The
of Adult Evaluation
Education Staff

EDUEVAL Handbook

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Introduction
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The *EDUEVAL Handbook* is one of three volumes, based on the results of the EDUEVAL Project – *Evaluation for the Professional Development of Adult Education Staff*[1]. The three volumes are: *EDUEVAL Curriculum (vol. 1)*; *EDUEVAL How to do Guide (vol. 2)*; *EDUEVAL Handbook (vol. 3)*. Specifically, the *EDUEVAL Handbook* is the manual of reference for the students addressed by the EDUEVAL training proposal, presented in the *EDUEVAL Curriculum (vol. 1)*.

One of the main aims of the EDUEVAL project was to contribute to the reflection on defining a professional profile of the evaluator of Adult Education (AE) staff and on the training for this profile.

The *EDUEVAL Handbook (vol. 3)* is structured in such a way as to present the concept of evaluation, offering a view of the theoretical models of evaluation of adult education staff. In addition, the manual focuses on the aims of the evaluation and on the methods and indicators of the evaluation of the work of adult education staff. This is followed by a reflection on the impact of evaluation of adult education staff, and on the ethical implications of the role of the evaluator.

As will be better specified in the handbook, the evaluation of adult education staff is a very delicate task, which requires specialized knowledge and skills that cannot be covered in full here. Therefore, to invite students to carry out further research and specialization, an extensive version of this *EDUEVAL Handbook* will be available[2], with all the supplmementary information on the main topics of this volume.

2   See the project website at: www.edueval.eu.

1.
Towards the definition of the professional profile of the evaluator of adult education staff

by Loredana Perla, Viviana Vinci[3]
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1.1 A preliminary statement: beyond the evaluating function, towards a new professional profile

Reflecting on the *professional profile* entails, beyond the specific field where the professional operates, clearly focusing on and defining a number of elements, such as the role played, the contexts of work, the areas and sectors of relevance, the type of users of reference, the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for the profession and the professional ethical principles inspiring professional action.

The international debate on the skill profiles of educational work has highlighted the complexity of being able to reach a complete model of the procedures and methods of evaluation on this subject (Research voor Beleid, 2010, Carlsen & Irons, 2003; Jääger & Irons, 2006; Jarvis, 2009). Evaluating educational work requires a view that can penetrate the density of the processes implemented in various contexts. The very expression of *educational work* is in itself difficult to be defined and delimited as it concerns different targets and an action that takes place in varying contexts and for different purposes.

The evaluator of Adult Education (AE) staff therefore represents a *new* professional figure for a *function* which, actually, it

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3   Loredana Perla is the author of the sub-sections 1.1, Viviana Vinci is the author of the sub-section 1.1.1.

is not: it has been performed for some time, through heterogeneous practices and professionals which change depending on the context and, to a considerable extent, on the different European country.

The evaluation of educational work, as the EDUEVAL[4] research results have shown, is mainly performed in two ways:

– either through 'officially recognized' evaluators, i.e. *professional evaluators* or certifiers of the quality of personnel belonging to bodies outside the organization, who evaluate the conformity with pre-established standards and who do not necessarily have in-depth knowledge of the educational context and of the complexity of the work processes and dynamics of the staff operating in it;
– or through 'unofficially recognized' evaluators, i.e. professionals from different training and professional backgrounds, with experience in the field of education and who mainly have roles of coordination (trainers, supervisors, consultants, experts). Unlike the professional evaluators of the previous point, they certainly have a wide knowledge of the contexts of adult education. However, they do not necessarily have specific training for evaluation: evaluating the staff often takes place, in this second way, through strategies which are not highly standardized and informal tools or ones which have been built up inside the work group.

There is, therefore, an *evaluating function* which is carried out in a very different way depending on the professional contexts and the different European countries, oscillating between external certification and practices which are not officially recognized.

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4 See the *EDUEVAL Public Research Report,* available at: http://www.edueval.eu/download/pdf/2.2_Public_Research_Report.pdf.

1.1.1 *The multiple competences of the evaluator: a single profession or a mix of different professionalisms?*

From surveys of the scientific contributions on the training/profile of the *evaluator* (Wilcox, King, 2014; King, Stevahn, 2015; Russ-Eft et al., 2008; Stevahn et al., 2005; Mertens, 1994; Torres, Preskill, & Piontek, 1996; Altschuld & Engle, 1994; Phillips, 1997; Brinkerhoff et al., 1983; Caron, 1993; Balotta, Righetti, Turbati & Caropreso, 2013) and from an analysis of the work on the *professional standards* of the evaluators, carried out by the most influential European and American societies of evaluation, some elements have been used in order to orient the definition of the EDUEVAL *profile of the AE staff evaluator*. The first element concerns the complexity of reaching a model for the professional profile of evaluator, starting from the absence of a univocal definition of the evaluator's competences.

Faced with a mix of reccomendations and suggestions collected from guidelines and standards for evaluators focused, in particular, on professional ethical principles and on the ethics of evaluation, including rules of conduct and the values inspiring action, the professional competences of the evaluator are stated in a fairly general way. Those described refer to *families* of different co-existing competences: those related to the policies, to the programmes and to the projects to be evaluated; those relative to the specific sector in which the programme to be evaluated is included; competences relative to the evaluating research methodology; competences relative to group management and, lastly, communication and multi-disciplinary cultural skills. These all contribute jointly to defining the professional expertise.

A second recurring element in the description of the profile of the evaluator is the combination of skills closely related to the context of evaluation with inter-personal skills, com-

mon to the profile of the evaluator and other *practices of consulting and care of individuals,* therefore counselling, training and supervision: for example empathic, listening and inter-personal skills with users, clients and stakeholders. Another association that emerges concerns the profile of the evaluator and that of the *researcher*, who both have in common multiple and flexible skills which include the ability to choose, adapt and conceive of models and methodologies of evaluation depending on the context, the users and the resources available. At stake there is a dimension of interpreting, reading, listening to and understanding the context and the processes enacted, which leads both the evaluator and the researcher to constantly *put their judgement to the test*, to continuously negotiate their interpretations and a continuous professional updating which never comes to an end. In the study of the profile of the evaluator of AE staff and in designing the current training model (cf. *EDUEVAL Curriculum, vol. 1*, and *EDUEVAL How to do Guide, vol. 2*), the theoretical frame which considered the competence of educational work as a "complex form of action through which the tasks and projects characterizing it are carried out" was taken into consideration (Harré, 2000, p. 74). The work of defining the Curriculum also received the extensive contribution offered, from the 1980s, by research on what are known as *transversal* skills (Rey, 2003) – such as, for example, problem-solving, management of group work, creativity, inter-personal skills, coping strategies in anxiogenic situations – which are essential in building up the profile of the evaluator of educational work and, therefore, at the basis of curriculating the training path.

This work of immersion and recognition of works on the evaluator profile has allowed building up a detailed picture to use as a starting point, to bring into focus the complex identity and the heterogeneous competences of the evaluator of AE staff.

Lastly, the classification proposed by the ESCO model was taken into consideration in designing the Curriculum. There-fore, the profile of the evaluator of AE staff can be defined using both the transversal competences of the ESCO model and the specific competences identified from the results of the EDUEVAL project.
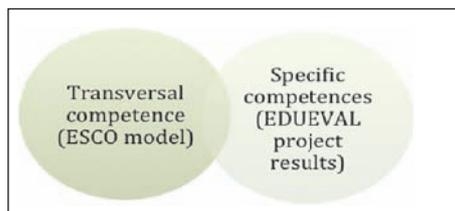
Profile of the AE staff evaluator

EDUEVAL profile of the evaluator of adult education staff	
Who s/he is and the roles s/he holds	The evaluation of AE staff is a high level professional who operates in adult education, using specific evaluation methods and tools aimed at improving the educational work of the staff. The roles of the evaluator in adult education contexts are multiple and include – as well as those more specifically on evaluation – others of management, training and coordination such as management of the service, staff training, selection of human resources, supervision, inspection and consulting.
What s/he does – activities, methods and tools	The professional activities of the evaluator of AE staff include: - planning, implementing and managing the evaluation of the educational and training actions of the staff operating in AE services; - building up plans and tools of evaluation and self-evaluation; - collecting, analysing and interpreting data; - documenting and communicating the results of the evaluation; - accompanying and planning follow-up actions and redesigning the educational work of AE staff; - supporting collaboration of the staff with the local area and the interlocutors//stakeholders involved in various capacities in the evaluation processes of the AE services.

	The evaluator of AE staff uses qualitative and quantitative methods and tools to carry out these activities. Those which must be mastered in particular for the evaluation of the staff – according to the triangulated EDUEVAL model (cf. sections below) – are: - methods and tools of observation, checklists and evaluation rubrics; - methods and tools for recording quantitative data such as surveys and questionnaires; - methods and tools for recording qualitative data, used in the evaluation and self-evaluation activities, promoting the group dimension (the object of evaluation is the staff, not the individual operator), including focus groups, case studies, brainstorming, portfolios, audits and professional/documentary writing by the staff. It is also important for the evaluator of AE staff to have knowledge about: - quality certification standards and systems; - legislation on the adult education services where s/he is to operate; - the specific characteristics of the context, the object of evaluation and of the services it networks with in the local area; - theories, models and meanings of evaluation; - leadership and how to manage a group and conflicts - communication, interpersonal, organizational and institutional processes, which underpin the evaluation of AE staff.
Where s/he operates (in which services)	The evaluator of AE staff operates in different areas of the social sector, including education, cultural development, mental health, family, social and legal, vocational training, community development and prevention, carrying out activity in multiple services aimed to promote adult educational care and education: - education, literacy and second chance services; - intercultural integration services; - services for drug addicts; - services for the disabled; - mental health services; - prison services; - parent/family services; - services for the promotion of cultural activities; - services promoting prevention; - personal care services. The evaluator of AE staff must have specific and transversal knowledge, skills and competences – didactic, educational, methodological, doximological, psychological and sociological – at the same time, which allow the evaluator to act with rigour, autonomy and professional awareness in multiple situations and contexts.

