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GLOBAL TRENDS OF ADULT EDUCATION IN THE UNESCO'S DOCUMENTS

Abstract. *The article is devoted to the problem of global trends and directions of development in adult learning and education that are considered in UNESCO's documents. It is noted that UNESCO, as a specialized agency of the United Nations, promotes international cooperation in education, science and culture, its priorities include the achievement of quality education for all and lifelong learning, as well as the creation of an inclusive knowledge-based*

society through information and communication.

The author summarizes that UNESCO as a world international organization has a crucial significance in promoting and developing adult learning and education through adopting a number of documents, concepts and reports that define mainstream trends and development directions. The latest may be referred to the following: replacement the concept of Development of Adult Education with the Adult Learning and Education, widening by this way sphere of its implementation; defining three core learning domains in the field of ALE as: literacy and basic skills; continuing education and professional development; liberal and community education (active citizenship skills); confirming the paradigm of traditional distinction between three basic categories of learning activity: formal, non-formal and informal learning; noting, however, that there should be a distinction between purposeful informal learning and random informal learning.

It is noted in the article that the efforts of numerous UNESCO organizations are focused on specific areas that need improvement, such as: giving everyone a fair chance at education so that everyone has equal access to adult education; a significant increase in participation in adult learning and education in order to achieve equal progress in adult education and learning in different countries, etc.

Key words: the UNESCO, lifelong learning, adult education, adult learning and education, formal, non-formal and informal learning, equal participation

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СВІТОВІ ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ РОЗВИТКУ ОСВІТИ ДОРΟΣЛИХ У ДОКУМЕНТАХ ЮНЕСКО

Анотація. Стаття присвячена аналізу світових тенденцій та напрямів розвитку навчання та освіти дорослих, які розглянуті в документах ЮНЕСКО. Зазначається, що ЮНЕСКО, як спеціалізована установа ООН, сприяє міжнародному співробітництву в освіті, науці та культурі, його пріоритети включають досягнення якісної освіти для всіх та навчання протягом усього життя, а також створення інклюзивного суспільства знань на основі інформації та комунікації. Навчання та освіта дорослих, згідно документів ЮНЕСКО, має вирішальну роль у досягненні Цілей розвитку тисячоліття, вирішенні складних викликів, що стоять перед освітою, з огляду на зростання нерівності, демографічні та кліматичні зміни, які відбуваються в світі. Навчання та освіта дорослих збільшують соціальну згуртованість, інтеграцію та

залученість, підвищують соціальний капітал та покращують участь громадян у соціальній та громадській діяльності.

Автором наголошено, що ЮНЕСКО як світова міжнародна організація має вирішальне значення у просуванні та розвитку навчання та освіти дорослих шляхом прийняття низки документів, концепцій та звітів, що визначають основні тенденції та напрями її розвитку. До останніх відноситься: заміна концепції розвитку освіти дорослих концепцією навчання та освіти дорослих з метою розширення сфери її впровадження; визначення трьох основних напрямів навчання в галузі освіти і навчання дорослих таких як: грамотність та базові навички; неперервна освіта та професійний розвиток (професійні навички); ліберальна, популярна та громадська освіта (навички активного громадянства); підтвердження парадигми традиційного розмежування трьох основних категорій навчальної діяльності: формального, неформального та неформального навчання, зазначаючи, при тому, що слід розрізняти цілеспрямоване інформальне навчання та випадкове інформальне навчання. Зазначено, що зусилля численних організацій ЮНЕСКО спрямовані на певні напрямки, які потребують вдосконалення, такі як: надання кожному справедливого шансу на освіту, щоб кожен мав однакову можливість доступу та отримання освіти для дорослих; значне збільшення участі у навчанні та освіті для дорослих з тим, щоб досягти рівномірного прогресу в участі в освіті й навчанні дорослих у різних країнах тощо.

