Adult Education and Learning

Understanding the European Framework

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VIDYA BOOKS

Table of Contents

PART ONE

THE EVOLUTION OF EUROPEAN UNION POLICIES

PALLE RASMUSSEN
ADULT LEARNING POLICY IN THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Development and Status

Adult learning became an element in the educational programmes and policy coordination of the European Union (EU) relatively late; but during the last decade the Lisbon process and the Lifelong Learning programme have made it much more important. At the same time the so-called Open Method of Coordination (OMC) has given the European Commission new responsibilities for coordinating and monitoring policy implementation. In the Commission, organisational development and the coordination of adult learning policy is mainly located in the Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG-EAC). However, other sections of the Commission also develop policies and fund activities involving adult learning; most prominently the Directorate General of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and the European Social Fund. This chapter traces the development of adult learning as a component in EU education and training policy and discusses how the work of EU institutions, especially the Commission and its different directorates and sub-units, have contributed and contribute to a transnational European adult education policy. Tensions in policy development between different understandings of and priorities for adult learning are highlighted and related to general perspectives on EU development and citizenship.

GENERAL CONTEXT

Adult learning policy must be seen in the wider context of the evolution and prospects of the EU and its institutions. This is a big and very complex issue, debated from many quarters, including by different social scientists. Among them is Jürgen Habermas, who has for many years backed the development of a stronger common European community, but who has also argued that such a community must build upon a more integrated civil society and public sphere (Grewal, 2012). In a recent contribution, Habermas argued that the EU has mainly developed as an elite project, in which the silent acceptance by national populations has been secured through the promise of economic gains. However, the recent economic crisis has highlighted the dramatic economic differences between EU member states. A mix of EU economic rescue plans for the hardest hit member states and EU demands on national policies (especially much more restrictive public spending) in these states has led to severe

tensions between the economically stronger member states like Germany and crisis-ridden member states like Greece and Portugal. To Habermas, this indicates that solidarity is a crucial component in a European community. Solidarity cannot be regulated by law, but has strong affinity to issues of social justice. Habermas refers to the role of solidarity in the labour movement and the development of welfare policies and affirms that: "Still today is it a question of solidarity, not a question of right, how much inequality citizens in a prosperous nation will accept" (own translation, Habermas, 2013: 106). To meet the challenge of solidarity in a sustainable way, the EU must shift from a pragmatic elitist mode to a citizen mode. This includes extending democratic institutions like the Parliament so that popular demands for social justice, public services and collective goods can be brought directly into the EU political processes, without always having to pass through national governments. According to Habermas, this would create a trans-European political public sphere, where different interests would be organised across existing national boundaries.

Opportunities and institutions for adult learning are collective goods that can potentially contribute to social justice and the development of adult learning policy, and thus have a wider political significance; not only that they are developed and prioritised, but also that they are developed in ways that make them realistically available to the broad majority of citizens and that they support learning that fosters cultural and democratic competences as well as relevant work competences. Another German social critic, Oskar Negt, has emphasised this in a recent contribution. He argued that only with the introduction of welfare states in Europe did political democracy evolve into a system that not only provides facades of legitimation for shifting power elites, but which actually involves citizens in everyday participation (Negt, 2012: 15). Negt is therefore extremely worried about the EU's strong and continuing focus on economic competitiveness, macro-economic policy and growth and on the reluctance to understand and confront the harsh reality of the lives of many poor and unemployed Europeans – a reality that necessarily involves questions of human rights and welfare. Negt has argued that the political thinking of European governments is increasingly influenced by a business logic focusing on narrow economic considerations and neglects a broader societal perspective. Insufficient strategies for confronting the crisis proliferate, like the expectation that increased flexibility and mobility in labour markets and workplaces will increase productivity and give better conditions for individual choice. Negt has warned that if flexibility is driven too far, it can fragment and undermine the identities and energies that make work meaningful and provide a sustainable basis for worker productivity. EU strategies and institutions need to be redirected to include social justice and participatory democracy; to Negt this involves popular processes of learning, and adult education has an important role to play:

> If democracy is not understood purely as a system of rules, that can be seen and learned once for all, but rather as a form of life, then political education, linking different elements like orientation, knowledge, learning, experience

and judgement with each other, is the substantial basis for a civil form of society (own translation Negt, 2012: 64).

Habermas' and Negt's diagnoses and recommendations are mentioned here not as unassailable truths but because they illustrate how issues of adult learning policy are related to the general development of the EU and the dilemmas that policymakers and citizens have to confront. These general perspectives serve to contextualise the development and role of EU adult learning policy.

EARLY DEVELOPMENTS

Until the *Maastricht Treaty* of 1992, proclaiming the existence of the EU, cooperation on education had no legal basis in the European community, and actual cooperation proceeded only slowly and as a by-product of the gradual development of the common market. Vocational education, however, did have a role from early on. The *Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community (EEC Treaty)*, article 128, envisaged the development of a "common vocational training policy", and in the context of employment policy this meant training for adult workers rather than for young people. In 1963, a Council decision established 10 general principles for the development of a common vocational training policy (Pépin, 2006: 56), but action was limited.

From 1971, ministers of education started meeting regularly, and in 1976 a Council resolution approved the establishment of an action programme in education and defined six areas of cooperation in this field; among them education for migrant workers and their children, cooperation in higher education, teaching of foreign languages and promotion of equal opportunities. Adult education was not mentioned, perhaps because it was regarded as vocational training. The resolution also established an education committee including representatives from the Commission and from the member states. Education was clearly not included in the *EEC Treaty*, so cooperation in this field depended on the political will of the member states. The committee was in many ways a political filter, serving to uphold the borderlines between community initiatives and the sovereignty of national education policy (CEU, 1976).

An event some years later illustrates the resistance to EEC involvement in education policy. In 1978 a meeting of the ministers of education was cancelled at the request of the Danish and the French governments, who both protested initiatives to be discussed at the meetings. The Danish government insisted that there could be no community action in these areas without a legal basis in the treaty. Such initiatives should be based on inter-governmental collaboration outside the treaty. Meetings of ministers of education were eventually resumed in 1980, but cooperation was only gradually resumed. Only in 1982 and 1983 did the Council and the ministers adopt new resolutions in the field of education (Pépin, 2006: 91).

Even though the *EEC Treaty* provided a better legal basis for collaboration in vocational education and training, this also proceeded slowly and mainly through 'soft' measures (reports, resolutions, etc.). A Council resolution from 1974 established

the Cedefop centre with the mission to collect and exchange information on national systems of vocational training and prepare a harmonisation of training levels. Vocational training policy was generally seen in the context of the severe youth unemployment in most of Europe. Vocational preparation, guidance and basic skills were seen as key elements in policies to reduce youth unemployment. The European Social Fund was widely used for such measures; in 1984, 75% of its funds went to projects to generate skills and employment for young people (Pépin, 2006: 95).

The Single European Act (SEA, 1986) which entered into force in 1987, emphasised the completion of the internal market including the free movement of workers and professionals. This strengthened the legal basis for cooperation in vocational and professional training, and the Commission took up issues like freedom of professional movement in dialogues with the social partners. Although this question did not directly relate to adult education it still affected it, for example through schemes for mutual recognition of qualifications, promoted from the earliest days of the EEC as an element of the internal market. Many approaches were attempted and the main lasting result was the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which describes the character of education programmes.

Parallel to the political developments, the Commission became more involved with educational matters during the 1970s. In 1973 a new directorate for education and training was established in the Directorate-General for Research and Science, and education was later included in the directorate's name. In 1981, the two divisions of education and vocational training were integrated into the same directorate, which became the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Education. In 1989 education and training were moved to a new autonomous task force for human resources. In 1995 (after the *Maastricht Treaty*) the task force was given status as a directorate-general and gradually emerged as DG-EAC (Pépin, 2006: 107).

As administrative capacity on education policy was gradually developed in the Commission, the need for statistics on education and training was also felt. Eurostat had published data on education since 1978, but not until 2003 did it establish a special unit for education and culture statistics.

As the theme of education gradually gained importance, more and more organisations in this field sought contact and collaboration with the Commission, which practised an 'open door' policy towards such stakeholders. Associations for universities, teachers, engineering education, were among the first: only in 1999 was contact established with an association for adult education (European Association for the Education of Adults, EAEA). Initially member states were reluctant to include social partners and associations in consultations, but after 2000 this became more widespread.

In sum, the decades before the *Maastricht Treaty* were characterised by hesitance to coordinate educational policy in selected areas among the EEC member states (Lawn & Grek, 2012: 37). Adult education was to some extent taken up as part of vocational education and training, but although collaboration in this area had some basis in the legal framework not much was done. During the 1980s, however,

the Commission had established administrative and political capital in the field of education and became a more consistent driving force.

ACTION PROGRAMMES IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Towards the end of the 1980s, the Commission started developing and proposing action programmes in different areas of education and training. Despite reluctance from several member states, the programmes were approved by the Council and funds were made available for mainly three types of activities: transnational networks, mobility and exchange schemes, and transnational joints projects.

The development of action programmes with European funding involved a growing group of educators and students in the member states in practical collaboration within an EEC framework. It has been called "the most effective form of gentle restructuring or convergence at Community level" (Bousquet, 1999: 44).

Adult education was not very visible in the action programmes, but one type of adult education was in fact targeted: continuing vocational training, especially through the FORCE programme, which started in 1990. The programme targeted workers undertaking continuing training in a company or a training organisation, particularly in regions with limited access to such training (Pépin, 2006: 124).

The 1992 *Maastricht Treaty* formally included education as an area of collaboration. A legal basis for education initiatives and policies had been established. The *Treaty* had one article on education (which also mentioned youth) and one on vocational training. The article on education ignored adult learning beyond mentioning that distance education should be encouraged. The article on vocational training did not mention adults either, but it mentioned "training and retraining" as well as "initial and continuing vocational training" (TEU, 1992, title VIII, article 127). This stronger legal basis did not in the short-term lead to any clear increase in centralised policy initiatives. Education and training initiatives were to be run close to the citizen (the subsidiarity principle) and thus mainly by the individual member states, and harmonisation of laws and regulations was still avoided.

In the field of education, EU institutions gradually attempted to transform the new legal basis into strategic action in the years following the *Maastricht Treaty*, and new agendas emerged after the collapse of the former Eastern bloc. A prominent issue was the increased pace and importance of globalisation, which made the competitiveness of European countries an urgent item on the community agenda.

In an important white paper on *Growth, Competitiveness and Employment*, the Commission underlined the importance of education and training systems for citizens as well as for economic growth, and specifically mentioned lifelong learning as an important objective (CEC, 1993). In the field of education the most important policy document produced in this period was probably the Commission white paper *Teaching and Learning – Towards the Learning Society* (CEC, 1995), a result of joint work in the Directorate General for Education and the Directorate General for Employment. While it did not emphasise the concept of lifelong learning, the white

paper recommended increasing the general level of knowledge and treating capital investment and investment in training on an equal basis (Lawn & Grek, 2012: 47).

The *Maastricht Treaty* and the new agendas also had an impact on the action programmes in education. In 1993, the previous six programmes were merged into two: the Socrates programme and the Leonardo programme. Within the Socrates programme the Erasmus and Lingua programmes were retained as sub-programmes, and Comenius was added as a new sub-programme on school education. An action on general adult education was also added but did not gain status as an actual sub-programme until 2000, when it became the Grundtvig sub-programme.

The programmes were managed on two levels: decentralised parts were managed by dedicated offices in each member state, while centralised parts were managed by the Commission and its technical assistance offices. After 2000, the Commission gained support (after reluctance from member states) to set up independent executive agencies to handle much of the technical support.

Elements related to adult education were included in both programmes. The Socrates programme encouraged open and distance learning as an objective as well as measures to promote adult education. The Leonardo programme promoted lifelong learning, encouraged specific measures for adults without qualifications, and supported vocational training policies giving all workers access to lifelong vocational training without discrimination and the development of self-training methods and of open and distance learning (Pépin, 2006).

In developing the next generation of action programmes to start in 2000, adult education was highlighted in the Socrates programme by establishing the Grundtvig sub-programme focusing on adult education and other educational pathways. In the new Leonardo programme one of the three specific objectives was to improve the quality of and access to continuing vocational training and the lifelong acquisition of skills and competences. Furthermore a Socrates sub-programme was established on open and distance learning and information and communication technologies (the Minerva programme). The integration of new technologies in education and training was also supported via the e-learning initiative of 2004-2006. However, the overall impression is that the e-learning initiative focused mainly on school education and higher education rather than on adult education.

Thus the action programmes in education and training became the core initiative in building up education and training policy in the EU. This policy focused mainly on higher education and on vocational training. Adult education was a sub-theme in both fields, but gradually gained importance, as illustrated by the establishment of the Grundtvig programme. The predominant policy objectives for adult education were defined in relation to the labour market and with an emphasis on information technology.

<div align="center">THE LISBON PROCESS AND LIFELONG LEARNING</div>

By defining investment in knowledge as a key element in a new growth strategy for the EU, the Lisbon strategy gave the education and training systems a much

more important role in the overall EU policy process. One main objective of the strategy was to "modernise the European social model by investing in people and building an active welfare state", and part of this was to "adapt the education and training systems to the knowledge society" (CEU, 2000). This also meant that the ministers of education were able to make themselves heard alongside ministers from traditionally more dominant policy areas like economy and employment.

In the field of education and training, the Lisbon process established a single framework for policy cooperation as a basis of reference for all education and training activities and the adoption of a new working method pointing towards a higher level of system convergence.

At the Stockholm European Council in March 2001, the ministers for education agreed for the first time on a set of common objectives, which became the basis of the 'Education and training 2010' process. There were three strategic goals (making systems of education more effective, more accessible and more open) and thirteen concrete objectives. The objectives especially relevant to adult education were: developing key competences; access to information and communications technology for everyone; creating an open learning environment; promoting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion; and strengthening links with the world of work, with research and society (CEU, 2001).

The Council decisions on the Lisbon process also outlined a set of policy instruments for the process:

– Fixed guidelines for the Union combined with timetables for achieving the goals.
– Quantitative and qualitative benchmarks and indicators allowing comparison to the rest of the world and tailored to the needs of different member states and sectors.
– Translating the European guidelines into national and regional policies.
– Periodic monitoring, evaluation and peer review organised as mutual learning processes (Shaw, 2011: 62).

This became known as the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), which was applied in a number of policy areas. In education there was initial reluctance among the member states towards the model, but by 2002 it had been more or less accepted. The Council adopted five quantified indicators (benchmarks) in 2003 to monitor the state and progress towards the 2010 goals. The benchmarks included one on lifelong learning participation.

The concept of lifelong learning was given a key role in EU education and training policy under the Lisbon strategy. At a Council meeting in 2000 (three months after Lisbon), the Council stated that "lifelong learning is an essential policy for the development of citizenship, social cohesion and employment" (Pépin, 2006: 227). It was included in the European employment strategy and in the social policy agenda established after Lisbon. Later the Commission established a lifelong learning research unit in Italy.

In the Lisbon education benchmarks, the concept of lifelong learning was more or less identical with adult education and learning; but at the same time it was acquiring a wider significance in EU policymaking. In preparation for the next generation of action programmes (to start in 2006) the Commission suggested in 2004 to establish a single integrated programme called the Lifelong Learning programme. This was realised, and lifelong learning actually came to designate education and learning in different stages and areas of life – childhood, youth, adulthood; school, work and civil society. When the member states were asked to develop action plans for lifelong learning, it was in this comprehensive sense. However, the concept remained ambiguous in the EU policy discourse. One of the motives for integrating the action programmes under the umbrella of lifelong learning was no doubt to tie them closer to the vocational training sector as part of the competitiveness objectives of the Lisbon strategy (Pépin, 2006: 259). And when a high-level working group chaired by Wim Kok issued an influential report in preparation for the mid-term review of the Lisbon process, it limited its recommendations to lifelong learning closely related to the labour market (Lawn & Grek, 2012: 91).

Europe 2020, the 10-year programme that the EU developed to succeed the Lisbon process, continued the trends in education that had emerged during the Lisbon period. Its principles were stated in the *Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training*, which was adopted by the Council in May 2009. Like the previous education and training programme, the strategic framework included objectives and actions in the different fields of education and training at the European level and linked to the Bologna Process. The framework set four general objectives to be reached by 2020 (CEU, 2009):

– Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality.
– Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training.
– Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship.
– Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

A new list of benchmarks was also adopted, with some adjustment of the quantitative levels of participation. The main difference from the Lisbon benchmarks was the inclusion of pre-school education.

The increasing involvement of EU institutions with education policy led to new initiatives in different sectors of education, including adult learning. In 2007, a three-year adult learning action plan with the title *It is Always a Good Time to Learn* was established, involving a spectrum of activities undertaken by the Commission as well as by the member states (CEC, 2007). The activities included focus groups, regional meetings, peer learning activities, workshops and research studies (GHK, 2011). After the action plan started, the Council confirmed the importance of the work through a resolution with a set of conclusions on adult learning. The resolution

was balanced between a labour market and a broader cultural view of adult learning, stating that it can provide,

> . . . not only economic and social benefits, such as greater employability, access to better-quality jobs, more responsible citizenship and increased civic participation, but also individual benefits such as greater self-fulfilment, improved health and well-being and enhanced self-esteem (CEU, 2008).

After the completion of the programme, the Council adopted a *Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning* (CEU, 2011), which specified objectives and resources for the advancement of adult learning under the Europe 2020 education and training programme. The agenda followed the four general objectives mentioned above, but added a fifth: improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult-learning sector.

The severe economic crisis that hit much of Europe shortly after the commencement of the Europe 2020 process has focused much EU activity and debate on urgent economic issues, and this is also influencing the priorities in education, including adult learning. Clear signs are found for instance in a communication issued by the Commission late in 2012, *Rethinking Education: Investing in Skills for Better Socio-Economic Outcomes* (CEC, 2012). The problem of massive youth unemployment is highlighted, and there is a strong demand for education to deliver employability. In the introduction, the Commission explicitly comments on the balance between different objectives for education:

> The broad mission of education and training encompasses objectives such as active citizenship, personal development and well-being. While these go hand-in-hand with the need to upgrade skills for employability, against the backdrop of sluggish economic growth and a shrinking workforce due to demographic ageing, the most pressing challenges for Member States are to address the needs of the economy and focus on solutions to tackle fast-rising youth unemployment (CEC, 2012: 2).

The communication does in fact include many of the broader objectives, but employability is the top priority, and the focus on youth unemployment implicitly reduces the importance of adult learning.

In sum, the Lisbon process made education and training a generally accepted policy area for the first time in EU history, and in many respects adult education was given a central role in EU education policy. Although general adult education was supported through an action programme – the Grundtvig programme – the main focus was on adult education linked to the labour market, on key competences, vocational guidance, recognition of prior learning and related aspects. The promotion of lifelong learning to key concept in EU education policy improved the status of adult education; but the broad and inclusive concept of learning also tended to obscure the more specific features and conditions of adult education.

EU GOVERNANCE AND ADULT EDUCATION

With a widening political agenda over the last two decades, the EU has struggled to develop types of governance that uphold a balance between the political systems of the member states and a common European level of governance. This also involves interactions and divisions of labour between the EU institutions (Council, Commission and Parliament). The Commission is at the centre of this and concentrates most administrative and professional resources.

As mentioned, the Lisbon process instituted a new set of governance instruments generally called OMC. The method, its impact, and its relative success or failure have been discussed widely among political scientists.

The two 'classic' forms of governance in European cooperation (as well as in other transnational political organisations) are the supranational or community method, which is based on supranational decision-making and the production of legally binding instruments, and intergovernmental cooperation outside the treaties, based on negotiations of common interests among the member states (Kohler-Koch & Rittberger, 2009). New modes of governance like the OMC are mixtures and combinations in between these two extremes. Such new modes of governance have rarely replaced traditional patterns; they have rather emerged in order to cover policy areas where coordinated action by all member states is regarded as necessary and useful, but there is little or no legal basis for action in the treaty.

The OMC relies mostly on discursive resonance within policy spheres in order to operate. It is about changing ideas in the absence of law, selectively mobilising the political energies of institutional actors. However, in practice OMC governance is not separated from traditional supranational decision-making. Some researchers point out that even though the Lisbon process involves much 'soft' governance, treaty provisions for EU policies have in fact been intensively used. Since the *Maastricht Treaty*, supranational policymaking has been dynamically expanded (Diedrichs, Reiners & Wessels, 2011: 11). Member states may be positive towards such 'soft' ways of coordination, but it is doubtful whether they seriously adapt their policies to common objectives and benchmarks. Without formally binding commitments it is still very difficult to set coherent and effective policies in place.

The difficulties in realising objectives through OMC governance were clearly perceived and debated in connection with the Lisbon process mid-term review. In the area of education and training, the moderate progress towards realising some of the key benchmarks led to the introduction of more focused indicators and guidelines to realise the 2010 benchmarks as well as to supplementary measures like asking member states to produce annual reports on their progress in reforming education (Lawn & Grek, 2012: 92-93). In recent years, the OMC has been less celebrated in the EU discourse, but its basic logic remains in action.

A working OMC needs to include some key elements: (1) common objectives, (2) indicators, (3) targets, (4) action plans, and (5) periodic peer reviews. Based on EU policy documents, Shaw (2011) has analysed the OMC models established in

a number of policy areas and assessed their relative strength. Each OMC is more or less associated with both a specific commission directorate (for education it is DG-EAC) and a council formation (for education it is education, youth and culture).

Shaw finds that all OMCs have common objectives, but several lack common indicators. Among those with indicators most have established EU targets, but few make use of national targets. For education and training, the treaty basis is still rather weak and the OMC started only with the Lisbon process in 2000 (for other areas, for instance employment, it started earlier). EU targets for education and training are defined, but member state targets are generally not. However, benchmarking and policy learning processes have been established.

Shaw points out that some OMCs are strengthened by related coordination processes outside the EU. Education is one because the Bologna process has been occurring in parallel and in increasingly close correspondence with EU strategy. Shaw concludes that education and training is among the policy areas where OMCs can be regarded as well established – others are R&D, information society, enterprise, social inclusion and employment (Shaw, 2011: 67).

The 2007-2010 action plan on adult learning may exemplify elements and workings of the education and training OMC. The accompanying Council resolution on adult learning (CEU, 2008) contains guidelines for policy implementation at two levels; the Commission and the national governments. For the national governments the measures are relatively 'soft'; they are encouraged to promote reforms, good practice, remove barriers to participation, involve stakeholders, etc. The most demanding task, living up to the adult learning participation benchmark, is not mentioned directly. The Commission has to realise mainly two types of measures: (1) improving the visibility of adult learning, for instance via a common inventory of good practice, a glossary of agreed definitions used in adult learning and information on career opportunities, conditions and resources for those working in the field of adult learning; (2) analyse adult learning, including impact of national education and training reforms in lifelong perspective and quality criteria for adult learning providers. Work on the action plan was coordinated by a working group with representation by all member states, candidate countries and a number of stakeholder groups. The activities included (GHK, 2011):

– Five focus groups, one for each priority area in the plan, each consisting of four to five experts and Commission staff, to give strategic advice.
– Four regional meetings bringing countries together in regional clusters to strengthen cooperation between the relevant stakeholders and share good practice.
– Five peer learning activities, three focusing on up-skilling of low-qualified adults.
– Four workshops on different topics under the programme.

The activities were organised by the Commission, but took place in different member countries. The Commission also launched several research studies to address the gaps in existing knowledge about adult learning.

Activities thus generally took the form of meetings where information was exchanged, new knowledge presented and objectives, problems and strategies

discussed. Participants were national representatives, stakeholder representatives, experts and Commission staff. Such exercises may have two main functions: they provide policymakers with more concrete knowledge, and they inculcate the discourse of EU policies among a wider group of actors.

The interpretations and assessments of the OMC model among social and political scientists often hinge on these two functions. Some have seen it as a new way of asserting and focusing the power of institutions. This interpretation draws especially on the Foucault-inspired concept of governmentality and sees the OMC as a discursive regulatory mechanism that redefines social policy in the light of economic performance (e.g. Jacobsson, 2004). The argument is that an OMC involves a discursive construction of common economic and social challenges, implicit removal of the themes of equality and redistribution, and codification of a neo-liberal agenda of competitiveness (flexibility, workfare, employability, etc.). Furthermore, these discursive constructions gain special strength through the de-contextualising language of numbers in the form of benchmarks and statistical indicators. This is evident not least in the area of education and training, where objectives and statements of policy content have traditionally been more qualitative. Lawn and Grek (2012: 99) have argued that "numbers have become an objective, irreversible 'truth'; context could only complicate or question it, hence it is unwelcome".

Others see the OMC as a deliberative form of governance that improves the quality of EU decision-making. In this interpretation the OMC solves common problems by bringing together stakeholders, who bring in many new ideas and give objectives a new quality of reflexivity. In contrast to 'comitology' (reliance on committees and expert groups) the OMC is seen as connecting EU institutions more directly to civil society (e.g. Armstrong, 2005). To some extent this corresponds to Habermas' diagnosis that the EU needs to change its decision-making processes into the 'citizenship mode'. Used in the right way, OMCs can in fact give different civil society groups voice in the policy process, make important social needs visible and help develop practices that respond to these needs. The method can contribute to transnational deliberative democracy, but within clear limits. Stakeholders represent specific, often professional, interests, they seldom have popular mandates, and their role in peer learning events, focus groups and other arrangements is generally filtered through national interests. And the general objectives and benchmarks are not part of the communicative processes that may occur – they are predetermined at higher political levels, and this clearly undermines the legitimacy of OMC governance. If the method was to contribute more substantially to a 'citizenship mode' of policymaking, it would have to be linked to more directly democratic institutions.

As an important element in the Lisbon education and training programme, adult education has been included in the discursive constructions channelled through the OMC in this policy area. The language of benchmarks and indicators is as strong for adult education as for other areas of education; but the discourses on competences is more ambiguous than for areas like higher education and vocational education,

because for European adults the need for retraining in the face of unemployment is an unavoidable fact and the link to citizenship is more evident.

EMPLOYABILITY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ADULT LEARNING

The responsibility for policy development and implementation in the field of adult education is located in the Commission's DG-EAC. The historical developments outlined above have almost all been linked to this directorate, and it has also had the administrative responsibility for implementing the education and training OMC. But in the EU context, education, and not least adult education, has always had strong links to work and the labour market. This is reflected in the fact that treaties before *Maastricht* only allowed for cooperation on vocational training, but the background is of course that the EEC focused on economic collaboration, and mainly in the narrow sense of market regulation.

Issues of work and labour markets are the responsibility of another commission directorate, the DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. One of its main tasks is the European employment strategy, which has three main objectives: supporting job creation, restoring the dynamics of labour markets and strengthening the governance of employment policies. Restoring labour market dynamics is mainly seen as a question of improving the employability of workers, and a key element in employability is skills and training. The most important directorate initiative is probably *New Skills for New Jobs*, which started in 2008 and aims at bridging the gap between education and work by promoting better anticipation of future skills needs and developing better matching between skills and labour market needs (CEC, 2008). The initiative continues as part of the Europe 2020 strategy.

Flexicurity is a key concept in the *New Skills for New Jobs* initiative. A 2010 communication from the Commission lists four elements in flexicurity: flexible and reliable contractual arrangements, comprehensive lifelong learning, active labour market policies and modern social security systems. Adult education is of course a part of the second element, and it is specified as improving access through more flexible pathways to learning, targeted measures for low skilled and other vulnerable workers, enhancing stakeholder involvement and improving incentives and cost sharing for continued training (CEC, 2010: 5).

The directorate is not only responsible for employment, but also, as signalled by the name, for social affairs and inclusion. One of the directorate's initiatives is a European platform against poverty and social exclusion, which is also part of the Europe 2020 strategy. Interestingly, however, education or lifelong learning is a very minor element in this platform. There seems to be more focus on finding smart solutions through social innovation and on public-private partnerships. This leaves education to be defined in the context of growth and competitiveness.

