



## UVODNIK

# NEKATERI TRENDI RAZVOJA NA PODROČJU IZOBRAŽEVANJA ODRASLIH – IZOBRAŽEVANJE ODRASLIH MED ZNANOSTJO, POLITIKO IN PRAKSO

Izobraževanje odraslih je kot študijsko znanstveno področje, predvsem v Evropi in Združenih državah Amerike (ZDA), vzniknilo v poznih dvajsetih letih 20. stoletja in je od takrat dalje prešlo skozi tri razvojne faze, kot ugotavlja Rubenson (2010).

Prva faza, katere začetek se umešča v dvajseta leta 20. stoletja, je pravzaprav bila odgovor na začetno profesionalizacijo izobraževanja odraslih. Z naraščanjem števila izobraževalnih programov za odrasle so se fakultete morale posvetiti vprašanju, kako vzpostaviti znanje, ki bo pomagalo razvijati novonastajajoče področje. Prvi univerzitetni program za izobraževanje odraslih so leta 1930 pripravili in začeli izvajati na Univerzi v Columbii. Od takrat pa do leta 1964, ki označuje začetek druge razvojne faze, je 16 univerz v ZDA ponudilo magistrske in doktorske programe iz izobraževanja odraslih. Podoben razvoj je v Evropi opazen v Združenem kraljestvu, kjer je interes za raziskovanje izobraževanja odraslih privedel do tega, da so leta 1926 podelili prvo profesuro v izobraževanju odraslih na Univerzi v Nottinghamu (prav tam, str. 7–8).

Leta 1964 je komisija profesorjev za izobraževanje odraslih v ZDA definirala področje in postavila konceptualne temelje izobraževanju odraslih v knjigi »Adult Education: Outlines of an Emerging Field of University Study«; knjiga je poznana tudi pod imenom »Black Book« in označuje začetek druge faze v razvoju izobraževanja odraslih. Ta faza je povezana s procesom, ko področje študija začne vznikat kot neposreden odgovor na potrebe prakse v izobraževanju odraslih. V ospredje stopijo zlasti vprašanja poučevanja in učenja odraslih, zaradi česar je področje izobraževanja odraslih močno vpeto v izobraževalno psihologijo. Od izida »Black Book« pa do leta 1991, ko je izšla dopolnitev knjige z naslovom »Adult Education: Evolution and Achievements in a Developing Field of Study«, se je število oddelkov in univerzitetnih programov izobraževanja odraslih v ZDA, Kanadi in Evropi – v Nemčiji, Združenem kraljestvu, Švedski, Finski, Nizozemski, Franciji, Poljski, nekdanji Jugoslaviji (tudi Sloveniji) in drugih evropskih državah (več v Savičević, 1999, str. 209–228; Krajnc, 2011) – močno povečalo, organizirane so bile mnoge letne konference o izobraževanju odraslih, ustanovljene znanstvene revije (npr. »Adult

Education Quarterly«), združenja (npr. Evropsko združenje za raziskovanje izobraževanja odraslih – ESREA) itd. (Rubenson, 2010, str. 8). To je tudi čas, ko se v ZDA in nekaterih evropskih državah, predvsem srednje- in vzhodnoevropskih – tudi nekdanji Jugoslaviji –, izobraževanje odraslih, definirano kot andragogika, vzpostavi kot relativno samostojna znanstvena disciplina, ki izhaja iz konceptualnega razlikovanja med odraslim učečim se in otrokom ter katere temeljni objekt proučevanja sta učenje in izobraževanje odraslih (Fejes in Nicoll, 2013; Krajnc, 1989; Savićević, 2008).

V drugih delih sveta, zlasti v državah v razvoju (v nekaterih afriških državah in državah Latinske Amerike) se je proces vzpostavitve posebnih oddelkov in univerzitetnih programov izobraževanja odraslih začel kasneje in ima predvsem značilnosti prve razvojne faze; v Braziliji je opaziti povečanje števila oddelkov in študijskih programov, ki se posvečajo izobraževanju odraslih, na Kitajskem pa so prvi magistrski program iz izobraževanja odraslih uvedli na East China Normal University leta 1993 (Rubenson, 2010, str. 8).

Leta 1991, ko sta Peters in Jarvis (1991) razmišljala o evoluciji in dosežkih razvijajočega se področja izobraževanja odraslih, sta predstavila zelo optimističen pogled na razvoj področja, ki je temeljil na znatnem povečanju lastne baze znanja, zmanjševanju odvisnosti od sorodnih disciplin, poglobljanju raziskovalnih metodologij, eksponentni rasti števila študijskih programov ter večji internacionalizaciji področja. Avtorja sta svoja razmišljanja sklenila z mislijo in pričakovanjem, da bo področje izobraževanja odraslih v naslednjih 25 letih kontinuirano raslo in se še dodatno utrdilo v akademskem prostoru.