Ключові слова: ЮНЕСКО, навчання протягом усього життя, освіта дорослих, навчання та освіта дорослих, формальне, неформальне та неофіційне навчання, рівна участь

Introduction, articulation of the problem. Education is a fundamental human right, a precious public good and an indispensable tool in building peaceful, sustainable and fairer societies, as it is considered in the UNESCO's «Fourth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education» (2019) (Fourth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education: leave no one behind: participation, equity and inclusion, 2019). However, the educational challenges nowadays are complex and include the rise of inequalities, demographic and climate change, the world is also changing drastically and quickly. Therefore there is an actual need to adapt and enhance adults' skills to not leave them behind. This challenge is a core of the UNESCO's documents, in particular «Education 2030. Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action» developed in 2015, which sets out a new vision for education for the next fifteen years (Education 2030, 2015). Adult learning and education (ALE), as UNESCO's documents very clearly shows, has a crucial role to play in achieving this goal.

The UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) as a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) contributes to promoting international collaboration in education, sciences, and culture. Among the other aims, the priorities of the organization include attaining quality

Education For All, lifelong learning, and building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication. Lifelong learning is considered as the «ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons» (Department of Education and Science, 2000). Therefore, it not only enhances social inclusion, active citizenship, and personal development, but also self-sustainability, as well as competitiveness and employability. One of the constituents of these global movements, aiming to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults, is adult education and learning.

Answering the mentioned world challenges and looking ahead, UNESCO stresses the need to increase national investment in ALE, reduce participation costs, raise awareness of benefits and improve data collection and monitoring, particularly for disadvantaged groups. In addition, UNESCO can make ALE a key lever in empowering and enabling adults, as learners, workers, parents, and active citizens. It urged all governments and the international community to join efforts and take action to ensure that no one adult – no matter who they are, where they live or what challenges they face – is left behind (Fourth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education: leave no one behind: participation, equity and inclusion, 2019). For these purposes UNESCO has analyzed and developed the current global trends in adult learning and education.

Analysis of recent publications. Nowadays the problems of lifelong learning as well as adult education and learning are actively developed by foreign and Ukrainian researchers including UNESCO's activity and documents. Significant contribution to the development of theoretical foundations of lifelong and adult learning was made by A. Tough, D. Aspin, Kolb, P. Jarvis, S. Merriam, R. Caffarella, C. Whyte, R. Dave, J. Livingston, S. Zmeyer, V. Onushkin and others. Many Ukrainian scholars study various aspects of adult learning among them: V. Vovk, V. Davydov, T. Desyatov, I. Zyazun, L. Lukianova, N. Nichkalo, O. Ohienko and others.

Thus, *the aim of this publication* is to highlight and analyze contemporary trends and development directions in the education in the world such as adult and continuing education, literacy and basic skills, non-formal education and others; to review the reflection of these issues in the recent UNESCO's documents and the organization's contribution to the implementation of the mentioned spheres.

Research findings. In 2015 the United Nations' General Assembly adopted Resolution «2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development» and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the resounding message: «Leave no one behind». The SDGs must, in other words, be addressed in a sensitively holistic way if they are to fulfill their potential to transform the lives of the most vulnerable and excluded people on the planet (Transforming our world, 2015).

Key global education goals in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda have been defined as quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all. The Agenda enjoined Member States to «ensure

inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all» through Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Transforming our world, 2015).

Adult learning and education has a crucial role to play in this, supporting the achievement of not only SDG 4 but also a range of other goals, including those on climate change, poverty, health and wellbeing, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, and sustainable cities and communities. The message of this report is that, while this potential is widely recognized, adult learning and education remains low on the agenda of most Member States – participation is patchy, progress inadequate and investment insufficient. Unless we change direction, we will, quite simply, not meet the stretching targets of SDG 4. And if it is not achieved the goal on education, the other SDGs will be placed in jeopardy (Transforming our world, 2015, p. 17).

Summarizing the development of adult learning and education in the world, the «Third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education» (GRALE 3) published by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning in 2016, showed that ALE produces significant benefits across a range of policy areas (Third Global Report, 2016). Countries reported a positive impact on health and well-being, employment and the labour market, and social, civic and community life. Adult learning and education led to improved health behaviours and attitudes, higher life expectancy and a reduction in lifestyle diseases, with a commensurate reduction in health care costs, the report found. It also highlighted the significant benefits of investment in adult education for individuals in the labour market, for employers and for the economy more generally. Also it showed how adult learning and education increases social cohesion, integration and inclusion, boosts social capital and improves participation in social, civic and community activities. These benefits are significant but, as this report shows, they are unevenly distributed (Third Global Report, 2016).

