

ANDRAGOŠKA SPOZNAVANJA

Studies in Adult Education and Learning

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## EDITORIAL

# LEARNING CITIES – AN INFLUENTIAL TOPIC FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND LEARNING, DRAWING ATTENTION TO INCLUSION, COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION

This thematic issue of *Studies in Adult Education and Learning* puts the topic of learning cities into the focus of analysis since the topic itself has been able to connect several matters of adult learning in the contexts of both participation and performance, the latter having strong references to professionalisation, over the last fifty years.

It is no surprise that the topic has recently been attached to issues concerning the quality of education as part of the discourse on Sustainable Development Goals and simultaneously reflects the question of using collaboration to create better communities by developing education and other welfare services in urban areas. However, certain facets of learning cities have generated tensions because of their political, economic, and societal aspects, and in terms of global, national, and local/regional views on the roles, aims, and choices of learning cities. Discourses at the recent PASCAL International Observatory or the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) conferences have signalled the limitations of power, structures, and policies and recommended shifting from the current models of learning cities towards community focuses on inclusion, equity, and equal opportunities (PASCAL Observatory, 2019; UIL, 2019a).

When one makes a thorough survey of the evolution of learning cities, it becomes obvious that their beginnings are connected to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and its goal to promote regional economic development based on effective knowledge transfer as part of a new and more modern knowledge-based society (see Németh's article).

However, these beginnings also provided valuable new insights to several international organisations like the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the newly established European Union (EU), who decided to make use of the concept in the shape of learning city-region formations. Inclusive measures were in place to raise participation in learning on the one hand, and to develop the quality and effectiveness of formal, non-formal, and informal education on the other. The importance

of a well-promoted learning society framework was highlighted at the turn of the millennium with the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs), UNESCO's vision of Education for All and with EU's programme to develop regions of lifelong learning (R3L) as part of the Lisbon programme (European Communities, 2002).

At the same time, the Korean initiative of Learning Cities, part of a broader national campaign to promote a policy of lifelong education, attached itself to participation-led community actions in order to achieve a better atmosphere of learning (demonstrated in Park's paper).

In this respect, this thematic issue tries to examine the trends and issues concerning some particularly challenging elements in the evolution of learning cities in order to address the constraints of mainly societal aspects when attempting to clarify influential factors of change and development. Each of the collected papers is analytical in its scope and, simultaneously, has tried to point out some elements of learning within communities and local/regional limitations which may either form or dismantle the model under scrutiny. The five papers have highlighted some particularly relevant aspects of learning city development with five individual approaches:

- the Korean example discusses the place of learning cities in the context and perspective of a learning society orientation based on a comprehensive literature review (Park's paper);
- the Serbian example demonstrates the changing nature and impact of learning sites in learning cities by analysing and relating the topic itself to public pedagogical and civic education concerns (Popović, Maksimović, Jovanović and Joksimović's paper);
- the Irish example discusses the matter of community building in the focus of capacity building, sustainability, and resilience, and also reflects on the special impact of raising capital, from human to cultural (Ó Tuama's paper);
- the comparative focus on the learning city models of Cork and Pécs relates some composite factors of the learning city evolution and each other's similarities and differences (Németh's paper);
- the practical example of the Learning City of Espoo, as is evident from the title of the paper, emphasizes concerns for sustainability and community focus (Erkkilä's paper).

Another very important element of this collection is underlining the necessity of community focus and community development as something like a 'quasi factor' of legitimation in all five examples. Learning cities could have developed a number of alternative orientations in the last two decades, however, it became inevitable to integrate the technology-driven innovations of smart, creative cities and the stakeholder-driven policy-guided formations of educating cities. More precisely, UNESCO's involvement has made it possible to recognise the roles and responsibilities of city leadership, but to firmly establish collaborations and inclusion as the keys to success for lifelong learning and for learning communities (UIL, 2016).

Each of the examples in the thematic section of this issue embodies its own set of values so that it reflects the human focus of learning cities and clearly demonstrates the challenge of engaging both citizens and their communities in campaigning for living and learning in the diverse environments that a city and its region encompass. Learning cities very openly reflect the fact that cities can only develop when they build upon the capacities of their communities and seek a reliable consensus on how to move forward in difficult times. The United Nation's (UN) Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development has indicated that urban environments will encounter a number of difficulties which will need to be tackled by setting global goals and taking local and regional action (United Nations, 2015).

The examples of learning cities will also help us understand the necessity of recognising the public benefits of community-based learning in learning cities and integrating both individual and community aspirations in urban settings of knowledge transfer and skills development. In this regard, some significant organisations and institutions of education and culture will definitely play a significant role, such as universities (eucen, 2018) and museums, libraries and community learning centres (Németh, 2018).

The first paper on Korean Learning Cities teaches us that the relationship between a learning city and a learning society has always entailed strong concerns about quality. For this reason, the aim of this learning city model is to emphasize the creation of a just society, both a great challenge and an opportunity in Korean society, as participatory action has a strong focus on equal opportunities. Park's paper demonstrates that increasing participation and realising equal opportunities require commitment and engagement, but also the involvement of citizens as learners and agents of learning to strengthen community development within learning cities and beyond. Not only learning itself but social inclusion through learning may help engage citizens in community affairs and community development to tackle inequalities through bottom-up formations and projects to empower citizens with civic values, attitudes, and by learning the skills of participation through their own practice.

The Serbian example can be regarded as a critical interrogation demonstrating that although the concept of learning cities-regions as developed by the OECD had a primarily economic angle, it is UNESCO and its global network of learning cities which introduced the importance of the community, the social perspective of learning cities, and highlighted the importance of participatory concerns and inclusive learning environments. Belgrade's approach, however, introduces a challenging focus on civic actions, reconceptualising the public sphere, and the active creation of space in the city. Popović, Maksimović, Jovanović, and Joksimović offer a broadening of the concept of the learning city to include cities with strong civic movements and actions, strengthening non-formal learning to result in critical thinking and active citizenship. Public pedagogy and civic education may be of help in this regard and get citizens to "co-create urban spaces". In this framework a city may be recognised both as a context and as an educator, making it possible for public places to become places of learning.

The third case from Cork, Ireland offers a special critical focus on learning cities. Ó Tuama elaborates upon lifelong learning, community building, and sustainability in Cork Learning City, especially on the Learning Neighbourhoods component to highlight that learning cities have a joint responsibility in building learning communities and, moreover, to prepare and empower them to become resilient and self-organised in order to face the challenges of sustainability and other global changes. Although the concept of Learning Neighbourhoods is essentially about collaboration and coalition building, it is a community building concept articulated through learning. Therefore, it is worth examining and getting an idea of how it may help the citizens of Cork prepare for the challenges posed by issues such as climate, poverty, and inclusion.

In the fourth paper the learning city of Pécs, Hungary, is compared to the complex model of Cork Learning City. Both former European Capitals of Culture (ECoC), Pécs and Cork went on to become learning cities and joined UNESCO's global network, which enables learning cities to collect and share ideas and experiences of community development through learning (UIL, 2017). The paper provides a summary of the main stages in the evolution of learning cities up to their current phase, where the global environment is combined with local and regional characteristics. Besides exploring the similarities and differences that exist between the Cork and the Pécs models, the reader will also find some explanations of the choices for and barriers to further development in the global climate, and the constraints of local and regional realities.

Erkkilä's practical example of the City of Espoo in Finland helps the reader recognise the impact a tradition of learning city-region development can have in strengthening its focus on combining learning and community development with that of innovative technological development for the benefit of its communities. Espoo was already a pioneering city in the 1990s and it worked systematically to join UNESCO's call for learning cities to lead, among other respected cities, toward sustainable development with a vision of dynamism based on collaborative action for sustainable formats and on empowering learners to actively participate and contribute to shaping the flexible learning spaces analysed in this paper. It is not surprising that Espoo combines the expansion of learning opportunities with the joy of learning and that of powerful collaboration.

We hope that this collection can successfully bring together the topic of learning cities and that of adult education and lifelong learning. In association with UNESCO UIL, the examined learning city models help promote better participation, performance, and provision in lifelong learning for all. UNESCO's *4<sup>th</sup> Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* (UIL, 2019b) points out several reasons why we still have a lot to do to turn learning cities into fully developed learning communities, cities, and regions that are inclusive and equitable grounds of human interaction, which promote better understanding and seek out appropriate responses to global and local challenges.

Besides the five thematic papers, this issue also includes two open papers, three reports, and a book review. In "Expansive Learning and Research Practices at the Slovenian Third

Age University” Matej Urbančič, Meta Kutin, Dušana Findeisen, Maja Mezgec, Nives Ličen and Klara Kožar Rosulnik discuss selected research practices at the Slovenian Third Age University (U3A) and interpret them using the theory of expansive learning. Selected examples of exploratory learning are used to identify the factors that influence the development of exploratory learning. The authors argue that expansive learning at the Slovenian U3A leads to innovative and socially engaged practices. In the second paper, “Sensitivity of Evaluation Practices to Types, Cycles and Fields of Study Programmes,” Jernej Širok discusses the concept of quality in higher education. His analysis of judgments on quality in the final expert reports from programme re-accreditation procedures shows that the criticism and frequency of qualitative emphases poorly track the necessities of intrinsic properties of types, cycles and disciplinary foundations of study programmes. This issue is brought to a close with three reports on different anniversaries in the field of adult education. Lidija Črnko reports on the centenary of adult education in Britain and the publication of the Ministry of Reconstruction’s landmark report in 1919, Monika Govekar-Okoliš has prepared a report on 100 years of *Volkshochschulen* in Germany, and Petra Javrh has written about the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Association of People’s Universities of Slovenia. Our final contribution is “Affective Societies”, a book review by Nives Ličen.

*Balázs Németh*

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## UVODNIK

# UČEČA SE MESTA – VPLIVNA TEMA ZA IZOBRAŽEVANJE IN UČENJE ODRASLIH, KI POUДАРJA VKLJUČEVANJE, SODELOVANJE IN UVAJANJE NOVOSTI

V tej tematski številki *Andragoških spoznanj* se ukvarjamo s temo učečih se mest, saj je ta nekakšno stičišče različnih vprašanj, ki so se v izobraževanju odraslih pojavljala skozi 50 let njegovega razvoja, in sicer v kontekstu tako udeležbe oziroma sodelovanja kot izvajanja, z močno navezavo slednjega na profesionalizacijo.

Prav nič ni presenetljivo, da je v zadnjem času, zlasti v okviru diskurza o ciljih trajnostnega razvoja, ta tema povezana z vprašanji kakovosti izobraževanja, vključuje pa tudi vprašanje soustvarjanja boljših mestnih skupnosti z razvijanjem izobraževanja in drugih storitev za javno dobro. Razprava o učečih se mestih je povzročila tudi napetosti, povezane z njenimi političnimi, gospodarskimi in družbenimi vidiki ter z razcepljenostjo globalnih, nacionalnih in lokalnih/regionalnih pogledov na vloge, poslanstva in odločitve teh mest. Diskusije na nedavnih konferencah Mednarodnega opazovalnega centra PASCAL in Unescovega inštituta za vseživljenjsko učenje (UIL) so nakazale omejitve pri zmožnostih, strukturah in politikah ter priporočile, naj se trenutni modeli učečih se mest spreminjajo v smeri osredotočanja skupnosti na vključevanje, pravičnost in enake možnosti (PASCAL Observatory, 2019; UIL, 2019a).

Skrben pregled razvoja učečih se mest jasno pokaže, da je začetek njihovega vzpona povezan z Organizacijo za gospodarsko sodelovanje in razvoj (OECD) in njenim zavzemom za regionalni gospodarski razvoj, ki temelji na učinkovitem prenosu znanj kot elementom nove, modernejše in na znanju utemeljene družbe (glej članek B. Németha).

Kakorkoli že, ti začetki so ponudili dragocene vpoglede številnim mednarodnim organizacijam, na primer Unesco in takrat na novo ustanovljeni Evropski uniji, ki so se odločile, da uporabijo ta koncept v obliki učečih se mest-regij. Na eni strani so vključevalni ukrepi povečali udeležbo pri učenju, na drugi pa razvili kakovostno in učinkovito izobraževanje na formalni, neformalni in priložnostni ravni. Pomen učinkovitega spodbujanja učeče se družbe so poudarili razvojni cilji novega tisočletja (*Millennium Development Goals*), nastali ob prelomu tisočletja, Unescova vizija »Izobraževanje za vse« in vzpostavitev programa

za razvoj regij vseživljenjskega učenja (R3L) v sklopu Lizbonskega programa (Evropske skupnosti, 2002) Evropske unije.

Sočasno se je v Koreji kot del širše nacionalne kampanje za spodbujanje politike vseživljenjskega izobraževanja pojavila iniciativa, imenovana »Učeča se mesta«. Pridružila se je na sodelovanje osredinjenim dejavnostim skupnosti, katerih cilj je ustvariti boljše vzdušje za učenje (kar v svojem članku pokaže Park).

V tem smislu skuša ta številka revije obravnavati nekatere trende in problematike, ki se nanašajo na še posebej zahtevne elemente v razvoju učečih se mest, da bi naslovila omejitve predvsem družbenih vidikov pri poskusu razjasnjevanja vplivnih dejavnikov sprememb in razvoja. Vsak članek je po svojem pristopu analitičen, hkrati pa skuša izpostaviti nekatere elemente v učenju znotraj skupnosti in lokalnih/regionalnih omejitev, ki lahko oblikujejo ali pa razgrajujejo model, ki ga posamezni avtor opisuje.

Teh pet tematskih člankov torej obravnava posebej pomenljive vidike v razvoju učečih se mest:

- Park na podlagi natančnega pregleda literature raziskuje učeča se mesta v Koreji v okviru in z vidika usmeritve učeče se družbe;
- Popović, Maksimović, Jovanović in Joskimović s primerom iz Srbije kažejo na spreminjajočo se naravo in vpliv prostorov za učenje v učečih se mestih, tako da analizirajo in povezujejo temo z javnopedagoško in državljanskovzgojno problematiko;
- v primeru iz Irske se Ó Tuama ukvarja z razvijanjem skupnosti z vidika krepitev zmogljivosti, trajnosti in odpornosti, prikazuje pa tudi poseben vpliv razvijanja različnih vrst kapitala, od človeškega do kulturnega;
- Németh se v primerjavi dveh modelov učečih se mest, irskega mesta Cork in madžarskega mesta Pécs, osredotoča na sestavne dejavnike v njunem razvoju, v ospredje pa postavlja tudi podobnosti in razlike med njima;
- Erkkilä se v praktičnem primeru učečega se mesta Espoo, kot pove že naslov članka, zavzema predvsem za trajnostni razvoj in skupnost.

Drug zelo pomemben element tega izbora člankov je poudarjanje nujnosti osredotočanja na skupnost in na razvoj skupnosti kot nekakšnega kvazifaktorja legitimacije v vseh petih primerih. Učeča se mesta bi lahko v preteklih dveh desetletjih razvila številne različne usmeritve, vendar je integracija tehnološko pogojenih inovacij pametnih in ustvarjalnih mest na eni strani in politike zainteresiranih, ki narekujejo oblikovanje tovrstnih mest, na drugi strani postala neizogibna. Bolj natančno rečeno je sodelovanje Unesca omogočilo prepoznavanje vlog in odgovornosti mestnega vodstva, kljub temu pa poudarilo ključni pomen sodelovanja in vključevanja za uspešnost vseživljenjskega učenja in uspešnost učečih se skupnosti (UIL, 2016).

Vsak primer v tej tematski številki zajema svoj lastni sklop vrednot, kar je odsev osredotočenosti na človeka v okviru učečih se mest in jasno kaže izziv, kako ljudi in njihove skupnosti pritegniti v prizadevanje za boljše življenje in učenje v raznolikem okolju posameznega mesta in regije. Učeča se mesta zelo jasno dokazujejo, da se mesta lahko

razvijajo samo, če gradijo na zmogljivostih svojih skupnosti in skušajo najti trden konsenz o tem, kako v teh težavnih časih narediti korak naprej. Organizacija združenih narodov (OZN) je v svoji Agendi 2030 za trajnostni razvoj nakazala, da se bodo v urbanih okoljih v prihodnosti pojavile številne težave, ki jih bo treba reševati z določitvijo globalnih ciljev ter izvedbo lokalnih in regionalnih ukrepov (Organizacija združenih narodov, 2015).

Upam, da bodo naši primeri učečih se mest pripomogli k spoznanju, da je nujno prepoznati javne koristi, ki jih prinaša učenje znotraj skupnosti v učečih se mestih, in povezati prizadevanja tako posameznikov kot skupnosti znotraj urbanih okolij za prenos znanj in razvoj spretnosti. Nekatere vidne organizacije in izobraževalne ter kulturne ustanove, npr. univerze (eucen, 2018) in muzeji, knjižnice in učni centri (Németh, 2018), bodo tu zagotovo igrale pomembno vlogo.

Prvi članek, ki se ukvarja z učečimi se mesti v Koreji, nam razkriva, da so bila v razmerju med učečim se mestom in učečo se družbo vedno prisotna vprašanja o kakovosti. Prav zaradi tega ima njihov model učečega se mesta za cilj poudariti ustvarjanje pravične družbe, kar je hkrati izziv in priložnost za korejsko družbo, saj je participatorna dejavnost močno osredotočena na enake možnosti. Park v članku pokaže, da povečevanje udeležbe in uredničenja enakih možnosti zahteva zavezanost, hkrati pa tudi dejavno vključenost državljanov kot učečih se in tudi agentov učenja, da se tako okrepi razvoj skupnosti v učečih se mestih in zunaj njih. Ne le učenje samo, ampak tudi družbeno vključevanje prek učenja lahko pripomoreta h krepitvi udejstvovanja v zadevah skupnosti in razvoja skupnosti, pri čemer bi premagovali neenakosti s pristopom »od spodaj navzgor« in projekti, ki krepijo državljanske vrednote, stališča in učenje participatornih veščin.

Primer iz Srbije s svojim kritičnim pristopom kaže, da sta navkljub primarno ekonomski konceptualizaciji učečih se mest, kot jo je postavila Organizacija za gospodarsko sodelovanje in razvoj, Unesco in njegova globalna mreža učečih se mest vključila pomembnost skupnosti, družbeno naravnost učečih se mest, in poudarili pomen razvijanja participatornih zanimanj in inkluzivnih učnih okolij. Pristop, uporabljen v Beogradu, kljub temu prinaša več izzivov, saj poudarja državljansko delovanje, povezano z rekonceptualizacijo javne sfere in aktivnim ustvarjanjem prostora v mestu. Popović, Maksimović, Jovanović in Joksimović v članku ponujajo razširitev koncepta učečega se mesta na mesta z močnimi državljanskimi gibanji, z državljanskim delovanjem, ki krepí neformalno učenje ter vodi h kritičnemu razmišljanju in dejavnemu državljanstvu. Javna pedagogika in državljanska vzgoja lahko v tem smislu pomagata državljanom »so-ustvarjati urbani prostor«. Na ta način so mesta lahko prepoznana hkrati kot kontekst in tudi kot vzgojitelj, kar omogoča, da javni prostor deluje kot prostor učenja.

Tretji primer iz mesta Cork na Irskem ima poseben pristop do učečih se mest. Ó Tuama razpravlja o vseživljenjskem učenju, razvijanju skupnosti in trajnostnem razvoju v okviru učečega se mesta Cork, še posebej učečih se sosesk (*learning neighbourhoods*). Avtor poudarja, da imajo učeča se mesta skupno odgovornost, da gradijo učeče se skupnosti, da dajejo skupnostim moč za to, da postanejo odpornejše in samoorganizirane, saj bodo le

tako pripravljene na izzive trajnostnega razvoja in druge globalne spremembe. Čeprav so učeče se soseske utemeljene prvenstveno na sodelovanju in združevanju, pa gre pravzaprav za koncept krepitve skupnosti, ki se artikulira prek učenja. Zato je vreden proučevanja in razmisleka o tem, kako lahko prebivalcem mesta Cork pomaga, da se pripravijo na izzive, ki jih prinašajo podnebne spremembe, revščina in socialna vključenost.

Četrty članek primerja dve učeči se mesti, Pécs na Madžarskem in Cork na Irskem. Kot nekdanja nosilca naziva Evropska predstolnica kulture sta Pécs in Cork postala učeči se mesti in se pridružila Unescovi globalni mreži, znotraj katere sta zbirala in si izmenjevala zamisli ter izkušnje, povezane z razvijanjem skupnosti prek učenja (UIL, 2017). Članek povzema poglavitne faze v razvoju obeh učečih se mest do njune trenutne faze globalnega okolja, ki ga dopolnjujejo lokalne in regionalne posebnosti. Poleg podobnosti in razlik med modeloma v obeh mestih članek prinaša tudi razlage in ugotovitve o odločitvah in ovirah za nadaljnji razvoj v globalni klimi in z omejitvami, ki izhajajo iz lokalnih in regionalnih razmer.

Erkkilä v svojem članku predstavlja primer finskega mesta Espoo in bralcu daje vpogled v vpliv, ki ga ima tradicija učečega se mesta-regije pri spodbujanju povezovanja razvoja učenja in skupnosti z inovativnim tehnološkim razvojem v korist svojih skupnosti. Espoo je bilo pionirsko mesto že v devetdesetih letih in se je s sistematičnim delom na tem področju pridružilo klicu Unesca, naj učeča se mesta skupaj z drugimi priznanimi mesti prevzamejo vodilno vlogo na poti k trajnostnemu razvoju z dinamično vizijo, ki temelji na sodelovalnih metodah oblikovanja trajnostnih pristopov in na usposabljanju učečih se, da aktivno sodelujejo in prispevajo k oblikovanju prožnih učnih prostorov, analiziranih v članku. Prav nič ni presenetljivo, da Espoo združuje širjenje učnih priložnosti z veseljem do učenja in močnim sodelovanjem.

Upamo, da je nabor člankov uspešno povezal temo učečih se mest z izobraževanjem odraslih in vseživljenjskim učenjem. V sodelovanju z Unescovim inštitutom za vseživljenjsko učenje preučeni modeli učečih se mest pomagajo spodbujati boljšo udeležbo, izvedbo in ponudbo vseživljenjskega učenja za vse ljudi. Unescovo četrto svetovno poročilo o izobraževanju odraslih (UIL, 2019b) postavlja v ospredje več razlogov, zaradi katerih nas čaka še veliko dela, preden bomo lahko s pomočjo učečih se mest ustvarili učeče se skupnosti, mesta in regije kot vključujoče in pravične prostore sodelovanja pri doseganju boljšega razumevanja med ljudmi in iskanju ustreznih odgovorov na globalne in lokalne izzive.

Poleg petih tematskih člankov ta številka vsebuje tudi dva tematsko odprta članka, tri poročila in eno knjižno recenzijo. Matej Urbančič, Meta Kutin, Dušana Findeisen, Maja Mezgec, Nives Ličen in Klara Kožar Rosulnik v članku »Expansive Learning and Research Practices at the Slovenian Third Age University« razpravljajo o raziskovalnih praksah na Slovenski univerzi za tretje življenjsko obdobje in jih interpretirajo preko teorije ekspanzivnega učenja. Na podlagi izbranih primerov raziskovalnega učenja avtorji opredelijo dejavnike, ki vplivajo na razvoj tovrstnega učenja. Zagovarjajo tezo, da ekspanzivno učenje na Slovenski univerzi za tretje življenjsko obdobje vodi do praks, ki so inovativne

in spodbujajo družbeno vključevanje. V članku »Občutljivost evalvacijskih praks na vrste, stopnje in področja študijskih programov« pa Jernej Širok obravnava koncept kakovosti v visokošolskem izobraževanju. Prek analize sodb o kakovosti v končnih evalvacijskih poročilih strokovnjakov v postopkih podaljšanja akreditacije študijskih programov pokaže, da kritičnost in pogostost kvalitativnih poudarkov strokovnjakov slabo sledita nujnostim intrinzičnih posebnosti vrst, stopenj in disciplinske vpetosti študijskih programov. Ob koncu se posvetimo še poročilom o treh pomembnih obletnicah v izobraževanju odraslih. Poročilo o stoletnici izobraževanja odraslih v Britaniji in izdaji prelomnega poročila ministrstva za obnovo iz leta 1919 je pripravila Lidija Črnko, o stoletnici *Volkshochschulen* v Nemčiji poroča Monika Govekar-Okoliš, o šestdesetletnici delovanja Zveze ljudskih univerz Slovenije pa Petra Javrh. Številko zaključuje Nives Ličen z recenzijo zbirke »Affective Societies«.

*Balázs Németh*

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Sangok Park

## WHERE DO LIFELONG LEARNING CITIES IN KOREA STAND? – FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A LEARNING SOCIETY ORIENTATION

### ABSTRACT

*The learning city aims for a just learning society, emphasising the subjective participation of citizens and providing them with equal learning opportunities. The purpose of the paper is to examine, through a literature review method, whether Korea's lifelong learning cities have achieved the formation of a learning society. In Korea learning cities have led to the provision of more learning opportunities for citizens and improved the quality of education programmes. There also exists a movement for citizens to participate in the learning city project as citizen activists. However, it is not yet possible to assess that most learning cities are developed and built by citizens' engagement. Moreover, there is even a tendency for inequality to be intensified in lifelong education. Therefore, Korea's learning cities will need to further solidify their citizen-led perspective, including democratic decision-making and the free expression of opinions by citizens, in order to move toward a just learning society.*

**Keywords:** Korea's lifelong learning cities, a just learning society, educational equality, citizen-led, citizen engagement

### MESTA VSEŽIVLJENJSKEGA UČENJA V KOREJI Z VIDIKA USMERITVE V UČEČO SE DRUŽBO – POVZETEK

*Cilj učečega se mesta je pravična učeča se družba, ki poudarja sodelovanje državljanov in enake priložnosti za učenje. Namen članka je s pregledom literature ugotoviti, ali je korejskim mestom vseživljenjskega učenja uspelo oblikovati učečo se družbo. V Koreji so učeča se mesta povečala priložnosti za učenje in izboljšala kakovost izobraževalnih programov. Izoblikovalo se je tudi gibanje, ki podpira aktivno sodelovanje prebivalcev v projektu učečih se mest. Kljub temu pa še ne moremo reči, da se večina učečih se mest razvija in gradi na podlagi delovanja prebivalcev samih. Pokazala se je tudi težnja, da se neenakosti na podlagi vseživljenjskega učenja celo poglobljajo. Da bo Koreja postala prava učeča se družba, bo treba okrečiti vlogo, ki jo v teh mestih igrajo prebivalci sami, to pa vključuje tudi krepitev demokratičnega odločanja in svobode izražanja.*

**Ključne besede:** korejska mesta vseživljenjskega učenja, pravična učeča se družba, enakost izobraževalnih možnosti, vodilna vloga državljanov, vključevanje državljanov

## INTRODUCTION

In the Republic of Korea, the Lifelong Learning City Project was launched in 2001 as part of the government's lifelong education policy. Following the enactment of the Lifelong Education Act (1999), which states in Article 15 that the "government can designate and support selected municipalities, districts, and counties as Lifelong Learning Cities (LLCs)," the Ministry of Education (MOE) designated the first three cities – Gwangmyeong City, Yuseong District, and Jinan County – as LLCs. The number of LLCs has steadily increased in Korea, and as of 2019, 167 of the 226 basic local governments (municipalities, city districts, and counties) nationwide have been designated as LLCs. The MOE of the central government has designated and supported the administrative districts of the basic local governments as LLCs, regardless of the urban or rural area, and the local governments have been working to promote the lifelong learning of the residents and build a learning society.

In Korea the LLC project has been established to play a decisive role in the growth and development of lifelong education practices. The LLCs designated by the MOE, whether autonomously or not, (1) set up an administrative structure, an organisation and professional staff to plan, implement and provide services, (2) provided the opportunities so that "lifelong educators", certified experts in lifelong education practice, can make a large contribution, and (3) tried to create a learning city atmosphere by not just providing educational programmes but also by forming a learning environment including learning circles and networks with various community organisations (Han & Makino, 2013). The learning city project has effectively stimulated local governments to expand the lifelong learning<sup>1</sup> opportunities of the whole nation, improve the quality of education services, and facilitate cooperation between different institutions, such as governmental agencies, schools, public libraries, and community centres in Korea (Yang & Yorozu, 2015).

This relationship between a learning city and a learning society has been asserted from the beginning of the concept of a learning city. The modern concept of a learning city came from that of a "learning society", which the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report, *Learning to Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow* (Faure et al., 1972), put forward and appealed to UNESCO Member States to re-organise their educational structures in 1972 (Osborne, Kearns, & Yang, 2013). According to the Faure report, along with another UNESCO report, *Learning: The Treasure Within* (Delors et al., 1996), the role of the regions and cities which contain immense educational potential is important for building a learning society, even if national governments also have a major role in setting the agenda and the vision. There are various educational agencies and educational programmes in the regions and cities to be provided

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1 In the paper, I use the concept of 'lifelong education' as the standpoint of an educator or an educational provider, and 'lifelong learning' as that of a learner. So, lifelong education is used to relate to participation, programme, and policy, and lifelong learning to opportunities.



to the citizens and residents, and in essence, a country is the sum of all its regions, cities, and communities (Osborne et al., 2013). Therefore, learning cities essentially aim at establishing a learning society, and terms such as “Educating Cities”, “Cities of Learning”, “Learning Communities of Place”, and so on, related to learning cities, also mean to build a learning society.

Like other countries in the world, Korea has been pursuing a learning city project to build a learning society. In the 20 years since the LLC project began in Korea, the learning city policy has greatly contributed to establishing and forming a lifelong education infrastructure and learning network in the community, to raising awareness about the importance of lifelong learning, and to providing opportunities for lifelong learning. However, few studies have discussed the outcomes and development directions of LLCs based on the ultimate purpose and intention of a learning city, which is the formation of a learning society. At present, most local governments in Korea are designated as LLCs, and it is necessary to check where Korea’s LLCs stand in the process of developing a learning society at this time.

But the ideal picture of a learning society is not clearly presented or does not objectively exist. Of course, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) established evaluation criteria in order to encourage efforts to spread and develop learning cities around the world and to measure whether the characteristics of learning cities are being realised (UIL, 2014). In addition, Korea has been making efforts to develop evaluation indicators to evaluate the performance and support the quality improvement of LLCs. However, these evaluation criteria are limited in objectively evaluating the extent to which a learning city has reached an ideal learning society. Nevertheless, it might be possible to discuss where the current LLCs stand in Korea through the meaning of a learning city and the direction of development toward a learning society, which are contained in the definition and the evaluation index of a learning city.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to diagnose and discuss from the perspective of a learning society where Korea’s LLCs, which have been growing and developing for the last 20 years, now stand. To this end, I will look into the development of a learning society as it is included in the definition, evaluation criteria, and theoretical discussions of learning cities. To examine the position of the LLCs in Korea, I have used the literature review method. I have collected and analysed the articles and reports that discuss the outcomes and issues of Korea’s lifelong learning cities. In particular, I focus on how in the development of a learning city the citizens should be the subjects and actively build a learning society or a local learning community, rather than on the expansion and growth of individual learning opportunities and the social and economic development of an entire city, which have been frequently discussed in relation to the achievements of a learning city. Discussion will also focus on questions of social inclusion and justice realisation, which may indicate how learning cities can advance into a learning society.

## **DIRECTIONS OF THE LEARNING CITY**

The direction of the development of a learning city into a learning society is primarily contained in its definition. The definition of an LLC in Korea, which has been used from the beginning of the LLC project to the present, is as follows:

A lifelong learning city is the total restructuring movement of a city toward learning community development where everyone can enjoy learning at any place whenever they want, in order to enhance an individual's self-realization, social inclusion, and economic competitiveness, ultimately improving the individual's quality of life and the competitiveness of the entire city. Also, LLC refers to a community education movement by the local citizens, for the local citizens, and of the local citizens, for building a networking learning community by linking all educational resources of the community between institutions, communities, and countries. (National Institute for Lifelong Education [NILE], 2019)

The definition of an LLC implies that a city aims to develop and regenerate the entire city as well as to enhance the socioeconomic capacity of the individual, to connect all educational resources, and to be a citizen-led educational movement. In addition, UIL, which coordinates the international network of Learning Cities, defined a learning city as follows in 2017:

A learning city effectively mobilizes its resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education; revitalizes learning in families and communities; facilitates learning for and in the workplace; extends the use of modern learning technologies; enhances quality and excellence in learning; and fosters a culture of learning throughout life. [...] In doing so, a learning city supports individual empowerment and social inclusion, economic development and cultural prosperity, and sustainable development. (UIL, 2019)

We can see that that within the concept of a learning city, learning is considered a solution or remedy for the individuals' and cities' problems resulting from the post-industrial risk society and neoliberal transformations of the knowledge economy (Han & Makino, 2013; Facer & Buchczyk, 2019). The LLC project in Korea was the outcome of instrumental policies by government bodies to mobilise citizens' learning that enhanced personal development, economic prosperity, and social inclusion, to develop cities or communities for living together and increasing job opportunities and economic stability, and to solve the social problems occurring in the cities in the processes of modern industrialisation (Han & Makino, 2013).

According to these definitions, LLCs are regional regeneration projects based on vitalising lifelong learning at the local level. In other words, the LLC project is to build a city as an ideal learning society that seeks to simultaneously pursue the purpose of citizens' learning activities and the revitalisation of the city (Han, 2009). Learning cities/regions

are supposed to play a key role in the building of local capacities for lifelong learning. According to these definitions, a learning city means the educational movement to promote lifelong learning in both respects, as a personal outcome, that is to support the development of skills and competences needed to adapt to new circumstances and to motivate citizens to become lifelong learners, and as a collective good, that is to cultivate shared values and support the development of social capital, social inclusion, and the competitiveness of the entire city (Preisinger-Kleine, 2013).

This definition, however, implies other notable goals besides those of personal and urban growth. One is that a learning city involves the concept of learning and education that prioritises social cohesion and social justice, and the other is to emphasise that a learning city should build a learning society through the citizens' empowerment and engagement as subjects of learning and education.

### **A Learning City that Prioritises Educational Equality and Social Justice**

A learning city aims to achieve social justice that addresses educational inequality. It seeks to provide equal learning opportunities to all citizens regardless of economic, social, and educational background. And if it previously hadn't done so, it will provide more learning opportunities. In this way, the learning city will be able to overcome educational inequalities and achieve social justice. In Korea, one of the goals of the LLC project was also to increase social inclusion by having marginalised people participate in adult learning and community activities (Han & Makino, 2013). For this purpose, the central or local government tried to expand lifelong learning opportunities for marginalised people by supporting literacy education programmes or customised programmes for vulnerable groups, centred on the learning cities.

UIL also suggests that a learning city enables people of all ages from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds to benefit from inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities (UIL, 2019). To support equity and inclusion, for example, the following practices for learning cities are suggested: enabling vulnerable groups who are not in formal schooling or training to acquire literacy and other basic/vocational skills; enabling migrant workers to obtain professional qualifications; providing career guidance, particularly for women, to encourage them to pursue higher qualifications; providing reading opportunities for all, especially people with disabilities, older adults, and preschool children through mobile libraries; establishing schemes that mobilise trained volunteers to encourage residents at risk of isolation to participate in cultural activities, workshops, physical activities, etc.

Therefore, one of the goals pursued in LLCs is to guarantee learning rights by providing learning opportunities to everyone fairly so that no one is left out of learning. In particular, the LLCs aim to achieve their goal by utilising various educational contents and methods such as literacy education, online education, career education, and cultural education to foster social participation capacity, and by respecting the human rights that all citizens should enjoy. Learning cities seek to reorganise their educational structures

and environment so that all agencies become providers of education and all citizens are engaged in learning, taking full advantage of the opportunities provided by the learning society (Osborne et al., 2013).

In particular, Han and Makino (2013) argue that learning cities in Asia underline the problems of social conditions and identities, cultural discontent, and conflicts within the cities, as well as various intergenerational and gender tensions. The LLC movement believes that it can contribute to achieving the sustainable development of cities by providing lifelong learning opportunities and social integration for those who are marginalised by education, culture, region, gender, and generation (Choi, 2015).

However, learning cities wanted to provide lifelong education services and to restructure their educational environment in order to overcome their geographical, cultural, and educational limitations, as well as to become economically stable and develop the region through job creation and growth of skill and knowledge. The vision for a learning city engages not only with social inclusion and equality and with the more emancipatory goals of critical adult education traditions, but with the preparation of citizens for economic competition (Facer & Buchczyk, 2019). The concept and direction of the learning city, therefore, implies a tension between managerial paradigms that privilege particular forms of desirable learning toward economic goals and a concept of learning and education that prioritises social justice and social cohesion and recognises sometimes conflicting grass-roots agendas (Facer & Buchczyk, 2019).

### **Building a Learning Society and Learning Cities through Citizen Engagement**

Another intention inherent in the definition of a learning city is that citizens should become subjects in the building of learning societies and local learning communities. The definition of LLCs in Korea involves the meaning that learning cities help all citizens to express their potential through learning “anytime, anywhere”, and that a learning society should be formed “by citizens”, that is, by citizens’ participation and initiative. In other words, the LLC project can be an education movement that creates a learning society and a learning community led by citizens. Beyond the passive involvement of learners in the learning framework or field established by existing local governments, the city should be gradually transformed into a citizen-led lifelong learning city based on learners’ initiative and active participation. When citizens who are suppliers and beneficiaries of lifelong education play a leading role in the operation of LLCs, LLCs will be activated and their vitality can be guaranteed (Lee, 2008).

The guidelines, which UIL developed in consultation with international experts, also show the actionable recommendation such as making sure that learning is accessible to all citizens and to create a coordinated structure involving all stakeholders (UIL, 2015). Stakeholders in a learning city involve all organisations and citizens, and a learning city should be structured so that all stakeholders have clearly defined roles and responsibilities in designing and implementing the learning city plan.

In addition, we can find out the direction of the learning city which leads to citizens' engagement in a list of criteria that consist of three areas: the wider benefits of building a learning city, the major building blocks of a learning city, and the fundamental conditions for building a learning city (UIL, 2014). There are a total of 12 areas of focus and 42 key features of learning cities. We can find some among the areas of focus and the key features mean that a learning city should be built by the citizens' empowerment and engagement (UIL, 2014).