A kot ugotavlja Rubenson (2010), v začetku 21. stoletja obstaja več znamenj, ki izpričujejo, da razvoj področja izobraževanja odraslih ni napredoval v smeri, ki sta jo predvidela Peters in Jarvis, ampak je izobraževanje odraslih vstopilo v novo, tretjo razvojno fazo, ki zaznamuje obdobje od druge polovice devetdesetih let 20. stoletja dalje. Značilnost tretje razvojne faze je, da se rast števila specializiranih oddelkov in študijskih programov v izobraževanju odraslih (tako kot v drugi fazi) ni nadaljevala, ampak se je pojavil nov trend; programi in oddelki izobraževanja odraslih so se z drugimi področji začeli združevati v večje oddelke, v nekaterih primerih pa so specializirane oddelke izobraževanja odraslih na univerzah tudi razpustili. Razlogi za tak proces so po mnenju avtorja različni. Prvič, proces združevanja je posledica širšega prestrukturiranja univerzitetnih oddelkov v večje strukture, kar seveda slabi vzpostavljanje področja izobraževanja odraslih, značilnega za drugo razvojno fazo. Drugič, uveljavljanje načela vseživljenjskega učenja, ki ga močno promovirajo različne mednarodne organizacije v evropskem in svetovnem merilu, otežuje vzpostavljanje ločenega področja za izobraževanje odraslih. Tretjič, glede na to, da je izobraževanje na delovnem mestu najhitreje rastoče področje v praksi izobraževanja odraslih, so se raziskovalci izobraževanja odraslih primorani ukvarjati tudi z raziskovanjem učenja in izobraževanja, povezanega z delom. Posledično je opaziti tudi vse večjo fragmentacijo (drobljenje) področja izobraževanja odraslih na več podpodročij; denimo področje izobraževanja na delovnem mestu se vzpostavlja kot alternativno področje izobraževanju odraslih, organizira svoje konference in ustanavlja lastne znanstvene revije. Četrtoč, področje izobraževanja odraslih se sooča s splošnim trendom, ki je značilen za vsa področja

izobraževalnih znanosti, to je z odmikom od vzpostavljanja čistih področij in disciplin k proizvodnji znanja o presečnih temah (npr. spola, migrantov), h katerim se pristopa z vidika interdisciplinarnega proučevanja, kar od raziskovalcev izobraževanja odraslih terja, da razvijajo zaveznitva z različnimi znanstvenimi disciplinami (prav tam, str. 8–9).

Zgodovinsko gledano se je torej izobraževanje odraslih v prvi in drugi razvojni fazi razvijalo predvsem iz skrbi za razvoj prakse izobraževanja odraslih. Mnenja o tem, ali je izobraževanje odraslih predvsem »praktična disciplina« (Rubenson, 2000) (oz. področje znanja), katere cilj je dati praktikom orodja, da bi se bolje spopadali z izzivi svojega dela, ali znanstvena disciplina, ki bi morala postati bolj teoretsko sofisticirana, da bi si v akademskem svetu pridobila več ugleda, pa so med strokovnjaki in raziskovalci na področju izobraževanja odraslih še naprej različna (Rubenson, 2010).

Napetost med teorijo in prakso je v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih 20. stoletja spodbudila razpravo o razmerju med teorijo, to je lastno bazo znanja, in statusom izobraževanja odraslih. Če je izobraževanje odraslih samostojna disciplina oz. področje študija, potem mora sama definirati svoj objekt raziskovanja ter razviti svoje lastne teorije. Kot je razvidno iz opisa prve in druge razvojne faze izobraževanja odraslih, je bilo *empiričnemu* kriteriju, ki pravi, da je izobraževanje odraslih lahko potrjeno in pripoznano kot univerzitetni predmet proučevanja, ko se profesorji na univerzah habilitirajo za področje (izobraževanja odraslih), zadoščeno že v prvi fazi razvoja izobraževanja odraslih. Vzpostavitev profesorjev za izobraževanje odraslih na akademski ravni v ZDA in evropskih državah lahko torej razumemo kot pomemben korak k pripoznanju in utrjevanju izobraževanja odraslih kot ločene znanstvene discipline oz. področja študija (Fejes in Nicoll, 2013).

Medtem ko je empirični kriterij pritrjeval izobraževanju odraslih kot ločeni znanstveni disciplini, pa so bila mnenja o izpolnjevanju *epistemološkega* kriterija, ki je izzval širšo epistemološko razpravo o statusu izobraževanja odraslih med strokovnjaki in raziskovalci, ki so bili dejavni na tem področju, razdeljena na vsaj tri prevladujoče struje. V prvi struji, ki se je oblikovala predvsem v ZDA in nekdanji Jugoslaviji (tudi Sloveniji), so bili nekateri avtorji prepričani, da je izobraževanje odraslih samostojna znanstvena disciplina, ki naj si ne bi več izposojala teorij in konceptov od drugih disciplin, ampak naj bi razvila lastne, saj lahko izposojanje znanja iz drugih disciplin ogrozi nadaljnji razvoj baze znanja v izobraževanju odraslih. Druga struja, ki je bila močnejša, je zagovarjala idejo o izobraževanju odraslih kot področju študija, ki proizvaja interdisciplinarno znanje, uporabno za prakso. Tretja struja je zanikala razumevanje izobraževanja odraslih kot samostojne znanstvene discipline ali področja teoretičnega znanja in je poudarjala, da je izobraževanje odraslih del izobraževanja, pri čemer sta tako izobraževanje kot izobraževanje odraslih razumljeni kot družbeno praktično področje, ki ne temeljita na logiki disciplin, ampak na praktičnem znanju, ki se razlikuje od znanja disciplin (prav tam, str. 10; Rubenson 2010, str. 9).