A minor element in the *New Skills for New Jobs* initiative is to improve employment by supporting entrepreneurship and self-employment, which involves creating jobs and developing relevant skills. However, this field of action seems to be pursued

more actively by another directorate, the DG of Enterprise and Industry, in which education and training for entrepreneurship is an important issue, often linked to improving the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (CEC, 2013). The directorate argues that Europe needs more entrepreneurs and more innovation; that it is necessary to promote entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours among young people and adults; and that education plays a vital role in this. In line with much writing on entrepreneurial education, the DG for Enterprise and Industry defines this in broad terms as "a mind-set that supports everyone in day-to-day life at home and in society, and provides a foundation for entrepreneurs establishing a social or commercial activity" (CEC, 2013, par. 2).

Adult education policy in the directorates for employment and for industry is not disconnected from the main education policy pursued in the education and training programme and the OMC. Statements on employability and entrepreneurship from the two directorates often contain cross-references to the education and training programme. But it is clear that the conceptualisation and promotion of adult education in the two DGs emphasise the role of adult education in preparing for work and success in the labour market, not only through skills training but also through developing mind-sets fit for employability. Educational institutions are given a more subordinate role in the discourses of these directorates; the preferred institutional arrangements are rather centres for vocational guidance, recognition of prior learning and public-private training partnerships.

EMPLOYABILITY IN ACTION

The main impact of the DG for Employment on adult education policy may not be discourses and objectives on employability and entrepreneurship, but rather the structural fund for which the directorate is responsible, the European Social Fund (ESF). The ESF was established already by the *Treaty of Rome* in 1957, and through its history it has increasingly funded education and training.

According to the Treaty, the ESF's main task is to strengthen economic and social cohesion by improving employment and job opportunities. The EU distributes ESF funding to member states and regions to finance their operational programmes which then fund employment-related projects run by public and private organisations. The level of ESF funding and types of projects funded differ among regions depending on relative wealth. The ESF always demands public or private co-financing.

Brine (2004) has analysed the shifting discourses of the ESF from its establishment to the early 2000s. In the first decades, the fund focused on the labour market and the worker framed by discourses of economic growth. The ideal was flexible workers who meet the demands of technological change. From the late 1980s, the focus changed; unemployment and social exclusion challenged European citizens and political stability, and social cohesion became the positive response. Brine has argued that ESF's function has increasingly been to secure political stability in and among EU member states.

This is probably still true, but the discourses changed again during the Lisbon process and the focus of ESF funding on education and training was strengthened. The Maastricht Communiqué of 2004 underlined the importance of "the use of the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund to support the development of VET (vocational education and training)" (MC, 2004: 3). When the fund started a new programming cycle in 2007 (running until 2013) it was under the headline "Investing in People" (CEC, 2006). Of the six priority areas, the two major are improving human capital (to be targeted by 34% of total funding) and improving access to employment and sustainability (to be targeted by 30%). Many types of activities will of course be covered by these projects and it is difficult to say how many have education and training as their main activity, but it does appear as a substantial increase in the priority given to such activities. An evaluation of ESF activity in the previous cycle (2000-2006) concluded that in this period circa 22% of ESF funding was allocated to projects targeting lifelong learning (LSE Enterprise Ltd. et al., 2010: 110).

The current regulatory framework for the ESF reflects the priority on lifelong learning in the Lisbon process and the ensuing Europe 2020 strategy. Earlier, young people and transitions from school to work were in focus, but the scope has been broadened to supporting increased participation in lifelong education and training, also by reducing early school leaving, gender-based segregation of subjects and increased access to and quality of initial, vocational and tertiary education and training. The broader agenda also includes measures to reform education and training systems and to raise "people's responsiveness to the needs of a knowledge based society and lifelong learning" (CEC, 2006: 4).

Since allocation of ESF funds is decided by member states and partly by regions in member states, we cannot assume that such agendas are implemented to the letter. A recent evaluation showed significant variations between the types of lifelong learning activities supported by different member states. Most countries continue to target young people, but Greece focuses overwhelmingly on low-skilled people aged 24 years or older (Ecorys, 2013: ii). Such differences make the focused EU agendas partly illusionary, but of course they may represent sensible priorities given the different economies and labour markets of member states. In fact, the EU has recently moved towards linking both education and training objectives and the use of ESF funds closer to differentiated policies, the so-called country-specific recommendations.

The projects supported by the ESF undoubtedly have impact, especially in low-income regions. The projects involve many citizens in activities aimed at employability and they involve a lot of officials, managers, educators, guidance officers and others in understanding and negotiating the EU employability and learning objectives in order to secure funding. The strength of this cultural impact is hard to estimate, but the impact is there. The evaluation report on ESF activity in the years 2000-2006 quotes a project manager in Spain who believed that:

> The main effect [of the ESF] was the change in mentality among all the agents of the labour market – workers, employers, public administration – and the

realisation and acceptance of the necessity of promoting lifelong learning. There has been a huge change in mentality' (LSE Enterprise Ltd. et al., 2010: 124).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has traced how adult learning policy has developed as an element in EU education and training policy and examined the status of adult learning policy outside its main arena in EU institutions, the Commission's DG-EAC. Although these are large questions that really merit a comprehensive research project, I still think I have basis for some tentative conclusions.

In the first decades of EEC collaboration, education policy was marginal and adult education was even more marginal. During the 1990s, this gradually changed and with first the *Maastricht Treaty* and later the Lisbon process, education became a recognised and perhaps even an important policy area.

EU educational policy has unfolded mainly in two ways: in the establishment of a European education policy space and in the initiation and funding of education and training activities.

The emergence of a European education policy space is a recent phenomenon. There were earlier attempts, but it is the Lisbon process and the OMC that made it happen. This approach has allowed common policy objectives to be fixed and benchmarked and processes of policy learning to unfold 'beneath' the cumbersome negotiations between national governments. In this way the OMC has potential to contribute to a 'citizenship mode' of EU governance, as argued by Habermas. However, this potential is overshadowed by the fact that the OMC benchmarks and processes have functioned as an instrument of discursive regulation and have accelerated a 'governing by numbers' regime, which is very visible in the field of education and training.

The other way is supporting and initiating education and learning activities in EU formats through a distribution of funding. The two main funding streams are the educational action programmes under the DG-EAC and the ESF funding. There is considerable convergence between these policy lanes, but to some extent they have pulled adult education policy in different directions, not least because ESF funding of education and training projects has been less connected to general education policy objectives.

In the EEC and later EU context, adult education has always been conceptualised with an emphasis on vocational training. In the DG-EAC this has to some extent been balanced by concepts of general education and higher education, but in other directorates, especially the DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, the focus has clearly been on employability. The Lisbon and EU 2020 processes can be seen as attempts to streamline the work of different actors in the field of adult learning. At the discourse level this has been successful; but different perspectives still exist and are pursued at many levels. There are also notable absences, for instance in the DG for Agriculture and Rural Development, where modern training of farmers

and their employees could be expected to have priority, and in the DG for Climate Action, where educating for sustainable lifestyles could be an important issue.

Also, even though EU education and learning policy is now more streamlined and implementation is pursued more systematically, the impact still depends very much on context. This has often been noted in relation to differences between member states; but it also applies to other contexts, for instance different business sectors. In an analysis of training policies and practices in the European steel industry, Stroud and Fairbrother (2008) have shown how EU policies, prescribing open learning environments and social inclusion, are undone by corporate management strategies upholding regressive practices that rely on informal arrangements, such as learning-by-doing and give employees limited opportunities to acquire qualifications. Navigating between national and EU policies and interventions, companies have been able to secure support but still restructure on their own terms.

EU adult learning policy remains ambiguous; in part it responds to the social needs of citizens and contributes to a European community, across which broader popular forms of participation can develop; in part it becomes an instrument in a more narrow competition policy, where economic growth in reality outranks all other priorities, a policy that promises welfare – to be delivered later. But as pointed out by Negt (2012), the tradition of adult education is strongly linked to ideas of social justice and versatile learning opportunities for all. This is a resource for developing the EU's education policy – and the EU in general – in a direction benefitting European citizens.

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ADULT LEARNING: FROM THE MARGINS
TO THE MAINSTREAM

The previous chapter showed the key role of the European Commission in developing adult learning policy. This chapter explores the wider intellectual and policy background to its work in this field. Over the past two decades, the Commission has appropriated – though it has also played a part in developing – a language related to adult learning which itself has a long history. This can be examined at a number of levels: from educational institutions and movements across the globe to the thinking of national governments and international organisations. This chapter examines adult learning's transition from a relatively marginal field to a prominent one in the language of the European Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament. In doing so, it explores how the terminology evolved, how a lifelong learning agenda grew, and how it gradually changed in focus.

DEVELOPMENT OF THINKING ON LIFELONG LEARNING

Though some analysts (Jug 1997, Doukas 2003) have argued that adult education started in the Hellenistic period, citing Socrates (5th century B.C.), and in ancient China (Confucius 6-5th centuries B.C.), European history generally traces the development of adult education to 17th-century thinkers and pedagogues (e.g. Jan Amos Komensky-Comenius, Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig) who recognised the problem of illiteracy and sought to overcome it through the education of adults. One can thus argue that the idea of lifelong learning has been present on and off in pedagogical thinking for centuries. This chapter discusses the development of the idea, from 'lifelong education' as seen in the Faure Report, *Learning to Be* (Faure et al., 1972) to 'lifelong learning' as embraced by the European Commission and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The beginnings of lifelong learning in the contemporary world can be traced back to the notion embraced by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – to meet the challenges of a changing world – in the 1960s. As Wain (2001) put it, referring to the second International Conference on Adult Education, held in 1960:

UNESCO declared 'lifelong education' as the master concept for all its educational planning, policy-making, and practice for the future. . . . New developments emerging out of subsequent experiments, pilot projects, studies

and seminars had resulted in a crystallizing and clarifying of the concept of 'lifelong education' (Wain, 2001: 183).

Wain maintains that the shift can be seen in the documents of UNESCO's International Committee for the Advancement of Adult Education. Approximately every 12 years UNESCO organises an International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA: from the French *Conférence International sur l'Enseignement des Adultes*). The Montreal conference of 1965 represented, in Wain's view, the turning point in adult education. Its impact, thinking and recommendations, have been reflected, felt and embraced in adult education programmes across the world. At that time, the notion of *lifelong education* came to the fore.

Learning to Be, commonly known as the Faure Report, commissioned by UNESCO, underlined that the "concept of . . . lifelong education (all through life as well as during childhood and adolescence) is emerging clearly as a conscious aspiration" (Faure et al., 1972: 48). In the same year, Faure, in his article *Education and the Destiny of Man*, stressed two fundamental concepts: lifelong education and the educational community. If learning is the affair of a "lifetime and of a whole society, then it is necessary to look beyond the reform of 'educational systems' and think of an educational community. That is the real educational challenge of tomorrow" (Faure, 1972: 9). As Schuetze (2006: 290) observed, Faure's notion "formulated the philosophical-political concept of a humanistic, democratic and emancipatory system of learning opportunities for everybody, independent of class, race or financial means, and independent of the age of learner".

As Wain points out, this 'maximalist' concept was not universally accepted. Bagnall, for instance, saw three models of lifelong education: (1) the preparation of individuals for the management of their adult lives; (2) the distribution of education throughout the lifespan of the individual; and (3) the identification of education with the whole of life (Bagnall, 1990: 186). Antikainen (2009), drawing on Dehmel (2006) and Rubenson (2006), recognised many discourses and narratives but suggested they are usually divided into three phases and points of view; the first two are more elaborated. The first phase is represented by the humanistic view: that lifelong education should "aim . . . to enable man to 'become himself', i.e. the whole person" (Antikainen, 2009: 4). Such education also brings advances in knowledge that foster and emphasise human development. According to Antikainen (2009: 4), Faure proposed "lifelong education as the master concept for educational policies in the years to come". The second phase, Antikainen suggested, is represented by the more economic viewpoint taken by both the OECD and the European Union. Their concern was for the development "of the knowledge economy and the knowledge society due to globalisation. Learning and work or employability and education became the . . . central issues" (Antikainen, 2009: 4). This has much in common, as Schuetze (2006) pointed out, with another concept developed by the OECD: 'recurrent education', education beyond compulsory schooling organised to articulate with recurrent periods of work and other social activity. This too focused on the need to maintain individuals' skills and update them to retain competitive

edge. The third phase, on this argument, is the hoped-for realisation that the human being is not only '*homo economicus*' but also a person with personal, social and cultural goals and should be offered opportunities in each and every sphere of their interest.

According to Wain, the notion of lifelong education receded into a more pragmatic phase (2001: 186) even within UNESCO, giving way to the lifelong and life-wide prospect of 'lifelong learning', which set the path for non-formal education and informal learning to be recognised, and enabled the emergence of a 'learning society' which, 'imbued with the spirit of scientific humanism', would enhance "the quality of life of both individuals and their communities in a fast changing, increasingly technologized, world" (ibid.: 184). Although broader political factors played a part in this (it was said to be imposing a hegemonic Western model of the learning society on international discourse, and there were differing views among different UNESCO spheres of interest: south and north, east and west, developed and developing countries), it was also "because of . . . 'bureaucratie' and political opposition to it from within the organization itself" (ibid.: 186).

FROM LIFELONG EDUCATION TO LIFELONG LEARNING

Why was lifelong learning, in its 'economistic' version, embraced by these organisations? The principal factor appears to be the perceived value of human capital in a competitive and globalised world. With changes to the global economy since the 1970s, beginning with the oil crises of 1973 and 1979, and intensified by growing unemployment and eroding job security, decreasing demand for low-skilled labour, and increased demand for highly qualified workers, lifelong learning "has gradually come to be appropriated more and more within the narrower instrumentalist discourse of further training and professional development" (Wain, 2001: 187). With globalisation (arguably a synonym for neo-liberalism), the growth of the internet and other information and communication technologies, knowledge has become more and more important, to the point of being regarded as a main factor of production. As Castells (2000: 52) has suggested, the whole planet is now, for the first time in history, "either capitalist or highly dependent" on capitalist processes (as cited in Riddell & Weedon, 2012: 2). In this light, it is no surprise that 'lifelong learning' discourse was re-introduced and stressed: knowledge embedded within human beings has been perceived as the predominant, if not the sole, source of competitive advantage.

The Rome conference on *Lifelong Learning – A Survival Concept for the 21st Century*, the 'First Global Conference on Lifelong Learning', organised by the Brussels-based European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) in November-December 1994 – and supported by the European Commission – stressed the multilevel importance of lifelong learning. In the conference material lifelong learning was defined as:

> . . . the *Development of Human Potential* through a continuously supportive *process* which stimulates and empowers individuals *to acquire* all the knowledge, values, skills and understanding they will require *throughout their*

lifetimes and *to apply them* with confidence, creativity and enjoyment in all *roles, circumstances and environments* (Ball & Stewart, 1995: 2, emphasis in original text; see also Longworth & Davies, 1994).

Human potential was thus deployed as something to be acquired and possessed: 'human capital', as it has subsequently been developed in European documents.

In UNESCO's later paper, *An Action Agenda for Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century* (1995) lifelong learning was defined in the same way as ELLI defined it. Over the following couple of years two developments played a crucial part in the adoption of the lifelong learning idea. The first was OECD's paper *Lifelong Learning for All* (1996), presented to a meeting of education ministers: in adopting it, the ministers accepted its goal of "aiming for Lifelong Learning for all, marrying the economic rationale with wider societal objectives" (Schuetze, 2006: 292). The OECD paper's rationales for lifelong learning were fivefold: the role of knowledge, information and ideas; the speed of technological change; the inadequacy of redistribution policies and changing and flexible lifestyles; active employment policies; and the need to address the challenges to social cohesion posed by those who miss out on educational opportunities.

The second development was UNESCO's CONFINTEA V, held in Hamburg in 1997. Support for lifelong learning was re-affirmed by all delegates. A quarter of a century after *Learning to Be*, the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, chaired by Jacques Delors, concluded:

> The concept of learning throughout life is the key that gives access to the twenty-first century. It goes beyond the traditional distinctions between initial and continuing education. It links up with another concept, that of the learning society, in which everything affords an opportunity for learning and fulfilling one's potential. (Delors et al., 1996: 38).

The Commission's report, *Learning: The Treasure Within*, emphasised the importance of four 'pillars' of education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be (ibid.: 37).

The Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning denoted lifelong learning as a process of adult learning which,

> . . . encompasses both formal and continuing education, non-formal learning and the spectrum of informal and incidental learning available in a multicultural learning society, where theory- and practice-based approaches are recognized (UNESCO, 1997: 1).

This is similar in many ways to the definition adopted by the European Commission in its *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (CEC, 2000).

A contrast is often made between Faure's (1972) maximalist, humanistic and liberating view of lifelong education, with a more pragmatic, economistic, perspective – adopted by international organisations such as the OECD, the EU, and the World Bank – tending to treat lifelong learning more instrumentally, as a means

to achieve employability. However, the EU's view has not always been so narrow: its *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (CEC, 2000), for instance, also stressed lifelong learning's role in social cohesion, active citizenship and social inclusion. Recent research has shown that when educational institutions have adopted the idea of lifelong learning, they have often used it more as a 'catch phrase', to be in line with current policy. Collins' observation remains valid: "the term lifelong learning is routinely incorporated into conventional curricular discourse" (1998: 49), but the concept is not central to how curricula are organised.

THE RISE OF A LIFELONG LEARNING AGENDA IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Education came to the fore in the European Commission's interests only with the *Maastricht Treaty* (TEU, 1992; see also Holford et al., 2008; Milana, this volume; Rasmussen, this volume). Previously it had been a more marginal concern. The first enlargement (1974) extended the scope for cooperation in education to some extent, but re-emphasised the need to work within the traditions and policies of each country (Holford et al., 2008). However, with growing international competition, there seems to have been a realisation of education's potential as a tool for economic development (cf. Malan, 1987). The Commission began to show interest particularly in vocationally-oriented areas of lifelong learning such as school-to-work transitions and 'adult anti-illiteracy campaigns' (Holford et al., 2008: 46).

Soon after the *Maastricht Treaty* (TEU, 1992) gave the EU a basis for promoting education, the ELLI organised a conference on lifelong learning in Rome (1994). It was attended by all the major proponents of lifelong learning. Two years later, 1996 was proclaimed the 'European Year of Lifelong Learning'. It aimed to draw attention to the need for cooperation, especially 'between education and training structures and the business community' – with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), now a European Commission '*fil rouge*' – to establish a 'European area of education and training through the academic and vocational recognition of qualifications within the European Union',[1] and to contribute to equality of opportunities. Reflecting nearly three years later, the Commission concluded that, as a result of the 'European Year',

> Lifelong learning has now become central to policy debate throughout the European Union. It is a cornerstone of the reform of the structural funds and the Community's employment policy.[2]

There is room for debate as to how far the member states endorsed the idea of lifelong learning, but they most certainly embraced the funds which the Year of Lifelong Learning brought. The measures were implemented on a decentralised basis, in partnership with bodies identified by member states: 550 projects, encompassing approximately 5,000 events (publications, conferences, seminars, and the like), and a budget of 34 million European Currency Unit.[3]

According to the Commission's own Report, the Year of Lifelong Learning had a 'major political impact' at the European level. It put lifelong learning at centre-stage, involving 'new players' in a field previously 'reserved for the specialists'. It also stimulated closer cooperation between various authorities (including government departments at different levels), educational providers and business. However the EU's contribution was also marked, it claimed – this was not universally accepted (cf. Boshier, 1998; Field, 2006; Holford et al., 2008) – by its "broad concept embracing a 'cradle to grave' approach which does not subordinate learning to economic imperatives and gives full place to such issues as personal growth, participation in the democratic decision-making process, recreational learning and active ageing".[4]

In the light of the European Year of Lifelong Learning and its impact, the Council of the European Communities made "its own distinct contribution to the active realization of a strategy for lifelong learning" (CEU, 1996: §7). While acknowledging the contributions of UNESCO, the OECD and the Council of Europe to the idea, its strategy embraced lifelong learning across the whole life span. and stressed that initial education and training should embrace not only core skills, but a broad base of knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences to encourage and support "learning through life" (ibid.: 7). This endeavour would cover: school systems; economic and social areas; local community development through education and training; continuing education and training; pathways and links between general and vocational education; access, certification, and accreditation; teachers and adult educators and the role of new technologies (ibid.: 7-8). Stemming from this strategy, a European-wide debate ensued on new basic skills: information technology, foreign languages, technological culture, entrepreneurship and social skills. The choice of skills was undoubtedly affected by the International Adult Literacy Survey (carried out in 1995 by the OECD and Statistics Canada). To promote digital literacy the Lisbon strategy (CEU, 2000, §26) envisaged a European diploma (with decentralised certification) for basic IT skills, and also aimed to give:

> . . . higher priority to lifelong learning as a basic component of the European social model, including by encouraging agreements between the social partners on innovation and lifelong learning; by exploiting the complementarity between lifelong learning and adaptability through flexible management of working time and job rotation; and by introducing a European award for particularly progressive firms. (CEU, 2000, §29)

Progress towards these goals was to be 'benchmarked' (ibid.). Circumstances were calling for further expansion of the idea of lifelong learning.

EXPANDING THE IDEA OF LIFELONG LEARNING

From 1996 a series of crucial documents was adopted by various European bodies, from the European Council to the European Parliament, paving the way to a 'learning society' based on lifelong learning as a key lever and means of survival. If

the key characteristic of lifelong education as conceptualised in the 1970s (and used in the UNESCO vocabulary until CONFINTEA V) was its humanistic dimension, when lifelong learning emerged in 'national and international policies in the 1990s, the emphasis was firmly on aiding economic performance, whether individual or societal' (Holford et al., 2008: 46), within a human capital approach. As Walters (1997) noted, human capital has been closely associated with neo-liberal ideology; this approach can be seen in the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (CEC, 2000). In its move towards a knowledge-based society, Europe needed access to up-to-date information, knowledge, and skills for its competiveness and to improve its workforce's adaptability and employability. The neo-liberal paradigm was also reflected in the emphasis on individuals' need 'to plan their own lives' and learn. In the discussion of the *Memorandum*, many pointed out that, despite some mention of equipping citizens to participate fully in democratic life, the document was underpinned by a *homo economicus* approach. Subsequent documents proved the critics right (Van der Pas, 2003). The *Memorandum* was issued following the European Council at Lisbon in March 2000 – the meeting which also launched the Lisbon strategy with its strongly economic target of making "the European Union the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world" (CEU, 2000).

SYSTEMATIC WORK ON LIFELONG LEARNING

The action plan arising from the *Memorandum* consultation, *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality* (CEC, 2001) changed the priorities, indicating a clear neoliberal agenda for economic growth through education and adult learning (cf. Holford & Mohorčič Špolar, 2012). In place of the *Memorandum*'s six key messages (new basic skills for all; more investment in human resources; innovation in teaching and learning; valuing learning; rethinking guidance and counselling and bringing learning closer to home) it emphasised valuing learning; information, guidance and counselling; investing time and money in learning; bringing together learners and learning opportunities; basic skills and innovative pedagogy.

Under the Lisbon strategy a set of educational goals, discussed and endorsed through the Open Method of Coordination, led to the document *Education and Training 2010* (CEU & CEC, 2004). This set out aims for the decade, as well as benchmarks and indicators to monitor how achievement. To this end a report was produced annually by the Commission showing the progress made. This soft governance has provided a 'framework' in which international institutions, such as the EU, can 'adapt their arrangements as circumstances change' (Koutidou, in press). In pursuit of the Lisbon aims, a number of policy documents emerged, including a Council *Resolution on Lifelong Learning* (CEU, 2002), *Investing Efficiently in Education and Training: An Imperative for Europe* (CEC, 2003), *Adult Learning: It is Never Too Late to Learn* (CEC, 2006), and *Adult Learning: It is Always a Good*

Time to Learn (CEC, 2007). These significantly raised the status of lifelong learning, though as Holford and his colleagues (2008: 51) stated, "there is no little ambiguity within and between the various documents" about the term.

> In keeping with the emphasis established for the EU's role in education and training by the Maastricht Treaty, and in line with the predominant thrust of international policy literature, the strong emphasis remained on the role of lifelong learning in relation to economic needs – the knowledge economy (and the knowledge society conceived as a function of the knowledge economy) (Holford et al., 2008: 51).

Implementation of lifelong learning, the Commission argued, was to be through existing processes, programmes and instruments. Additional support would be provided through the exchange of good practice and experience, and sharing of problems, ideas and priorities. Databases on good practice and on information and experience about lifelong learning at all levels were promised. Existing Commission programmes like Socrates (promoting multinational cooperation in general and higher education)[5], Leonardo da Vinci (promoting vocational training) and Youth (policy measures and projects for youth) would also pave the way towards lifelong learning. A new programme, Grundtvig, was established, specifically for adult learners. Apart from these, various other instruments available to the Commission – such as the European Social Fund (ESF) and the ESF Community Initiative EQUAL – would be used. Progress would be measured and monitored through the use of agreed indicators and reported regularly.

Since the mid-1990s, then, the Commission has followed its agenda on lifelong learning, deviating little in either employment or educational spheres. *Education and Training 2010* integrated all actions in education and training at European level, including vocational education and training (the Copenhagen Process) and higher education (the Bologna Process). In 2005 the Commission adopted the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as a key priority.

The objective of the EQF was to facilitate the transfer and recognition of qualifications held by individual citizens (whether attained through non-formal education or informal learning) by linking qualifications systems at the national and sectoral levels and enabling them to relate to one another. Apart from encouraging recognition of learning, the EQF was intended to act as a 'translation device' for qualifications and thus to facilitate citizens' mobility for work and study, alongside such schemes as Erasmus, the European Credit Transfer System and Europass.

Of the policy documents in adult education accepted since 2001, three have had particular effect on the national scene: the Commission Communications *Adult Learning: It is Never Too Late to Learn* (CEC, 2006) and *Adult Learning: It is Always a Good Time to Learn* (CEC, 2007), and the European Parliament's *Resolution on Adult Learning: It is Never Too Late to Learn* (2008). Active citizenship and social cohesion, evident in the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, largely disappeared from these two Commission documents. Their goals were more connected to the

economic dimensions of adult learning, which in the absence of a European view on the wider benefits of learning, are almost acceptable: other policies advocate the recognition, monitoring and economic benefits of adult learning. Both these documents advocated indicators to monitor progress. At the same time, however, they encouraged partnerships (with social partners) and saw the importance of learning beyond retirement age.[6]

The European Parliament's *Resolution on Adult Learning: It is Never Too Late to Learn* (2008) emphasised Europe's commitment to adult learning and education. Adult learning was 'becoming a political priority' and needed 'concrete and adequate programmes, visibility, access, resources and evaluation methods'. It focused on improving adults' motivation to participate in learning, and recognised the need for good statistical data. It also called for intergenerational and intercultural solidarity, stressed the importance of learning languages and the particular needs of groups 'at risk', and argued that access to higher education should be opened to a wider public. The *Resolution* also recognised the need to improve quality, teaching and the variety of provision, and suggested that those prepared to invest in their own learning should have a stronger employment orientation. And, as is quite common, it called for investment in programmes and qualifications to make people's access to education and training easier.

The *Council Conclusions on Adult Learning* (CEU, 2008) recognised the importance of the two Commission documents (*It is Never Too Late to Learn* and *It is Always a Good Time to Learn*) and called on member states to remove barriers to participation in adult learning, "to speed the process of validation and recognition and to ensure sufficient investment in and monitoring of the field" (CEU, 2008: 10). An Annex set out specific measures for the period 2008-2010, divided into those to be undertaken "by the Commission with cooperation of the member states" and those to be undertaken by "member states with the support of the Commission" (ibid.: 12-13).