The learning city's intention that citizens should engage and lead by themselves can be found in the case of Gwangmyeong City in Korea. Gwangmyeong City became the first declared LLC in Korea in March 1999. This was an attempt to overcome the limitations of Gwangmyeong as a satellite city of Seoul (such as lack of settlement consciousness and educational conditions) and to improve citizens' participation in lifelong education and educational conditions. In this process, however, the willingness and participation of not only the Gwangmyeong City government but also local activists and civic groups played a big role. The citizens' strong desire for the development of cities through lifelong education acted strongly, and the citizens took the initiative to declare the LLC.

Learning cities that seek to build a learning society cannot be planned and implemented only with the involvement and practice of administrative agencies or experts, but by the voices of citizens, by their engagement and self-government capacity (Choi, 2015).

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN A LEARNING CITY**

Social justice and citizen engagement, which are the intentions and strategies of the learning city, are not separate from each other but closely related. Learning cities or learning societies in which educational inequalities are alleviated and all citizens can be guaranteed equal educational opportunities can only be built with the participation of empowered citizens.

This is in line with the new perspective of lifelong education towards a learning society. Kim (2015) argued that lifelong education not only meant the expansion of education targets, time and place, but also took a new perspective to call for a change in the subject of education. In other words, it is a shift from the point of view where it is taken for granted that the instructor takes the initiative of education, to the point of view that it is more valuable that the learner is actively involved in the education, subjectively judges, selects, and demands. Rather than that educators (educational authorities, schools, teachers, etc.) have all the powers of education and learning, educators and learners interact with each other through dialogue and compromise, and in practise make learners the subject of education (Kim, 2015). Based on this lifelong education perspective, the learning city should be formed by the citizen, who is the learner and the subject, to form a learning society. In the end, it can be called the formation of a learner-centred learning society, and Kim (2015) called it the "democracy of education".

Specifically, Welton (2005) explains that "The Just Learning Society" can be realised when the sovereignty of education and learning is in the hands of citizens. "Learning"

does not necessarily mean something good because inequalities still exist in the learning society and gaps in the information society. Emphasis is placed on empowerment and democracy in society, corporations and organisations for learning societies, but it is only a “lip-service” (Welton, 2005). It is impossible to think about a just learning society apart from the power, greed, and privilege of those who hoard the goods and skew the learning processes in the service of the money-code (Welton, 2005). Thus, a just learning society can be created by raising the awareness of all citizens on social issues that cause injustice and by free citizens’ participation and decision-making. Citizens’ empowerment and participation in decision-making processes can build the just learning society or social equality and justice. Borkowska and Osborne (2018) also emphasise the importance of facilitating more fully active citizenship, social inclusion, and learning opportunities for all in order to change urban areas innovatively and to develop smart learning cities.

However, citizens’ empowerment, engagement, democratic decision-making, or communication skills do not develop on their own. Existing systems can distort the development of communication and practical wisdom. Adult educators must awaken to the actual way the learning dynamics within civil society work. First, civil society can be a fundamental training ground for adults to unfold and express their capacities as authentic speakers and decision makers. So adult educators are trying to shape the structures that permit human beings to express their many-sided potentials in civil society (Welton, 2005). In addition, the communicative infrastructure of the institution, association or interaction must be consciously designed to foster knowledgeable, not ignorance, in a co-operative spirit.

Second, adult educators should not only form democratic decision-making structures of civil society but also foster and promote active citizenship and citizen engagement skills. Adult educators need to practice the maximal conception of citizenship education to raise people’s critical awareness of injustice and work towards developing a more equal and just society (Moir & Crowther, 2017). Even if the city developed a number of democratic systems, infrastructures, and technological interventions (e.g. smartphone apps and other digital platforms) for citizen participation, the frame in itself does not facilitate active citizenship and public engagement. Borkowska and Osborne (2018) argue that it happens only if learning permeates the helices. There are needs to be supported through the provision of learning opportunities, to be a focus on learning that pervades everyday life, and to focus on issues of social justice and cohesion, and challenges for social inequality as well. In addition, citizens need to enter the public space where they can then recognise their commonality with others and individuate themselves. Citizens can only develop and exercise practical wisdom through deliberation within the context of particular problems and action situations (Welton, 2005). Democratic agency is not the agency of an isolated individual considered outside of any social context, but is rather the exercise of this power in free association with the agency of others.

After all, in order to realise a citizen-led learning society and a “just learning society” that learning cities pursue, democratic development that encourages the free opinions of citizens and their participation in democratic decision-making should be the basis.

The learning city must play a role in developing competent citizens. The core factors in the building of learning cities have been issues concerning social justice and cohesion, and the ability of individuals to participate in decision-making processes (Borkowska & Osborne, 2018).

## ARE ALL CITIZENS LEARNING WHAT THEY NEED IN THE LEARNING CITIES IN KOREA?

### The expansion of learning opportunities provision and of participation in lifelong education

Since the beginning of the LLC project in Korea, more than two thirds of basic local governments (municipalities, city districts, and rural counties) have been designated as LLCs, which have provided citizens with various types of lifelong learning opportunities and enhanced education, then expanded their participation in lifelong education programmes. Through the provision of community centres, educational spaces, and educational programmes, people are motivated to make use of the ample resources of these centres in their spare time, thereby helping to foster a learning culture (Yang & Yorozu, 2015). The learning opportunities of citizens have been expanded by local governments providing lifelong education programmes that are either free or inexpensive, rather than through direct financial aid.

In detail, the participation rate of lifelong learning among Korean adults (ages 25–64) has increased steadily from 2007 to the present, as shown in table 1 (MOE & KEDI [Korean Educational Development Institute], 2018). It increased from 29.8% in 2007 to 35.6% in 2012 and 42.8% in 2018. This is because the interest in lifelong education has increased as most basic local governments have been committed to providing lifelong education services for residents and have been designated as LLCs (MOE & NILE, 2018). In other words, it is based on the lifelong education projects and programmes actively conducted in the learning city.

Table 1: Lifelong Education Participation Rate in Korean Adults (2007–2018)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total	29.8	26.4	28.0	30.5	32.4	35.6	30.2	36.8	40.6	35.7	35.8	42.8
Formal education	5.7	4.1	4.3	3.9	4.2	3.5	3.8	3.1	3.5	2.8	2.2	2.7
Non-formal education	26.4	23.9	25.3	28.2	30.1	33.1	28.0	35.2	39.1	34.2	34.6	41.8

Source: MOE & KEDI, 2018, p. 28.



In particular, the learning city has contributed greatly to the expansion of residents' participation in lifelong education and the vitalisation of local lifelong education by operating a variety of curriculum and supporting learning circles' activities. An immediate consequence of the learning city policy was the increase in adult education programme provision through public institutions like lifelong learning centres, libraries, and art centres. In their survey, Ko et al. (2008) confirmed that learners' participation rates and time spent at adult education programmes were higher in the participating cities than other cities. Shin and Jun (2017) inferred that the LLC has achieved the expansion of lifelong learning opportunities for community residents based on the result that residents' participation in formal and non-formal education in LLCs was statistically significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) than in non-LLCs. Therefore, LLCs have contributed greatly to increasing the participation rate of Korean adults in lifelong education.

However, the learning cities have made efforts not only to purely expand the quantity of their educational provision, but also to enhance the quality of education (Han & Makino, 2013; Yang & Yorozu, 2015). First, learning cities set up an administrative structure, an organisation and professional staff to plan, implement and provide services. Second, in so doing, lifelong educators, certified experts in lifelong learning practice, made a large contribution. The quality of teachers and educators has an important bearing on the quality of lifelong learning. At least one lifelong educator has been assigned to each LLC, and lifelong educators took on the important role of developing the public policies and lifelong educational programmes of the city. Third, learning cities tried to create a learning city atmosphere by nurturing a whole city environment where provision and participation are organically interconnected across the entire social ecosystem of learning, including learning circles and networks, interlinked with various civil society organisations, even though they did not always lead to actual change. Fourth, the learning cities have been encouraged to open and operate lifelong education programmes for marginalised groups, including foreign immigrants, illiterate people, and people with low incomes and levels of schooling. Last, they have tried to move away from teacher-centred approaches that focus on conveying knowledge and towards learner-centred approaches that emphasise learning for personal development, active citizenship, employability, and social inclusion, according to the perspective of lifelong education.

In addition, the efforts of learning cities for the quantitative and qualitative growth of lifelong learning have contributed to improving outcome recognition and satisfaction. According to Park's research (2009), the residents of lifelong learning cities have higher levels of satisfaction than expected when it comes to the cost, physical environment, educational goals, relationships, instructor qualities, and support environment factors of lifelong education services.

Therefore, the LLC that has been promoted in Korea for the past 20 years has greatly contributed to the formation of a learning society by expanding the learning opportunities and participation of local residents and developing the social and educational environment of the city.



### **Resolving remaining lifelong educational inequality**

Despite the expansion of lifelong education participation opportunities and the quality improvement through LLCs, Korea still shows differences in lifelong learning opportunities by class. Education alienation and inequality of education participation opportunities are occurring, and furthermore, regional lifelong education tends to emphasise individuality rather than community in the flow of neoliberalism. In addition, there has been criticism that as the national goal-oriented policy was developed, regional lifelong education was used as an artificial means to implement the policy, and that the learning city is still insufficient when it comes to forming a learning community that is closely related to the lives of local residents and centred around voluntary participation (Oh, 2018; Youn et al., 2013).

Above all, the provision of lifelong learning opportunities has in fact been distributed unequally according to age, schooling, income, jobs, and regions: younger generations participate more; college graduates participate more than those with less education; high-income earners learn more than low-income earners; urban dwellers have more opportunities than rural residents. It may be true that in Korea lifelong learning chances are not distributed evenly, and this pattern sometimes causes various side-effects, even though not enough evidence is available to show whether the learning city programme has improved this situation (Han & Makino, 2013).

This gap in participation in lifelong education may not be independent of the overall polarisation of Korean society. Korea has been suffering from two economic crises (the 1997 IMF crisis and the 2008 financial crisis), and the slow growth in the economy and the continued polarisation of income are intensifying. In addition, a stable job decline has undermined the mechanism for easing polarisation, and expectations for a rise in class are falling. On the other hand, civic engagement has been growing recently, and the demand for the democratic values of fairness, justice and equality is increasing. Despite this situation, learning opportunities are being provided more unequally. Social integration due to income and regional polarisation and lifelong learning support in line with the growth of civil society are needed. In particular, considering that the provision of lifelong learning opportunities is one of the most necessary policy tools for resolving polarisation, the gap in the rate of participation in lifelong education is a very urgent task for us to solve.

Therefore, it is important to build a learning society in which none of the local residents are alienated through the LLC project from the perspective of learner-centred lifelong education (Oh, 2007). In other words, when LLC projects become activities from below, not from above, all citizens will be able to enjoy the required learning equally. In addition, a learning city where all citizens participate and are involved can be formed in the process where learning is centred on the issues of community life, not separated from everyday life, and local residents learn and solve various local problems together in everyday life. In the end, this is connected with the concept of a learning society which empowered citizens positively participate in and build together.

## **ARE THE LEARNING CITIES IN KOREA BUILT BY EMPOWERED CITIZENS?**

In Korea, LLCs advocate a learning community movement “by the local citizens, for the local citizens, and of the local citizens” (NILE, 2019). This does not only mean that residents can expand their participation in lifelong education or get a ‘good’ education, but also includes the meaning of education that leads individuals and communities to actively and energetically change their areas through learning. Thus, the key to the formation of a learning city is the subjective engagement of citizens and local organisations (Yang, 2007).

### **Movements to build a learning city with citizen engagement**

Citizen engagement in democratic civil society can be regarded as active and voluntary participation that can strengthen the autonomous capacity of individual citizens and reflect their views in government and local policy and administration, not as passive participation. Therefore, citizen participation means that citizens can express their own opinions in the agenda of various policies and administrations, such as individual problems, community problems, or important decision-making for the development of individuals and communities (Lee, 2007). Citizen participation can be achieved through personal learning experiences, community learning, volunteer work experiences, citizenship education, and empowerment. By talking and learning with others, and thinking about and solving our problems and local issues together, citizens make changes both internally and externally, and then transition to civic engagement.

The learning city movement in Korea formed by citizen participation can be seen in the case of “citizen activists” who operate in the learning cities under various names. Recently, there has been a movement to cultivate citizen activists and utilise them in the field of lifelong education. In other words, the cultivation of “intermediate activists” has begun in earnest due to policy needs such as the participation of residents to expand the base of lifelong learning, the need for intermediate activists in the lifelong education field, and the social demand for strengthening their ability to practice (Ji, 2015). Also, in 2013, the national policy to establish and operate town “happiness learning centres” was promoted to ensure learning was accessible locally, and many LLCs have trained and arranged for “lifelong learning managers”, citizen activists who work at the happiness learning centres. Of course, not all LLCs in Korea are fostering citizen activists or encouraging their participation in city governance. However, the citizen activists who are residents living in the region, are interested in the community they live in, and work for the purpose of forming a learning community for the residents, can be said to be a form of citizen-led learning city practice.

Citizen activists such as lifelong learning managers participate in all decision-making processes in the lifelong education project, including the process of planning, designing, operating, and evaluating projects. Running a learning city by working with citizen activists is already a matter of realising a citizen-led learning society. For example, in

Seocheon-gun, Chungcheongnam-do, lifelong learning managers have participated in the process of promoting lifelong education programmes in the region through monthly meetings (Shin, 2019). In addition, they experienced high effectiveness and satisfaction when the programmes in each village were carried out based on the participation of the residents. When the residents experienced mastership in the process of village work, they became more active and subjective, and organic relationships formed among the members of the community that worked together. Through this process, lifelong learning managers, who were general residents, established their identity as local lifelong education activists, established values through their understanding of diversity and experiences of reflection through on-site activities, recognised and practiced the necessity of realising a resident-led learning society, and became “acting citizens” (Shin, 2019).

In addition, Kim and Park (2013) found that the area of responsibility of the citizen activists increased as their activity period increased by one year, and in this process they grew into a subject of expansive learning. In other words, instead of acting according to the general needs and directions of local governments, they actively participated in a lifelong education policy or project from its planning stages, and their role changed in the form of consultation and cooperation with local governments. As a result, citizen activists are growing into “subjective learners” at the individual level, gaining expertise as “education mediators” who support the growth of residents at the organisational level, and forming their identity as “citizens” at the local level (Ji, 2015).

Moreover, a “learning village project” has been developed in LLCs (Yang, 2015). It is called the “learning village movement”, and some typical examples are Siheung City’s “village school”, Eunpyeong-gu’s “hidden coriander”, Suwon City’s “everyone school”, and Daedeok-gu’s “learning village” (Yang, 2018). Siheung City village school was a learning village movement that started with lifelong learning. The project and activities evolved through an organic and continuous relationship between the citizens who built the learning villages in Siheung City, the civic organisations related to lifelong education, and the administration (Yang, 2015). The village school was attended by people ranging from children to the elderly, and the residents became instructors who taught the children. The residents were being made the subjects of village development through continuous learning and practice (Yang, 2018).

Recently, the subjective activities of the residents have been changing the region. For instance, residents have become the educational subjects, for example, in small library movements, joint childcare, learning circles, and “Ma-Eul” (it means village) education communities, expanding the regional educational influence (Yang, 2018). In particular, the Ma-Eul education community movement is spreading in Korea. Schools that had only been interested in their own educational activities are turning to villages and cooperating with local communities to form educational communities. The practice of the Ma-Eul education community should be based on the participation of the various agencies, such as schools, school districts, municipalities, community members, community groups, and students. The subjects participating in the Ma-Eul education community

have the right and the responsibility to participate in the important decision-making processes related to the planning, operation, and evaluation of the Ma-Eul education community. The Ma-Eul education community movement is the practice of creating a small unit of a learning society with the active participation of village members or empowered citizens.

### **The limits of learning cities still being practiced in a top-down way**

As discussed above, there are recent movements in Korea to nurture residents as citizen activists and develop learning communities led by the residents. However, despite these changes and developments, Korea's LLC project is still led by local governments, mainly through the planning and budget support of the central government or local governments, rather than driven by the citizens' voluntary and independent participation. In relation to the central and local governments, broadly speaking, LLCs in Korea have been centrally designed and locally implemented (Han & Makino, 2013).

First of all, it is argued that the LLC policy undertaken in Korea is led by the state and administration because the value of efficiency and development is being affected (Yi, Park, Park, & Lee, 2011). The designation, evaluation, and support of LLCs are carried out by the national organisation, and the evaluation criteria are more uniform rather than reflecting the specificity of a particular region. In addition, each local government is pursuing an LLC in order to achieve the policy goal of regional development and to enhance the capacity of local residents. Local governments organise budgets and systems, and plan various projects to meet the national criteria. In this context, Yi and Hwang (2016) criticise Korea's LLC policy as a "product" created through a standardised mass production system that blends the central government's national policy with the needs of regional development. Indeed, in most local governments administrators and lifelong education specialists mainly design and plan for their LLC projects themselves rather than actively involve local residents and reflect their opinions.

Ko (2007) argued that four learning cities in Korea had a communication structure that flowed from top to bottom and did not reflect the learning needs of local residents. He found that because the residents' learning needs were not reflected in the learning city, learning opportunities were not diversified, focused more on quantitative growth, and projects focused on specific areas. As a result, these LLC projects have a strong character of developing a region through the lifelong learning of residents, rather than forming a learning society for the residents. The learning cities did not faithfully reflect the principle of democracy as a basic principle of lifelong education (Ko, 2007).

Kim and Park (2018) also argued that in Korean lifelong education, building a learning society serves as a tool and an instrumental feature of policy goals such as regional economic development and job creation, rather than serving educational purposes. Therefore, the importance of the LLC project as a means of regional development cannot be completely excluded, but the justification that the LLC needs to be led by the residents and the educational purpose of forming a learning society will need to be strengthened.

The development of LLCs is not possible if it is only in the hands of administrators, experts, and lifelong educators. Local residents should be able to participate in the LLC project independently, and the residents' affection and vitality should be used (Yang, 2007). In other words, citizens should participate not as objects of education but as subjects of learning and project implementation, and their opinions should be reflected in the visions, goals, and plans of learning cities (Hong & Kim, 2013). However, most of the LLC projects are still formed in a top-down manner. In order for Korea's LLCs to move in the direction in which all citizens participate as subjects, it is necessary to establish a partnership system in which the current modes of citizen participation can be further activated. The voluntary participation of the residents and the support of the administration should be further developed into a learning city where all educational subjects, resources, and information of the region can be connected and cooperate. Of course, the needs and opinions of the residents are so diverse that different directions can be pursued or confronted. Coordinating conflict and carrying out projects that reflect various needs may require more time and effort, and it may not be possible to achieve their goals effectively. However, in order for a lifelong learning city to successfully build a learning society, local resident-led, active participation of citizens in a true sense must be ensured.

## **SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS**

The paper examined the current position of Korea's LLCs from the standpoint of building a just learning society led by subjective citizens. We can see that the LLCs show both the possibilities and the limits to creating a just learning society formed by citizen engagement. In terms of the development of the LLCs, the quantity and quality of lifelong learning opportunities has been expanded and strengthened. However, there is a tendency of intensifying inequality rather than progressing towards a just learning society where learning opportunities are provided equally to all citizens. Moreover, most of the LLCs were still planned and implemented lifelong education policies and projects in a top-down manner, rather than with a bottom-up approach based on the active participation of the residents.

Despite these limits, there are possibilities for Korea's LLCs to develop into a just learning society. Recently, movements and activities where residents independently participate in their LLC projects as citizen activists and form their village as a learning community are beginning to be activated. In the future Korea's LLCs will need to further solidify the citizen-led perspective, to promote the participation of democratic decision-making and the free expression of citizens' opinions, and to activate citizenship education. To achieve these aims, the practice of citizenship education needs to move beyond the framework of knowledge education and emphasise not only knowledge but also civic values, attitudes, and learning participatory skills through daily practice (Park, 2018). In this process, lifelong educators will be required to have expertise as practitioners of citizenship education, and to design education programmes in which residents can recognise local problems and participate in problem solving.

This study analysed the position of Korea's LLCs on the road towards becoming a learning society, but it has limitations that could not be evaluated based on objective factors or indicators for reaching a just learning society. In the future, further research will be needed, such as studies on rational criteria for evaluating a citizen-led just learning society, empirical studies based on these criteria, and practices that influence the development to a just learning society.

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## NEW LEARNING SITES IN LEARNING CITIES – PUBLIC PEDAGOGY AND CIVIC EDUCATION

### ABSTRACT

*Although the concept of learning cities and the idea of learning being place-based and focused on a region, city, town or community have existed for a long time, it is UNESCO's work that gave the impetus to the practice, helping to create and spread the network of Learning Cities worldwide. One of the main characteristics of the current concept is the leading role of the local government and partnership with policy makers. The paper challenges this feature with the example of cities that are "rebellious" against the local or national government, but do have learning at the core of their activities. The example of Belgrade is described in detail, where various civic actions (protests, 'guerrilla' actions, active participation in public discussions) are analysed from the point of view of public pedagogy. The theory of Gert Biesta and his conception of the public sphere as a space for civic action as well as Elizabeth Ellsworth's ideas on the active creation of space are the framework in which civic actions are interpreted as important kinds of learning. Lefebvre's concept of the "right to the city" is also applied. In this way, the whole concept of learning cities might be broadened to include cities without a harmonious relationship with its policy makers, but with strong civic movements and civic actions as a kind of non-formal learning in public spaces.*

**Keywords:** *learning city, public pedagogy, Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own, civic education, civic activism*

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## NOVA PRIZORIŠČA UČENJA V UČEČIH SE MESTIH – JAVNA PEDAGOGIKA TER DRŽAVLJANSKA VZGOJA IN IZOBRAŽEVANJE – POVZETEK

Čeprav koncept učečih se mest in ideja o učenju, ki je osredinjena na prostor, torej regijo, mesto ali skupnost, obstajata že dolgo časa, je Unesco to prakso spodbudil ter pomagal ustvariti in razširiti mrežo učečih se mest po vsem svetu. Vodilna vloga lokalnih oblasti in partnerski odnos z oblikovalci politik je ena od poglobitih značilnosti obstoječega koncepta učečih se mest, vendar v članku prek primerov učečih se mest, ki se »upirajo« lokalni ali nacionalni vladi, ob tem pa imajo v središču svojih dejavnosti učenje, spodbijamo nujnost te značilnosti za nastanek učečega se mesta. Podrobno je opisan primer Beograda in različne oblike državljankega delovanja (protesti, »gverilsko« delovanje, aktivno sodelovanje v javnih razpravah) v tem mestu, ki so analizirane z vidika javne pedagogike. Okvir, v katerem je državljansko delovanje interpretirano kot pomemben način učenja, tvorita teorija Gerta Bieste z njegovim konceptom javne sfere kot prostora državljankega delovanja in ideja Elizabeth Ellsworth o aktivnem ustvarjanju prostora. Prav tako je uporabljen Lefebvrov koncept »pravice do mesta«. Na ta način je mogoče idejo učečih se mest razširiti tudi na mesta, v katerih odnosi z oblikovalci politik niso harmonični, obstajajo pa močna državljankega gibanja in državljansko delovanje kot oblika neformalnega učenja v javni sferi.

**Ključne besede:** učeče se mesto, javna pedagogika, Ne da(vi)mo Beograda, državljanska vzgoja in izobraževanje, državljanski aktivizem

## LEARNING CITIES AND NEW GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Learning cities are one of the most captivating phenomena in the education landscape of the last decade. Retaining the best features of “community learning” (and similar “geographically defined learning concepts”; Longworth & Osborne, 2010, p. 369) and capturing some of the recent global trends and challenges of globalisation and urbanisation, learning cities offered a new educational response to both policy makers and practitioners. The practices of various kinds of learning at the community level are not new. They were known and popular even in the 60s, 70s and 80s, across the continents, often as a part of social movements (peace, feminist, political, environmental movements), but in the last two decades they got a new interpretation and a new frame, while the flexibility, inclusiveness, and adaptability to local circumstances added to the popularity of the concept.

One of the most important “drivers” of the concept of learning cities and learning regions from the 1970s to the 1990s was the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), whose economic agenda was the main framework for the new understanding of learning at the community level. Even later, in its publication *Cities and Regions in the New Learning Economy*, OECD (2001) clearly states that the goal is “to promote learning, innovation, productivity and economic performance at the local level”, analyses the “relationships between various forms of learning and economic performance at the regional level” and “provide[s] strong evidence of the importance of individual and firm-level organisational learning for regions’ economic performance” (p. 3). A clear neoliberal character influenced the concept of learning cities, which later echoed in the

concept of “smart cities”. UNESCO has broadened this narrow understanding and added other elements to the contemporary approach.

The process of the creation of Agenda 2030 gave further impetus to learning cities. The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (UCLG [United Cities and Local Governments], 2015) pointed out that

[c]ities and territories are where women and men, girls and boys, live, where they work to create their livelihoods and where dreams are made. They are where poverty and inequalities are tackled, where health and education services are provided, where ecosystems are protected and human rights must be guaranteed. (p. 21)

It seems that learning cities might be an approach for achieving many goals, not only Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 (quality education and lifelong learning for all) and SDG 11 (inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements) – it could help tackle poverty, inequality, and environmental problems, and showcase how SDGs can work at the local level. The concept was embraced by the education sector for its idea that “cities can transform by placing lifelong learning at their heart” (UNESCO, 2016, p. 126) and for the fact that the learning cities practice can successfully integrate the whole scale of lifelong learning, including all ages, formal and non-formal education and informal learning, different levels of education and various sectors and areas.

Furthermore, learning cities seem to capture three dimensions of lifelong learning:

- as green and healthy learning cities (environmental sustainable development);
- as equitable and inclusive learning cities (individual empowerment, intercultural dialogue, and social cohesion);
- through decent employment and entrepreneurship in learning cities (economic development and cultural prosperity).

One aspect of the process of building learning cities deserves special attention if considered from the point of view of the new social reality in many countries marked by social movements, civic and student protests and new forms of organised citizenship. In spite of these movements, the mainstream understanding of learning cities is still through the strong leadership role of the municipality, whereby a learning city relies very much on the stakeholders’ involvement and the support which government at all levels should provide to education and learning processes.

One of the main recommendations of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) (2015) for becoming a learning city clearly states: “Create a coordinated structure involving all stakeholders” (p. 1). Further on, strong political leadership and steadfast commitment are recommended, as is the involvement of city leaders. Clearly, local government is in the driver’s seat. The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments is resolved on this issue:

All of the SDGs have targets that are directly or indirectly related to the daily work of local and regional governments. Local governments should not be seen as mere implementers of the agenda. Local governments are policy makers, catalysts of change and the level of government best-placed to link the global goals with local communities. (UCLG, 2015, p. 1)

Additionally, although other local actors play the most important roles, it is recommended that “strong contact with the ministry of education or any other related ministry” is maintained “to link the local with the national development” (UNESCO & UIL, 2015, p. 2).

Even more than UNESCO’s guidelines, the Global Network of Learning Cities, consisting of cities from all continents and coming from very diverse geo-political settings, presented broadly at UNESCO’s Learning Cities conferences, proves the importance of political support and the involvement of decision-makers and politicians. Although they usually involve various stakeholders and include representatives from civil society and different community groups, the heads of the delegations are almost always mayors, and the strong commitment of the city leaders and local government is never absent in success stories (UNESCO & UIL, 2019b). It starts with the national governments that are usually dedicated to the creation of the learning society, and peaks with the mayors that have the leading role in guiding, coordinating, and strategising towards the common goal of the learning city. The current global panic around climate change has increased the belief that learning cities might boost, through the engagement of citizens, more actions towards sustainable development. But what about an increasingly important challenge coming from the current political processes in Europe and the world, the wave of authoritarian and extremist regimes, the crises of democracy? Can learning cities and their existing stakeholder cooperation patterns meet these challenges?

The most recent, fourth International Conference on Learning Cities in Medellin, Columbia, showcased clearly the leading role of policy makers: The UNESCO Learning City Award 2019 was received mostly by Mayors, Deputy Mayors, Governors and one Secretary-General of the Municipal Government (UNESCO & UIL, 2019a). This guarantees, no doubt, the continuous commitment, the sustainability of the efforts, the broad range of the stakeholders involved (institutions and organisations that are motivated or supported by the municipality) and the systemic impact of education and learning activities.

But what happens in cities that lack this kind of governance, one supportive of learning? Longworth (2014) reminds us:

It is also why we believe that the process of becoming a learning city is a long one, taking many years of development, and therefore, unfortunately, often at the mercy of opportunist politicians or parties with limited vision or a personal agenda. (p. 3)

Most authors explore this issue through the lense of stakeholder interactions in urban partnerships (Le Feuvre, Medway, Warnaby, Ward, & Goatman, 2016), question the growing diversity of urban partnership forms (urban growth coalitions, new policy networks, and urban regimes), but a broader view might bring another dimension to the understanding of learning cities. Namely, some cities experience, for longer or shorter periods, autocratic governance that excludes the voices of citizens, ignores their needs, and perceives education either as a commodity or as the means of ideological control and pressure. Could such a city, whatever educational actions might be organised by its main actors, be called “a learning city”? What happens when there is a deep discrepancy between the way the citizens and the city’s governing bodies see the development of the city, the way of engaging, the role of education and learning? What happens if there is a gap, even a conflict between them? Who has the right to decide what learning is for, and whose vision of the city is valid? Great examples of a truly democratic approach to this question are experiences with participatory budgeting in many cities, the most famous example being Porto Alegre in Brazil, where citizens engaged in meetings and discussions held in public spaces, set the budget together and decided on the priorities in spending it. This experience was so inspiring that a few thousand cities worldwide developed similar practices (Beard, Mahendra, & Westphal, 2016).

A kind of “blindness” to alternative approaches and to a broader understanding of learning cities is quite common:

[T]he concept of learning cities has been implemented mainly in ‘developed’ countries, growing initially out of initiatives by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) from the 1970s onwards and the European Commission (EC) in the early part of this century. (Osborne, Kearns, & Young, 2013, p. 411)

The concepts of learning cities developed in the Global South have been less explored, maybe also because of their ‘non-traditional’ character and ways of practising democracy and pursuing democratic goals in a less democratic environment, or even in war zones, such as Rojava in northern Syria, where stateless democracy and democratic confederalism are practiced (Knapp, Flach, & Ayboğa, 2016).

Although more and more developing countries are cultivating new forms of learning communities, cities, and regions, the dominant discourse still frames the thinking behind learning cities. This might have been the reason for neglecting the political aspects of learning cities, the nature of city governance, and the relationship of power between citizens and city leaders. These are also being dramatically impacted by the various forms of civic protests which are happening around the globe (currently in Lebanon, Chile, Hong Kong, Haiti, Barcelona, Serbia, etc.). The current discourse focuses on the “western” type of the learning city, leaving behind many examples worldwide that do not “fit the mould”.

The special issue of the International Review for Education *Learning Cities: Developing Inclusive, Prosperous and Sustainable Urban Communities* explores and broadens the characteristics of learning cities beyond Europe; for example, Biao, Esaete, and Oonyu (2013) use the Freirian concept of conscientisation that should “awaken the consciousness of city-dwellers towards action to transform their physical, social and psychological environment”, while Messina and Valdés-Cotera

show that the notion of an educating city is related to the democratisation of social life and to the possibility of creating a community from or within an urban space. Hence it corresponds to political proposals that defend the notion of a community of individuals, whilst talking and negotiating as equals. The educating city first of all promotes an extension of the fundamental right of all people to education. (Osborne, Kearns, & Young, 2013, p. 413)

The focus is still very much on the increased role of civic participation, a kind of partnership, and the goal of the learning activities; authors very seldom examine cases with a conflicting paradigm and learning processes that are clearly oriented against the city governance.

A very strong line of development is currently oriented towards “smart cities”, but the difference is substantial:

unlike smart cities that start with digital technologies, big data, artificial intelligence and sustainable infrastructure, learning cities start with people, with their needs, families, such cities draw on their problem-solving capabilities, they are about caring for one another and working together for the common values. (Popović, 2019, p. 10)

The examples of smart cities are being pushed forward and presented as exemplary, but authors such as Nancy and Lefebvre provide “indispensable critical tools for conceptualizing the urban planet and its political possibilities [...] [contrasted] to the conservative imagery of the urban planet as techno utopia that was produced at Expo 2010 in Shanghai, China” (Madden, 2012, p. 1).

Instead of moving towards more technologies (although they shouldn't be excluded, but rather used as an important ally for civic movements), some cities are trying to find an answer to the democracy deficit, the rise of populism and nationalism; for that purpose, they are moving towards a new kind of togetherness, towards new ways of achieving solidarity and new concepts of community learning (Popović, Maksimović, & Jovanović, 2020).

## **LEARNING CITIES – THE NEED TO CHANGE A PARADIGM?**

Several efforts have been made to help cities monitor and measure their progress and learning achievements, for example, *The Composite Learning Index CLI* developed by

the Canadian Council on Learning (2010), *The European Lifelong Learning Index – ELLI* (Saisana, 2010), and the *German Learning Atlas* (Baethge-Kinsky & Döbert, 2011; Das Bildungsportal-Lippe, 2011). Based on the criteria and indicators from these frameworks, most of the “rebellious cities” wouldn’t be categorised as learning cities. They might match the criteria related to formal education (such as the education level of the population) and educational infrastructure, and also other indicators whose value systems and contents are not contested by the stakeholders involved.

Most of the usual criteria seem to be based on the ‘silent’ assumption that all stakeholders share the idea of the importance of education, while the differences come from the level of commitment to the realisation of education goals, from different approaches and different priorities, as well as from the lack of resources. An example of a commonly used indicator illustrates this: access to education institutions, especially community institutions, is considered very important. While this indicator could be defined in various ways (the number and sufficiency of education institutions, geographical distance, physical accessibility, financial affordability, information and guidance provided etc.), it cannot include the possibility that existing educational institutions can be rejected by citizens for being politically exclusive, non-democratic and manipulated in terms of their content or methods, or simply going against the will of the citizens for various good reasons.

The UNESCO guidelines do state that learning offers should respond to the learning needs and interests of citizens, and a learning city forum should be established where people can contribute and share experiences (UNESCO & UIL, 2015). But disrespect of the citizens’ needs, and the lack of common spaces for sharing and coordinating might happen not only because of the omission or lack of resources, but as an expression of deeper misunderstanding and conflicting interests of the citizens and the city’s governance. Does this mean that we cannot talk about learning cities anymore? Or that we should change or broaden the concept of learning cities? Many of the rebel communities and cities, especially in the Global South, do not implement the usual learning cities agenda, but they do democratize many aspects of their everyday life, using learning as a powerful instrument to do that. Cities using participatory budgeting are among them, but also Rojava in Syria, Zapatistas in Chiapas, Lenca communities in Honduras, etc. Some European cities also have an ‘alternative’ learning agenda, compensating for the gaps in the formal learning agenda of the municipality and practicing true grassroots democracy even if it is against the will or the agenda of the authorities.

The “rebellious cities” question two main premises of the current concept of learning cities: partnership and learning sites.

There is a strong feeling in these cities that the political establishment lets people down and that it is disconnected from the lived experiences of communities. Such an example is London’s Take Back the City movement (White, 2016), which fights the effects of neo-liberal urbanism on London’s neighbourhoods. They turn against the establishment and leaders, and create their own spaces and their own learning realm. In these “rebel cities”



(Harvey, 2012), there is a strong partnership, but it exists among other actors, mostly non-governmental organisations, associations, various civic groups, often also with cultural and artistic organisations. The official representatives of the municipalities are not included – even more, fighting their agenda is part of the civic discourse. When Longworth (2006) talks about a centralised model of the education curriculum and assessment, he allows for other models depending on the system that is in place in various countries and cities, “but the general trust of contribution by stakeholders remains valid and modifiable whatever the setup” (p. 106). The protesting cities challenge this paradigm of trust, and don’t assume that trust and cooperation with the municipality is only a matter of a lot of effort and a good strategy.

Longworth (2006) quotes the LILLIPUT learning materials for learning cities and regions: “Ever changing and developing learning cities and regions are no place for ideological dogma or single-issue politics” (p. 137)<sup>1</sup>. But we are dealing with the crucial difference in perceiving democracy and civic and human rights as the main value in the context of learning cities. Therefore, the people and civic groups in these cities are making a turn: by being committed to the values defined in UNESCO’s guidelines and similar documents developed within the framework of human rights, they organise actions that include learning as an important instrument for achieving these goals, transcending simple participation in decision-making, but claiming the city in a new way, not only without the city government or leaders, but also outside of their political reality and through strong partnerships among the community actors. With this shift, “democracy” comes hand-in-hand with learning, as inseparable criteria for calling any geographical reality a “learning space”. Learning occurs as the “natural instrument” in the fight for democracy, and democratic, participatory actions become the best “content and way of learning”.

The second feature that is transformed by the “protesting cities” are learning sites. Since the municipality is not considered a partner in this case, most of the formal and governmentally run institutions are not seen as important learning sites. They may be included in educational interventions, and their importance is not denied, but the main spaces of learning intervention are found elsewhere: in public spaces, in the streets, squares, parks, abandoned buildings, alternative areas, etc. Occupying spaces selected for gentrification or investor-driven urbanism – these are expressions of the citizens’ will and the right and claim they have over the city. Obviously, the focus here has shifted to non-formal education and informal learning, as well as to adult learning, and is less focused on formal education and the learning of children. But even the ‘usual’ educational spaces might be contested if they deny the nature of public education as a common good:

It is in this context that the revival of a rhetoric and theory of the commons takes on an added significance. If state-supplied public goods either decline or become a mere vehicle for private accumulation (as is happening to education),

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<sup>1</sup> The LILLIPUT Learning Materials are available in audio format at <http://eurolocal.info/resource/lilliput-learning-materials-overview>.



and if the state withdraws from their provision, then there is only one possible response, which is for populations to selforganize to provide their own commons. (Harvey, 2012, p. 87)

This is one of the reasons why education and learning may leave institutional rooms and formal education spaces, and move to new, alternative learning sites. In connection to Lefebvre's "the right to the city" concept, Harvey (2012) explains how new spaces are created, becoming the new reality of the citizens:

Lefebvre's concept of heterotopia (radically different from that of Foucault) delineates liminal social spaces of possibility where 'something different' is not only possible, but foundational for the defining of revolutionary trajectories. This 'something different' does not necessarily arise out of a conscious plan, but more simply out of what people do, feel, sense, and come to articulate as they seek meaning in their daily lives. Such practices create heterotopic spaces all over the place. (p. xvii)

New civic movements, rebelling cities, and their re-focus of the cities' philosophy of human rights, put "space" in the center. Public spaces are the frame for exercising and showcasing "the right to the city", being physically at the heart of civic activities. Therefore, public spaces are natural new learning sites, not only places to learn, but spaces where simply "being there" has a relevance in a political context and thus becomes a starting point for the learning process, often a collective one.

