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Comparative Studies in Adult Lifelong Learning – COMPALL

Strategic partnership in transnational studies in adult and lifelong learning



Preface

The aim of this short description is to provide a short insight to a European project trying to develop both studies and research with professional comparative approaches to adult and lifelong learning by addressing some specific issues which influence the quality improvement of adult education provision and learning opportunities for adults. The core intention of COMPALL is to formulate specific tools and methods in comparative studies and, at the same time, provide in-depth analysis of certain issues and trends influencing adult and lifelong learning across Europe. COMPALL, by being an European Erasmus+ project, is not just a collaborative action amongst distinguished higher education institutions, but also, a particular series of winter school programmes to integrate curriculum development and effective comparative study-networking of teaching staff and students. Moreover, it is based on innovative Joint Module development so as to combine interdisciplinary approaches with good practices from countries being represented. This overview provides a glimpse on the project itself.

Aims and objectives of COMPALL. The impact of former professional ALE Projects, like and Comparative Studies Networking in ESREA, ISCAE and ASEM LLL

Background

When the Adult Education Department of the University of Würzburg, Germany decided to move further along in the professional development of comparative studies in adult and lifelong learning the Department had already gathered partners from key universities having been engaged in activities and programmes focusing on innovations in studies and research of adult and lifelong learning. Most partners have participated EU-funded quality projects, like Erasmus EMAE (European Studies in the Adult Education), Grundtvig TEACH (Teaching Adult Educators in Continuing and higher Education), Erasmus+ ESRAL (European Studies and Research in Adult Learning and Education) and several other comparative surveys for the European Commission in between 2007 and 2012 on quality, financing and the roles of higher education institutions in the development of adult learning. The impact of participation in comparative researches and discourses over international comparative work

in ESREA networks (European Society for the Research in the Education of Adults), in ISCAE (International Society for Comparative Adult Education) and in ASEM LLL (The LLL Hub for Asia and Europe Meeting and its thematic conferences and publications).

International Arena for Comparative Work

Another impact have been the regular consultancies, collaborative actions with UIL (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning), with OECD CERI (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and its Centre for Educational Research and Innovation), with EAEA (European Association for the Education of Adults) and with particular national institutes of adult education, like NIACE (British National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education, now turned into a new flagship institute for employment, called Learning and Work), DIE-Bonn (the German Institute for Adult Education and its Leibniz Centre for Research), SIAE (The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education)

Winter School base for comparative studies at the University of Würzburg

Prof. Regina Egetenmeyer, a former colleague of Prof. Ekkehard Nuisl as ex-director of DIE-Bonn and professor of adult learning and education until 2013 at the University of Duisburg-Essen, started to organise winter schools on adult and lifelong learning from 2013 and onwards. The positive impacts of the winter school series and participating academic researchers from various European universities urged Prof. Egetenmeyer and her team to improve the network around comparative studies and research to realise a deeper focus on four identical dimensions as planned products in the COMPALL project which was handed in for decision to the European Commission by early 2015. When the decision was made and COMPALL received a green light, the seven university partners had already planned for a quality start at the end of 2015 and started their preparations for the first COMPALL Winter School for February 2016.

Aims and objectives of COMPALL project

The orientations and focus of COMPALL has been to improve joint curricula-based modular structures by establishing a so-called Joint Module in adult and lifelong learning embedded into the Winter School structure itself which usually lasts for a fortnight. This Joint Module will have a preparatory phase with subject-based on-line tutorials, preparations with leaders of Comparative Working Groups investigating formerly advertised issues and trends as topics in adult and lifelong learning. Another key product of COMPALL is the winter school which is the two-weeks long intensive study format which is structured into two parts, the first one to get participating students focus on adult learning policies in Europe, and the second one to join one Comparative Working Group by each student to present their country-specific findings they had prepared for presenting in front of other members of their Working Groups. Finally, students and the teaching staff of the COMPALL Winter School are supported by a professional on-line network, based in LinkedIN. Quality presentations from Doctoral students are planned to be published upon selection in the Peter LANG Series on Adult and Lifelong Learning with an international focus. Erasmus+ COMPALL has structured its claimed products into so-called intellectual outputs (IOSs)

COMPALL Joint Module

The Strategic Partnership had been designed to develop a Joint Module on Comparative Studies in Adult and Lifelong Learning (COMPALL). For that purpose, a didactic concept for a joint blended-learning module is developed and implemented at all partner Universities.

The COMPALL Joint Module starts each year with registration of MA and Doctorate (PhD) students by the end of October. This is followed by on-campus preparation by partner universities and on-line preparation (especially with students outside the partner universities). Each participant submits a transnational essay on a selected aspect of adult education and lifelong learning by mid-January. All participants meet in February for a two-weeks intensive programme at the Würzburg Winter School.

The process, therefore, includes an on-line registration, an on-line and on-campus preparation, submission of a transnational essay and, finally, active participation at the COMPALL winter School.

The COMPALL Winter School is an intensive study programme having two parts:

- A focus of lectures and discussion around European and international policies in adult education and lifelong learning with field visits to adult and continuing education providers in Germany;
- Intensive Comparison of selected issues in adult education and lifelong learning (for topics students are provided with annual booklets they can make their decision which Comparative Working Group to follow!): introduction is followed by the development of research categories and finally individual analysis and country-specific presentation at the Winter School.