With which users s/he works	The evaluator of AE staff works with the staff that operate in adult education, therefore mainly with groups of teachers, educators, trainers and operators who, in various ways, operate in the services mentioned above. The users of reference, therefore, do not concern the individual operators or the users directly (who are at the *first level* of services and educational bodies/institutions – in this case, adults –) but the staff, the work groups who are at the *second level*.
Professional ethical principles	The professional action of the evaluator of AE staff must be guided by deep professional ethical principles, that can guarantee transparency, impartiality and rigour in the evaluation processes, such as: - integrity, coherence, respect, responsibility, emotive balance and self-awareness, open-mindedness, social conscience (*ethical attitudes*, cf. *EDUEVAL Guidelines*); - knowledge of the cultural framework of evaluation, transparency, respect of privacy (*professional ethics: principles and advice*, ibid.); - ensuring the whole evaluation process, providing clear indicators, creating trust, interpreting the explicit and implicit dynamics, providing effective feedback (*competences and skills*, ibid.); - taking into consideration the complexity of evaluation, interpreting the context promoting organization and professional well-being, taking into consideration the local area and external interlocutors (*political and social aims*, ibid.); - paying attention to the risks linked with roles that are not clearly defined, misunderstandings, manipulation and influence of one's personal background (*risks to manage*, ibid.).
Training and professional paths	The training of the evaluator of AE staff must meet two areas of competence: - a basic one, following an educational qualification, as required by the regulations of the national context - a specialized one, on evaluation. In addition to specific training, a compulsory requisite for practising the profession of the evaluator of AE staff is having substantial professional experience in the field of adult education, both in the roles of educator/operator and in second level roles, i.e. of staff coordination.

Specific professional competences	*Being able to analyse the context and the demand for evaluation*
	- collecting information on the context of adult education;
	- consulting documents of the service or body/institution (charter of services, documentation etc..);
	- consulting direct (operators of the service and/or body/institutions) and indirect (stakeholders) witnesses;
	- observing the context;
	- identifying the specificities, constraints and resources of the context;
	- studying the feasibility and sustainability of the evaluation process;
	- using mixed strategies (listening, conducting groups, exploring representations) to support the operators in clarifying a demand for evaluation (optimization of work processes, well-being of the staff, improvement of the internal dynamics of the organizations, communication with the stakeholders etc.);
	- understanding the implicit and explicit expectations of the staff and of the organization;
	- working out interpretative hypotheses of the need expressed by users.
	Being able to plan the evaluation
	- collecting bibliographic or research material as a support for planning the evaluation;
	- collecting all the data that has emerged from the exploratory phase and hypothesizing the evaluation questions;
	- selecting theoretical models and tools, approaches and tools to be used coherently with the specificities of the context and the data collected;
	- designing an evaluation plan, identifying the resources necessary and estimating the costs;
	- indicating the objectives and the results expected of the evaluation;
	- organizing the phases of work and a time schedule for the activities;
	- building up evaluation devices using techniques and tools that are already known or adapting them specifically to the context;
	- identifying any risks, times for monitoring and redesigning one's work.

		Being able to collect, analyse and interpret the data of the evaluation - applying the methodologies, techniques and tools included in the evaluation plan in the context; - collecting the data that emerged from applying the data collection devices; - triangulating the data obtained with different strategies; - mixing different data analysis techniques; - leading the staff by assigning tasks and defining roles and leadership to the members of staff in the evaluation and self-evaluation processes; - supporting the operators of the staff in the different phases of the evaluation and self-evaluation process; - identifying any criticalities and making modifications; - interpreting the data of the evaluation.
		Documentation and communication of the evaluation report - preparing a report on the outcome of the evaluation process; - communicating the outcomes of the evaluation report to the staff; - using different and contextualized methods of documentation, languages and styles of presentation with respect to the specificity of the context; - identifying the findings that have emerged from the report and motivating them; - negotiating interpretations emerging from the report with the staff; - remaining in communication with the client/organization; - managing and containing any dysfunctional dynamics and internal conflict in the staff, after returning the results of the evaluation report. *Follow-up and implementing the evaluation plan* - communicating with stakeholders and local area networks; - preparing recommendations and plans for the improvement of the processes which have been evaluated; - providing suggestions for the autonomous use of self-evaluation tools by the staff.

	Management of the evaluation process - monitoring the evaluation plan; - evaluating one's own work; - observing ethical principles and guidelines* for evaluators.
Transversal competences selected by ESCO	*1. Application of knowledge* 1.1 Numeracy skills 1.2 Information and communication 1.3 Health, safety and the workplace environment *2. Attitudes and values at work* 2.1 Attitudes 2.2 Values *3. Social skills* *4. Thinking skills* *5. Language and communication*

The profile of the evaluator of adult education staff is thus very complex. This figure has to have specific knowledge on evaluation (models and theories, methods, procedures, standards and indicators, tools), the contexts of adult education (legislation, users, local areas) and educational work with adults (characteristics, specificities, structure, dynamics). Above all, the evaluator must be able to translate this knowledge into competent action which, whilst respecting a particular ethic, can increase the level of awareness of adult education staff on the educational work done in their particular contexts. This effectively seems the condition to promote the development of adult education staff and consequently the services of adult education. The evaluation model developed by EDUEVAL highlights the areas in which the evaluator must have full expertise.

5 See the *EDUEVAL Guidelines* available at: http://www.edueval.eu/download/pdf/brochure_guidelines_def.pdf

2.
The EDUEVAL triangulated model of evaluation
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The evaluation of the work of adult education staff is a complex task, full of meanings, with many variables – linked to the mission of the organization, the work styles of the operators and the internal dynamics of the staff – which involve multiple aspects concerning community, professional and personal development, from a micro and a macro, individual and system point of view. Many adult education contexts can be defined as *services to the person*, characterized by a number of *specific features* (Bezzi, 2000; Pandolfi, 2012; Barbanotti & Iacobino, 1998) including, by way of example, the *intangibility* and *immateriality* of the services and activities, the *negotiability* and *flexibility* of the interaction between operator and user (characterized by *direct* communication and relations, by *emotive involvement* and responsibility of the operators), the *limitation of resources*, the *individualization of the action, legislation,* the co-presence of *different professional profiles* such as teachers, educators, healthcare operators, volunteers, trainers, quality managers, mentors, tutors, coordinators and administrators.

This heterogeneity and complexity reveals the difficulty of identifying a single model of evaluating educational work. There is no theoretical framework that can comprehend, from a univocal perspective, the complexity in the contexts and in the professional profiles involved in adult education, in which indicators and areas of professional competence that relate to different dimensions exist. The very process of evaluation has multiple objects and references: for example the context, the

processes, the results, the attainment of objectives, the respect of pre-established standards, the dynamics between operators, the improvement of the organization, the well-being of the staff and individual performance are all evaluated.

In building up a model of evaluation of educational work, the complexity and heterogeneity of the theories, practices and tools of evaluation emerging – whether explicitly or implicitly – in the professional context have to be taken into consideration[6].

Starting from these presuppositions, the model of evaluation of adult education staff is conceived in such a way as to emphasize the *subjective* (self-evaluation), *objective* (external evaluation) and *intersubjective* (evaluation of the context) dimensions of the educational processes (cf. section *3.3.1 Levels of evaluation*, for further information), considered in their complexity and richness.

The methodological principle underpinning this model is *triangulation* (Denzin, 1989; Greene, 2007; Hussein, 2009). A complex reality characterized by multiple dimensions, like educational work, cannot be evaluated from a single point of observation of the phenomenon but needs several perspectives of analysis and complementary points of view.

Triangulation is borrowed from the language of mathematics, as a technique which allows calculating distances between points taking advantage of the properties of triangles. It becomes a typical principle of qualitative methodologies, i.e. a technique that allows appreciating the properties of a phenomenon by comparing several representations of the phenomenon itself, which can be obtained from different points of view, subjects, tools and perspectives of analysis. In partic-

6   On evaluation practices see the results of the first phase of the EDUE-VAL project, in the *EDUEVAL Public Research Report*; for the theories and tools of evaluation, see the following sections.

ular, according to Denzin (1989, 2010), the concept of triangulation consists of the possibility of studying the same object of research through:

– different theoretical perspectives (*theory triangulation*);
– different methods (*methodological triangulation*);
– different researchers (*investigator triangulation*);
– different research data (*data triangulation*).

Triangulation in research is a pivotal tool to get to know and understand complex concepts, with a polymorphous nature, which require multiple points of view (Castoldi, 2012, p. 175), a combination of perspectives, tools and data necessary to describe it, overcoming the reductionisms inherent in dichotomies and in the descriptive categories of a phenomenon.

The decision to use three perspectives (self-evaluation, external evaluation and evaluation of the context) is inspired by the *trifocal* view, which Pellerey (2004) initiated to understand *competence*, a complex construct that requires three levels of observation which can be referred to as the subjective, inter-subjective and objective dimensions. The theoretical structure proposed here focuses on educational work (instead of "competence") as the complex construct to be evaluated through a subjective (self-evaluation), objective (external evaluation) and inter-subjective (evaluation of the context) level.

Before concentrating better on the three levels of evaluation considered in the EDUEVAL model[7], the following section intends to understand the heterogeneity of the *theories* and *theoretic models* underpinning the evaluation of educational work[8].

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7   These will be the subject of specific in-depth study in the later sections of the *EDUEVAL Handbook, vol. 3*, focused on the methods, the levels, the criteria and the tools of evaluation.
8   The EDUEVAL work group started from here to bring a *triangulated perspective* into focus.

3.
The evaluation of adult education staff

In order to contextualize the EDUEVAL model of evaluation of adult education staff, the plurality of theoretical approaches underpinning the *evaluation object*, conceptualized as a powerful regulator of the functioning of systems, should be understood first of all. It is based on the collection and scientific interpretation of data and oriented at improving the processes and products of a system.