These new tendencies bring one important aspect to the forefront, and that is the political framework of learning cities. It is taken for granted that a certain level of democracy is provided, and the goal and content of education are rooted in the human rights approach. But the question of ownership and decision-making is more prominent than ever: who has the right to set the city's agenda and make decisions about education and learning?

In the contemporary learning cities network there is a kind of 'harmony' among the stakeholders, at least when it comes to their common goal. But what about cities where the relationship among various interest groups is marked by conflict, and learning is based on completely different discourses? Can they be called learning cities, and what kind of learning are they carrying out?

To answer this question, we will give an overview of the recent activities of the civic movement called Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own and inquire into learning that emerges through collective action. This process is also captured by the concept of public pedagogy which has been widely construed over time, and its meaning might have become elusive. But public pedagogy nevertheless gives us the best theoretical framework for learning cities. In learning cities the city as a public space is only a site for public pedagogy, "in which public refers not to a physical site of educational phenomena but rather to an idealized outcome of educational activity: the production of a public aligned in terms of

values and collective identity” (Sandlin, O’Malley, & Burdick, 2011, p. 342); understood like this, public pedagogy is simply education for the public good. Public space is also a place important for civic or democratic education beyond the traditional humanistic understanding, a place for subjectification, as Rancier and Biesta call it, in the interpretation of Reimers and Martinsson (2016):

democratisation is not a process of identification, that is, of taking up an existing identity, but is rather a process of disidentification or [...] a process of *subjectification*, a process of being a subject of politics or political subject. (p. 22)

This kind of political subjectivity is achievable in education, but outside of the neoliberal institutional normative framework.

In arguing for sustainable development, Robèrt, Daly, Hawken, and Holmberg (1997) present public pedagogy as educating the public on “how the world works”, so that the voting public could understand the scientific principles that are related to the subject. They also state that the distribution of knowledge is at least as critical for democracy as the distribution of income, with the idea that the public that has appropriate knowledge will be able to adopt a certain public policy (Sandlin, O’Malley, & Burdick, 2011). If we understand that public space is the result of purposeful actions (Garau, 2016), which are the result of policies, which are in turn the result of ideology, we can go one step further from just mapping the world and argue that social intervention in public space is simultaneously the criticism of dominant ideology, and the very active and concrete deliberation on ideal life and society. Moir and Crowther (2017) confirm that education can’t be neutral in this role:

Citizenship education without a critical view of democracy and society is more about social control rather than social change whereas the real challenge for citizenship education is to be relevant to the inculcation of an open, participatory democratic culture that contributes to individual and collective agency. (p. 18)

### **“DO NOT LET LEARNING CITIES D(R)OWN!”**

This title is a reference to the civic movement born in Belgrade called Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own. The movement was established during 2016, when it was provoked by increased investor-driven urbanism and large-scale illegal actions in which private properties were demolished overnight due to new “urban investments”. Shocked by the lack of reaction from responsible official bodies, and in disagreement with an urban policy driven by neoliberal and capitalist interest that completely excluded the citizens’ voices as well as their interests, people started gathering and protesting. Out of these protests a movement was created, and would later participate in the local elections in Belgrade in 2018. Even without reaching census it remained a significant counterweight to current policies. Between 2016 and today this movement has remained the main opposition to the

dominant neoliberal political streams in managing the city of Belgrade and to its current urban policy. The movement's agenda and actions tackle the urbanisation of Belgrade funded by private investors, which jeopardises the environment and public goods under the mantra of "modernisation", and it also protests against restraining the possibilities of citizen participation and their right to the city of Belgrade.

All the efforts of the Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own activists aim at motivating, empowering, and educating citizens to take an active role in the life of the city. In this paper we use this micro case study to analyse how this movement, its structure, and its actions reflect the idea of learning cities and how it re-thinks public spaces and uses them as learning spaces. The initiative is a part of the global municipal movement standing up to defend human rights, democracy, and public good (En Comú, Bookchin, & Colau, 2019; Harvey, 2012; White, 2016). The movement includes new approaches to fighting for democracy, strong feminist features in its politics, a focus on solidarity, neighbourhood movements and various actions trying to build bottom-up changes and networks of solidarity and support.

### **Belgrade as a learning city?**

When talking about learning cities one question can be put as central: whose knowledge counts in the everyday life of the city? Is it the knowledge of us as citizens as diverse as we are; the knowledge of professionals that analyse, conduct research and have a professional responsibility for the city's development; the knowledge of the politicians who make the final decisions and contracts about the development of the city; the knowledge of investors as power holders? To use Lefebvre's famous question: "Who has the right to the city?" (Lefebvre, 1996) Let us ask ourselves whose knowledge dominantly forms our everyday city experiences: on public transport when going to work, in the park where we take our dog for a walk, in the main square while we wait for a date, or in the very privacy of our flats? In each of these situations one can have positive feelings and attachments to the materialisations and meanings of these spaces, or one can experience frustration. The main discourse of the Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own initiative builds upon very common frustrations regarding these spaces among the citizens of Belgrade. The main arguments against the current and previous mayor have concerned poor city management that is negligent of its citizens and professionals. The issue of democracy is independent for the urban policy of the government: "Let us be contented with the notion that the democratic character of a regime is identifiable by its attitude towards the city, urban 'liberties' and urban reality, and therefore towards *segregation*" (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 141).

So, having some fundamental principles of democracy and civic participation as the foundation, but engaging with the everyday problems of people living in the city, the Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own initiative acts through several channels. Their actions can be grouped into three categories:

- protests,
- "guerrilla" actions, and
- participation in public discussions.

Reflecting on these practices theoretically and analysing these three categories in the light of learning cities and the pedagogy of the public space will improve the theoretical framing and conceptualising of these phenomena, and put the local struggle into the broader context of global tendencies.

### **Public spaces as mass classrooms**

Since its beginning Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own has organised several dozen protests with diverse ranges of participants; the biggest gathering encompassed tens of thousands of protestors. The way in which these protests has changed the public life of the city has been researched and described in several papers (Delibašić, Nikolić, & Vasiljević, 2019; Popović, Maksimović, & Jovanović, 2018). What these authors emphasise is the potential for mobilisation and a new discourse of provocation, humor, and personal engagement. The current government's opposition describes the political situation in Serbia with terms such as "media darkness", "arrogant and autistic governing", etc. This civic initiative raised the question of the visibility of citizens, their voice and their epistemological right when it comes to decision-making in the city. What does it mean to protest in such an environment? Whose interests do the protests bring out to the streets, whose right to the city do they exercise? Even though Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own included several thousand people, some people heard about it for the first time when it took to the streets, when it literally became visible and loud. In the era of the internet, social networks and a huge media presence, one wouldn't expect the streets, the very space of action, to become the most visible and prominent point of learning.

Protest walks and actions in public spaces are good illustrations of how safety, organisation, and planning have changed through time. With each new protest, people who previously had no experience in organising such events, learned more and more – how to engage, react, manage, talk, etc. For example, there were always some provocations or counter-protests organised during the Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own actions, but they were always pacified through some minor efforts of the organisers and mostly by the nonviolent reactions of the protestors. The protests are visually identified as colourful, loud, incorporating music and positive, humorous slogans; some examples of the symbols used are fake diplomas, fake monuments or similar objects pointing out and symbolically commenting on the current burning issues in society.

One of the layers of public space is formed by personal and interpersonal experiences, embracing the sensorial and haptic, interactions, memories, constructed meanings, but also imaginary ideas about possible lives. So by marching and protesting citizens are re-claiming their right to the city, they are physically sending the message about the spaces that belong to them. In Lefebvre's (1996) words:

It is on the one hand a relationship of the human being with his own body, with his tongue and speech, with his gestures, in a certain place and with a gestural whole, and on the other hand, a relationship with the largest public space, with the entire society and beyond it, the universe. (p. 235)

Occupying and re-designing public space thus transcends the one-day event and becomes a universal claim for human and civic rights. There is an undeniable subversive element to it: it is an interruption of the existing order which manifests as a reconfiguration of space and positions, occurring in those moments when the 'logic' of the existing social order is confronted with the 'logic' of equality (Biesta, 2013).

From the perception of the city as the best possible classroom for civic education, public spaces offer a multitude of meanings, ambiguous happenings, actions, interactions, all in the constant state of becoming through the engagement of its citizens. Public space is an unfinished entanglement of materiality, encounters, and relationships, "a meaningful witness of social and societal changes in history and the present. It creates the material basis for people's social (inter)actions within their community but in the same time results from these social (inter)actions" (De Visscher, 2014, p. 78).

Solidarity and joint action are the main core of this type of activity; in protests one learns how to become more aware of the community that he/she belongs to, and how to reach a level of organisation where the group impact is in the interest of individuals. Bridging the individual and the communal is the main issue not only in Belgrade but everywhere where neoliberal logic is prevailing and suppressing other interests and approaches.

### **Guerrilla learning**

"It is noon, people are gathering, everyone is silently anxious and no one is talking about the location of our action" (quote from one of the activists<sup>2</sup>). One hour later the entrance to the main landfill in Vinča, Belgrade is blocked. Activists with banners, barrels, and flags stand at the entrance, demanding that the city authorities give up on building an incinerator with a foreign private investor. The technology of burning waste is very outdated and bad for the already troubled environment, especially the highly polluted air in Belgrade. Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own has a detailed analysis of this project. The blockade isn't announced, lasts for one hour, and provokes one smaller incident involving unidentified persons whose efforts to stop the action were unsuccessful. Many truck drivers whose entry or exit from the landfill is interrupted talk to the activists. Many of them hear about the plans of the city officials for the first time, although they will directly impact their main source of income. The anger towards "someone who is preventing me from doing my job today" transforms into anger towards "someone who is taking my job forever"<sup>3</sup>. The same process takes place with people who live nearby in the neighbourhood of the Vinča landfill.

This type of "guerrilla learning", one can say, happens when policies are implemented without any public discussion or acknowledgment, in the deep silence of oppression, which restrains even the possibility of hearing the voice of the citizens. People learn about issues and problems that will change their lives dramatically and for the worse, that will

2 Source: the private archives of the authors.

3 Source: the private archives of the authors.

take away their space, their resources and their rights, but they also learn about how to fight these policies, how to join others, how to get a say in what will directly affect their quality of life and well-being, their cultural spaces, even their job opportunities. Is there any more important learning in a learning city than that?

Paradoxically, it is exactly through the activities of “guerrilla learning” that the process of becoming a citizen is occurring, since under the current political circumstances, it is a truly democratic practice. Biesta argues that “citizen” is not an existing identity but is in constant emergence through democratic practices, that “[c]itizenship is not so much a status, something which can be achieved and maintained, but that it should primarily be understood as something that people continuously do: citizenship as practice” (Lawy & Biesta, 2006, p. 72), which is rooted in Biesta’s idea of subjectification, where it’s important what a subject can do, and not what the subject is (Biesta, 2017).

As such, it cannot be reduced to an education goal and a curriculum or understood in a traditional way, because a goal-oriented curriculum is organised around specific linear learning outcomes that need to be transmitted and accomplished. It is a complicated and even impossible task because an answer is not predictable and given, but is a constant quest for equality, meaning that emancipatory education begins with the principles of equality and emancipation.

This is exactly where civic engagement in the rebelling cities is on track – not with educational goals and the usual set of learning indicators but through emancipatory action, the process of occupying spaces and at the same time liberating and/or constructing citizenship. In their research, a group of authors analysing civic actions in two Slovenian cities came to a similar conclusion:

Learning interaction in public spaces, as compared to traditional (structured, regulated) learning environments, is changeable, open and formed by citizens through discussion; learning is unpredictable, multi-layered, and in a way more demanding, because its course and results are dependent on a participant’s skills to perform it. Hence, such learning is natural, experiential and based on the problems of the citizens. (Jelenc Krašovec et al., 2017, p. 58)

The sector where the process is very dynamic is not unexpected: The problems of urban environments (but sustainable development in general) are among the most prominent in the actions of urban civic movements.

### **Learning in public discussions**

A local government is legally obliged to organise public discussions in the form of a hearing or consultation with all stakeholders about each decision of public interest. This, however, does not mean that public discussions become open or free spaces where knowledge can be exchanged. They are usually organised at a time that is unsuitable for the majority of citizens, poorly advertised and without the necessary information and documentation,

or arranged in a way that is difficult to understand and navigate. It is clear that what was developed as democratic practice has turned into a space of exclusion. Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own tries to translate these topics for citizens, to call and announce each hearing, and finally to engage in proposing and creating better solutions for the city. The interplay of power and knowledge in these discussions is always very intense. Marked by conflict, communication with the local authorities in public discussions in Belgrade remains an exciting battlefield of learning. Contesting knowledge reflects the social struggle and builds the identity of the learning city.

“The urbanization of society is more than just a spatial process – it also involves forms of knowledge and frames for action” (Madden, 2012, p. 780). Public discussions are exactly that – learning processes as preparation, gathering information and knowledge, taking part in the public discussions and navigating through verbal attacks and insults, engaging and empowering people to join in and take part.

However, it is important to differentiate between a common understanding of civic education and this kind of “learning in action”. For example, Biesta (2013) suggests a distinction between civic learning as a mode of socialisation – a person involved in a process of becoming a part of an existing social order, meaning adopting a social identity of an active citizen, and learning that happens through engagement in an experiment of democracy.

This “experiment” definitely needs the common action of citizens, and working for a common goal. So it is necessary to challenge and overcome the individualistic conception of civic education that came to the fore with neoliberal ideology, and focus on collective social and political engagement in democratic processes and a city as a learning context and an educator. This is why learning cities require a new understanding of what is “common” and new ways of belonging to the group, away from the traditional, conservative approach, but also away from neoliberal, alienating individualism. Public spaces as learning spaces in the city offer a framework for that.

## **LEARNING CITIES FOR/THROUGH CITIZENSHIP**

What could be learned from these examples and how do we examine the topic of learning cities, civic movements, and civic education? First of all, the dominant question remains: is it possible to teach a person to be active in a community, and are active citizenship, activism, and human rights “teachable”, especially to adults?

It is public pedagogy, which asks for the link between city, space, learning, and education to be reconsidered, that might extend the existing concept of learning cities. Public pedagogy offers the discourse which sees activism in the context of learning, but also as an educational goal in itself. But one cannot learn the methods and theories of civic education without engaging in it; it is only through action that a person begins to notice the positions, discourses, interactions occurring in one’s environment, and starts to feel free to act, and feels in charge of his/her actions, is optimistic about collaboration and change, and familiar with the existing mechanisms of participation. Thus, not only are



there learning processes that are needed to engage in action, but the action becomes learning per se.

Elizabeth Ellsworth (2005) uses Winnicott's view on transitional space as a point of departure when conceptualising public pedagogy. She claims that people transform only when they dare to connect with the outside worlds of things which provokes rearrangements of the "inside". However, this process does not happen consequently, but rather simultaneously as the world and person are recalibrating in the action of making. This "recalibration" is the act of "becoming a citizen" through action.

What is educational in this process? Educators encounter space, time, experience, people, and objects with an educational intent of seeking new ways of knowledge and relating that transform memory, space, and the future (Ellsworth, 2005). The city and its architecture become pedagogical and pedagogy becomes architectural when "together they create a fluid, moving pivot place that puts inside and outside, self and other, personal and social into relation" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 38).

This "imagining" in the case of the movements in Belgrade refers to the common democratic future, true participation, and increased agency for the common goal. By being involved in an experiment of democracy, a person is becoming/transforming simultaneously as a world and social order are being interrupted and transformed, having in mind that transformation is not a state but a field of emergence, a process of constant forming and re-forming. Perhaps, trans-forming is not even possible in this context, as a person is never *outside* of the world that is in the making. It is an entanglement of collective memory, imagination, and action that shapes new onto-epistemological realities. As Barad (2007) said:

Practices of knowing and being are not isolable; they are mutually implicated. We don't obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are of the world. We are part of the world in its differential becoming. The separation of epistemology from ontology is a reverberation of a metaphysics that assumes an inherent difference between human and nonhuman, subject and object, mind and body, matter and discourse. (p. 185)

This is exactly why public actions and activities in public spaces manage to transcend the gap between 'inside' and 'outside', learning goal and learning process, between those who teach and those who learn; they take learning to new sites and into a new education realm, thus enabling a true transformation of the person and community.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The movements and initiatives of free municipalities, rebelling cities, and civic protest in urban areas reveal a potential to rethink and re-conceptualise the existing concept of learning cities. A new kind of governance is the most outstanding feature of these movements,



since they put citizens in the focus – not as the main ‘beneficiary’ but as the active creator of the learning content, spaces, and approach. Even more than that – the educational goals come from the citizens so the learning is not reduced to a limited instrumental role but goes beyond that and becomes a way of transforming people, community, and society.

Even in a traditional perspective, these movements change the view of educational institutions and learning sites:

Organizing the neighborhoods has been just as important in prosecuting labor struggles, as has organizing the workplace. One of the strengths of the factory occupations in Argentina that followed on the collapse of 2001 is that the cooperatively managed factories also turned themselves into neighborhood cultural and educational centers. (Harvey, 2012, p. 132)

Improving the educational offer is only one of the aspects of the new paradigm; what brings the substantial change is a new perspective of learning, removed from the usual paternalistic approach and instrumental treatment. The strong political character of these civic movements reshapes the municipalities’ lives and practices in various ways. Not all of them are successful and functioning, but it is difficult to deny that the answer to the challenges of extremist, populist, and authoritarian regimes lies in civic engagement at the local level. It incorporates “the simple view that we all have an equal ‘right to the city’, to co-create our urban spaces. It proposes a shift from participative tokenism to delegated power and citizen control; a creative, transparent, open style of democracy” (White, 2016, p. 1).

It would be hard to find such vibrant, learners-centred, dynamic, close-to-life forms of education and learning as those that can be found in the “rebellious cities”. This is the reality – the fact that such learning doesn’t fit into traditional learning paradigms and their rigid “compartments” doesn’t make it less important. Instead of ignoring that reality as it develops further, opening new possibilities for theoretical considerations and innovative practices, we should transform and broaden our concept of learning communities and learning cities so that we can improve the ways in which they try to meet the challenges of our time.

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*Séamus Ó Tuama*

## LEARNING NEIGHBOURHOODS: LIFELONG LEARNING, COMMUNITY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN CORK LEARNING CITY

### ABSTRACT

*Cork Learning City is piloting a programme called Learning Neighbourhoods. While it is an evolving model, it has potential for animating a culture of learning that is community based and with the prospect of giving ordinary citizens a chance to contribute both to broader issues at city level as well as to significant global debates of the day. The Learning Neighbourhood concept is essentially about collaboration and coalition building, extending networks and prioritising learning (horizontally and vertically) among and between generations and the positive leverage of all and every resource to enhance the process. It is a community building concept articulated through learning. Learning is not something abstract and removed from the practicalities of living. Learning encapsulates the four types of capital, human, social, identity, and cultural; it also extends to capacity building, resilience, and the challenges of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). This paper contextualises the theory and practice informing Learning Neighbourhoods.*

**Keywords:** *Learning Neighbourhoods, lifelong learning, community development*

### SOSESKE UČENJA: VSEŽIVLJENJSKO UČENJE, SKUPNOST IN TRAJNOSTNI RAZVOJ V UČEČEM SE MESTU CORK – POVZETEK

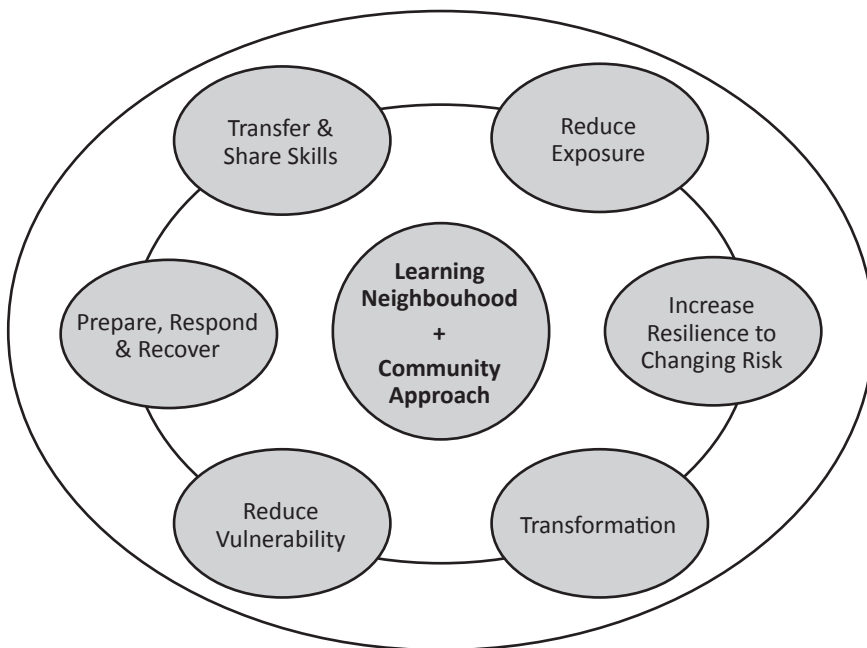
*Učeče se mesto Cork poskusno izvaja program, imenovan Soseske učenja. Čeprav je še v razvojni fazi, ima program zmožnost za spodbujanje kulture učenja, ki temelji na skupnosti in omogoča ljudem, da sodelujejo pri reševanju pomembnih vprašanj na mestni in globalni ravni. Zamisel soseske učenja temelji na sodelovanju in združevanju, na širjenju omrežij in dajanju prednosti učenju (horizontalno in vertikalno) tako znotraj posamezne generacije kot med njimi ter na učinkoviti uporabi prav vseh virov pri krepitvi tega procesa. Na takšen način se z učenjem gradi skupnost. To pa ni nekaj abstraktnega ali nekaj, kar bi bilo ločeno od vsakdanjega življenja. Učenje obsega štiri vrste kapitala, človeškega, družbenega, identitetnega in kulturnega, nanaša pa se tudi na področja krepitve zmogljivosti in odpornosti ter soočanja z izzivi, ki nam jih prinašajo cilji trajnostnega razvoja. Članek predstavlja teorijo in prakso, na podlagi katerih je oblikovan koncept sosesk učenja.*

**Ključne besede:** *soseske učenja, vseživljenjsko učenje, razvijanje skupnosti*

## CONTEXTUALISING LEARNING NEIGHBOURHOODS: LIFELONG LEARNING AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

Lifelong learning literature appears at times to imply that learning is not only an end in itself, but perhaps the only end. On the other hand, much of the recent focus on human capital accumulation to counter poverty seems to lose sight of the wider individual and social benefits of learning. Community development, lifelong learning, and resilience are not social silos, they are all part of the common experience of living. The Learning Neighbourhoods model has the capacity to link each of these domains. Learning Neighbourhoods can build on existing networks, assess local needs, promote collaboration within the community, make city-wide connections and through the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) engage with other learning cities; they are about trust building with local government, about autonomous actions and responsibility taking. They are also intrinsically about learning together and individually. They champion the essential importance of learning, not just for the communities themselves but for city governments and other stakeholders. Learning Neighbourhoods adopt a notion of lifelong learning that is about community capacity building, resilience, and a broader understanding of the complexity of the world in which we live (Figure 1). They echo Kruper and Prins's (2016) view that community development inherently involves "adult education" (p. 360), while much of adult education also inherently involves community development.

Figure 1: Learning Neighbourhood + Community Approach



Source: Adapted from Archer, 2016.

A synergetic bond between community and learning is the bedrock of the Learning Neighbourhoods project in Cork City. It adopts “a community development approach to build trust, embeddedness and community ownership of the project” (O’Sullivan, Ó Tuama, & Kenny, 2017, p. 534). The idea of a “sustainable learning community” described by Kearney and Zuber-Skerritt (2019) in relation to the Samoan community in Logan City in Australia bears a remarkable similarity with the Learning Neighbourhoods model piloted in Cork City. They draw on Senge’s (1990) learning organisation, which essentially “encourages members to draw from knowledge within the organization to strengthen their ability to think critically and creatively” (Kearney & Zuber-Skerritt, 2019, p. 402). In Senge’s model learning is a continuous process, it is about a deep cultural shift in how we see the world. Putting the learning organisation theory into practice gives Senge a praxis perspective. In this praxis milieu there are

spaces for generative conversations and concerted action [...]. People can talk from their hearts and connect with one another in the spirit of dialogue [...]. When people talk and listen to each other this way, they create a field of alignment that produces tremendous power to invent new realities. (Kofman & Senge, 1993, p. 16)

The concept is about “a shift that goes all the way to the core of our culture” (p. 22). This is part of the motivation in Learning Neighbourhoods. It is equally a critical aspect of community development that is aimed at transforming the lives of people in marginalised communities, but it also has to be the motivation of the entire planet as we grapple with the urgent and extremely complex challenges of the SDGs. The agility of conceptualising new futures is about how we get “frozen patterns of thought to be dissolved” (Kofman & Senge, 1993, p. 6). At a local level it’s where people “act and interact as equals, expressing ideas and challenging themselves and each other to achieve shared goals [...] [and] fosters an environment where people can learn to learn together, for the collective good and for themselves” (Kearney & Zuber-Skerritt, 2019, p. 402).

There is a strong resemblance between this definition and the working definition of the Learning Neighbourhoods adopted in Cork City as “an area that has an ongoing commitment to learning, providing inclusive and diverse learning opportunities for whole communities through partnership and collaboration” (O’Sullivan & Kenny, 2016, p. 2).

Learning Neighbourhoods conceptually draw on community building ideas. They are about the essential symbiosis between reflection, learning, and community development, as well as about denizens having both the capacity and opportunity to be involved in shaping sustainable futures locally and seeing this in a ‘glocal’ way. In this way community development and lifelong learning are a twin helix (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Twin Helix: Lifelong Learning and Community Development



Source: Author's own.

The indispensable link between learning and community is at the core of Learning Neighbourhoods, it is at the confluence of learning and knowing and place making. Naidoo (2001) develops this linkage in what she terms “lifelong community learning”, which is an interweaving of community and learning “as a force for social change and development”, emphasising that it is “an end-goal in and of itself as the development of a learning culture within communities” (p. 714). This coupling of community development and lifelong learning is especially important for communities on the margins to “conscientize, mobilize and empower them to take steps to change their socio-economic situation” (p. 715).

Community members individually and collectively can only contribute to making beneficial change if they have the tools to understand and engage with the critical issues that impact them. This is essential to Freire’s ideas and is at the heart of the challenges we face today to allow people to be drivers in shaping their own futures, partners in creating futures not just for their neighbours but as part of the deeply pressing need for all of us to address unfolding global crises like those encapsulated in the SDGs. Freire’s challenging of the teacher-student relationship is not only apposite in terms of appreciating what lifelong learning should mean, but is equally core to the idea of community development: “The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow” (Freire, 2009, p. 169). He is talking about real dialogue, challenging the idea of authority, and giving agency to all.

### **NEIGHBOURHOODS LED BY EQUAL NEIGHBOURS: NONDOMINATION AND ANTI-SUBORDINATION**

In the literature we can find two different terms to describe very similar concepts. Bohman (2015) uses the term “nondomination”, while Steil and Delgado (2019) use the term “anti-subordination”. Both address persistent contexts of inequality, exclusion, and poverty, and the extent to which those directly impacted lack the sufficient means to engage in a meaningful way in the very decisions that impact their lives. The systemic environment is described by Steil and Delgado (2019) as “the durable categories of political, economic, and social inequality that characterize contemporary cities” (p. 39). For them anti-subordination would “enforce positive rights for those who have been historically subordinated” (p. 39). For Bohman (2015) nondomination, in the negative sense, is being able to “avoid the injustice of being subject to the will of others, while potentially, if not actually,

being able to exercise a minimum of control over one's own life" (p. 522). In the positive sense it's about people having "the communicative freedom to have influence over collective decisions that affect them" (p. 524).

Law and formal rights on their own cannot redress the essential imbalance, which is a key point in Bohman's critique. He speaks of "mutually granted communicative status" that is moving beyond the formality of rights alone, because even in well-functioning democracies with strong legal systems and rights regimes, some people are not mutually granted that status, "where speakers are silent because they do not have the standing to speak, much less to make claims concerning the extent of their freedom" (Bohman, 2015, p. 525). In the confluence of lifelong learning, community development, and city policy making, especially vis-à-vis communities, these are critical issues.

We can find many examples of domination and subordination in the everyday experiences of long-time resident, right-bearing citizens in our cities. But the situation is exasperated for some communities. These can include people who are homeless, or do not have secure tenure, or do not have a legal right to live in a state, or belong to an excluded group because of their status, economic standing, gender identity, religion, ethnicity or any number of other designations. It may not be feasible or safe for these people to articulate their objections to domination. The level of domination can vary across the political landscape. This is a highly complex issue, which cannot be fully articulated here. However, it is important to articulate it in the context of lifelong learning and community development, especially in bottom-up development where those directly affected have a meaningful voice in shaping the decisions that impact them. For learning cities this should involve access to lifelong learning opportunities for all, regardless, for instance, of their legal status. This is the context in which Cork Learning Neighbourhoods adopted the term *denizen* rather than *citizen* to describe people who live in a neighbourhood. In Cork as in many other cities there can be striking anomalies between the circumstances of neighbours, even neighbours who might share the same classroom. In terms of lifelong learning, a child who has lived virtually all their life in Ireland might be effectively prevented from entering higher education. Fleming, Loxley, and Finnegan (2017) point out that in Ireland there is a legal requirement that "Irish school goers who were born in non-EU countries but grew up in Ireland face very high foreign student fees" (p. 135).

Through processes of learning individuals and communities can gain knowledge of their situations and begin to make their voices heard around critical situations regarding the community in which they live. In terms of the development of those areas, it means that all the people have not just a say in the decisions, but a positive injunction that it is safe for them to speak. This is not an easy challenge: it may mean, for instance, that a city could be at odds with the national legislation when offering communicative freedom via democratic sanctuary in which people can speak freely and are encouraged to speak for themselves. Even in ostensibly open and democratic societies the emergence of neo-liberal economics and new public management has muddied the water. Steil and Delgado (2019), drawing on the work of Jane Jacobs and Susan Fainstein, propose a change of emphasis for city

governments to reverse the cultural shift “from managerial to entrepreneurial urban governance” (p. 40), advocating they take on board the views of those most directly impacted, placing justice ahead of efficiency, and recreating the commitment to public good and social supports. To some extent this is being addressed within the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC). In GNLC, cities, at governmental level, commit to promoting lifelong learning, engage in a dialogical approach, align to international best practice and promote the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that no one is left behind. In Cork, this commitment is taken very seriously, the Learning Neighbourhoods project is sponsored by the learning city, with very high visibility by city hall.

Learning Neighbourhoods are located at the nexus of balancing the interests of diverse actors as well as “addressing social and environmental justice, both internally and in relation to wider global concerns” (Bulkeley, Luque-Ayala, McFarlane, & MacLeod, 2018, p. 717). Creating a sustainable model for city autonomous governance means “NGOs, community organisations, social processes and city authorities all need enhanced capacities to collaborate” (p. 717), which is exactly the concept underpinning Learning Neighbourhoods. However, scaling up to city level is both an opportunity and a challenge. It brings a new *modus operandi* into the deliberative process, a greater diversity around the table, which enables a more inclusive dialogue. It speaks to what Bohman (2015) calls “one’s standing as a knower” (p. 525), which is fundamental to the 2030 Agenda that no one is left behind. It is affirmed in the Cork Call to Action for Learning Cities (2017) that learning cities be a “driver for environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability and acknowledging the importance of involving all stakeholders in the process” (p. 2). Being a knower is about being recognised as an authentic autonomous person with a right to know your own world and being given the opportunity, without threat or prejudice, to express your point of view in make decisions on issues that affect you and your community. There is an element of this that rhymes too with Freire’s (2009) concept of conscientisation, because we need to develop the knowledge and skills to know many things about the world in which we live.

## **ADULT EDUCATION: A KEY DIMENSION OF LEARNING NEIGHBOURHOODS**

Learning Neighbourhoods are about promoting learning cultures that are lifelong and lifewide. A major component of lifelong learning is adult education, which enhances “educational equality, participation, catch-up learning and personal development” (Kil, Motschilnig, & Thöne-Geyer, 2012, p. 2) that emerges in formal, non-formal, and informal environments. Not only this, but adult educators are on the frontline in terms of facilitating learners to experience and understand the complex world we inhabit today. They “help their learners develop values, knowledge, and skills for collaboration and socially responsible interaction practices that span from the local to the global community” (Coryell, Sehin, & Peña, 2018, p. 180). This reflects an idea developed by Richard Sclove (1995) about developing a “democratic macrocommunity”, which is creating links

between “non-parochial” small communities, like neighbourhoods. The idea is that although people are engaging locally, they are contextualising local issues and concerns not in isolation or totally oriented towards just solving the local, but understood in the context of global challenges and contributing even in a small way to addressing them. This approach fits perfectly with the UNESCO Learning City agenda, which does exactly that, and with the additional layer of local engagement like Learning Neighbourhoods, the reach is down to individuals, families, and local residents, and up to the world stage. Adult education according to Coryell, Sehin, and Peña (2018) is placing increasing emphasis on “employing cosmopolitanism as a theoretical lens in their work” (p. 180).

In taking stock of why adult education is a critically important dimension of lifelong learning and especially in the generation of learning cities, we need to acknowledge that the tradition places the learner very much in the centre: as Knox (2016) puts it, “participants have a transcendent experience that expands past their personal activities” (p. 1). It has an intrinsic value. Kil, Motschilnig, and Thöne-Geyer (2012) sum this up simply as: “Adult education constitutes a value per se. It provides an insight into world knowledge and enables own experiences to be confronted with acquisition processes” (p. 2). It is also operating on both the plane of lifelong and lifewide learning. Smilde (2010) used the term “biographical learning” to capture the meaning of lifewide learning as it “includes people’s experiences, knowledge and self-reflections — in short everything people have learned throughout their lives and have absorbed into their biographies” (p. 186). In this sense learning has a chronological dimension to it (lifelong) but also a width in that it captures the full span of people’s experiences. The word “expand” is significant as it captures the idea of width as the notion of it being both creative and transcendent. Evans (2013) pursues a similar theme, presenting it as an individual drawing on “accumulated, layered and multifarious biographical resources” which are effectively a “distillation of learning processes” (p. 18) that enable the individual to shape their own life and create a platform off which to extend their learning. Soylu and Yelken (2014) make concrete that “life-wide learning represents the fact that learning can take place in all fields of the life such as work, family, travelling, volunteering, etc.” (p. 2703). In practice they see it as a process where learners draw on past experience and learning, and extend their learning through new learning opportunities, which could of course be in all the informal and formal contexts envisaged in their definition. Aleandri and Refrigeri (2012) elaborate the context as encompassing the range of non-formal and informal learning experiences as well as formal ones and critically make the point that lifewide learning systems must be characterised by being “flexible, to allow learners to enter and leave the system when it is necessary and appropriate” (p. 1243). In all of these discussions it is clear that adult education is a critical component in both lifelong and lifewide learning.

As pointed out by Carr, Balasubramanian, Atieno, and Onyango (2018), SDG4 is not particularly well framed in terms of lifelong learning as it lacks specifics and would seem to lean towards what they call a common sense definition where lifelong learning is a chronological process rather than one underpinned by a tradition of theory and practice. While

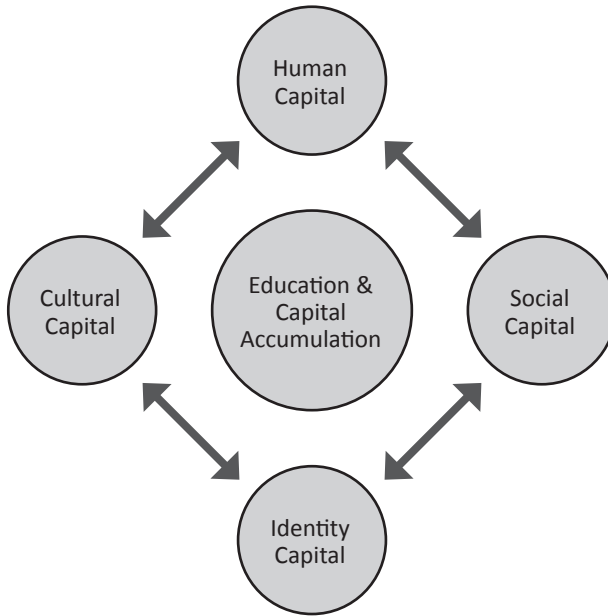
this lacuna exists in the drafting, it does not mask the complexity of the field. In practice lifelong learning assumes formal, non-formal, informal, and popular educational components, as well as blends of each of these, and while it includes all life stages, adult learning is particularly important beyond the formal education system and for ensuring inclusion and participation by those left behind by formal education. The *Benefits of Lifelong Learning* (BeLL) study across ten European countries concluded “that adult learners experience numerous benefits from liberal adult education” (BeLL, 2014, p. 3), as those surveyed reported better health, new social networks, wellbeing, and motivation to stay engaged in learning. Additionally, it found that “the lower the educational level of the respondent, the more positive changes” (p. 10) they reported. A very significant impact is the social inclusionary dividend which respondents reported. Younger learners saw their experiences as being “a ‘stepping stone’ into society, improving their sense of control over their life. For older participants, learning has a ‘cushioning’ effect, protecting them from age-related changes in their lives” (p. 10). Learners reported social cohesion benefits too in relation to their own networks, their workplaces and about one third reported positive changes “to work and career and to active citizenship” (p. 9). No single approach is a panacea for all societal challenges, but liberal adult education and learning has clear societal benefits.