Nevertheless, the «Fourth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education» (GRALE 4) in 2019 stated that the educational challenges the world faces are complex and drastic (Fourth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education: leave no one behind: participation, equity and inclusion, 2019). So, the efforts of UNESCO organizations are aimed at some directions that need to be improved. They are following.

1. *Giving everyone a fair chance.* The focus of UNESCO's documents therefore, is equity. It is obvious that not everyone has the same opportunity to access and benefit from adult learning and education. Not everyone has the same chance to get a decent job, develop their competences and capabilities, improve their lives or contribute to the communities in which they live and work. If things continue as they are – and without a significant sea change in political outlook there is every chance they will – the benefits of adult learning will continue to coalesce around the better off and most advantaged in society, reinforcing and even intensifying existing inequalities, rather than helping the least advantaged individuals and communities.

The ability to learn new skills, refresh our knowledge has growing

resonance in the twenty-first century. As the International Labour Organization (ILO) made clear in its recent report on the future of work, the way in which we make our livings is changing dramatically, to the extent that in many countries people now speak of a «fourth industrial revolution», characterized by automation, digitization, the growth of platform employment and the application of artificial intelligence (Global Commission, 2019). These developments render old skills obsolete while creating demand for new and different skills, and ALE can play a central role – as the ILO report acknowledges – in ensuring that all are able to seize the opportunities that arise.

In some countries, demographic change is another key imperative, obliging adults already in the workforce to fill a larger proportion of the jobs of the future, and requiring them to learn new skills and update existing ones. Increased mobility, population displacement and changing patterns of consumption and production are also factors. It is more and more accepted that such shifts, and the growing complexity and uncertainty of modern life and work, demand a population that is adaptable, resilient and, perhaps above all, sensitized to learning, and a system of lifelong learning that both fosters and embodies these qualities by providing opportunities for adults to learn throughout life (Global Commission, 2019).

2. Participation matters. As the «2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development» recognized: «All people, irrespective of sex, age, race, ethnicity, and persons with disabilities, migrants, indigenous peoples, children and youth, especially those in vulnerable situations, should have access to lifelong learning opportunities that help them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities and to participate fully in society» (Transforming our world, 2015, p. 25).

Targets 4.3, 4.4, 4.6 and 4.7, part of SDG 4 on education, focus specifically on the SDG commitment to participation in adult learning and education. Target 4.3 aims to «ensure equal access for all men and women to affordable, quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university». The main indicator (4.3.1) sets out to measure the «participation rate of youth, and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex». Target 4.4 focuses on youth and adult skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship, with global indicator 4.4.1 focusing on the measurement and monitoring of digital skills. Target 4.6 concerns improvements in literacy and numeracy, so that «all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy», with the corresponding indicator being the «percentage of the population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex». Importantly, Target 4.7 aims to «ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to support sustainable development» (Transforming our world, 2015, p. 17).

Equity is a major focus for the SDGs: one target (4.5) is devoted to gender equality in education, while SDG 10 commits Member States to reducing inequalities in general. Equity needs to be understood across a variety

of dimensions, including gender, socio-economic status, dis/ability and location. Furthermore, in a period marked by intense demographic change in many regions, age is also an important dimension of equity. The UNESCO's most recent «Global Education Monitoring Report», a flagship monitoring publication to assess progress towards inclusive educational goals, emphasized the role of adult education and learning in supporting refugees, displaced people and migrants, but also noted that these vulnerable groups may face additional barriers to participation in opportunities for development (Fourth Global Report, p. 143–157).

As noted above, participation in adult learning also has a direct impact on other Sustainable Development Goals. It contributes to SDG 8, on decent work and economic growth, for example. The ILO's Global Commission on the Future of Work called for the formal recognition of a universal entitlement to lifelong learning and the effective establishment of a lifelong learning system so that people can benefit from new technologies and new roles (Global Commission 2019). UNESCO's Research shows that ALE generally promotes employability and can be targeted successfully at those most in need.