These endeavours show the Commission was systematically advocating lifelong learning in its youth, employment and adult education policies and programmes. In its progress reports, however, the Commission identified various obstacles to its aims, and in 2010 it recognised that despite a general improvement in education and training performance across the EU, the majority of benchmarks set for 2010 would not be reached: implementing "lifelong learning through formal, non-formal and informal learning, and increasing mobility, remain[ed] a challenge" (CEU & CEC, 2010: 2).

According to the Council's conclusions on the *Social dimension of education and training* "education and training systems contribute[d] significantly to fostering social cohesion, active citizenship and personal fulfilment in European societies" (CEU, 2010). Increased international competitiveness would require high professional skills which could be obtained through lifelong learning as well as in traditional education and training systems. In such circumstances it was,

. . . even more important for education and training systems to raise overall attainment levels, whilst ensuring that all people, young and adult – regardless

of their socio-economic background or personal circumstances – are enabled to develop their full potential through lifelong learning (CEU, 2010).

In May 2009 the European Council adopted a *Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training* (*ET2020)* (CEU, 2009). This proposed two main aims for the future of European education and training: first, the personal, social and professional fulfilment of all citizens; and second, sustainable economic prosperity and employability, whilst promoting democratic values, social cohesion, active citizenship, and intercultural dialogue. It also distinguished four strategic objectives:

> 1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality; 2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training; 3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; 4. Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training (CEU, 2009).

A close reading of *ET2020* shows that lifelong learning is primarily used in relation to employability rather than personal development and social cohesion.

The European Council *Resolution on a Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning* (CEU, 2011) again stressed the importance of adult learning – along with formal, non-formal and informal learning, valuing learning, the importance of quality, learning opportunities and monitoring. It identified five priorities for adult learning in Europe for 2012-2014; four were drawn from *ET2020*, but one was specific to adult learning: improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult learning sector. These would both help establish the benefits of adult learning, and encourage citizens and governments to value it.

The *Agenda for New Skills and Jobs: European Contribution Towards Full Employment* encouraged 'comprehensive lifelong learning policies' to support employability, flexicurity and other flexible contractual arrangements in the labour market (CEC, 2010: 5). It advocated improved access to lifelong learning, targeted approaches for more vulnerable workers and enhanced stakeholder involvement and social dialogue. The idea of lifelong learning in this document has similarities to the OECD's 1976 notion of 'recurrent education' – as the *Agenda* put it "more flexible learning pathways can facilitate transitions between the phases of work and learning, including through modularisation of learning programmes" (CEC, 2010: 5).

In these documents lifelong learning has shrunk from the 'maximalist' view of *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality* (CEC, 2001) and *ET2020* (CEU, 2009) to a far more pragmatic one (Wain, 2001). Nevertheless lifelong learning remains on the EU agenda as something which can contribute substantially to further development. As Malan wrote of educational planning policy, education is prioritised "both as an instrument of modernisation and as a factor of social cohesion" (Malan, 1987: 19).

Since economic crisis hit Europe – along with other countries – lifelong learning has become more and more instrumentalised. Though still given an important

position in policy, its focus has shifted towards areas which were seen as bringing employability, employment and income. The adult learning agenda has narrowed, concentrating on more specific areas such as basic skills, increasing the proportion of 30-34 years-olds who have completed tertiary education (to 40% by 2020), and monitoring the adult learning sector (including through the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences PIAAC). In November 2012 *Rethinking Education: Investing in Skills for Better Socio-Economic Outcomes* confirmed that the "broad mission of education and training encompasses objectives such as active citizenship, personal development and well-being" (CEC, 2012: 2). However, these were to go hand in hand with the need to upgrade skills for employability. Against the backdrop of sluggish economic growth and a shrinking working-age population, "the most pressing challenges for member states are to address the needs of the economy and focus on solutions to tackle fast-rising youth unemployment" (ibid: 2). The emphasis was therefore laid on delivering the right employment skills, increasing the efficiency and inclusiveness of education and training institutions, and "working collaboratively with all relevant stakeholders" (ibid: 2). In this document 'lifelong learning' is mentioned three times: once when describing adequate skills or lack of them to participate in lifelong learning (ibid: 2), once when presenting data on adult participation in lifelong learning, third in connection with validation of learning and lifelong guidance (ibid.: 5) and finally in connection with different lifelong services (ibid.: 15). Learning is connected to skill acquisition and qualifications as means to opening doors to employment.

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE MAINSTREAM AND THEN . . .

The idea of lifelong education sprang from the field of adult education and was a response to the rapidly changing world of market economies, competition and economic transformation. It crystallised in the UNESCO report *Learning to Be* (Faure et al., 1973). Some scholars saw this as encouraging a humanistic, democratic and emancipatory system of learning opportunities for all, independent of class, race, financial means and the age of the learner. Though propagated by UNESCO it was never fully realised – due partly to opposition within UNESCO itself, and partly to differing political priorities. The Delors Report *Learning: The Treasure Within* drew worldwide attention to lifelong learning, but it was the "European Union which took the concept seriously and systematically translated it into policy statements, programs and projects" (Ouane & Hinzen, 2003: vii).

The *Treaty of Rome* (1957), which established the European Economic Community, did not see education as a central lever of economic or social advancement. It spoke of "an effective co-ordination of efforts in the spheres of vocational training, of research and of the dissemination of agricultural knowledge", and allowed that "this may include joint financing of projects or institutions" (Article 41). However it also stated ("Without prejudice to the other provisions of this *Treaty* and in conformity with its general objectives"), that "the Commission shall have the task of promoting

close co-operation between member states in the social field, particularly in matters relating to: employment; labour law and working conditions; basic and advanced vocational training" (Article 118).

Vocational retraining was also seen as a way back to employment (Article 125a); European Social Fund finance was therefore available. The *Treaty* also asserted that the "Council shall, acting on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the Economic and Social Committee, lay down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy capable of contributing to the harmonious development both of the national economies and of the common market" (Article 128).

However over the following 20 years, the world changed. With the intensifying economic competition from the United States of America and Japan, and with globalisation generally, the EU sought to transform itself into an advanced knowledge-based society. Education and learning were seen as vital to this end. As Malan (1987) suggested, in times of crisis, education is often seen as the solution. The EU therefore embraced the idea of lifelong learning, systematically translating it into documents, communications and programmes. However, it narrowed its scope from a broad conception of education (lifelong and lifewide) to a narrower, more instrumental version. In this neo-liberal form, lifelong learning has become an explicit agenda for the EU and a crucial key in its economic development.

The reporting and monitoring of progress against indicators and benchmarks has led to member states having their achievements or failings paraded (a process of 'fame and shame'). Thus education and learning, in principle matters of each country's discretion, have progressively become a more central part of the common European agenda. Little account was taken of national misgivings. In order to achieve the targets set, additional support has been provided through exchange of good practice and experience, and sharing of problems, ideas and priorities. A database on good practice has been encouraged, while existing Commission programmes like Socrates, Erasmus, Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci and Youth were enriched by Grundtvig (non-formal adult education) – thought more recently all have been merged into the Lifelong Learning programmes. Research on, and analysis of, lifelong learning have been stimulated and supported. Thus in EU documentation, lifelong learning came to be understood as a tool, a means to achieve economic targets and employment. The economic crisis of 2008 further limited the vocabulary. Recent documents have tended to restrict lifelong learning to 'adult lifelong learning', with the liberating aspect of education for personal and social development being lost. Though references to lifelong learning as a means to empowering the European population remain, education and training seem to be losing much of their social dimension.

The idea of lifelong learning as addressing adult learning has had benefits at many levels. It has brought the significance of adult education to a wider audience, and emphasised its national importance. With the need for governments to report on progress, many new opportunities have been opened for adults. Countries unacquainted with the idea of lifelong learning have been brought into the arena, even though sometimes accepting the idea without much discussion (Holford et al.,

2008). More longstanding EU member states have adjusted lifelong learning to their own purposes and national circumstances.

However, two decades after lifelong learning emerged into the EU policy agenda, it has become overwhelmingly seen as a tool for achieving decisive advantages in economic prosperity and competitiveness; the social, cultural and humanistic element can seem irrevocably lost. But . . . as Edgar Faure wrote 40 years ago, "if learning is the affair of a lifetime and of a whole society, then it is necessary to look beyond the reform of 'educational systems' and think of an educational community. That is the real educational challenge of tomorrow" (Faure, 1972: 9). Now as people question why the Lisbon strategy has been so qualified a success, another route to economic growth – or to changing how we lead our lives – is called for. Education and learning will always form an important part of society, but whether it will be lifelong learning in the truest sense of the word – and with all it should imply – remains to be seen. Global capitalism constantly reminds us we are individuals, succeeding or failing in a world of markets and risk. But even neo-liberal policy pronouncements accept that we have rights to education and learning, including adult learning, throughout our lives. As human agents, we are creative; let us use that creativity to educate ourselves, and our fellow-citizens, not just as 'governed subjects', but as freely-thinking women and men.

NOTES

[1] http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11024_en.htm (accessed 13 November 2013).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid. For a fuller official evaluation of the European Year of Lifelong Learning, see European Parliament: Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport (2000).

[5] The Socrates programme formerly encompassed a number of sub-programmes: Comenius (secondary education), Erasmus (higher education), Grundtvig (adult education), Lingua (language teaching and learning), and Minerva (open and distance learning and the introduction of new technologies in education).

[6] The elderly, it was envisaged, would be a major part of the European population by 2050. The EU27 population demographic would continue to age, with those aged 65 years and over rising from 17.1% in 2008 to 30.0% in 2060. The proportion aged 80 and over were expected to rise from 4.4% to 12.1% over the same period (Eurostat, 2008).

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PART TWO

POLITICAL THEORIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL

MALGORZATA KLATT
UNDERSTANDING THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS POLITICAL POWER

The Contribution of European Studies to Adult Education Policy Research

INTRODUCTION

The European Union (EU) is frequently seen as an important actor in shaping globalised education policy space, but its complex architecture and policymaking processes carry constant challenges for researchers. There is a growing tendency in academic literature to avoid separating the national and the EU level of policymaking. The pressures of globalisation and the national interest advocated by each EU member state are strongly mediated by the specific 'actorness' of the EU: the number and variety of actors involved in education policymaking and implementation.

This chapter brings a political science perspective to help open the 'black box' of policymaking in the EU. It contextualises the inner-workings of the EU, its structure and its relationship with member states. It begins by providing a theoretical background of the day-to-day policymaking by analysing the agency-structure dichotomy in the EU policymaking. Next, it analyses the institutional arrangements of the EU focusing on 'soft law' and policymaking of the European Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament. Further, it defines the growing in prominence concept of Europeanisation, which is understood as a three-way analytical concept that includes the infiltration of the member states' policy preferences – or rules – into the EU, the 'national adaptation' of EU policies, as well as horizontal exchanges. The chapter also provides an explanation of how the EU is perceived through the 'normative power' concept, as well as how member states themselves become 'norm entrepreneurs'.

EXPLAINING THE DAY-TO-DAY POLICYMAKING IN THE EU – THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

To understand the political arrangements and decision-making processes in the EU, political scientists traditionally utilised integration theories including functionalism and intergovernmentalism that were based on the main International Relations (IR) theories (Haas, 1964; Moravcsik, 1998; Rosamond, 2000). Europeanists argue, however, that these meta-theories are not sufficient to explain the day-to-day level of policymaking in the EU (Cram, 1996). Instead, they propose to focus

on specific analytical strengths and weaknesses of the approaches that work better in combination, than alone (Sandholtz, 1993). In this context, the EU theorising focuses principally on the agency-structure dichotomy.

Understanding of the agency-structure debate is crucial before attempting to analyse European policy processes. The agency-structure debate revolves around the nature of social reality attempting to establish to what extent social reality is rooted in an 'agency', which refers to the capability of the individual to be creative and make their own choices, or to the 'structure', which might limit choices and constrain behaviour. In the case of European education policies, the debate has two dimensions. The first focuses on the individual nation state's decisions and interests, and the constraining implications of EU institutions and decision-making processes on them; the second on the influence of the nation state on the policymaking processes within the EU. In general, there are two competing understandings of the compatibility of IR theories in EU studies. The first assumes that the differences in ontological and epistemological views rooted in the agency-structure assumptions of each theory make it impossible to combine them (Smith, 1994). In this view, there may always be only two accounts of social world construction (based on agency or structure), which may not be combined. On the other side of the spectrum, constructivists argue that agency and structure are 'mutually constitutive' (Checkel, 1999; Risse, 2004). In this respect, the social environment defines who we are; but at the same time, human agency creates and changes its environment through its daily practices (Risse, 2004). This two-way constitutiveness is especially important when examining the EU as a two-way policymaking process at the European level, where the European processes and institutions 'feed back' into member states.

In political science, social constructivism occupies an ontological 'middle ground' between agency and structure, enabling the compilation of both for examining policy change. Education policy is seen as a social construction, which has emerged and continues to emerge from the social interaction among diplomats, officials, politicians, citizens of EU member states, and EU member states themselves, as well as other actors or structures which influence the education policy agenda.

Constructivist approaches to European integration concentrate on answering the questions of how particular policies have been developed. They question ontological and epistemological assumptions of the rationalist theories, focusing on the role of ideas, norms and identities in international relations and point to the interdependence of agency and structure. Social constructivism has been used by political science scholars to explain the key aspects of Europeanisation, interests and identity (Checkel, 1999). Recently, also scholars in education (Dale & Robertson, 2009; Lawn & Grek, 2012) have taken up the study of Europeanisation and its effects on education policies across Europe. Checkel (1999) suggests that the mutual constitutiveness of agents and structures is the key theoretical approach to help open the 'black box' of decision-making processes in the EU including a formation of national interests, as the identities and the interests of actors emerge from the interaction between

agents and structures, and are in effect endogenous of this process. In line with this argument, Risse (2004) provides three main contributions of social constructivism that aid the understanding of the EU: first, accepting the mutual constitutiveness of agency and structure allows for a much deeper understanding of Europeanisation, including its impact on statehood in Europe; second and related, emphasising the constitutive effects of European law, rules, and policies enables us to study how European integration shapes social identities and interests of actors; third, focusing on communicative practices permits us to examine more closely how Europe and the EU are constructed discursively and how actors try to come to grips with the meaning of European integration (Risse, 2004: 165).

The most common criticism of constructivism, put forward, for example, by Moravcsik (2004), is that the constructivist claims are not testable, because it is difficult to test how abstract ideas or norms change behaviour. Nevertheless, there has been a growing amount of empirical research based on social constructivist assumptions testing hypotheses on socialisation and norm-diffusion. Either way, the constructivist assumptions have become increasingly popular, as they capture the growing complexity of the decision-making processes in the EU and their impact on national policies of member states, which can no longer be analysed in terms of independent and dependent variables, as the relationship is increasingly multi-layered and complex.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES WITHIN THE EU INSTITUTIONS

The EU has a complex and unique decision-making system. The key institutions determining EU policies include the European Council, the European Commission, and the European Parliament. The decision-making process is controlled by 'different national channels': governments, parliaments, courts, sub-national levels of government, citizens, political parties and interests (Nugent, 2006).

The most powerful channel controlling the policies in the EU is a national government. The government's representatives play significant roles, in particular, in the European Council.

European Council

European Commission	Council of Ministers	European Parliament

Figure 1. Main Institutions of the European Union.

The European Council

The European Council (the Council of the EU) is a body that brings together the Heads of state or government and the Commission President, who meet usually

four times a year. It is a gathering at the highest political level which gives leadership and direction to policy development of the EU. Its agenda is prepared by various bodies – especially COREPER (consists of Permanent Representatives to the EU), the Council Secretariat and the Presidency of the Council. The Presidency is rotational, provides leadership for six months and is perceived as a vital channel for influencing EU policies. The European Council acts regularly as a political initiator. The *Communiqués* of the summits' meetings usually instigate the Commission's actions, which are transformed into EU policies. These are the institutions where the decision-making is based on intergovernmentalism, where the member states' government leaders negotiate and bargain to meet their own national interests.

The Council of Ministers

The Council of Ministers is the institution where the member states' ministers with responsibility for a given area sit. The body that is shaping the education policy is the Education Council. It meets three or four times a year and adopts its decisions by a vote of Ministers (usually by a qualified majority). The Council of Ministers has the main decision-making powers regarding the implementation of European Council strategies. In 2000, the Lisbon European Council set itself the goal of making the European Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. The Education Council followed by adopting, for example, common future objectives of education and training systems, and subsequently developing indicators and benchmarks to measure progress (CEU, 2001). It is important to emphasise that the decisions of the Council of Ministers are a result of long negotiations between the governments' representatives, and the governments are accountable for implementations of the Councils of Ministers' resolutions.

The European Commission

In the Commission, each member state is represented by one Commissioner responsible for particular EU policy. His or her role is to represent EU-wide interest rather than just the national one. As the governments have a rather limited opportunity to influence the individual commissioners, their influence is channelled through the groups of experts advising the Commission's committees and working groups, as discussed by Rasmussen in Chapter 1. It is an important access point into EU policymaking, as there are hundreds of committees which produce thousands of legislative acts every year.

The Commission's main role is to initiate the legislation, control the implementation of the *acquis communautaire* in member states, undertake research activity and represent the EU abroad. The Commission also has an agenda-setting role. For example, once the European Council (Heads of state or government) agreed on the

Lisbon strategy in 2000, the Commission proceeded with its initiatives. It released a memorandum on developing a coherent overall strategy for lifelong learning in Europe (30 October 2000). In this context, the Commission stressed the importance of lifelong learning and the role of adult learning, including its contribution to personal development and fulfilment in reaching those objectives (CEC, 2001). The memorandum was followed by a wide-ranging debate, as well as the development of National Action Plans by member states (CEU, 2001). These Action Plans were also based on the idea of coherent strategies for lifelong learning. Thus, the Commission's work directly influences debates and instigates changes within member states.

The Commission may also introduce recommendations directed to member states on the basis of its objectives that do not necessarily result from the European Council meetings. For example, the Bologna process was not formally an EU initiative, but received strong support from the European Commission. The Bologna objectives, embraced by the Commission, resulted in support for reforms, leading to building the European area of higher education. Although the Bologna process is an intergovernmental process, the European Commission became a significant actor in actively promoting Bologna objectives through, for example, the establishment of the Erasmus programme (a scheme for the mobility of university students and staff).

The Commission's role has risen significantly. It has driven the EU towards greater uniformity through 'regulation by networks' (Eberlein & Newman, 2008), which refers to networking national officials in issue-specific arenas, and also engaging a number of interest groups, social partners and associations working in education – therefore creating a space for network governance. The national officials who are engaged in networking and who frequently socialise with each other are more easily persuaded by a good argument or technocratic consensus (Kelley, 2004). Networking that is taking place in the EU includes a number of public, private, and semi-private actors which creates a complex web of interests to manage. As Lawn and Grek (2012) conclude, networks and associations are important in creating the policy space for education in Europe.

The European Parliament

The European Parliament has a number of ways of influencing EU policies, including the right to accept, amend, or reject the vast majority of EU law. It is involved in the design of legislation by participating in a pre-proposal stage with the Commission. It adopts its own proposals, strategies and resolutions to shape policy directions. For example, in 2006, the European Parliament adopted a report on lifelong learning for adults (EP, 2006). It argued that too few adults were participating and urged member states to utilise the European Commission's frame of reference for key competences as a tool to develop and update their competences. The resolution was adopted in first reading after agreement with the Council of the EU.

Table 1. Characteristics of the European Union Institutions

Institution	Composition	Accountability	Role
The Council of the EU	Heads of state or government	National governments	Provides strategy
The Council of Ministers	The Ministers of each member state with responsibility for a given area	National governments	Implements the European Council strategies
The European Commission	Commissioners, one from each EU country	Appointed, impartial and independent	Controls implementation and sets agenda
The European Parliament	Members of the European Parliament	Directly-elected	Accepts, amends, or rejects EU law

The Influence of Individual Member States

Having in mind that education is an area that falls within the competence of member states, each member state has a direct influence on EU policymaking. Although the infiltration of the member states' policy preferences (bottom-up Europeanisation) into the EU can be observed during different phases of policy negotiations, scholars who explore the power and influence of member states in the EU utilise diverse theoretical approaches. For example, at the core of liberal intergovernmentalism (LI) rests hard interstate bargaining, based on the relative power of nation states (Moravcsik, 1993, 1998). Bargaining occurs regularly in EU affairs, yet in Smith's (2000) view, this type of cooperation is decreasing, giving way to a growing tendency of 'problem-solving', which involves an appeal to common interests and the use of ostracism or peer-pressure. Problem-solving has been supported by the EU's set of norms, such as regular communication and consultation, confidential discussions, which are usually conducted by consensus, and the notion of *domaines réservés*, or subjects considered off-limits owing to the objections of one or more EU states.

These norms provide a basis for common positions on a number of difficult areas, without the engagement of the EU's supranational institutions. Similarly, Wallace (2000) points to 'intensive transgovernmentalism', which refers to the "cooperation between the EU members, where the states have been ready to commit themselves to extensive engagement, but have judged the full EU institutional framework to be inappropriate for adoption". In other words, the willingness of national governments to cooperate closely and solve problems, rather than bargain, resulted in the deepening of cooperation in areas of high politics.

Powerful Factors

It is common knowledge that some EU member states exercise more 'political weight' than others. There are several factors which influence a state's capacity and capability (Archer & Nugent, 2006):

– Historic position (the date of joining the EU),
– Geographical location,
– Economic strength,
– Public attitude towards the EU,
– The size of the state.

These factors determine 'political weight' within the negotiating process. Nevertheless, Wallace (2005) argues that the role of ideas, norms and socialisation is as important as political power. Several particularly significant indicators of influence in the EU system may be recognised:

– Political practice, which refers to gaining peer respect through a particular political behaviour;
– Example setting, which describes influence through observable practices within a particular member state;
– The ability to propose persuasive ideas;
– Setting compelling demands, which refers to a particular concern of a government toward a specific case and an ability to project it in the EU;
– Credibility and consistency in a political approach towards the EU.

These elements derive from active national governments, competency of negotiators, and influence of other actors such as national parliaments.

Active government. The ability of a government to play an active role depends on the domestic stability of the government, which is influenced by the coalition's strength and support from electorate and interest groups. Governments are even stronger negotiators while in alliance with one or two other governments. It is an increasingly important aspect of government strategy, called 'multilateral bilateralism'.

The competence of negotiators. The competence of negotiators plays an important role, in particular, in the Council of Ministers. Furthermore, the level of control over the national representatives from their government influences their flexibility to negotiate on important policy areas, particularly at lower Council of Ministers levels.
   The scholars point out four major arrangements established for governments to coordinate their policy and participation in the EU (Nugent, 2006):

– Heads of government are managing the major political and constitutional EU issues;
– Relations between the EU and the national leaders are handled by the Foreign Ministry;

– The Ministries' internal structures are adjusted to the EU's requirements;
– The character of the coordination arrangements depends on a particular member state.

On the basis of these arrangements, three major types of coordinating system may be distinguished: a fragmented German system, a centralised French model and a Spanish one, where the competences are concentrated in the hands of the Foreign Ministry.

National Parliament.   Another important instrument influencing the national input into EU decision-making process is the national parliament. It is not as powerful as the government, but displays a significant consulting and controlling role. All governments consult their parliaments on fundamental matters. Each parliament has established a special parliamentary committee to deal with EU matters. The weakness of national parliaments in the EU decision-making process results from a lack of formal EU treaty powers, so that national governments can choose on what matter they consult the parliament. Moreover, the national parliaments' leading role is to advise on EU legislation, which is mainly 'administrative', and thus lies within the competences of national government. Furthermore, it is highly technical, therefore hard to understand by an average legislator. The national parliaments also cooperate with each other on EU matters. They provide a forum for exchanging best practices in matters connected with European Union membership, and give an opportunity to exchange views on current issues, to coordinate positions and to take common initiatives.

Other governing bodies.   In assessing national inputs on EU decision-making, the role of the sub-national level of government must be pointed out, as their importance within the EU is growing. The Committees of the Regions have their representatives in the EU and they are mostly focused on lobbying and gathering information.

HARD AND SOFT LAW

The European Union functions effectively across the range of policy spectrums through soft coordination of hard legislation. The hard legislation of the EU is based on intergovernmental cooperation, as it is considered a politically sensitive area. The dominant intergovernmental institution is with the European Council, which principally represents the national interests of member states. The decisions in the European Council are taken under instructions of the national governments. As Moravcsik (1993) explains, "at the core of liberal intergovernmentalism are three important elements: the assumption of rational state behaviour (the state will act in a way which aims to achieve its national interests), a liberal theory of national preference formation and an intergovernmentalist analysis of interstate negotiations".

The main point of reference in intergovernmentalism is domestic politics shaping the interest of the state (Cram, 1996). Moravcsik (1993) points out two stages of decision-making process characterising intergovernmentalism: national preference formation (formed on the basis of economic or geopolitical factors) and interstate bargaining. Moravcsik argues that economic and geopolitical factors are crucial in understanding how policy preferences are formed in a given member state. A common policy with no economic consequences for one or more big member states will only exist if it has positive geopolitical implications for these states. A common policy with economic consequences for one or more big member state(s) will only exist if the economic consequences are positive for these states.

Moravcsik's approach to European integration and to the actions of member states' governments in the EU has been very popular among the scholars, yet it also attracted some criticism. The most common argument is that liberal intergovernmentalism overestimates the influence of national governments, and hence understates the importance of supranational institutions, such as the European Commission and the role of international organisations (Nugent, 2006). Furthermore, there is criticism of Moravcsik's empirical research being focused solely on analysis of fundamental policies, such as the *Maastricht Treaty* and monetary integration. Indeed, in politically sensitive areas such as education policy, intergovernmentalism is half-hearted. Therefore, there is a growing interest among scholars in analysing the impact of soft governance, the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) in particular, on EU decision-making in education.

The OMC was established during the Lisbon Summit in March 2000, where the EU leaders projected the goal to turn the European economy into the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010. In contrast to a traditional EU's 'soft law' the OMC is highly political through a stronger role of the European Council – in policy formulation and monitoring (Borras & Jacobsson, 2004). It results in greater coherence of the EU's policies. The components of the OMC have been divided into steering mechanisms and steering forces (Grek et al., 2009). They include benchmarks, reference tools, frameworks, communications, conclusions and recommendations. As Grek and her colleagues emphasise, these policy tools are 'self-imposed' and 'self-adhered' therefore 'easier' to re-define, re-adjust and break down to national systems accordingly. It is argued that the OMC has "unequivocal effects on national politics through the articulation of common targets, the collection of comparable data on key indicators, the agreement on joint priorities, and valuable opportunities for mutual learning" (Weishaupt & Lack, 2011: 33). Nevertheless, the effective implementation of these objectives is controlled by the Council of the EU, with support from the Commission (Borras & Jacobsson, 2004). The Commission's role includes preparing proposals using the European Council guidelines; consulting on 'best practice'; preparing evaluation methods; and assuring coherence of the programme (Eggermont, 2012).

The complexity of the relationship between the EU and its members states has been exacerbated by the economic crisis of the late 2000s, changing the dynamics

of European integration process. The economic and social pressure on Eurozone countries, EU institutions and all member states has been growing following the collapse of European economies and rapid unemployment increases. It had a twofold effect on decision-making processes in the EU. On the one hand, uniform European integration was questioned – instead the option of a two-speed Europe, split on the basis of the level of economic and political integration, has been considered. On the other hand, it prompted the European Commission to call for deepening political integration within areas which fall within the competences of member states. President Barroso argued that "we need to accept that the increased economic interdependence demands also a more determined and coherent response at the political level" (José-Manuel Barroso, 2010: 2). Lifelong learning was acknowledged as an essential component of growth in Europe: "lifelong learning should be regarded as a fundamental principle underpinning the entire framework" (CEU, 2009: C 119/3). The pressure on the member states has been growing to make lifelong learning 'a reality'. All members agreed to meet the benchmark of an average of at least 15% of adults participating in lifelong learning by 2020 (CEU, 2009). The search for new solutions to the crisis, finding new educational opportunities for unemployed youth as well as the re-skilling of adults, resulted in an increased focus on lifelong learning.