Adult education, as Mayombe (2018) acknowledges, “equip[s] mature people with the knowledge required for active participation in the political, economic, and social life of their communities” (p. 399), which fits perfectly with the goals of Learning Neighbourhoods. Schuller (2010) identified three types of capital learners accumulate: “human capital, social capital and identity capital” (p. 110). I would include cultural capital, which Talcott Parsons (1977) identified as the “means to acquire minimum thresholds of cultural currency”. All four types of capital are necessary for full participation in society (Figure 3). They directly benefit the individual and the wider community and are essential gains of a lifelong learning agenda. Human capital is the set of “skills, knowledge and learning that individuals can use in the job market” (Ó Tuama, 2016, p. 112). Social capital is essentially the networks, connections, and linkages which an individual can avail of in all aspects of their life. For Jelenc Krašovec and Kump (2009) the “basic ingredients of social capital are trust, networks, participation and norms of reciprocity” (p. 259). Identity capital “is a sort of validation of a person’s social credentials or a reinforcement of identity and recognition” (Ó Tuama, 2016, p. 114).

On a broader societal level, addressing the SDGs requires us to imagine new futures, for people to be knowers; in short, we need what Granovetter (1983) described as “cognitive flexibility”, which is a direct spin-off of engagement and learning. Johnco, Wuthrich, and Rapee (2013) define cognitive flexibility as

the ability to shift cognitive set, thought or attention in order to perceive, process or respond to situations in a different way [...] to produce diverse ideas, consider response alternatives and modify behaviour and cognition in response to changing environmental demands. (p. 577)

Figure 3: Education and Capital Accumulation



Source: Author's own.

Cognitive rigidity, Granovetter (1983) suggests, is symptomatic of “any set of people whose outlook is unusually provincial as the result of homogeneous contacts” (p. 205). The contemporary era is marked by an increase in stridently held views, the most obvious being ones related to religious fundamentalism and increases in xenophobic and nationalistic politics. These rigidities in thinking close off the possibility of considering “that the situation is novel and requires a new strategy” (Johnco, Wuthrich, & Rapee, 2013, p. 577). These closed worldviews are a luxury the world cannot afford in the light of significant global challenges like climate change and all the consequences that follow. Benhabib (2005) talks about this “rage against rationalization” which has generated “a plethora of cultural, as well as political and religious, fundamentalisms” (p. 754). What seems common to all of these political discourses is a lack of cognitive flexibility, an inability to perceive that we need to imagine new approaches that are more flexible, more inclusive and more optimistic of the future. Echoing these points, Brunkhorst (2005), contextualising what democracy means, deviates from a concept of democracy simply as “majority rule restrained by basic rights” to one which is about being free from domination and solving “social problems through democratic self-obligation” (p. 139). He speaks of the people as “a learning sovereign that exposes itself to a risky experimental practice of trial and error” (p. 140), but which also includes people who are excluded, including dissenting voices and marginalised and excluded minorities. This is a world not of command and control, but one driven organically through a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. It aligns with how Habermas (1990) describes the principles of discursive procedure, which



necessarily includes “all concerned”, reciprocally recognises the equality of the views of everyone and in which those engaged have an openness to “complete reversibility” (p. 122) of the views which they brought to the table. In practice reaching these goals is inherently difficult, but what is practical is to set out a broad agenda for practice that sets out to include all perspectives, that has a mission to promote learning for and by all, that takes a non-parochial perspective and is built on a model of partnership, which includes residents, but also includes city governments, businesses, NGOs, schools, health services, police, and all relevant actors (individual and collective).

Learning Neighbourhoods are premised on those kinds of values, they champion local autonomy but they also include institutional partners, civil society groups and essentially should have room at the table for all who wish to have a voice. This approach is essential for social capital accumulation and what Granovetter (1974, 1983) describes as the strength of weak ties, which is essential to the capacity building of disadvantaged urban communities. What learning neighbourhoods should strive to achieve are not just binary or indeed multifaceted links, but an environment of networking and engaging. Jane Jacobs (1961) highlighted just those types of interweaving relationships that are necessary for effective urban communities. Her “hop-and-skip relationships” and “hop skip people” were catalysts for making this type of environment real. The number of such catalytic characters doesn’t need to be huge because they “know unlikely people, and therefore eliminate the necessity for long chains of communication” (Jacobs, 1961, p. 135). There are significant differences between now and the 1960s, but some challenges are surprisingly similar. The idea of neighbourhood is about scale too. The layers of complexity in addressing contemporary challenges require advanced knowledge generation and highly specialised research and theory building. But it equally needs engagement outside of rarefied silos and real engagement with ordinary people, whose lives are impacted by climate, migration, crime, security, and the rapidity of change. The people who are most vulnerable and exposed to risk are very often the ones who “have the worst access to environmental goods and services (such as good quality housing, energy efficiency measures, green space, etc.) and who experience the poorest health and quality of life” (Eames & Egmore, 2011, p. 771). As the SDGs make very clear, sustainability is multifaceted, but two things tie all the goals together: the absolute need for learning throughout the life course and the need to imagine new futures (cognitive flexibility).

The *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* (2013) makes clear that sustainable development “requires fundamental changes in the way people think and act. Lifelong learning is a necessary part of making this change” (p. 4). The Mexico City Statement on Sustainable Learning Cities (2015) calls for “lifelong learning strategies that foster environmental stewardship” (p. 2). The Cork Call to Action for Learning Cities (2017) aspires to create “mindful learning cultures in our cities that foster global consciousness and citizenship through local action to implement the SDGs” (p. 1). That common theme is present with increasing urgency.



## CONCLUSION

More people than in any previous time, by numbers and the percentage of the total population, live in cities today. More people are displaced and are migrating than in any previous period in history. Millions of people are living in inadequate housing, they have low levels of nutrition, poor education, and poor health care. We face a greater threat to human life now than in any previous era of human history. The pace and complexity of technological change are unprecedented. We are emerging into a new information driven period with unprecedented opportunities and challenges. We may be at the threshold of a new age or at the twilight of human history. The decisions we make in the next few years will determine our future like in no previous time. Who will make the brave decisions and when is critical. Certain cities and the people who live in those cities will be critical actors in shaping the future. The extent to which ordinary people can have a say in how they want to shape that future is paramount. Then United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, proclaimed: “Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family” (Annan, 1997, p. 3).

Learning Neighbourhoods is one of the capstone projects of Cork Learning City. It is established as a pilot concept that is applicable to the host city, but with potential for cities throughout UNESCO GNLC. This paper set out to place this model in a context which includes community development, lifelong learning, and resilience. It also placed discussion in the context of the global challenges addressed in the 2030 Agenda, which impacts locally as well as at a global level. Learning Neighbourhoods is premised on the idea that ordinary people should be what Bohman (2015) describes as knowers, people who can comprehend and contribute to finding solutions to contemporary problems that impact them. In this regard the knowers in a Learning Neighbourhoods context know that everyone in their locality is a neighbour, but they also know that problems cannot be solved solely locally, regionally, nationally or globally. It is a pilot project and it is too soon to draw definitive conclusions on its effectiveness. What this paper can offer is a praxis stocktake, placing the project in the context of the literature by way of both acknowledging the rationale for the project, but also setting some signposts to shape future practice and challenges. In learning cities, in neighbourhood projects like Learning Neighbourhoods, ordinary people have opportunities to learn, discuss, and formulate opinions on shaping the future.

The challenges we face are incredibly urgent and complex. We need to apply our collective thoughts on how we can save the planet and lift millions of people across the globe out of poverty. We need to formulate policy on the basis of the best available information, but for policy to succeed it needs the willing assent of the people it impacts. People can only truly give assent through discursive processes that are open and fair. To participate in a meaningful way, people need to have the tools to analyse, synthesize and criticise, as well as the confidence to give voice to their views. Discourse in the classroom and in the hair salon are important. We need informed active publics. The best way to build these publics is through opening channels of learning and discussion and through active collective listening by all of us. Learning Neighbourhoods is just one such experiment.

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*Balázs Németh*

## LEARNING CITIES IN PROGRESS: COMPARING THE MODELS OF PÉCS AND CORK

### ABSTRACT

*This paper analyses the influence of the rise and development of learning cities and regions in adult education research work. Comparative adult education research has got great potential to investigate the concrete mechanism of learning city-region constructions and to analyse the changing nature and structures of learning city-region models. Therefore, the paper tries to underline the impact of some relevant theoretical focuses and related models perspectives and limitations to comparative adult education research work since it is important to examine how learning city-region collaborations at local-regional levels may enhance both participation and performance in the learning of adults, but also of other age groups, and affect the intergenerational dimensions of learning as well as community development. At the same time, this contribution signals the need for interdisciplinary approaches and positions in comparative research work on local and regional citizen participation in learning programmes.*

**Keywords:** *learning city-region, comparative adult education research, participation, Pécs Learning City, Cork Learning City*

### UČEČA SE MESTA V TEKU: PRIMERJAVA MODELOV MEST PÉCS IN CORK – POVZETEK

Članek analizira vpliv razvoja učečih se mest in regij na raziskovanje izobraževanja odraslih. Primerjalno raziskovanje izobraževanja odraslih ponuja veliko priložnosti za raziskovanje konkretnih mehanizmov, ki delujejo znotraj učečih se mest (ali regij), ter za analizo njihove spreminjajoče se narave in strukture njihovih modelov. Članek v ospredje postavlja vplive, ki jih imajo nekateri teoretični pogledi, in omejitve povezanih modelov na primerjalno raziskovanje izobraževanja odraslih, saj je pomembno raziskati, kako lahko sodelovanje učečih se mest-regij na lokalni-regionalni ravni izboljša tako udeležbo in učinkovitost učenja odraslih kot tudi učenje drugih starostnih skupin ter vpliva na medgeneracijske dimezije učenja in razvoja skupnosti. Hkrati prispevek kaže na potrebo po interdisciplinarnih pristopih v primerjalnem raziskovanju lokalne in regionalne participacije državljanov v učnih programih.

**Ključne besede:** *učeča se mesta-regije, primerjalno raziskovanje izobraževanja odraslih, udeležba, učeče se mesto Pécs, učeče se mesto Cork*

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## INTRODUCTION

It is necessary to acknowledge that the topic of learning cities and regions has already been analysed from various perspectives in terms of both economic and social orientations. However, it is inevitable that a balanced approach must recognise some key issues and focuses which formed not only the conceptual foundations but also the evolution of related frames and narratives, which themselves played a certain role in emphasizing local and regional collaborations for better education, learning to combine community and individual aspirations.

The theoretical part will try to guide the reader in a thorough overview of the development of the learning city concept and the practice-oriented part will elaborate on the integration of recent concepts channelled into the models of Pécs and Cork, both responding to local and regional interest for raising collaborative forms of learning within particularly manageable structures to gain public interest and support.

However, the incorporation of this mainly neoliberal economy centred model into the lifelong learning policy track of the European Union at the turn of the millennium by way of the European Regions of Lifelong Learning (R3L) can be considered a shift towards balancing the economic with a certain level of the social, the employability factor with attention towards governance, citizenship, and community concerns (Longworth, 2001).

Osborne, Kearns, and Yang (2013) underline the necessity of recognising the stages of development, or rather the evolution, of learning cities. It has changed dramatically over the last ten years under the increased attention and activity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and its Global Network of Learning Cities. Moreover, the model has been attached to the overarching framework of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) at Goal No. 11. The evolutionary perspective may help us to match some drivers of realising the model in concrete national or local-regional contexts.

The cases of Cork and Pécs not only represent two different visions through different models, but they offer several lessons on the formation of learning communities to result in growing participation and community engagement. But it also turns out that a bottom-up approach is key to a successful learning city instead of top-down measures which usually resemble the nature of politics and of the political in the planning of learning city models.

## LEARNING CITIES AND REGIONS ON THE RISE

The birth of learning cities and regions can be traced back to 1972 when the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) initiated a seven city project called "Educating Cities". Vienna, Edinburgh, Kakegawa, Pittsburgh, Edmonton, Adelaide, and Gothenburg made education the focus of their strategies and policies in order to develop economic performance. That experience was turned into an example model

for other cities around the world (Longworth, 1999). The project had a lot of positive impact, but perhaps it is the fate of all projects, or perhaps it is the effect of politics, that in the 1990s, only the stakeholders in Gothenburg remembered their original aims and project-based results.

It actually took until the 1990s for things to start developing in a much broader dimension (Longworth, 1999). Longworth labelled this period as the age of innocence – when researchers recognised that something was afoot but not quite what it was. Two conferences took place in the first half of the decade to gear up the initiative, both of them helping to push back the limits of knowledge and action. The Gothenburg gathering in 1992, also sponsored by the OECD, was a follow-up event to succeed the Educating Cities project. It thus initiated the international association of educating cities, which is currently based in Barcelona and has a membership of more than 370 cities worldwide.

The Rome conference was proposed and organised by the European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) and the American Council for Education in 1996 and this in turn generated the World Initiative on Lifelong Learning (WILL). Today both ELLI and WILL no longer exist, but in the 1990s they directly promoted the advancement of learning city knowledge. ELLI offered guidance for developing some of the early charters for learning regions – charters that demonstrated the commitment of a city-region to improving learning opportunities and methodologies for all its inhabitants.

This set the stage for a wider dialogue on promoting the local culture of learning. Cities as far apart as Adelaide in Australia, Halifax in Canada, Espoo in Finland, and Dublin in Ireland applied this charter formula and exploited it for their own goals to develop lifelong learning in their communities and neighbourhood regions.

Hitting a peak in the middle of the decade with the European Year of Lifelong Learning in 1996, it was taken very seriously by ELLI and relatively many universities (there was a funding initiative and programme connected to it), yet its value was unfortunately forgotten by many of the organisations that matter – cities and regions, schools, business and industry, and most people in the newly established European Union. In spite of this, there is no doubt that the cornerstones of today's work on learning cities and regions are based in the early work on adult and lifelong learning that was given an impetus by the European Year of Lifelong Learning.

A huge number of quality initiatives was either marginalised or ignored, and the process lingered on to the age of experimentation in the late 1990s when National Learning City networks began to appear, first in the United Kingdom and later in Finland and Sweden. Therefore, the North European approach very much signalled “the centre of gravity” for lifelong learning and learning city focuses (Longworth, 1999).

In this new age of experimentation, Learning City-Region projects began to receive financial support and one of them, “Towards a European Learning Society” (TELS), delivered what it called a Learning Cities Audit Tool and analysed the performance of 80 European



municipalities (Longworth, 2001). Unsurprisingly, it found that the words “Learning City and Learning Region” were almost unknown; indeed, in more than two thirds of those 80 cities they were non-existent. At this time several conferences and learning city launches in places like Liverpool, Espoo, Edinburgh, Glasgow and many others were taking place. Learning Festivals celebrated the joy of learning in Glasgow, Scotland and Sapporo, Japan.

As Europe was approaching the new millennium, the age of advancement was accelerated mainly by the European Commission’s (EC) Lisbon agenda, which put lifelong learning at the forefront of European policy. The development of learning cities and regions was one of the key strategies of this policy – and so the European policy paper on the local and regional dimension of lifelong learning was published in 2002. This important document was built on the results of TELS and written by Norman Longworth. The document clearly stated that “to promote a culture of learning across Europe, there is a need to develop learning communities, cities and regions and to establish local multifunctional learning centres” (EC, 2002, p. 6).

The OECD (2000a) also geared up the process in 2001 with its learning regions project in 5 European regions – Jena in Germany, Oresund in Sweden and Denmark, Vienne in France, Kent in the UK, and Andalusia in Spain. Among its findings were the perhaps surprising statement that secondary education appears to be the most important for regional development and the more predictable one that there is a need to encourage creativity at all levels of education. And that’s a theme that crops up time and time again in learning region folklore – creativity, innovation, and vision at all levels of education (Longworth, 2001).

Despite the fact that many cities and regions are still well behind the mark, in the new millennium the movement to create learning cities and regions threatened to become an avalanche; to provide a couple of examples among many, Germany established around 76 learning regions as part of the Lisbon Process, while every city, town, and municipality in Victoria, Australia became a learning entity (Longworth & Osborne, 2010). Moreover, the Chinese government decreed that every large city in China should become a learning city by 2010 and beyond. The term “Ideopolis” was born, described below by Tom Cannon and his collaborators:

A City or Region whose economy is driven by the creative search for, and the application of, new ideas, thinking and knowledge, and which is firmly rooted to the creative transfer of ideas, to opportunities, to innovation, and eventually to production. (Cannon, Nathan, & Westwood, 2003, p. 7)

There are those words again – creative, innovation, new ideas and thinking. These initiatives launched researchers into what might be called the age of understanding – and many of them finally thought they got it – knew, or thought they knew, what being a learning region entails and at the same time the number of European projects increased. From

every part of the Commission – Learning Cities and Regions was included in the Framework research programmes and a lifelong learning element had to be included in the vast majority of the Commission’s Social Fund and Socrates calls (EC, 2002). And yet the OECD would have you believe that all regions seek to sustain economic activity through various combinations of lifelong learning, innovation, and creative uses of information and communication technologies (OECD, 2000b).

### **Bridging Learning and the Learning Economy**

In order to promote an understanding of the concept of learning cities and learning regions, it is worth indicating that there are four major different impacts on the idea itself. The first impact on the reconceptualisation of learning and learning economy/learning organisation can be traced to what now must be seen as a seminal paper by Lundvall and Johnson (1994) on the *learning economy*. Its approach to different types of learning and the difference between codified and tacit learning is well articulated – something not new to those in the fields of education and adult learning. Of special interest in this paper by Lundvall and Johnson (1994) are the explicit connections made to economy.

While *the role of learning in production and work is not new*, generally it was largely “assumed” and occurred invisibly (Razavi, 1997). What Lundvall and Johnson (1994) as well as others (Edquist, 1997; OECD, 2000) have identified and stressed is that in the newly emerging knowledge economy *learning is now a fundamental process and resource*.

A second impact on learning cities and learning regions derives from *the application of learning within and across organisations* (Senge, 1990). Economic geographers have also emphasized that what forms *the transfer and sharing of knowledge and ideas across informal networks within industry clusters* (sometimes referred to as collective learning) *seems to be a critical aspect of creativity and innovation* (Keeble, Lawson, Moore, & Wilkinson, 1999).

Since innovation is a basic element in the knowledge economy, ways to promote, support, and enhance innovation are important (Edquist, 1997). As for *case studies of technopoles and industrial complexes in Europe* (Cooke & Morgan, 1998), the UK, the USA and Canada (Wolfe & Gertler, 2001), there is growing evidence and awareness that *learning is the fundamental process at work in the new knowledge economy*. Far from a presumed and hidden force, it still needs to be made explicit, strengthened and backed up.

Apart from matching clusters and communities of practice, *the work of economic geographers signalled* a third important aspect of the conceptualisation of learning cities and learning regions – *the spatial context*. Florida (1995) established the idea of learning regions and others (Boekema, Morgan, Bakkers, & Rutten, 2000) described it as the basis of *regional innovation systems*. A very special idea was framed here – that in particular local learning, which was fostered and supported through *good learning infrastructure* (i.e. a regional innovation system), *enabled the locality to compete in a global economy*. This recognition of the regional scale provides *an important link to local economic*

*development and the importance of learning, social capital and human capital in community development.* By setting this link, it is open to move beyond a potentially narrowly defined regional innovation system which only focuses on business and industry *to take a wider community-as-a-whole approach where learning and learning processes can increasingly be the vehicle for equipping and empowering whole communities* (Amin & Thrift, 1999). Allison and Keane (2001) have broadened the spheres of activities and influence for learning *to underline a learning communities approach to local economic development.* In this approach *an explicit link between learning initiatives, partnerships and governance, social capital, and building local capacity together with capabilities and economic prosperity is developed.*

Parallel to this special approach to local economic development is the work of scholars in the field of education research. Tooke (2000), for example, argues that the broader value of learning has been recognised by those who work in and focus on education, lifelong learning, adult, and community education. Obviously, this scholarly tradition brings in *a timely and useful critique to the concept of learning regions provoking an effort to embrace wider social and community development issues.*

The TELS Project (Longworth, 1999) and the UK Learning Towns Project (Yarnit, 2000) presented *four critical objectives for learning and learning initiatives which encompass (i) economic prosperity, (ii) social inclusion, (iii) sustainability, and (iv) governance.*

These objectives resemble the most frequently indicated ones in local economic development strategies. It is the interconnection of these *different dimensions of 'learning' which result in a framework for a whole-of-community approach to learning cities, learning regions* to underline the economic and social life of communities in the global economy.

In this *broader conceptualisation*, the scope of actions and *value of learning goes well beyond a limited definition of industry clusters and issues of competitiveness or innovation* (as important as these are). Like the flow of learning initiatives described by Yarnit (2000), Longworth (1999), Longworth and Franson (2001), Allison and Keane (2001) and others, learning makes its way through/in the community in different manners.

## **UNESCO'S GLOBAL LEARNING CITY INITIATIVE**

Almost ten years after the OECD's learning regions project, UNESCO, another inter-governmental organisation (IGO), initiated a new plan to realise a global learning city network based on the fact that more than a thousand cities in the world had developed into or were building Learning/Educating Cities. This obviously shows that the building of cities which put learning at the forefront of their policies and strategies has become a significant world-wide phenomenon. Cities rarely work in isolation and practical examples have reflected that those cities that are members of a dynamic network of local authorities at national, regional and international levels, have accelerated their growth and competitiveness as learning cities.

There are also many cities still unaware or uncertain of the benefits that a truly global network of learning cities can bring to the development of lifelong learning and the learning society. For these reasons and more this initiative is timely. As UNESCO’s centre of excellence for promoting lifelong learning, and in response to the call of Member States to adopt a more pragmatic and instrumental approach to building a learning society, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) has recently proposed the establishment of the UNESCO Global Learning Cities Network (UNESCO GLCN) to enhance and accelerate the practice of lifelong learning in the world’s conurbations (UIL, 2019c).

Figure 1: The Framework of the UNESCO Global Learning City Index



Source: UIL, 2015, p. 11.

The overall aim of the establishment of the UNESCO GLCN has been to create and develop a global platform in order to mobilise cities and demonstrate how to use their resources effectively in every sector to develop and enrich all their human potential for fostering lifelong personal growth, for developing equality and social justice, for maintaining harmonious social cohesion, and for creating sustainable prosperity. The UNESCO GLCN is intended to be a timely and innovative initiative to offer appropriate means by which cities can themselves develop, according to Figure 1, into learning cities and create a better environment for their citizens (UNESCO, 2013).

Based on the UNESCO guidelines and key features of learning cities, the first UNESCO co-ordinated learning cities gathered in Beijing in the autumn of 2013 during the first UNESCO International Conference of Learning Cities. It was there that the representatives of Cork reflected that they would work to become a Global Learning City based on

their achievement of several goals that had been formulated in association with PASCAL International Observatory, a global think-tank group on learning cities (UIL, 2014; PASCAL Observatory, 2019).

It was also the project-based partnership with PASCAL which moved the University of Pécs to join the global survey of UNESCO UIL on learning cities in 2013 (UIL, 2015) and enabled the City of Pécs to initiate further collaborative actions with UIL.

## **ON BECOMING GLOBAL LEARNING CITIES: THE ROUTES OF PÉCS AND CORK COMPARED**

While we try to underline here that learning cities and regions should be included into comparative adult education research, our explanation comes from the reality that learning cities today demonstrate a social, political, and economic alliance in order to balance diverse needs through learning that may bring about and support the development of open and inclusive societies in contrast with closed and exclusive communities.

It must be clarified that the selection of Pécs and Cork is supported by several similar factors. A special aspect is that both cities were European Capitals of Culture, which generated a profound community focus towards learning communities. Another significant issue to be recognised as a similarity is the relationship between the two cities and their universities with PASCAL International Observatory and its networks. Although Cork has mainly been devoted to PASCAL's so-called "EccoWell" programme and initiated its model accordingly, Pécs joined PASCAL's LCN programme (PASCAL's Learning Cities Networks) and its culture oriented platform of "Harnessing Cultural Policies in Building Sustainable Learning Cities"<sup>1</sup>. A third composite source is the link to universities and university lifelong learning. Both University College Cork and the University of Pécs, as European Universities Continuing Education Network (eucen) members, have been strongly committed to the social responsibility of higher education and have consequently been engaged in the development of learning cities.

In this respect, the main purpose of this analysis is to look into some particular aspects of the development of Cork and Pécs as learning cities and, more precisely, to highlight some similarities and differences around which reasons can be found for comparative studies in adult learning and education.

This paper does not have direct data analysis at the core of its focus, but it tries to assess the impact of policy guided system development in adult learning and education in the context of learning cities and learning communities. This approach is mainly embedded into the reality of the UNESCO dimension of global learning cities and their connection to sustainability and quality concerns. Another aspect of this analysis is how learning cities provide an effective model for integrating different forms of learning with various focuses on community engagement at equitable and sustainable levels.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <http://lcn.pascalobservatory.org/>.

## The Pécs Learning City-Region Forum: Combining Global Initiatives with Community Development

The University of Pécs has always played a key role in the development of the Learning City model in Pécs, Hungary. It started in 2003 when the University, a member of eucen since 1999, joined PASCAL International Observatory and some of its key EU-funded Erasmus and Grundtvig projects based on the development of learning city-regions across Europe. These former projects, for example, LILARA (Learning in Local and Regional Authorities), PENR3L (PASCAL University Network of Regions of Lifelong Learning), and Grundtvig R3L+, accelerated our partnership with the City of Pécs and its local authority together with several other distinguished stakeholders in education, training, and culture (PASCAL Observatory, 2019). These former PASCAL projects, together with the special session of the Commission of Education (EDUC) Committee of the Regions in 2006 and the 2007 PASCAL Conference in Pécs, laid the groundwork for further platform building amongst the relevant bodies engaged in effective knowledge transfer lifelong learning activities.

The Pécs Learning City-Region Forum was formally grounded in 2010 amongst thirteen different institutions of education, training and culture, together with the local and regional authorities of Pécs and Baranya County and that of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Based on a decade-old international project-based partnership that dealt with Learning City-Region innovations in association with PASCAL and UIL, the University of Pécs and its Faculty of Adult Education and HRD re-initiated the establishment of the Pécs Learning City-Region Forum in 2013 to develop a direct tool in certain areas of pedagogical/andragogical work targeting training trainers, educators, and facilitators of learning. The project was incorporated into the project of the University of Pécs, financed by the Hungarian Government's Social Renewal Operative Programme (TÁMOP 4.1.2.B – Developing Teachers-Educators/*Pedagógusfejlesztés*), focusing on the development of teachers.

Its so-called K4 project's sub-group decided to develop structural models for collecting and sharing knowledge and experience among teachers, trainers, mentors, and facilitators engaged in the promotion of quality learning and skills-development in formal, non-formal, and informal settings. The Pécs Learning City-Region Forum started its activities in the autumn of 2014 in three major fields by accelerating partnerships and dialogues (Németh, 2015):

- *the Atypical/Non-Formal Learning platform* tries to help cultural organisers, curators, managers be more successful with their educational programmes organised for adults and also for school-teachers engaged in the development of cultural programmes for children. Such a collaborative frame involves more than 8 organisations/institutions and their representatives in order to identify innovative learning methods, tools, and methodologies with atypical contexts.



- *the School and Environment platform* supports dialogue amongst professionals developing specific environment-oriented programmes for local youth and their parents so as to become Nature-friendly, and conscious in protecting their environment. Around nine member organisations/institutions work actively in the Forum through delegates, professional experts, by providing a platform-based exchange of ideas on bringing school pupils and their families closer to the environment and nurture environmentally-friendly, green-thinking actions and change-management, with attention to interdisciplinary thinking and human behaviour.
- *the Inclusion and Handicapped Situations platform* teachers engage in collaborative actions, providing dialogue to understand problems that emerge in working with young children with learning difficulties, e.g. autism. This platform supports our urban community of schools in addressing the problems caused by early school leaving and matters of adult basic education in the neglected area of second chance schooling.

The three dimensions of the Forum's platforms have enabled us to recognise *some key barriers to collecting and sharing good practices* on particular development works of partner organisations and institutions, which are:

- low levels of culture in mutual partnerships and collaborative actions to share experiences and to develop professional skills and the competence of educators/trainers, and facilitators;
- limited time available for educators/trainers, and facilitators to develop skills and share knowledge and experience;
- meagre resources that constrain participation in the Forum's programmes and, at the same time, a heavy workload dominating the majority of working time.

The Learning City-Region Forum has identified some potential issues which may accelerate the development of our learning city-region model. The aspects of Pécs' progress as a learning city listed below were highlighted in the dialogue among partners of the Forum to develop festivals and other related actions:

- a growing interest among decision-makers and stakeholders to develop and maintain new and effective ways and methods for useful and problem-based knowledge transfer between institutions/organisations in the school sector, labour market, cultural organisations, institutions, and other respected informal learning spaces and environments;
- the European funds available through the European Social Fund for collaborative actions among educational, cultural, and environmental organisations to increase participation and provide counselling for better performance in learning;
- the need for a Common Identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to learning city-region development;
- the necessary improvement of learning conditions and collaborative spaces for young people with learning difficulties through inclusive learning environments.

On the one hand, the Pécs Learning City-Region Forum has renewed its membership in PASCAL International Observatory's Learning Cities Networks (LCN), more precisely, in the group called "Harnessing Cultural Policies in Building Sustainable Learning



Cities” in order to continue its ties to this international platform which was formally established in 2007 when Pécs hosted PASCAL’s annual international conference on learning city-regions (Németh, 2016a).

On the other hand, the University of Pécs initiated the realisation of close ties to UNESCO’s Global Network of Learning Cities in 2016 so as to prepare for the Global Learning City Award of UNESCO which may help in further developing collaborative actions amongst key providers of lifelong learning in and around the city of Pécs.

In this regard, the University of Pécs and the local authority/municipality of Pécs decided to launch a campaign to use the Learning City-Region Forum to establish an annual Learning Festival where both the concept and the three areas of action of the Forum can be multiplied into a real learning community of around seventy institutions and organisations under the same umbrella movement.

### **The Making and Progression of Learning Festivals in Pécs**

The Learning City Programme of Pécs set up its first Learning Festival in 2017 and established a set of three thematic topics in order to provide flexible platforms which would include each and every learning provider with their particular programmes based on the participation of local citizens from school-age to retired members of the community.

The three topics were set in order to represent a broad range of interests and, simultaneously, to incorporate different interests channelled into representative topics and signal both global and local focuses with popular calls. Those 2017 learning city topics were (UIL, 2019b): (1) Culture and Arts, (2) Environment, Green Pécs and (3) Knowledge Transfer and Skills Development.

These topics generated growing participation since more than seventy organisations and institutions got involved in the one hundred and thirty programmes of the first Learning Festival on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> September 2017. One can argue about whether it was a good decision and direction to have the House of Civic Communities take a central role in the organisation of the Learning Festival, but having evaluated the impact of the first Learning Festival, we can conclude that the learning community of Pécs took a big step towards getting used to the formation of the Learning City model and its flagship initiative called the Pécs Learning Festival. This focus cemented a bottom-up approach based on trust and partnership, but the initiative could not avoid a lack of funding and limited political attention, even though the City of Pécs received the Global Learning City Award on 18th September at the 3<sup>rd</sup> UNESCO International Conference on Learning Cities (Németh, 2016b).

The organisers of the Learning Festival had collected public proposals for festival topics, and it was a great achievement that participating platforms of learning providers came to a consensus to provide three authentic topics of lifelong learning which definitely meet the characteristics of Pécs as a city of culture, where high culture is influenced by multicultural, multi-ethnic, multilingual, and multi-religious dimensions. This particular focus was highlighted in the GNLC report on Pécs as a Global Learning City and incorporated

into the publication of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning as well as its website (UIL, 2019b).

According to the key features of learning cities, the Learning City Programme of Pécs and its Learning Festival has emphasized, from its beginning, the connection and partnership building with local and regional businesses, corporations, and other market-led groups like the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UIL, 2015). This approach and special attention was carried through the organisation process of the first Learning Festival in 2017 to initiate and promote the particular angle of business- and economy-driven narratives, understanding the benefits of learning and of skills development. Companies like the local forestry group, the local public bus transportation corporation, and the local powerplant joined the festival with its programmes and learning models, like environmental learning in the forest/woods, learning community skills on buses, and learning about the new dimensions of energy supply for residential and business areas (Németh, 2016c).

A necessary conclusion is that the initiation of the Learning Festival resulted in moving the notion of learning away from negative meanings and contexts; moreover, it helped increase participation, address the growing needs of community learning, intergenerational collaboration, and the inclusion of depressed, underdeveloped districts of the city.

Those three topics helped to move Pécs in the direction of a smart and creative city with a culture-based orientation (Németh, 2016c).

Planning for the second Learning Festival of Pécs began in February 2018 in association with more than seventy organisations and institutions which claimed that they would continue with their active engagement and participation in the festival and its programme for the second time. Three topics were decided on to support the overall theme of *Experimental Learning* (UIL, 2019b): (1) Environmentally Conscious? Sustainable Environment in and Around Pécs; (2) Place and Values – Cultural Heritage of Pécs; and (3) Is It Easier to do Things Together? Intergenerational Learnings and Partnerships for Skills Development.

A great number of people worked on the planning and development of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Learning Festival of Pécs, which took place from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2018 and brought together several communities with activities ranging from kindergarten-based harvest-festival programmes to the special learning activities of senior citizens and their special Senior Academy run with the support and organisational assistance of the University of Pécs and its Institute for Human Development and Cultural Studies. The UNESCO Global Learning City Award generated attention, respect, and equitable status to the Learning Festival amongst other culture-based festivals in the City of Pécs.

In accordance with this progress, a special Learning City Conference was organised for 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 with several participants to discuss the topic of “Learning Cities and Culture Working Together” in three strands (UIL, 2019b):

- The Impact of Heritage, Values and Culture in Learning Cities and Regions;
- Smart and Learning Cities, Technological Innovations and System Developments;
- Learning Cities to Promote Intergenerational Learning.

These three strands provided a good opportunity to examine the innovative potential of the Learning City initiative and some particular perspectives of development and of challenges to tackle by giving more attention to the needs of stakeholders and of individuals, local citizens, regardless of age. Pécs could position its Learning City Programme well with the support of the University of Pécs to provide research and innovation to support this valuable initiative and, consequently, the festival concept became recognised through those many collaborative actions based on the Learning City brand by 2018.

More than seventy participating organisations and institutions carried out one-hundred and twenty programmes and involved a big part of the lifelong learners in the city centre of Pécs in their colourful programme and interactive, mostly intergenerational events, lectures, presentations, games, concerts, dialogues, platform talks, etc., through which learning was again in a position where it was able to demonstrate joy, entertainment, community building, access, inclusion, care, and solidarity. One example of this was a little roundtable with short presentations on the “Routes of Learning” with special attention to drama games and motivation for learning, learning as a source of happiness, early childhood integral development, inclusive pedagogy, a focus on “A City to Touch”, and the Pygmalion effect and its relation to learning (Szederkényi & Németh, 2018).

We have to recognise and pay tribute to the House of Civic Communities for co-ordinating and managing most of the Learning Festival related programmes for those two days of action. In this regard, the House became the engine and real headquarters of the Learning Festival in Pécs and began preparing for a 3<sup>rd</sup> Learning Festival in September 2019.

### **Cork Learning City: A Community-Focused Development Model**

It was the Cork Learning City Forum and its wide range of stakeholders which established the Cork Learning Festival in 2004. This programme steadily grew into an annual week-long festival with around five-hundred activities offered by different types of providers. Compared to the Pécs Learning City-Region Forum and its Learning Festival, the scale of participation is substantially higher, and the project has brought together both local innovations practices and engagement with global networks of cities.

The development of Cork Learning City is very much based on a special learning environment, which represent four circles of learning embedded into a community model. This model reflects a community with strong local resonance and global reach as part of the UNESCO Learning Cities network and the PASCAL International Exchange (PIE). The circles of the learning environment demonstrate certain dimensions of a learning city which overlap with each other, yet signal some specific aspects at the same time. They are the Cork Learning Festival, the UNESCO Learning City Award and Growing Lifelong Learning in Cork, Learning Neighbourhoods as a pilot project of UNESCO in

partnerships with PIE, and finally, EcCoWell, which is aimed at environmental, economic, health, well-being, and lifelong learning in order to reach for good societies (Ó Tuama, 2016; UIL, 2019a).

The Lifelong Learning Festival of Cork has got deep community roots and has been devoted to participatory actions with intercultural and intergenerational aspirations. In this respect adult and lifelong learning play an important role in shaping its programmes and depend on the focus to increase participation in events, gatherings, and local discoveries by collecting and sharing valuable knowledge and experience amongst the members of the community based on learning. Moreover, the festival connects ten Community Education Networks which were established following the 2000 governmental paper called *Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education* (Department of Education and Science, 2000). These networks offer actions and programmes as parts of the festival and have a special approach to certain specific groups in the community, for example, disadvantaged groups. Distinguished stakeholder groups play an important role in the planning and achievement of their programmes.

It must be added here that various forms and ways of communication are regularly used to capture the attention of different kinds of people: not only modern and electronic communication but traditional posters and brochures are also used to attract potential visitors and participants. One has to point out that there is significant free citizen engagement in the festival based on the principles of equality and inclusion so as to provide an opportunity to participate in learning (Neylon & Barrett, 2013; PASCAL Observatory Conference on Cities Learning Together and Regions in Hong Kong, 2013). In this regard, inclusiveness, free entry and open access to all are ongoing themes of the festival (Keane, Lane, Neylon, & Osborne, 2013).

The UNESCO Learning City initiative has also played a significant role in the achievements of Cork Learning City. Both the establishment of the Cork Learning City Forum and the initiation of the Lifelong Learning Festival provided significant forces to realising the vision of people behind the original plans to make Cork a learning city and community. The attention of PASCAL International Observatory towards learning city developments and innovative approaches made PASCAL want to get Cork involved in its network.

That step brought Cork closer to international partnerships which soon accelerated the engagement with UNESCO's agenda on learning cities in 2012. The example of Cork also reflects outstanding partnerships with wide stakeholder groups so as to engage them with the mission and goals of the project. The Learning Neighbourhoods initiative signalled a serious focus on local people, especially concentrating on the needs of city districts and people living in those municipal areas of Cork with specific social, economic, and cultural conditions and aspirations (Ó Tuama, 2016).

There have been several impacts and challenges to the Cork Learning City initiative and project. But the collective action of the city communities has strengthened the alliances between the participants and brought higher level institutions into contact with marginalised groups. UNESCO interest may also help renew the commitment of politicians and

stakeholders to the initiative, for example, the University of Cork, which has a strong concern both from the perspective of research and from the perspective of development as part of university lifelong learning.

