previous focus of the work has not blocked the view for other groups and diversity criteria. For example, one of the pilot institutions in Spain stated: "Diversity awareness was something that management was aware of already, but the project helped to link the ideas of diversity and productivity in ways that had not been explained before. The term diversity is very general and, in our centre, it was focused on a few major areas; age profile, ethnicity and finally language abilities." (see pilot report La Blanca Paloma)

2.3 The role of the environment

As already mentioned above, the immediate environment and the integration of an institution plays a central role for the goals, the approach and the possibilities of an opening process. Generally speaking, adult education institutions have the task to educate adults in the environment of the institution. If they do not do this, they lose their legitimacy and their economic basis of existence. The environment of the adult education institution should therefore be considered very carefully in the diversity process: who lives and works there, what is the geographical accessibility, which target groups are addressed by the offer, which ones are not reached, with whom could one cooperate in order to reach these target groups.

Furthermore, adult education institutions are dependent on publicly regulated funding and its requirements and/or private grants. This often results in requirements for the organisation of teaching, staff requirements and much more. Every process of change should therefore be oriented towards the general objectives of adult education on the one hand and take into account the requirements of public funding bodies on the other.

But it is not only on an administrative level that the embedding of the institution plays a role. Public institutions in particular should orient themselves to the education and development plans of the municipalities. This can be helpful for institutional opening if - as in the example of Hanover - an overarching "Local Integration Plan" has been adopted, but it can also be a hindrance if contrary developments are pushed forward and, for example, work with migrants is no longer funded in particular.

Another factor for the possibilities of an opening process is the question of whether the topic has been on the agenda in politics, science and education for a long time. If a broad, often controversial political debate has already taken place and if there is broad research on the topic at universities, then experience can already be drawn on. Those, the level of knowledge among actors and decision-makers is better and the possibility of professional support is far more available than in countries with less previous experience.

All these factors have a decisive influence on the diversity process, determine its degree and its implementation. It is important to be aware of this in order to plan the project realistically and purposefully from the beginning.

2.4 What is the right approach?

Once the situation of the organisation has been analysed, the objectives and the relevant diversity criteria clarified, the next step is to agree on the appropriate approach. The organisational culture and the respective experiences with change processes is a determining factor in deciding whether the process is initiated and carried out more "bottom-up" or "top-down". A purely "top-down" process allows employees to play a part but not really to participate. As a result, the outcome is not supported in depth by the staff. A purely "bottom-up" process lacks the strong leadership and support of management and thus runs the risk of losing its way. The pilotings showed that most processes were a mixture of both approaches, as here in a Dutch organisation (see pilot report Amaryllis):

"Starting with a small working-group, a thinktank would be very useful. From here, movement, action plans and gradual growth can be worked on. Working on an agreement with the board and management for creating the support-package of activities is necessary."

Furthermore, you may use the so-called colour print model for change for deciding about the right approach. This model gives an indication about the change approach which is suggested for each organisation under the aim of achieving a diversity oriented one. It helps to analyse the needs for a change process at organisational level, because you change both the organisational structure (procedures/rules/systems) and organisational culture (way of working, social culture, corporate culture, etc.). The model shows five different change management approaches, which have been named with colours.[4]

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[4] Vermaak, H.; Caluwé, L. de (2018): The colors of change – revisited. Situating and describing the theory and its practical applications. Draft Manuscript. In: Shani, R.; Noumair, D. (ed.) (2018): Research in Organizational Change and Development (vol. 26), Bingley (UK): Emerald Insight, https://hansvermaak.com/wp-content/uploads/Vermaak-Caluwe-SHARE-VERSION-Colors-Revisited-ROCD-2018-FINAL-DRAFT.pdf [last access 2020-02-24]

THE COLOUR MODEL		
Yellow-print thinking	power approach	Assumes that something only changes when key players are backing it and that little will happens if key players oppose it. In this view, enabling change requires getting the powers that be behind it, whether their power is based on formal positions (e.g. board members) or informal influence (e.g. opinion leaders)
Blue-print thinking	rationality, not power matters most (rational approach)	The assumption is that change happens only when you analyse first what problem is, suggest the best possible solution, and implement it according to plan. Change is thus deemed a linear endeavour: you think first before you act. The process is expert driven: the activities are executed by those who have the necessary know-how and experience.
Red-print thinking	emphasis is on motivation, not on power or rationality (motivational approach)	The key assumption is that change is not about policies and plans but about behaviour, and that people change their behaviour only when they are stimulated to do so. In its simplest form this comes down to barter: the organization hands out rewards and offers support in exchange for personnel taking on tasks and responsibilities and trying their best.
Green-print thinking	emphasis in on learning (learning approach)	Changing and learning are deemed inextricably linked: they are thought to mean almost the same. The only way forward from a green point of view is to dig deeper: to discover one's limits and expand and deepen the way we see and act in the world.
White-print thinking	no planned affair (permanent change approach)	In contrast, white-print change agents view change as constant and taking place of its own accord. The key assumption is that people can make the most difference when they understand and catalyse a change that is about to happen. In white-print thinking, change agents do not create evolution, but they do support transitions or stand in their way.