Te razprave o epistemološkem statusu izobraževanja odraslih, ki so prevladoval v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih 20. stoletja, so v devetdesetih letih usahnile, z začetkom novega tisočletja pa so skoraj povsem izginile. Kot ugotavlja Rubenson (2000), so bila

v sredini in konec osemdesetih letih vprašanja, povezana z izposojanjem iz drugih disciplin, v izobraževanju odraslih že »preživeta«, saj je večina strokovnjakov s področja izobraževanja odraslih zagovarjala in podpirala idejo o izobraževanju odraslih kot ločenem teoretičnem področju znanja. Na prehodu tisočletja je opaziti predvsem prizadevanja raziskovalcev, da se na področje izobraževanja odraslih vključijo teoretska dela raziskovalcev z drugih področij, disciplin in tradicij, kar je v evropskem prostoru razvidno tudi iz aktivnosti različnih omrežij ESREA (Fejes in Nicoll, 2013). Pa vendar ta proces ni brez pasti za nadaljnji razvoj področja izobraževanja odraslih; kot ugotavlja Rubenson (2000), je skrb o pomanjkanju teoretičnih podlag izobraževanja odraslih v tretjem razvojnem obdobju nekatere raziskovalce vodila k »pretiranemu« ukvarjanju z razvojem abstraktnih teoretskih konceptov, ki niso povezani s prakso, kar lahko povzroči, da začne pešati tudi praksa izobraževanja odraslih, če ta nima podpore v teoretskem raziskovanju, na ker je v slovenskem prostoru opozorila Krajnc (2011, str. 15).

Danes torej v mednarodnem prostoru prevladuje konsenz glede epistemološkega statusa izobraževanja odraslih: področje izobraževanja odraslih je v svojem bistvu interdisciplinarno in pluralistično ter si izposoja teorije in metodologije od različnih disciplin oz. področij znanja (Fejes in Nylander, 2015).

V tretji razvojni fazi izobraževanja odraslih se prav tako izkaže, da je področje zelo raznoliko glede na ciljne skupine, vsebino poučevanja, izvajalce, institucionalizacijo, financiranje in zakonodajo v posameznih državah. Ta raznolikost prav gotovo pomeni izziv za večjo profesionalizacijo izobraževanja odraslih na praktični ravni, medtem ko na teoretični ravni potekajo razprave o tem, kaj izobraževanje odraslih pravzaprav danes pomeni oz. naj bi pomenilo in kaj vse obsega v različnih delih sveta (Jütte in Lattke, 2014).

Pri razmisleku o statusu izobraževanja odraslih kot znanstveni disciplini v aktualni tretji razvojni fazi Peter Jarvis in Agnieszka Bron (Bron in Jarvis, 2008), ki prihajata iz različnih izobraževalnih tradicij (prvi iz anglosaške, ki »stavi« na izobraževanje odraslih, in druga iz kontinentalno (vzhodno)evropske, ki »stavi« na andragogiko), skleneta, da je izobraževanje odraslih mlada znanstvena disciplina, ki jo nekateri imenujejo »izobraževanje odraslih«, drugi pa »andragogika« (npr. v Sloveniji, Poljski, nekaterih delih Nemčije). Najbolj pogosto je razumljena kot poddisciplina izobraževalnih znanosti ali pa pedagogike. Proučuje učenje in izobraževanje odraslih v formalnem in neformalnem izobraževanju (to je v organiziranih oblikah izobraževanja) ter učenje v priložnostnem kontekstu (to je v vsakdanjem življenju, na delu, v družini, civilni družbi in ob pristočasnih aktivnostih), kar pomeni njeno posebno raziskovalno področje; proučuje priložnosti in pogoje odraslih za izobraževanje in učenje, vzgojo (»formation«, »Bildung«) in socializacijo ter njihov razvoj, saj naj bi se odrasli skozi proces učenja, ki poteka skozi vse življenje, nadalje razvijali, spreminjali svoja življenja ter vplivali drug na drugega. Razvila je svojo lastno terminologijo in koncepte, ki vključujejo poimenovanja, kot so učenje, vseživljenjsko učenje, samostojno učenje, nadaljevalno izobraževanje. Discipline, ki pomagajo izobraževalcem odraslih pri raziskovanju področja, so predvsem sociologija, psihologija, zgodovina, filozofija, ekonomija in politologija. Raziskave pa se največkrat izvajajo na štirih ravneh:

mega (politike mednarodnih organizacij), makro (nacionalne politike in prakse), meso (izobraževalne ustanove, različne – prostovoljske, kulturne, politične idr. – organizacije, skupnosti, javni prostori) in mikro (učeči se odrasli) ravni.