In this regard, Cork may provide a good lesson for Pécs to expand initiatives into a wider public project and movement: start small and build up systematically, keep participation voluntary, ask all your participants to publicize their events to establish special ownership and sense of belonging to the programmes and networking. Make sure that the kinds of learning showcased are as broad as possible, do not restrict participation to the state sector, publicly recognise and thank all those who organise events and, finally, never forget that it is a festival – fun and celebration are a powerful means of changing attitudes to learning (Neylon, 2016).

### **Reasons Behind the Similarities and Differences in the Two Cases**

We have been able to recognise that there are some similarities and differences in the evolution and the learning city models of Pécs and Cork. The identification of those similarities and differences will help us to understand the scale and the scope of each of the two learning city models we have compared upon their grounding drivers, development, composite grounding forces, vision, and the central direction of actions/topics. It is also necessary to consider the economic and social realities of the two models.

Pécs and Cork are similar in that neither is a capital city. They were both European Capitals of Culture during the Lisbon decade, Cork at the beginning and Pécs right at the very end.

Pécs and Cork have both made use of the particular values of their communities, traditions and cultural activities, institutions and other respected formations so as to reconceptualise their visions and mission through learning.

Pécs and Cork have built on the voluntary work and participation of their citizens to celebrate learning through a Learning Festival. Cork, however, has already organised several festivals on the basis of its strong community and political commitment and participation, while Pécs has only organised three learning festivals so far and with the limited public attention of between one and one thousand five hundred people.

Both Pécs and Cork have opened up to international partnerships and networking in learning city-region developments and innovations through PASCAL Observatory, but Cork joined the PIE network and Pécs was invited to the LCN platform and its cultural network of PASCAL. Both Pécs and Cork have focused dominantly upon the participatory aspect of learning city innovations and thus favoured the involvement of adult and lifelong learners in their programmes and events. This particular participatory and community focus has shifted Cork and Pécs more towards UNESCO's balanced approach on learning cities, towards sustainability instead of the OECD's reductionist focus on smart cities and learning economies.

Finally, both Pécs and Cork have made use of their former cultural capital status to aspire to a Learning City title and, consequently, to apply for being selected as a UNESCO Global Learning City and potentially be recognised with a special *Global Learning City Award*.

Based in its larger scale of inhabitants, Cork has got a rather well-developed and balanced structure of adult education institutions and associations in place, while adult learning and education in Pécs has got a deformed structure, mainly focusing on VET and the labour market with state monopolies. Cultural and community institutions and organisations, in this respect, have special roles and functions to provide spaces for atypical forms of lifelong and lifewide learning.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is obvious that learning cities and regions can be investigated as frameworks and special structures that provide adult learning and education on the one hand, and that incorporate informal learning of adults and/or intergenerational/tandem learning on the other.

This paper tried to emphasize that researchers in adult and lifelong learning have always been close or even active participants of this initiative in many places in Europe and other continents. Moreover, UNESCO connected adult and lifelong learning to learning city developments in order to help increase participation in learning and in community development or both.

This short analysis helps us to understand how different scales of resources, approaches and political attention will result in different limits to the growth of the learning city model. However, it also underlines the argument that learning city developments are mainly influenced by the approach and consideration of the initiating bodies who bring their views and values into the process to form the ways and structures of collaborative action in community organisations. At the same time, we could only compare those formative aspects that are reflected in the structures, goals, participating bodies, international relations, and embeddedness of the two global learning cities.

In this measure, university lifelong learning has also been reflected on as the two higher education institutions of Cork and Pécs have made use of their own project-based experiences, having positioned themselves in line with international platforms like PASCAL International Observatory, eucen, ASEM Lifelong Learning HUB, and UIL GNLC. In a reverse angle, the impact of these international platforms has also emphasized the partnership-based progress of stakeholders in the framework of the learning city and learning city networks where cities can learn from each other while also openly demonstrating their local-regional values and experiences in learning, community building, and skills development both in economic and social terms.

Consequently, we propose that further developments are needed in this frame through the concentrated actions of comparative studies. This focus, on the one hand, is currently embedded into the UN Agenda 2030 discourse on SDGs, especially into dimensions of SDG11 on Learning Cities. On the other, it is also present in the new UNESCO Handbook for Lifelong Learning: Policy and Practice, to be published in spring 2020, with a separate chapter on learning cities referring to implementation at the local level. It may



help governments make use of this concept and demonstrate that in lifelong learning and education no one is left behind!

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## THE CITY OF ESPOO DEVELOPS AS A SUSTAINABLE LEARNING CITY

### ABSTRACT

*This paper presents Espoo as a sustainable learning city, recognised by UNESCO as one of twelve pioneering Learning Cities in 2015. The vision of the city states that Espoo is a good place to live, learn, work and do business, and where residents can have their say in matters. Dynamic co-creation processes with residents, partners, universities, and enterprises have helped create and implement the Espoo Story and to find sustainable solutions for the city and its residents. The city of Espoo is preparing its citizens for the future by empowering all kinds of learners to be at the centre of their own learning processes. Espoo provides continuous learning paths leading from early childhood education, to capacity building in the workplace, and to learning in later life. Flexible learning spaces and digitalisation are expanding opportunities to participate and have fun when learning.*

**Keywords:** *inclusion, co-creation, sustainable development, continuous learning paths*

### ESPOO SE RAZVIJA KOT TRAJNOSTNO UČEČE SE MESTO – POVZETEK

*Članek predstavlja mesto Espoo kot trajnostno učeče se mesto, ki ga je leta 2015 Unesco prepoznal kot enega od 12 pionirskih učečih se mest. Vizija mesta je Espoo kot odlično mesto za življenje, učenje, delo in poslovanje ter kot mesto, kjer imajo prebivalci svoj glas pri odločanju. Dinamični postopki soustvarjanja, v katere se vključujejo prebivalci, partnerji, univerze in podjetja, so pomagali ustvariti in uresničiti zgodbo mesta Espoo ter poiskati trajnostne rešitve za kraj in njegove prebivalce. Espoo pripravlja svoje prebivalce na prihodnost s tem, da opolnomoča vse učeče se, da so sami v središču svojih lastnih učnih procesov. Espoo jim ponuja učno pot, ki se razteza od izobraževanja v zgodnjem otroštvu do krepitev zmogljivosti na delovnem mestu in končno tudi do učenja v poznejših življenjskih obdobjih. Poleg tega fleksibilni učni prostor in digitalizacija dajeta vedno večje možnosti za sodelovanje in zabavno učenje.*

**Ključne besede:** *vključevanje, soustvarjanje, trajnostni razvoj, neprekinjene učne poti*

## **THE LEARNING CITY AS A MEANS FOR A CITY TO GROW AND DEVELOP IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY**

Cities play a central role in how the world is developing and how big global challenges are tackled. More and more people are moving to cities and through urbanisation the power of cities keeps growing. From the perspective of a particular city there is a need to find a competitive edge compared to other cities in order to attract more people who would be an asset to it. Therefore, how cities choose to grow and brand themselves and to deal with sustainability is important.

When Richard Florida introduced his notion of the creative class, he introduced the “Three T’s” of economic development to be considered in strategic planning. The 3 T’s are technology, talent, and tolerance. Later Florida discusses his theory in relation to cities and points out that all three are needed for a city to be successful. He argues that people are the key economic growth asset and that cities need to tap and harness the full creative potential of all people. As an open question of the creative age he points out that the creative economies must deal with rising social and economic inequalities in order to succeed (Florida, 2005).

Charles Landry (2000) argues that in the future the “learning city” will be a more powerful metaphor than the “creative city”. A true learning city in his mind is one which develops by learning from its experiences and those of others and where self-evaluation is a defining feature. The key characteristic of the learning city is the ability to develop successfully in a rapidly changing socio-economic environment. He also points out that any city can be a learning city. Even so, the fewer natural or historical advantages a city enjoys, the more important it is that it should re-think itself as a learning city. There is an opportunity to turn weaknesses into strengths by looking at its potential resources in a more comprehensive way (Landry, 2000).

As Landry’s mission is to help cities make the most of their potential, he elaborates later on the opportunities of a digitised city (Landry, 2016). We are currently in the midst of redesigning the world and all its systems – legal, moral, political – together with the economy and the infrastructures for a digital age with ICT as one backbone. The digitised city needs ethical values to guide its progress with human beings placed centre-stage. Cities need to remain alert to ensure their priorities and values are acknowledged as the digital industrial complex has discovered the city as a major new market. Collaborative models based on openness are key to surviving well in this emerging world. New governance models on disruptive co-creation effects, for example, the effect of Uber on taxi companies, are required (Landry, 2016).

City development experts look at cities from a design perspective. The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) is advocating a more humanistic approach. The idea of the learning city from this perspective has been driven by educators: lifelong learning experts and those in adult and community education. In the founding meeting of the global network in 2013, the Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities defines a learning city as a city that effectively mobilises its resources in every sector to:

- promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education;
- re-vitalize learning in families and communities;
- facilitates learning for and in the workplace;
- extends the use of modern learning technologies,
- enhances quality and excellence in learning; and
- fosters a culture of learning throughout life.

In so doing, it will create and reinforce individual empowerment and social cohesion, economic and cultural prosperity and sustainable development (UIL, 2014, p. 6).

According to Valdés-Cotera and Wang (2018), the UNESCO learning city approach is a practical, holistic, and comprehensive way to implement lifelong learning in all sectors and at all levels, from families, communities, and municipalities, to national levels. Learning cities foster inclusive and sustainable learning systems that provide broad and flexible lifelong learning opportunities through formal and non-formal pathways. They thereby help create inclusive, sustainable, creative, and entrepreneurial societies that promote the health, wellbeing, prosperity, and civic engagement of their citizens. Successful learning cities all add a well-organised lifelong learning dimension to sustainability in all its aspects: social, economic, cultural, and environmental.

### **The Espoo Story**

Espoo is the second largest city in Finland and consists of five city centres. It is a continuously growing city which makes it necessary for the city to organise more and more services. This has pushed the city to rethink how to organise its operations and act in many new and innovative ways.

The Espoo city strategy is in the format of a story. This story is only a few pages long and explains the city's beginnings, where it is now, and where it is going, i.e. the history, the current stage, and the future of the city. The story was created together with multiple stakeholder groups as illustrated in Figure 1. The main bulk of responses were received through an internet tool that helped gather and sort the information. City employees were asked to fill in the survey as well. In addition, the mayor toured the city and held meet and greet events. He met children in day-care and asked them what they would do if they were to be the mayor for one day. Children expressed ideas from their own perspectives. He met with the elderly and collected wisdom from them as well. In total almost 20,000 comments and suggestions were received. All the material was discussed and reworked for the Espoo Story. The sectors and units of the city derive their own stories and goals from the main Espoo Story. According to the mayor, the Espoo Story has been very successful. The story has inspired the residents and stakeholders to partner with the city. It is not merely a publication that is forgotten when it is done but it lives with the city in its everyday life (City of Espoo, 2018d).

Figure 1: The Espoo Story was created together with citizens and stakeholders



Source: City of Espoo, 2018d.

A special effort to implement the Espoo Story goes through cross-administrative development programmes which identify the major challenges that the city is facing today and will face in the future. The development programmes are led by groups of the top five politicians and the top five civil servants from different fields. Agile co-creation processes and innovative experiments are the main ways of finding sustainable solutions for improvements (Erkkilä, 2017).

### **Espoo Innovation Garden**

Espoo has claimed to be a responsible pioneer. Pioneering refers to broadmindedness, creativity, openness, a desire to question the status quo and courage to do things in a new way. It also includes the will to use research and international experience, experimentation as well as being prepared to deal with the possible failures related to them. The main strength of Espoo is that it is calling on its citizens, organisations, including universities and other educational institutions and businesses to develop and make things happen together.

Espoo Innovation Garden refers to an innovative way of working based on a culture of collaboration and co-creation (City of Espoo, 2019b). It promotes a communal way of thinking and doing things. The city's mission is to find and formulate the right questions, to create platforms for collaboration, and to encourage its citizens and all other

stakeholders to get involved – at every level and everywhere. This way they form an ecosystem for working together to develop innovations. The goal of this collaboration is to create new jobs and wellbeing for the companies, communities, and citizens. Espoo Innovation Garden also shares and implements the Espoo Story. The city of Espoo is a facilitator. It is responsible for providing the Innovation Garden with the best possible environment and grounds for growth. The city also provides tools to create networks and shared platforms (City of Espoo, 2019b).

### **Espoo Becomes a Learning City in the UNESCO Network**

The Espoo Local Development Plan for Education 2020 is based on the vision that Espoo aims to be a competent municipality known for its fairness, its commitment to residents and clients, and its pioneering approach with responsible leadership. The plan was initiated by the Finnish National Agency for Education and was put together with various educational partners in capacity building workshops organised by the city authorities (City of Espoo, 2014).

In Espoo, its citizens can fulfil their own potential and participate in developing their communities. By providing learning opportunities and resources, Espoo encourages its citizens to be competent and creative residents who can succeed even in an uncertain future with the help of a learning spirit. These principles are included both in the Espoo Story and in the Local Development Plan for Education, which have been co-created with the citizens and partners (City of Espoo, 2018b).

Both of these plans together with the notion of Innovation Garden were a good start for developing an understanding of what building a learning city involves. When UNESCO called for cities to attend the first Conference on Learning Cities in Beijing in 2013, Espoo responded. At the Beijing meeting it became clear that Espoo was headed in the same direction as the Global Network for Learning Cities (GNLC). Espoo joined the network as soon as it was possible.

### **BUILDING A LEARNING CITY**

The main thing a city needs to consider when becoming a learning city is its motive for becoming one. Espoo's goal is to be a good place to live, learn, work and do business, and to be a place where residents can have their say. Ensuring the wellbeing and inclusion of all its citizens is the key objective. Providing every citizen with opportunities for lifelong learning plays an important role in achieving this objective (Erkkilä, 2015).

In order to join the GNLC Espoo had to create its own definition of a learning city and the rationale for its activities. This coincided with Finnish national budget cuts in education. It was a good reason for the local education providers to unite. The idea was not to go to barricades against the budget cuts but to show how important the right for lifelong learning is for everyone. The strength of Espoo as a learning city lies first and foremost in that the city recognises the importance of learning for the wellbeing and growth of its citizens,

organisations, companies, and the city itself, but also in the fact that Espoo is a growing city and wants to be a forerunner and to find new ways of doing things. The joint slogan was formed: “In Espoo learning is valued.” It has three subthemes: (1) “Everyone has an opportunity to learn”, (2) “The joy of learning grows”, and (3) “Collaboration is power”.

The consistent learning paths had already been on the agenda as part of the Espoo Local Development Plan. The concept also includes the idea of learning happening anywhere, at any time, and at any age. The city of Espoo is preparing its citizens for the future by empowering all kinds of learners to be at the centre of their own learning. It provides continuous learning paths leading from early childhood education, to capacity building in the workplace, and to learning in later life. Flexible learning spaces and digitalisation are expanding opportunities to participate and have fun when learning.

Information and communications technology (ICT) as an enabler has been imbedded in this notion. International studies had shown that kids in Finland did not enjoy themselves in schools. At least they did not express that. Other studies showed that when there is joy in the learning process and when learning happens together with others, one learns much better. This way the joy of learning became the second emphasis. The third point was obvious in Espoo, but it needed still to be stated. Espoo had been built as a city in a way in which partnerships mattered. As the city was growing so rapidly it had teamed up with third sector organisations and institutions to fulfil part of its duties (City of Espoo, 2014, 2018b).

## **WHO IS BUILDING THE LEARNING CITY?**

In Espoo the interest for lifelong learning started in the early 90s, if not earlier, in the sector of Education and Culture with the leadership of the Deputy Mayor. Then there was an active network in Espoo, in Finland and internationally. Longworth and Davies (1996) mention Finland and actors from Espoo being involved in the European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) and the World Initiative on Lifelong Learning. The European Commission designated 1996 as the European Year of Lifelong Learning. OECD, UNESCO, and G7 Nations were all active on the subject as well.

However, when people change, ideas and activities can easily be forgotten for a while. The beginning of the UNESCO GNLC in 2013 provided a new opportunity for the Lifelong Learning agenda to surface in Espoo. It is necessary to have a spokesperson or persons for an agenda. It was again the leadership in the Education and Cultural Services in the city organisation who took initiative in this. The same group that had been involved in drafting the Local Development Plan was gathered to make an action plan to become a learning city. The beginning was organised on a rotating basis. In the autumn of 2017, the Learning City Advisory Board was established to support the development. The Advisory Board consists of city officials from different sectors, political decision makers, leaders for key educational partners and representatives of the business community. The Advisory Board meets twice a year. Its key task is to set the goals of learning city work for a four-year

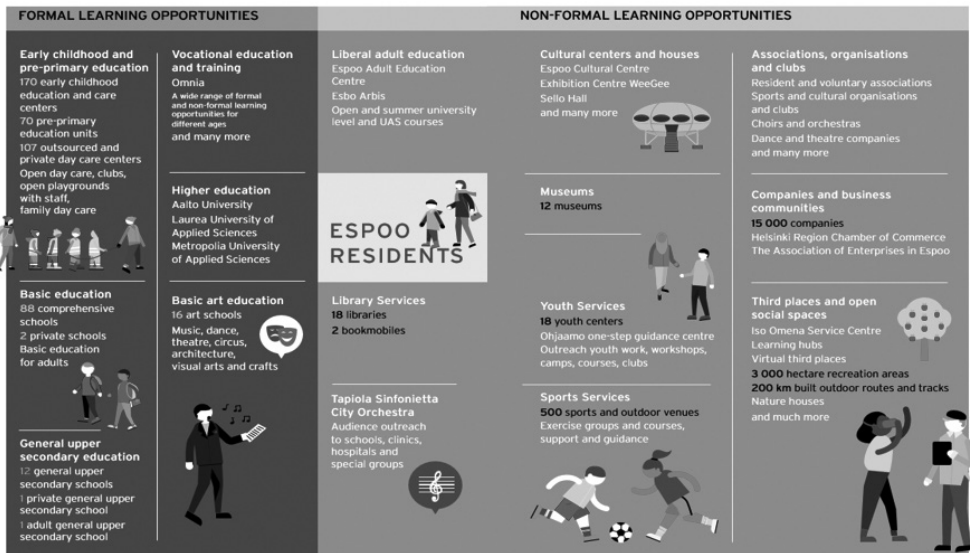


period. It is also an important group for lobbying the importance of lifelong learning in their own organisations, local society, and beyond. A Learning City Steering Group from the central organisations was formed to plan, prepare, and lead the implementation. This group meets 6 to 8 times a year (City of Espoo, 2017, 2018b).

When setting the objectives for Espoo Learning City, the Advisory Board did not start from scratch. They connected their objectives with the Espoo Story and with the directions of the Guide for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Learning Cities (UIL, 2017) and the three areas of emphasis there: (1) Equitable and inclusive learning cities, (2) Green and healthy learning cities, and (3) Decent employment and entrepreneurship in learning cities. The Espoo Learning City Objectives for 2018-2021 have a total of eight goals. The implementation of these goals is set and monitored annually by the Advisory Board (City of Espoo, 2018b).

In the end, it is the people themselves who make up the Learning City of Espoo as illustrated in Figure 2. Only a small part of it is happening under the umbrella of formal education. So much can come from different groups, organisations, clubs, and societies within culture, sports, and other fields. It is the Espoo residents in different contexts such as libraries, museums, events and activities, be they physical or virtual, who are all building the Learning City of Espoo starting from their own interests. The local entrepreneurs and businesses are participating as well (City of Espoo, 2018b).

Figure 2: People in Espoo are building the Learning City



Source: City of Espoo, 2018b, pp. 5-6.

## **EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Espoo has been recognised twice as the most sustainable city in Europe. This recognition is based on a study conducted by the Telos Institute, which is related to the University of Tillburg, Holland (Zoeteman, Muldder, Smeets, & Wentink, 2016; Zoeteman, Paenen, Mulder, & Wentink, 2017). The study showed that while constantly growing, Espoo has been able to keep the city sustainable as measured by economic, sociocultural, and ecological indicators. The main strengths of Espoo, according to the study, are nature, safety, and participation. The goal of Espoo is to keep its leading position as the most sustainable city. This calls for direct action in many different fields and commitments from various stakeholders. The most striking goal for Espoo is to be a carbon neutral city by the year 2030 (City of Espoo, 2018c).

In addition, it is important to realise that remaining one of the most sustainable cities also calls for systematic education and training on sustainable development and working to fulfil the SDGs. This is needed in all stages of life, including adulthood (cf. Evans, 2019). In Espoo the concept of a sustainable lifestyle is used to talk about the attitudes and actions for making more sustainable choices in everyday life. The city can promote a sustainable lifestyle in many ways by organising services to support this. One example is providing good conditions for sorting rubbish, making it easier for users to do that. Espoo has also compiled a programme called Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Espoo 2018-2021. It is directed at the city officials but also at Espoo residents. It brings ESD onto everyone's agenda and inspires the readers to act themselves. It includes three goals, gives examples of good practice, and makes the SDGs and ESD better known in the city. Espoo has a set leadership structure to lead this work and to track the implementation of the programme. One very important factor is that based on this programme good practice can be found, get recognition, and it can be scaled (City of Espoo, 2018a).

## **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF ADULT LEARNERS?**

There is a saying that one is never too old to learn. Learning activity depends on attitude but also on opportunity. Lifelong learning encourages the learners to learn at any age, but it helps if there are programmes, forums, platforms, and information available for adult learners.

It was decided a few years ago to concentrate the central educational services for adults in Espoo at the Adult Learning Services Centre. This centre unites the Community College, the General Upper Secondary School for Adults, the Apprenticeship Training Centre, and the Vocational Adult Education Centre. The idea is to have all the services under one roof or on the same virtual site in order to support the creation of a personal lifelong learning path, which can combine both professional and leisure time goals (Erkkilä, 2015). Liberal adult education also includes open and summer university services from traditional universities and the universities of applied sciences (i.e. more practice-oriented studies). Together with young people, adults can of course also learn in other non-formal and informal contexts.

Learning as part of the working life has long been the norm in Finland. For example, teachers generally have three days a year minimum for further training, but it can be many more based on the needs of employees and on what the employer can afford. The recent societal debate has been about seeing lifelong learning as an asset in working life in order to keep up with technological changes. It has not been easy to find an entity who is willing to pay for it all. There are initiatives that it should be a citizen's right for everyone to update their skills in a systematic manner to reach the competence needed. Several blogs, working groups, and committee reports are discussing the development of skills and competences as a long-term investment in working life and as a source of wellbeing for the individual. There is currently a call to develop a new cross-sectional policy for lifelong learning in Finland (Sitra, 2018).

Espoo is known as the Finnish city with the most highly educated adults (more than 50% of adults have a higher education degree) and the healthiest elderly in the country. They are highly motivated to continue learning even when they get older. The Espoo Adult Education Centre provides open studies for lifelong learning and for personal growth. The centre offers a variety of subjects to study and the choices are available online together with other metropolitan area adult education organisers. There is also an opportunity to get a printed catalogue of education providers. Instruction is given at least in Finnish, Swedish, and English. Most of the classes take place in the evenings so that people who work in daytime can join them as well (City of Espoo, 2019a).

Valadas, Vilhena, and Fragoso (2019) studied Portuguese men at the transition stage to retirement and found out that education and learning have an immense impact on the lives of older adults. Education had shaped the life paths of men, but it also affected directly and indirectly their motivation and ability to continue learning in later life. For some of the men in their study informal learning was the central instrument for changing community life. They also noted that informal learning is often invisible, unnoticed by both researchers and educators.

In Espoo, there is evidence that particularly highly educated elderly women are the most active segment in taking courses at the Adult Education Centre. In general, those from a more educated background seem to be active in lifelong learning, be it from formal or informal sources. In Espoo many organisations, clubs, societies or businesses have noticed the rising demand in elderly population. Particularly sporting opportunities tend to also draw senior men to participate. The city of Espoo offers free sports and exercise services to Espoo residents aged 68 and over with the +68 sports wristband. In terms of culture, the elderly can get a volunteer companion to escort them to cultural events. It should also be pointed out that in Espoo only the evidence which is measured systematically can be shown.

## **CELEBRATE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND THE JOY OF LEARNING**

The Guidelines for Building Learning Cities call for cities to initiate and maintain the process of developing a learning city with celebratory events. It suggests organising a

learning festival or holding a conference and inviting the media to cover it. It is important that these occasions are regular to keep up the interest (UIL, 2015).

The first Learning City Festival in Espoo was held in September 2016. It consisted of an invitational conference and a fair open to the public. The conference was meant for Espoo stakeholders but those interested from other municipalities in Finland were also invited. The topics concentrated on showcasing what a learning city is. Successful European learning cities Cork, Swansea, and Sönderburg presented their models. UIL and the Ministry of Education sent their representatives to participate and present. On the second day the local lifelong learning providers gathered their educational offerings and innovations into one big fair and this way the participants could show the public what they were doing, learn from each other, and find new opportunities for collaboration. The festival also included a workshop for all the attending learning cities for planning future developments together. A joint document of the planned activities was launched as the Espoo Statement: *Learning Together*.

The second Learning City Festival was held in May 2019. It was a one-day event held both inside and outside of a shopping mall. The theme of the festival was “Let’s do together!” People were invited to participate, watch, experiment, and learn. This time a team consisting of the core educational organisations had planned and organised the event for about nine months. The only international group who took part in this festival was a delegation from Osan City, Korea.

## **AWARDS AND CHALLENGES**

At the second International Conference of Global Network of Learning Cities in Mexico City in 2015 Espoo was recognised by UNESCO as one of 12 pioneering Learning Cities. This award was a recognition of all of Espoo’s initial efforts (City of Espoo, 2017).

Even though Espoo has been one of the first cities in GNLC in Finland and perhaps Europe as well, to join GNLC, there is still a lot that needs to be done.

Valdés-Cotera and Wang (2018) state as one concrete challenge that Finnish society is becoming more multicultural and diverse, which tends to be most immediately apparent in metropolitan areas. Espoo’s lifelong education services will continue to play a special role in helping newcomers settle into the city while maintaining their own cultural identity.

“No one is left behind” has been a powerful slogan in Finland for many years. Espoo has been implementing plans to realise that successfully on many levels of education. It is a core task in the Espoo school system, but there are also special programmes to pay attention to and work on these challenge as there are many lonely or marginalised persons especially among the youth and the elderly in addition to immigrants.

Another challenge is still to get all the necessary parties and the general public truly engaged in the Learning City agenda. As people in the leadership change, this is a challenge for the city’s commitment. There are so many competing agendas in any city that it is hard

to say which ones are the most beneficial and essential to keep. However, Espoo seems to be truly committed to being a sustainable city and lifelong learning is seen as an essential tool to keep sustainability on the agenda and to advance the actions for reaching the SDGs. It would be a smart choice to support that by continuing to be active as a learning city and in the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is a great opportunity for a city to decide to become a learning city. It requires a lot of work to become one, but it can be seen as a long-term investment for the future of the city and its citizens. Learning city activities can also be a vehicle for advancing things such as citizen wellbeing and sustainable development. Some learning cities have profiled their learning city by emphasizing certain topics. In Espoo the emphasis has been on inclusion, ensuring continuous learning paths for everyone, not just in formal but also in informal learning and free time activities, and working for sustainable development.

One of the main things when beginning to build a learning city is to gain the support and commitment of the society. The better the network to support the learning city's commitment, the better the chances for the city to succeed in its task. As a solid educational foundation is important for a continuous learning path, there is a need to get those providing formal education involved first. There is no right size for a city to do that. It can be a village, a town, a rural city, a metropolis or a part of one. It is really up to the people to decide how the idea best works for them. It is worth taking the time needed and making all the necessary steps suggested in the GNLC guiding materials when building a learning city. Some cities are eager to learn what other cities are doing. It is smart to look for other cities domestically or internationally; even though the conditions, strengths, advantages or challenges might be very different, it is good to reflect on the actions taken in one city and to consider how they might work in another. This is where GNLC can be of great assistance with its database, publications, forums, and gatherings both locally and regionally. Some cities decide to build their learning city in their own way and stick to their own starting points.

When is the city then ready and can finish developing as a learning city? The first major milestone is to be ready to send the application for membership in GNLC. The next could be to apply for the Learning City Award. But in the end, a learning city is never complete because lifelong learning and continuous development are the essence of the whole idea.

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## EXPANSIVE LEARNING AND RESEARCH PRACTICES AT THE SLOVENIAN THIRD AGE UNIVERSITY

### ABSTRACT

*Several innovative projects have been conducted at the Slovenian Third Age University (U3A), creating important new social practices. The project results impact exploratory learning as well as learning and development in the wider community. The aim of the paper is to describe selected research practices at the Slovenian U3A and to interpret them through the theory of expansive learning. In terms of methodology, the research is designed as ethnographic research with elements of the phenomenological and reflexive research paradigm. Selected examples of exploratory learning at the Slovenian U3A are used to identify the factors that influence the development of exploratory learning and the way they are experienced by those involved in exploratory learning processes. It has been found that expansive learning at the Slovenian U3A leads to innovative and socially engaged practices.*

**Keywords:** *third age university, expansive learning, exploratory learning*

### EKSPANZIVNO UČENJE IN RAZISKOVALNE PRAKSE NA SLOVENSKI UNIVERZI ZA TRETJE ŽIVLJENJSKO OBDOBJE – POVZETEK

*Na Slovenski univerzi za tretje življenjsko (SUTŽO) obdobje poteka več inovativnih projektov, ki ustvarjajo družbeno pomembne nove prakse, tako da postanejo rezultati raziskovalnega učenja vplivni tudi za učenje in razvoj v širši skupnosti. Namen prispevka je opisati izbrane raziskovalne prakse na SUTŽO in jih interpretirati s teorijo ekspanzivnega učenja. Metodološko je raziskava zasnovana kot etnografska*

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*raziskava z elementi fenomenološke in reflektivne raziskovalne paradigme. Ob izbranih primerih raziskovalnega učenja na SUTŽO avtorji opredelijo vplivne dejavnike za razvoj raziskovalnega učenja in doživljanje le-teh pri udeleženi v procesih raziskovalnega učenja. Ugotovitve kažejo, da ekspanzivno učenje na SUTŽO poteka kot inovativna in družbeno angažirana praksa.*

**Ključne besede:** *univerza za tretje življenjsko obdobje, ekspanzivno učenje, raziskovalno učenje*

## INTRODUCTION

The interest in learning as a form of participation in practice with the aim of innovating practice is far from new as it was explored by various researchers in the previous century, such as Bateson (1972), Argyris and Schön (1974), Lave and Wenger (1991). The innovative learning model was developed by Visser (2007) and Engeström (Engeström, Rantavuori & Kerosuo, 2013). The latter designed the expansive learning model. Further insight into the connections of learning and doing has been provided by the research conducted by Tynjälä et al., who developed a model of integrative pedagogy (Tynjälä & Gijbels, 2012; Tynjälä, Virtanen, Klemola, Kostiainen, & Rasku-Puttonen, 2016). Ingold (2018) argues that learning by doing is always innovative; even if it imitates another activity, it includes improvisation. There are a number of different connections between innovation, practice and learning.

The research presented in this paper is focused on how development projects, doing and learning are connected in the context of older adult education at the Slovenian Third Age University (U3A). Exploratory learning emerges in a variety of settings, and the development of long-lived society has resulted in the need to generate innovative responses to the new needs of the older adults (Wacker & Roberto, 2019; Findeisen & Ličen, 2017; Krajnc, 2012). The theory of expansive learning has been chosen as the framework for reflection on exploratory learning.

## EXPANSIVE LEARNING

The rapid increase in information, changes and uncertainty has resulted in learning becoming an increasingly unavoidable component of any doing. The abilities to acquire, design, create and use knowledge are recognised as a major asset of various organisations (Doutor & Guimarães, 2019), including those involving older adults. Various studies are focused on the research into learning at individual and organisation levels (Zhu & Bargiela-Chiapini, 2013; Marsick & Watkins, 2016; Paine, 2019); they include explicit and tacit knowledge, informal and incidental learning, and also encourage the development of models for different types of learning (e.g. innovative, narrative, experiential, transformative). The complexity of modern practices has influenced the development of new theoretical models for research into learning. In the 1980s, Engeström began developing the theory of expansive learning, which emphasises learning as innovating practice and

is characteristic of the social and historical circumstances surrounding a period of rapid change (Engeström, Rantavuori, & Kerosuo, 2013). According to this model, innovative learning by doing depends on the sociocultural environment and the individuals' agency (Hall, Murphy, & Soler, 2008; Engeström et al. 2013, Tynjälä et al., 2016).

The theory of expansive learning is related to the model of situated learning (McLellan, 1996; Suchman, 2003). This type of learning combines situated knowledge with everyday practices or situated actions. Learning that is placed within a cultural context occurs during participation in cultural practices and has its own "agenda", which differs from the teaching curriculum as it mostly involves informal learning. The basic framework is the concept of professional agency (Eteläpelto, Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, & Paloniemi, 2013). Informal learning in the workplace (or wherever a subject is active) is also linked to the subject's creativity. Professional agency has mostly positive connotations for creativity and motivation, as well as a sense of satisfaction/happiness (Welzel & Inglehart, 2010, in Eteläpelto et al., 2013).

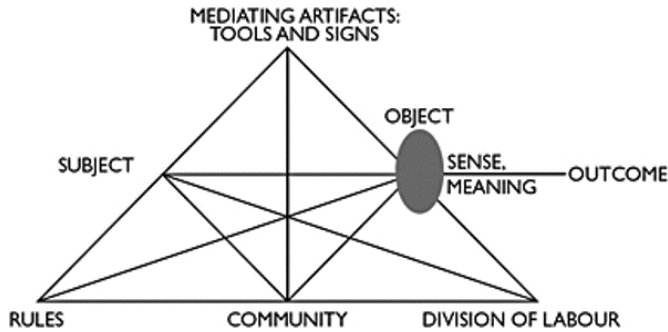
Situated learning can be interpreted with different theories, the research presented here, however, uses the theory of expansive learning as the research focus is on innovative changing of practice. Expansive learning (Engeström, 2018) combines the cultural-historical model by Vygotsky with Bateson's systemic approach. Agency means an active attitude to reality. Humans are actors embedded in a sociocultural environment. Learning and doing are part of the sociocultural context and cannot be separated from situations. Learning and learning outcomes are not independent of the situations in which they occur, and the connection of an actor with a situation results in the production of knowledge, i.e. situated knowledge. Knowledge that is generated is a product of activity, experience, the active self and memory, as well as culture, and the historicity of an individual's biography in which the knowledge is developed and used is thus also important. Learning, as understood in this particular research, is defined as an embedded process determined by the sociocultural space, a local environment with its cultural and natural factors.

Expansive learning produces new social forms, i.e. those that do not yet exist at the beginning of an activity. The theory of expansive learning is based on the cultural-historical activity theory and implies a research methodology that allows the exploration of activity systems.<sup>1</sup> The activity system is presented in a triangular structure including various elements. On one side of the triangle is the subject (who learns); the subject works on a selected object (substances, items, practices, individuals, groups). The subject's activity directed at the object takes place by means of cultural artefacts (tools, signs) and according to community rules. The results include professional growth, changed practices, changed ways of thinking, empowerment of groups, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> The theory of expansive learning is associated with a specific action research model – the DWR strategy (developmental work research).

Figure 1. Activity system diagram



Source: Engeström, 2018, p. 48.

Rules include those governing mutual learning, the language of communication, the role of ICTs, the sequence of events, cooperation and the ethics of dialogue, specific relationships; they also include systems of norms and beliefs. The community represents other participants (in addition to the subject), researchers, learning groups, the organisation, social groups. In this model, the roles of the learner and the teacher are not separate. According to this model, the division of labour is such that all the participants are knowledge producers. Everyone occupies the role of knowledge receivers and knowledge producers, so strategies such as peer learning, mentoring and the like are used at the implementation level.

Engeström (Engeström, Rantavuori, & Kerosuo, 2013, p. 85; Engeström, 2018, p. 63) defined the process of expansive learning through the following seven activities: (1) the first stage is the questioning of the existing practice, (2) this is followed by an analysis of the situation in which transformations of mental and practical patterns occur in order to identify the mechanisms of doing that they aim to change, (3) modelling the new solution, and (4) examining the new model, followed by (5) implementing the model, (6) reflecting on the process and evaluation. (7) The final stage is the consolidation of outcomes into a new practice (a stable form of practice). All the stages are connected in the cycle of expansive learning,<sup>2</sup> so they do not necessarily take place in the above sequence.

Unpredictable problems imply learning that is not repetition of the known, previously acquired knowledge, nor is it reproduction of culture through the transmission of patterns and meanings – it is also creation of new cultural and social practices by transforming the existing ones or by introducing innovations, which is emphasised by the theory of expansive learning. Creativity at work is based on an adult actor's ability to perceive problems and to be able to analyse, deconstruct, and change (or surpass) established practices (routines). The definition of innovative learning in an organisation is based on Engeström (1999, p. 377), who states the following: "Innovative organisational learning

<sup>2</sup> The cycle of expansive learning and developmental work research (DWR) are similar to the stages of design thinking and design-based research (DBR), both of which are about finding and creating new practices.

is collaborative learning in work organisations that produces new solutions, procedures, or systemic transformations in organisational practices.”

Exploratory learning occurs also as the creation of new practices at the Slovenian U3A. Much research has been undertaken into learning and training in business organisations, however, much less research has been done into innovative learning in the field of older adult education. At the Slovenian U3A, the basic study groups are study circles, some of which are involved in innovative projects. The projects are either conducted as part of a chosen study circle or independently. An example of this are international projects run by the Slovenian U3A's Research and Development Centre. The following two attributes are considered when it comes to reflection on the transfer of knowledge and the creation of new practices (new knowledge) in the local/organisational/educational environment: (a) the dynamics of knowledge and (b) the innovation of learning. These two attributes have been taken into account in the research presented in this paper, as they relate to the introduction of new practices and the changing of knowledge by supplementing quantitative growth with quality (of relationships, actions, seeking new opportunities) and fostering the flow between implicit and explicit knowledge.