Illustration 2: © Jumbo Klercq[5]

In addition, it is important to think about the importance and necessity of a frequent exchange with the migrant-organisations regarding the challenges and innovation within the organisation: Adaptation of the current means of communication used and alignment with the target group of migrants should be ensured, for not coming in the situation to talk only about the target group and not with the target group, in order to be able to direct future actions towards these needs.

2.5 The power for change - commitment with the management

Implementing a diversity process in an organisation is a question of power. Thus, the commitment of the management is essential for those processes and the approach has to take into account the kind and culture of the organisation. As AE institutions have to keep their role and their economic basis in mind. Therefore, alongside arguments that are focused on social justice, sometimes you have to reason with diversity management arguments to foster diversity. The management should be sure that the diversity brings advantages, and not only causes extra work and challenges. For ensuring the commitment of the management it is important to value what the institution has already achieved. Therefore, the analysis in the case-study about the level of diversity is an important step to inform the management about the needs on

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[5] Based on the above-mentioned source

one hand and to make visible the achievements on the other. A diversity process in an organisation never could be uniformed, it has to be tailor-made.

Managers are busy with a lot of different tasks every day and have many challenges to overcome. Thus, the diversity process can easily get out of sight, which is why the commitment of the management should be demanded again and again.

2.6 The role and importance of process-facilitator

For the change process to be successful, it needs someone to keep an eye on it throughout, to make sure that it does not get out of sight in the diverse and ever-changing day-to-day demands of management, or even in the case of staff changes. This function can be performed by an internal or external representative, such as a diversity manager or an external coach / facilitator, or by a working group set up for this purpose. At this point, it is once again important to secure the support of the management from the very beginning. The management, in turn, has the task of selecting a coach/facilitator/workgroup for this change process whom it trusts, and trusts to be competent. Another important task of the facilitator is to ensure that staff are involved as planned. It is also important that staff trust him or her and recognise his or her professionalism and objectivity. In addition, the facilitator should be able to establish contacts with professionally qualified staff for concrete change activities, such as intercultural training, and initiates contacts in the relevant networks.

There are advantages and disadvantages to using an internal or external facilitator. The internal one is integrated into the company hierarchy and therefore cannot act outside the line or criticize the management. S/he belongs to a certain circle of employees who may be in special relationships or competitive situations with other departments. An advantage is, of course, the good knowledge of the organisation and the assured confidentiality. In the case of an external professional it is important, that the facilitator gains many insights into the organisation, that should be treated confidentially and should under no circumstances be made accessible to the public or even to competing educational institutions. Without these detailed insights, however, change is not possible. In addition, an external facilitator should first familiarise him/herself with the organisation and its peculiarities, but s/he has the advantage of being able to act far more independently.

The alternative to a single responsible person is to entrust a working group with these tasks. In this case, one approach would be the task of a facilitator to make the preparations, i.e. to prepare the case study and carry out an analysis, the working group would then develop concrete recommendations and drive the implementation forward. It is important that the members of the working group have time resources available and are formally mandated by management to ensure commitment with management. Ideally, the members of the working group would not be bound to

directives, but this is hardly conceivable in practice. Thus, the problem for the working group is that they remain embedded in the hierarchy and power structure of the institution and have only limited possibilities for action. Furthermore, how criticism is received in an institution also depends on who voices it. An insider who is affected, is assumed to complain. In the case of an external expert, it is understood as advice.

On the other hand, the advantage would be that more staff would be responsibly involved in the process, several internal perspectives and good knowledge of different functional areas of the organisation could be brought in. To achieve this, the working group should be composed of staff from different levels of the organisation and be as diverse as possible according to the topic itself.