V zadnjem času je pri proučevanju trendov razvoja področja izobraževanja odraslih opaziti tudi povečanje zanimanja za t. i. bibliometrične študije, ki omogočajo vpogled v razvoj področja skozi analizo najbolj uglednih, prepoznavnih ali pa citiranih revij s področja izobraževanja odraslih (npr. Fejes in Nicoll, 2013; Fejes in Nylander, 2015; Rubenson in Elfert, 2015). Te analize kažejo, da, geografsko gledano, področju izobraževanja odraslih dominirajo anglosaške države; tri prevladujoče in najbolj prepoznavne revije so »Adult Education Quarterly« (ZDA), »International Journal of Lifelong Education« (Velika Britanija) in »Studies in Continuing Education« (Avstralija). Avtorji, ki prihajajo iz teh držav, v svojih delih prav tako citirajo zgolj avtorje iz prevladujočih anglosaških držav. V izbor prevladujočih revij na področju avtorji uvrščajo še eno revijo iz Velike Britanije, to je »Studies in the Education of Adults«. Med druge pomembnejše revije na področju izobraževanja odraslih, ki ne izhajajo iz prevladujočega anglosaškega okolja, pa avtorji prištevajo »International Journal of Continuing Education & Lifelong Learning«, ki izhaja v Hongkongu in proučuje razvoj izobraževanja odraslih v azijskih državah, »European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults«, ki ga izdaja ESREA in je forum za raziskovalce izobraževanja odraslih iz vse Evrope, ter »International Review of Education«, ki ga izdaja UNESCOV Inštitut za vseživljenjsko učenje (ta proučuje razvoj izobraževanja in izobraževanja odraslih v državah v razvoju).

Na podlagi bibliometričnih analiz člankov v prevladujočih znanstvenih revijah s področja izobraževanja odraslih so avtorji poudarili, da se je področje v tretji razvojni fazi glede na prvi dve močno spremenilo: a) metodološko gledano so v ospredju kvalitativne raziskave, medtem ko kvantitativne raziskave upadajo; b) teoretično gledano prevladujejo sociokulturne perspektive (npr. Vigotski), kritična pedagogika (npr. Freire) in postrukturalistične teorije (npr. Foucault); c) geografsko gledano prevladujejo avtorji iz anglosaškega prostora; d) glede na spol je v vzponu število avtoric, medtem ko število avtorjev upada; e) fragmentacija področja izobraževanja odraslih (izposojanje teorij in metod od različnih disciplin) se stopnjuje; f) širi se razhajanje med akademskim raziskovanjem izobraževanja odraslih in politiko izobraževanja odraslih, ki jo vse bolj sooblikujejo mednarodne in politične organizacije (Fejes in Wildemeersch, 2015). Te organizacije si prizadevajo vzpostaviti tradicijo na »podatkih temelječe politike« izobraževanja odraslih in na rezultatih zasnovanega izobraževanja, katere primer je OECD-jeva raziskava PIAAC (Program za mednarodno ocenjevanje kompetenc odraslih), ki naj bi zagotovila podlago za oblikovanje politike, temelječe na podatkih (Kump in Mikulec, 2017). Medtem ko torej mednarodne in politične organizacije spodbujajo predvsem oblikovanje politike izobraževanja odraslih, ki je povezana z diskurzom spretnosti, pa se v akademskem raziskovanju izobraževanja odraslih ta diskurz pojavlja v zanemarljivem obsegu, zaradi česar se razhajanje med akademskim raziskovanjem področja in politiko izobraževanja odraslih le še pogloblja (Rubenson in Elfert, 2015).

Bibliometrično analizo člankov, objavljenih v znanstvenih revijah s področja izobraževanja odraslih v Sloveniji (npr. »Andragoška spoznanja/Studies in Adult Education and Learning«), v drugih državah naslednicah nekdanje Jugoslavije (npr. »Andragoške studije/Andragogical Studies«) ter državah srednje in vzhodne Evrope (npr. »Dyskursy Młodych Andragogów/Adult Education Discourses«), torej tam, kjer se je uveljavila tradicija andragogike, spodbujava tudi urednika Andragoških spoznanj. Zanimivo bi bilo namreč videti, ali so trendi razvoja izobraževanja odraslih v tem delu Evrope podobni ali pa se razlikujejo od trendov v prevladujočih (anglosaških) znanstvenih revijah, ki odločilno določajo področje izobraževanja odraslih.