## EMPIRICAL PART

The research is focused on an analysis of selected examples of exploratory learning/expansive learning in practice at the Slovenian U3A. The aim is to identify the characteristics of exploratory learning<sup>3</sup> as experienced by project participants. A further aim is to identify the factors listed by project participants as being significant for the development of exploratory learning and to identify the forms of learning and types of knowledge that emerge as part of innovative practice.

Moreover, another specific aim is to identify the characteristics of learning “under non-routine conditions”, when innovations are introduced into the practices of older adult education, when routines (stable functioning of a study circle) are broken (cf. Tynjälä, 2013, p. 16) and new practices are developed. The focus is on the micro level where learning takes place in the context of an organisation, in this particular case at the Slovenian U3A. In terms of methodology, the research was thus planned in accordance with the ethnographic method (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Kirner & Mills, 2019) as it involves the so-called “emic” and participatory approach (Zhu & Bargiela-Chiapini, 2013; Giatti, 2019) – learning about phenomena through the experiences of participants involved in innovative projects.

The research plan was based on two “theoretically informed” assumptions that are grounded on the research on innovative learning in the work environment, since no similar

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3 The terms innovative learning and exploratory learning are used in professional literature to refer to learning that does not constitute acquiring the already known, familiar knowledge, but rather the formation of new knowledge. The term used in this paper is “exploratory learning”, as this is also the term used for this type of learning at the Slovenian U3A.

research in the field of older adult education has been found. The first assumption was that a trans-organisational or trans-group connection (e.g. between a museum and the U3A as an educational organisation, between a botanical garden as a public place and institution and the third age university, between a bookstore and the Slovenian U3A, between Slovenian Third Age University and European third age universities) creates the potential for innovation (cf. Tuomi-Gröhn & Engeström, 2003; Wegener & Tanggaard, 2012; Højrup, 2012). The second assumption was that innovations occur in day-to-day activities, while practice is being innovated, and are not introduced from other research institutions.

### **Research questions**

The aim of the research was to find out how expansive learning takes place when a group innovates a practice, and what the participants in innovative projects feel is important for the development of expansive learning.

The primary research question was developed into the following three research questions:

- What are the characteristics of expansive learning in innovative projects at the Slovenian U3A?
- How did participants in innovative projects at the Slovenian U3A experience expansive learning based on the environment?
- According to the participating actors, what influenced expansive learning?

### **Research method**

The research was planned in accordance with the principles of activity theory. According to the activity theory, the basic research method is not a conventional laboratory experiment, but a formative experiment that combines active participation with the observation of developmental changes. The research followed the principles of reflexive methodology, the phenomenological methodological paradigm (Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2017), and ethnographic approaches (LeCompte & Schensul, 2012; Price, 2013). Situated learning as informal learning is (can be) a hidden phenomenon where only a small part can be seen from the perspective of an external researcher. Therefore, an ethnographic participant observation method was used – in the final stage it was supplemented with data collection by means of interviews.

The ethnographic research was aimed at gaining a broader insight into the practice. The unit of research was an active group, which was viewed as an activity system according to Engeström (2018). The participants were involved in research work (McNiff, 2013; McIntosh, 2010; Keane, 2003; Price, 2013), as a result of which the research is regarded as participatory. Participatory research methods were used to produce creative spaces for research and learning (Giatti, 2019).

### **Units included in research**

The research included three cases of innovative practice that took place in three international projects. The cases were selected purposefully. In all three cases, a new form

of social practice emerged and was incorporated into everyday activities. A number of international and national projects have so far been set up at the Slovenian U3A, introducing new practices, and the entire older adult education system has been recognised as a social innovation.<sup>4</sup> Various innovations have been developed, such as the Festival of Knowledge and Culture in Later Life, The 11th School in Bookstore, development of strategies for using film for the purposes of active ageing and raising the awareness of stereotypes through the CinAge and RefugeesIn projects, development of a network of voluntary cultural mediators in Slovenian museums (Bračun Sova, Ličen, Findeisen, & Kramberger, 2015), a silver economy group striving for greater social justice in this economy and fighting against the stereotypes of older adults being helpless in their old age.<sup>5</sup> Of the many projects, three that are relevant to the research presented here were selected as research units (see Merriam, 1998, p. 61; Grbich, 2013, p. 18).

Data were collected in the following three projects:

- (a) Personal Town Tours (2014; [www.utzo.si/en/projekti/personal-towntours/](http://www.utzo.si/en/projekti/personal-towntours/)) and activities of the study circle (project leader: M. Kutin),
- (b) Promoting Third Age Education (2016–2018; [www.utzo.si/en/projekti/p3ae-promoting-third-age-education/](http://www.utzo.si/en/projekti/p3ae-promoting-third-age-education/); project leader: D. Findeisen),
- (c) RefugeesIn (2016–2018; [www.utzo.si/en/projekti/refugeesin/](http://www.utzo.si/en/projekti/refugeesin/); project leader: D. Findeisen).

The Personal Town Tours project was set up on the basis of an identically-titled EU project, which involved partners from Bulgaria, Romania, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia. The focus of the project was establishing sightseeing town routes based on the preferences of project participants.

The project partners in the project titled Promoting Third Age Education were from Lithuania, Latvia, Spain and Slovenia. The main aim of the project was to contribute to the professionalisation of the field of older adult education.

The RefugeesIn project was a continuation of the CinAge project – European Cinema for Active Ageing. The aim of the project, which included partners from Slovenia, Portugal, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Greece, was to raise awareness of the derogatory and stereotypical treatment of older adults and migrants.

### **Data collection and processing**

Data collection took place over different time periods between the academic years 2013/14 and 2017/18. Various data collection methods were used and the principles of newer ethnographic approaches, as described by Grbich (2013, pp. 55–69), were

4 In 2011, A. Krajnc and D. Findeisen received the Social Innovation Award (SPIRIT Slovenia – Public Agency for Entrepreneurship, Internationalisation, Foreign Investments, and Technology). In 2012, the Association for Third Age Education was presented with a national education award.

5 The listed projects are presented in more detail on the Slovenian U3A's website:<http://www.utzo.si/en/projects/>

followed. Participant observation, unstructured interviews and document analysis were all used – the latter is available on the website of the Slovenian U3A. The researchers participated during the course of all three projects, as well as in various product presentations (e.g. the presentation of a brochure as part of Personal Town Tours project). Ethnographic research is a creative experience and the “objects” of research are the subjects with whom a relationship is established. The epistemological position adopted in data collection followed the “surrender-and-catch” principle (Gherardi, 2012), which means that the researcher surrenders to whatever goes on and is committed in the relationship to it. The data were recorded in the form of field notes. They were processed by means of the textual analysis method and thematic sets were formed. The data were arranged according to the principles of classification (the material was categorised) using deductive and inductive approaches and taking into account the theory of expansive learning.

A preliminary thematic analysis was performed following the principles of grounded theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Although the research question design was informed by theory, the analysis was not focused on comparing empirical data with established theories (or definitions), as there are very few such theories when it comes to the field of older adult education. The coding was open and was done by attaching concepts (codes) for each individual activity in the field notes.

In addition to observation, two in-depth interviews were conducted in 2018. The two interviewees were selected purposefully – they both have more than ten years of experience working with older adults, they are both highly educated in the field of social sciences and humanities, they both work as mentors of study circles at the Slovenian U3A and they were both involved in the selected research and development projects. One of the two interviewees was involved in all three projects and the other in one of them.

## **FINDINGS**

The findings are presented based on the developed research questions and topics. The description of the phenomena is accompanied by verbatim notes taken during the fieldwork and the interviews – the notes are marked using indentations and are italicised. The following three topics, which follow the research questions, have been formed on the basis of empirical data: characteristics of expansive learning, experience of expansive learning, influences on expansive learning.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF EXPANSIVE LEARNING**

In this part, the answer to the first research question is provided: What are the characteristics of expansive learning in innovative projects at the Slovenian U3A?

The first set of answers reveals that the cycle of expansive learning emerged in all three projects, that different forms of learning have been developed, that different learning



strategies have been used and that different types of knowledge have been produced. The answer to the first question is provided through the following three sub-topics:

- (a) expansive learning as part of innovation,
- (b) forms of learning,
- (c) types of knowledge and wisdom.

### **Expansive learning as part of innovation**

The basic assumption was that trans-organisational or trans-group networking creates the potential for innovations (Wegner & Tanggaard, 2012; Højrup, 2012). When it comes to the Slovenian U3A, the observations and interviews suggest that this is partly true since most of the innovations originate from the Slovenian U3A.

The fact that we want to adapt to other institutions, i.e. to the way they work, makes us take steps towards them. However, other institutions don't necessarily – in fact, usually this is not the case – take any steps in our direction. When we work together, however, this does bring about some change. Usually innovations come entirely from our side. There is a bit more collaboration when it comes to international projects where we conceive and plan the project together, but then again, only some of the project partners – one or two of them – are actively involved. Many of our innovations are developed by the process of analogy, by modifying the existing practice and taking into account the given frameworks. For instance, by recognising a certain need, through calls for tenders, the questions we receive, the need to change whatever already exists, and, most of all, by reading various studies and daily newspapers, by watching foreign TV programmes, on the basis of identified and anticipated social problems, such as migrants even before they made it over here, or a higher retirement age and social exclusion of older adults. Learning from real, actual problems leads to innovative learning. [Interview 1]

Expansive learning is not only related to new technology, on which research is generally most often focused (Hackel & Klebl, 2014), and is also present at the Slovenian U3A. Professionals working in fields where relationships and communication play an important role, such as in older adult education, are confronted with the stories of people that are part of the paradoxes of insecurity in the modern world and their work must respond to people's needs rather than merely following a specific educational programme (curriculum). Innovations are developed at different levels of older adult education (in groups, at the level of the entire organisation), as well as through the impacts on the wider cultural environment.

Expansive learning comes from a certain deficit, a lack of something or the urge to innovate. The first of the challenges is presented when facing problems that have arisen as a result of established routine practices no longer being suitable. Mentors need to develop new professional expertise, emotional abilities and professional practice that allow them to find new knowledge that will respond to a perceived problem.

The second challenge is posed by the need to bring innovations into practice as leaders explore how to develop new programmes. Older adult education is a new activity and can thus not merely respond to explicitly expressed needs, as these needs do not yet exist in the environment in the first place; rather, it needs to use professional knowledge to identify opportunities for proximal development (see Engeström & Sannino, 2010) and develop innovative practices accordingly. The learning that occurs in these situations is still part of experience and doing, and is based on agency. However, it is not driven by a deficit – rather it is part of innovation. All three projects were based on a research relationship to the phenomena (the town as experienced by older adults, migrations, older adult education). None of the three cases involved “urgent deficit-related problems”; they were about introducing innovations aimed at developing new models and not at solving a particular problem.

### **Forms of learning**

Unintentional and informal learning took place as an accompanying part of doing. In older adult students, informal learning was not recognised until after the projects had already been completed, and some processes were recognised as learning retrospectively through reflection on the processes. Intentional learning also occurred, specifically in the form of the following strategies:

- (a) Self-guided learning by means of various printed resources (books) and watching TV shows, self-guided learning through a self-analysis of one’s experiences (talking to oneself, reflecting on experiences, talking about experiences with friends), browsing the internet, asking in forums (they spent a lot of time searching for similar cases online, which indicates a high level of motivation for learning/the project);
- (b) peer mentoring by means of talking to others and emailing them about the project content (e.g. they called their colleagues to ask them about the problems they are facing in the projects);
- (c) trial and error: trial-and-error learning was not learning in the sense of “training”, but rather double-loop learning or deutero learning, where an individual learns the rules and then modifies them, which is a common type of organisational learning (see Leicher, 2013; Findeisen, 2013).

The identified forms of learning are classified as informal and non-formal forms of learning, which has been confirmed by other studies in the field of workplace learning (e.g. Tynjälä, 2013; Engeström, 2013). One of the forms of learning was cooperative learning, where the entire project team acted as a learning group. Another identified learning strategy were study tours as part of which the groups met up with other international groups.

### **Types of knowledge**

Expansive learning develops different types of knowledge and connects all types of knowledge, which leads to new ideas and practices. The concept of knowledge includes four integrated components (Tynjälä & Gijbels, 2012; Findeisen & Ličen, 2017), all of

which were developed in the projects that were the subject of observation: conceptual knowledge, practical and experiential knowledge, self-regulative knowledge and sociocultural knowledge. The one characteristic that stands out in older adults' projects is wisdom. Older adults are not "information junkies", as pointed out by Moody as early as 1986 (Moody, 1986, p. 135), but rather they develop intertwined systems of knowledge, which are best referred to as wisdom. Wisdom is understood as a balanced system of different forms of knowledge: narrative, intuitive, experiential, conceptual, rational and sociocultural. In innovative projects, a complex of cognitive, reflexive and affective elements is developed. Ardelit refers to it as wisdom (Ardelit & Jacobs, 2008), which leads to conscious ageing and positive ageing, both of which promote expansive learning at a subjective level as a process of reinventing oneself.

The way different types of knowledge are intertwined is indicated by the field notes below.

The first meeting with the future project participants took place a week before leaving for Venice and the Università della Terza Età Mestre, an institution that has a few characteristics in common with Slovenian Third Age University. The responses of future participants were easy to predict as they reflected the rather common *fears* of Slovenians. "I won't be able to do it, foreigners are better than us," was the unspoken underlying thought. D. F. encouraged them: "Tell me at least one 'foreigners' trait that would make them better than you." The responses were *emotional* and unreasonable. It mattered that the co-founder of the Slovenian U3A was present at this meeting. Her age, experience and position reassured them to some extent, so they stopped asking so many questions about what they would be doing, how they would work, what the language of communication would be, and they stopped hesitating. *It was, however, not possible to provide detailed and comprehensive answers*, as they concerned *exploratory learning*, which always involves a number of unknowns. The university representative told them that she was not surprised, as she had expected these sort of responses. In the end she added jokingly, "You know how to do it and you'll be the best as usual. We, Slovenians, are always the best among foreigners ..." [Field Notes 2017; emphasised by the authors]

For a long time, *they couldn't understand that they wouldn't attend any lectures*, that they would combine their new knowledge with the previously acquired disciplinary knowledge, that they would construct it together as new knowledge. They expected that they would be able to remain knowledge recipients, the sort of recipients that add some of their experiential insights for illustration purposes from time to time, offering them to their mentor and fellow students. [Interview 1, emphasised by the authors]

The knowledge produced in innovative projects impacts the environment, as well as the personal attitude to one's own ageing and personal biography. Understanding knowledge

is important for every project. If, for instance, cultural heritage is preserved/understood not only through scientific approaches, but also through memories (the bearers of experience), volunteers working as tourist guides can serve as a new means for generations to meet. If the creation of town tours is viewed as a creation of an environment of existence, cultural mediators and narrative knowledge gain in importance. If a town is interpreted not only through formal professional records (urbanism, architecture, demography, etc.), but is understood as whatever one feels in it, an innovative project may be different than if it is created only on the basis of scientific (conceptual, theoretical) knowledge.

## **EXPERIENCE OF EXPANSIVE LEARNING**

This part provides the answer to the second research question: How did the participants in the innovative projects at the Slovenian U3A experience expansive learning based on the environment?

The answer was formulated using the following subtopics: satisfaction, commitment/belonging.

Satisfaction with innovative learning was observed in all the cases, which was confirmed by the two interviewees. A similar observation was made by Eteläpelto et al. (2013), who noted that work satisfaction develops during innovative projects.

During its journey, the group experiences some wonderful moments when, after a period of searching, the results of its work gain recognition by outsiders: public appearances, participation in a conference, an invitation to make a public appearance in a foreign environment, preparation of a guide book and an exhibition, journalists' interest, newspaper articles about them, radio broadcasts, invitations to new projects. Appraisal by the public plays an important role in the process of knowledge acquisition. The public and the individuals they meet ensure that the knowledge is spread and enhanced, that there is even more exploratory learning. Both 'researchers' and other individuals in the environment get excited about it. [Interview 1]

Older adult students described learning as "an internal force that is part of every human being" and said that learning was intertwined with personal biographies. New knowledge became part of their lives. The second interviewee made similar observations.

"Learning cannot be separated from life, they go hand in hand," they [students] said. The same thing is clear from the large amount of emails, text messages, and repetitions of the tour route. A student sent an email to the other students in her group, saying, "I'm now testing our research topic on café life in practice. And I'm sending you a photo." Another student wrote the following: "I did a bit of tidying up and decluttering around the house and found some books on the topic I know you'd be interested in. I have them in my car if you'd like them."

And a third student said, “I’ll try to make arrangements for the project results to be displayed at our local library. I’d like others to see what we have seen.”  
[Interview 2]

They emphasised the development of their own identity (sense of self, self-image and sense of belonging to the community), which points to the importance of self-regulatory knowledge formed through the experience of innovative practice.

The knowledge we gain in projects is primarily for the sake of innovation, for a project. But at the same time this makes me feel better, I feel I’m doing well, said M. P. [Field Notes 2018]

In projects carried out at the Slovenian U3A, the groups that were introducing innovations were independent and “posed no threat” to anyone, unlike in the work environment, where some colleagues may be forced to break out of established routines or rigid practices when an innovation is introduced. Innovative projects have been well received both at the Slovenian U3A and in the milieu, which gave the students satisfaction. Individuals or small groups that have innovative ideas and articulate many ideas for change are often not well received in their (work) environment. Højrup (2012), Toumi-Gröhn and Engeström (2003) propose organising learning teams as part of which learning can take place. These teams provide psychological security/trust, share a common field of experience, create new knowledge, and then test it. An example of such teams are research study circles at the Slovenian U3A.

It can be concluded that innovation must be regarded as interaction. It depends on mutual relationships and the culture within an organisation. Innovations are a form of participation in which older adult students take the initiative to develop change, so it is important for them to feel that they can act on their own initiative. In the development of innovative projects, the affective element (“a good feeling”) has been provided in a number of ways. Innovative projects were well received by the media (radio broadcasts, newspaper articles). The Slovenian U3A follows the principle that all activities, in particular innovative activities taking place in a field with less social power (such as older adult education), should also be promoted in the media. Expansive learning is part of the cultural environment, and it is therefore desirable, according to the theory of learning used, that a wider public is informed about the innovations introduced in older adult education. This element also affects the identification of the older adults with the Slovenian U3A.

Practice innovation is related to professional commitment and dedication to the work of the Slovenian U3A, as the mentors’ and students’ statements reveal that much of the learning took place outside working hours, i.e. outside the individuals’ time that is officially intended for work at the Slovenian U3A. In the cases researched, it was of crucial importance that the actors in the study circles understood and trusted one another.

Learning took place as:

- (a) the changing of programmes, which could be understood as the transformation of cultural objects and that of knowledge transfer tools;
- (b) proximal development (the participants reported changes in knowledge (expertise) as well as self-feelings (identity)); all learning took place through doing and was based on agency and reflection;
- (c) new ways of network building (e.g. the content of socialising becomes different, the motives for socialising are related to innovative projects).

## **INFLUENCES ON EXPANSIVE LEARNING**

The answer to the third research question on what influenced expansive learning in the opinion of the participating actors is provided through the subtopics on the rules and activities within the community. The subtopics include the understanding of older adult education and active ageing, personal motivation and understanding learning as a biographical process. According to older adult students, the following is important for expansive learning:

### *(a) Understanding of older adult education and the associated active ageing and lifelong development*

Older adult students view older adult education as an integral part of their development, including professional development, as noted in the following statements (summarised from the field notes taken during short conversations with the participants):

If you see getting old merely as deteriorating, it's difficult.

I moved to Ljubljana a few years ago, but it's taken me until now that I'm working with you to feel like I'm becoming a local.

When I took visitors around Ljubljana, the atmosphere was really great. You could feel mutual enthusiasm, which confirms that we [older adults, authors' note] can offer something that 'routine guides' can't. [Field Notes 2018]

The conception of identity as something that individuals accept (as a social role) at the beginning of life and then "carry" it with them faded when new understandings of identity as a process emerged. Unless older adult students develop an idea of themselves and their identity as something that develops even in old age, they are not likely to be favourably inclined towards innovative learning.

### *(b) Personal motivation and personal goals*

To persist in the search of the new requires personal motivation, which older adult students in innovative projects display in different ways. If a learning subject is unable to accept the risk, they will prefer to follow routine when learning and they will want to be told by others about a strategy that has previously proven efficient. When it comes to innovative projects, however, older adults create new knowledge. The second interviewee had the following to say in relation to this:

We have fun (we can experiment) while doing this, no one can stop us after all, right?

You can make even more use of me in these tasks, a student wrote to his mentor.

I know this topic doesn't quite fit in with the project concept, but I've always been interested in it and would like to work on it. We'll be able to incorporate it somehow, right? [Interview 2]

*(c) Understanding learning as a biographical process*

An older adult student said:

During my many years working in television, I developed a bit of a feeling for composition and detail. Now I'm trying my hand at photography. When I took the very first photos for our project, I was still using an ordinary camera. When I replaced my old mobile, I chose a new one, a so-called smartphone because it's, among other things, more practical for taking photos and I can always carry it on me. Now I'd like to learn a photo editing programme. [Interview 2]

It's important that you achieve something when everyone else is telling you that there is no point in it, you have retired after all! It's important for you to achieve something in a new community and in a new field. [M. P., Field Notes 2018]

Participants in the projects where expansive learning was studied as part of this research are convinced that learning is a lifelong process and that each of us learn all the time. Another difference lies in whether learning is viewed as an individual process (one is responsible for everything on one's own) or as a social process depending on the sociocultural environment. In the groups involved in the projects, both were observed.

The above elements are part of the activity system structure that influence expansive learning. They make up systems of community rules and practices. The environment in which expansive learning takes place is important. At the Slovenian U3A, innovative projects enjoy the support of the management, which is all about promoting innovation.

Innovative projects involve the activities of acquiring, creating and using knowledge. In the networks of actors (students, mentors, researchers, management), all these activities are intertwined without any role hierarchy.

## **CONCLUSION**

The theory of expansive learning is an appropriate choice for interpreting learning in development projects carried out at the Slovenian U3A. Learning is reflected at different levels and through different types of knowledge. It has been found that expansive learning in the researched projects was influenced by factors within the environment at the level of



individuals (students, mentors, and researchers), the group (study circle) and the organisation (Slovenian U3A).

Project activities, as a social innovation, have influenced the development of a wider community. The collaboration between the Faculty of Arts at University of Ljubljana, and the Slovenian U3A resulted in a study course titled Older Adult Education, which was influenced by all three aforementioned projects. Tours of Ljubljana were set up, round tables were organised and films were made with the aim of raising awareness of migration. Learning in innovative projects, which takes place under the expansive learning scheme, thus introduces important innovations into the environment.

Introducing innovations through expansive learning can be understood as a period of transition during which a number of abilities turn out to be important, i.e. the ability to explore one's own practice and adapt to unpredictable situations, plan one's own work, learn by means of self-guided learning and create new knowledge, with all the actors within the system also acting as knowledge producers. All three projects led to the formation of explicitly coded knowledge (publications in professional and scientific periodicals, undergraduate and master's theses). As pointed out by all research participants, the snowball effect is distinct in expansive learning. It generates new learning: when a project is carried out in a relaxed atmosphere, these results in a wealth of ideas for new projects. Innovative projects have been well received internationally. Expansive learning has led to raising awareness of older adults' opportunities for active ageing through socially engaged education and socially engaged art.

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*Jernej Širok*

## OBČUTLJIVOST EVALVACIJSKIH PRAKS ZA VRSTE, STOPNJE IN PODROČJA ŠTUDIJSKIH PROGRAMOV

### POVZETEK

*Kakovost v visokem šolstvu je relativna in funkcionalna. Razpeta je med različne interese in hkrati vse manj zavezana univerzi lastnemu jeziku, logiki in vrednotam. Empirična raziskava evalvacijskih praks v Sloveniji prikazuje občutljivost kakovosti za razlike med stopnjami in vrstami študijskih programov ter disciplinami, v katere so študijski programi vpeti. Intrinzična raznoličnost študija je izpeljana tako iz pristopov v visokošolskem izobraževanju, specialnih didaktik in razlik med disciplinami kot iz razlik, ki jih opredeljujejo področni predpisi. Rezultati raziskave na podlagi analize vrednostnih sodb o kakovosti v končnih evalvacijskih poročilih strokovnjakov v postopkih podaljšanja akreditacije študijskih programov sporočajo, da kritičnost in pogostost kvalitativnih poudarkov strokovnjakov slabo sledita nujnostim intrinzičnih posebnosti vrst in stopenj študijskih programov, še posebej pa njihove vpetosti v različne discipline. Ker tudi področna primernost skupin strokovnjakov pri tem skorajda ne nadoknadi neobčutljivosti področnih predpisov za intrinzične posebnosti študija, kakovost ogroža svojevrstnost praks in procesov v visokem šolstvu.*

**Ključne besede:** *discipline, evalvacijske prakse, področna primernost strokovnjakov, vrste in stopnje študijskih programov*

### THE SENSITIVITY OF EVALUATION PRACTICES TO TYPES, CYCLES AND FIELDS OF STUDY PROGRAMMES – ABSTRACT

*Quality in higher education is relative and functional. It is divided between various interests and increasingly less bound to the language, logic, and values of the university. This empirical research of evaluation practices in Slovenia shows the sensitivity of quality to the differences in types and cycles of study programmes as well as their disciplinary foundations. The intrinsic diversity of study is linked to the various approaches that can be found in higher education, to specialist didactics and disciplinary differences, and also to differences nested in legislation. The analysis of quality assessments in the final expert reports from programme re-accreditation procedures shows that the criticism and frequency of qualitative emphases in the reports poorly track the necessities inherent in the intrinsic properties of the types, cycles, and especially disciplinary foundations of study programmes. Since the disciplinary*

*competence of evaluators also hardly compensates for the legislation's insensibility to these intrinsic properties, quality endangers the particularity of the practices and processes in higher education.*

**Keywords:** *types and cycles of study programmes, disciplines, disciplinary competence of evaluators, evaluation practices*

## UVOD

Izrekanje vrednostnih sodb o kakovosti visokega šolstva v delih, ki presegajo ugotavljanje skladnosti s predpisi, je razpeto med ekstrinzičnimi in intrinzičnimi predstavami o tem, kaj je v študijskih praksah in procesih dobro oziroma slabo. Prve vrste predstav zaznamujejo vrednote iz družbenega okolja, v katerem so danes močne poslovna, organizacijska in potrošniška kultura. Te kulture glede na svoje posebnosti od visokega šolstva pričakujejo učinkovitost, produktivnost, uspešnost, optimalnost, storilnost, konkurenčnost, uporabnost, inovativnost, fleksibilnost, odgovornost, transparentnost, sledljivost in dostopnost. Druge vrste predstav se v splošnem ozirajo po akademski svobodi, institucionalni avtonomiji, samoregulaciji vednosti ter predvsem odprtem iskanju resnice in širjenju razuma na najvišji ravni, a se glede na različna področja vednosti, načine poučevanja, vrste izobraževalnih ustanov in študija med seboj razlikujejo.

Kakovost v visokem šolstvu ne temelji na konceptualno poenotenem esencialističnem programu, ki bi za usmerjanje njenega presojanja ponudil strukturiran sistem vrednot, zmožen razlikovanja med ekonomističnimi, tehnokratskimi, konstruktivističnimi in akademskimi ideali kakovostnega. Predstave o dobrem in slabem skuša usmerjati z objektivnimi univerzalnimi predpisi. Ti so pretežno specifikacije družbeno sprejemljivega. So minimalne zahteve, o katerih je mogoče objektivno ugotoviti, ali (in koliko) so izpolnjene. Pomanjkljivo pa usmerjajo vrednotenje kakovosti – tistega, za kar je onkraj ugotovitev o družbeno sprejemljivem mogoče oceniti, da je dobro ali slabo. Kadar evalvacije presežejo preverjanje skladnosti s predpisi in vstopijo v domeno izrekanja vrednostnih sodb, so lahko bodisi meritorne bodisi interesne. Ker se opirajo na različne impulze agensov, vrednote in ideale, so podvržene relativnosti in arbitrarnosti. Kot take trčijo ob tradicije kognitivnih, družbenih in razvojnih posebnosti disciplin, različnih pristopov v visokošolskem izobraževanju, raznovrstnosti študijskih programov in razlik v institucionalni (na primer statusni ali organizacijski) ureditvi visokošolskih zavodov.<sup>1</sup>

Zatekanje k predpisom pri presojanju o kakovosti odpira problematiko njihove specifičnosti in splošnosti. Jasnejši ko je predpis, bolj mora biti specifičen in izključujoč. Bolj ko je splošen, manj natančno je mogoče po njem presojati z upoštevanjem posebnosti presojanega. Če je preveč specifičen, je lahko za posamezne vrste, stopnje

<sup>1</sup> Sonja Kump (1994) za označevanje spoznavnih in razumskih gradnikov disciplinarnega znanja uporablja izraz *kognitivne lastnosti*. Becher in Trowler (2001) uporabljata izraza *epistemološke lastnosti* in *različne oblike znanja*. Ker te gradnike poleg epistemoloških dopolnjujejo tudi ontološke in metodološke lastnosti in ker izraz *oblike znanja* ni dovolj jasen, v nadaljevanju uporabljamo izraz *kognitivne lastnosti*.

in področja izobraževanja različno primeren in pravičen. Če nekaterim celo ugaja, je lahko do drugih zaviralen. Če pa je presplošen in univerzalen, pa za posebnosti ni nujno občutljiv.<sup>2</sup>

Kakovost je v Sloveniji uzakonjena. Znotraj upravno-pravnega sistema deloma razlikuje med različnimi stopnjami in vrstami študija ter različnimi vrstami in statusnimi oblikami visokošolskih zavodov, vsem disciplinam in študijskim področjem pa postavlja enake specifikacije. V obdobju, ki ga zajema raziskava evalvacijskih praks, tudi ni bila občutljiva za različne pristope v visokošolskem izobraževanju. Zato ima potencial za standardizacijo disciplinarne vednosti in uniformiranje njenih partikularnosti, do določene mere pa tudi celotne visokošolske dejavnosti. Medtem ko namreč ni posebej občutljiva za intrinzične posebnosti visokega šolstva, odprto sprejema njemu ekstrinzične vrednote in ideale (Scott, 2003). Ti lahko dajejo prednost izbranim disciplinam (predvsem trdim in aplikativnim), segmentom visoke vednosti (predvsem aplikativni in zaprti vednosti), načinom poučevanja (predvsem usposabljanju in veččinjenju) in vrstam študija (strokovni in specializirani študijski programi). Poleg tega pa lahko izpodrivajo intrinzične vrednote, na primer z zahtevami po učinkovitosti ali preglednosti.

Predpisi se s kakovostjo vednosti, izobraževanja in raziskovanja v njim lastnem jeziku in logiki ukvarjajo obrobno. Primarno se namreč posvečajo participaciji agensov (njihovim pravicam in obveznostim) in pravni ureditvi njihovih medsebojnih transakcij, organizaciji (transparentnost, ureditev organizacijskih ciljev, dokumentacije, procesov, postopkov in nadzora) in poslovanju (učinkovitost in odgovornost). Tako niso le bolje usklajeni z zunanjimi interesi in umeščeni v upravno-pravni red, temveč se tudi bolje prilagajajo zahtevam po merjenju. Lažje je meriti tisto, kar se meriti dá, in izmerki so javnosti bolj razumljivi, čeprav morda o visokošolskem izobraževanju ne povedo tega, kar bi morali (Biesta, 2010).

Posledice takšnega pristopa h kakovosti so daljnosežne. V vrednostnih sodbah izrečena priporočila, slabosti in pomanjkljivosti se lahko opirajo na različne vrednote ali imperativne, tudi tiste, ki so akademskim tuji in za akademske izzive vprašljivi. Sodb, ki bi na primer spodbujale povečanje svobode poučevanja in raziskovanja ali se lotevale problematike razmerja med različnimi pristopi v visokošolskem izobraževanju, v evalvacijskih poročilih ni zaslediti, medtem ko je pozivov k večanju učinkovitosti ali preglednosti na vseh področjih presoje mnogo (Spletni arhiv Nacionalne agencije Republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu, b. d.). Nacionalna agencija Republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu (v nadaljevanju: Agencija) visokošolske zavode k usmeritvam iz teh sodb praviloma zaveže tako, da jih primora k realizaciji predlaganih ukrepov pred izdajo končne odločitve o akreditaciji, ali pa z zahtevo za izdelavo akcijskih načrtov, katerih realizacijo bo morda nekoč preverjala (Spletni arhiv Nacionalne agencije Republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu, b. d.).

<sup>2</sup> Sonja Kump (1994) je opozorila, da so unitarni kriteriji ali standardi do disciplin krivični, ker ne upoštevajo različne narave disciplin in njihovih predmetov.

Pri iskanju odgovorov o posledicah instrumenta kakovosti za samobitnost visokega šolstva poskušamo najprej ugotoviti, koliko so strokovnjaki občutljivi za razlike med stopnjami in vrstami študijskih programov ter disciplinami, v katere so študijski programi vpeti. Zanima nas tudi, ali področna primernost skupin strokovnjakov, ki je opredeljena na koncu poglavja *Empirični del*, na to kakor koli vpliva. Kolikor dopuščajo rezultati, je treba raziskati tudi implikacije takšne občutljivosti. Rezultati raziskave, ki so bili podlaga za ta prispevek, ne zajemajo problematike različnih pristopov v visokošolskem izobraževanju, saj je bila njihova raznoličnost besedišču instrumenta kakovosti v obdobju, ki ga raziskava pokriva, povsem tuja. Zaradi neraziskanosti vzročnih povezav med izsledki evalvacijskih praks in statusom visokošolskih zavodov (predvsem na osi javni–zasebni) raziskava prav tako zaobide občutljivost evalvacijskih praks za posebnosti institucionalne ureditve visokošolskih zavodov, ki izvajajo presoje študijske programe.

### **POSEBNOSTI DISCIPLINARNE VEDNOSTI IN VISOKOŠOLSKEGA IZOBRAŽEVANJA**

Predpisane specifikacije, na katere se opira instrument kakovosti, ne ločijo med kognitivnimi, družbenimi in razvojnimi posebnostmi disciplin. Celotno evalvacijsko besedišče, vključno s svojimi kvalitativnimi in kvantitativnimi oznakami, določili in usmeritvami tako v Zakonu o visokem šolstvu (v nadaljevanju: ZViS) kot v Merilih za akreditacijo in zunanjo evalvacijo visokošolskih zavodov in študijskih programov (v nadaljevanju: Merila za akreditacijo), nima neposrednih sredstev, ki bi usmerjala prepoznavo in presojo posebnosti glede na disciplino, v katero se umešča študijski program. Merila za akreditacijo iz 2014 v 1. točki 14. člena določajo zgolj, da mora biti študijski program »sestavljeno formalno in vsebinsko ustrezno po študijskih področjih ter znanstvenih ali umetniških disciplinah, za katere je zavod ustanovljen« (Merila za akreditacijo in zunanjo evalvacijo visokošolskih zavodov in študijskih programov, 2014). V splošnem določilo usmerja v ugotavljanje ustreznosti (ne kakovosti), ki pa vendarle ni le formalna, temveč tudi vsebinska. Instrument kakovosti se je pri tem zanašal na okoliščino, da so strokovnjaki praviloma habilitirani visokošolski učitelji s področij presojanih študijskih programov, da so torej člani istih ali vsaj sorodnih disciplin. To naj bi omejevalo vplive, ki bi lahko s svojo neobčutljivostjo, kot opozarja Sonja Kump (1994), prispevali k rušitvi zvez med disciplinarnimi skupnostmi in oblikami vednosti.

Kuhn (1996), Biglan (1973), Kolb (1981) ter Becher in Trowler (2001) so bistveno prispevali k razumevanju kognitivnih, družbenih in razvojnih lastnosti oblik disciplinarne vednosti. V kognitivnem smislu se discipline med seboj povezujejo oziroma razlikujejo glede na svoje ontološke, epistemološke in metodološke posebnosti. Kolb (1981) je te lastnosti izpeljal iz različnih strategij iskanja resnice, iz disciplin dominantne filozofije, teorije resnice, skupnih lastnosti temeljnih raziskovalnih vprašanj, temeljnih enot znanja ter različnih načinov njegovega prikazovanja. Discipline tako zaznamujejo specifični kriteriji znanstvenega spoznanja in utemeljevanja. Razlikujejo jih posebna pravila in postopki produkcije, urejanja in preverjanja znanja. Medtem ko ene stremijo k odkritjem ali



aplikativnim rešitvam, so pri drugih odkritja in tehnologije v praksi redki, njihova znanstvena prizadevanja pa skušajo širiti ali poglobljati razumevanje. Odnos do resnice je zato različno strog in sega od približevanja razumevanju realnosti s pomočjo interpretacije do njenega neposrednega dokazovanja in preverjanja (Becher in Trowler, 2001). Medtem ko nekatere discipline k raziskovanju pristopajo bolj sistematično, objektivno in eksaktno, z bolj nadzorovanimi in izoliranimi spremenljivkami znotraj omejenih referenčnih okvirov, so druge pri tem bolj splošne, celovite, metanarativne in približne, saj je njihov referenčni okvir, v katerem preučujejo medsebojno povezane in odvisne spremenljivke, širši, in dopuščajo različne poglede na resnico (Dilthey, 1990). Raznoličnost zato bogatijo tudi odgovori na raziskovalna vprašanja, ki so glede na značilnosti discipline lahko dokončni ali bolj odprti; različno ločljivi, delni ali bolj celoviti; bolj teoretski ali bolj praktični; prav tako pa jih je mogoče načrtovati in predvidevati z različno zanesljivostjo (Becher in Trowler, 2001). Avtorja dodajata, da je razvoj disciplinarne vednosti lahko bodisi bolj linearen, povezan in kumulativen bodisi ga pretežno zaznamujejo vzorci ponavljanja in skromnejša povezanost ustvarjene vednosti. Kot poleg Biglana, Kolba, Becherja in Trowlerja poudarja Freitag (1996), izvira pomenljiva ločnica tudi iz odnosa disciplin do funkcionalnosti znanja, kar se odraža v različnem razmerju do zainteresirane in nezainteresirane produkcije znanja ter v pogledu na to, kdaj znanost na poti od produkcije do aplikacije znanja preide v stroko ter kdaj je znanost predana preučevanju realnosti in kdaj njenemu ustvarjanju.