To be extremely concise, the international debate on evaluation will be referred to, starting from a tripartite pattern (Stame, 2001) which groups together evaluation studies in three main approaches, describing, for each approach, both the main meanings and models of evaluation that emerge and how the evaluation of adult staff is (or is not) considered. The intention, taking this tripartite model as reference, is to understand and refer to those models of evaluation, the characteristics of which appear more coherent with the requirements of the evaluation of AE staff.

3.1 The theoretical framework : theories and models of evaluation

by Loredana Perla, Viviana Vinci[9]

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 The meanings and functions of the act of evaluation are multiple and fundamentally vary between two poles, *measurement* and *evaluation*, from which different approaches stem with different considerations of evaluation, as "measurement", "estimate", "appreciation", "comprehension", and which refer, with a different importance, to criteria such as determining the results obtained and the efficacy, efficiency and the performance of the object being evaluated. The three main approaches of evaluation, focused differently on one or more dimensions of those described, are summarized below in graphic form (in a table and a figure).

Table The approaches to evaluation (Stame, 2001)

	Positivist-experimental	Pragmatist-quality	Constructivist
Benchmark	The objectives	The standards	What the *stakeholders* define "success"
Authors	Hyman, Suchman, Campbell, Rossi and Freeman, Chen	Scriven, Wholey, Donabedian, NPM (New Public Management) tradition	Stake, Stufflebeam, Guba and Lincoln, Cronbach, Patton, Fetterman, Hirshman, Tendler
Questions	Do the results correspond to the objectives?	Do the results correspond to the criterion of quality?	What happened? Is what happened good?
Direction of the investigation	*Top down*	*Top down*	*Bottom up*
Attitude towards values	Relativism: the values are those of the programme	The evaluator judges with respect to the values (his own or of the existing concept of quality)	The values are those of the *stakeholders*: at times they agree, at other times they are conflicting
Theory	With good planning all the effects can be foreseen	There is a concept of quality to aspire to in every situation	Reality is richer than can be foreseen; the importance of unexpected events
Main method of investigation	Experiments and quasi-experiments	Scriven's "logic of evaluation"; multicriteria analysis	Comparative analysis; exploration; participated analysis

9   Loredana Perla is the author of sub-sections 3.1 and 3.1.1; Viviana Vinci is the author of sub-sections 3.1.2, 3.1.3 and 3.1.4.

Techniques	Survey	Analysis of user satisfaction; opinions of the experts	Case studies; interviews, focus groups, observations
When and where it is normally applied	In programmes; in European Structural Funds; wherever there are objectives with respect to which it is possible to identify means and results (social and work policies etc.)	In training and education institutions for adults; in cultural and literacy centres; in services (health, education etc.); in university evaluation; in charters of services (standards of quality); in programmes of public sector reform	In innovative situations; in pilot projects etc.
Area of use	Instrumental for political decision	Instrumental for the management and functioning of the administration	Fact-finding; *empowerment*
Theoretical problems	The black box: why should there be this result?	What is quality? How are values formed?	Where to start?
Problems of empirical research	The objectives are not clear: there is no data	How are standards of quality fixed?	Where to look?
Answers-Solutions	Analysis of evaluability; taxonomic evaluation, conceptual maps, evaluation based on theory: Weiss, Toulemonde	If there are no standards of quality, use those from a comparison with other situations or with one's own past. Involve the users in defining quality	One thing leads to another; the reflective practice of the evaluator
Advantages	It helps to plan better	It helps for good management	There is something to learn for all the stakeholders

3.1.1 The *positivist-experimental* approach

In the *positivist-experimental* approach, evaluation is under-stood as the analysis and verification of the attainment of pre-established objectives. Alongside methodological rigour and therefore validity and reliability, the coherence, pertinence and neutrality of the evaluator are important in the models with this approach. Particular emphasis is given to *measure-ment*, the *quantitative* dimension[10]. The conditions necessary for an evaluation understood as "measurement" are very care-ful planning of the objectives – including classified taxonom-

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10 In practice, this approach coincides with the logic of examinations and tests.

ically in terms of observable behaviour – and reliable tools to analyse the expected results. The resulting evaluation model is of a *rationalist* type (Galliani, 2014, p. 28), in which evaluation is associated with the ability to foresee – owing to clear planning of objectives – not only the outcomes of the training process but also of the possible changes/improvements. This approach is affected by a certain methodological rigidity and is not always able to reconcile *grey area* variables.

This approach includes *measurement* models and *goal-oriented* models, which have been applied almost exclusively in scholastic contexts. Some procedures and tools (questionnaire) have also been borrowed from the pragmatist-quality approach and then applied to the evaluation of educational actions.

3.1.2 The *pragmatist of quality* approach

The *pragmatist of quality* approach, on the other hand, stresses the dimension of the comparison and definition of standards and criteria, conceiving of educational evaluation "as *management of the organizational procedures* to guarantee attaining the training standards defined inside or outside the system" (Galliani, 2014, p. 31). The implied evaluation model is of a *functionalist* type, in which evaluation takes on a supporting role for the *decision-makers* and meets the external requests of the *stakeholders*.

In the models that can be ascribed to this approach, particular significance is given to the opinion (and therefore to the "voice" of the different players involved in the evaluation process). The risk of these models is that of self-referentialism and being anchored to indicators established only in the system where the evaluation takes place.

This approach includes various models, such as *Company-Wide Quality Control*, *Goal-free evaluation*, the CAF model and the Servqual model.

3.1.3 The *constructivist* approach

The *constructivist* approach values the subjectivity of the players involved in the evaluation process and aims at interpreting and understanding, by *hermeneutic evaluation* (Perla, 2004), more than *measuring* the phenomena and the actions, which are the object of evaluation. At the centre of the models included in this approach, there is attention to the qualitative dimension of evaluation, the pluralism of values held by the various stakeholders, which requires a process of negotiation, phenomenological understanding of the meanings, languages and cultures emerging from the community in which they are inserted (Galliani, 2014). The model of educational evaluation underlying the constructivist approach is of a procedural type. It sees evaluation almost as an *act of communication*, which can be interpreted and negotiated, characterized by continuity, recursivity, creativity, unforeseeability, progressiveness, collaboration, cognitive and metacognitive regulation of the quality of individual learning and organizational systems (*ibid*, p. 35; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

This is an approach that is closer to the possibility of understanding the implicit elements of processes that are not grasped by the methodologies of traditional evaluation. However, it is not always possible to guarantee generalization and the use of the knowledge and results obtained. In this case too, there are multiple models: the CIPP model (Strufflebeam, 1967, 1983, 2003); the Responsive Evaluation model (Stake, 1975, 1988); the Multi method model (Patton, 1990, 1997); the Model of reflection in the course of action (Schön, 1983, 1987); Model of formative evaluation (Calonghi, 1992; Hadji, 1995).

3.1.4 *Certification and evaluation of competences in adult education*

After having identified the three main approaches of evaluation, reference should be made to the one which, although it does not represent a real scientific "model" of evaluation, includes a set of procedures – many of which are being experimented in the field – which are verifying the possibility of validating and certifying the informal and non-formal competences of European workers in AE. As is generally known, the goal of the Europe 2020 strategy is to reach intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth. It is in this direction that the Proposal for a Recommendation of the European Council on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (Brussels 05.09.2012) should be read, which repeated the invitation to all the Member-States to establish as soon as possible a homogeneous system of certification and evaluation of competences, to allow recognizing competences matured during adults' professional lives. The White Paper of the Bauer Committee already pointed out, as early as 1997, the need to establish a better system of recognizing and defining non-formal competences (cf. Cedefop Glossary). At European level, the Recommendation of the Council of the European Union on the validation of non-formal and informal learning was published on 20/12/2012, with which the Member-States were urged to set up national systems for the validation of non-formal and informal learning by 2018. The urgency was felt at the same time to promote the development of methodologies for evaluating competences acquired outside the standard contexts of education and training, i.e. in non-formal and informal learning contexts. The recognition of these categories of competences would make mobility and re-employment of workers on the job market easier. This is also a necessary action in view of the growing need for new professional profiles in some sectors such as services to the person (known as *white jobs*).

3.2 Aims of the evaluation: why evaluate?

by Kleio Koutra, George Kritsotakis, Lina Pelekidou, Nikoleta Ratsika
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Why evaluate? What does evaluation in contexts of adult education aim at? Answering these questions is not simple and entails referring to a multiplicity of interconnected elements. The aims of evaluation in adult education can vary enormously, as it is a process linked to numerous variables, including the characteristics of the context of reference, the heterogeneity of the subjects involved in the contexts where the evaluation takes place, the complexity of the activities and the aims of the organization, the dynamics of power inside and outside the context, the relations with the local area and the interests of the stakeholders.

Some of the main functions of evaluation are:

Managerial function of the evaluation as control. One function of evaluation is managerial and organizational control, "i.e. that process that can influence the behaviour and the results of the human resources with regard to the aims of the organization" (Fadda, 2013, p. 77). Managerial evaluation[11] addresses optimizing the use of public resources and improving the policies and decision-making. From this point of view, evaluation is

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11 Martini and Cais (2000) distinguish the concepts of *policy and programme design* – concerning the phase of collecting the initial information in order to select the programme before submitting it for its approval – of *compliance* – corresponding to the phase of control, inspection and checking behaviour in order to identify those that are illegitimate, negligent or not standard – and of *management control*, corresponding to management control by those who are at the top level in an organization. This control aims to keep under control the internal functioning and the crucial aspects of the activities of an organization (Bartezzaghi, Guerci & Vinante, 2010, pp. 59-60).

one phase in the organizational control process, which ascertains the *performance* of individuals and the attainment of the aims previously established by the organization. This function is associated with the *rewards system* of human resources, linked to measuring the results with respect to the aims defined in the planning phase (Flamholtz, Das & Tsui, 1985; Noeverman & Koene 2012). The meanings attributed to the concept of *evaluation*, in this sense, refer to *ascertaining that the planned aims have been reached,* responding to a logic of *control*, in which the evaluation is mainly implemented by subjects outside the experience that has been evaluated (cf. section 3.3.2.2 *The Audit*), to ensure and attest that the formative results have been attained. It is therefore evaluation oriented towards *measurement*, which mainly uses standardized/objective tools and techniques, in a *top-down* logic.