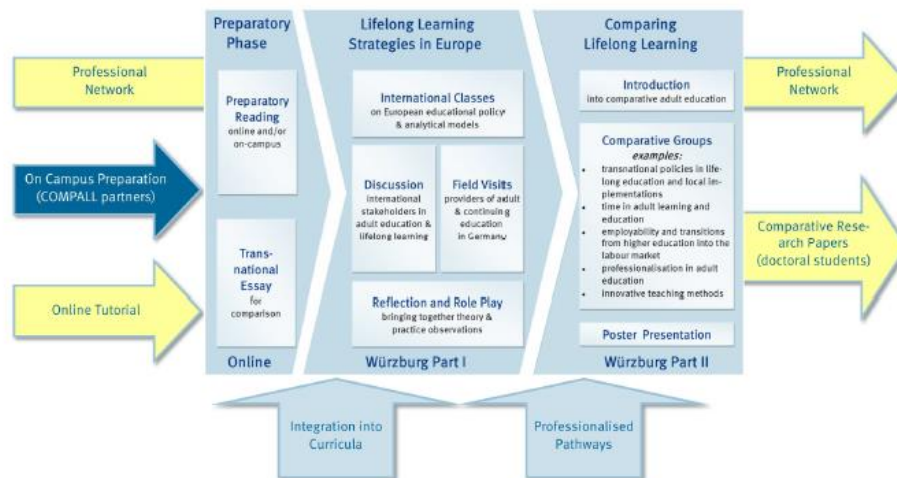
The Joint Module generally focuses on participants' home countries, on the development of analytical and comparative competencies and on professional language use and the development of professional networking competencies. Lifelong learning strategies in Europe will be critically analysed, based on social policy models, including an in-depth look at selected European countries. Furthermore, subtopics of lifelong learning will be chosen for an in-depth comparison of the situation in various European countries.

The **Joint Module** has the following didactical structure:

- a) **Joint on-line sessions** to introduce students to the analytical model
- b) **Supplementary tutorials** at all partner universities
- c) **On-line supervision** for preparing individual country reports
- d) **Joint intensive phase** at the Würzburg campus (Germany)
- e) **Preparation of a comparative research paper** (supervised).

The joint module is focused on advanced master's students and early doctoral students in disciplines that explore questions in adult and lifelong learning. Thereby, it targets prospective educational professionals in adult and lifelong learning.

Joint Module Structure



COMPALL Intellectual Outputs

Based on the interdisciplinary expertise of the partners, the Strategic Partnership develops and implements a joint module on comparative studies in adult and lifelong learning.

- IO1: Joint-module methodology: didactic basis for the joint module.
- IO2: Online tutorial: didactic preparatory phase to support universities introducing students to comparative studies in adult and lifelong learning.
- IO3: Professional online network: for a long-term internationalization and networking among participants
- IO4: Comparative analysis: insight into the diverse and transnational nature of adult and lifelong learning in Europe and beyond.

Public Multiplier Events

COMPALL is offering annual public events. International experts in adult and lifelong learning are invited to discuss COMPALL results with a wider audience at special formations:

- Intensive Workshop: Comparative skills in adult and lifelong learning (11-12. February, 2016)
- International Seminar: Joint Module in comparative studies in adult and lifelong learning (16-18. February, 2017)
- Transnational conference: Comparative analysis in adult and lifelong learning (15-17. February, 2018.)

Professional On-line Network

COMPALL is developing a professional on-line network which allows networking between young graduates and researchers in adult and lifelong learning. LinkedIn facilitates interaction with fellow students, the investigation of academics and professional profiles, and the establishment of best partners for the transnational studies and research. In a public network, current international study and research opportunities in adult and lifelong learning is also disseminated. The COMPALL Network also allows publication of international vacancies.

Be part of our community: www.linkedin.com/groups/8445381

From Teaching to Research

COMPALL is offering doctoral students the exclusive chance to pursue their comparative work commenced during the Winter School. Guided by the International experts, the results will be published in a volume edited internationally and published by Peter LANG

Expected Impacts

Systematic integration of European policies and comparative studies into study programmes in adult education and lifelong learning

- Raising mobility among former participants of the joint module;
- European usage of Intellectual Outputs beyond the partnership;
- Strengthening European perspectives in individual study pathways

COMPALL Partner Universities

- Julius-Maximilians- Universität Würzburg, Germany (Coordination)
Prof. Dr. Regina Egetenmeyer
- Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal - Prof. Dr. Paula Guimarães
- Università di Padova, Italy - Prof. Monica Fedeli
- Università degli Studi di Firenze, Italy - Prof. Dr. Vanna Boffo
- Helmut Schmidt University Hamburg, Germany - Prof. Dr. Sabine Schmidt-Lauff
- Pécsi Tudományegyetem, Hungary - Dr. Balázs Németh
- University of Aarhus, Denmark - Prof. Soeren Ehlers

LinkedIn Network: <https://www.linkedin.com/grp/home?gid=8445381>

Compall website: <http://www.hw.uni-wuerzburg.de/compall>

ESRALE: www.esrale.org

UIL: www.uil.unesco.org

OECD CERI: <http://www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/>

ESREA: www.esrea.org

ISCAE. www.iscae.org

ASEM LLL: <http://asemlllhub.org/>