V družbenem smislu je mogoče discipline razumeti kot kulture posebnih znanstvenih skupnosti, povezane s splošnimi vrednotami in idejami, kot sta akademska svoboda in avtonomija, a razmejene s specifičnimi tradicijami, etiko, pravili vedenja, lingvističnimi in simboličnimi oblikami komuniciranja ter načini prenašanja znanja. Od discipline do discipline tako variirajo medsebojna povezanost in enotnost njihovih članov, prepustnost disciplinarnih meja ter interakcija med disciplinami kot tudi enotnost oziroma razpršenost raziskovalnih interesov in raziskovanja, intelektualnih stilov in diskurzov. Glede na to se, kakor pišeta Becher in Trowler (2001), členijo na urbane in ruralne ter na konvergentne in divergentne. Imajo različne oblike akademskega kapitala, različen status in družbeno moč, ki vplivajo na produkcijo znanja, vrednost in vrednotenje znanstvenih dosežkov ter posledično na akademski uspeh in ugled njihovih članov (Becher in Trowler, 2001; Kolb, 1981).

Kuhn (1996) izpelje razlike v razvoju disciplinarne vednosti iz dinamike znanstvenih revolucij in linearnosti normalne akumulacije znanstvene vednosti v naravoslovju. Razvojno dinamiko opre na koncept znanstvene paradigme kot temeljne enote znanstvenega razvoja, ki po eni strani povezuje kognitivne in družbene lastnosti znanstvenega dela ter člane posamezne discipline, po drugi pa jo je mogoče razumeti kot nosilko konkretne rešitve nepremostljivega znanstvenega problema ali uganke, ki v izjemnem prelomu spodkoplje tradicijo znanstvenih praks, torej tradicijo kognitivnih in posledično družbenih lastnosti disciplin, ter jih spremeni. Izmenjavo kumulativnih (normalnih) in nekumulativnih (revolucionarnih) epizod strni v tri razvojne faze disciplin – v predparadigmatično,

paradigmatično in poparadigmatično. Ugotavlja, da v njihovem cikličnem izmenjevanju variirajo predvsem: enotnost znanstvenih praks in članov disciplinarnih skupnosti (divergentnost in konvergentnost); število znanstvenih šol, načinov reševanja znanstvenih problemov in pogledov na svet; vloga, pomen ter vpliv disciplinarnih pravil in standardov; načini uvajanja v disciplino; stabilnost, čvrstost, rigidnost in prepustnost disciplin; hitrost oziroma jakost razvoja vednosti ter predvidljivost in prodornost raziskovanja. Kot tudi sam prizna, z usmeritvijo v preučevanje razvoja normalnih znanosti zaobide razvojno dinamiko disciplin, ki so že v svojem bistvu divergentne in ciklične ter jim v obdobju normalnega razvoja ne vlada ena povezujoča paradigma. Becher in Trowler (2001) dodata, da takšne discipline kljub temu ne obtičijo zaklenjene v predparadigmatično razvojno fazo in se kot manj vredne ne izključujejo iz polja znanstvenih disciplin. Divergentnost je celo svojevrstno gonilo njihovega napredka, medtem ko jih lahko prizadevanja za enotno paradigmo razvojno omejujejo.

Ker raziskava evalvacijskih praks gravitira k posebnostim vrednostnih sodb pri presojah študijskih programov, vpetih v različne discipline, se posvetimo še klasifikaciji disciplin glede na kognitivne lastnosti disciplinarne vednosti. Discipline, klasificirane po lastnostih teritorijev disciplinarnega znanja, je namreč mogoče povezati z evidentiranimi študijskimi področji presojanih študijskih programov. Biglan (1973), Kolb (1981) ter Becher in Trowler (2001) poudarjajo, da klasifikacije disciplin niso absolutne in brezčasne, temveč so grobi in spremenljivi konstrukti s prožnimi mejami, ki ne zajemajo vseh kognitivnih posebnosti in kompleksnosti disciplinarne vednosti. Zato discipline, kot je ekonomija, celo omenjeni avtorji pripisujejo različnim skupinam disciplin. Biglan (1973) je z raziskavo dojetanja disciplinarne vednosti med člani različnih akademskih skupnosti discipline razdelil na trde čiste, mehke čiste, trde aplikativne in mehke aplikativne. Kolb (1981) je sledil Biglanovi klasifikaciji, a je skupne lastnosti in razlike med disciplinami namesto v dojetanju članov akademske skupnosti iskal v stilih učenja. Na podlagi lastnosti prenosa disciplinarne vednosti je discipline klasificiral v abstraktne reflektivne, konkretne reflektivne, abstraktne aktivne in konkretne aktivne. Navezal se je na Biglana in mehke discipline označil za konkretne, trde za abstraktne, aplikativne za aktivne in čiste za reflektivne. Becher (1994) je njunima klasifikacijama pripisal disciplinarna področja, in sicer na način, da trde čiste oziroma abstraktne reflektivne discipline pretežno pokrivajo naravoslovne vede, mehke čiste oziroma konkretne reflektivne zajemajo humanistiko in družbene vede, trde aplikativne oziroma abstraktne aktivne obsegajo znanstvene stroke (v izvorniku: »science-based professions«), mehke aplikativne oziroma konkretne aktivne pa družbene stroke (v izvorniku: »social professions«).

Trde čiste discipline zaznamujejo kumulativnost, atomističnost, drevesna struktura, zanimanje za univerzalnosti, naravnost na količine, poenostavitve, brezosebnost in odsotnost vrednot, jasnost pravil za preverjanje znanja in njegove aktualnosti, konsenz za obravnavo pomembnih vprašanj, usmerjenost v odkritja ter dobra organiziranost. Mehke čiste discipline so reiterativne, holistične, tekoče, usmerjene v partikularnosti, kvalitativne lastnosti in komplikacije. So osebne in polne vrednot. Primanjkuje jim soglasja o

pomembnih vprašanjih, njihovi rezultati pa so interpretacije. So individualistične, pluralistične in ohlapno strukturirane. Trde aplikativne discipline so namenske, pragmatične in usmerjene v obvladovanje fizičnega okolja. Njihovi pristopi so hevristični, kvalitativni in kvantitativni, pri čemer za kriteriji presoje tičita namen in funkcija. Producirajo izdelke, tehnike in patente. Mehke aplikativne discipline pa poleg namenskosti, pragmatičnosti in oziranja navzven povezuje usmeritev v izboljševanje strokovnih praks. Pomembne so jim študije primerov, producirajo pa protokole in postopke. Podvržene so modam in trendom ter nagnjene k negotovemu statusu (Becher, 1994; Becher in Trowler 2001).

Klasifikacija disciplin po lastnostih teritorijev disciplinarnega znanja upošteva tudi skupne lastnosti in razlike, ki izhajajo iz družbenih in razvojnih posebnosti disciplin ter so jih omenjeni avtorji sicer strukturirali ločeno od kognitivnih. Čeprav so posamezne discipline na družbeni in razvojni ravni klasificirali posebej, so družbene in razvojne lastnosti disciplin povezane z njihovimi kognitivnimi danostmi. Zato je mogoče v trdih čistih in trdih aplikativnih disciplinah zasledovati prevlado elementov konvergentnosti, urbanosti in paradigmatične poenotenosti. Zaradi kognitivnih lastnosti tovrstnih disciplin se njihovi člani nagibajo k večji povezanosti, enotnosti in usmerjenosti raziskovanja, pri čemer se te discipline uspešneje razmejujejo od drugih. Nasprotno se mehke čiste in mehke aplikativne discipline nagibajo k prepustnosti in odprtosti svojih meja ter paradigmatični odprtosti in fragmentiranosti, njihovi člani pa so manj povezani, poenoteni in raziskujejo na širšem področju.

Razsežnost raznoličnosti disciplinarne vednosti poraja pomislek o dopustnosti enotnih objektivnih in merljivih pogojev za presojo kakovosti raziskovalnega oziroma umetniškega dela v visokem šolstvu. Posebnosti disciplinarne vednosti pa pomembno vplivajo tudi na načine prenosa znanja – na visokošolsko izobraževanje. Kolb (1981) razlikuje med disciplinami, ki se pretežno opirajo na modele, teorije in simbolno manipulacijo, in tistimi, ki jim je pomembna čustvenost, intuicija in metaforična reprezentacija znanja. Pri prvih gre za abstraktne oziroma trde discipline, pri drugih pa za konkretne oziroma mehke. Gurung, Chick in Haynie (2009) pa poudarjajo pomen signaturne pedagogike, ki pomeni disciplinarno pogojene specialne didaktike. Avtorji opozarjajo na negativne posledice generičnih pristopov v visokošolskem poučevanju. Prikazujejo kvalifikacijske, predvsem pa socializacijske in subjektifikacijske lastnosti poučevanja, na katere vplivajo disciplinarne kulture in ki se kažejo v različnih tehnikah poučevanja, načinih razmišljanja in razumevanja ter z njimi povezanih navadah in vrednotah, na podlagi katerih posameznik usvaja disciplinarno specifičen akademski habitus, a obenem tudi razvija metadisciplinarno zavest.

Poleg disciplinarnih posebnosti visokošolskega izobraževanja so pomembni tudi različni idejni pristopi v izobraževanju, ki imajo svojevrsten odnos do kvalifikacije, socializacije in subjektifikacije.<sup>3</sup> Segajo od omike (»Bildung«) do usposabljanja, od razvijanja akademskega habitusa do razvijanja strokovnega in poslovnega habitusa ter od umeščanja

3 Koncept kvalifikacije, socializacije in subjektifikacije je povzet po Biesta (2010).

v obstoječi družbeni red do emancipacije (Biesta in Bingham, 2010).<sup>4</sup> Ker jim botruje uzakonjeno načelo svobode poučevanja, je med njimi mogoče svobodno izbirati, a je nekaterim mogoče tudi dajati večjo pozornost in podporo. Idejni pristopi v visokošolskem izobraževanju so različnim disciplinam različno blizu predvsem glede na to, ali so čiste ali aplikativne in ali so konvergentne ali divergentne.

Gurung idr. (2009) opozarjajo na problem generičnih pristopov v visokošolskem poučevanju, ki niso občutljivi za disciplinarne posebnosti. Kot dodajajo, so ti vse bolj pod vplivom visokemu šolstvu ekstrinzičnih vrednot in namesto specialnih didaktik v ospredje postavljajo vprašanja učinkovitosti in uspešnosti študija ter splošne ideale usposobljenosti za delovno mesto. »[K]olikor bolj [...] so 'kompetence' primarni [...] cilj izobraževanja, toliko bolj se mora temu prilagoditi poučevanje in v svoji skrajni različici postane zgolj trening 'kompetenc.'« (Kotnik, 2013, str. 25) Kompetentnost, kot ugotavlja Kotnik (2013), preprosto gledano pomeni usposobljenost.

Ko preidemo k posebnostim visokošolskega izobraževanja, ki jih nacionalni predpisi vendarle prepoznajo, moramo ugotoviti, kako in s kakšno občutljivostjo se specifikacije in morebitna idejna sidrišča za izrekanje vrednostnih sodb za različne stopnje in vrste študijskih programov opredeljujejo do razmerja med kvalifikacijo, socializacijo in subjektifikacijo. Večina opredelitev različnih stopenj in vrst študija je namenjenih kvalifikaciji, torej se pri vseh namen študija pretežno usmerja v usposobljenost za opravljanje dela.

ZViS (2017) v 33. členu največ določil namenja usposobljenosti. Ta ureditev velja tudi za obdobje, ki ga zajema raziskava. Visokošolske strokovne in univerzitetne študijske programe prve stopnje enači s specifikacijo prenosa strokovnega znanja, uporabe znanstvenih metod, reševanja strokovnih problemov in praktičnega izobraževanja, ki pri univerzitetnih študijskih programih sicer ni obvezno. Univerzitetne študijske programe od visokošolskih strokovnih loči predvsem po dodatni specifikaciji študija teoretičnih in metodoloških konceptov. Magistrski študij se glede na prvostopenjskega na ravni prenosa strokovnega znanja poglobi in razširi – ne specializira. Študij kljub temu ostaja strokoven in šele na tretji stopnji preide na raven znanstvenega izobraževanja, raziskovanja, razvijanja novega znanja, reševanja najzahtevnejših problemov in iskanja rešitev. Socializacija, ki jo ZViS (2017) glede na kvalifikacijo skromneje opredeljuje, je na prvi in drugi stopnji tesno povezana z usposabljanjem za strokovno delo. Medtem ko prvostopenjski študij ne glede na vrsto predvideva odgovornost, samostojnost in iniciativnost v stroki, je pri magistrskem pomembna predvsem odgovornost. Regresija socializacijske ravni se nadaljuje na doktorskem študiju, kjer ta raven ni opredeljena. Posebnosti študija so na subjektifikacijski ravni še skromneje opredeljene. Za vse njegove stopnje in vrste je zahtevana kritičnost, ki od strokovne kritičnosti na prvostopenjskem študiju prehaja h kritični refleksiji na študiju druge in tretje stopnje.

Slovensko ogrodje kvalifikacij (v nadaljevanju: SOK), kot izdaja že ime, med vrstami in stopnjami študija razlikuje predvsem po elementih usposobljenosti. Medtem ko v ničemer

4 Zgodovinski razvoj humanističnega koncepta izobrazbe pregledno prikaže Kodelja (2010).

ne razločuje med vrstama prvostopenjskega študija, pri opredeljevanju kompetenc za različne stopnje študija sledi ZViS (SOK, b. d.).

Merila za akreditacijo (2014) v 4. točki 14. člena določajo, da morajo biti »[t]emeljni cilji in učni izidi programa [...] v skladu z vsebino in ravni študijskega programa ...«. Po eni strani predpis namesto upoštevanja posebnosti različnih stopenj in vrst študija tako v zasnovi kot izvedbi poudarja zgolj vsebinsko skladnost zapisov o temeljnih ciljeh in učnih izidih z zapisi o vsebini študija na ravni načrtovanja kurikuluma. To se je odražalo tudi v zunanjih evalvacijah študijskih programov, saj 22. člen Meril za akreditacijo (2014) presojo kakovosti študijskih programov usmerja k presoji njihove organizacije in izvedbe, ki pa jo je v odsotnosti kakršnih koli dodatnih določil posebej za izvajanje študija mogoče opreti le na akreditirano stanje in spremembe študijskih programov, torej na omenjeno določilo v 14. členu. Tako na tem področju presoje ne presenečajo številne ocene strokovnjakov, da morajo visokošolski zavodi popraviti zapise v učnih načrtih (Spletni arhiv Nacionalne agencije Republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu, b. d.). Po drugi strani pa Merila za akreditacijo (2014) v 4. točki 14. člena posebnosti ravni študijskega programa, ki je oprta na klasifikacijski sistem in ne omogoča razlikovanja med vrstami študijskih programov, povezujejo zgolj s temeljnimi cilji in učnimi izidi, ne pa tudi s študijskimi vsebinami, posebnostmi disciplinarne vednosti, iz njih izhajajoče specialne didaktike ali z idejnimi pristopi v visokošolskem izobraževanju. Ker se temeljni cilji in učni izidi povezujejo s kompetencami, Merila za akreditacijo (2014) v drugih členih pravzaprav odredjajo ugotavljanje skladnosti kompetenc študijskega programa s splošnimi kompetencami posameznih vrst in stopenj študija, ki jih v 33. členu opredeljuje ZViS (2017), ne pa kakovosti.

Čeprav nacionalni predpisi zahtevajo občutljivost presoj kakovosti za stopnje in vrste študija, jih postavljajo v ozek kvalifikacijski okvir. Zahtevnost študija sicer stopnjujejo, a ga s ponavljanjem generičnih kompetenc in njihovo podobnostjo tudi uniformirajo. Kljub pomembnemu rezu med drugo in tretjo stopnjo, ko študij preide s strokovne na znanstveno raven, ostajajo podlage za razločevanje med modalnostmi študija pri presojah pomanjkljive. Ker tudi visokošolska didaktika o tej problematiki ni ponudila pomembnih razprav, se v praksi strokovnjaki pri presojah ne morejo zateči niti k jasnim specifikacijam niti k idealom, po katerih bi bilo mogoče razlikovati, da je na primer visokošolski strokovni študij na prvi stopnji aplikativen, univerzitetni pa temeljen in namenjen nadaljnjemu študiju; da je prvemu posebej pomembno usposabljanje, drugemu pa omika; da se prvi nagiba k posredovanju zaprtega in stabilnega znanja, drugi pa odprtega in pluralnega; da prvi razvija strokovnost v povezavi z delovnim okoljem in na njem poučujejo tudi učitelji iz stroke brez akademskega habitusa, drugi pa skrbi za zgodnji razvoj akademskega habitusa, razgledanost in kulturnost. Predpisi pravzaprav dopuščajo, da se prvine enega in drugega študija prepletajo in jima določajo podobne kompetence, ločnico pa potegnejo zgolj pri tem, da je prvi praktično zasnovan, drugi pa bolj teoretski (ZViS, 2017; Eurydice, b. d.).

## EMPIRIČNI DEL

Raziskava občutljivosti evalvacijskih praks za vrste, stopnje in področja študijskih programov je nastala kot del širše raziskave kakovosti v terciarnem izobraževanju in lastnosti evalvacijskih praks v sklopu periodične sistemske analize Agencije. Črpa iz javno dostopnih končnih evalvacijskih poročil strokovnjakov v postopkih podaljšanja akreditacije 485 študijskih programov, o katerih je svet Agencije sprejel končno odločitev v obdobju od 2014 do 2017 (Spletni arhiv Nacionalne agencije Republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu, b. d.). Ugotavlja, katerim spremenljivkam kakovosti so strokovnjaki posvečali več pozornosti in katerim manj glede na to, ali je bila določena lastnost oziroma stanje vredno njihovega kvalitativnega poudarka (Širok, 2018).<sup>5</sup> Njen namen je odgovoriti na vprašanje, koliko so strokovnjaki občutljivi za razlike med stopnjami in vrstami študijskih programov ter disciplinami, v katere so študijski programi vpeti. Odgovoriti pa skuša tudi, kako na to vpliva področna primernost strokovnjakov.

Ker so bili vzorec, zbiranje podatkov, njihova interpretacija ter s tem povezana pravila in lastnosti rezultatov raziskave že predstavljeni (Širok, 2019), spomnimo le na njeno usmerjenost v kvalitativne poudarke, ki so jih strokovnjaki v poročilih za 30 opisnih spremenljivk razvrščali med tri kategorije – prednosti, priložnosti za izboljšanje in neskladnosti (s predpisi). Vseh spremenljivk niso vselej obravnavali s poudarkom znotraj ene od treh kategorij, zato se je za vsako spremenljivko dodatno spremljala četrta kategorija *ni obravnavano*. Izbrane spremenljivke se opirajo na določila Meril za akreditacijo (2014) in so bistvene za področje organizacije, vsebine in izvajanja študijskih programov, ki je neposredno povezano s posebnostmi stopenj in vrst študijskih programov ter njihovih matičnih disciplin.

Pridobljena baza podatkov ponuja rezultate za študijske programe kot razmerja med štirimi kategorijami za vsako spremenljivko posebej (Širok, 2019). Za filtriranje rezultatov po stopnji in vrsti študijskega programa so bile kot kategorije uporabljene vse stopnje in vrste študijskih programov po ZViS (2017). Klasifikacija študijskih programov (Klasius-P, b. d.) po dveh klasifikacijskih ravneh je bila povzeta iz eVŠ evidence visokošolskih zavodov in študijskih programov (2017) za december 2017 in povezana s frascatsko klasifikacijo (Javna agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije, b. d.). Na podlagi primerov in raziskovalnih rezultatov o klasifikaciji disciplin po Biglan (1973), Kolb (1981) ter Becher in Trowler (2001) so bile kategorije povezanosti področij študijskih programov s skupinami disciplin na kognitivni ravni oblikovane po naslednji konvenciji:

Pretežno trde discipline so povezane s študijskimi programi z naslednjih področij: 42 vede o živi naravi; 44 vede o neživi naravi; 46 matematika in statistika; 48 računalništvo; 52 tehniške vede; 54 proizvodne tehnologije; 58 arhitektura in gradbeništvo; 62 kmetijstvo,

<sup>5</sup> Oznaka *spremenljivka kakovosti* je načrtno uporabljena namesto oznake *kazalnik kakovosti*, saj se slednja pri zagotavljanju kakovosti tendenčno uporablja kot merljiva spremenljivka. Spremenljivke, zajete v pričujočo raziskavo, pa na ravni zunanjih evalvacij študijskih programov niso bile predmet meritev, temveč vrednostnih sodb o kakovosti.



gozdarstvo in ribištvo; 64 veterinarstvo; 72 zdravstvo; 85 varstvo okolja.<sup>6</sup> Pretežno mehke discipline so povezane s področji po Klasius-P oziroma s študijskimi programi z naslednjih področij: 14 izobraževalne vede in izobraževanje učiteljev; 21 umetnost; 22 humanistične vede; 31 družboslovne vede; 32 novinarstvo in informiranje; 34 poslovne in upravne vede; 38 pravo; 58 arhitektura in gradbeništvo; 72 zdravstvo; 76 socialno delo; 81 osebne storitve; 84 transportne storitve; 86 varnost.<sup>7</sup> Pretežno čiste discipline so povezane s področji po Klasius-P oziroma s študijskimi programi z naslednjih področij: 21 umetnost; 22 humanistične vede; 31 družbene vede; 42 vede o živi naravi; 44 vede o neživi naravi; 46 matematika in statistika.<sup>8</sup> Pretežno aplikativne discipline so povezane s področji po Klasius-P oziroma s študijskimi programi z naslednjih področij: 14 izobraževalne vede in izobraževanje učiteljev; 31 družbene vede; 32 novinarstvo in informiranje; 34 poslovne in upravne vede; 38 pravo; 48 računalništvo; 52 tehniške vede; 54 proizvodne tehnologije; 58 arhitektura in gradbeništvo; 62 kmetijstvo, gozdarstvo in ribištvo; 64 veterinarstvo; 72 zdravstvo; 76 socialno delo; 81 osebne storitve; 84 transportne storitve; 85 varstvo okolja; 86 varnost.

Za filtriranje rezultatov po področni primernosti sestave skupine strokovnjakov sta bili kot kategoriji uporabljeni ujemanje strokovnjakov in neujemanje strokovnjakov, in sicer na podlagi javno dostopnih podatkov o področjih raziskovalne dejavnosti v bazi Informacijskega sistema o raziskovalni dejavnosti v Sloveniji SICRIS (b. d.) in tujih raziskovalnih bazah, med katere zaradi pretežno hrvaške zasedbe tujih strokovnjakov sodita predvsem Tko je tko u hrvatskoj znanosti (b. d.) in Hrvatska znanstvena bibliografija CROSB (b. d.), ter podatkov o pedagoški dejavnosti, torej o področjih izvolitve v naziv oziroma nosilstvu in izvajanju predmetov, dostopnih na spletnih straneh visokošolskih zavodov. V prvo kategorijo so bile razporejene skupine strokovnjakov, za katere je mogoče vse člane, ki niso študenti, po akademski dejavnosti neposredno povezati s področjem študijskega programa po dveh klasifikacijskih ravneh Klasius-P, v drugo pa skupine strokovnjakov, v katerih nobenega od strokovnjakov, ki ni študent, ni mogoče neposredno povezati s področjem študijskega programa.

## REZULTATI IN INTERPRETACIJE

Občutljivost evalvacijskih praks za posebnosti študija je mogoče izluščiti iz primerjave razlik med največjimi in najmanjšimi vrednostmi za posamezne kategorije kvalitativnih sodb – kako različno so torej strokovnjaki pri posameznih spremenljivkah poudarjali prednosti, priložnosti za izboljšanje oziroma neskladnosti za skupine študijskih programov,

6 Področje 72 se ponovi tudi pri mehkih disciplinah, ker je 13 študijskih programov vpetih v mehke discipline (npr. zdravstvena nega, babištvo, fizioterapija), 15 pa v trde (npr. medicina, dentalna medicina, farmacija). Področje 58 se ponovi tudi pri mehkih disciplinah, saj je 10 študijskih programov povezanih z mehkiimi disciplinami (npr. arhitektura, urbanizem), 12 pa s trdimi (npr. gradbeništvo).

7 Področje 21 Biglan (1973) in Kolb (1981) obravnava kot disciplino, frascatski sistem pa ne.

8 Področje 31 se ponovi tudi pri aplikativnih disciplinah, saj je 32 študijskih programov vpetih v aplikativne discipline (npr. finance, marketing, ekonomija), 21 pa v čiste (npr. sociologija kulture, družbena geografija). Nekateri so razpeti med čiste in aplikativne, npr. študijski programi s področja psihologije.



filtrirane po stopnjah, vrstah, skupinah disciplin in področni primernosti strokovnjakov. Za poenostavitev prikaza so kvalitativne sodbe postavljene v razmerje razlike med deleži prednosti ter vsoto deležev priložnosti za izboljšanje in neskladnosti. To razmerje, ki za izbrane spremenljivke povprečno znaša  $-3,36\%$ , je mogoče razumeti kot stopnjo kritičnosti, katere pozitivna vrednost pomeni presežek deleža prednosti, negativna pa presežek vsote deležev priložnosti za izboljšanje in neskladnosti. Prikaz rezultatov je razširjen s podatki o deležih obravnavanosti posameznih spremenljivk, ki v povprečju znaša  $29,03\%$ . To pomeni, da v prek  $70\%$  študijskih programov povprečna spremenljivka *ni bila obravnavana* kot vrednostna sodba – ni bila označena s kvalitativnim poudarkom. Prikaz največjih razlik po posameznih skupinah filtriranih podatkov sporoča, kakšen je bil razpon med podskupino študijskih programov posamezne kategorije (npr. stopnje, vrste ali discipline) z najnižjo stopnjo kritičnosti oziroma obravnavanosti in podskupino z največjo vrednostjo.

Tabela 1: Ranžirna vrsta za stopnjo kritičnosti presoje po posameznih spremenljivkah s prikazom največjih odstopanj za posamezne skupine podatkov, razširjena s pripadajočimi podatki o obravnavanosti

Spremenljivka	Razlika med prednostmi ter vsoto priložnosti in neskladnosti				Ni obravnavano			
	Vsi programi (N = 485)	Največja razlika za stopnjo in vrsto	Največja razlika za disciplino	Največja razlika za ujemanje strokovnjakov	Vsi programi (N = 485)	Največja razlika za stopnjo in vrsto	Največja razlika za disciplino	Največja razlika za ujemanje strokovnjakov
Zadovoljevanje potreb okolja po znanju (intelektualna vpetost v širšo skupnost)	56,12 %	24,51 %	11,23 %	6,90 %	22,89 %	25,86 %	3,10 %	5,28 %
Spremembe in posodobitve vsebin študijskega programa (ŠP)	28,22 %	27,52 %	11,58 %	0,99 %	57,11 %	24,69 %	12,22 %	15,39 %
Sodelovanje z gospodarstvom na področju izobraževanja	21,24 %	40,37 %	12,15 %	18,20 %	61,86 %	23,20 %	16,91 %	30,16 %
Zadovoljevanje potreb po znanju za javne storitve in javno dobro	18,76 %	16,40 %	12,85 %	5,79 %	79,18 %	13,17 %	13,62 %	9,71 %
Kompetence diplomantov	17,11 %	13,44 %	14,93 %	0,84 %	57,32 %	18,21 %	4,92 %	3,29 %
Izobraženost diplomantov	16,70 %	21,24 %	13,77 %	10,78 %	76,70 %	18,01 %	13,67 %	13,88 %
Interdisciplinarnost študijskih vsebin	1,44 %	15,02 %	9,63 %	13,18 %	88,66 %	8,88 %	8,18 %	3,49 %
Spremembe obsega in razporeditve izvajanja kontaktnih ur	0,82 %	3,50 %	2,83 %	0,39 %	98,76 %	1,36 %	2,25 %	0,39 %
Spremembe načina ali oblike izvajanja ŠP	0,41 %	1,26 %	1,02 %	0,00 %	99,59 %	1,26 %	1,02 %	0,00 %

Spremenljivka	Razlika med prednostmi ter vsoto priložnosti in neskladnosti				Ni obravnavano			
	Vsi programi (N = 485)	Največja razlika za stopnjo in vrsto	Največja razlika za disciplino	Največja razlika za ujemanje strokovnjakov	Vsi programi (N = 485)	Največja razlika za stopnjo in vrsto	Največja razlika za disciplino	Največja razlika za ujemanje strokovnjakov
Skladnost vsebine ŠP z njegovo stopnjo in vrsto	0,21 %	6,42 %	1,02 %	6,78 %	93,20 %	2,93 %	5,09 %	3,64 %
Povezanost učnih izidov in kompetenc z ravno znanja, socializacije in subjektifikacije	-1,45 %	14,00 %	3,93 %	2,74 %	97,32 %	9,72 %	3,31 %	5,10 %
Skladnost vsebine ŠP z njegovim področjem in disciplino	-1,65 %	7,77 %	2,03 %	3,64 %	86,80 %	11,96 %	10,46 %	3,69 %
Način ali oblika izvajanja ŠP (glede na število vpisanih, ciklično, na daljavo, kombinirano)	-3,71 %	17,73 %	8,69 %	9,52 %	84,33 %	21,96 %	16,71 %	2,00 %
Upoštevanje pobud študentov za spremembe ŠP	-4,33 %	22,28 %	12,39 %	4,32 %	63,09 %	26,28 %	16,55 %	21,62 %
Sodelovanje z zunanjimi akademiki, znanstveniki, strokovnjaki ali umetniki s področja ali discipline pri prenovi ŠP	-4,53 %	6,52 %	4,79 %	1,06 %	95,05 %	6,53 %	5,38 %	1,06 %
Prilagojenost izvajanja ŠP potrebam študentov	-4,54 %	37,95 %	3,60 %	3,25 %	75,26 %	19,11 %	13,07 %	5,02 %
Zaposljivost oz. zaposlenost diplomantov	-8,45 %	25,44 %	13,88 %	3,26 %	37,94 %	12,19 %	13,08 %	9,17 %
Izvajanje kontaktnih ur, njihov obseg in razporeditev	-10,31 %	20,93 %	9,23 %	5,32 %	60,41 %	25,22 %	7,20 %	7,58 %
Prilagojenost vsebin ŠP potrebam gospodarstva	-11,75 %	16,90 %	18,11 %	1,15 %	65,36 %	36,71 %	16,08 %	0,61 %
Zahtevnost študija	-11,75 %	16,84 %	11,29 %	12,24 %	68,45 %	10,60 %	14,30 %	13,23 %
Preverljivost učnih izidov in kompetenc	-11,96 %	11,70 %	13,57 %	7,47 %	69,90 %	13,16 %	4,50 %	8,56 %
Skladnost vsebine ŠP z njegovimi cilji, znanji, kompetencami in učnimi izidi	-14,43 %	35,00 %	22,91 %	11,10 %	53,40 %	6,92 %	16,02 %	7,30 %
Obvezne sestavine študijskega programa, ki se ne tikajo kurikula	-15,04 %	3,90 %	7,88 %	8,66 %	79,18 %	5,32 %	3,25 %	4,76 %
Sodelovanje z delodajalci pri prenovi ŠP	-15,46 %	10,54 %	17,17 %	7,08 %	70,52 %	10,06 %	16,77 %	5,93 %
Prilagojenost vsebin ŠP potrebam študentov	-16,29 %	32,05 %	9,26 %	0,35 %	58,35 %	39,68 %	11,64 %	13,46 %

Spremenljivka	Razlika med prednostmi ter vsoto priložnosti in neskladnosti				Ni obravnavano			
	Vsi programi (N = 485)	Največja razlika za stopnjo in vrsto	Največja razlika za disciplino	Največja razlika za ujemanje strokovnjakov	Vsi programi (N = 485)	Največja razlika za stopnjo in vrsto	Največja razlika za disciplino	Največja razlika za ujemanje strokovnjakov
Učni izidi in kompetence ter njihova povezanost z zaposljivostjo	-18,35 %	9,58 %	8,54 %	1,00 %	73,40 %	6,61 %	6,58 %	3,32 %
Dovršenost strukture ŠP	-18,77 %	27,32 %	7,00 %	13,13 %	73,61 %	22,67 %	8,33 %	3,21 %
Zadovoljevanje potreb trga dela	-21,85 %	9,77 %	11,93 %	1,12 %	71,13 %	3,10 %	14,62 %	3,45 %
Krepitev kompetenc za delovno mesto	-29,07 %	33,01 %	13,91 %	18,21 %	54,43 %	43,07 %	14,89 %	3,27 %
Skladnost vsebine ŠP z njenim kreditnim vrednotenjem	-38,14 %	31,69 %	16,76 %	15,55 %	55,88 %	32,14 %	16,76 %	22,20 %
Povprečje	-3,36 %	18,69 %	10,26 %	6,47 %	70,97 %	16,69 %	10,35 %	7,66 %
Standardni odklon	18,63 %	10,89 %	5,37 %	5,51 %	17,95 %	11,49 %	5,32 %	7,18 %

Vir: osebne analize

Pri razumevanju rezultatov je treba upoštevati, da se z zviševanjem stopnje obravnavanosti večajo odstopanja od nične vrednosti stopnje kritičnosti. Pogled na razvrstitve rezultatov kaže, da se z večanjem negativnosti stopnje kritičnosti raznoličnost kvalitativnih poudarkov po stopnjah, vrstah in skupinah disciplin skoraj ne povečuje, nekoliko bolj pa se raznoličnost v obravnavanosti povečuje z zviševanjem stopnje obravnavanosti spremenljivk. Enako velja tudi za razlike v kvalitativnih poudarkih in obravnavanosti glede na področno primernost skupin strokovnjakov. Za interpretacijo rezultatov je ključno, da se z večanjem razlik v obravnavanosti in stopnji kritičnosti znotraj posameznih skupin filtriranih podatkov več občutljivost presoj strokovnjakov za posebnosti stopnje, vrste in disciplinarne vpetosti študija. Posamezne spremenljivke imajo namreč za različne posebnosti študija različne implikacije in pomen, čeprav so lahko izpeljane iz univerzalnih specifikacij. Z upadanjem razlik so torej strokovnjaki do posameznih vprašanj ne glede na njihovo specifiko kot na zadevne posebnosti študija vse bolj enako kritični in se jim vse bolj enako posvečajo – s svojimi presojami tako pomagajo študij uniformirati.

Odstopanja v stopnji kritičnosti so med študijskimi programi različne stopnje in vrste v povprečju (18,69 %) občutno večja kot med študijskimi programi, vpetimi v discipline različnih skupin (10,26 %). V povprečju so razlike v razmerju med kvalitativnimi poudarki najmanjše glede na področno primernost sestave skupine strokovnjakov (zgolj 6,47 %). Enako velja za obravnavanost spremenljivk, ki v povprečju najbolj variira med različnimi stopnjami in vrstami študijskih programov (16,69 %), manj med študijskimi programi, ki pripadajo različnim skupinam disciplin (10,35 %), najmanj pa glede na področno primerenost sestave skupine strokovnjakov (7,66 %).

Če rezultate tako za obravnavanost spremenljivk kot za stopnjo kritičnosti presojo razvrstimo po razponu občutljivosti strokovnjakov za presojo disciplinarnih posebnosti študijskih programov, največjo variacijo kažejo spremenljivke, ki se tikajo participacije (predvsem zunanjih) agensov pri vprašanih vsebine in izvajanja študija; kompetenc za delovno mesto in kompetenc diplomantov. Bolj homogena pa je obravnava spremenljivk, povezanih z intrinzičnimi lastnostmi študija – z njegovo vsebino glede na cilje, stopnjo, vrsto, vpetost v disciplino; z njegovim izvajanjem in obveznimi sestavinami. Podobno dihotomijo med spremenljivkami pokaže tudi razvrstitev razlik v obravnavanosti in stopnji kritičnosti za študijske programe različnih stopenj in vrst: v nasprotju z rezultatsko razgibanimi spremenljivkami, usmerjenimi v potrebe in pričakovanja okolja oziroma agensov, so spremenljivke, ki zadevajo intrinzične lastnosti študija, uravnoteženo obravnavane in primerljivo kritično presojane.

Razvrstitev rezultatov glede na področno primernost strokovnjakov temu trendu ne sledi, saj se v robnih tercilih pojavljajo spremenljivke, ki zajemajo tako intrinzične kot ekstrinzične dejavnike študija. Tako so strokovnjaki ne glede na svoj disciplinarni habitus bolj občutljivi za uporabnost in funkcionalnost študija (kakovost kot ustreznost namenu), katerima se obenem tudi pogosteje posvečajo. Zanašanje instrumenta kakovosti na področno primernost strokovnjakov pa v praksi ne kompenzira uspešno neobčutljivosti specifikacij za intrinzične posebnosti študija.

Če spremenljivke razporedimo v skupine, ki jih povezujejo različne konceptualne predispozicije;<sup>9</sup> usmerjenost bodisi v potrjevanje skladnosti bodisi v presojo kakovosti; lastnost merljivosti ali nemerljivosti; stopnja predpisanosti;<sup>10</sup> deloma pa tudi usmerjenost v presojo pogojev, procesov ali končnih stanj, se v obeh tercilih tako za stopnje in vrste kot za disciplinarno vpetost študijskih programov pojavljajo spremenljivke, ki znotraj svojih skupin pripadajo različnim modalnostim. Presoja po njih je zato z vidika modalnosti pretežno homogena, tudi glede na področno primernost strokovnjakov. Izjema je raznoličnost spremenljivk glede na stopnjo njihove obravnavanosti. Pod vplivom zgoraj omenjenega razmerja med stopnjo obravnavanosti in odstopanjem stopnje kritičnosti od nične vrednosti se z zviševanjem stopnje obravnavanosti sorazmerno večja tudi občutljivost presoje strokovnjakov za posebnosti študija.

9 Gre za izbrane esencalistične koncepte kakovosti, zajete v raziskavo evalvacijskih praks. Mednje na eni strani sodita kakovost kot ustreznost namenu in kakovost kot popolnost oziroma skladnost, na drugi pa akademska kakovost in ekonomistični, tehnokratski oziroma konstruktivistični pristop h kakovosti (Širok, 2019).