The reporting and rendering account function of the evaluation. Evaluation documents and renders account of the activities, processes and products in an organization, transforms the educational work into procedures and rules to be respected, protects personnel in the case of accidents, problems or unforeseen occurrences (as it allows reconstructing the processes, the actions, the subjects involved, the roles and responsibilities) so that an educational context can take on a uniform and appropriate internal organization.

The meaning attributed to evaluation, in its reporting function, is that of *accountability*, concerning "having to render account" – by the person in charge of the organization - of the choices made, the activities and the results reached to outsiders (Humphrey, Miller & Scapens, 1993; Roberts & Scapens, 1985).

Evaluation also enables the operators to *document* the daily activities (Biffi, 2014) and is therefore indispensable for two main categories of reasons:

– to make explicit the processes and professional practices

which would otherwise remain unexpressed at an implicit and latent level (Perla, 2010) and could not be communicated inside or outside the contexts of work;

– to maintain and foster relations and communications between the different players involved in the evaluation process: institutions outside the service, entities in the local area.

The planning function of evaluation. Evaluation is indispensable to reconsider planning choices. It has the function of redesigning the educational work: planning and evaluation can be considered as part of a recursive circuit (Lipari, 1995), as they both refer to contexts structured in objectives, decisions, specific actions of the intervention and results. Evaluation also allows understanding what has happened following the approval of a local law, understanding whether the solutions are useful for solving the collective problem, bringing to the light causes of malfunctioning or administrative inefficiencies in the implementation of regional policies. The results of a process of evaluation or self-evaluation are always useful for planning, re-adapting, an educational intervention or programme to make it as effective as possible.

Formative and transformative/improving function of evaluation. Evaluation, if used as a *critical view of action* (Turcotte & Tard, 2000) and a tool of reconsidering the educational work, emerges in its *pedagogical* function (Perla, 2004), linked to the formative, transformative/improving potential, of constructing the educational paths of users and the well-being of the group. Evaluation, which has a consultancy potential, can become a tool investigating the professional practices and the values of an organization, allows starting self-evaluative and reflective cognitive processes that can orient reflection in professional teams, create a *mirror*, an external snapshot and a *space*

for thinking, which helps understand the causes of the difficulties inherent in any work group (Ulivieri Stiozzi, 2013; Riva, 2013). The *formative* function is clarified as a reflective action, as an opportunity of analysis f the educational work, a search for meaning and clarification. Evaluation can also take on the essential function of legitimizing, clarifying and improving the educational practices. "Through evaluation, the work of professionals who operate in educational services on a daily basis can be given greater value and recognition, as the results and the outcomes become visible and can also be communicated to the exterior" (Pandolfi, 2012, p. 13).

In conclusion: beyond the different shades of meaning attributed to the functions of evaluation, it always comes from a *pragmatic interest for improvements*, often linked to problem-solving or to the selection of a decisions to be taken, using the judgement on the value and quality of an object – whether a programme, an action or a project (Torre, 2010) –.

Evaluating adult education staff or activating self-evaluating processes of adult education staff allows:

– to compare and to negotiate the values of all stakeholders in educational activities, to promote in staff a mentality of evolution and change after reflection and to introduce new professional processes and new internal dynamics;
– to foster mediation, often difficult, with other institutions;
– to understand the desired or unwanted effects of an intervention, its obstacles and the possible strategies of improvement.

3.3 Methods of evaluation: how to evaluate?
by Loredana Perla, Viviana Vinci[12]
University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy

The complexity of the evaluation of the work of adult education staff entails, as has been made clear in the previous sections, the importance of using a *triangulated* approach, capable of understanding a reality characterized by multiple dimensions – as is educational work – through different perspectives of analysis and points of view. Superseding *a single model* of evaluation of educational work, in favour of the *triangulation* of different and complementary theoretical perspectives, is also reflected on the methodological level.

How should the educational works of adult education staff be evaluated? Through which methods, levels, criteria and tools of evaluation?

Echoing the theoretical structure based on triangulation, a structure built up either on the qualitative or on the quantitative method should be suspended from a methodological point of view as well, in favour of the perspective of *mixed methods evaluation* (Bamberger, 2012; Bledsoe & Graham 2005; Greene, Benjamin & Goodyear 2001; Mertens, 2010), based on the mixed use of qualitative and quantitative data and methods of evaluation. With this perspective, greater value can be given to the diversity of points of view, the participation of different social players (evaluator and evaluee, but also the stakeholders) and the evaluation research can take on greater social utility, validity, credibility and completeness (Bryman, 2006). The use of a perspective with a *mixed methods design* (Hesse-Biber & Johnson 2015; Tashakkori & Teddie,

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12 Loredana Perla is the author of sub-section 3.3, Viviana Vinci of the sub-sections 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.2.1, 3.3.2.2 and 3.3.2.3.

2003; Creswell 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark 2011) implies the possibility of drawing from different techniques, tools and sources, in order to give greater validity to the results obtained and not to use reductive or limiting evaluation perspectives, especially in complex social contexts.

Talking about *mixed methods* in evaluation means, for example, being able to flexibly and rigorously integrate methods of qualitative research – such as those used in an ethnographic study or in action research (observations, case studies, phenomenological research, interviews, conversations, focus groups) – with questionnaires, grids and matrixes that offer the evaluator a quantitative and numerical element as well as the ability to analyse, through computational analysis software, qualitative text data.

However, it also means being able to integrate different methods and levels of evaluation, conceived in a synergic and complementary way. This is what has been done in the EDUEVAL model of evaluation, based on the triangulation of the *subjective*, *objective* and *intersubjective* dimension of evaluation which is methodologically translated into the levels of *self-evaluation, external evaluation* and *evaluation of the context*. Let's have a look at these specifically.

3.3.1 *Levels*

The EDUEVAL model of evaluation has been built up, as stated, from the triangulation of *self-evaluation, external evaluation* and *evaluation of the context,* with three forms of evaluation having precise and different meanings, which we can summarize as follows.

External evaluation means a level of evaluation designed and implemented by an evaluator or team of expert evaluators, not

belonging to the organization responsible for the action or service evaluated. This level usually completes the process of self-evaluation, which the institution already implements, and can be of support in guaranteeing the validity and impartiality of the results, precisely thanks to an *external view*. It is of great help to the organization in establishing the merit, the value, the efficacy, the impact and the conformity (with respect to pre-established standards, objectives declared by the organization, procedures laid down by rules and regulations inside and outside the service) of a programme/action/procedure.

Through external evaluation, on the one hand, greater impartiality, independence of judgement and credibility can be attributed, reducing the self-referentialism of the organization. On the other hand, however, some risks should be stemmed: these relate both to the overlapping of the evaluated subject with the client of the evaluation (who has an interest in keeping the service credible and who implicitly opposes resistance to the evaluation process, which requires an inclination for change) and to the lack of familiarity that the external evaluator has with the context and with the internal dynamics of the organization, which cause mediated and indirect access of the evaluator to the sources of information.

The process of external evaluation differs from certification and accreditation, although they share substantial analogies. Certification "bases the attestation of following the standards of the process, whilst evaluation seeks to extend the panorama of its judgement with reference also to objectives (of policy/programme/action) and to subjectives needs/necessities of the addressees. Accreditation is also an attestation of conformity (of structural, technological and organizational) requisites but issued by a national body (e.g. the Regional Council, the National Health Service) which authorizes the structures to exercise in the area. A role is also played in certification by the *conformity* of the services (or parts of them)

to pre-established standards. "The certification can be issued even if it attests one or more non-conformities of the service with respect to the requisites" (Bezzi, 2012, p. 26).

The main tool through which external evaluation takes place is the Audit (see further details below).

Self-evaluation is understood as the evaluation which aims to identify the strengths and the areas for improvement, in an organization, through self-analysis of the work, by those working in the context. Defined as "a comprehensive, systematic and regular review of an organization's activities and results referenced against a model/framework, carried out by the organization itself" (ESS Quality Glossary 2010, Unit B1 "Quality; Classifications", EUROSTAT, 2011), self-evaluation is a systematic process of self-reflection based on data. It supports the improvement of the organizational performance, such as that of implementing the indications in external evaluation and in the audit process, and is particularly appropriate with the introduction of a new policy or procedure, or when the results reached by an organization are not sufficiently documented or when a problem has to be tackled, such as that of implementing the indications in external evaluations and in the audit process.

The main function of self-evaluation is of the formative type, i.e. to help produce knowledge, reflection and awareness in the operators, who act in the first person in the design and management of the formative actions and can, thanks to the self-analysis of their work, transform the knowledge acquired into changes and strategies for improvement. This particular formative function makes self-evaluation a particularly useful in the evaluation of AE staff, almost a *starting point* on which to subsequently graft the external evaluation and/or the evaluation of the context. For this reason, it will be discussed in further depth later, in relation to some tools (for

example the portfolio and e-portfolio) on which the EDUE-VAL model can be compared with previous European projects and experiences, such as Validpack for example (see relevant section).

Another function of self-evaluation, in addition to the educational one, is that of *rendering account*, as it allows making known externally the outputs achieved and the value of a project/action that has been enacted.

Self-evaluation often precedes the external evaluation, with which it is in continuity and circularity: self-evaluation supports the documentation of the working processes and the process of the main players of the action as they become aware, therefore it is also functional for the improvement and communication of the "internal" processes to the stakeholders. External evaluation, which often follows on after the process of self-evaluation, helps stem – thanks to a rigorous methodology of evaluative research – the risk of self-referentialism of the results produced.