3. CHANGES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF THE ORGANISATION

"The focus of current debates about institutional opening processes is on the key organisational areas of continuing education, such as personnel, programme, and audience policies. The goal is to enable organizations to respond to the challenges of a migration society both at the structural and personnel level and in terms of content orientation and the composition of participants." (Heinemann 2018, p. 13)[6] - this is how Alisha M.B. Heinemann describes the demand on a continuing education institution committed to diversity and democracy.

Diversity processes should therefore be realised at all levels of an organisation:

- The organisational level and thus the management level.

- The level of human resources

- In the teaching-learning processes

The current feasibility and necessity are important guidelines for deciding at which level and for which concrete measure the opening process should be initiated. If, for example, there are several vacancies to be filled, it is necessary at the level of human resources that the first step is to change the advertisement and application procedure to be diversity-friendly. However, if a new website is being installed, the organisational level with public relations is currently the priority. Only if current feasibility and necessity determine the measures, the diversity process has a good chance of being carried out successfully. Otherwise, other priorities will always take precedence. This also means that the planning of the diversity process should always remain flexible, and sometimes one has to be satisfied with small steps first. But regardless of which measure is used to start the change process, a certain momentum starts and the topic of "diversity" inevitably comes into focus and is increasingly widely discussed and dealt with. The importance is recognised by many and new approaches and ideas emerge beyond the planned measures. It is important that project planning incorporates and supports these.

The following recommendations on these three levels result from the findings and recommendations of the pilot projects in 14 AE institutions in the countries participating in the project:

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[6] Heinemann, Alisha M.B. (2018): Institutionelle Öffnung und Migrationsgesellschaft – einige rahmende Anmerkungen. In: Heinemann, Alisha M.B.; Stoffels, Michaela; Wachter, Steffen (ed.) (2018): Erwachsenenbildung für die Migrationsgesellschaft. Bielefeld, p. 13-39, translated into English for this report

3.1 Diversity at the organisational level - recommendations for managers

Important factors for diversity at the organisational level are how the institution is presented to the public, which images are conveyed, which people can be seen, which languages and writing styles are used, is there information in simple language in addition to multilingual information, are the guidance systems in the institution designed language-free and is the institution barrier-free. Important further questions are, if there is a diversity policy, and if there is a mission statement and if it contains statements on diversity. The networks in which the organisation is integrated also have an influence on its orientation and further development. The following recommendations for management are derived from these considerations.

Definition of diversity for the context of the institution

For getting familiar with the topic and for starting any diversity process it is important to determine what is "diversity" for the institution. Diversity is a wide field which has a lot of different meanings. Thus, the first step should be to clarify what it is for the institution and its staff. It is recommended to include an external expert for this phase. Included in this clarification should be an analysis about the environment (who is living around the centre, which target groups could be addressed by the institution, taking into account the number of addressees that may fall into this category). Such a process should have a visible advantage for the organisations. On one side, on the level of values and social responsibility, but also on the economic site, because all AE institutions have to keep an eye on their economic capacity to act. Therefore, the benefit for the organization of such a process should be clear, at least in a long-term perspective.

Importance of the mission statement

The mission statement has an important effect internally, by giving the staff orientation for their work, and externally, by presenting the goals, the values and the culture of the institution. It is an important source of information for potential participants, network partners, politicians, clients and, last but not least, staff. It should therefore be known to all staff and be updated regularly. In the project, it was found that the mission statement is often outdated and not known to staff. One recommendation is therefore to revise the mission statement and include the aspect of diversity.

Involvement of all staff in defining a mission statement is importance. The mission statement should be made visible to everyone, especially on the website, but also for all internal and external collaborators. In the statement the nonverbal values, the principles the organisation believe in and on which the work as educators is based, should also be made explicit.

Visibility of the networks

Create an overview of the institution's networks. What is the orientation of the networks and how do they cooperate with the institution? Building a network relationship with migrant organizations is highly recommended! Revaluing social networks, a social map with migrant organizations is urgent for innovation within the organization to serve clients with a migrant background. It is important to increase the network of stakeholders in the field of diversity. AE organisations should have more contacts and give frequently information about their offer and their support systems to associations involving this type of target-group.

Diversification of communication modes

Define the internal and external communication mode for the "diversity" target group. It might be useful to understand, also from a distribution point of view, in which language to write them and in which places to distribute flyers useful for promoting the courses.

Appointment of a person responsible for diversity

Define a "diversity" responsible that can collect all the information about this subject, useful for the management evaluations and staff needs. The task of this responsible person should also be to implement the process of diversity orientation permanently and to motivate the staff again and again to face the issue, because diversity is an ongoing, never-ending process, it is not only "there", it should be initiated again and again. But in all the day-to-day demands on management, it often gets lost from view, which is why it is important that someone is specifically responsible for it and has been entrusted with this task by management and is supported by management.