Pričujočo odprto številko Andragoških spoznanj sestavljajo trije znanstveni in trije strokovni članki, poročilo in recenzija knjige. Odpira jo članek Eve Klemenčič »Mnenja vodstvenih delavcev institucij v izobraževanju odraslih o učinkih Erasmusa+ na področje izobraževanja odraslih: primer Slovenije«, v katerem avtorica proučuje učinke programa Erasmus+ v Sloveniji na institucionalni in sistemski ravni. Avtorica vidi program Erasmus+ kot primer evropeizacije sistema izobraževanja (odraslih), ki vpliva na institucije izobraževanja, javne politike in skupne vrednote. V empiričnem delu ugotavlja, da so mnenja vodstvenih delavcev o učinkih programa Erasmus+ na izobraževanje odraslih v Sloveniji pretežno pozitivna (na profesionalni razvoj, organizacijsko klimo, kakovost, »evropsko dodano vrednost«), a so ti neodločeni glede skladnosti potreb zavodov izobraževanja odraslih z nacionalnimi usmeritvami v izobraževanju odraslih.

Drugi članek avtoric Anite Jug Došler in Margerite Zgmajster z naslovom »Središča za samostojno učenje (SSU): aktualni izzivi, priporočila in vizija razvoja« obravnava razvoj organiziranega samostojnega učenja v svetovnem merilu in v Sloveniji, kot se je začel razvijati od leta 1993 dalje. Avtorici ugotavljata, da se število udeležencev v mreži središč za samostojno učenje v Sloveniji z leti povečuje, ter na podlagi zaznane potrebe po dopolnjevanju in nadgradnji delovanja središč dajeta vrsto priporočil za nadaljnji razvoj organiziranega samostojnega učenja v središčih za samostojno učenje.

Tretji članek Tanje Miklič »Vidiki učenja tujih jezikov na Univerzi za tretje življenjsko obdobje« v ospredje postavlja učenje tujih jezikov v tretjem življenjskem obdobju. Na podlagi teoretičnega in empiričnega proučevanja avtorica ugotavlja, da učno gradivo, struktura učnega procesa ter učne oblike in metode niso zadosti usklajeni z zdravstvenimi omejitvami starejših odraslih kakor tudi ne s sodobnimi andragoškimi ter gerontološkimi spoznanji, ter predlaga možne ukrepe za odpravo ugotovljenih pomanjklivosti.

Tanja Vilič Klenovšek v svojem prispevku »Andragoško svetovalno delo med teorijo, izobraževalno politiko in prakso« obravnava različne opredelitve svetovalne dejavnosti, kot so se razvile v teoriji, izobraževalni politiki in praksi izobraževanja odraslih, kakor tudi poudarja ključne cilje in naloge svetovalnega dela v izobraževanju odraslih ter strateške cilje razvoja tega področja v sistemu izobraževanja odraslih, saj je z novim zakonom o izobraževanju odraslih (2018) svetovalna dejavnost dobila tudi zakonsko podlago.



Polona Klemše v prispevku »Aktivna politika zaposlovanja mladih: jamstvo za mlade« analizira shemo Jamstvo za mlade v obdobju 2014–2015, katere cilj je bil izboljšati zaposljivost mladih in jih aktivirati na trgu dela. Avtorica ugotavlja, da shema s svojimi ukrepi, kljub danim obljubam, ni bistveno pripomogla k izboljšanju stanja brezposelnosti mladih v Sloveniji.

Mihaela Drobnič in Maruša Grilj pa v prispevku »Problem prevzemanja besedišča pod vplivom globalizacije« obravnavata problematiko prevzemanja novih globalnih tujih izrazov v slovenski jezik, do česar prihaja zaradi hitrega tehnološkega razvoja, in ob tem ugotavljata, da mnogi odrasli ne razumejo najbolje novega besedišča, ki se uveljavlja na internetnih straneh in družbenih omrežjih.

Številko zaokrožujeta še dva zanimiva prispevka; poročilo Ide Srebotnik »Gradimo mostove v izobraževanju odraslih«, v katerem avtorica poroča o sodelovanju strokovnjakov s področja izobraževanja odraslih v državah naslednicah nekdanje Jugoslavije, ter recenzija Danijele Makovec, ki recenzira zbornik »Cultures of Program Planning in Adult Education«.

**Borut Mikulec**

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## EDITORIAL

# SOME TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION – ADULT EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS OF SCIENCE, POLITICS AND PRACTICE

Adult education only emerged as a scientific field of study in the late 1920s, primarily in Europe and the USA, and has, according to Rubenson (2010), since gone through three different phases of development.

The first phase, dating back to the 1920s, developed in reaction to the early professionalisation of adult education. As the number of adult education study programmes rose, universities began to consider the problem of establishing the kind of disciplinary knowledge required to assist in developing this newly emerging field. The first university study programme in adult education was developed and implemented at Columbia University in 1930. By 1964, the year that marks the beginning of the second phase of development, 16 US universities offered master and doctoral programmes in the field of adult education. In Europe, a similar trajectory can be traced in the United Kingdom, where the rising interest in adult education research led to the first university chair in adult education being established at the University of Nottingham in 1926 (*ibid.*, pp. 7–8).