Evaluation of the context is understood as the level of the evaluation which has as its purpose the interpretation of an educational context, in its complexity, from the intersubjective analysis of the processes, of the environment, of the activities and of even the most intangible factors that are hard to quantify, such as emotions, cultures, structural, symbolic and qualitative dimensions that characterize it. Defined as a set of "procedures of attribution of judgement referred to abstract entities, objects that are not single individuals, but rather complex educational phenomena located at different systemic levels and interacting with one another" (Bondioli & Ferrari, 2000), evaluation of the educational context is a professional skill that has to be built up, taking into account both the educational purposes of the context and the nature of the act of appreciation, of its models and its practices, its tools and its

particular techniques, characterized by basic orientations which have to be made explicit.

This is an intersubjective analysis, which takes into account the perceptions of the players who belong to the context, and which allows fostering the professionalism of all the figures that operate in adult education services, triggering off processes of growth inside the service. It involves the internal users in processes of self-analysis, comparison with other social players and designing an improvement plan to be systematically reviewed. Through the evaluation of the context, it is possible to identify not only outcomes and products of the activities of an educational service, but also to describe and understand the contexts in which these experiences take place and how these processes are structured, in the awareness of the ecological variables at stake – man and the environment cannot be conceived of as separate (Bronfenbrenner, 1994) –. The educational context includes a heterogeneous set of elements, i.e. all those material, human and symbolic resources which an organization implements for the purpose of producing a formative outcome for the addressees of the educational action: the physical, interpersonal, social environment, the actions, the interventions, the educational strategies, how the work is organized for the operators, the relations with the families of the users, the professional activities of the operators, the relations with other educational agencies and the relationship with the local area. Which indicators of the educational context could be described and evaluated?

The context, in the first place, is evaluated in the extent to which it determines and/or conditions the action of the adult educator and must be described in the first place paying attention to some aspects which relate to the type of service (a brief history of the local and social context in which it operates, the main services provided), the main partnerships established and the main (internal and external) stakeholders of

reference, the organization chart, the mission (policies and institutional mandate), the vision (the strategic objectives of the service/context), the strategies and resources of the context (both as a structure and as professionalism).

There is more: the context can also be evaluated by looking at the skills (of the operators) implemented in a context, the educational processes and the interactions that take place in the educational context between educator-learner, between equals (learners, users of the service) and between colleagues, the environment, the physical and symbolic space of the action – which includes the furnishings, the materials, the times –, the educational activities, the actions, the routines, the professional gestures and the implicit beliefs (Perla, 2010).
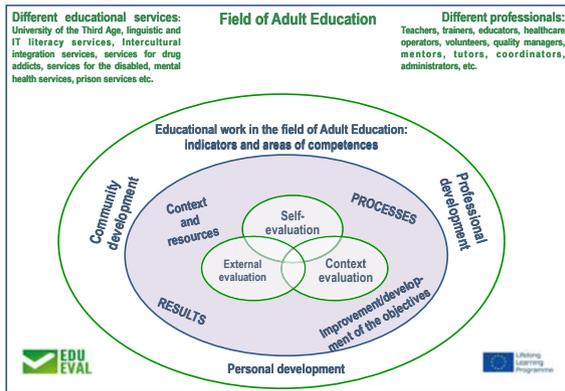
These three levels of evaluation, according to the EDUE-VAL model, cannot be conceived of hierarchically or in a clearly separate way, but intersect, are intertwined and at times overlap.

It is sufficient to think of how they are intertwined in an adult education service, where, for example, an external evaluator may check the compliance to the procedures through an audit visit (external evaluation) or each educator (or the

staff) evaluates their own work through a portfolio (self-evaluation) or the coordinator – or an operator which is nevertheless part of the context – has to evaluate their own context. This is an intersubjective evaluation, which takes into account several variables and the perceptions of all those who operate in the context (evaluation of the context).

None of these three forms of evaluation, on their own, is sufficient to guarantee an evaluation process that is really of use for improving a service and the organizational culture in an Adult Education context. As can be seen from the cases given as examples and the diagram, external evaluation, self-evaluation and evaluation of the context are part of the same process, conceived of with continuity and flexibility. External evaluation for example, can be based on materials from a process of self-evaluation. In the same way, the tools must not be associated univocally with a form of evaluation but can be used differently, depending on the aims of the evaluation. For example, the portfolio is a tool that can be used both in the process of self-evaluation but also as a tool of evaluation of the context or as an audit portfolio which includes the documentation selected by the institution for the audit visit. The rubric can be used as a tool of self-evaluation or external evaluation of the context.

In conclusion, the levels of evaluation of the EDUEVAL triangular model should be conceived in a flexible and circular way, with the tools and methodologies adapted to the special conditions and the uniqueness of the different educational contexts in which the evaluator (or, better, the team of evaluators) will be operating.

3.3.2 *Tools*

There are multiple tools for evaluating the work of adult education staff: precisely due to the triangular approach based

on mixed methods, a wide selection of tools deriving from the observational and narrative methods, also used more in general in social research (Corbetta, 1999) can be considered, such as observation grids, log books and other forms of professional writing, interviews and focus groups, the analysis of the documentation of the service, portfolios, rubrics, questionnaires, the audit etc.

Well aware that the tools used to evaluate educational work have to be selected, each time, according to the requirements of the evaluation (of the target, of the nature of the service, of the number of users, of the problematic issues that have emerged, of previous experiences of self-evaluation of the staff), thanks to the expertise of the evaluator, the choice has been to focus in particular on three tools. They do not represent the *only tools possible* to evaluate educational work, but are considered the most representative of the EDUEVAL model, based on the evaluation of the context, self-evaluation and external evaluation: they are the rubric, the portfolio and the audit.

3.3.2.1 The evaluation rubric

The rubric is a tool used to evaluate the quality of products and performances (McTighe & Ferrara, 1996), especially in the scholastic context, where it is common for evaluating the competence of pupils through a definition of the dimensions that make it up, of the expected levels of mastery and the "evidence" referred to real situations (Castoldi, 2012). It consists of a scale of pre-established scores and a list of criteria that describes the characteristics of each score on the scale (Castoldi, 2006) and appears as a table with two columns. It "is built up by breaking up a complex task into essential elements, identifying for each one of them a series of descriptors of the actions

required, with ordinal or numerical values with which to translate the judgement into a raw score or a mark" (Baldassarre, 2015, p. 232; Arter, 1994). The criteria of evaluation of a complex performance, a competence or a product, are expressed in levels of quality that are clearly defined and can be expressed through observable, measurable and concrete behaviour (not through general concepts). The performance that is the object of evaluation is analysed through some fundamental features, which make up the components of a rubric:

— the *dimensions*, specific characteristics that distinguish the performance (they answer the question: *which aspects do I consider in evaluating a certain performance?*);
— the *criteria*, the educational aims, the conditions that each performance or competence has to meet to be adequate and successful (they answer the question: *according to what can I appreciate the performance?*);
— the *indicators*, which provide concrete feedback on the achievement of the target and the satisfaction of the criterion, identifying what to look at to judge (they answer the question: *which observable evidence allows me to measure the degree of presence of the pre-chosen criterion of judgement?*);
— the *anchors*: concrete examples of performance that can guide translating a criterion or indicator (they answer the question: *in relation to the indicator identified, what is a concrete example of performance in which the presence of the criterion considered can be recognized?*);
— the *levels*, in the last place, specify the degrees reached by the criteria, considered on the basis of an ordinal scale arranged from the highest level to the lowest one.

3.3.2.2 The audit

The *audit* is a documented, systematic and independent inspection visit, aimed at highlighting the non-conformities, with respect to pre-established criteria, of products, processes, systems and programmes in an organization (Storti, 2006). It takes place through collecting objective *evidence*, i.e. information that can be verified and traced back to concrete situations, and for this reason it is also useful for providing significant data to the highest levels of the organization, for future decision-making. The information that can be verified through an inspection visit in loco can be collected using different methods, including interviews with the personnel, observation of activities and the work context, the analysis and re-view of the documentation of the organization, the statistics, and information from subjects external to the organization. The phases for conducting an audit process are somewhat standardized and include:

– a phase of planning the audit, in which its objectives, the field and the criteria are defined;
– a phase of reviewing the documentation of the service to be evaluated;
– a phase of preparing the work documents and forms to record information/data;
– a phase of planning the programme of the audit;
– an opening meeting, in which to present the method of conducting the audit and the criteria;
– a phase of audit in the field, in which to collect the evidence;
– a phase of preparing the audit report, which includes the non-conformities and the recommendations for improvement;
– a closing meeting, where the audit report is presented (*ibid.*, p. 23).

Used as the tool of choice of the Quality Management System in conformity with the requirements of the UNI EN ISO 9001: 2000 standard and as a form of external evaluation for the purpose of an accreditation system – with the definition and verification that an organization requesting the attestation of accreditation, for example required so that an institution can provide training courses accredited by the local authorities, is in possession of the minimum requirements –, an audit allows not only highlighting non-conformities, inefficiencies and discrepancies, it also allows describing some recommendations to improve the organization and to record conformities and good practices.

3.3.2.3 The portfolio

The *portfolio* is understood as the annotated documentation of a training or professional path, curated by the individual or by a work group. It is built up by selecting a series of materials considered significant (photographs, documents, products, films, essays, texts, articles, case studies, course materials, evaluation tools, tests, certificates of membership or participation in groups, notes, performance evaluations), but is not limited to the mere "collection" of documenting material. In order to be able to talk about a portfolio, these materials have to be critically analysed through the identification of merits and limits and situated in the educational experience, interpreting the overall meaning of the experience.

Borrowed from the scholastic and training context, it is also considered a valid tool for evaluating educational action (Paulson & Meyer, 1991) as, in addition to being a final product and inventory of documents, it also represents *documentation of a process*, a narrative practice aimed at reflection and self-evaluation of one's professional, formative and personal

experience. The portfolio allows tracing back the knowledge matured through experience and acquiring awareness of the competences gained, it fosters a growth of awareness by the subject and a more mature construction of identity, it allows the subject to become aware of their learning, their limits and their potential (Castoldi, 2012). The portfolio thus represents self-evaluation through the characteristics of significance, authenticity, processuality, responsibility, promotionalism, recursivity, dynamicity, globality and metacognition.