The UNESCO's Research GRALE 4 explores participation in adult learning and education from the perspective of equity and inclusion and tracks progress in adult learning and education against the «Belém Framework for Action», adopted in 2009. The monitoring finds that two-thirds of countries reported global progress in ALE policy since 2015, while 30% reported no change, with progress seeming particularly weak in Asia and the Pacific. Five countries (3%) reported regression, including four so-called «fragile» states. Three quarters of countries reported improvements in governance, with 50% also reporting progress in stakeholder participation. However, only 28% of countries reported that ALE spending as a proportion of public education had increased since 2015, with 17% reporting a decrease and 41% reporting no progress. Low-income states were the most likely to report a decline in public spending on ALE (35%). More positively, 75% of countries reported major improvements in ALE quality since 2015, with the highest rates of progress reported in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa (Fourth Global Report, 2019, p. 34-36).

Progress in participation in ALE was uneven, the survey indicated. More than half of countries (57%) reported an increase in ALE participation rates, with 28% reporting no change and 9% reporting a decrease. However, only 103 of 152 countries (67%) responded that ALE participation rates were based on actual figures. More than a third (37%) reported not knowing the ALE participation rates of minority groups, migrants and refugees. Among those countries that reported ALE participation rates based on actual figures, 25% reported participation at between 5% and 10%; 20% at 20 – 50%; and 15% had participation rates higher than 50%. Around 29% reported participation rates below 5%. In a range of countries, ALE provision had decreased for vulnerable groups such as adults with disabilities and residents in remote or rural areas (Fourth Global Report, 2019, p. 48).

As UNESCO's surveys demonstrated, participation in ALE also has clear and measurable benefits for health and well-being and on participants' attitudes towards their community, as well as their willingness to take civic action, which in turn can help contribute to meeting such challenges as climate change and responsible consumption. In order to deliver these effects in a sustainable way, participation in adult education needs to be both higher and more equitable. Increasing insights and common understanding on access and participation in ALE are therefore fundamental in enabling us to know how to act to promote the Sustainable Development Goals.

Monitoring on participation, bears out and amplifies two of the main messages of the report: first, that disadvantaged, vulnerable and excluded populations tend to do by far the worst when it comes to participation in ALE; and, second, that we simply do not know enough about participation, particularly in low-income countries and for marginalized and excluded groups.

3. *A new vision of adult learning and education.* UNESCO stresses a new vision of adult learning and education that is reflected in the last decade organization's documents. It is following.

Firstly, UNESCO Member States' decision to replace the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education with the 2015 Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education (RALE) reflects a new vision of ALE and its importance in meeting contemporary educational, cultural, political, social and economic challenges (Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education, p. 6). In many countries, the boundaries of youth and adulthood are shifting; it therefore proposes that «adult» denote all those who engage in adult learning and education, even if they have not reached the legal age of maturity. This is the case particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, where youth and adult learning and education (YALE) continues to be the most commonly used classification, rather than ALE. Similarly, many countries in the Asia and Pacific region view ALE policy and youth education policy as closely linked, even though some of them have independent policy statements on youth education and skill development (UIL. CONFINTEA VI, 2017, p. 21). It is, therefore, not always advisable to make a sharp distinction between the education of youth and adult learning and education.

Secondly, RALE contains far-reaching suggestions for how the field should be defined, and groups ALE into three core learning domains:

- 1) literacy and basic skills;
- 2) continuing education and professional development (vocational skills);
- 3) and liberal, popular and community education (active citizenship skills) (Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education).

These three RALE learning fields will be referred to herein as «the RALE typology». RALE identifies key components of a national policy framework that are deemed necessary in order for adult learning and education to more fully contribute to the revitalization of learning in private, community and economic life in ways that would equip people with the capabilities to take

control of their destinies. To address participation, inclusion and equity, Member States are urged to combat discrimination, give special attention to the learning needs of vulnerable groups and to better address learners' needs and minimize barriers to participation. RALE, building on the 2009 Belém Framework for Action, specifically recommends that countries address the following areas of action: policy; governance; financing; participation; inclusion and equity; and quality (Recommendation on Adult Learning).