In 1964 the US Commission of Professors of Adult Education defined and conceptualised the foundations of adult education in the publication *Adult Education: Outlines of an Emerging Field of University Study*; this compendium is also known as the “Black Book” and marks the beginning of the second phase in the development of adult education. In this stage, the process of emergence of the field of study is related to a direct response to the needs found in adult education practice. It is precisely the questions of adult teaching and learning that come to the forefront, which means that the field of adult education is closely linked to educational psychology. Between the publication of the original “Black Book” and its 1991 companion piece entitled *Adult Education: Evolution and Achievements in a Developing Field of Study*, the number of adult education departments and university study programmes in the USA, Canada and Europe – in Germany, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, France, Poland, ex-Yugoslavia (including Slovenia), and other European countries (cf. Savićević, 1999, pp. 209–228; Krajnc, 2011) – saw a great rise, with the organisation of many annual conferences on

adult education, the establishment of scholarly journals (e.g., *Adult Education Quarterly*) and associations (e.g., ESREA – the European Society for Research on the Education of Adults), etc. (Rubenson, 2010, p. 8). At the same time, adult education, defined as andragogy, is established as a relatively independent scientific discipline in the USA and some European countries, especially in Central and Eastern Europe – including ex-Yugoslavia. It builds on conceptual differentiation between adult learners and children, and focuses on researching adult learning and education (Fejes and Nicoll, 2013; Krajnc, 1989; Savićević, 2008).

In other parts of the world, particularly in developing countries (some countries in Africa and Latin America), the process of establishing specialised departments and university study programmes in adult education took longer to commence and is currently characterised by traits typical of the first phase of development. In Brazil, there is a noticeable increase in the number of departments and study programmes dedicated to adult education, and China saw its first master programme in adult education introduced at the East China Normal University in 1993 (Rubenson, 2010, p. 8).

Reflecting on the evolution and the accomplishments of the developing field of adult education up until the 1990s, Peters and Jarvis (1991) presented a very optimistic perspective on the development of this field based on the considerable increase of disciplinary knowledge base, the diminishing dependence on related disciplines, the improvements in research methodology, the exponential growth in terms of study programmes and a greater internationalisation of the adult education field. In their discussion, they came to the conclusion that the adult education field would experience continuous growth in the following 25 years, leading to even firmer positioning of the discipline in the academic sphere.

Rubenson (2010) finds, however, that at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there are several signs that the development of adult education is not going in the direction foreseen by Peters and Jarvis, and that, since the mid-1990s, adult education is witnessing a transition to a new, third phase of development. It is typical of this stage that the growth of specialised departments and study programmes in adult education (as experienced in the second phase) has not continued, with a new trend emerging instead: adult education programmes and departments have begun to merge with other fields to create larger departments, and there have also been some cases of universities abolishing specialised adult education departments. The author sees a multiplicity of reasons for this process. First, the mergers are a consequence of the broader restructuring of university departments into larger structures, which as a rule makes it difficult to establish the field of adult education in the manner characteristic of the second phase. Second, the implementation of the principle of lifelong learning, heavily promoted by various international organisations Europe- and worldwide, represents an obstacle to establishing the field of adult education as an independent discipline. Third, given that workplace education is the fastest growing part of adult education practice, adult education researchers are compelled to undertake work-related learning and education research. Consequently, what is noticeable is the ever greater fragmentation of the field into several subfields; for instance, the field of

workplace education is being established as an alternative field to adult education with its own conferences and specialised scholarly journals. Fourth, the field of adult education is facing a general trend typical of all fields within education science, namely moving from the establishment of discrete fields and disciplines to the creation of knowledge about some common topics (e.g., gender, migrants, etc.) approached from an interdisciplinary research perspective. This makes it necessary for adult education researchers to develop alliances with various other disciplines (*ibid.*, pp. 8–9).

From a historical perspective, the development of adult education in its first and second phases grew out of concern for developing the practice of adult education. There are, nevertheless, different opinions among scholars and researchers in the field as to whether adult education is primarily a field of practice (Rubenson, 2000), i.e., a subject area whose goal is to develop tools that will help practitioners respond to work challenges, or instead a scientific discipline that should strive for greater theoretical sophistication with the aim of improving its academic reputation (Rubenson, 2010).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the tense relationship between theory and practice led to a discussion about the link between theory, i.e., disciplinary knowledge base, and the status of adult education. If adult education is to be an independent discipline and research field, this means it must define its research focus and develop its own scientific theories. As shown by the first and second developmental phases in adult education, the *empirical* criterion, with its demand for the establishment of university chairs in the field (of adult education) as a necessary component to the establishment and acknowledgement of adult education as a subject of research at university level, was already met in the first phase of development. The establishment of adult education chairs in American and European universities can thus be understood as an important step towards acknowledging and solidifying adult education as a separate scientific discipline and field of study (Fejes and Nicoll, 2013).