This tool will be considered in greater depth below, in the section 3.4.1.3, where a possible exemplification of portfolio for the self-evaluation of the educational work of AE staff will be described.

3.4 Indicators in an evaluation process
by Pilar Escuder-Mollon, Roger Esteller-Curto
University Jaume I, Spain

Defining indicators in an evaluation process helps staff and managers to define the details of what is important for the institution or for the success of the educational activities of the institution. Once indicators have been defined, we then know what data needs to be collected, what is important, and the effectiveness of our activities. Indicators are necessary to be included in the evaluation process, better if they are defined formally. We should not forget other indicators, not formally established, created from the experience and expertise of the practitioners.

When creating indicators for evaluation, it is necessary firstly to understand their purpose and justify the need for them, and later how the indicators and the results obtained will be used. Secondly, the indicators should be integrated into the

evaluation process, therefore they will be linked to a methodology and in the end, used for assessing, therefore, the indicators themselves should fulfil some characteristics.

Indicators are created and defined because there is some kind of requirement. This supposed need could have several origins and the following are the most common:

– strategic aims of the institution, or operational objectives for a specific department or service. Firstly the indicators can be used to verify that the aims or objectives are fulfilled. Secondly, indicators can also provide information about quality and progress, begin a source of information for decision making. Example of a strategic aim is: *We should target excellence on the pedagogy-based technology*. It is then possible to create several indicators, such as: *Average number per year of courses/conferences that staff attend related to technology-enhanced teaching*, or *The drop-out rate in e-learning courses*;
– policy regulations. There could be some aims that are mandatory because of policy regulations or contracts among institutions, for example, there could be a regulation saying that *at least 1/5 of the classes should be in English*, then the indicators can be used to verify that this is done correctly;
– the institution offers a charter of services. This is a document where an institution informs the users about the services that it offers and the quality of those services. It can be seen as a commitment between the institution and the clients or users. Example of an item in a charter of services is: *We will give a reply to any user inquiry in less than 3 days*. This item in the charter of services would then originate an indicator: *Average time when answering a question, suggestion or complaint made by a user.*

Evaluation is one of the main processes in an institution (such as training, management, accounting, human resources coordination etc.). Sometimes, this evaluation process is used to increase quality, for accreditation, assessment or management, among others, no matter the scenario, we always use indicators, but sometimes they are used unconsciously in their daily routines by managers, coordinators, heads of departments and other staff with experience.

Those indicators are used as clues that allow knowing that something is going wrong, something can get better and continuously take decisions. Try to define indicators and use them to assess, understand and improve the processes of your institutions. Think on indicators as tools that will help your evaluation process, not as something that restricts you. They will also help to justify and prove to others (as decision-makers, accreditation offices, society) the work you are doing and the impact.

3.4.1 *Adult educators' evaluation indicators*
by Velta Lubkina, Gilberto Marzano, Tamara Pigozne, Svetlana Usca
Rezekne Academy of Technologies Latvia

In assessment methodologies some main *indicators* have been identified:

– an integrative approach *(lesson structure, content, teaching methods, unified content, themes complementing each other)*, emphasizing the principle of the unity of form and content;
– compliance *(ability to use appropriate methods for adult education, a balanced proportion of theory and practice);*
– innovations *(essential topicality of the course program theme, technical equipment appropriate to the requirements of contemporary requirements and the ability to use it; applied creative solutions).* Communication is considered an important ability

of educators to interact and "unleash" the audience, as well as a crucial attitude for collaborating with colleagues.

Figure 1 shows the structure of the assessment of the evaluators of adult education staff.
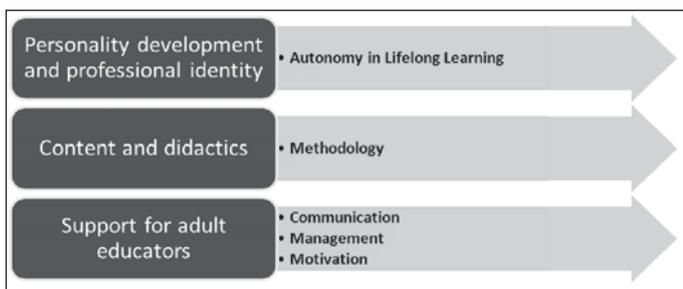
Figure 1. **Structure of the assessment of evaluators of AE staff**

3.4.1.1 Competences in the evaluation of adult educators

The topical issue in the context of the evaluation of adult educators is the definition of the characteristics and properties, which characterize education both as a process and as an outcome of continuous improvement that comply with the changing requirements and needs of individuals and all other interested parties (Fern te, 2014, p. 12).

Differences have been observed in understanding and evaluating the quality of adult education among the persons involved in the educational process (both professionals – educators/teachers – and beneficiaries – the adults –): educators and adults (learners and beneficiaries) relate educational awareness, as well as the evaluation, to individual interests, needs and abilities, while employers emphasize compliance with the needs of the labour market and national socio-economic development (Fern te, 2014).

Accordingly to a pedagogical view, evaluation is a person's targeted activity, which reveals personal, intellectual and social development. Accordingly, one of the key indicators of education quality is the educators' quality (Paņina, 2007).

Within the framework of the *AGADE - A Good Adult Educator in Europe* project (2006), a set of criteria and competencies for adult educators (see Figure 2) was developed. AGADE focused on two dimensions: the personal development/ethical dimension and the professional development dimension. These dimensions have been divided into three stages: organization (knowledge), performance (skills), evaluation *(organization)* (Carlsen & Irons, 2003; Jääger & Irons, 2006) (see Figure 3).

Figure 2. Minimum competences of adult educators
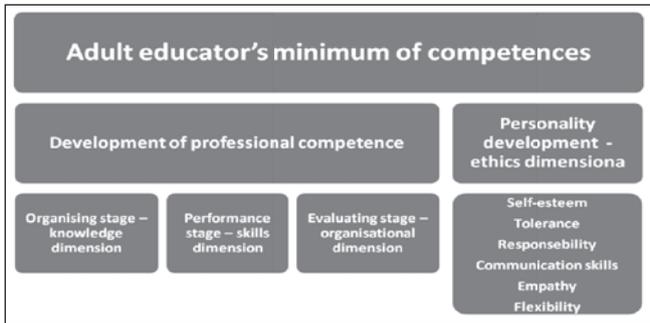
Figure 3. Stages of the assessment of adult educators
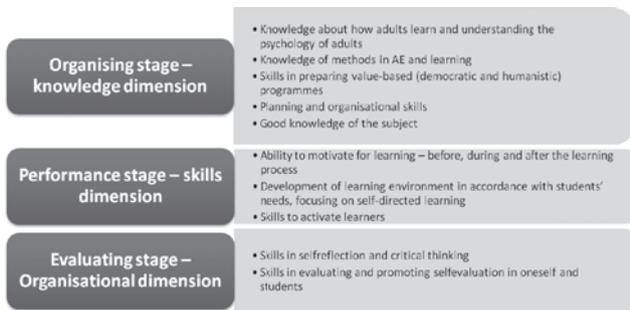
Within the framework of the *Qualified to Teach* project (2009) an international qualification system for promoters of adult education in adult initial training and continuing education in Europe was developed, structuring qualification descriptions in 3 domain areas (see Figure 4), where the pedagogical triangle as an analytical category reflects 3 key pedagogical elements that must be combined in pedagogical activities:

– content and didactics (basic competencies connected with the goal);
– personal development and professional identity (basic competencies related to the promotion of learning);
– learners' support (basic competencies related to the adult beneficiaries/learners) (see Figure 5).

Figure 4. Assessment structure of the competences of adult educators (according to *Qualified to Teach*, 2009)
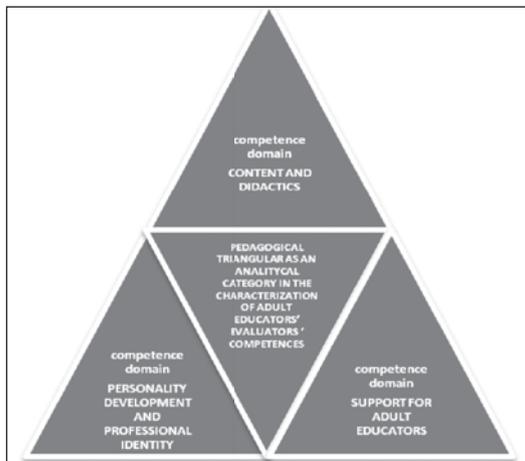
Figure 5. Criteria for the competences of adult educator (Research voor Belied, 2010)

Competence domain : content and didactics – basic competencies connected with the goal	• Expertise on the theme that is taught, didactics • Evaluation system
Competence domain: personality development and professional identity – basic competencies related to the promotion of learning	• Personal development • Professional development
Competence domain: support for adult educators – basic competencies related to the learner	• Encouraging and motivation • Support • Process management

Indicators have been developed (Research voor Belied, 2010) for the self-evaluation of the basic competences of adult educators (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Profile of the evaluation of basic competences (Research voor Belied)

Profile of evaluation of basic competencies

General
I reflect on my practical work, learning and personal development;

I possess interpersonal competence in communicating and working with adults, peers and other interested persons;

I am aware of and take responsibility for adult education;

I use a variety of learning methods, techniques, technologies, etc.

Specific
I am able to assess previous experience, learning needs, abilities, motivations and desires;

I contribute to the learning process of adult education: promoting the acquisition of knowledge (practical and / or theoretical) and stimulating the development of personality;

I continuously monitor and evaluate adult learning process to improve it;

I consult on the issues related to career, life, future development etc.