It needs to be remembered that there is a growing tendency in the academic literature to avoid separating the national and the EU level of policymaking, due to an increasing intertwining of national preferences with the EU's through the consideration of common interests at the preference formation stage and socialisation process (Smith, 2004). Also, the process of globalisation requires the EU and its member states to employ a more coordinated approach to resolving policy issues. Unemployment for example is closely correlated with member states' education, lifelong learning and social policies. The hard law of the EU itself would not address this issue, but it requires the engagement of social partners, subnational authorities, and the mobilisation of knowledge and resources. It is here that the OMC may be most relevant (Borras & Jacobsson, 2004).

EDUCATION POLICY IN THE EU

Education in European countries had always been seen as a national affair. The education systems and objectives had been closely related with each country's history, political system and location. It has been perceived as an instrument for strengthening national identity and culture. The nation state also provided a major framework in the provision of formal education. However, due to the increasingly global character of the way national and supranational policy is created, education policymaking is increasingly framed by national economic imperatives and driven by the need to be globally competitive (Thomson et al., 2012). Global trends, including the strong relevance of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), guide the objectives of national policymaking in many

countries. The European Union has also become an influential actor in norm and standard setting for educational achievement. Nevertheless, it is argued that the EU is strongly driven by neo-liberal objectives and that policy initiatives providing neo-liberal policy solutions have a better chance of making their way to the top of political agendas (Baumgartner, 2007).

Furlong (2010) explains EU education policy in terms of a 'differentiated integration' concept. As member state education systems are characterised by diverse structures and processes, adherence to common EU objectives requires adopting different custom-built solutions. Each member state, thus, would use different baselines, change at different speeds and adopt separate institutional solutions. Nevertheless, the goals and benchmarks included in EU legislation and accepted by all EU members need to be adhered to.

It has to be emphasised that although the EU provides a platform for discussion, the exchange of ideas and a space where member states can 'share' policy ideas, developments in education policy in the EU, the Lisbon strategy in particular, have been founded on 'human capital' theory to develop Europe into 'the world's most competitive and dynamic, knowledge-based economic area' (European Council, 2000). The Lisbon strategy is at the centre of European economic policy. The advancement of education as a priority over the past two decades by incoming governments not only in Europe, but also in the USA (Clinton), and Australia (Rudd/ Gillard) indicates that it is seen by liberal democratic governments as a policy field that has potential social and economic returns that have become more difficult to achieve through policy instruments that were available in the pre-globalisation era. Such an approach is problematic as it regards education as a remedy for economic problems, which leads to vocationalisation and instrumentalisation of policies. Thomson and her colleagues (2012) for example, argue that policy objectives should be driven rather by "an imaginary of a better and more socially just future for all". Unlike a 'determinist view of a knowledge society' there is a need for developing the capacity to imagine a longer-term future where school has an authentic educational focus and where school "serves multiple, life-enhancing purposes through a rich array of pedagogic practices" (Thomson et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, as Holford and Mohorčič Špolar (2012) emphasise, the specificity of the EU, its governance architecture and policymaking processes, sets the EU apart from neoliberal-driven countries. The globalisation pressures and national interest advocated by each EU member state are strongly mediated by the 'actorness' of the EU: the number and variety of actors involved in education policymaking and implementation. It also includes Europeanisation processes which are not dominated by one institution, but rather remain a complex three-way force.

EUROPEANISATION

In recent years, Europeanisation has become a term commonly used in international relations, social sciences and particularly in European studies. The concept

of Europeanisation has been popular among the scholars of European studies, however the definition and applicability of the term has been strongly contested. Europeanisation is, in an important part, formed by "the transnationalism and the interdependence of the EU and of national administrative and governance systems", transforming both the EU and the member states (Murray, 2009). These transformations create an extensive area for the research of power and influence in the EU.

In the context of education policy, Lawn and Grek (2012: 8) emphasise how Europeanisation creates "transnational networks and flows of people, ideas and practices across European borders" leading to transformations of travel and social policies in unexpected ways. Europeanisation of education policy occurs at a national level where national political structure, administration, policy processes and policies are being 'oriented' into the European direction. It can present itself through the 'national adaptation', which is understood as a change of position or policy problem as a result of participation in common EU decision-making, in particular through the OMC. National level Europeanisation is specifically addressed by Milana in Chapter 4, but it is important to provide a definition and explain the full extent of the process.

The definition of Europeanisation predominantly used in political science studies of the EU is one that follows Claudio Radaelli:

> Europeanisation consists of processes of a) construction, b) diffusion and c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public policies. (Radaelli, 2004, A definition of Europeanisation, box 1)

Such an approach to Europeanisation focuses largely on the transformative effect of the EU governance system on the political institutions, policies, and political processes of member states. The OMC is a promising Europeanisation instrument as its mechanisms are based on learning and knowledge diffusion. Nevertheless, Europeanisation is not only a uni-directional, top-down process.

A significant number of political scientists perceive Europeanisation as a 'mutually constitutive' process of change. This suggests that Europeanisation is a two-way relationship between agency and structure where agency is transformed by participation in the EU structure, but at the same time agency is transforming EU processes and structure (Boerzel, 2003). Such an approach generates a growing interest in exploring other notions of Europeanisation such as the analysis of 'national inputs' of member states and their effect on EU policies and decision-making processes in the EU institutions (upwards process).

The 'national inputs' affecting EU policies and decision-making processes in the EU institutions, and the main point of access in the EU system for member states include policy design process, the negotiation stage, legitimation, the

implementation of the policies, and elite socialisation. One of the recent examples of national input into policymaking in the EU is a memorandum for introducing a vocational education system based on Germany's model signed, on the invitation from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, by Spain, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Slovakia and Latvia, in association with the European Commission (Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 2013). The initiative targets the countries where youth unemployment grew to dramatic proportions. The process is supported by the European Commission and may be further developed under its wings.

Scholars also recognise that the Europeanisation process refers not only to the vertical dimension (EU-member state); it is also characterised by horizontal dynamics (nation state-nation state). The horizontal dynamics result from the exchange of ideas, power and policies between member states' actors, created by the context provided by the EU. The horizontal process creates a culture of cooperation, which includes the harmonisation of ideas and policies between the member states or between a member state and a non-member state. Horizontal linkages put pressure on actors without the involvement of supranational institutions. Horizontal cooperation may also create linkages to other transnational organisations and non-EU members. According to Bulmer and Radaelli (2005), the horizontal pattern of Europeanisation is particularly witnessed in the areas where the supranational institutions are less influential, and cooperation and mutual learning prevails between member states. In policy areas where the national governments are the key actors, where decisions are subject to unanimity amongst the governments, or where the EU is simply an arena for the exchange of ideas, supranational institutions have very weak powers and they cannot act as strong agents promoting Europeanisation.

There is growing evidence of cross-national learning at sub-national levels between the state or national communities - mostly driven by the EU's education mobility programmes (Ilsøe, 2008). Horizontal Europeanisation also takes place through regional platforms. For example, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, or the Visegrad Group where cooperation within these organisations and with other EU members has provided not only an additional forum for discussing issues related to the common region, but also provided a forum for consultation on the positions to be negotiated at the EU level. The Visegrad Group Ministers for Education, from Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia, meet regularly to discuss common priorities and goals. Recently these Ministers shared their opinions on how to improve the quality and transparency of tertiary education through reforms and system changes enhancing public confidence in tertiary education as a whole as well as in particular universities (Visegrad Group, 2011). Its objective was a common strategy to improve the results of their universities in international comparisons. The participants agreed on several common steps, including setting quality standards and professionalisation of accrediting agencies; introducing a transparent system of information access; and establishing a working group of Visegrad Group Ministries, aimed at modernisation of the tertiary education area, including through evaluation.

Although the effects of three dimensional processes of Europeanisation may be observed at regional or state levels of government they are increasingly influential through the thick web of networks and spaces, "providing European solutions to European problems" (Lawn & Grek, 2012: 15). Europeanisation of education policy results in creation of the European space of education where governance subjects, formally or informally, act as "points of distribution for the ideas of Europeanisation" (ibid.).

EU AS A NORMATIVE POWER

The scholarly literature, analysing the EU's actorness and influence, portrays the EU as an actor that promotes a series of normative principles. The EU's normative principles, such as democracy, human rights, the rule of law, peace and freedom are generally acknowledged within the United Nations system, and are clearly set out in the *Treaty on European Union* (1992):

> RECALLING the historic importance of the ending of the division of the European continent and the need to create firm bases for the construction of the future Europe, CONFIRMING their attachment to the principles of liberty, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and of the rule of law, DESIRING to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions. (TEU, 1992, No C191/1)

It is important to note that "norms do not emerge out of thin air; they are actively built by agents having strong notions about appropriate or desirable behaviour in their community" (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998: 896). In this way, the EU becomes a stronger normative actor when member states themselves promote norms. Norms set standards of international behaviour. On the basis of the EU's collection of attitudes and values over the years, the EU has been described as a civilian power, a soft power and, more recently, as a normative power. The idea of the EU's civilian power, proposed by Duchêne (1973), referred to the EU's ability to extend its own model of stability and security through economic and political rather than military means. On the other hand, Nye's (2004) famous definition of 'soft power' as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" was related to forms of policy influence which relied on the power of attraction deriving from culture, political values and legitimate policies.

More recently, the most prominent expression of the normative nature of the EU has been the work of Manners (2002, 2006). Introducing the idea of the EU as a normative power, Manners described the EU as a policy actor intent on shaping, instilling, diffusing – and thus 'normalising' – rules and values in international affairs through non-coercive means. The normative power approach is visible in the EU's official texts and discourses that make similar claims about the Union's role in world politics.

The notion of the EU's normative power does relate to the norms promoted by supranational institutions, but it first and foremost relates to the promotion of norms by EU members themselves. If member states also act as 'norm advocates' and comply with the norms they propagate, then the EU's norm promotion becomes more convincing. Many international norms began as domestic norms and became international through the efforts of entrepreneurs of various kinds (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Militarily weak and economically dependent small states, in particular, play a significant role in strengthening global codes of appropriate behaviour by acting as 'norm entrepreneurs' in the international community (Ingebritsen, 2002). The term 'norm entrepreneur' relates to any policymaker, agenda-setter or institution committed to a certain idea and able to shape the collective behaviour of others. Such a promoter of a notion purposely favours the selected idea over others, which derives from either the norm entrepreneur's identity or its particular interests. The role of norm entrepreneurs has been attributed to Scandinavian countries, in particular, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Their remote geographic position, limited material capabilities and unique identities provide them with normative policy objectives.

Although normative power is not widely accepted as an objective analytical concept, it provides the EU with an identity based on the image of a positive force in world politics. The EU presents the potential to transform policymaking by acting as norm entrepreneur. Norm entrepreneurship, as a conceptual approach, has been successfully applied by European integration scholars in EU foreign policy studies. Recently, the concept has also been used in the context of education policy. Kleibrink (2011) argues that the EU successfully acted as norm entrepreneur in neighbouring states that were economically less developed by establishing its view of lifelong learning policy as a norm. The regional diffusion of such a norm resulted in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) becoming a regionally accepted meta-framework. Furthermore the EU has played a role in establishing and diffusing a particular language relating to education. As Fredriksson (2003: 526) notes: "'indicators', 'benchmarks' and 'benchmarking' did not formerly have a very precise and clear meaning in the education sector, but they are now".

In the area of education policy, however, the EU's normative power image has been questioned. Some scholars have perceived the EU not so much as a 'force for good', but as an imperialising power (Robertson, 2009), a driver of globalisation (Dale, 2009) or a promoter of neoliberal imaginary powered by improved human capital and better skills (Thomson et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, the EU has become an influential actor in norm and standard setting for education achievement. Grek and her colleagues (2009) argue that the EU is a "friendlier face of globalisation" as it offers a quality assurance framework and 'best practice' advice without interfering in national 'curriculum' standards. Indeed, it provides a platform for discussion, an exchange of ideas and a space where smaller, less powerful nation states can raise their voices, and contribute to policy development and strengthening of the rule of law in neighbouring non-EU countries.

CONCLUSION

Processes of education policy development in Europe are no longer located within the political, historical and cultural context of a single nation state. They are mediated by an emergent EU education policy space. Education policy in Europe is a result of mutual constitutiveness of agents and structures. National policies of member states can no longer be analysed in terms of independent and dependent variables, as the relationship is increasingly mediated.

Opening the 'black-box' of decision-making within EU institutions requires an understanding of the interactions between various national interests, identities and the interests of the actors involved in the process. In-depth understanding of the inner workings of the EU institutional system is imperative as the nature of education policymaking is no longer the same. Although the infiltration of the member states' policy preferences into the EU is significant, particularly in the Council of Ministers, the role of supranational institutions, such as the European Commission, has risen significantly. The drive towards greater uniformity has taken a form of 'regulation by networks' – networking national officials in issue-specific arenas and also engaging number of interest groups, social partners and associations working in education creating a space for network governance.

The tendency towards a more coordinated approach to resolving policy issues has also been exacerbated by the growing role of soft governance in EU decision-making – the OMC in particular. The OMC affects national policies through the articulation of common targets, the collection of comparable data on key indicators and the joint priorities, which support constant comparison and the possibility of peer pressure.

The transnationalism and the interdependence of the EU, and of national administrative and governance systems, remains an important factor in the growth of Europeanisation. Europeanisation focuses on three-way transformative effects on policymaking with a strong influence of supranational actors, the 'input' of nation states, as well as the horizontal exchanges between nation states created by the context provided by the EU. Europeanisation of education policy results in creation of the European space of education where governance actors distribute the Europeanisation ideas in formal or informal ways.

There is also an on-going debate on what kind of 'actor' the EU really is. It has been described as having civilian power, soft power and more recently normative power. In the area of education policy, however, the EU's normative power image has been questioned with perceptions of the EU as being an imperialising power or promoting a neoliberal imaginary, powered by improved human capital and better skills. Nevertheless, the EU has become an influential actor in norm and standard setting for educational achievement.

The political science perspective provides education policy researchers with a policymaking context on increasingly complex technical and bureaucratic forms of policy change in the European Union. It provides an understanding of governance

architecture and the complex relationships between the EU and its member states, which are transforming education policy in a range of complicated ways. Researching education policy benefits from including political science perspectives, and in particular, the use of concepts like Europeanisation, norm entrepreneurship and supranational or national perspectives. Understanding the complexity of the decision-making system, the inner workings of the EU institutions and the three-way process of Europeanisation can be utilised by education policy scholars to effectively clarify the context of policy analysis on local, national and supranational levels. As the European space for education grows into existence the governance, ideas, networks and agents ruling this space become increasingly relevant in policy analysis. Policy outcomes scrutinised by national governments will also result and will have a direct effect on education policy space construction.

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EUROPEANISATION AND THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE (EUROPEAN) STATE

Implications for Studying Adult and Lifelong Education

INTRODUCTION

Drawing on contributions from state theory, European studies and education, this chapter problematises how the changing nature of the state restricts or amplifies member states' political space. In particular, part one outlines how changes that occurred with the European Union (EU) led to the subsidiarity principle in education to be by-passed, generating a new scenario for European policy work in education. Although this process, generally captured under the label of Europeanisation, has reinforced a shift in legitimate authority from member states to EU institutions, my argument is that the authoritative backing of political agencies from within member states is still an important aspect of EU policy work. Against this scenario, part two pays close attention to the organisational means by which the state works, so as to capture the changing nature of legitimate authority by and within member states. Here I argue that European policy work in education is increasingly a matter of individual, organisational and inter-systemic negotiation and coordination across member states (and its array of political agencies) and the EU (and its diverse political institutions) as a pooling of sovereignty. The chapter concludes with a few considerations on the implications of bringing the state back into the study of adult and lifelong education policies in Europe. Specifically, this implies raising a rather different set of questions from those addressed when either excluding or underestimating member states' political space.

EUROPEANISATION, EU-ISATION AND THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY

Education is an area that falls within the exclusive competence of member states; thus it is subject to the principle of subsidiarity. While this legal position might easily lead to the assumption that European policy work in education has not changed over the last 20 years, it has, dramatically! Starting with a brief account of EU competence in this area, I proceed to unpack the changes that have led the EU to by-pass (to a certain extent) the principle of subsidiarity in education, which in turn has reinforced a shift in legitimate authority from member states to EU institutions. Despite this shift, however, I argue that the EU still needs the authoritative backing of political agencies within member states.

A Glance at the Treaties

In 2010 education (and vocational training) was recalled in the *Treaty Establishing the European Community* (now *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*) as among the competence areas of the EU that are subject to the subsidiarity principle.

> The Union shall have competence to carry out actions to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the member States. The areas of such action shall, at European level, be: . . . (e) education, vocational training, youth and sport (TFEU, 2010, art. 6).[2]

Yet the specificity of EU action in this area, prior to its having been incorporated in the *Treaty Establishing the European Community* (2010), was already spelled out in the *Treaty on European Union* (1992), better known as the *Maastricht Treaty* (see also Rasmussen, this volume).

> The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organization of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity (TEU, 1992, ch. 3, art. 126, para. 1).[3]

Article 126 (now art. 149) has remained unchanged in its wording ever since; and so has the principle of subsidiarity. Yet, several scholars have devoted attention to the subtle dynamics that can explain the vivid changes that have occurred in European policy work.

Europeanisation Through Education

In the words of Grek and her colleagues:

> Europeanization is the process of formation of the European Union, the processes which are attached loosely or formally to this formation, or set in motion by it (Grek at al., 2009: 112).

The specificity of such a process of formation of the European Union has been addressed by Klatt (this volume). My concern here is how Europeanisation mingles with education.

The creation of a European education space had started long before the appearance of the EU. Its grounding principles can be found in post-1945 Europe, when educationalists from Europe, either in their capacity as professionals, researchers or policymakers, networked across borders, partly thanks to inputs by major comparative educationalists (Lawn & Grek, 2012). A key turning point for institutionalising the exchanges of knowledge and ideas around a European Educational Space, Pépin (2006) claims, can be found in *For a Community Policy on Education (1973)*; a

report commissioned to Henri Janne, former Belgian Minister of Education. As we can read in its Preface:

> The Commission of the European Communities, realizing that its responsibility for developing Community policies extends to the field of education . . . asked Professor Henri Janne . . . to formulate the first principles of an education policy at Community level . . . The Members of the Commission of the European Communities welcomed the report enthusiastically . . . particularly as the new Commission attaches so much significance to the questions of education policy it has to deal with (Janne, 1973: 5).

The report renders explicit how a Community education policy is in line with the *Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community* (1957), better known as the *Treaty of Rome* due to its links with the economic need for training at a time of Community expansion.

> Thus there is 'awareness' of the fact that the economic (and therefore 'professional') needs for training are not separable from the education system in general . . . Coherence in one field calls for coherence in the other, and an operation of 'approximation' or 'harmonization' of the policies – carried out with the necessary prudence – is indispensable (Janne, 1973: 11).

The policy principles of 'approximation' or 'harmonisation' have since been at the core of the European Educational Space, and have been promoted over time via cross-European projects and activities run in partnership between a multiplicity of European associations of universities, schools, trade unions etc., with the support of the European Commission. By the late '90s, the development of specific programmes such as Erasmus, Socrates, Leonardo, and Comenius had come to play a major role in supporting joint Europe-wide education projects across sectors (Lawn & Grek, 2012; Pépin, 2006).

This confirms that networking, cross-dissemination of ideas, and brokering across national borders, institutions, educational sub-systems, and productive sectors has always been centrally backed in the formation of a European Educational Space (Dale & Robertson, 2009; Grek et al., 2009), and continues to be so, also thanks to the creation of stronger links across specific programmes under the Lifelong Learning (now Erasmus+) programme (see Rasmussen, this volume). However, it is the 2000 Lisbon summit that represents a landmark in EU policy work in education, as we have come to know it in current times. At the Lisbon summit the Heads of EU governments approved a common strategy that

> Implicitly give[s] the Union the mandate to develop a common interest approach in education going beyond national diversities as can be seen in the demand of Ministries of Education to debate common objectives of educational systems (Hingel, 2001: 15).

Accordingly, Ertl (2006) called the Strategy a "turning point" in the process of "unionization" (Nóvoa & de Jong-Lambert, 2003) of education policies – in an

area that is still officially within the exclusive competence of member states. In line with this argument, Nóvoa (2002: 133) spoke of the Strategy as the precondition for the EU to function as "a regulatory ideal" because it gives the EU a power to influence national policies that goes beyond existing diversity in national education and training systems, and thus by-passes the subsidiarity principle.

To date there is a shared consensus among educationalists that the Lisbon summit represents a landmark in the history of EU policy work in education, and very few, if any, would call it into question. Although not enforced via binding regulations, directives, or decisions[4], EU leverage occurs through new governance mechanisms; mechanisms that were introduced by Directorates General other that the Directorate General for Education and Culture, but institutionalised at the Lisbon summit also for the governance of education (Bruno, Jacquot & Mandin, 2006). Accordingly, much post-Lisbon policy research has brought to the foreground the functioning of these new governance mechanisms, against the background of Europeanisation as its driving force. This however has often closed off considerations of political agency by and within member states; political agency that exists despite and sometimes by means of these very mechanisms. Let me elaborate on this statement by pointing at a few issues emerging from European studies literature.

Europeanisation versus EU-isation.   Europeanisation is by and large assumed to be the totality of political, legal and social processes that constitutes and explains both the cause and effect of the EU (see quotation from Grek and her colleagues above); the emergence and development of "distinct structures of governance . . . specializing in the creation of authoritative European rules" (Risse, Cowles & Caporaso, 2000: 3) that direct and shape national politics (Ladrech, 1994: 69). Such "conceptual stretching", as Radaelli (2002) pointed out, is primarily concerned with the identification of the set of qualities covered under the umbrella of Europeanisation, that is to say the extension to which the concept applies, rather than with clarifying the type of entities to which Europeanisation applies, namely its conceptual intentions. As a result, a certain degree of Europeanisation is found everywhere in the literature, often without clarifying what falls outside such a concept. This recalls what Sartori (1991) addressed as "degreeism", specifically the problem of a concept that does not distinguish between A and B, but rather addresses the entire A-B continuum. While theoretically relevant, degreeism tends to reduce the analytical power of a concept. It is in line with this argument that Radaelli (2002: 105) coined "EU-isation" to capture, specifically, the national effect of EU public policy.

From this viewpoint, Europeanisation is an all-encompassing concept that incorporates both EU policy formation processes and their outcomes. EU-isation, on the contrary, focuses specifically on mechanisms for public policy formation within the EU that work either vertically or horizontally. While the former makes reference to policies that are defined at an EU level and prescribes models to be implemented at a national level, through pressure and/or coercive mechanisms, the latter addresses changes in domestic policies that are triggered by policies defined at the EU level. Accordingly, EU-isation captures and explains better both policy convergence and

policy divergence. In other words, despite the EU's harmonising intentions, EU-isation draws attention to differential changes in domestic policy that weaken, alarm or strengthen EU member states (Börzel, 1999: 111).

Shift in authority.   No agreement exists on whether or not the EU should be considered a 'state'. Yet, there is a certain degree of accord around the fact that the EU "possess[es] governmental institutions and policy-making machinery and therefore invites comparison with known state forms" (Delanty & Rumford, 2005: 137). When we consider traditional state functions, such as the existence of a political-administrative system, the regulation of relations between individuals and collectives within a given territory, and the steering of socio-political development in the pursuit of a 'common good', the EU – in some measure – acts as a state-like institution (see also next section). Against this background, as Caporaso and Wittenbrinck (2006) pointed out, it is important to distinguish between the institutions that make laws and the process of law-making. When we extend such an observation more broadly to policymaking processes, thus incorporating also norm-setting, agenda-setting, and policy implementations processes, it is worth noticing that EU institutions, their interactions and outcomes need the authoritative backing of member states. In view of that, we shall acknowledge that the influence of EU institutions is "more in devising the proper tools, and less in negotiating an intergovernmental compromise, so as to achieve a consensus on strategic goals set in Lisbon" (Bruno et al., 2006: 521). At the same time, we shall not underestimate that devising and applying these tools or new government mechanisms also requires authoritative backing in one form or another. As a result, new governance mechanisms have undoubtedly shifted "patterns of authority and legitimacy in the EU" (Caporaso & Wittenbrinck, 2006: 474), and require more backing by expert authority such as from the European Commission (see also Klatt, this volume). Still, authority from legislative to executive powers within member states has also shifted, as Duina and Raunio (2007) contended, at least with reference to the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) (see Rasmussen, this volume). By recognising that the OMC tends to marginalise the participation of national parliaments in favour of national governments in EU policy formation processes, Duina and Raunio (2007) argued that the same mechanism "introduces new possibilities and dynamics in the institutional power struggles of the member states". This is to suggest that knowledge produced though the OMC could be used by domestic legislative powers to better scrutinise and / or contrast their executive counterparts, so "at a time when national legislatures worldwide increasingly seem to lose relevance, the OMC can potentially give NPs [National Parliaments] new grounds for asserting themselves" (Duina & Raunio, 2007: 497).

Member states' bargaining power.   Member states still possess a certain degree of bargaining power in EU policy work; however their degree of success may depend on a number of factors. Arregui and Thompson (2009) drew special attention to a few perspectives of decision-making within the EU that help elucidate this point. One such

factor is *member states' network relations with other states*, or the depth and breadth of cooperation in which a member state is involved, independently from its size or total population. Naurin and Lindhal (2008) noted, for instance, that big countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom and France, as well as smaller countries like Sweden, Denmark or the Netherlands, possess a higher stock of network capital than, for instance, Spain or Italy. Another factor is *member states' interest in prioritising the issue under negotiation at the European level*. An additional factor is *country size*, as small member states tend to have narrower interests, and thus clearer policy priorities, as compared to their bigger counterparts. Finally, an important factor is *member states' salience* or "the extent to which a state is willing to put into effect its capabilities to influence other actors" (Arregui & Thompson, 2009: 671). These capacities include, but are not limited to, all those resources, relevant to the situation or issue at stake, which can be used to exert power. One such resource is the rotating Council presidency, as presidents have privileged access to knowledge about other member states' positions, and thus are in a better position to craft compromise proposals that are as close as possible to their own position on a matter of common concern. Yet, the holding of the Council presidency, after the 2004 enlargement, seems to bring less opportunity for the presidency to exert bargaining power, as a higher effort is often needed to facilitate agreements between a larger number of states with more diverse positions, rather than on the pursuit of a presidency's own country interests (Arregui & Thompson, 2009).

It shall be noted that Arregui and Thompson's (2009) line of reasoning derives from the study of congruence and incongruence between the outcomes from EU legislative decision-making on controversial issues, and member states' policy positions on such issues. Although Education is exempt from these legislative processes, but because the subsidiarity principle has been by-passed, it is reasonable to assume that these factors also affect, to some extent, consultation processes leading to soft law instruments, such as strategic documents approved by the Heads of EU governments (e.g. Lisbon strategy, 2010) or Communications and Action plans by the European Commission, later approved under Resolutions by either the European Parliament (e.g. Resolution on Adult Learning, 2008) or the European Council (e.g. Resolution on Lifelong Learning, 2002; Resolution on a Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning, 2011). In fact, according to consultation procedures, when the European Commission makes a proposal to the European Parliament or the European Council, these institutions can only change the proposal unanimously or approve it by either qualified majority votes or unanimity. For that reason, expert authority by the European Commission can support or counteract member states' bargaining power, depending on whether or not member states hold similar positions to that of the European Commission, or have been able to exert influence on the European Commission's position.