10 Gre za členitev spremenljivk v tri skupine glede na to, ali so neposredno oziroma izrecno predpisane v Merilih za akreditacijo (2014), ali so v predpisu zgolj posredno, vendar ne izrecno nakazane, ali pa v njem nimajo podlage.

Tabela 2: Rezultati za vse spremenljivke po posameznih skupinah študijskih programov, kategorijah kvalitativnih sodb in obravnavanosti

	Prednost	Priložnost za izboljšanje	Neskladnost	Ni obravnava- vano	Razlika med prednostmi ter vsoto priložnosti in neskladnosti
VS. 1. st. (N = 65)	12,92 %	14,82 %	0,56 %	71,69 %	-2,46 %
UN. 1. st. (N = 159)	12,62 %	18,20 %	0,19 %	68,99 %	-5,77 %
MAG. in enoviti MAG. 2. st. (N = 190)	13,56 %	15,11 %	0,63 %	70,68 %	-2,18 %
DR. 3. st. (N = 62)	10,70 %	13,65 %	0,22 %	75,54 %	-3,28 %
Trde discipline (N = 197)	14,10 %	16,72 %	0,22 %	68,98 %	-2,91 %
Mehke discipline (N = 344)	11,99 %	15,24 %	0,49 %	72,26 %	-3,75 %
Čiste discipline (N = 226)	12,85 %	16,49 %	0,59 %	70,06 %	-4,23 %
Aplikativne discipline (N = 322)	12,93 %	14,99 %	0,50 %	71,57 %	-2,56 %
Ujemanje strokovnjakov (N = 255)	13,44 %	14,99 %	0,65 %	70,90 %	-2,21 %
Neujemanje strokovnjakov (N = 59)	14,52 %	16,27 %	0,28 %	68,93 %	-2,03 %
Vsi programi (N = 485)	12,82 %	15,78 %	0,41 %	70,97 %	-3,36 %
Δ Stopnje in vrste	2,86 %	4,55 %	0,44 %	6,55 %	3,60 %
Δ Discipline	2,11 %	1,73 %	0,37 %	3,28 %	1,87 %
Δ Ujemanje strokovnjakov	1,08 %	1,28 %	0,37 %	1,97 %	1,18 %

Vir: osebne analize

Razlika znotraj posameznih skupin filtriranih podatkov je za vse kvalitativne kategorije, za stopnjo kritičnosti in za stopnjo obravnavanosti največja med različnimi stopnjami in vrstami študijskih programov, znatno manjša je med študijskimi programi, ki pripadajo različnim skupinam disciplin, najmanjša pa glede na področno primernost sestave skupine strokovnjakov. Medtem ko je mogoče ponovno potrditi ugotovitev, da zanašanje na področno primernost strokovnjakov v praksi nima zelenega učinka, se je treba posvetiti tudi deležem priložnosti za izboljšanje v navezi s stopnjo obravnavanosti. Strokovnjaki so do univerzitetnih študijskih programov občutno manj prizanesljivi kot do drugih stopenj

oziroma vrst študija, pri čemer jim proporcionalno posvečajo tudi največ kvalitativnih poudarkov (najpogosteje jih obravnavajo). Med skupinami disciplin so deleži priložnosti za izboljšanje precej bolj izenačeni, se pa študijski programi, vpeti v trde discipline, ponašajo s proporcionalno več prednostmi in kvalitativnimi poudarki.

Tabela 3: Uvrstitve posameznih skupin študijskih programov po številu spremenljivk glede na povprečne vrednosti

	Nadpovprečna (+1)/ podpovprečna (-1) obravnavanost	Nadpovprečna (+1)/ podpovprečna (-1) razlika med prednostmi ter vsoto priložnosti in neskladnosti
VS. 1. st. (N = 65)	+12/- 14	+16/- 11
UN. 1. st. (N = 159)	+16/-9	+10/- 14
MAG. in enoviti MAG. 2. st. (N = 190)	+12/- 10	+13/-9
DR. 3. st. (N = 62)	+9/-16	+12/- 17
Trde discipline (N = 197)	+20/-9	+16/- 12
Mehke discipline (N = 344)	+7/-16	+10/- 12
Čiste discipline (N = 226)	+13/- 11	+9/- 12
Aplikativne discipline (N = 322)	+10/- 11	+12/-7

Vir: osebne analize

Če se vrnemo na raven posameznih spremenljivk in opazujemo odstopanja od povprečnih vrednosti, so univerzitetni študijski programi prve stopnje pri največ spremenljivkah nadpovprečno obravnavani (16 od 30 spremenljivk) in pogosto nadpovprečno kritično ocenjeni (14 od 30 spremenljivk). Z -17 jih sicer kljub najpogostejši podpovprečni obravnavanosti presenetljivo presega doktorski študijski programi. Skupno so visokošolski strokovni študijski programi prve stopnje pri največ spremenljivkah podpovprečno kritično ocenjeni.

Spomnimo na predhodno ugotovitev, da so strokovnjaki ne glede na področno primernost v splošnem bolj občutljivi za uporabnost in funkcionalnost študija. Tudi posvečajo se jima pogosteje kot njegovim intrinzičnim posebnostim. Pogosteje in bolj kritično obravnavane spremenljivke, kot so *krepitev kompetenc za delovno mesto, zadovoljevanje potreb trga dela, prilagojenost vsebin študijskega programa potrebam študentov, prilagojenost vsebin študijskega programa potrebam gospodarstva in zaposljivost oziroma zaposlenost diplomantov*, so pri univerzitetnih študijskih programih prve stopnje v povprečju pogosteje obravnavane (za povprečje omenjenih petih spremenljivk znaša presežek 12,31 %) in v povprečju beležijo večje deleže priložnosti za izboljšanje (za povprečje omenjenih petih spremenljivk znaša ta 13,56 %) kot pri visokošolskih strokovnih študijskih programih. Dodajmo, da znaša povprečna obravnavanost za omenjenih pet spremenljivk za vse

študijske programe 42,56 %, povprečen delež priložnosti za izboljšanje pa 29,78 %. Skoraj tretjinsko povečanje obravnavanosti in skoraj polovično povečanje deleža priložnosti za izboljšanje glede na povprečji za vse študijske programe sta v nasprotju z intrinzičnim namenom prvostopenjskega univerzitetnega študija, saj bi moral ta v nasprotju z visokošolskim strokovnim bolj kot potrebe (zunanjih) agensov zasledovati potrebe matične disciplinarne vednosti.

Na ravni disciplinarne vpetosti študijskih programov so odstopanja od povprečnih vrednosti tako za stopnjo obravnavanosti kot za stopnjo kritičnosti na osi vpetosti v trde/mehke discipline izrazitejša kot na osi vpetosti v čiste/aplikativne discipline. Na področju presoje kakovosti organizacije, vsebine in izvajanja študija strokovnjaki večkrat nadpovprečno ocenijo študijske programe, povezane s trdimi disciplinami. Medtem ko slednje tudi največkrat nadpovprečno obravnavajo, pa so najmanjkrat nadpovprečno kritični do študijskih programov aplikativnih disciplin. Če se spomnimo, da področni predpisi v ničemer ne ločijo med disciplinarnimi posebnostmi študijskih programov, kakovost v visokem šolstvu v praksi vendarle ni indiferentna za disciplinarno poreklo študija.

## **SKLEP**

V prispevku smo z empiričnega zornega kota deloma osvetlili občutljivost evalvacijskih praks za posebnosti študija. Pri tem nas je omejevala tesna povezanost med področnimi predpisi in evalvacijami, ki zaznamuje tudi samo besedišče kakovosti in povezane idejne sheme. Te okoliščine se odražajo v dosegu raziskave – v kompromisni določenosti spremenljivk zaradi zamejitve subjektivnih interpretacij pri pripisovanju posameznih kvalitativnih poudarkov strokovnjakov k posameznim spremenljivkam in kategorijam. Preučevanje občutljivosti presoj je bilo oprto predvsem na predpisane specifikacije. Rezultati raziskave kljub temu nakazujejo na pogojenost občutljivosti presoj za različne stopnje in vrste študija s področnimi predpisi, ki posvečujejo raven kvalifikacije; na neobčutljivost presoj za disciplinarne posebnosti študija; in na okoliščino, da področna primernost skupin strokovnjakov v praksi ne kompenzira uspešno neobčutljivosti specifikacij za posebnosti študija. Čeprav se instrument kakovosti v praksi manifestira kot gibalno standardizacije in transformacije visokošolskega izobraževanja po visokemu šolstvu pretežno zunanjih silnicah, hkrati zavira njegove posebnosti in ukaluplja izrekanje kvalitativnih sodb. Postavlja se vprašanje, ali bi razmere izboljšal esencialistični in na deklariranih vrednotah temelječ koncept kakovosti z razlago posebnosti študija. Postavlja pa se tudi vprašanje, ali ne bi morali za svojevrstnost praks in procesov v visokem šolstvu avtonomno skrbeti visokošolski zavodi sami, ker so to v dolgoletni zgodovini že uspešno počeli, nemara bolje, kot to danes z usklajenimi posegi od zunaj počne instrument kakovosti.



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## TRAJNA NACIONALNA NUJNOST: IZOBRAŽEVANJE ODRASLIH IN VSEŽIVLJENJSKO UČENJE V BRITANiji ZA 21. STOLETJE

Novembra 2019 je izšlo težko pričakovano novo poročilo o izobraževanju odraslih v Britaniji, *Trajna nacionalna nujnost: izobraževanje odraslih in vseživljenjsko učenje v Britaniji za 21. stoletje* (*A Permanent National Necessity: Adult Education and Lifelong Learning for 21st Century Britain*).<sup>1</sup> Dokument, ki ga je objavila Stoletna komisija za izobraževanje odraslih, je prišel sto let po tem, ko je Odbor za izobraževanje odraslih ministrstva za obnovo leta 1919 objavil prvo *Poročilo o izobraževanju odraslih*.

V začetku leta 2018 je skupina izobraževalcev za odrasle v počastitev stoletnice ustanovila Kampanjo izobraževanje odraslih 100, v katero je vključila program dejavnosti, ki so trajale do novembra 2019. Spodbuditi so želeli dejavnosti, ki bi bile osredotočene na stoletnico prvega poročila, ter ponovno ovrednotiti zgodovino izobraževanja odraslih 20. stoletja in postaviti vizijo za vseživljenjsko izobraževanje odraslih za novo stoletje.

Sto let stara vizija, da se »izobraževanje odraslih ne sme dojemati kot luksuz samo za nekaj posameznikov [...] temveč je izobraževanje odraslih trajna nacionalna potreba, neločljiv vidik državljanstva, ter mora zato biti tako univerzalna kot vseživljenjska« (str. 4), se ohranja tudi danes.

V poročilu ugotavljajo, da sta izobraževanje odraslih in vseživljenjsko učenje bistvenega pomena za premagovanje družbenih delitev in izzivov demokracije, s katerimi se trenutno srečujemo povsod po svetu.

Ugotovitve, da gospodarstvo, skupnost in demokracija potrebujejo ljudi s sposobnostmi, s katerimi se bodo ti lahko spoprijeli z današnjimi izzivi, so omenjeno skupino vodile v opredelitev šestih področij raziskovanja: oblikovanje in uresničevanje nacionalne ambicije; zagotavljanje temeljnih spretnosti; spodbujanje skupnosti, demokracije in dialoga; spodbujanje ustvarjalnosti, inovativnosti in priložnostnega učenja; zagotavljanje individualnega učenja in dobrega počutja ter udeležba v svetu dela.

Vsa področja raziskovanja so s prepričanjem o nujnosti univerzalne in vseživljenjske ponudbe izobraževanja predstavljena skozi 18 priporočil: vlada mora razviti nacionalno strategijo za izobraževanje odraslih in vseživljenjsko učenje; minister, odgovoren za izobraževanje odraslih in vseživljenjsko učenje, mora o napredku letno poročati parlamentu;

<sup>1</sup> Pridobljeno s <http://www.centenarycommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/The-Centenary-Commission-on-Adult-Education-Report.pdf>

vzpostaviti je treba različna partnerstva za učenje odraslih; zagotoviti financiranje izobraževanja odraslih na lokalni ravni; povečati financiranje za izobraževalne storitve za odrasle in višje šole za odrasle, ki so izpadli iz šolanja; zagotoviti financiranje za ustanove, ki krepijo nacionalni pomen izobraževanja odraslih; vsaka organizacija, ki ima status univerze, mora zagotavljati izobraževanje odraslih in vseživljenjsko učenje različnih vrst; potrebne so nacionalne informacijske kampanje, ki bodo ljudi motivirale za vključitev v vseživljenjsko učenje – v partnerstvu z lokalnimi ponudniki in službami za karierno orientacijo ter z mediji; del nacionalne strategije izobraževanja in vseživljenjskega učenja bi morala biti strategija osnovnih spretnosti odraslih; zagotoviti in povečevati je treba financiranje za informalno skupnostno učenje v skladu z lokalnimi pobudami; šole za nadaljnje izobraževanje morajo imeti v svojih odborih zastopnike lokalnih oblasti, organizacij iz skupnosti in sindikatov; treba je ustanoviti sklad, ki bi podpiral inovacije v skupnostnem in neformalnem izobraževanju ter zagotavljal širjenje dobrih praks; financirati nepridobitne organizacije za upravljanje zaupanja vredne digitalne platforme, dostopne vsem javnim izvajalcem izobraževanja odraslih; razširiti in vzpostaviti prožnejše vajeništvo; delodajalci bi morali zagotoviti plačan delovni čas za učenje; delodajalci bi morali zagotavljati navzočnost predstavnikov učenja na vseh delovnih mestih; delodajalci bi morali vsako leto poročati o porabi sredstev za izobraževanje in usposabljanje zaposlenih ter zagotavljanje enakih pravic za vse pri vseživljenjskem izobraževanju.

Poročilo iz leta 1919 je sodobne izzive opredelilo na načine, ki so aktualni še danes. Sredi vojne so si ljudje prizadevali zagotoviti mir in mednarodno sodelovanje. Danes je najbolj pereče globalno vprašanje podnebna kriza, ki od državljanov zahteva, da razumejo, kako lahko izvoljeni voditelji in širša družba učinkovito ukrepajo v boju proti tej grožnji. Leta 1919 je bila komisija zaskrbljena zaradi zahtev žensk po enakosti na delovnem mestu in v družbi. Medtem ko enakost spolov še vedno ostaja vprašanje, se izziv družbene in ekonomske neenakosti v Veliki Britaniji leta 2019 širi na raso, invalidnost, spolnost in socialni izvor.

Močno sporočilo v poročilu iz leta 1919 je prepričanje, da lahko izobraževanje odraslih »zdravi« celotne skupnosti in spodbuja zdravo demokracijo. Analiza glasovanja o referendumu leta 2016 v Veliki Britaniji kaže, da so skupnosti razdeljene in mnogi se danes počutijo »zapuščene«, popolnoma izključene iz politike in javnih razprav. Ob izgubi zaupanja v politiko lahko ljudem pomaga le izobraževanje, prek katerega si povrnejo samozavest in okrepijo svoj glas za sodelovanje v lokalnih, regionalnih in nacionalnih razpravah ter pri aktivnem ukrepanju.

Umetna inteligenca zdaj ogroža število in kakovost delovnih mest, kot so to nekoč stroji. Trenutni gospodarski in tehnološki razvoj bo vplival na večino delovnih mest. Ocenjuje se, da bo v celoti izginilo med 9 % in 44 % poklicev. Za uspešno prilagoditev bomo potrebovali prilagodljive in generične sposobnosti, ugotavljajo avtorji poročila.

Poročilo ugotavlja, da je treba korenito preoblikovati izobraževanje odraslih. Za vzpostavitev omrežja in zaupanja marginaliziranih skupnosti bo potrebno dolgotrajno delo, vendar se morajo prizadevanja nadaljevati. Izobraževanje odraslih ni stvar

pametnih ljudi, ki znanje prenašajo nevednim, temveč vključuje izmenjavo različnih znanj in iskanje načinov razlage tega, kar zna ena oseba ali skupnost, na načine, ki bodo smiselni drugim. To pomeni iskanje načinov za razumevanje drug drugega. Izobraževalne agencije morajo nadzor nad izobraževalnimi programi odstopiti organizacijam v skupnosti. Ljudje v skupnostih morajo biti sami sposobni zaznati, kaj se dogaja, kaj se učijo in kako se učijo. Ključnega pomena so stalno ozaveščanje, medvrstniška podpora, podpora skupnosti in dostop do virov.

Formalni, neformalni in priložnostni načini učenja odraslih niso alternativni modeli. Vsak ponuja različne poti napredovanja: individualne in skupne. Te poti morajo delovati skupaj in vzajemno, zlasti v korist izključenih posameznikov oziroma skupnosti.

Prav tako se mora razširiti pojem dela. Potreben je premislek o binarnem pojmovanju ali delo ali prosti čas. V pojem dela je treba vključiti širši nabor dejavnosti, ki lahko dragoceno prispevajo družbi, v kateri živimo. To je še posebej pomembno v zvezi s potencialno uvedbo štiri- ali celo tridnevnega delovnega tedna v prihodnosti. Učenje bomo potrebovali za nadaljevanje produktivnih, vendar netradicionalnih oblik dela in prav tako za prosti čas.

Plačilo odsotnosti z dela zaradi izobraževanja bi morala biti prednostna naloga družbe, delodajalcev in vlade. Če bi zaposleni pridobili pravico do plačanega prostega časa za izobraževanje, bi to izboljšalo njihovo življenje, postali bi bolj angažirani v svojih skupnostih, bolj dejavni kot državljani in volivci ter bolj predani v službi.

Ponovno spodbujanje in razvoj izobraževanja odraslih v naših skupnostih in družbi je postala nujna nacionalna potreba. Državljanom je treba omogočiti, da se vključijo v kritična razmišljanja in demokratično razpravo. Potrebno je spodbujanje kohezije skupnosti s soustvarjanjem izobraževalne ponudbe, ki vključuje člane iz različnih skupnosti. Potrebno je spodbujanje razumevanja različnih kultur in okolij. Krepitev pravic vsakega posameznika je najbolj zanesljiv način zagotavljanja pravic za vse.

Naša kakovost življenja bo v prihodnosti odvisna od preprečevanja podnebnih katastrof. Na spoprijemanje s tako resnimi vprašanji se bodo posamezniki, skupnosti in družba lahko pripravili samo z zagotavljanjem večje možnosti izobraževanja odraslih za vse in omogočanjem aktivne razprave.

V prihodnosti lahko pričakujemo vse več stoletnikov, vse več bo psihično in fizično sposobnih devetdesetletnikov. Vseživljenjsko učenje mora temeljiti na individualnih potrebah in osebni izpolnjevanju za produktivnost pri delu in družbeno angažiranost. Vse večje naložbe v vseživljenjsko učenje se bodo v vsakem smislu izplačale.

Poročilo se sklene z jasnimi in prepričljivimi napotki vsem, ki so vpeti v izobraževanje odraslih, ter od njih pričakuje proaktivno delovanje, saj, kot so zapisali, »od nadaljnjega odlašanja ni nobene koristi« (str. 51).



## STO LET LJUDSKIH VISOKIH ŠOL (VOLKSHOCHSCHULEN) V NEMČIJI

Razlogi za razvoj množičnega izobraževanja odraslih v Nemčiji so povezani z razvojem gospodarstva, veliko rastjo prebivalstva, urbanizacijo in novimi potrebami družbe. V 19. stoletju je bila Nemčija industrijsko razvita država. Zaradi velikega števila delavcev in potreb po njihovem izobraževanju so se v drugi polovici 19. stoletja okrepila delavska gibanja. Od leta 1865 dalje so se za izobraževanje delavcev vzpostavljale »delavske zveze« (*Arbeiterverbände*). To je bil začetek delavskega izobraževanja (»znanje je moč«), ki je služilo emancipaciji delavskega razreda (Nuisl in Pehl, 2004).

Med letoma 1892 in 1908 je bilo pomembno gibanje za ljudsko izobraževanje Nemcev, ki je spodbudilo nastanek prvih organiziranih ljudskih in potujočih knjižnic. V tem času je nastalo prek 4000 ljudskih in 1200 potujočih knjižnic (Picht, 1950). Vzporedno s tem so se v Nemčiji razvijala tudi izobraževalna društva. Leta 1871 je meščansko liberalno gibanje (*Bürgerlich-liberale Bildungsbewegung*) ustanovilo »Društvo za širjenje ljudske izobrazbe« (*Gesellschaft für Verbreitung von Volksbildung*) (Tippelt in von Hippel, 2011). To je dalo podlago za sistemsko izobraževanje odraslih, saj je bila v njegovem okviru leta 1879 v Berlinu ustanovljena prva ljudska visoka šola – Humboldtova visoka šola (*Humboldt-Hochschule*), leta 1920 pa je nastala berlinska ljudska visoka šola (*Volkshochschule Gross-Berlin*). Obe šoli sta poleg splošnega znanja prenašali tudi praktična strokovna znanja. Temeljna metoda izobraževanja odraslih je bilo občasno predavanje, temeljna oblika izobraževanja odraslih pa je bil tečaj, ob njem pa so bile še druge oblike, na primer delovne skupine in potovanja. To je bilo prvo uresničenje ideje danske ljudske visoke šole v Nemčiji, a v specifični obliki (večerna ljudska visoka šola brez danskega načina skupnega internatskega bivanja) (Hirsch, 1927). Leta 1893 so se pojavili popularni univerzitetni ekstenziji (*University Extension*; tečaji izrednega študija za odrasle po angleškem vzoru), najprej v Jeni, potem v Leipzigu in Münchnu (Picht, 1950).

Od leta 1909 naprej se je veliko razpravljalo o problemih izobraževanja odraslih in organiziranju šol za odrasle. V tem času je imelo poseben pomen delo Antona Heinricha Hollmanna *Dansko izobraževanje odraslih*, objavljeno leta 1909, ki se lahko šteje za vzorno knjigo, saj gre za prenos idej danske ljudske visoke šole (*Folkehøjskole*). Med pomembnimi posamezniki tistega časa, ki so se zavzemali za ustanovitev ljudskih visokih šol (*Volkshochschule*), je bil Wilhelm Rein (profesor pedagogike in izobraževalec odraslih), ki je objavljial ideje o ljudski visoki šoli za izobraževanje odraslih od leta 1890 dalje. Leta 1919 je bil eden od soustanoviteljev ljudske visoke šole v Thüringenu (Hinzen, 1999).



Prve ljudske visoke šole v Münchnu (1896), Augsburgu (1904) in Bonnu (1904) ter tiste, ki niso bile vedno poimenovane z imenom »ljudska visoka šola«, imajo še daljšo tradicijo izobraževanja odraslih v Nemčiji, celo več kot sto let (Hinzen in Meilhammer, 2018). Glede na izobraževalno-vzgojno usmerjenost in organizacijo dela so delovale v dveh oblikah: domske ljudske visoke šole (*Heimvolkshochschulen*) in večerne ljudske visoke šole (*Abendvolkshochschulen*) (Hirsch, 1927). Domske ljudske visoke šole so bile vzpostavljene na podlagi danskih ljudskih visokih šol (*Folkehøjskole*) in so bile internatskega tipa z dvema semestroma letno ter so dajale splošno izobrazbo od 17 do 30 let starim osebam. V središču izobraževalno-vzgojnega procesa je bil nemški človek in njegova domovina, z zelo poudarjenim velikonemškim duhom. Izobraževali so se skupaj v instituciji kot ena velika nemška družina. Večerne ljudske visoke šole pa so nastale po zgledu angleških univerz (*University Extension*) in so bile samostojne andragoške ustanove. Čeprav so bile različne glede na pristop k izobraževanju, je bilo vsem skupno vzgojno-izobraževalno delo: politična in kulturna vprašanja, diskusije in razgovori, ciklusna predavanja, seminarji, tečaji z znanstvenih, kulturno-umetniških in tehničnih področij, študijska potovanja in razstave (Samolovčev, 1963).

Kot ustanovno leto za ljudske visoke šole (*Volkshochschulen – VHS*) v Nemčiji pa šteje leto 1919, ko so bile te prvič opredeljene kot državne ustanove za izobraževanje odraslih. To je spodbudilo širjenje mreže ljudskih visokih šol za izobraževanje odraslih, ki pa so se od prvih tovrstnih šol razlikovale tudi v sodobnem didaktičnem slogu, ki je pripadal »novi smeri«. To je bil prelomni čas, konec prve svetovne vojne, konec nemškega cesarstva, s tem pa tudi začetek želja po demokraciji. Tako je bila 9. novembra 1918 razglašena weimarska republika in s tem prvič vzpostavljena parlamentarna demokracija kot državna oblika na nemških tleh (Hinzen in Meilhammer, 2018). Dne 11. avgusta 1919 je bila sprejeta ustava weimarske republike, ki je v četrtem odstavku 148. člena imela zapisano odločilno zahtevo po razvoju in spodbujanju celotnega izobraževanja odraslih: »Država, dežele in lokalne skupnosti naj spodbujajo razvoj nacionalnega sistema izobraževanja, vključno z ljudskimi visokimi šolami.« (Hinzen, 1999, str. 32)

V obdobju weimarske republike je bilo izobraževanje odraslih državno priznано kot pomembno, vendar je bilo drugačno kot dotlej. V Nemčiji so takrat, kot omenja Buchwald (1925, v Hinzen in Meilhammer, 2018), doživljali duhovno-moralno krizo z izkušnjo razdvojenosti in osamljenosti. Zato ni naključje, da so prav v tem času pretresov ljudske visoke šole doživele velik razcvet. Začele so namreč služiti ljudem in demokraciji, ki je bila odvisna od ljudi (Buchwald, 1925, v Hinzen in Meilhammer, 2018). To je bila zlata doba v razvoju nemške andragoške prakse.

Ljudske visoke šole so bile v obdobju weimarske republike dveh vrst: politično skrajno leve (npr. socialistično delavsko izobraževanje na ljudski visoki šoli v Tinzu) in desne izobraževalne ustanove (nacionalno konservativna ali nacionalno usmerjena ljudska visoka šola tudi za kmete) (Hinzen in Meilhammer, 2018).

Ljudske visoke šole so imele posebno javno poslanstvo, saj so bile od vseh institucij za izobraževanje odraslih odprte za vse ljudi, ki so se zavzemali za demokracijo v Nemčiji.

Odrasli so se izobraževali o socialni in politični odgovornosti, hkrati pa se izobraževali tudi za poklic. Razvoj teh institucij je močno povezan s politično in družbeno zgodovino. To še posebej velja za obdobje nacionalsocializma (1933–1945) in čas delitve na Vzhodno in Zahodno Nemčijo po drugi svetovni vojni, ko je bila ideja o demokratičnem izobraževanju odraslih opuščena.

Ljudska visoka šola v nacionalsocialistični državi ni bila več svobodna in ideološko nevtralna ustanova ter se je preimenovala v nemško domovinsko šolo (*Deutsche Heimatschule*), ki je služila ciljem nacionalsocializma. Od leta 1949 do 1990 pa se pojavljata dva sistema ljudskih visokih šol za izobraževanje odraslih: zahodnonemški na stari organizacijski in idejni podlagi skandinavskega sistema izobraževanja odraslih in vzhodnonemški s posebno obliko sovjetskega sistema z močno poklicno usmerjenim izobraževanjem. Z nastankom združene Zvezne republike Nemčije leta 1990 so se ljudske visoke šole, ki so delovale po posameznih zveznih deželah Nemčije, organizirale v deželne zveze, ki so kasneje postale članice Zveze ljudskih visokih šol Nemčije (*Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verband* - DVV) (Hinzen in Meilhammer, 2018). DVV je predstavnicja ljudskih visokih šol na zvezni, evropski in mednarodni ravni ter spodbuja nadaljnje izobraževanje odraslih. Je največja nemška krovna organizacija za 16 deželnih zvez ljudskih visokih šol in skoraj 900 ljudskih visokih šol v Nemčiji (*Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband*, b.d.). Danes so ljudske visoke šole v Nemčiji v velikem razmahu, obstajajo v mestih in na podeželju ter imajo različne programe za izobraževanje odraslih glede na njihove potrebe.

*Monika Govekar-Okoliš*

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## NOVIM DESETLETJEM NAPROTI

*Eva Mermolja, Anja Benko, Alenka Grželj, Nives Ličen (ur.)*

### **SOUSTVARJAMO DRUŽBO ZNANJA** **Zbornik ob 60-letnici Zveze ljudskih univerz Slovenije** *Ljubljana, Zveza ljudskih univerz Slovenije, 2019*

Minulo leto je bilo za ljudske univerze pri nas posebno – mnoge so praznovale visoko obletnico delovanja oziroma ustanovitve. Krovna organizacija, Zveza ljudskih univerz Slovenije (ZLUS), je praznovala 60 let, enako tudi nekatere ljudske univerze (LU), ki so bile ustanovljene leta 1959. V letu 2021 pa se načrtuje tudi slovesno zaznamovanje 100-letnice prvih ljudskih univerz v Celju in Mariboru. To je častitljiv jubilej tudi, če se ozremo po Evropi.

Ob tej priložnosti nastajajo različni projekti za zaznamovanje tega dosežka. Pred seboj imam do bralca prijazno knjigo *Soustvarjamo družbo znanja: zbornik ob 60-letnici ljudskih univerz Slovenije*. Slika pove mnogo več od besed, je vtis ob prvem listanju. Besede zlahka postanejo suhoparne, ko se strokovnjaki po več kot pol stoletja trajajočem razvoju in iskanjih ozirajo na prehojeno pot, a besede v zborniku nikakor niso take. Zbornik je opremljen z izvirnimi besedili, ki nas popeljejo od zgodovinskih začetkov, kot se jih spominja prof. dr. Ana Krajnc, prek različnih vlog ljudskih univerz skozi čas do udeležencev današnjih rešitev. Skozi razvoj ljudskih univerz v času se lahko sprehodimo tudi med dilemami, ki so stiskale in stiskajo te pomembne ustanove izobraževanja odraslih v obdobju neoliberalizma, ko se je skupnostno izobraževanje začelo kazati kot alternativa. Predstavniki posameznih ljudskih univerz v zborniku predstavijo vrsto poskusov, ki jih je kot odgovor na ta trenja razvila mreža širom po Sloveniji. Bralcu pade v oči pojav množice aktualnih tematik, kot so poti integracije, večnamenski romski centri, povezovanje izobraževanja in lokalnega gospodarstva, socialna aktivacija in druge. Zaključuje pa jih neke vrste triangulacija osebnih pogledov: predstavnice odločevalcev, direktorja osrednje institucije za izobraževanje odraslih v državi in udeleženca programov z osebno izobraževalno zgodbo mladega migranta.

Posebna vrednost tega zbornika je medgeneracijsko sodelovanje. Šele čas pa bo pokazal, kako pomembno vlogo v profesionalnem razvoju bodočih andragogov je imelo tesno srečanje z zgodovino LU skozi živo pripoved njihovih starejših kolegov, ki so delovali in

delujejo v LU. Študentje so imeli namreč priložnost, da so v okviru pridobivanja raziskovalnih veščin neposredno sodelovali in pomagali soustvarjati predstavljeni zbornik.

(Pre)hiter tehnološki napredek prinaša vrsto vprašanj, ki še nimajo pravega odseva in odgovora v izobraževanju odraslih. Na primer: kakšna naj bo etična drža izobraževalca, ko ga bo udeleženec postavil pred vprašanja o genetskem inženiringu ali o usodnem spreminjanju človeških teles z nanobiotehnologijo. Ali kako naj se andragog praktično odziva na zahteve menedžerjev po skoraj popolni prilagoditvi programov usposabljanja v delovnih okoljih, ko je na preizkušnji dobrobit odraslega in zaveza, da delujemo v prid njegovemu opolnomočenju.

Okrogle obletnice so idealen čas za čestitke, razmislek, nove vizije in predvsem pogum. Naj ta ne usahne v novih desetletjih, ki so pred strokovno skupnostjo kot celoto.

*Petra Javrh*

*Jan Slaby in Christian von Scheve (ur.)*

## AFFECTIVE SOCIETIES

*London in New York, Routledge, 2019*

Sodobne raziskave v družboslovju in humanistiki so vse bolj pozorne na vpliv čustev in občutkov na družbena dogajanja. Afekti in emocije so v 21. stoletju ključni del diskurza na mnogih področjih, tako da pogosto govorimo o afektivnem obratu (*affective turn*). Pojavlja se veliko raziskovalnih skupin iz različnih znanstvenih ved, zato – mimogrede – nastaja tudi mnogo izzivov ob poimenovanjih fenomenov. »Berlinska šola«, kot imenujejo raziskovalni center *CRC Affective Societies* pri *Freie Universität Berlin*, se raziskovanja emocij in afektov loteva kot novega inter- in transdiscipinarnega področja (več glej na <http://affective-societies.de/>). Mnogi od raziskovalcev so vključeni v izdajanje posebne zbirke pri založbi Routledge z naslovom *Routledge Studies in Affective Societies*, saj po njihovem mnenju postaja koncept »afektivna družba« organizirajoča ideja, s katero se presojajo sodobne družbe, podobno kot so bili poznani koncepti »družba tveganja« ali »družba omrežij« ali »informacijska družba«. Emocije in afekti se pojavljajo kot kategorije, s katerimi mislimo družbo in družbeno. V zbirki so v zadnjih dveh letih izšle tri monografije. Prva je *Affect in Relation: Families, Places, Technologies* (2018), uredila sta jo filozof Slaby in antropologinja Röttger-Rössler. Druga nosi naslov *Analyzing Affective Societies: Methods and Methodologies* (2019), uredila jo je sociologinja Kahl. Razvoj raziskovalnih metod gre v korak s konceptualno in teoretsko analizo fenomenov. Metodologija ne more biti ločena od teoretskega razvoja nekega področja. Ker so koncepti gradniki, na katerih sloni empirično raziskovanje, je v zbirki izšla tudi tretja knjiga, to je *Affective Societies: Key Concepts* (2019), ki sta jo uredila že omenjeni profesor Slaby in sociolog von Scheve, ki je tudi vodja raziskovalne skupine za sociologijo emocij.

Temeljno izhodišče pri vseh treh monografijah so emocije in afekti kot fenomeni, ki so socialno odnosni in vedno umeščeni v konkretno okolje. Vseskozi se uporabljata oba pojma: afekti in emocije (emocionalni in afektivni fenomeni), med njimi na prvi pogled ni ostre in natančne razmejitve. Za oboje je značilna dinamičnost, oboji so »transpersonalni« in se zgodijo med akterji v kompleksnem okolju. Sledeč razvojno-konstruktivističnemu pojmovanju so odnosni afekti primarni, emocije pa so »derivati« afektov. Toda to razlikovanje in linearnost nista tako enoznačna tudi v praksi. Ko se v neki kulturi določene emocije kulturno kodificirajo, slednje nato vplivajo na pojave skupnostne in individualne afektivnosti.

V delu *Afektivne družbe: ključni koncepti* v poglavju, kjer rišejo zemljevid ali, kot sami zapišejo, »kartirajo pokrajino«, se sklicujejo na dela Spinoze in Deleuza ter na raziskave sodobnejših feminističnih študij. Pojasnjujejo koncepte, kot so: afektivne postavitev (*affective arrangements*), afektivne dispozicije, afektivne prakse in afektivne ekonomije. Pri zadnjem konceptu razlagajo globalno kroženje afektivnih form, stilov in simbolov. S konceptom *affective arrangement* ali afektivna postavitev (ki izhaja iz Deleuzovega koncepta *agencement*) interpretirajo način delovanja, ki je posledica kompleksne sociomaterialne postavitve, v kateri sta opazni afektivna moč in afektivna odnosnost med akterji, materialnim okoljem/pogoji in postavitvijo.

Različne oblike afektov in emocij so del materialnih in nematerialnih kontekstov. Afekti in emocije so sicer nestanovitni, fluidni fenomeni, vendar pa postanejo dokaj stabilni, ko so kulturno umeščeni. Tedaj postanejo del snovne in nesnovne kulture in jih lahko vodimo, reguliramo. Emocionalni repertoarji so razmeroma stabilne specifične forme splošnih kulturnih repertoarjev (npr. kulturnih praks), ki jih osebe usvojijo, ker jih potrebujejo v družbenih situacijah.

Afekti in emocije so bistvenega pomena za formiranje in transformiranje subjekta, pomembni so za učenje v odraslosti in starosti, zato je zbirka zanimiva (tudi) za andragoško področje. Za izobraževalce je še posebej zanimivo peto poglavje z naslovom *Gefühlsbildung*. Avtorica naslov prevede kot *The formation of feeling*. Nemški termin *Gefühlsbildung* pomeni formiranje ali vzgojo čustev, to je eksplicitno in implicitno učenje, s katerim čustva/občutki dobijo formo v vsakdanjih interakcijah. Vključuje tako dimenzijo namernega vplivanja (poučevanje, edukacija) kot tudi implicitne procese učenja v vsakdanjem življenju (gl. Röttger-Rössler, 2019, str. 61–62). Obe dimenziji sta odvisni od družbenih okoliščin, vrednot in norm, ki vključujejo tudi »čustvena pravila«, določajoča, kdo lahko kaj in kdaj čuti (npr. obvezno spoštovanje avtoritete staršev).

Vzgoja afektov in čustev je vseživljenjski proces, ki ni omejen le na obdobje otroštva in mladosti. To dokazujejo antropološke raziskave, ki spremljajo emocionalno prilagajanje ob spreminjanju kulturnih okoliščin. Namerno in načrtovano učenje lahko poteka kot samostojno učenje ali vodeno učenje ob različnih strategijah (od jogijskih vaj do psihoterapevtskega svetovanja). V praksi se v okviru socialno-emocionalnega učenja razvijajo različni programi poučevanja o čustvih (pogosto jih imenujejo *emotion pedagogies*), ki omogočajo poimenovanje in občutenje vseh vrst afektov in emocij.

Tri zelo zanimive monografije, ki sestavljajo zbirko, bodo v pomoč tako študentom kot raziskovalcem. Pomemben prispevek je namreč razširitev perspektive, ki vključuje afekte in vladanje, afekte in izločanje/vključevanje, razvoj političnih afektov. Omogočile bodo razumevanje sodobnih populizmov, političnih slogov pa tudi religioznih afektov. Za andragogiko pa razmisleki in analize implicirajo nove raziskave in tudi oblikovanje novih praks izobraževanja odraslih.