Indirectly related, supportive
I am able to manage human resources, manage financial resources and to evaluate social and economic benefits;

I am competent in marketing and public relations;

I contribute to the development of ICT-based learning environment, etc.

3.4.1.2 Validpack

VALIDPACK is a package of validation instruments, unique of its kind at European level and it was considered an example of good practice by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). The Handbook & Evaluator's Guide contains useful guidelines and instructions for adult educators on how they should approach this validation process. The instrument creates a framework for the documentation and evaluation of real competences of adult educators, no matter whether they have been acquired in formal, non-formal or informal learning contexts. VALIDPACK is an instrument coming from the VINEPAC project. The components of adult educators' competence model elaborated by L. Garrido, G. Levi, A. Medina and E. Mendeza (Garrido, Levi, Medina & Méndez, 2014) are institutional affiliation, innovation, research, evaluation, motivation, planning, professional identity, media integration, methodology, communication, tutoring and intercultural communication. It is emphasized that adult educators' competence is an important factor in evaluating the quality of adult education (EAEA, 2006).

Evaluation criteria is an essential condition for qualitative self-evaluation (Santos & Pinto, 2014), which, in the authors' opinion, is one of the main forms of adult education evaluation. Quantitative or criteria evaluation is the determination of quality using criteria; its alternative is the determination of quality through subjective experience, using a description, analysing success/merits and shortcomings/failures (Stake, 2004).

A process and a result are important components of adult educators' evaluation (Jaspers & Schade, 2002). Under the influence of modern pedagogical paradigms, the focus is put on process-oriented evaluation. It helps to see the relationship between causes and consequences, evidence that supports the re-

sults or impact of the supportive intervention (Nagao, 2003; Jaspers, 2003; Jääger & Irons, 2006), it provides a more active participation of the interested parties in the evaluation, decision-making and implementation process (Smith, 2005), as well as ensuring sustainability (Hashimoto, Pillay & Hudson, 2011).

Process-oriented evaluation is related to the assessment of the performance, which is defined as the assessment of integrated action and behaviour in the definite situation, which is relevant to the profession (Van Brakel & Heijmen-Versteegen, 2003). In order to assess the competencies that are specific to the profession or have a key role, a testing method is used. Standardized observation is also used in evaluation process. It is done by qualified evaluators who are specially trained to observe, record and evaluate. This will possibly guarantee the highest reliability.

The assessment of adult educators' evaluators is characterized by:

− focus on process;
− focus on self-evaluation;
− development;
− responsibility;
− grade value determined by multiple drafts (Porter & Clelland, 1995).

The method advocated by the *Self-Evaluation in Adult Life Long Learning* (SEALLL) project starts with a modular framework where "self-evaluation as a dialogue in a multiplayer situation" is the key-concept. A dialogue between staff, teachers and learners within the institution and a dialogue between the institution and relevant external actors is the starting point for self-evaluation.
Based on the theoretical statements and results of empirical research, the authors offer a model for evaluation of the

competence of evaluators of adult educators, which could be the basis for the evaluation of competence of evaluators of adult educators (see Figure 2), and which analyses the assessment as a process and a result, emphasizing the assessment of performance; goals are related to the provision of quality and sustainability according to learners' needs; competence indicators are methodology, motivation, communication and management; evaluation includes consolidation of self-evaluation and external evaluation. Based on the analysed literature and the proposed model, the authors define the competence of evaluators of adult educators as a meta–competence, where general and professional competences closely synergize with the evaluator's personal qualities and objectivity and focus on the evaluation of the actions and behaviour of educators in the defined educational context, as well as facilitating sustainable improvement of the existing process (activities).

3.4.1.3 A portfolio designed for the evaluation of adult education staff: indicators and criteria

A portfolio is a targeted collection of materials, which show the competence of adult education staff evaluators and demonstrate their activity, accumulated experience, achievements and progress in one or more areas, the participation of evaluators, selecting content, criteria and evidence of self-reflection by evaluators of adult education staff. Furthermore, a portfolio provides a complex and comprehensive picture of the performance by evaluators of adult education staff in a defined context (Paulson & Meyer, 1991).
The portfolio for adult education staff evaluators is a way to document their progress. Its greatest value is that adult education staff evaluators, when designing it, become active

participants in the evaluation process. However, the portfolio is not just a collection of materials compiled in the folder. Each component of the portfolio structure should be designed and organized in such a way as to demonstrate certain competences. It is a tool for developing the autonomy of the evaluator of adult education staff (Khoosf & Khosravani, 2014).

3.4.1.3.1 Digital portfolio

Technological development opens up portfolio digitization facilities, thus becoming electronic media, supplementing the multimedia environment and providing the opportunities for evaluators of adult education staff to easily and effectively collect, compile and manage their own artefacts, not only images, but also audio and video files without any space and time constraints, as well as feedback and making them available to the wide circle of society (Wall & Peltier, 1996; Heath, 2002; MacDonald, Liu, Lowell, Tsai & Lohr, 2004; Knight, Hakel & Gromko, 2008). An electronic portfolio is not a haphazard collection of artefacts, but rather a reflective tool that demonstrates growth over time (Barrett, 2000). The portfolio will have a significant educational value, if it is used and developed in a way that promotes the evaluation experience and provides valid assessment. With the portfolio concept, reflection is dramatically increased due to the continuous exposure to past work. "In this capacity, portfolios become vehicles for reflection in which learners examine where they have been, where they are now, how they got there, and where they need to go next" (Porter & Cleland, 1995, p. 34).

In order to assess the competence-based learning and educational environment, testing methods are based on the

model created by M. Jaspers and I. Heijmen-Versteegen (Jaspers & Heijmen-Versteegen, 2004) that is based on testing functions (monitoring and evaluation, the role of feedback) and focuses on testing (process and results). In order to provide supervisory functions when developing a digital portfolio, coaching, personal development and action plan, reflexive report, the test on progress, learning style, personality and practice should be used, while for the provision of evaluation functions, the feedback, evaluating discussion, the criteria-based interview method, an essay, a knowledge test, case studies, simulations, qualification test, presentations and the final project / thesis should be used. Self-evaluation, peer evaluation and joint evaluation are the basis for monitoring testing methods that are oriented to both the process and the result.

3.4.1.4 Checklist of indicators for the evaluation of adult education staff

A check list for adult education evaluation has been defined[13].

1. Why evaluate?
   - Purpose of adult educators' evaluation
   - Types of evaluation
   - What to evaluate
   - When to evaluate
   - Evaluation delivery mode
   - Who would benefit from the educators' evaluation activity?

13 It has been used for evaluating the EDUEVAL training activity in Latvia.

2. How do we evaluate adult educators?
   - Using frameworks or forms
   - Contextualising the frameworks
   - Identifying the strongest effects of evaluation
   - Effects on learning?
   - What specific suggestions do you have for changes that I can make to improve the education activity?
3. Evaluating the physical and learning environment
   - Are the physical facilities provided for this educational activities appropriate (e.g. classroom space, structure and furnishing)?
   - Is the number of participants in the training activity acceptable?
   - Are all the materials required for the training activity available?
   - What is the general climate like (poor, good, very good)?
4. Evaluating the activity of the educators
   - Are the educators appropriate for the specific training level?
   - Do they use well organized contents/materials?
   - Do they clearly know the training objectives?
   - Is the training content correlated with the training objectives?
   - Are the training materials clear and easy to understand?
5. Evaluating the tutor's activity
   - Is the tutor a good teacher/educator?
   - Does the tutor provide enough time for questions and discussions?
   - Does the tutor use concrete examples to explain concepts?
   - Is the tutor able to simplify difficult material?
   - Is the tutor well prepared for tutoring?

6. Evaluating training effectiveness
   – Knowledge acquired
   – Skills acquired
   – Motivation, morale, values, etc.

3.4.1.5 Conclusion

Adult education is a very wide area which encompasses different scopes, pertaining not only to the world of work, but also to peoples' physical, social, and mental well-being throughout life (active ageing), as well as to the education of people with special needs (prisoners, adult migrants, refugees, the disabled, etc.).

Nevertheless, evaluation is a complex process that applies to a variety of contexts. It can be used to support decision-making, and at the same time, to test the effectiveness of national and international programs in different fields, education included (Mertens, 2014).

In this chapter we focused on the evaluation of adult educators illustrating some specific aspects, such as indicators, the portfolio and the digital portfolio. We also presented the Validpack model, highlighting its usefulness in the evaluation of process of adult education staff.

We are convinced that the evaluation of adult educators implies the study not only of the models of evaluation, but, above all, the contextualization of the process as well, since the field of application covers a very differentiated spectrum of teaching/learning activities and related competencies, depending on the purpose, situation, content, modality, type of learner, and so on. For this reason, we included in this chapter the portfolio structure and a checklist of indicators of evaluation of adult education staff. They represent a practical framework that can be adapted/improved according to the different operative contexts.

Finally, we ought to point out that the Validpack model includes both external evaluation and consolidation, this is intended as a comparison between self-evaluation and external evaluation. Nevertheless, we decided to focus on self-evaluation since it is easier to implement and exploit in non-formal and informal environments that represent the most diffused learning modalities in adult education.

4.
The impact of the evaluation of adult education: a European perspective

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In the European Union, evaluation as a notion and an evaluative, objective quality assessment method, started to widespread since the latter part of the eighties in the 20th century. At that time, the European Community institutions implemented profound reforms of structural policies, for which evaluation became a principal tool of efficient and effective quality assurance of the development programmes which were under way. It was when the European Commission obligated all member countries to mandatory ex-ante, on-going and ex-post evaluation, referring to projects which were co-financed by the EU funds. Simultaneously, evaluation was accompanied by the implementation of other processes, such as: monitoring, audit and control. All of them played a complementary role in order to achieve a more complex evaluation of the programmes, including those in the field of education and social policy. A particular emphasis was put on the evaluation within the framework of reforms concerning the EU public policies which were in action in 1993. Since then, the evaluation had been recommended to be carried out in all programmes and projects, both on the UE and national levels, as well as in those adopted not exclusively in the framework of the economic and social cohesion policy.