Direct and outside lobbying.   From within member states diverse interest groups lobby EU policy, either directly or via leverage on national governments. When it comes to specifically lobbying EU legislation at both the European and national

levels, Dür and Mateo (2012) suggested that the interest groups that reach out more strongly at the EU level are those that are more influential at the national level. Such interest groups can either lobby EU institutions, particularly the European Commission or the European Parliament, or national political actors, who will defend their interest within those institutions. The literature on lobbying also suggests that interest groups' success depends on the type and amount of resources (e.g. financial means, legitimacy, representation, knowledge and expertise, and information). Thus, business organisations gain better access to both the European Commission and national governments via direct lobbying, while citizens and citizenship associations have a stronger sway on national parliaments via outside lobbying aimed at influencing public opinion. In line with this argument, diverse interest groups have a variety of options to exert leverage with either EU and national governments, or national political programmes and legislation by elected parliaments, on educational as well as other matters.

In sum, in the post-Lisbon period the principle of subsidiarity in education has been by-passed to a certain degree thanks to a shift in legitimate authority from member states to shared institutions at the European level, as recent literature on Europeanisation and education also points out. Yet such emphases tend to underestimate that political agencies within member states also provide authoritative backing to the work of EU institutions; a backing that is played out by a multiplicity of political agencies, which include parliaments, governments and other interest groups active at both national and European levels. Member states' backing occurs through different means, such as direct or outside lobbying, which are resource-dependent; backing therefore varies across both sets of political actors and countries. Accordingly, new government mechanisms do not necessarily diminish member states' authority *tout court*; rather they weaken, trigger or strengthen the legitimate authority of a specific set of political actors from within member states. Legitimate authority, and how it plays out in EU-member states' relations, necessitates deeper understandings of the changing nature of the modern state.

THE STATE, ITS CHANGING NATURE AND EUROPEAN MEMBERSHIP

The modern state is traditionally understood as the embodiment of organised political power, which is exercised through a set of arrangements with the scope to control specific fields of action (Poggi, 1990). Against the scenario depicted in the prior section, however, my attention here turns to the organisational means by which the state works, so as to capture the changing nature of legitimate authority by and within member states. With a point of departure in Weber's (1978) conceptualisation of legitimate authority, I introduce Jessop's (2007) approach to the state, and bring to light the functioning of strategic selectivity. By combining such perspectives with a multi-scalar governance approach, my position is that European policy work in education in the post-Lisbon period is increasingly a matter of individual, organisational and inter-systemic negotiation and coordination across member states

(and its array of political agencies) and the EU as a pooling of sovereignty (and its diverse political institutions).

The State and its Legitimate Authority

According to Weber (1970: 77-78) there is scarcely any task that some political association has not taken in hand, and there is no task that one could say has always been exclusive and peculiar to those associations designated as political ones. Yet, what distinguishes the modern state from other political associations is its organisational structure based on a few principles:

– "a monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force" (Weber, 1978: 54). Although such a monopoly may never be fully accomplished, the state is the only legitimising source who grants the 'right' to use physical force;
– a territorially-based organisation. Modern states, in fact, occupy clearly defined physical spaces;
– a binding authority in the area of its jurisdiction, embodied by the very idea that no other political agent can contrast the will of the sovereign state within its territorial boundaries; and
– an administrative and legislative organisation by which sovereignty is exercised, which in Weber's (1978) words is "bureaucratic" in its very essence. Public bureaucracy is based on a hierarchy that defines state officials' responsibilities, on the adoption of fixed rules and procedures, on specialised knowledge or expertise of administrative procedures, on impartial applications of general rules to particular cases, and last but not least, on state officials acting according to the public office they occupy, rather than in their personal capacity.

In order to appraise the organisational means of the modern state as a particular political organisation, however, its authority and legitimacy becomes fundamental. Authority has been traditionally defined as:

. . . the probability of certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of persons . . . every genuine form of domination implies a minimum of voluntary compliance, that is an *interest* (based on ulterior motives or genuine acceptance) in obedience (Weber, 1978: 212, emphasis in original text).

Depending on its grounding, authority can be legal, charismatic or traditional. Legal authority rests on "an established belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands" (Weber, 1978: 215). Traditional authority is based on the inviolability of traditions and the authority of those ruling under them. Charismatic authority derives from the exemplary character of an individual. While legal authority is the most frequently found in the modern state, other forms of authority can also be found in those political structures with rotating office holders, such as "Parliamentary and committee administration

and all sorts of collegiate and administrative bodies" (Weber, 1958: 3). This is the case, for instance, with the rotating Council presidency of the EU. Independently from its origins, an authority that receives popular acceptance is what constitutes 'legitimacy'. By combining these aspects, the term 'legitimate authority' refers to an effective authority that is accepted by those who are subject to it. Legislation, and public policy more broadly, are the primary means by which the state's legitimate authority is exercised.

It is generally agreed upon that a state refers to people sharing a common government and territory, while a nation is generally defined as a community of people sharing a common language, culture, ethnicity, descent or history. It should be noted, however, that since the Peace of Westphalia, European states' legitimate authority has been secured also through an intentional effort of coupling a government with its people in geographically demarcated territories that at least share and enforce a common predominant language, culture, and historical narrative. This effort, however, has been challenged to such an extent that some speak of the rise of a post-Westphalian model where

> National governments are no longer the only source of policy authority . . . The bureaucratic administrative state also has been replaced by polycentric arrangements involving both public and private interests (Rizvi & Lingard, 2011: 117).

Within the European region, examples of such polycentric arrangements are constituted by the pooling sovereignty of the EU, and its institutions.[5] From an empirical viewpoint this raises the question of how European states can uphold legitimate authority while acquiring EU membership. Recent theories of the state, to which I now turn, can help elucidate this point.

Recent Theories of the State

Although not exempt from controversies, a review of recent theories of the state highlights that

> The state should not be taken as a free-standing entity, whether as agent, instrument, organisation or structure, located apart from and opposed to another entity called society (Mitchell, 1991: 95, as cited in Pierson, 2004: 77).

Accordingly, the state is the site for different political agents to act intentionally and strategically; however access to such a site is gained by certain agents and not others, given their structural position or privilege. Among the most important factors giving or preventing access to the state are economic resources, political resources, knowledge and gender.

Against this background, the traditional definition of the state as an 'organised political power' still holds true, however, the organisational means and modalities through which it exercises such power in diverse societies are always the resultant of contingent factors and global forces.

This perspective questions the traditional dichotomy between the self-reproductive nature of the state apparatus and the role of agency in transforming the state system. Poulantzas (1978), for instance, suggested that, as an "institutional ensemble", the state has no power in itself. State power results from the balance between social forces that act within and upon such an ensemble, and which depends on particular institutional forms. Accordingly, class contradictions are reproduced within the state apparatus, as evidenced by public policies that are often incoherent and / or of a disorganised character. However, the complex dialectic between state structure and social forces, emphasised by Poulantzas, also produces a general (though contingent) political direction, which is the resultant of a 'strategic' organisation of the state. In other words, a general political direction in the exercise of state power does not result from a single logic but rather from a clash between diverse strategies and tactics.

> In this sense Poulantzas resorts to what one might call a strategic causality which explains state policy in terms of process of strategic calculation without a calculating subject (Jessop, 1990: 257).

A Strategic-Relational Perspective

Further elaboration of the state as a "complex social process" (Jessop, 1990: 5) can be found in Jessop's (1990, 2002, 2007) distinctive "strategic-relational" approach to the state. Jessop's point of departure is the state as a set of institutions and system of political domination, according to the Marxist tradition. However, the relation between state institutional structures and class struggles for Jessop are always contingent, as determined by temporally and spatially defined social conjunctures. Jessop's point of view abandons the Marxist view of a 'relatively autonomous' state with respect to forces located elsewhere, and he additionally rejects the supremacy of class and economy. Also, inspired by Poulantzas' strategic causality, Jessop's arguments consider the state as the resultant of intentional action through which political agents pursue particular 'projects'; however such capacity

> . . . is not inscribed in the state system as such. Instead it depends upon the relation between state structures and the strategies which various [social] forces adopt towards it (Jessop, 1989, as cited in Pierson, 2004: 62).

This results in a 'dialectic duality' between structure and agency. Structures are always spatially and temporally defined horizons of actions defining the context in which agents' strategically calculated and structurally oriented action is possible. Accordingly, political action is the resultant of the interplay between institutional materialities and agents' interactions with others (Jessop, 1990). From this perspective, state power is a complex phenomenon that

> . . . can serve at best to identify the production of significant 'effects' . . . through the interaction of specific social forces within the limits implied in the prevailing set of structural constrains (Jessop, 2007: 29).

Jessop's emphasis of state 'effects' highlights the existence not of a unified state, but rather of structural and strategic factors that contribute to the realisation of (competing) state projects, from which some political strategies will be privileged over others at the time that they interact. Thus, while the structure upon which these effects rest is 'determined', the effects as such are at all times 'contingent'. Accordingly, an analysis of state power requires attention to the organisation, modes of calculation, resources, strategies and tactics by different agents as well as relations between these agents, while taking into consideration both structural constraints and conjunctural opportunities from a 'comparative advantage' perspective. As a result, among viable structural alternatives at a given conjuncture, a situation, action or event is in the interest of a specific agent when it secures a net increase or smaller net decrease of the conditions that guarantee its existence (Jessop, 2007: 30).

These reflections suggest that state actions should not be attributed to the state as an originating subject but should be understood as the emergent, unintended and complex resultant of what rival 'states within the state' have done and are doing, on a complex strategic terrain (Jessop, 1990: 9).

In other words, the state is always the resultant of the balance between social forces that are spatially and temporally situated. This implies that rather than being embedded in the state system, the differential capacity of political agents to pursue their own interests within a time horizon is dependent on the complex relations between the strategies that these agents adopt, as well as on specific state structures. Thus the state cannot be reduced to an autonomous actor in relation to others, as its action is determined by the very nature of the broader social relations in which it is situated.

In line with this argument, the state simultaneously represents the site, the generator and the product of 'strategic selectivity'. As a site of strategic selectivity, any given state's type, form or regime is more or less accessible to certain political agents, and not others, depending on the strategies these agents adopt in their strive to power. As a generator of strategic selectivity, politicians and state officials adopt strategies to impose some kind of unity or coherence on the state's activities. Finally, as a product of strategic selectivity, any given state's type, form or regime always results from past political strategies and struggles, thus current political strategies embed past patterns of strategic selectivity as well as their reproductive or transformative potentials (Jessop, 1990, 2007).

In his later work, Jessop (2007) combined the dialogical relationship between structure and agency with that of ideation and materiality, recognising the relevance of discursive selectivity in the pursuit of strategic selectivity. From this perspective, the emergence, selection, retention, contestation and replacement of discourses, although based on social imaginaries, always resonate to a certain extent with the agents' material experience, and thus provide cognitive templates that interact with strategic selectivity at the intersection between structural constraints and conjunctural opportunities.

> In sum, in the same way that a given context is strategically selective – selecting for, but never determining, certain strategies over others – it is also discursively-selective – selecting for, but never determining, the discourses

through which it might be appropriated (Hay, 2001, Discursive selectivity: The place for ideas section, para. 6).

Summing up, I argue that from a strategic-relational perspective any EU member state represents distinct political agents whose materiality results in an ensemble of institutions and organisations exercising power to serve specific functions. However, the organisational means and modality through which this ensemble exercises power at national as well as EU levels are by necessity geographically and historically determined. Legitimate authority remains a central concern for any member state to exercise power over its territory as well as over the extended European territory, but it no longer only relies on bureaucratic principles; it depends on strategic selectivity (structural and discursive) by privileged political agencies and the adoption of diversified means that are contextually relevant. Nonetheless, strategic selectivity (thus, member state activity) is dependent on the links or relations that a member state has with other institutions and organisations within and beyond its core ensemble, at national, inter-national and regional levels. Accordingly, forms and mechanisms through which member states participate in the activity of the EU and its institutions (as well as the effects of such participation) are spatially and temporally determined by strategic and discursive selectivity. EU membership can act as a conjunctural opportunity for member states to (re)gain (national) legitimate authority, at the same time as it can act as a structural constraint, in favour of the EU, acting as a state-like institution. State-like institutions define or implement collective decisions affecting member states, and their relative populations, in the name of a shared (inter-state) common interest. Klatt (this volume) depicts this occurrence via hard and soft law mechanisms. Further, as Reinalda and Kulesza (2006) recall, from a judicial perspective, even when ratified by member states on a voluntary basis, collective decisions still represent a formal agreement binding their signatories to cross-national cooperation. This underpins processes of European governance, to which I shall now turn attention.

Member States and Multi-Scalar Governance

European governance makes reference to diverse modes of coordination of activities that are inter-dependent, thus suggesting that governing – the traditionally exclusive business of individual member states – is increasingly a matter of negotiated decision-making that occurs within, as well as beyond and across, member states via formal as well as informal interactions with EU institutions and non-state actors. Still some of the 'blind spots' of governance, which studies have more broadly defined (Lemke, 2007), also apply here. Of particular relevance is the assumption of the object of governance as pre-defined or independent of governance mechanisms, which in turn underestimates the role of strategic selectivity by a whole range of actors (see Jessop, 2007). In doing so, European governance is assumed by some to be a heterarchic alternative to hierarchic (state-centred) governing forms and mechanisms, with no due recognition to indirect forms and mechanisms of cooperative governance, within and across member states. When authority is contingent and historically constructed, and norms and ideas

are used as tools of power by member states, EU institutions and non-state actors, it is worth questioning the organisation of the conditions for European governance which contrast hierarchical (state-based) modes of governing. Jessop (1998, 2002) distinguished between three types of heterarchy or multi-scalar governance:

– *Interpersonal exchanges* (or meta-exchanges) that occur between individuals who may not have the mandate to make commitments on behalf of the organisations to which they belong;
– *Self-organisation of inter-organisational relations* (or meta-organisation), which represents a strategic alliance among institutions and organisations who share perceived joint interests and work to achieve mutual benefits; and
– *Inter-systemic steering* (or meta-heterarchy) that also takes place among institutions and organisations but is used to strengthen mutual understanding and avoid negative repercussions of individual decisions upon others.

Although distinctive, these forms of multi-scalar governance are not mutually exclusive, and can support one another.

In synthesis, by dismantling old assumptions that member states are major political actors and discrete sovereign unities, European governance, rather than the working of governments, has come to the surface. European governance highlights how governing is increasingly a matter of negotiated decision-making that occurs via interactions by a multiplicity of actors, who use norms and ideas as tools of power and authority. Still, with its primary focus on EU institutions, European studies sometimes dismiss member states as active players and the EU as a pooling sovereignty. A strategic-relational perspective to the state combined with a multi-scalar governance approach moves beyond this impasse. Further, it suggests at least three levels at which negotiation and coordination across member states (and an array of political agencies) and the EU (and its diverse political institutions) takes place: individual, organisational and inter-systemic.

CONCLUSION

Institutional changes that have occurred at the EU level – with a view of the EU as an institution which pools sovereignty – and in its operational workings have increased EU political agency in education, yet have also redefined the contours of political agencies within member states. Broadly addressed under the label of Europeanisation, the ways these changes affect public policy work on adult and lifelong education is hard to capture. The main argument brought forward in this chapter to overcome this conundrum is to refocus attention on the reciprocal power relation between the EU and its members states, under European governance, through a process that glues and blends these elements together. Moving in this direction implies:

1. Recognition of the distinctive nature of EU policy formation processes and the outcomes of such processes that reverberate within international and national contexts.

2. Acknowledgment of more subtle shifts in legitimate authority within the EU, both through the changing nature of its pooled sovereignty – relations between member states and EU – and through shifts in the relationships between and within the EU's representative institutions (i.e., European Parliament, European Council and European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion).

3. Recognition that subtle shifts in authority are also occurring within member states, and their nationally representative institutions (i.e., parliaments and governments), and that these have an impact on EU-member state relations.

4. Appreciation of member states' bargaining power, and the factors that affect their degree of success.

5. Attention to lobbying potentials and mechanisms that either directly or indirectly leverage both EU and national representative institutions.

On these premises, when we look at new government mechanisms, such as the OMC, not only as tools of European governance, but also as tools for understanding the system of governance these create at both inter-state and national levels, member states' authority is not necessarily diminished or weakened as some claim. It is certainly triggered in ways that can also strengthen its authority within its own territory or expand it beyond national borders. Yet member states' authority can no longer be interpreted according to traditional modes of understanding the modern state, as primarily based on legal authority. Here we need to appraise political intentions and strategies adopted by national representative powers inasmuch as they are influenced by business institutions, citizenship organisations, research institutes and policy consultancy agencies, and their representatives, who have an interest in adult and lifelong education. These agencies participate, either directly or indirectly, in material and ideational work carried out via new governance mechanisms. One way to go about it is to look at the organisation of the conditions for European governance, rather than hierarchical (state-based) modes of governing, and member states' political space within such processes as consisting of political intentions and strategies by multiple agencies. Thus we can question individual and blended forms of multi-scalar governance that occur via interpersonal exchanges and inter-organisational relations, which also lead to common EU policies on adult and lifelong education. Emblematic examples can be found in a series of initiatives undertaken under the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in Education and Training (ET2020) (CEU, 2009). For instance, according to the principle of the OMC, the Directorate General for Education and Culture has set up a Thematic Working Group on Financing Adult Learning in 2011 (DG EAC, 2011) and a Thematic Working Group on Quality in Adult Learning in 2012 (CEC, 2012). The topics for these groups were decided on from within DG EAC's Unit B.2, which held responsibility for adult education and learning. Yet the staff at B.2 were either employed by the European Commission (EC) or seconded by member states, and hence embodied national knowledge and understandings about adult education and learning, and possessed

differential degrees of commitment to individual countries' political priorities. When we look at the composition of the Thematic Working Groups, for the most part their members were directly appointed by member states, so even if differently composed, both consisted of representatives from national ministries of selected member states and partner countries, and individual experts representing a variety of organisations, including European agencies, international trade unions, and non-governmental organisations, either internationally or nationally-based. Additionally, the Working Group on Financing Adult Learning included an individual expert from UNESCO. However, both groups were moderated by external experts working for a private company (ICF GHK, formerly GHK) that offered a series of consulting services to the Directorate General for Education and Culture. Accordingly, within these groups, representational coverage at an organisational level could constitute a strategic alliance among actors with perceived joint interests in achieving mutual benefits (e.g. the EU and UNESCO), or strengthening mutual understanding and avoiding negative repercussions of individual decisions upon others (e.g. trade unions, non-governmental organisations); at an individual level, however, not all national representatives and experts necessarily had the mandate to fully commit the organisations of which they are members. Further, both Working Groups also benefitted from exchanges with parallel groups of experts who won open calls for carrying out studies on the same topics of concern. These groups were composed of academics, researchers and private consultants from a variety of institutions and specific countries.

Yet, interpersonal exchanges and inter-organisational relations within Education and Training 2020 are undergoing important changes. Since 2013 a network of national coordinators for adult learning has been put in place, with representatives from all EU executive bodies, while a new functionality for working groups' organisation under the OMC is being considered.

In the meantime, the Directorate General for Research and Innovation commissioned a work on adult and continuing education from an Italian academic (EC-DGR&I, 2013), the results of which are receiving attention across Directorates and EU institutions. In part, this is due to an official hearing initiated by a member of the European Parliament, also from Italy.

Against these manifestations of multi-scalar governance, to deepen our understanding we should also appraise how interpersonal exchanges and inter-organisational relations weaken, trigger or strengthen legitimate authority by specific political actors (within and across member states and the EU as a pooling sovereignty). We can do so, for instance, by questioning:

1. Which are the countries, institutions and individuals being represented (i.e., in steering and working groups, in commissioned work)?
2. Why these countries, institutions or individuals (and not others)?
3. What is their differential bargaining power (i.e., in terms of network relations with other countries, institutions or individuals) in relation to other participants (and non-participants)?

4. What are the country, institutional or individual interests being represented? How are the issues and debates being prioritised within individual national, sectoral or institutional contexts?
5. What are the conjunctural opportunities or structural constraints for member states (and their array of political agencies) which offer authoritative backing to EU policy?
6. How do wider socio-economic and political events, such as the economic crisis that hit much of Europe in 2009 and the plethora of 'austerity' policies that followed, affect members states' domestic conditions and priorities?

In conclusion, bringing back the state into examination of adult and lifelong education policies in Europe means raising a rather different set of questions from those so often addressed when looking at EU or national policies. Essentially, policies can no longer be studied either in isolation or upon the assumption of linear dependency – we overcome these by repositioning the state at the centre of our analyses.

NOTES

[1] This contribution drawn on activity undertaken under the European Union's Marie Curie funding scheme (grant agreement PIOF-GA-2011-297727). However, the views expressed herein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the European Union.

[2] Article 6 has been added to the *Treaty Establishing the European Community* (now *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*) in compliance with the amendments approved in 2007 at the European Council and signed by member states.

[3] This article has remained unchanged in its wording (though it has been renumbered to article 149) from the first consolidated version of the *Treaty on European Union* (1997), but it has been removed from the subsequent consolidated versions of the *Treaty* (2002, 2008 and 2010). Since 1992, in fact, this article (and the entire Chapter 3 on education, vocational training and youth to which it belongs) has been incorporated into the *Treaty Establishing the European Community* and has remained unchanged (but has been renumbered to article 149) in all its consolidated versions (1997, 2002, 2006).

[4] According to the *Treaty Establishing the European Community* (consolidated text, 2002), the legal instruments used by the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament in producing policy are: (1) regulations and (2) directives, binding on the member states to achieve results; (3) decisions, binding on those to whom they are addressed; and (4) opinions and recommendations, non-binding documents. However, also intergovernmental agreements, such as the Lisbon Agenda or the Education and Training 2010 programme (and follow-ups) signed by the Heads of states and government of the member states lay the foundation for a stronger political cooperation among member states.

[5] These include: the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Central Bank and the Court of Auditors (TEU, 1992, Article 13).

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PART THREE

GOVERNMENTALITY PERSPECTIVES AND THEIR POTENTIAL

ROMUALD NORMAND & RAMÓN PACHECO

CONSTRUCTING THE LIFELONG LEARNING SELF

European Politics and the Sense of Justice
INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we adopt a theoretical approach in order to explore European lifelong learning politics and their role in the fabrication of learners as individuals with moral and political capacities. The education of adults is a component of these politics, and has become a powerful lever for shifting the boundaries between education and work, state and market, formal and informal education. But European lifelong learning politics contribute at the same time to the emergence of a new kind of governmentality, in the sense proposed by Foucault (2007): that is, an ordering of populations and individuals within the European territory through procedures such as framing (standards, classifications, indicators), and legitimate new principles of justice which characterise new configurations of the common good (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Lawn & Grek, 2012). These politics represent new challenges for individuals who are expected to focus their actions towards a complex lifelong universe, "from the cradle to the grave", as described in official reports of European Commission (Rasmussen, this volume; Mohorčič Špolar & Holford, this volume).

Inspired by Foucault's ideas, this chapter focuses on the role of objects and devices in the normalisation of practices. It does not, however, reduce the politics of lifelong learning to surveillance and discipline. It attempts to describe these politics through a diversity of arrangements and actions related to different principles of justice. Following Walzer (1983), who demonstrated the diversity of spheres of justice in the fabrication of the common good, and Fraser (1997), who emphasised the concepts of redistribution, recognition and representation in characterising three contemporary political orders, we use the works of Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) and their theoretical framework on the grammars of justice. These French sociologists argue that individuals, throughout their lives, are confronted with hardships related to different orders of worth and definitions of the common good (inspiration, tradition, opinion, civics, market, effectiveness). Through these hardships, they mobilise material and cognitive resources to justify their actions and criticise those of others, particularly in the public sphere. Politics are then embedded in agreements and compromises between different individuals and groups, converging towards a common good. This compromise can be temporary

if the agreement is broken because of a conflict. It can become sustainable when it is embedded in institutions, objects and devices which have a strong degree of irreversibility. According to this approach, different hardships contribute to framing the individual and the self. It can be also the object of disputes and criticism, as Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) argued in their study of the new spirit of capitalism. So, criticism is inseparable from the extent of this new spirit of capitalism, because political technologies (market, accountability, ICTs, etc.) attempt to create a new moral self at the same time as they offer some opportunities for radical criticism and resistance from civil society.

The first section of this chapter deals with the restructuring of the principles of justice which manage the politics of lifelong learning–breaking these away from education and training which currently play a part in shaping knowledge and citizenship. Also, we define lifelong learners' agency both within their subjectivities and identity construction and within their interactions in a new material and space order, as they try to fit the new challenges they are supposed to face. The last section of the chapter analyses and reflects on the possibilities for autonomy and emancipation offered by lifelong learning politics to individuals, but also discusses how these politics propose a new capitalist spirit which assumes new relationships of domination and exploitation (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005).

LIFELONG LEARNING POLITICS AND THE RESTRUCTURING OF PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE

Lifelong learning policy originates in the historical commitments according to which educational and training systems grew from the 1950s and 1960s (Mohorčič Špolar & Holford, this volume). Until the present, economic effectiveness and investment in human capital have been understood from the perspective of the expansion of educational participation, from nursery school to university. Education and training were seen as totally separate from the labour market and professional life, on the basis that the welfare state would compensate for injustices through redistributing resources according to some kind of social solidarity and equality of opportunity. More recently, this view has been criticised politically because it raised inequality while failing to reduce unemployment or social exclusion, and because it could not recognise ethnic and cultural differences. Another kind of governmentality – of population – has been promoted by European institutions, reappropriating progressive ideas born in the 1970s in the notion of lifelong learning. A new commitment has therefore been reached between research about efficiency (converting Europe into the most competitive knowledge economy in the world) and social justice (giving new populations access to work and training: unqualified young people, women, disabled people, seniors, immigrants, and so forth).

This European commitment is supported by principles of justice which define a political order and a liberal grammar, and which recognise new political and moral capacities for the individual (Lawn & Grek, 2012). As we will demonstrate,

conceptions of justice in education cannot be separated from scientific knowledge and political representations related to inequalities. These are themselves determined by political imperatives for governing education and training systems through the classification, selection and certification of the population to reproduce an elite, to educate citizens and to incorporate manpower in the division of labour.

This government of education is sustained by a liberal grammar which articulates the principles of mobility and competition for individuals through access to education; at the same time, their qualities and capacities have to be assessed against a common standard. This standard creates disputes, controversies and public debate around a diverse range of principles of justice, themselves linked to different conceptions of inequality. The mobilisation of science by the state and by international organisations allows the institutionalisation and stabilisation of a conception of inequalities until it is denounced by scientific and political communities which hold another appreciation of what is fair and unfair (Rizvi & Lingard, 2006). Consequently, new instruments and policies are invented to change how criteria of justice are elaborated. This transformation today characterises the politics of lifelong learning: it shifts the hardships individuals face through their relationship to education. At the same time, it renews the principles of a liberal grammar linked to the regulation of education and training systems (through policy) and institutionalises new horizons of justice for learners.

The Government of Individuals and the Institutionalisation of Hardships in Education

According to Michel Foucault – who drew his view from natural history – classification is itself a hardship. Thus every similarity in the physical, moral or intellectual qualities of learners is submitted to a comparison: the ordering of identities and differences subsumed in several categories articulates the totality of a specific area (Foucault, 1994; see also Fejes, this volume). This taxonomy, Foucault explains, implies a continuum which facilitates prior knowledge and prepares the ground for a table assigning people characters which are simultaneously close and distant: backward; idiot; moron; gifted/novice; intermediary; expert. In public education, taxonomies and classifications play an important role in the building of a social order. As formal or standardised tools, they have produced a sustainable political enterprise with strong implications in terms of justice and morals in education and training systems. Today, these classifications, such as formal, non-formal, informal education, or more elaborated statistical categories such as the European framework of skills and qualifications, challenge the historical representation linked to schooling in modernity.