Provision of resources

The diversity process needs time and resources. Therefore, the task for the management is to make time and financial resources available and to find the funds to invest in the best management and education of diversity.

3.2 Diversity-oriented staff as a prerequisite - recommendations

As mentioned above, it is not enough for participants and learners in the AE institutions to be diverse, this diversity should also be reflected in the composition of staff at all levels of the organisation. This requires staff with different cultural and other backgrounds and orientations, as well as the competence to deal constructively with diversity. Job advertisements must be designed in such a way that precisely these staff are addressed, the selection process should make these competences and attitudes visible, and appropriate further training should be

offered to staff. The language competence of staff should be improved and made visible.

Recruiting of diverse staff

The recruiting of diverse staff for the different work areas of the organisation is essential for adult education with the aim of diversity and openness. Only if the institution has diverse staff, it can address diverse participants and respond sensitively to the different requirements, attitudes and expectations. In addition, visible, diverse staff enables identification with the institution; participants feel that they are being addressed in a way that meets their needs.

One approach to diversify the workforce was so-called positive discrimination. Here the focus was to favour applicants with specific diversity dimensions which were structurally at a disadvantage, e.g. female applicants. However, this approach entails difficulties and often misses the target; furthermore, it is also incompatible with the requirements for filling positions, especially in the public sector, in which the requirements for recognized qualifications (that were acquired abroad) are significantly stricter than in private companies. The way forward, then, should be to increasingly invite people from immigrant backgrounds, for example, to apply for jobs and to present themselves convincingly as an employer committed to diversity. In addition to presenting itself to the public, e.g., through an appropriate mission statement and a corresponding visual presentation, this also includes appropriate practice in job advertisements and application procedures.

This process should go hand in hand with procedures for selecting personnel who have intercultural or diversity competencies. These should be ascertained in the application process and validly determined in the interview. These two processes are therefore interlinked, since a diverse workforce is better able to critically examine application procedures than a homogeneous one. Secondly, appropriate calls for applications and selection processes can only be initiated and carried out, if managers and HR managers have the appropriate competencies.

Staff training - make your staff better prepared for diversity needs

All adult education institutions are able to plan training, it is their daily business. Here are some tips for staff training to increase diversity competence for staff on all levels of the organisation:

- Organise training courses on "diversity" - and share the contents with those who cannot attend the courses, now more useful by doing it online.

- Make a list of good practices (not only to be shared in closed groups, but also among all members of staff, through monthly meetings or internal exchanges) depending on

the department and the type of work performed, good practices can be of different types, if shared, they can give added value and useful answers to all;

- Develop and participate in courses or training or invite experts to better interact with diversity within the institution and with clients - psychological aspects, contribution to guidance, diversity management, involvement of "different" users in courses are relevant topics.

- Define together a collection book, in which best practices can be added. In a collective approach, staff contributes resolutions of problems that can be met in working with people perceived as "different".

- Training in intercultural communication is crucial to support the diversity process.

Make language skills visible

Some employees surely are able to speak other languages, especially if they have different cultural backgrounds. Making them visible will help participants to find someone who is able to speak his/her language! The easiest way to organize this is to distribute a questionnaire on the topic to all employees and then you can add the flag of the language on the name-tag of each one. This added information does not only facilitate the communication for the participants, it is also a sign to the outside world, that communication with all target groups is an important concern.

3.3. The teaching process - recommendations for teachers and pedagogical staff

Professionalism and diversity of trainers/teachers

The professionalism of the staff plays a central role in the teaching-learning processes. Make sure professionals have knowledge and understanding of multicultural aspects in dealing with different groups. To this end, the provision of in-service training for teachers on diversity and culturally sensitive teaching plays an important role in ensuring that participants are treated equally and that the learning speed and ability and the linguistic possibilities of the participants are taken into account in the courses. The recommendation is therefore: Organize training courses on "diversity" - and share the contents with those who cannot attend the courses, now more useful by doing it online.

In addition to the training of teachers, care should be taken in the selection of trainers/teachers that they are diverse. The diversity of the trainers, who may serve as role models, will increase the diversity of the participants. Furthermore, they should be enthusiastic and can motivate others, they should be open-minded and sensitive to diversity. Participants should feel "at home" and being appreciated.