Since that time, the evaluation extended over a wide area and not only in the sector of programmes conducted with the support of the EU funds, but also within those of a national and regional character (Grewinski, 2002). It has been

noticed, in a major part of countries, that the evaluation brings various measurable benefits and desirable outcomes, which gave as a result its implementation in many fields and spheres of economic and social state policy, as well as in the activities performed by local governments (Grewinski, 2010). Evaluation, as a research method, began to be used in the assessment of social and educational conditions of various social groups. Originally, evaluation served primarily for the assessment of public programmes which were carried out by the social policy institutions (Szatur-Jaworska, 2010).

Depending on the definition that has been adopted, the evaluation is determined either in a narrow or in a broad context. A narrow approach clearly recognizes its difference from monitoring, audit and control. A broad approach contains other perspectives and it considers evaluation as a widely conceived macro-evaluation or meta-evaluation. On the one hand, macro-evaluation is understood as a holistic, complex quality assessment based on a continuous quantitative and qualitative collection of data and pieces of information. On the other hand, macro-evaluation provides recommendations concerning chances for future achievements of the assumed results at a given stage of the programme or project being under way. Meanwhile, meta-evaluation is an attempt to evaluate the evaluation programmes in order to synthesize and summarize a number of different, detailed evaluative reports. For example, we deal with meta-evaluation when we holistically evaluate huge European or national public operational programmes, within the framework of which thousands of smaller projects are being carried out.

In Europe, during two last decades, thousands of evaluation procedures have been in action, including the evaluation of diverse groups of adults, who were involved in various programmes of educational and vocational training for mature people. As it results from them and also from many other eva-

luation procedures performed by research institutions, as well as by the international team of experts working for the EDUEVAL project, among important, advantageous features of the evaluation of adults who are in lifelong learning programmes, the following ones need to be listed in the first place: information feedback and recommendations received by trainers, by institutions as organizers of the learning process, as well as by the course, training or postgraduate studies participants themselves – that is to say by all stakeholders of the educational processes. The above is a particularly significant impact of the evaluation, because other procedures, such as control, supervision or audit are focused more on accountability functions. The evaluation itself, as an additional source of knowledge, contributes to the improvement of the management processes, to a higher quality of educational services being in offer or to a greater involvement and commitment of the recipients of those services. It needs to be stressed, however, that the evaluation research procedures – being plentiful and frequent in the European Union – often face difficulties with the implementation of outcomes. Sometimes, the evaluation is *ticking off* the necessary procedure, without taking into account practical conclusions, recommendations or useful implications. The situation is slightly different in the control procedure, when post-control conclusions are mostly implemented by the entities to which they refer. It indicates that, in certain circumstances, the evaluation is either underestimated, or even neglected, especially if it is about the effectiveness of changes that are supposed to be introduced (Haber, 2007).

The evaluation reveals another important impact in Europe in the institutional context, which means improving the quality of performance of a particular entity or a given service that is offered, due to the obtained results of the evaluation. Many entities engaged in education and training of adults,

treating their mission seriously and respecting the recipients of their services, really improve their offer or the quality of training, according to the results of internal and external evaluation that is under way. In this place, the very quality of the evaluation itself is of a particular importance. A successful evaluation should present the following characteristics: meticulous planning of the examination procedure, professional recognition of the recipients, efficient and rational reporting (Sternik, 2007). Unfortunately, many evaluation procedures throughout a great number of countries occur in a hurry. In addition to that, the organizations, which conduct evaluation that is commissioned to be carried out by public institutions and from their own funds, may not be fully objective and critical. This raises a problem of partiality and one-sidedness.

The evaluation in the sector of adults presents another significant aspect of an individual perspective referring to the labour market, employment and job decisions. This is due to the fact that the majority of adults who are in lifelong learning schemes in Europe wish to improve their qualifications through courses, other forms of training or postgraduate studies, with the aim to get a better position in the world of work. The evaluation outcomes in the context of labour market programmes indicate that evaluation plays an important role in the acquisition of a new knowledge or new skills, that are like signposts leading to changes of job decisions or transitions to different social roles. That is why the meaning of evaluation seen from an individual perspective is continuously growing, because many adult people search for new job opportunities for themselves, their families and relatives.

Another argument in favour of the evaluation is related with the idea that it provides reliable and useful pieces of information that enable to take advantage of the acquired knowledge by the authorities in their decision-making process. This occurs not only in the context of a particular activity

that is examined but, also, in the sphere of planning educational policy on the European, national and regional levels. Knowledge acquired during evaluation can be used in the process of developing future actions, including lifelong learning public strategies and programmes. It is worth remembering that evaluation becomes an element of a much broader process than just only immediate verification of the assumed objectives and, thus, it leads, for example, to the standardization of actions in education. (Szatur-Jaworska, 2010). Educational standards for adults mean activities which are supposed to answer the question of what might be offered, to what extent and at what kind of level – within a given educational service in favour of particular groups and in accordance with their identified needs which can be sensibly fulfilled (Wajcman, 2012) –. The notion of standard, based on the evaluation, refers to a final outcome of a particular action faced by its recipient. It is substantial that this concept of standard determines the quality of an educational service but, at the same time, it does not always exclusively reflect the level of satisfaction expressed by its beneficiaries (*ibidem*).

A key issue is that evaluation refers to the quality of adult education processes, because it shows a substantial measurable result of educational services with the use of quantitative and qualitative indicators for the assessment of those services, in terms of didactic and organizational values. As regards educational services, the most desirable outcomes consist of: specific knowledge, competencies and skills that are applicable in various social and work-related situations after the completion of services. In this context, the evaluation examines the impact understood, in other words, as expectation or a long-term influence that is verified in the following areas:

- the opportunity to make use of the results: how the recipients of educational services will be able to use the results,

also when they are completed, and how their dispositions and attitudes will change;

- the input of a given activity, including educational services, to the existing solutions and the influence upon the development of new services: to what extent the educational services under examination may contribute to the improvement of the level of knowledge and skills, to the change of the work methods, to the increase of the quality of educational processes;
- the definition of an added value: the inspirations resulting from a given educational process, for example new kinds of activities, changes in local communities;
- the capacity to transfer models of educational activities and implemented principles, etc. into similar kinds of actions, adaptation opportunities, possible implementation in other regions or countries;
- interest from the part of other entities, organizations, partners, including those from other sectors (Sawczuk, 2004).

Summing up, it needs to be stressed that the impact of the evaluation upon adults in the lifelong learning programmes is multi-faceted in the context of their personal development and the acquisition of information feedback. The evaluation has its influence upon the organizers of learning processes: owing to the results of evaluation, they improve the quality of their services and better adopt them to the demands of learners. The evaluation or meta-evaluation also has a broader impact on the decision-making processes and the decision-makers themselves. The latter have a say on innovative programmes and projects in the framework of educational policies for adults, or they decide to continue the existing initiatives. Probably, in the future we shall witness further improvements in the field of evaluation procedures, methods and how to use the achieved results that meet the demands

of science and practice. There is enough evidence of a growing popularity of the concept of public policies that follow evidence based practice, where evaluation from the above perspective constitutes a significant analytic tool (*European Social Network Report*, 2015).

Conclusions

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This handbook, which addresses those who want to learn to be an evaluator of adult education staff or want to implement their skills in this field, performs two correlated functions.

On the one hand, it allows gaining a systematic vision of the models, knowledge, methods, tools and procedures that are useful for conducting actions of evaluating adult education staff. Its particularity is to articulate these elements on the basis of a complex model of evaluation, which has been constructed thanks to the EDUEVAL product: the triangulation of evaluation of the context, external evaluation and self-evaluation. This model respects the complexity of functions and therefore of competences and knowledge that an evaluator of adult education staff has to be able to activate, as made clear in the profile of the evaluator.

In the other hand, this handbook has a practical usefulness. It allows access to knowledge, methods, tools and procedures that an evaluator can decide to use according to the specific needs of the organizational context and the staff where he exercises his function. The type of framework that the EDUEVAL model provides allows him, however, to develop a critical and reflective perspective of his action and therefore, on the possible ways of evaluation. Every decision on actions, procedures, evaluative tools, according to this model must question itself on the evaluative logics already present in the context and/or on those to be promoted, as well as on the aims of the evaluation to be implemented.

From this point of view, this handbook is a complex work tool: it does not provide immediate applicative solutions, but provides the elements thanks to which an evaluator attentive to the particular dynamics and needs of a given context of adult education can build up his evaluation project, suitable for the situation. The handbook provides the framework for the possibilities and constraints within which to exercise an evaluative action: it indicates the dimensions that can guarantee the rigour of this action and shows the possibilities that the evaluation of adult education staff opens up, highlighting both its aims and impact on the contexts of work.

In this sense, this handbook promotes a profile of a *reflective* evaluator, capable of taking up a position of *research* thanks to which it is possible to intertwine knowledge of the context with the wide range of opportunities that specific knowledge, relative to evaluation, offers.

For any project or action of evaluation to be effective in developing culture and the ways of working of adult education staff, on the one hand an exploratory attitude has to be implemented that can understand the constraints and potential that characterize an educational context and a staff in all its dimensions (cultural, organizational, institutional, territorial etc.).

On the other hand, the models and strategies that are deemed *right* for that situation have to be sought from the knowledge already possessed or to be possessed. The evaluator presupposed by this handbook does not impose *per se* given ways of evaluation, but is capable of choosing them.

It therefore follows on from this that the evaluator, as a researcher, has to evaluate his action himself; he has to identify its effects, understand the process implemented, in order to improve it and acquire that "case knowledge" (Schön, 1983) which will allow him in the future and in other situations to refine his capacity for research and choice of more appropriate evaluative models, each time honing his professionalism.

The model proposed here, therefore, is not a closed model, but presupposes a conception of evaluation as a continuous practice: like the practice of constant learning.

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