To illustrate the significance of the second hardship (related to the assessment of capacities), it is useful to read the famous passage Foucault (1995) devoted to exams. In this he shows that exams confer a visibility, an objectivity, on human beings through which they are differentiated. With their systems of recording, methods of

identification, signalling and description, the procedures of exams or tests enable the aptitude of each learner to be characterised by mapping his/her capacities. Since the 19th century, technologies for the assessment of individual capacities have been transformed, shaped by both the development of new scientific knowledge and the evolution of modes of justification of school selection. Today, an industry of testing and assessment, taken over by international organisations, has been developed at European level to assess the lifelong skills of individuals and to force them to update their knowledge and skills regularly in order to get – or keep – a job.

The third hardship is linked to the selection of individuals to create elites. Modern societies may have chosen to make elites circulate; however they invented modes of assessment and selection which make statements about inequalities between learners arising according to merit (Normand, 2011). These politics have been associated with beliefs and actions very far from the principle of common humanity, as was shown by the success of eugenics (Soloway, 1990). All modern philosophical and political conceptions of inequality have sought to use selection tests linked to measurement of individuals' physical, moral, or intellectual capacities. However, in democratic systems, this selection appears legitimate only if learners are assessed under the same conditions, which entails a standardised and universalistic framing of institutionalised tests. This has strong implications for teaching and learning. Today, the politics of lifelong learning, by undermining the place of initial training in the recognition of skills, but also by valorising knowledge and skills through capacities for mobility, flexibility, sense of initiative, and entrepreneurship, are reconfiguring the relationship of elite to traditional formats of training. Apprenticeship and further training are now developed even in colleges, and the state is recruiting more and more a cosmopolitan elite from among executives and experts trained in global professional networks.

These new institutionalised hardships in the government of education and training systems (classification, assessment, selection) are sustained by an updating of liberal principles to guide individual behaviour – while a certain initiative and autonomy is allowed to learners through the expression of preferences and choices. Three principles of this liberal grammar in education can be exemplified in important shifts.

The Transformations of a Liberal Grammar in Education

The principle of mobility in education assumes that, although human beings may be ascribed qualities in a classification or taxonomy, they can still be linked or shifted from one quality to another in a reversible way – that is, they are not permanently assimilated to a specific class. So, learners' positions are not fixed by descent or inheritance, or confirmed by an hierarchical or other authority, which would represent a social determinism unbearable to a liberal society, but by some value tested by assessment which links human beings to a category or a type. Once the classifications are institutionalised, after high-stakes challenges and specific struggles, they participate in a representation of society, and from these the

procedures of circulation and reproduction of the elite are themselves legitimised. That is why these procedures could be criticised, notably by sociology, for problems such as the boundaries they generate, the difficulty of moving from one class to another, or the impossibility of creating new classes or categories on the basis of different social claims. This principle of mobility is today an important pillar both of the policy of learning and of the European strategy for employment which aims to increase the circulation of individuals in the European labour market. The challenge of social mobility is now combined with a challenge of spatial mobility according to the different schemes which characterise education and training policies in Europe (Dale & Robertson, 2009).

The second principle, certification, corresponds to the attribution of value to individuals, and confirms for a fixed period the effects of the hardships which have institutionalised them as human beings endowed with capacities. Certification individualises learners through recognition of their specific skills – but detached from the place of learning. As Bourdieu explains, the exam delivers, in addition to a qualification, a social quality by the effect of certification, which consecrates the scarcity of educational resources as the technical and social scarcity of capacities (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Embedded in an authoritarian relationship, certification institutionalises the capacities of certain human beings by protecting them from circumstances and by constraining others to achieve some recognition. The traditional mode of the certification, through diplomas and initial training, is challenged however today across Europe because the duration – the 'shelf-life' – of legitimate skills, and the value to individuals of a diploma or a qualification, are both decreasing.

The third principle concerns the setting of a competition between individuals to access the goods provided by education (Frazer & Honneth, 1998; Walzer, 1983). In modern education systems, the qualities of learners are unequally recognised as there are asymmetries in the value attributed to their capacities and the recognition of their merit. Furthermore, how human beings are selected and guided to satisfy some requirements of the international division of labour is constrained. These limits reduce the accessibility of goods but also the expression of human capacities, and place individuals in an attitude of competition. They are assessed and compared, with selective effects on their future. Consequently, their involvement in the competition to access social positions depends not only on how access to certification is constrained, but also on how they are allocated within education and training systems. This involvement in international competition is enhanced by lifelong learning policies at the European level which emphasise competitive challenges, the validation of prior learning and certification gained in the workplace.

Three principles which support the transformation of a liberal grammar in education have been detected here: mobility, certification and competition. Educational systems are expected to control outputs rather than inputs, involving students in standardised processes. These processes carry a liberal logic which fits perfectly into classifications and taxonomies, standardised recognition of qualifications and the regulation of access to certain goods provided by education.

Different Views of Justice in Educational Politics

But education politics do not only link individual differences to a standard, a framework, or a type. They have always sought to control and reproduce populations, to allocate costs and profits, and to attribute value – on the basis of imperatives of justice which evolved during the last century – in the recognition of individuals. Three different views of justice appear mainly to lead these liberal trends.

The first is related to the preservation and maintenance of the productive quality of the population of working age. It responds to some concerns linked to the biological government of populations by the state, and has been enhanced in particular by the development of statistics and demographics (Normand, 2013). It gave birth to a metrology and categorisations borrowed from eugenics, before they were redeveloped in a climate of economic expansion by economists and sociologists of education to assess what the democratisation of access for working class pupils had achieved. Then, theories of human capital, undermining theories of the inheritance of ability, transformed the politics of reproduction, before they were reappropriated by international organisations and the European Commission. As a result, another principle of equivalence was founded: the measurement of inequality of results was seen as related to principles of equity and quality in education and training systems (Normand, 2010).

Another view of justice is fixed according to the modalities of sharing educational resources. Historically, the redistribution of educational resources found its legitimacy in a conception of the welfare state which sought to compensate for inequalities of access to education and to promote a compensatory education for deprived working class children. With the transformation of the state, the implementation of New Public Management, and the development of the market in education and training, the share of resources has been transformed. The state has retreated; there is a stronger involvement of private agencies (Derouet & Normand, 2011; Gunter, 2012). Lifelong learning policy assumed that private agencies have to be more involved in the provision of education and training services, and that the redistribution of resources must be supported by individual efforts from learners, who must themselves be more accountable (Ball, 2008). This transfer from the state to the private sector and to individuals is justified not only by the incapacity of the state to face its duties, but also by the possibility of providing "second chance" devices and programmes to balance the inequalities revealed in initial training.

The third view of justice is related to how talents compatible with the selection of a social elite are determined. Once the hierarchy of natural or inherited gifts has been discredited, and individual merit consecrated, how can value be attributed to individuals so that they are guided into the education system – without which they would not be able to occupy equivalently privileged social positions? Today, the determination of talents, and the measurement of skills it requires, is not confined to a national context. The attribution of value to individuals is made according to an inscription in networks of excellence which institutionalise "World Class" standards

corresponding to the expectations of the new internationally mobile elite of globalisation. It is reinforced by the development of international rankings in Higher Education systems and policies (Hazelkorn, 2011). With this new circulation of elites, and the building of new instruments of certification, such as the International Baccalaureate or the *licence-master-doctorat*, the recognition of skills and talents is transformed. So too are the modalities of recruitment in business and administration. The learning and mastery of foreign languages as a key capacity for mobility has become an important social barrier for learners.

AGENCY AND NEW CHALLENGES OF LIFELONG LEARNERS

Lifelong learning politics face new and important challenges when operating through educational measures linked to particular world views of lifespan, such as adolescence or adulthood. As shown by Jones and Wallace (1992), historically educational politics in Europe have shaped the transition from dependent children to independent citizens, including procedures for recognition of new emerging statuses. But as Castells (1997) points out, lifelong learners emerge at the same time as a knowledge society – which breaks with old world views which fit individuals "individually" into traditional categories. So a new challenge for educational politics arises: how to shape agency from the perspective of the self of the lifelong learner.

The advance of the knowledge society requires a raising of training and qualification levels among the working age population (Flecha, 2000), and within European Commission reports this totally justifies the politics of lifelong learning and the success of human capital theories (Bonal, 2002; and see Rasmussen, this volume, on adult education). As we have described above, principles of justice have been transformed as part of a new modernity and the emergence of a European space of training and education (Nóvoa & Lawn, 2002). The principles of the liberal grammar linked to lifelong learning are impregnated with historicity and carry a kind of progressive sense that originated in Enlightenment philosophy, that is to say, a conception involving free will and individual autonomy. On the other hand, this transformation generates a new zone of risk through the disappearance of the collective solidarities and guarantees which, up to present, have been assured by an educational state. These expand the awareness of inequalities outside compulsory schooling for target groups (women, immigrants, older people, disabled people, and so forth).

It is interesting to analyse this tension when lifelong learners are fabricated by European politics, and make evident the kinds of experiential hardship faced by individuals involved in the transformation of their professional paths in order to ensure social mobility and access to employment.

Fabrication of the self and new agency of lifelong learner

Justice principles evoked earlier took root historically in the right to education. They correspond to the progressive establishment of compulsory schooling whose

most noticeable consequence was the exponential increase in the number of people with access to systematic and institutionalised training. Flecha (2000) links the beginning of this process within modernist thinking, defining it as a "technocratic colonization of education" and consequently of learning. This colonisation, driven by technocratic systems, is today developed in parallel within the world of employment as well as generally in society. This is why ideals of justice which support compulsory schooling in principle paradoxically feed individuals with a modern conception of self, which is technocratic and reflexive – as illustrated in the "reflexive practitioner" of modern theories of educational organisation and training, a conception often found in official documents of the European Commission.

This creation of a modern, technocratic and reflexive self relates to a "fabrication process", as Popkewitz (2007) argued. Such modernist politics, by playing down their self-created exclusionary processes and inverting the subject-object relation from an instrumental vision, prevent the creation of symbolic spaces and the negotiation of meaning by actors in education and training. The lifelong learner, having broken away from the various stages of compulsory schooling, establishes a professional lifecycle, in which tests constantly play a necessary role. Individuals are required to plan their activity by themselves, which is not possible for children, who do not have this capacity (Popkewitz, 2012). Thus, lifelong learners' development calls for breaking away from traditional patterns of schooling in order to create a new and integrated way of life according to new commitments in learning and its environment. These provoke risk and uncertainty, but also shape a liberal individual capable of expressing choices and preferences in a training market.

According to Flecha (2000), technocratic systems – especially those based on digital technologies, as the development of e-learning demonstrates – generate linguistic strategies which lead to exclusion, and influence communities of learners. A contradiction appears when lifelong learning policy raises the level required of the learner beyond the basic skills demanded by compulsory schooling, and reclassifies people according to their capacities to update their knowledge and competences throughout life, and to satisfy new assessment and certification requirements. Lifelong learning politics ought to go beyond the principles of justice applied to compulsory education, granting all a basic education in order to encourage more involvement and responsibility among adults.

But these politics work against those who do not have access to such thinking – which explains why continuing education benefits executives more than workers. Continuing education also disregards the ethical complexity of the relations that link trainee and trainer. As Cribb and Gewirtz (2012) argue with regard to social work, precisely for this reason it ignores identities and moral dilemmas associated with these ways of interaction.

Popkewitz (2012) shows us that agency finds its boundaries in typified shapes and schemes of political, cultural and social practices, which create categories of people who can become suitable objects for investigation in their own professional and social situations. The implementation of human reason as the agent of change generates

two opposed registers: on the one hand, a kind of freedom granted to learners in accordance with the promise of emancipation; on the other, a social, bureaucratic and technocratic administration of their learning processes. A policy of integrated popular knowledge would represent a real revolution in lifelong learning because it would invert the dialectics of the construction of the self; learning processes would be produced by subjects and no longer by a codified instrumentation of technical and procedural knowledge which based on modes of reasoning drawn from cognitive psychology, neurosciences or management theories (coaching, mentoring, etc.), and which project an idealised form of "reflexive practitioner".

Authors like Mead (1934) or Cooley (1909) implement the notion of agency within a scheme of practices associated with the production of citizens as a collective. They define the role of primary groups as essential for the development of an internal sense of morality and self, sentiments and ideals. Mead locates the construction of the self in social processes of communication and community: agency is composed by socially organised principles of interaction and communication which represent the "community". This accounts for social arrangements among individuals which depend on lived situations; their moral competences are mobilised in the service of a common good, they are recognised and identified by the group, from a commitment to several principles of justice (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). The sense of justice is not imposed by a predefined frame but through discussion and deliberation, a space of justification and criticism which provokes agreement on the action to be carried out.

Popkewitz (2010) shows that, on the contrary, human beings are fabricated without taking their agency into account, but according to a rational and instrumental view. The epistemological principles which order modern reason look for agency by ignoring the diversity of social life. Thus agency resists the inscription of human beings within a typology, a standard or a technique, even if science and technique claim useful knowledge and a better planned lifelong learning policy which will enable individuals to be better taught. According to Popkewitz (2012), this fabrication process presents two correlated senses: on the one hand it maintains a fiction about what human beings should be; on the other, it takes them as ontological subjects of "reality". In this way, subjects suffer a conversion process. From this tension a certain number of hardships about the construction of the lifelong learning self emerge, and a certain number of paradoxes remain.

Between Autonomy and Exploitation: Some Paradoxes within the Fabrication of a New Lifelong Learning Self

Lifelong learning policy expects the fabrication of a reflexive being who is able to question permanently his or her knowledge and practice to become a lifelong learner, while at the same time it focuses on individuals who are victims of exclusion, insecurity or disability. This fabrication is perceptible from the approach represented – between common sense based on experience and "instrumental" concepts – as

long as it does not create, on the part of the excluded, a preliminary space for the negotiation of meanings and symbolic ownership of lifelong learning programmes and devices. This asymmetry among knowledge, types of argumentation, concepts and skills in a discursive or actionable register provides an explanation of tensions that can be found in the experiences of individual learners. The evidence provided by Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) shows that human agency faces a vast diversity of situations and competences, and mobilises a repertoire of cognitive resources and objects which change the expression of the sense of justice according to the situation. It raises a wide spectrum of principles of justice and world views within human beings which are not reducible to a merely instrumental, efficiency- and market-oriented, vision.

This complexity of agency entails that meanings are negotiated as a consequence of numerous interactions, through a diversity of logics of action, and not only as a consequence of classifications or taxonomies which are fixed in the same way as words in a dictionary. Lifelong learning policy demands individuals build up their own self concepts according to an ideal of justice which has its roots in the traditions of liberal societies, but is marked by an autonomy and accomplishment which salutes education and work. But this freedom conferred on individuals ignores the fact that their capacities are activated within an environment of collective constraint, which suppresses standards and reduces the potential for exploration and exchange with others. The responsibility allotted to individuals is less a moral essence than an instrumental one because they must be accountable for their effectiveness and are subjected to assessment of standardised knowledge and skills. Lifelong learning policy thus fabricates "human types" according to a grid which makes them become visible and calculable objects useful for a kind of government of the population with the main aim of improving competitiveness and investment in human capital (Popkewitz, 2012).

Sciences and technologies come together to transmit a kind of directionality in ways of thinking, feeling and perceiving learning. Spaces for the negotiation of meanings and training in values are marked by this directionality. The human subject thus organises his or her agency according to a technocratically-made design. Their dependence on a prepared and formatted environment in order to fit into technological and rational norms of the division of labour denatures people's experiences of professional life and socialisation in order to build up an ideal kind of lifelong learner – endowed with the features expected by enterprises and the economic world. This is the paradox of lifelong learning, gesturing both to social inclusion, with the promise of learning for the most deprived, and social exclusion, through the incapacity of human beings to access potentialities for social and professional reflexivity which would allow them to master their destiny.

The processes of technocratic colonisation from an ideal-typical configuration of the information or knowledge society rely on on digital technologies which test the self's capacity for maintaining links within a network, as the development of e-learning illustrates (Flecha, 2000). Aims and procedures of learning and teaching

procedures are decided without reference to people, but expect performance of agency in the capacity of human beings to deal with information, interact with others, find and adapt resources and produce knowledge and expertise. This colonisation of lived experience leaves the lifelong learner in a paradoxical situation of stability, with the certainty that from now on he or she must access knowledge more efficiently than the enlightened encyclopaedists. Yet at the same time it creates instability, with the uncertainty that learners will be able to find appropriately-adapted information unless they transform their own cognitive schemes and representations of the knowledge and its new formats.

The same tension, between inclusion and exclusion, occurs in access to a learning community or when sharing knowledge within a group. The lifelong learner's field of action becomes bigger thanks to the new digital environment, and it allows him to experience a kind of autonomy, and possibilities of emancipation, when exchanging with and meeting other learners. This capacity, which must be considered by the other, in terms of respect, recognition and self-esteem, is unquestionably a chance to escape from isolation and exclusion, and to be better integrated within a discussion space favourable to democratic emancipation and promotion of the self. This carries new solidarities and claims for the improvement of learners' welfare and personal development. It characterises some principles of justice–founded on a civic grammar which lowers barriers between the sphere of common sense and the sphere of knowledge – to which destitute people in general have no access. But at the same time learners' exposure to an environment prepared for the public shatters their rapport in time and space. It requires dispositions or aptitudes towards the presentation of self, and interactivity or other competences, which demand a high level of expertise and mastery of the material and symbolic environment. This requires that individuals detach themselves from dependence on their environment and adopt a cosmopolitan point of view, going beyond the social and cultural boundaries that usually distinguish social groups.

The Self of Lifelong Learner between Responsibility and Mobility: A New Spirit of Capitalism

Now we would like to describe the new lifelong learning actor invested with the skills expected by European policy, who is represented as both reflexive and also enterprising, mobile and a cognitive participant in an economy of knowledge spread along networks supported by digital technologies. The knowledge economy project, described in official European documents, is not independent of a deep transformation of capitalist modes of regulation (some authors refer to cognitive capitalism) which weaken conventions, articulate training and work within a formal recognition of competences and classifications, and move towards the institution of network management of individuals and network management of public organisations as private ones. The horizon of a free European labour market, and the recognition of liberal individuals who are autonomous when choosing and

revealing their preferences, establish lifelong learners as entrepreneurs of their own professional lives who, if successful, can lead others' action towards more economically productive and efficient performance.

This image of the reflexive practitioner is associated with an image of leaders as endowed with new competences, provoking initiative and the taking of responsibility in others; it promotes in other learners a view and a promise of emancipation (Gunter, 2003). Beyond this regime of empowerment, which – as envisaged in European documents – includes peer learning, the capacity of leaders to develop their cognitive flexibility (information management in real time) and geographical (cross-border) mobility is essential for the economic world and the enterprise. This is because remaining in the same workplace, and unenterprising behaviour, are perceived as signs of underestimation of the importance of knowledge and professional competence. As Eve Boltanski and Eve Chiapello explain, in this networked world, "the great" derive a part of their power from the immobility of "the small" (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). The contribution of the immobile to others' flexibility and mobility is at the same time both an enrichment and a valuable factor in the conception and mobility of projects, and a source of their exploitation and domination. Occupying precarious and marginal positions, the immobile are at increased risk of exclusion in the new international division of labour.

Lifelong learners, now entrepreneurs, take advantage of the size and density of networks created through digital technologies. They also take advantage of a differential *vis-à-vis* other people who, for moral, social or institutional reasons, remain attached to a single place and must content themselves with limited networks and more limited professional relations. People's employability, and the recognition of their competences by the enterprise, will be dependent on the capacity of lifelong learners to jump from one work situation to another, adapting themselves permanently to change, constantly demonstrating creativity, and always open to innovation. Conversely, immobile people are likely to face the rapid obsolescence not only of their professional knowledge but also of their nodes of social relations. They are also likely to find their responsibilities weakened within the organisation, because of the gap that develops between their experience and the flows of information, data and knowledge that pass them by, and which they cannot control.

CONCLUSION

The processes of domination and exploitation within this new spirit of capitalism, supported by lifelong learning policy, enhance differentials among individuals, creating and maintaining deep asymmetries in access to knowledge and recognition. On the one hand, the official documents and programmes of the European Commission produce a discourse of truth by artificially fabricating an agency of human beings as lifelong learners which fits them within types, standards and frames that establish them as subjects of a liberal grammar associated with a diversity of

principles of justice. On the other, lifelong learners are required by organisations to be "reflexive practitioners" and leaders. They must renew – often through tests – the certification and recognition of their knowledge and individual competence. Organisations must also establish new tests of mobility and flexibility which weaken traditional relationships between training and employment. Finally, new modes of domination and exploitation emerge, as do new forms of injustice and humiliation on the part of individuals who, in the absence of resources, or a communication zone for expressing lived real situations and the suffering they experience, are deprived of trust and voice and have no access to these responsibilities – apart from the general promise of having access to a knowledge society.

To conclude this chapter, it seems that understanding lifelong learning calls for questioning both the politics that produce learning human beings, through standards, frameworks and typologies of their practices which serve an economy of knowledge, and the lived experiences of the learners who are exposed to new risk and uncertainties when accessing resources and mobility, but must also update their knowledge and competences to satisfy new demands in the international division of labour. If the politics of lifelong learning integrates principles of justice through a liberal grammar that promises autonomy and emancipation, they also generate sufferings and feelings of humiliation among those who are exposed to the new hardships and lack the capacity to spread their voice and to take part in this new regime of responsibility. Lifelong learning policy also feeds on a new spirit of capitalism where mobile individuals, as entrepreneurs of their own lives within a network society, accumulate capital and competitiveness differentials over the immobile. These are the forms of a new mode of domination and exploitation that goes through both public and private organisations, structured as distributed and flexible, which change the forms of planning and hierarchy on which 20th century capitalism was built. The reshaping of this grammar of justice, and the new asymmetries with regard to access to lifelong learning and education, call for the development of empirical research that studies the different forms of hardship, both of speech and practice, to which individuals – promised a better future and social inclusion – find themselves exposed.

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ANDREAS FEJES

WORKING WITH FOUCAULT IN RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATION AND LEARNING OF ADULTS[1]

INTRODUCTION

This chapter argues for the usefulness of Michel Foucault in research on the education and learning of adults. The chapter begins with a short introduction to how the work of Foucault has been taken up in adult education research and what trends can be discerned in terms of how extensive such research is and what parts of Foucault's work are used. Second, I argue for the usefulness of a governmentality perspective, inspired by Foucault. This is followed by an introduction to some key concepts such as governmentality, power, technologies of the self, and regime of practices. The chapter then goes on to introduce an argument about how policies on lifelong learning (in which adult education and adult learning are currently inserted) and the regime of practice of which it is part, fabricates certain kinds of citizens. The chapter ends with some concluding notes.

FOUCAULT IN RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATION AND LEARNING OF ADULTS

Although Foucault (1991) mentioned the school as a modern institution where disciplinary power was produced and exercised, he never did enter the educational area of research. Nor did educational researchers start to use his ideas more extensively until the late 1980s and early 1990s. Before 1990, the use of Foucault's ideas was almost completely absent in educational research. One of the exceptions is Hoskin (1979, 1982), who draws on ideas from Foucault's (1991) *Discipline and Punish* when analysing the prehistory of examination.

In 1990, a first edited collection on the theme of Foucault and education was published (Ball, 1990), where the focus was on education and its relationship to politics, economy, and history in the formation of humans as subjects. Most of the contributions drew on ideas from *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1991), especially the idea of dividing practice: how school in many different forms divides pupils into the normal and the abnormal. A couple of the contributions used the idea of genealogy as a way to analyse the urban schoolteacher and the emergence of physiology; others combine Foucault with the Gramscian concept of hegemony. After this book was published, there was a major increase in the wider use of Foucault in educational research, both in terms of research articles as well as published books. For example, several edited collections were published during the 1990s and into the 2000s (cf. Baker & Heyning, 2004; Peter & Besley, 2007; Peters et al., 2009; Popkewitz &

Brennan, 1998). A general trend visible in the contributions of these books is a shift in interest regarding what parts of Foucault's work are engaged with, from the idea of subjects as objects and docile bodies (e.g. *Discipline and Punish*) to a greater interest in Foucault's later work and his interest in the modes through which the subjects are constructed by themselves (technologies of the self) and to the idea of governmentality.

The above-mentioned trends are similar if we focus on research on the education and learning of adults. In an overview, Fejes (2008a) analysed all articles published between 1999 and 2006 in four journals in the field of adult education and learning: *Adult Education Quarterly* (USA), *International Journal of Lifelong Education* (UK), *Studies in Continuing Education* (Australia), and *Studies in the Education of Adults* (UK). The focus of the analysis was partly on discerning what different uses of Foucault there were in the articles. How did the authors use Foucault, what parts of Foucault's work did they draw on, and to what extent did they draw on Foucault?

The result illustrated that 56 out of 617 articles (9%) referred to Foucault, which in one way seems to be a great deal. However, when focusing on *how* Foucault was used, the picture becomes different. Fejes (2008a) outlined four analytical categories of how Foucault was used: as an interpretative strategy, as an eclectic use, as a way to pose an argument, and as decoration. Those who used Foucault as an interpretative strategy (13 articles) outlined a theorisation based on the writing of Foucault in order to elaborate an argument or in order to analyse some kind of empirical material (mostly policy texts). Eclectic uses of Foucault (9 articles) were similar to the interpretative strategy in outlining a theorisation in order to develop an argument or analyse empirical material, but Foucault was here used in combination with other theories (e.g. poststructural feminism) in order to pose different arguments than might otherwise have been possible. Foucault as a way to pose an argument (13 articles) referred to articles where authors drew on parts of Foucault's work in order to pose an argument as part of the overall argument in the article. And Foucault as decoration (21 articles) more or less only mentioned and referred to Foucault but did not engage with his work in any substantial way. Concluding from Fejes' (2008a) overview, the uses of and reference to Foucault seem to have been quite common in these journals during these years. However, only a limited number (13) made a more elaborated use of Foucault (as interpretative strategy).

Since 2006 there seems to have been an increase of uses of Foucault as an interpretative strategy. An edited collection entitled *Foucault and Lifelong Learning* was published in 2008 (Fejes & Nicoll, 2008), including contributions where Foucault's work on governmentality was mobilised in relation to the education and learning of adults. At the same time, *The Learning Society from the Perspective of Governmentality* (Masschelein, Simons, Bröckling & Pongratz, 2007) was published; several contributions focused on the education and the learning of adults drawing on a governmentality perspective. Recently, *The Confessing Society* (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2012) was published, in which the authors draw on Foucault's work on technologies of the self, specifically confession, in order to analyse the regime of

practices of lifelong learning, in which adult education is part, and to examine how the adult learner is shaped through such a regime. These are just a few examples of the growing literature in this area.

Another pattern that can be discerned, in both research on education more generally and on the education and learning of adults more specifically, is a shift from referring to his earlier to his later work. As Fejes (2008a) illustrates, the works of Foucault most commonly referred to in the articles analysed were *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1991) and *Power/Knowledge* (Foucault, 1980). When looking more closely at those articles in Fejes' review that used Foucault as an interpretative strategy, we can see how approximately half of them referred to Foucault's writing on disciplinary power, while half of them draw on the later work of Foucault (genealogy and governmentality). This picture partly confirms a similar pattern, mentioned previously, that there seems to have been a move from using Foucault's work on disciplinary power to his work on governmentality and technologies of the self. Such a picture is further strengthened by looking at the contributions in *Foucault and Lifelong Learning* (Fejes & Nicoll, 2008), in which all chapters drew on Foucault's work on governmentality and/or his work on technologies of the self.

Concluding, there seems to have been a major increase in the uses of Foucault in research on the education and learning of adults. A shift can be identified, from referring mostly to Foucault's work on disciplinary power, to his later work on governmentality and technologies of the self. However, Foucault as an interpretative strategy was limited (in the overview by Fejes, 2008a). In the next section, I will argue for why Foucault as an interpretative strategy and theorisation is useful in research on the education and learning of adults.