Motivate the teachers to make use of tools that can best facilitate communication, video, images, etc.

Tailor the content to the target group

When selecting the content of your course, think beyond an offer specifically for individual target groups and try out new, cross-cutting offers. For example, migrants are not only migrants, but they are interested in ICT, like to cook or paint, want to develop professionally. If possible, develop an offer that gives participants the opportunity to contribute their specific knowledge in their own way and to contribute to the success of a course. Through sharing about common interests and equal exchange, communication becomes more open and easier.

Provision of support services

Beside of taking into account the abilities of the participants, it is necessary to provide support services for participants with special learning needs. The contents, the formats and the information about the offer should be organised according to the needs of different target groups. Ask people in need directly what might be helpful to make it easier for them to get involved in the classroom or in the training. Participation in various networks is very helpful for this.

Creation of inclusive learning environment

The learning environment itself plays an important role for the success of learning and the motivation to attend a course. So be aware of differences in "We and I culture". In the classroom, create situations, role plays, icebreakers, ways to get everyone in the classroom to feel on the same level, even during the first few class meetings.

Peer support and exchange

The advice for the teachers is to ask for help from other staff, tutors, and management if there are problems in handling difficult situations. Teaching and working with diverse groups is a challenge, so a frequent exchange should be organized, i.e. by bi-yearly workshops. The workshop should be focused on dealing with diversity in the work environment. Include external professionals if necessary.

4. WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE PROCESS?

Change takes patience and time - we know that. But in reality, it is difficult to endure and brings with it many problems. On the one hand, the change processes in the participating AE organisations took place within the framework of a scheduled project, so that results should also be available at a certain point in time. On the other hand, an adult education institution should constantly face current challenges and, if necessary, postpone activities that cannot be accomplished at the moment. The DivCap external facilitator has only a weak position in this structure, s/he can only move as much as the management allows him or her to. Another problem with the "time" factor is, that it also involves personnel changes during the process, and new personnel often set new priorities. One should be aware of these hurdles in the change process in an adult education institution and include them in the project planning. At this point, it is once again important to secure the support of the management from the very beginning. The management, in turn, has the task of selecting a facilitator or a workgroup for this change process whom it trusts and trusts to be competent. The facilitator could be internal or external, both has advantages and disadvantages, as mentioned above.

Diversity should be addressed at all levels of an organisation. At management level, at employee level and with the participation of the respective network.

Management should set the framework for this, make clear the strategic importance of a diversity-sensitive approach - also by setting an example - and provide financial and time resources for this process. A common approach to diversity should be developed together with all employees and with the involvement of the network of customers, course instructors as well as other external partners, and expressed in a mission statement.

The results of the DivCap project show that it is not possible without the inclusion of new and external perspectives and ideas. Targeted feedback and ideas from outside stimulate the organisation's engagement with diversity. Therefore, a comprehensive participation of different actors and network partners should be strived for, in order to gain an all-round view of the structures and processes of the organisation and to be able to adapt them better if necessary. This is very important for the further process. All employees should adopt this as a basic attitude, and the new opportunities offered by digitization provide many approaches to this.

Initiating change processes in an adult education institution should be done with a high degree of flexibility in planning. Fluctuations in staff, management and especially freelancers constantly create new situations.

The commitment of the management is indispensable for every change process. Only if the management is fully committed, resources can be used for the change and the topic gains the necessary importance. It is not enough to make sure of this commitment at the beginning of the project; it should be constantly renewed in the process. On the other hand, the motivation and willingness of the staff to deal with the topic of "diversity" is an indispensable prerequisite for a process. These are important tasks for a facilitator who accompanies the change.

5. CONCLUDING REMARK

Finally, it should be noted that the pilotings in the 14 adult education organisations took place under unusual conditions. The Covid-19 pandemic reached Europe during the implementation phase of the project. The adult education institutions closed down, the staff worked in home offices. The organisations were faced with a completely new situation and had to face unfamiliar challenges in order to ensure the survival of the institution and to continue to offer education to the participants. The issue of "diversity" was suddenly no longer a priority, and so steps to implement the change process were postponed, reprioritised and placed in a different context. But this crisis-ridden and difficult situation also held potentials. For example, it became apparent that the expansion of the infrastructure for online learning would also permanently benefit target groups, who tend to be immobile or who, for other reasons, could only participate in courses in the institution with difficulty.

Certainly, this was a difficult situation, but it showed under which conditions and requirements adult education institutions work and which practical, creative and innovative solutions can be initiated by new processes.

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