Thirdly, in contrast to the Belém Framework for Action, which was silent on the matter, RALE recognizes the value and relevance of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for ALE, which are seen as holding great potential for improving access by adults to a variety of learning opportunities, resulting in greater equity and inclusion. It notes that ICTs offer various innovative possibilities for realizing lifelong learning, reducing the dependence on traditional formal structures of education and permitting individualized learning. Through mobile devices, electronic networking, social media and online courses, adult learners can access learning opportunities anytime and anywhere. Information and communication technologies also have considerable capacity for facilitating access to education for people with disabilities, permitting their fuller integration into society, as well as for other marginalized or disadvantaged groups (Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education).

Thus, a comparison of the UNESCO 1976 and 2015 Recommendations reveals the far-reaching changes that have occurred in the understanding of adult education. At the centre is a shift from a narrow preoccupation with adult education to a much broader understanding of the field, in which learning has become as central to the discussion as education.

4. *Three basic categories of adult learning.* The new ALE paradigm confirmed by the latest UNESCO's documents is consistent with the traditional distinction between three basic categories of setting in which purposeful learning activity takes place: formal, non-formal and informal. This distinction was introduced by The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1996 and European Commission in 2000. However the RALE notes the importance of a distinction that can be made between purposeful informal learning and what is known as incidental or random informal learning (Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education).

Formal learning takes place in an education or training institution that is a part of the formal education system of a country; it is structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support) and leads to certification.

Non-formal learning, on the other hand, is provided outside regular programmes of the formal educational system. It is typically offered in the form of short courses, workshops or seminars, and may happen in the workplace, in community centres or through the activities of civil society organizations and groups. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's perspective; it typically does not lead to certification but it is structured in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support.

Purposeful informal learning includes forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate but are not institutionalized. It may include learning activities that occur in the family, workplace, community and daily life on a self-directed, family-directed or socially directed basis. Incidental or random learning refers to forms of learning that are not organized or designed to bring about learning.

Incidental or random learning may occur as a by-product of day-to-day activities. While incidental learning falls outside the public policy sphere and is not usually addressed in statistics on participation in adult learning and education, it cannot be ignored. As G. Dohmen reminds, informal or everyday learning, whether positive or negative, forms the very core of lifelong learning. Accepting this premise, the focus falls on the nature and structure of everyday experiences and their consequences for a person's learning processes, ways of thinking and competencies (Dohmen, 1996).

While recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) has received considerable attention, in both scholarly and policy literature, its implementation often remains problematic. So, building on the triad, a new typology of adult learning and education fields intended to capture the full range of ALE has been introduced by «Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education» (Recommendation on Adult).

Participation in formal, non-formal and informal as well as incidental learning has demonstrable power to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. In the new broadened context of adult learning and education, Member States are faced with difficult policy decisions about: an appropriate balance between public funding for formal, non-formal and purposeful informal learning activities, an appropriate accreditation of non-formal and informal learning activities in the formal system the role of investment in new learning technologies in an overall national ALE strategy, and the consequences of such decisions on inclusion and equity.

Conclusion. Thus it may be summarized that UNESCO as a world international organization has a crucial significance in promoting and developing adult learning and education through adopting a number of documents, concepts and reports, that define mainstream trends and development directions. The latest may be referred to the following: replacement the concept of Development of Adult Education with the Adult Learning and Education, widening by this way sphere of its implementation; defining three core learning domains in the field of ALE as: literacy and basic skills; continuing education and professional development (vocational skills); and liberal, popular and community education (active citizenship skills); confirming the paradigm of traditional distinction between three basic categories of learning activity: formal, non-formal and informal learning, noting that a distinction can be made between purposeful informal learning and incidental or random informal learning.

Considering educational challenges that the world faces, the efforts of UNESCO organizations are aimed at some directions that need to be improved such as: giving everyone a fair chance to education, that everyone has the

same opportunity to access and benefit from adult learning and education; and greatly increasing participation in adult learning and education to obtain even progress in participation in ALE in the countries. So, UNESCO provides an up-to-date summary of the latest data, demonstrating where the gaps are, analyzing policy and practice, and highlighting what we do not know about participation in ALE and why this matters, proposing effective ways of solution.

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