WHY FOUCAULT IN RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATION AND LEARNING OF ADULTS?

Why then do I think that the work of Michel Foucault is useful in studies on the education and learning of adults? To me, it is first a question of perspective. Foucault's work offers us a quite different perspective through which to articulate what goes on through adult education and learning. It offers alternative ways to formulate the questions that we might ask and thus the answers that we might find. To explain this further I will need to talk a little more about this perspective and what it can offer.

Drawing on a governmentality perspective, you could say that, in one or another way, you explore questions of power. More precisely, you would explore *how* (the means by which) adult education and learning is promulgated as power within the contemporary period, and *what happens* in the modification and coordination of power relations through adult education and learning. Exploring the education and learning of adults in these terms may mean that we find ultimately that we must put aside previous assumptions that we know what it is we do when we engage with adult education and learning as policymakers, researchers, teachers, or learners, and

this is what I want to do. Foucault points out to us that although people can be quite clear about what they are doing at a local level, what happens in terms of the wider consequences of these local actions is not coordinated: 'People know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what what they do does' (Foucault, 1983: 187). It is these wider means and effects of adult education and learning as it is embroiled with and intrinsic to relations of power that I am interested in exploring. Such an analysis puts a specific focus on *relations of power*, a power that is not acknowledged in everyday policymaking and other practices of adult education and learning or often within research into it. By posing such questions, we are able to show, for example, how the ambition to 'be inclusive' through adult education and learning has exclusionary practices as one of its effects.

Adult education and learning is, then, through a Foucauldian perspective, intrinsic to contemporary political technologies and strategies of power. However, to say this, it is not necessary to see these as emanating from any particular person, group, or indeed strategist. Indeed, Foucault specifically encourages us to give up these ideas. People who are engaged in adult education and learning practices act knowingly and may have strategic purposes. It is possible, however, that when those who are involved see the wider consequences of a multiplicity of actions that take place locally, they may also see that there are unintended consequences in what both they and others do. Actions may not 'join up' (to use a common policy phrase) to produce the effects that we had in mind within our localities. For this reason alone, we should look to the practices of adult education and learning, across their multiple locations, to explore the possibility of a 'grid of intelligibility' (Foucault, 1983: 187) for them.

Through a Foucauldian approach it is therefore possible to ask questions other than those offered by positivism or by alternative interpretative perspectives. Instead of focusing on adult education and learning as something that is effective or ineffective in terms of policy or other aims, is essentially good or bad, or is something which can free people from constraints, I pose quite other questions. Thus, I (as author) hope in one way or another to destabilise those things which I and others might otherwise take for granted about adult education and learning in the present time. Such destabilisation is meant to introduce a certain kind of awkwardness into the very fabric of our experience, by making our narratives of such experiences 'stutter' (Rose, 1999).

Positivist and some kinds of interpretative research into adult education and learning aim to produce generalisable 'truths' about it. Foucault (1983) helps to show how this may be dangerous, as discourses of truth generally are. We can see this in that my research can have the effect of producing the things that I want to destabilise, undermine, oppose, or counter within relations of power. As an example, here, the concept of 'Bildung' has been centrally used by critical theorists and has significantly informed policies and practices of education in many European nations over the last years (cf. Gustavsson, 2002). It is an idea about the purpose of education as that which develops the ability of humans to be reflective (on themselves and their surroundings) as a means of emancipation from social

conditions and constraining relations. Bildung is a narrative about freeing oneself through learning as self-autonomy and critique. Such a construction, however, is 'troubled' through a Foucauldian approach as that which is made possible by, and reinforces, that which it opposes – constraint (Masschelein, 2004). By believing that we are free, we can accept and act within conditions of constraint. Thus, the autonomous, self-reflective life does not overcome power relations. Instead, it is a particular kind of historical 'figure of thought' of self-government through which we become traversed by power relations even as we believe ourselves to be free. This approach thus permits questions about our discourse of Bildung and what the effects of this are. Where adult education and learning is dominantly considered to signify freedom from power through self-autonomy and critique, Foucault helps us to 'read' it alternatively as a mechanism of power whereby the individual governs himself or herself within relations of power. Thus, through this, we see how our generalised narrations of freedom as a 'truth' can be dangerously misguided.

In order to further explicate a governmentality approach inspired by Foucault, I will now speak a bit more about the concepts of governmentality, power, technologies of the self, and regime of practices.

GOVERNMENTALITY, POWER, TECHNOLOGIES OF THE SELF, AND REGIME OF PRACTICE

Policymaking and policy texts could be seen as processes and documents that govern people in a vertical top-down way. There is someone who decides how things should be, and citizens have to follow such decisions, even though citizens may have a say in who is going to be the decision-maker. In a general way, such a perspective presupposes that someone holds power and that power can be used in relation to others. Thus, policy becomes a tool of power. Further, such perspective presupposes that government is the government of the state. The state holds power and yields it in relation to its citizens. Power could then be oppressive, where some people are limited in their actions through the yielding of power. With such a perspective, a policy researcher might be tempted to focus on how polices are implemented and how effective and successful they might be, in order to find ways to make them even more effective. With a more critical attitude, the researcher might focus on how policies are creating inequalities that have to be overcome – for example, finding ways to help people to empower themselves. Turning to Foucault instead, the questions would be quite different, and concepts such as power and government would be defined in a different way.

Power

Usually, we say that knowledge is power, that is, we assume that power resides with a certain person who is then able to wield this power upon others. We further assume that those who do not have power are easily oppressed. Such a description

is connected to the historical figure of the king and his power over life and death, which was used to protect his territory (Foucault, 2007a), and it draws on an image of both power-law and power-sovereign (Foucault, 1998). Foucault (1998: 89) urged us to 'cut off the head of the king' if we wish to conduct an analytics of power within the historical framework of its operation. We should ask a 'how' question of power, rather than 'where is power' and 'where does it come from'. Focusing on a 'how' question would help us to avoid forming a unified theory of power or avoid taking the point of departure in the idea that power pre-exists. A 'how' question about power will therefore allow us to question our pre-assumptions about what power is.

> To put it bluntly, I would say that to begin the analysis with a 'how' is to suggest that power as such does not exist. At the very least it is to ask oneself what contents one has in mind when using this all-embracing and reifying term (Foucault, 1983: 217).

By asking a 'how' question, the focus is on how power is exercised, by what means it is exercised, what happens through this exercise of power, and what the effects are of this power. With this perspective, power is seen as being everywhere, in all relations; it is 'the omnipresence of power . . . because it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another' (Foucault, 1998: 93). Thus, power is relational, and it exists only through actions, such as in the way that actions modify other actions within the relationships of groups or individuals.

> [T]he exercise of power . . . is a total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; in the extreme it constrains or forbids absolutely; it is nevertheless always a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action. A set of actions upon other actions (Foucault, 1983: 220).

Power relations are therefore immanent in all types of relations because they encompass both their conditions and their effects. Power makes certain actions and distinctions possible; at the same time, power is the effect of these actions and distinctions. Importantly, these relations are both intentional and non-subjective – that is, power is always exercised with an aim and objective, but this is not the result of a choice made by any individual or group. Rather, this aim and objective is the result of a calculated strategy that coordinates power (linking explicit tactics on the local level), that draws on support from elsewhere, and that forms a perfectly clear and comprehensive logic system. This is 'an implicit characteristic of the great anonymous' (Foucault, 1998: 95).

Governmentality and Technologies of the Self

For Foucault (2007a), government is analysed as a more complex concept than the government of the nation-state concerned with governing through law-making, the

police, decisions in governmental organisations, and so forth. Instead, government concerns our everyday life, all the relations of power that we are involved in, not least our relations to ourselves. This displacement of our generally accepted notion of government is made possible through Foucault's (1980) displacement of our concomitant notion of power as argued in the former section. Taking such a stance makes it possible for us to approach governing as something other than the 'government of the state' and in such a way that we do not presuppose it. It allows us to relate activities to the government of ourselves, the government of others, and the government of the state (Dean, 1999), which makes it possible to show the complexity of the conduct of government. In the words of Foucault (2007a), it relates to the conduct of conduct. To conduct is to lead others while at the same time it is about behaving oneself. One of the strengths with this notion of governmentality is thus that it displaces our rather common-sense and commonly used concept of 'government' with a perspective, rather than another concept or theory. Drawing on such a perspective, the analytical focus is directed at the ways people are being governed and are governing themselves within certain regimes of practices.

In his own analysis of the emergence of governmentality in the present, Foucault focused on liberal mentalities of governing. Liberalism is here seen not as an ideology that can be related to a specific political party. Instead, liberalism is seen here as a mode of governing or as a set of ideas about how governing should be conducted. Foucault (2007a) argued that during the last few centuries, there has been a shift in rationalities of government and how governing operates in society, namely, from a situation in which society is planned through legislation and repression to a situation in which governing is conducted by the citizens themselves. Here, the notion of freedom is important. The governmentality of today is dependent on the freedom of the citizens. The starting point within this rationality of governing is that the freedom of the citizen is both a prerequisite and an effect of governing. Without the freedom to choose, there is only a situation of constraint, and there would therefore be no governing.

There is a different notion of the state related to this perspective, namely, a decentred notion of the state. The state is not an *a priori* actor which does things. Instead, the state is seen here as an epistemological pattern of assumptions about how governing should operate (cf. Fejes & Nicoll, 2008; Hultqvist, 2004). In his writing, Rose (1999) called the contemporary state the 'enabling state'. An important aspect of this view on the state is that it provides the opportunity for (enabling) citizens to make choices in accordance with their wishes and desires; thus, the political ambition to govern coincides with individual dreams and aspirations. Here, freedom is both the prerequisite and the effect of governing.

The analysis of government is concerned with thought as it becomes linked to and embedded in the technical means for the shaping and reshaping of conduct and as it becomes embedded in practices and institutions. Thus, to analyse the rationalities of government is to analyse thought made practical and technical (Dean, 1999). A governmentality analysis directs attention towards the technologies and techniques

through which governing operates and reaches its goals (how governing operates), combined with an analysis of what subjects are brought forth through them (the effect of governing). Technologies do not have any essence, and they are not the direct linear output of a specific will to govern or of any intention. Instead, they are assemblages of aspirations, beliefs, knowledge, and practices of calculations, for example, which aspire to shape specific subjectivities (Rose, 1999). As expressed by Foucault (2007a: 99):

> [T]he end of government is internal to the things it directs (*diriger*); it is to be sought in the perfection, maximization, or intensification of the processes it directs, and the instruments of government will become diverse tactics rather than law.

There were primarily two types of technologies that Foucault analysed in this writing: technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self. The former concern the practices through which the self is objectified and shaped through dividing practices, whereas the latter concern the ways in which the self constitutes itself as a subject.

> Technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, and objectivising of the subject . . . technologies of the self, which permits individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality (Foucault, 2003: 146).

These technologies seldom function separately; rather, the encounter between the two is what Foucault called governmentality. Thus, to conduct a governmentality analysis, the researcher needs to consider both types of technologies, although Foucault turned his attention to the technologies of the self in his later writing.

A Regime of Practice

With such different notions about power and government, the focus of analysis becomes quite different compared to policy analyses that focus on how well policy is implemented or those focusing on how policy inequalities can be overcome. Rather, the interest is directed at how, for example, lifelong learning (in which adult education today is inserted), as a regime of practice, shapes and governs citizens. Lifelong learning does not have any essence or any one meaning. Instead, lifelong learning is viewed here as a regime that connects different elements, practices, and knowledge that constitute the organised and routinised ways in which we conduct our lives.

Here, by 'practice', I mean something quite distinct and different from what is, perhaps, the more everyday understanding of the term. Drawing on the work of Foucault (2007a), Dean (1999), and Rose (1999), we see that practices operate

through wider 'regimes' of practices through which we are governed and govern ourselves. Practices are thus intrinsic to the exercise of power, just as government is the exercise of power in the shaping of the conduct of others and of ourselves ('conduct of conduct') (Dean, 1999). A regime of practice is, through this perspective and in a rudimentary manner, the organised and routinised way in which we learn how to do things. This regime operates in part through institutionalised practices, but it is not equivalent to them because it can be identified through discursive and non-discursive elements that can be part of, but can also be linked to and through, the practices of an institution.

A regime of practice cannot be reduced then to a set of specific relations or problems. A regime is multiform, consisting of multiple and heterogeneous elements with different historical trajectories. A regime is polymorphous in its relations and bears upon a range of different problems. For example, a modern regime of practice of lifelong learning focuses on a range of problems of care such as schooling and support for a range of people who are marginalised through their situation, such as unemployed people and immigrants (cf. Dahlstedt & Tesfahuney, 2010; Nicoll & Fejes, 2011). A regime of practice of lifelong learning points to a domain of discursive and non-discursive elements that comprise things such as discourses of learning, schooling, management, institutions, and the architectural arrangements for learning, regulations and laws, the mechanisms for administration, the scientific knowledge of learning and propositions about learning, and the benevolent and moral motivations and activities that come together to focus on those who are the objects of learning and who are subject to learning (cf. Foucault, 1980). This relationship between elements is not the outcome of a strategy put in place by any particular person, group, or government; rather, it is a collection of dispersed activities, objects, and ideas that have come together to operate powerfully as strategy.

An analysis of a regime of practice as a governmentality analysis includes several aspects. The analysis focuses on (1) the emergence of a regime, the elements that constitute the regime, and the processes that bring these together, (2) identifying the specific knowledge that is made possible through this regime and that is necessary for it to emerge, (3) how the regime becomes the target of different programmes of reform and change, (4) the techniques through which the regime operates and reaches its goals (cf. Dean, 1999). In the following, I will conduct a short, partial, and fragmented analysis of the emergence of a regime of practice of lifelong learning in order to illustrate what the proposed theorisation can do.

THE EMERGENCE OF A REGIME OF PRACTICE OF LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong learning has emerged as a policy area and concept during the last two decades and can be seen from a Foucauldian reading as a regime of practice in which a range of concepts, institutions, discourses of learning, the scientific knowledge of learning, and propositions about learning, and the like, come together to focus on those who are the objects of learning and who are subject to learning. Such a regime

is powerful and persuasive in that it incorporates a range of diverse and different adult education institutions and practices across Europe such as, for example, municipal adult education in Sweden, local recognition of prior learning (RPL) centres in Portugal, work-based RPL programmes, courses for unemployed people, courses for immigrants, literacy classes for adults, study circles, and so forth.

The emergence of a regime of lifelong learning in Europe can be connected to amongst others the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning,* published by the Commission of the European Communities (CEC, 2001), which positions lifelong learning as a central policy concept in the realisation of the Commission's strategies. As a concept, lifelong learning partly replaces former concepts such as adult education, and lifelong education (Lindeman, 1926), and has become the dominant manner in which to speak about the education and learning of adults in policy terms. The shift from speaking about education to speaking about learning signifies a shift in how citizens are constructed. For example, during the late-1960s and early-1970s, the concept of lifelong education attained a central position within policy discourse. The catchword was, according to Rubenson (2004), *personal development,* where people were to 'make themselves' instead of 'being made'. This concept was a humanistic definition of education and was produced, for example, through the Faure report, *Learning to Be,* published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Faure, 1972). Biesta (2006) saw this humanistic orientation as remarkable because of its vision of a generalised role for education in the world, its reflection of the optimism of the 1960s and early 1970s regarding the possibility of generalised progress, and its contrast with policies and practices of lifelong learning today. Faure identified four assumptions that underpin the position of this report on education: 'the existence of an international community' with: a 'fundamental solidarity'; a shared 'belief in democracy'; the aim of development as the 'complete fulfilment of man'; and that 'only an over-all, lifelong education can produce the kind of complete man the need for whom is increasing with the continually more stringent constraints tearing the individual asunder' (Faure, 1972: v-vi). Here we can see how lifelong education is related to a positive notion of progress and personal development. Individual development is seen as good for society. This type of discourse construes education as a way in which to meet and manage the changing future. As Rubenson (2004) argued, the idea was that lifelong education would enable people to control and adapt to change.

Ideas about controlling and adapting to change were also emphasised in the policy texts on adult education in Sweden during the mid-20th century. The idea put forth in these texts was that it is possible to control the future through education (cf. Fejes, 2005, 2006). A discourse on talent operated in the policy texts. The idea was that by defining the talented population and providing them with the opportunity to study in adult life, society would become prosperous. This type of discourse construed education as a way of planning the future by defining the talented and not-talented adults. Planning the future was discursively related to the idea of a private concern for happiness. It was argued that if a person chose the 'correct' path in life in accordance with his/her talent, he/she would become happy in life (cf. Fejes, 2005;

Ministry of Education, 1952). The logic constructed in this argument is that choice according to talent leads to happiness. Along with this idea of individual happiness, the subject is discursively constructed as passive through knowledge production and governing technologies (cf. Fejes, 2005, 2006). The private self (talent) should be made public before a counsellor and a board of exemption. Through intelligence tests, interviews, and other methods that were made possible through the emergence of science, the talented and not-talented adults were defined. Thus, the private self needed to be made visible to an other in order to shape subjects that were publicly desirable (cf. Fejes, 2008b).

During the 1990s, we can see how the concept of lifelong education was replaced within the policy texts by lifelong learning. Lifelong learning was used by UNESCO in 1994 as a midterm strategy for the coming years (Rubenson, 2004), and the report *Lifelong Learning for All* (OECD, 1996), published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Lifelong learning also became a cornerstone in Jacques Delors' white paper on competitiveness and economic growth within the European Union in 1994, and the European Commission then declared 1996 as the European year of lifelong learning (Field, 2006). In 2001, the European Commission published the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (CEC, 2001), which positioned lifelong learning as a central policy concept in the realisation of the commission's strategies, which had the goal of shaping Europe into a knowledge-based society. The policy indicated a shift from a humanistic to an economic discourse (cf. Fejes & Nicoll, 2008; Field, 2006; Rubenson, 2004). In 2010, the Lisbon strategy was replaced by a new policy agenda (CEC, 2010), which further outlined a long-term strategy for lifelong learning that included an initiative aiming to integrate work and education as a lifelong learning process. At the same time, talk about lifelong learning and a 'research, education and innovation' triangle in European policy (CEC, 2009: 2) suggested that there was a new emphasis on the relationship between knowledge production and lifelong leaning in the contemporary discourses of governing. This new emphasis suggests a shift from positioning lifelong learning as a support for creating a knowledge-based economy to positioning lifelong learning as an integral part of the work and knowledge production processes (Nicoll & Fejes, 2011).

The shift from speaking about education to speaking about learning can be seen as problematics of governing (Foucault, 2007b), which is a situation in which the issues regarding government are problematised. Today, learning is discursively inserted into practices that were not previously construed as practices of learning. Learning is related to not only formal schooling, such as adult education institutions or universities, but also, for example, to the workplace, family life, media, crime prevention, and health promotion. Thus, in a Foucauldian-inspired reading of these changes, there has been a reconfiguration of the relations of power, which has effects in terms of what type of subject is defined as desirable and the type of governance that is operating (cf. Fejes & Nicoll, 2008).

While education often refers to a relationship between the educator and the student (a relational concept), learning refers to an activity that a person can do by

her/himself (cf. Biesta, 2006). This relational aspect can also be seen in the use of the term 'adult learner' (cf. Fejes, 2006). Therefore, the argument here is that learning becomes an individualised and all-embracing activity at the same time that it becomes the responsibility of the individual. Learning is something that is always taking place, and each and every citizen needs to take responsibility for learning and for acquiring knowledge that will be helpful in directing one's life towards self-fulfilment and towards the good of society. Life has been colonised to become a life of learning.

This discursive shift from education to learning reconfigures the relationship between citizens and the future. Instead of construing education as a way in which to control the future, learning is now construed as a way in which to manage a future that we know nothing about except that it is constantly changing (Fejes, 2006). A society that is construed as constantly changing does not need to rule governed citizens but rather flexible and adaptable citizens (cf. Petersson, 2003). Thus, the management of the future is no longer based on the assessment of talent or planning or related to formal adult education. Instead, the management of learning is conducted by constantly encouraging citizens to make their own individual choices (concerning learning); thus, citizens are shaped to become 'free' and active subjects. This encouragement is conducted through numerous practices, as has been argued. Thus, there is an intersection between guiding rules and the encouragement of choices, which is different from the previous discourses. As argued by Biesta (2006), these shifts in discourse have transformed lifelong learning from a right to a duty and responsibility while at the same time dividing citizens into high- and low-skilled learners. Although the low-skilled learners are those targeted by specific programmes and interventions, all of the citizens who participate in learning activities accept that they are indeed learners and, as such, that they are in constant need of learning. What is needed are citizens who develop a constant 'will' to learn.

The above short reading of policy developments on lifelong learning illustrates how several elements are joined together within a regime of practice of lifelong learning shaping and governing certain kinds of citizens. For example, within the regime a specific kind of knowledge is mobilised that makes possible certain ways for us to speak about adult education, the adult learner, and so forth. In the regime of the 1950s, as constructed in the Swedish policy documents, psychological and statistical knowledge mobilised through intelligence tests and psychological measurements made the fabrication of talented and not-talented citizens possible. Education was limited to those adults who were deemed talented. Today, learning is construed as something that anyone can and wishes to participate in. The responsible and constantly learning adult is made possible through ideas about useful and productive knowledge (Nicoll & Fejes, 2011), a knowledge that is possible for anyone to acquire. Thus, anyone has the possibility to become a lifelong learner. However, anyone is not the same as all citizens. Anyone is he/she who accepts and indeed wishes to construct him- or herself as a constant and responsible learner. Those who do not wish or those who do not have the capacity to engage as learners are positioned as undesirable citizens and in need of further intervention.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of this chapter has been to argue for how the work of Foucault can be useful in research on the education and learning of adults. Some key concepts related to a governmentality perspective have been introduced and mobilised in relation to an analysis of a regime of practice of lifelong learning emerging through policymaking. The analysis of such a regime is short, partial, and fragmentary. Only some of the elements of the regime have been partially identified, in order to provide a flavour of what a governmentality analysis does. I do encourage the reader to further engage with the literature in the area in order to get a wider, and further developed, picture of what Foucault can contribute to within research on the education and learning of adults.

As the chapter has illustrated, Foucault's notion of power and government offers a wider approach than those approaches commonly used within policy research on the education and learning of adults. Rather than focusing on power as owned by someone or government as that of the state, Foucault offers us a relational notion of power and a notion of government as that of the state, of the self, and of others. Thus, it becomes possible to identify those elements that make up the wider regime of lifelong learning, and what the regime's effects are in terms of shaping subjectivity. This is a critical project in terms of providing starting points for problematising our present time and those things we take for granted as inherently good and unproblematic. This is a critique in terms of trying to displace the regime of lifelong learning, and thus maybe, to some extent, to contribute to the exercise of 'the art of not being governed like that and at that cost . . .[or] the art of not being governed quite so much' (Foucault, 2007b: 45).

NOTE

[1]   This chapter is based on previously published work (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2012; Nicoll & Fejes, 2008).

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PART FOUR

DEVELOPING METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

PIA CORT

TRAILING THE UNPREDICTABLE PATHWAYS OF EUROPEAN UNION LIFELONG LEARNING POLICY

Methodological Challenges

INTRODUCTION

> What makes policy travel or flow across Europe, within wider policy spaces, is of interest here (Lawn & Grek, 2012: 10).

Since 2000 the concept of Europeanisation has gained importance as a way of conceptualising the changes in education and training policy in the European Union (EU). Not least the introduction of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) in education and training has launched important policy processes through which the usual distinctions between policymaking, policy decision and policy implementation are changing. Policy pathways have become unpredictable as "transnational flows and networks of people, ideas and practices across European borders" (Lawn & Grek, 2012: 8) have intensified and drawn together actors from different sites to make a "European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality" (CEC, 2001).

The changes challenge policy research and its traditional analytical units of the nation-state and the EU as a supranational organisation. As stated in the introduction to the book, decision-making processes now involve actors drawn from across governments and agencies and public and private institutions at multiple levels. In this landscape characterised by fluidity and uncertainties of boundaries there is a need to challenge methodological nationalism (see Engel, 2012) and to connect the various actors within the new structures of a European education space.

The aim of this chapter is to develop a tentative proposal on how to study the unpredictable pathways of EU lifelong learning policy. The methodology of policy trailing (Holford & McKenzie 2013) and the use of the mixed methods of discourse analysis and narrative inquiry are proposed as a means of overcoming methodological nationalism and connecting structure and agency in the study of the European education space.[1]

THE METHODOLOGY OF THE POLICY TRAIL[2]

The governance of the European education policy space appears to be increasingly 'produced' through building relations between actors and

communities, which are themselves no longer contained within the silos and discourses of the national (Lawn & Grek, 2012: 9).

The policy trail is a recent concept developed by Holford for the EU project LLLight-in-Europe (Holford & McKenzie 2013).[3] The concept is put forward both as a means of *theorising* policy and as a *methodology* for studying policy.[4]

As a theoretical concept it takes its starting point in the changes in the public sector and the global trend of privatising formerly public services. Privatisation shifts power from the state apparatus to the market and thus makes government more complex. To conceptualise this shift, the concept of governance has gained ground in order to capture the changing relationship between actors in the policy process. The concept of governance shifts our attention from polity to policy processes transcending the polity and to the increased influence of transnational organisations and public-private networks in policymaking. The policy space is widened and includes actors from various sites in the policy process. This is where the concept of policy trails comes in to theorise how this space is negotiated and how power is distributed across sites (Holford & McKenzie, 2013). The aim of the concept is to make sense of the policy processes in the EU education space: what is going on and how do we avoid the pitfalls of methodological nationalism?

As a methodology, policy trailing should be seen as an attempt to deal with the "complexity of multi-level and networked governance within the EU" (Holford & McKenzie, 2013: 16). The analytical unit becomes the policy per se and how it is recontextualised and reproduced by actors in various sites across the EU, be it transnational technical working groups, research projects or cooperation, national ministries, regional authorities or local schools. Methodologically, the concept of policy trailing aims at mapping the connections between actors and sites in the EU education space. Instead of working with policy as a top-down, bottom-up or horizontal (i.e. nation-state to nation-state) process,[5] it works with policy as a process distributed across sites and actors. Thinking of policy as something that can be 'trailed' across sites can help avoid state-centric or EU-centric approaches. On the other hand, it opens up for a continuous contextualisation as a policy travels across various sites:

> Thinking about education and its systems is still bordered by the limitations of nation-state histories, language and vernacular customs. Boundaries of thought are not just disciplinary or even customary; they are literally framed by spatial limits. Researching across political borders means exploring other ways of understanding education, embedded within landscapes comprised of histories of national policy documents, law and legislation, accumulated commentaries and normative engagements (Grek & Lawn, 2012: 7).

The trailing can take point of departure at any level, any site[6] and any specific point of time and can be trailed through actors involved in the policy process, not just those involved in policy networks or technical working groups, but also practitioners and researchers involved in projects and lifelong learning practice as it unfolds in adult education institutions. The trailing can take place by trailing documents and central

concepts as they travel across different sites. Policy documents can be understood as 'actors' in the sense that they have performative effects.

As a methodology, policy trailing is abductive, that is, it is an interpretive approach to policy analysis in which a main interest is to link structure and agency (Bertilsson, 2003) and develop new concepts to describe a changing social order (Reichertz, 2004). The trailing of a policy includes a focus on both the social actors involved in the policy process and the structures constraining their ways of thinking and acting. I shall focus on how social actors *narrate* a policy: how it has come about and takes effect in a specific context and the *discourses* that actors draw on when narrating a policy, but policy trailing can be combined with other methods.