If the empirical criterion for acknowledging adult education as a separate scientific discipline was fulfilled, positions on satisfying the *epistemological* criterion, which provoked a broad epistemological discussion on the nature of adult education among active adult education scholars and researchers, can be divided into at least three main schools of thought. Some authors within the first school, which was characteristic primarily of the USA and ex-Yugoslavia (including Slovenia), believed that adult education was an independent scientific discipline which was to stop borrowing theories and concepts from other disciplines, developing instead its own, as borrowing from other disciplines could endanger the further development of adult education disciplinary knowledge base. The second and more popular school promoted the idea of adult education as a subject of study producing interdisciplinary knowledge applicable in practice. The third school rejected the concept of adult education as an independent subject discipline or theoretical subject area, seeing adult education as part of education in general, where both education and adult education were understood as social and practical areas that were not based on a disciplinary logic but on practical knowledge distinct from disciplinary knowledge.

These discussions about the epistemological status of adult education which dominated the 1970s and 1980s saw a decline in the 1990s and almost entirely disappeared at the dawn of the new century. According to Rubenson (2000), the question of borrowing from other disciplines was already passé by the mid- and late 1980s, as most scholars in the field of adult education championed the idea of adult education as a separate theoretical field of knowledge. What is particularly noticeable at the turn of the century is the scholarly efforts to include the theoretical work of researchers in other areas, disciplines and traditions in the field of adult education, as demonstrated in Europe by various ESREA network activities (Fejes and Nicoll, 2013). Nonetheless, this process is not without pitfalls; Rubenson (2000) argues that in the third phase of development, the concern about the lack of a theoretical basis for adult education has led to some researchers being overly preoccupied with the development of abstract theoretical concepts divorced from practice, which can, in consequence, cause a decline in the practice of adult education if the latter is not supported by theoretical research, as pointed out in the Slovenian context by Krajnc (2011, p. 15).

Thus, there is a consensus in the international sphere today regarding the epistemological status of adult education; the field of adult education is essentially interdisciplinary and pluralistic, borrowing theories and methodologies from various disciplines and fields of knowledge (Fejes and Nylander, 2015).

In a similar vein, in the third phase in the development of adult education the field also turns out to be very diverse across countries in terms of target groups, teaching content, providers, institutionalisation, funding and legislation. This diversity must surely be a challenge to a greater professionalisation of adult education on a practical level, while on the theoretical level there are ongoing discussions about what adult education means or ought to mean today, and what it comprises in various parts of the world (Jütte and Lattke, 2014).

When pondering the status of adult education as a scientific discipline in the currently ongoing third phase of development, Agnieszka Bron and Peter Jarvis (Bron and Jarvis, 2008) – authors coming from two different traditions of education (the latter from the Anglo-Saxon tradition advocating adult education and the former the Continental (Eastern) European tradition advocating andragogy) – conclude that adult education is a new scientific discipline which is called “adult education” by some and “andragogy” by others (e.g., in Slovenia, Poland, parts of Germany, etc.). Most frequently it is understood as a subdiscipline of education science or of pedagogy. Its goal is to examine adult learning and education in both formal and non-formal education (i.e., in organised education), as well as informal learning (i.e., as part of everyday life, at work, in the family, civil society and leisure activities), which constitutes its own special field of study; it examines the opportunities and conditions for adult education and learning, adult formation (“Bildung”), socialisation and development, as, throughout their lives, adults go through the process of learning and develop, change their lives and influence each other. The discipline of adult education has developed its own terminology and concepts, including terms such as

learning, lifelong learning, self-directed learning, continuing education, etc. The related disciplines that can be of help to adult educators in researching the field primarily include social science, psychology, history, philosophy, economics, and political science. Most commonly, research is executed on four different levels: mega (policies of international organisations), macro (national policies and practices), meso (educational institutions, various – volunteer, cultural, political, etc. – organisations, communities, public spaces), and micro (adult learners) levels.

Recently, research into developmental trends in the field of adult education shows an increasing interest in so-called bibliometric analyses which bring insights into the development of the field based on the analysis of the most reputable, distinguished or cited journals in the field (e.g., Fejes and Nicoll, 2013; Fejes and Nylander, 2015; Rubenson and Elfert, 2015). These studies show that, geographically speaking, Anglo-Saxon countries dominate the field of adult education; the three most dominant and widely recognised journals in the discipline are the *Adult Education Quarterly* (USA), *International Journal of Lifelong Education* (United Kingdom), and *Studies in Continuing Education* (Australia). Authors in these countries also only ever cite authors from these same dominant Anglo-Saxon countries. One more British journal, *Studies in the Education of Adults*, is included in the selection of dominant publications in the field. Among other influential journals in the field of adult education, but published outside the dominant Anglo-Saxon sphere, the above-mentioned authors include the *International Journal of Continuing Education & Lifelong Learning*, based in Hong Kong and focusing on the development of adult education in Asian countries, the *European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults*, which is published by ESREA and serves as a forum for adult education researchers across Europe, and finally the *International Review of Education*, published by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and dedicated to the development of education and adult education in developing countries.

Based on bibliometric analyses of articles in the dominant scholarly journals in the field of adult education, the authors point out that the field of adult education has experienced significant changes in the third phase of development compared with the first two: (a) in terms of methodology, qualitative research is coming to the fore, while quantitative research is in decline; (b) in terms of theory, there is a dominance of socio-cultural perspectives (e.g., Vygotsky), critical pedagogy (e.g., Freire), and post-structuralist theories (e.g., Foucault); (c) in terms of geography, the field is dominated by authors from the Anglo-Saxon sphere; (d) in terms of gender, the number of female authors is on the rise while the number of male authors is in decline; (e) the field of adult education is increasingly fragmented (borrowing theories and methods from various disciplines); (f) there is a widening gap between academic research in adult education and the policy of adult education shaped more and more by international and political organisations (Fejes and Wildemeersch, 2015). Such organisations strive to establish a tradition of “evidence-based adult education policy” and outcome-based education, such as instantiated by the PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies)

OECD survey, whose aim is to provide the basis for developing evidence-based policy (Kump and Mikulec, 2017). If international and political organisations thus largely promote adult education policy-making related to the skills-oriented discourse, this type of discourse is only marginally present in academic research in the field of adult education, which only serves to further broaden the divide between academic research in the discipline and adult education policy (Rubenson and Elfert, 2015).

The editorial team of this journal would like to encourage bibliometric analyses of articles published in scholarly journals in the field of adult education in Slovenia (such as *Andragoška spoznanja/Studies in Adult Education and Learning*), in other ex-Yugoslav countries (such as *Andragoške studije/Andragogical Studies*), and in countries of Continental and Eastern Europe (such as *Dyskursy Młodych Andragogów/Adult Education Discourses*), viz., in environments with an established tradition of andragogy. Such an undertaking would show whether in this part of Europe the trends of development in the field of adult education are similar to or different from the trends in the dominant (Anglo-Saxon) scholarly journals which exhibit a decisive influence on the field of adult education.

This open issue of *Studies in Adult Education and Learning* comprises three scientific and three professional articles, a report and a book review. The first paper by Eva Klemenčič, “Opinions of Adult Learning Institution Managers on the Impact of Erasmus+ on Adult Education: The Case of Slovenia” examines the impact of the Erasmus+ programme in Slovenia at both institutional and systemic levels. The author sees the Erasmus+ programme as an example of the Europeanisation of the (adult) education system exhibiting impact on institutions in the field of education, public policies, and common values. The empirical study involved shows that managers of adult learning institutions in Slovenia mainly have a positive opinion about the impact of the Erasmus+ programme on adult education in Slovenia (in terms of professional development, organisational climate, quality, and “European added value”), but that there is also some indecision about how well the national guidelines for adult education match the needs of adult education institutions.

Anita Jug Došler and Margerita Zagnajster’s paper “Centres for Self-directed Learning (CSDL): Current Challenges, Recommendations and Future Development” explores the development of organised self-directed learning worldwide and in Slovenia, where the concept was first implemented in 1993. According to the findings, the number of participants in the network of centres for self-directed learning in Slovenia increases year after year. Acknowledging a need for the continued improvement and expansion of centres for self-directed learning, the authors suggest an array of proposals for further development of organised self-directed learning.

The third article, “Aspects of Foreign Language Learning at the Third Age University” by Tanja Miklič, focuses on foreign language learning in the third age. Based on a theoretical and empirical investigation, the author finds that the learning materials, the structure of the learning process and the learning forms and methods are not sufficiently adapted



to either the health limitations of older adults or to the current findings in adult education and gerontology. A number of possible measures are proposed to address these shortcomings.

In her paper “Adult Educational Guidance Between Theory, Educational Policy and Practice”, Tanja Vilič Klenovšek examines the various definitions of guidance as developed in theory, education policy, and adult education practice. The author emphasises the key goals and tasks for guidance work in adult education, as well as the strategic aims for the development of this area in the system of adult education, now that there is a legal basis for the implementation of counselling thanks to the new Slovene Law on Adult Education (2018)

Polona Klemše’s article “Active Employment Policy for Youth: Youth Guarantee” analyses the 2014–2015 active employment policy for youth, whose aim was to promote youth employment and youth activity in the labour market. The author finds that despite this ambition, the measures that were part of the scheme did not make a significant contribution to youth employment levels in Slovenia.

In their paper “The Problem of Word Acquisition Under the Influence of Globalisation”, Mihaela Drobníč and Maruša Grilj tackle the issue of adopting new global expressions into Slovene. Brought about by the rapid development of technology, this phenomenon leaves many adults unable to fully comprehend the new vocabulary that is being established on the internet and social media.

Finally, the present issue also includes two more interesting contributions: Ida Srebotnik’s report “Building Bridges in Adult Education”, an account of professional cooperation of adult education experts in ex-Yugoslav countries; and a book review by Danijela Makovec reporting on the proceedings volume *Cultures of Program Planning in Adult Education*.

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