As an abductive approach, policy trailing rests upon "an attitude towards data and towards one's own knowledge: data are to be taken seriously, and the validity of previously developed knowledge is to be queried" (Reichertz, 2004: 307). Reichertz describes 'abduction' as a mental leap that researchers need to take in order to "bring together things which one had never associated with one another" (Ibid.). In the case of trailing EU lifelong learning policy this infers that we need to connect the 'dots' between the actors and sites under investigation in the EU education space in order to understand or explain the researched policy.

The nature of what we want to research is complex and we need to work like detectives trailing a policy through the analysis of documents and interviews with actors across the EU lifelong learning space as the connections may not always be clear-cut: sites may be connected in haphazard ways leading to strange transformations in or interpretations of a policy. There may be multiple ways of explaining lifelong learning policy and its unpredictable pathways. We need to identify the nodal 'suspects': the actors whose narratives turn into 'grand' narratives (discourses) and the 'subversive' elements working against a policy. Furthermore, we need to establish the temporal aspect of the trail as well as the spatial: how does this policy trail connect to previous trails? In this sense, the use of 'trail' as a metaphor allows us to open our minds to re-thinking policy – like a detective story.

Likewise, the metaphor of 'trail' captures both the intentionality and the erratic character of policy. On the one hand, the trail is intended to connect sites and bring about change. On the other hand, although the trail may be intended to be linear and to have specific outcomes, it may turn and bend and meet in some places insurmountable obstacles. In other words, the proposed methodology is cartographic and aims at mapping the trail, its travellers and the terrain that it travels through.

As a methodology, the concept of policy trailing can be traced back to ethnography and resembles George E. Marcus' 'multi-sited ethnography', in which the research interest is to "discover new paths of connections and association by which traditional ethnographic concerns with agency, symbols and everyday practices can continue to be expressed on a differently configured spatial canvas" (Marcus, 1995: 97). Marcus' concern is also with the inadequacy of binaries such as local-global and lifeworld-system and calls for researchers to "follow the people, the thing, the metaphor, the plot, the life and the conflict" (ibid.). To this could be added, 'follow the policy trail'.

TRAIL THE POLICY – AS DISCOURSE AND AS TEXT

In order to trail 'a policy' we need to know what policy is. In the Danish language, the English concept of 'policy' has been adopted due to the fact that there is no clear distinction in Danish between polity, politics and policy (Albæk, 2009). In this understanding, policy is the outcome of politics, the concrete pieces of legislation or strategies implemented in order to solve societal problems or guide the behaviour of the population. In an article from 1993, Ball ponders on the concept of policy and how to study it. He discusses two ways of approaching policy: 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse'. Ball calls for a toolbox 'of diverse concepts and theories' in order to "bring together structural, macro-level analysis of education systems and education policies and micro-level investigation, especially that which takes account of people's perception and experiences" (Ball, 1993: p. 359).

To me this article addresses some of the central problems relating to the concept of 'policy' and not least how to study it. It should be noted that in the article, Ball operates with the analytical unit of the 'national' and 'national education systems' and does not take transnationalisation and, in this case, Europeanisation of education into account. Here it is necessary to take into account that the article is from 1993 and the role of transnational organisations in education policy has increased since the mid-1990s, hereby adding to the complexity of studying and defining policy.

In the article, Ball distinguishes between 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse'. The latter is concerned with the framing of the actors, and in this perspective agency is limited by discourse. Ball writes that the actors "are spoken by policies [and] take up positions constructed for us within policies" (Ball, 1993: 14). Discourse analysis makes it possible to understand how the actors are located in the discourse and although there are struggles relating to policies and how they should be interpreted, these struggles take place within a discourse that "articulates and constrains the possibilities and probabilities of interpretation and enactment" (ibid.: 15). The effect of 'policy as discourse' is that it changes the possibilities we have for thinking 'otherwise' (ibid.: 14). In the following, I shall look into 'policy as discourse' as a method for exploring EU lifelong learning policy through the analysis of policy documents to establish its framing properties (Cort, 2012).

'Policy as text' is concerned with the actors and how policy texts act as 'textual interventions into practice' (Ball, 1993: 13). In this perspective of policy, the focus is on the interests of the actors and how policy is contested, changed and reproduced. Within this perspective, there is 'plenty of social agency and social intentionality around' (ibid.) and agency is perceived as constitutive of structure.

Turning to narrative inquiry as a possible method to explore agency, narratives connect to policy as text as the interest is in the actors and their personal experiences with policy. The epistemological interest is on how individual actors make meaning of a policy and contribute to its meaning as it travels across different sites in the EU education space. I shall look into narrative inquiry as a method to explore how actors in lifelong learning policy describe and perceive their own role in the policy of which

they are part. The epistemological interest is in discovering how policy is transformed and why people involved in a policy do what they do. In keeping with the method, I shall propose the concept of 'policy as narrative' instead of 'policy as text'.

To sum up, Ball calls for a methodology in which both 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse' are applied. In line with Ball, I argue that we need to trail policies both discursively and in terms of the narratives of the actors involved in order to understand the complexity of EU lifelong learning policy and not least the interrelationship between structure and agency in the policy process.

'POLICY AS DISCOURSE'

In the section, I shall discuss how critical policy as discourse analysis can be used in the analysis of EU lifelong learning policy. I draw on Bacchi's (1999, 2009) *What's the Problem Represented to Be?* as an approach to analysing policy as discourse and uncovering how a policy is constructed across sites and whether there is discursive alignment or not. In this perspective, the aim is to understand the framing properties of lifelong learning policies. I draw on my dissertation, in which I analysed the Copenhagen Process on the basis of Bacchi's approach (Cort, 2011).

Before explaining the Bacchi approach in more detail it should be noted that discourse analysis is not a single approach but multiple approaches with quite different ontological and epistemological positions. In EU studies, discourse analysis varies from a positivistic research tradition (see, e.g. Radaelli & Smith, 2005) in which discourse is a variable with (semi-)explanatory power to constructionist approaches in which discourse is perceived as "socially produced forms of knowledge that set limits upon what it is possible to think, write or speak about a 'given social object or practice' . . . " (Bacchi, 2009: 35). Common for the approaches is that 'reality' is discursively constructed; in other words, we interpret reality through our categories and through language that is not neutral but value-laden. According to Phillips, the strength of discourse analysis lies in its focus on how discourse constitutes "knowledge, identity and power in a specific way, which veils, marginalises or completely eliminates other forms of knowledge and action" (own translation, Phillips, 2010: 284). Discourse analysis is commonly used in sociology and educational studies; however, in mainstream EU policy research it is still an analytical approach on the margins (see, e.g. Dietz, 2001).

The *What's the Problem Represented to Be?* discursive approach developed by Bacchi looks into policy as discourse and how a policy closes off the space of possibility by representing social problems in a specific way, and in this way constructs both the problem and its policy solution (Bacchi, 2009). The approach consists of six steps to critically analysing and contextualising problem representations of a policy. The first step to analysing policy as a discourse is to look into problem representations and their underlying assumptions, binaries and causalities. The aim is to understand how such representations become hegemonic and naturalised; "the representation is unchallenged and perceived by the majority of people as the 'truth'" (Cort, 2012:

28). The representations are the result of our meaning-making of the physical world, a meaning-making that takes place through language, concepts and categories, and experience. The aim of a discourse analysis is to analyse the constitution and dissemination of a specific representation, and discover which kind of different representations make up, in our case, policy as discourse (Neumann, 2001: 35). Harvey, for example, describes the neoliberal discourse as "the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world" (Harvey, 2005: 3). Bacchi's six steps take us from the problem representations of a policy to its discursive, subjectification and lived life effects (Bacchi, 2009: xii) and help us denaturalise the taken-for-grantedness of a given policy. This is the strength of the approach: it enables us to deconstruct a policy and understand how it constructs a social problem in a specific way with a specific solution in mind and with framing effects. In terms of EU policy, it helps us analyse technocratic and de-politicised documents and speeches and bring out the ideological basis.

However, the study of EU policy as discourse tends to be an agent-less affair: in most EU documents, the author is invisible and there is a tendency (on the part of the research community) to reproduce a critical discourse analysis in which 'neoliberalism' becomes an almost explanatory factor when analysing policy: it is the 'ill' that can explain almost everything (Cort, 2012; Mitchell, 2006; Olssen, 2006). But who are the 'neoliberals'? As my German supervisor stated at one point during a discussion:

> I don't think that the civil servants in the German Ministry of Education are neoliberals (PhD supervisor).

These words resonated with my own growing discomfort with discourse analysis as a research strategy. In connection with writing my dissertation it evoked a number of questions: How could I explain that my discourse analysis pointed to discursive alignment across the EU around a neoliberal conceptualisation of education and the fact that very few persons would say that they had neoliberal values or adhered to neoliberal ideas? How did the civil servants make meaning of the policies that they were part of? Were they as actors so enmeshed in discourses that they had no agency at all? And if this is the case, where do discourses come from if not by and through human agency? To me, it pointed to the inadequacy of discourse analysis to capture the agency of those involved in EU policy processes and to a need to bridge methods that could point to on the one hand, how the actors' agency is limited by discourse and on the other hand, how discourse is changed through agency and the constant battle over the ascribed meaning to dominant signifiers. As Klatt writes in this volume (p. 54)', we need to "establish to what extent social reality is rooted in an 'agency' which refers to the capability of the individual do be creative and make their own choices or to the 'structure' which might limit choices and constrain behaviour".

Working with EU lifelong learning policy as discourse from a *What's the Problem Represented to Be?* approach (and for that matter other discursive approaches) tends

to leave out agency and "we do not speak a discourse – it speaks us" (Ball, 1993: 14) rather than the actors creating, maintaining and changing the discourse in a dialectical relationship. Therefore we need to explore agency in EU lifelong learning policy processes in order to understand how actors make meaning of 'policy as discourse' and turn it into 'policy as narrative', whereby the actor's role is accentuated and the policy is embedded in a concrete context.

An Example of Discourse Analysis in the Study of EU Lifelong Learning Policy

Brine's article analysing the use of the terms knowledge economy and knowledge society in EU documents from 1993 to 2005 is in my opinion exemplary of the strengths and weaknesses of discourse analysis (Brine, 2006). Brine shows how the concepts of knowledge economy and knowledge society are consistently used to distinguish between high knowledge-skilled learners and low knowledge-skilled learners. In the EU documents, the knowledge economy is the 'bright new technological future' that the EU is striving for whereas the knowledge society is impaired with the challenges of polarisation and learners at risk of marginalisation (Brine, 2006). Her analysis brings about an understanding of the discourse of lifelong learning and the knowledge economy/society in the EU; however, it leaves us with the questions of who the actors are and why these discourses become dominant. The documents analysed by Brine include EU white papers, treaties, memorandums and resolutions: documents prepared by Commission staff and experts and documents negotiated between the member states and prepared through an intricate legal procedure. How has this consistency been ensured across documents, actors, organisations and years? Is it a deliberate strategy? Or have the actors been enmeshed by the discourse? And what are the consequences in practice to those affected by lifelong learning policies? Does the discursive construction as high or low skilled learners make a difference? It is a question that Brine raises herself.

   From this example, a number of conclusions can be reached about discourse analysis as a method in the study of EU policy: analysing EU lifelong learning policy processes through the discourse analysis of policy documents across sites provides insight into a hegemonic discourse about lifelong learning. It points to the ideological character of policies presented as neutral and evidence-based and brings out underlying values, assumptions and ideas about education and its role in society. However, the discourse becomes almost mythical as it is difficult to pinpoint how it circulates. Levin used the metaphor of an 'epidemic' to signify that it is a 'virus' rather than a discourse created by humans (see Levin, 1998). Therefore (again), I agree with Ball's statement that 'effects' of policy must move beyond the analysis of policy documents and study the conflict and struggles between interests within the context (Ball, 1993: 13). It is necessary to bring agency into the picture in order to understand how discourses 'materialise' and are transformed into bodily knowledge and practices at the individual level (Cort, 2012: 24).

'POLICY AS NARRATIVE'

> Narrative research offers a tool for analysing subjects as 'tellers of experience' and 'experience as discourse' (Britzman, 1995: 232).

In this section, I shall focus on how narrative inquiry can be used as a means to understand policy as narrative, that is, the struggles over policy, translation, the adaptation, interpretation among different actors within different institutions, etc. Whereas epistemological interest in 'policy as discourse' revolves around the framing properties of discourses based on their representations of policy problems and their solutions, narrative research is concerned with people and how they ascribe meaning to their world. 'Policy as narrative' enables the researcher to understand how actors in a policy process make sense of the policy and connect it to the social practice in a specific site. By combining 'policy as discourse' and 'policy as narrative' we are as researchers able to trail how dominant discourses enter and are reinterpreted across different sites.

A central assumption in narrative research is that agency matters and discourses "do not hold sway and can be resisted and commented upon" (Merrill & West, 2009: 55). Narrative interviews with actors in EU lifelong learning policies will in this respect open up for a reflection on the actors' role in the process and the experiences gained from lifelong learning policy processes. Furthermore, by mapping the processes it is possible to connect actors and the various narratives and establish how they change as they enter into a new site in the EU education space, thereby shedding light on the relational aspect of lifelong learning policy as discourse and as narrative. It enables us to make connections between apparently disparate sites. Narrative can be regarded as a form of representation linking agency and structure.

Whereas the research interest in discourse analysis centres on the dominant discourses and how power is distributed in discourse, in narrative research, the focus is often on giving voice to the marginalised:

> A commitment to the marginalized and to giving voice remains an important, if not exclusive, aspiration in biographical research (Merrill & West, 2009: 55).

In the trailing of lifelong learning policies across European sites our concern is not primarily with marginalised groups but with the elite and policy networks stretching from adult education institutions to the EU (and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) bureaucracy. There is an interest in understanding how a policy moves from site to site and how actors narrate the policy and make sense of it within a specific context and in regard to specific interests. From this perspective, the narrative approach can be a way of looking into how "some powerful groups are able to impose their definitions of reality on others" (Britzman, 1995: 231). Hence, applying narrative methods to the study of EU lifelong learning policy may pose a problem of access. In terms of EU lifelong learning policy, networks may be more or less closed. As researchers we might have to use our own experiences as part of the study and look into our networks in order to identify relevant actors and on this basis start the snowball rolling. Sampling may in other words be opportunistic rather than purposive.

An Example of Combined Methods in the Study of EU Lifelong Guidance Policy

The article by Sultana (2011) *On Being a Boundary Person* provides a good example of drawing on personal experience and of the strengths of combining discursive and narrative methods. In the article, Sultana connects his own individual narrative of being a policy advisor for the EU and other transnational organisations with a discursive analysis of guidance policy and an analysis of the contexts into which transnational guidance policies have been and are being transplanted.

He shows how policies travel across organisations and regions and contemplates his own role as carrier of specific values inherent in career guidance policy. His own narrative is woven into the article as a critical reflection on policy lending/borrowing and the role of research in transnational career guidance policy. He considers the role of policy advisors and how ideas travel through communities of experts and policy entrepreneurs. He follows policies from the transnational organisations to ministries of education to the level of the individual expected to take advantage of career guidance, ending up asking the question:

> What does career guidance mean to a girl in a small hamlet in Banie Sueif, Sohaag or Fayyoum, who grows up in what, from our world view, would epitomise a conservative Muslim or Christian Copt environment, one that defines her future very narrowly in gender typified ways? (Sultana, 2011: 277).

In this way, he connects the global and the local as well as structure and agency and points to the need for reflexivity in research *for* policy (see Desjardins & Rubenson, 2009). The article brings out the complexity of EU policy and points to the framing property of discourses:

> We are so enmeshed in our own life world that it becomes almost impossible to make the leap of imagination that is required to understand that others see reality in very different ways (Sultana, 2011: 278).

And yet, through the combination of discourse analysis and narrative inquiry Sultana successfully makes this leap. My claim is that as researchers of EU policy we need to make this leap too, and challenge challenge the imagination of those involved in EU policy as well, by making them reflect on their own role in a specific policy.

CONNECTING THE PROPOSED METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

By connecting the methodology of policy trailing and the combined methods of discourse and narrative analysis it is possible to trail actors and documents across sites. It demands a continuous and meticulous contextualisation of both within the particular site, thereby adding to the triangulation of methods in the methodology. In this way, the methodology will be like a mapping of a policy and how it plays out in different sites. The policy will be localised and the role of different actors in the policy process will be analysed. As a way of describing the methodology, I propose

the following imagery: 'policy as discourse' may capture whether the trail is an open road with many possibilities of getting off into other directions or a motorway with no exits. 'Policy as narrative', on the other hand, gives us the perspectives of those following the trail, their representations of the trail, its sights, whether it is travelled alone or in groups and their encounters with other travellers along the trail. The methods of discourse analysis and narrative interviews will help us map the trail. As stated earlier, working with a 'policy trail' is a kind of detective work involving looking into the different narratives of the actors that may represent 'reality' in different ways and as researchers we find out – not the Truth – but the meaning-making and the discursive effects of a policy – whether restraining or liberating.

As a metaphor, 'trail' sensitises us to the space of opportunity for the agents in the various sites: how they are able to pave the way and change the intended direction of the trail. So although EU lifelong learning policy (as discourse) may restrict the agency of the actors in the various sites, it does not remove agency.

The 'trail' concept also points to the limitations in the methodology as the trail may stretch infinitely; as researchers, we cannot map the entire trail but only part of it. Furthermore, there may be intersecting trails and in some places the trails may go underground. In other words, it is not always possible to trail the policy. Access may prove a problem when using the 'policy trail' methodology (see the section on 'policy as discourse').

An Example of Policy Trailing

The methodology for a policy trail has not yet been put to the test;[7] therefore, I shall draw on my own research to provide an example. In an article from 2010, I researched the 'evidence' described in EU policy documents as underpinning the policy of the European Qualifications Framework. I trailed the policy into (among other countries) England, where the policy of qualifications frameworks had been a political solution to the problem of a disorganised vocational education and training (VET) provision incapable of delivering highly skilled workers in a competitive global market economy (see, e.g. Wolf, 2002). The policy as a discourse was taken up by the EU Commission as part of the Copenhagen process and its aim of ensuring transparency across member states. Despite the difference in problem representations, my analysis showed that many of the underlying (and neoliberal) assumptions behind qualifications frameworks as policy tended to cling to, for example, learning outcomes as a basis for curricula, a shift from teaching to learning, individualisation of learning, privatisation, and employability as a main objective of learning.

In the article, I did not look into the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF) as a narrative and how it is narrated differently from site to site; however, interviews with civil servants and social partners across Europe showed how it travelled from site to site and was differently shaped and narrated. On a study visit to Riga, representatives from the Ministry of Education described how the government had implemented the EQF by law as a means to modernise

the Latvian vocational education and training system. It seemed to be more or less 'copy-and-paste' EU legislation with no consideration of the consequences for the existing education system. In Denmark, interviews with two civil servants showed disagreement as to the effect of the EQF – whether it was a legitimising rite *vis-à-vis* the Commission and the Danish commitment to EU resolutions and decisions or whether it would have practical consequences for the Danish education and training system. One argued it would mean major changes in the long run, the other claimed that it was 'much ado about nothing'. Trailing the EQF policy further to the level of practice, and to effects of introducing learning outcomes in national curricula, proved it to be a powerful intervention into the practice of teachers and students (see, e.g. Sarauw, 2011).

When talking to social partners in Finland and Germany, the narratives of the EQF were quite different. In Finland, a union representative perceived it as an empowering tool in relation to unskilled workers and the recognition of their skills. To my great surprise (being myself quite critical of qualifications frameworks), he spoke passionately about the EQF and its emancipatory potential. In Germany, the union representative from IG Metal told me how it was used as a lever for wage bargaining and as a means of ensuring parity of esteem in the German dual system by changing the level descriptors in close cooperation with government and employers. The latter showing the strength of the German dual training system and how this policy trail heavily influences the EQF trail.

Finally, when working with international coordinators at vocational colleges across Finland, Germany, France and Hungary in an EU Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) partnership project, the qualifications framework was embedded in a school narrative of increased mobility and narrated as a prerequisite for enhancing cooperation (despite the fact that some of the colleges had cooperated on mobility tracks for more than 10 years). Some of these international coordinators were later invited to take part in national discussions on qualifications frameworks and a credit transfer system for VET (ECVET) on the basis of their experiences in the LLP partnership project. In this sense, the EQF policy trail took an interesting turn from the local site of a vocational college to the site of national policymaking. On the basis of their experiences from EU LLP projects, these coordinators became experts on EU policy. The Finnish coordinator ended up working for the Finnish Board of Education, setting up projects on how to implement the EQF and ECVET in Finland.

As can be seen from this brief example, policy trailing brings out the complexity of the policy as it moves from site to site. Looking into individual narratives adds to our understanding of EU lifelong learning policy and sheds light on the relationship between individual narratives and dominant discourses, between agency and structure. Furthermore, it draws our attention to the fact that policy is a process and as a process it takes form through its circulation among different actors. By applying the concept of policy trail we can, as noted by Beech and Larsen, "avoid a simplistic and static view of transfer as if ideas are produced in one site and then received in another context" (Beech & Larsen, forthcoming).

CONCLUSION

> Such a 'combining' addresses the multifarious and complex ways in which things are happening around us in the 'run-away' world. This complexity defies the conceits and simplicities of singular perspectives and invites interdisciplinary approaches to the analysis of the historical and social conditions that define and constitute the lives of human subjects (Tamboukou & Ball, 2003: 2).

In this chapter, I have proposed a methodology for trailing the unpredictable pathways of EU lifelong learning policy. I argue that the increased complexity and fluidity of policy in a state of constant making call for mixed methods and interdisciplinarity, and I have advocated the methodology of policy trail combined with the concepts of 'policy as discourse' and 'policy as narrative' as a way of bringing together different theoretical and analytical approaches. The latter two concepts are put forward as methods to be applied in policy trail methodology. In other words, in order to understand the complex relationship between agency and structure, there is a need for trailing policies discursively and narratively as they travel across the European space of education. Instead of working a priori with the analytical units of 'the nation state' and 'the EU', policy trailing will provide a mapping of a complex landscape in which actors cooperate and create an EU education space across organisations and member states.

The methodology is a means of transcending traditional analytical units such as the nation and the EU, and in a sense also a limited understanding of practice as something that reproduces policy as discourse. The analytical unit becomes policy as an unstable object – as discourse, narrative and trail – and its transformations and effects as it crosses new ground. Hereby the methodology breaks with "assumptions about the nation-state as clearly defined and demarcated territory" (Engel, 2012: 82) but also with traditional bottom-up, top-down and horizontal understandings of policy processes. The mapping of the trail can take its point of departure at any point – even in oneself as a researcher – as shown by Sultana (2011).

In the chapter, I have not considered the epistemological and ontological problems that may arise in combining policy as discourse and policy as narrative through the trailing of a policy. Tamboukou and Ball (2003) label the research path as "dangerous" insofar as the methods stem from disciplines with different underlying epistemological and ontological assumptions. Narrative inquiry has traditionally had an emancipatory aim, 'giving voice to the marginalised', whereas discourse analysis in the Foucauldian sense distances itself from humanistic discourses. This distance is related to its conceptualisation of power, which is perceived as productive and distributed. From this perspective, interest is not in the 'who' of power or where power is located, but on the 'how' of power and how it works through discourses. As pointed out by Britzman (1995), the narrative approach is concerned with how "some powerful groups are able to impose their definitions of reality on others". In other words, power can be located and is not 'just' a productive and distributed

effect of discourse. In a sense this is to return to the problematic of structure-agency. The problem may be that it is (re)presented as a binary instead of a relationship, which may be 'uneasy' as Britzman contended (1995: 232), but is nonetheless a relationship that should be explored. The concepts presented in this chapter are tentative starting points.

NOTES

[1]   For an elaborated discussion of the agency-structure debate, see Klatt, this volume.
[2]   This section is indebted to John Holford, Lisa McKenzie and Anne Larson and our discussions at the LLLight'in'Europe project meeting held in Nottingham in May 2013.
[3]   For further information about the project, please see http://www.lllightineurope.com/work-packages/wp-5-country-lll/.
[4]   For a discussion of the distinction between methodology and method see Koutidou, this volume.
[5]   See Klatt, this volume.
[6]   A site is an analytical unit defined and described by the researcher. It may be a ministry, a network, a project group, a vocational college, etc., anywhere a specific policy is taken up or has effects. Staying with the metaphor of trail, a site can be compared to a town or a central location on the trail.
[7]   The methodology will be applied within the LLLight'in'Europe project in relation to mapping lifelong learning policies contributing to companies' human resources and development (HRD) strategies.

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EVANGELIA KOUTIDOU

THE EUROPEAN UNION'S ADULT EDUCATION SOFT LAW AND ITS DOMESTIC IMPLICATIONS

A Socio-Legal Perspective

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a methodological framework from the field of sociology of law. It applies this to adult education research about the implementation of a statutory framework regarding certain ethnically and culturally diverse social groups. The research is conducted comparatively both at the European Union (EU) and the national levels.

The chapter unfolds along two distinct axes and is divided into two main parts. In the first, following the fundamental theoretical distinction in the social sciences between methodology and method, we point out the theoretical bases of the socio-legal discipline, out of which both theoretical standpoints and technical research tools arise.

In the second part, we provide a rough description of an adult education research project carried out through the lens of the sociology of law. In the first section of this second part, we outline the research design, how it was conducted, and what the research contributes. We continue with an indicative reference to research sources, both European and Greek documents – mainly 'soft law'. The meaning of this term in the European Union and national legal and educational policy context is also explained. In the second section, we present some key research findings regarding the hypotheses tested, concluding with a brief account of implications for adult education policy.

The chapter proposes integrated research in the sociology of adult education law, drawing on both an interdisciplinary and an intercultural point of view. It aims to provide critical feedback to scholars as well as to both European and national legislators and adult education policymakers.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF A SOCIO-LEGAL PERSPECTIVE ON ADULT LIFELONG LEARNING

To illustrate a socio-legal perspective in the study of adult education policy, one can draw on a rich vein of theoretical scholarship covering the diverse strands of the sociology of law. The following introductory and illustrative remarks aim therefore to be highly selective rather than encyclopaedic.

Basic Context of the Sociological Approach to Law

In the Anglo-American context, numerous pioneer works by European writers such as Eugen Ehrlich and George Gurvitch, or, later, Renato Treves and Jean Carbonnier, not to mention some of the most influential social and political theorists who were legal scholars or trained in law, from Montesquieu and Jeremy Bentham to Max Weber and Karl Marx, contributed to the development of the sociology of law as a clearly identifiable discipline. In the light of these valuable contributions, the sociological perspective on law was bound to grow at a fast rate in the late 20th century, and "become one of the liveliest foci of social research" (Evan 1980: 15; Podgórecki & Whelan 1981: 12). The sociology of law, viewed either as a vehicle for improving law by aiding the legislator, or as facilitating a more efficient technology of government, or even as a precondition of a wider understanding of legal phenomena, is literally a perspective, an *angle de vision*, as Carbonnier said, from which law can be observed. Hence, it also recommends *ad hoc* methodologies, which are fundamental if one wishes to understand how social actions and practices, directly or indirectly, affect or involve the legal system (Cotterrell, 1984: 16).

By defining their field neither as a sub-discipline of sociology nor as a branch of legal studies, several prominent sociologists of law present it as a field of research in its own right within a broader social science tradition, seeking to establish an epistemological field of interdisciplinary collaboration between jurisprudence and the sociology of law (Cotterrell, 1980: 21–25). In this respect, a global and multi-faceted perception of the legal phenomenon leads to the definition of the subject matter of the sociology of law as "the set of relationships, interdependencies and interactions among legal regulations, social structures and human actions, while these regulations are being generated, evolve, are being interpreted and implemented" (Intzessiloglou, 2012: 33–36).

Hence, sociology of law suggests the interrelations of legal science to other social sciences and, more specifically, of jurisprudence to sociology. In this distinct epistemological field of interdisciplinary collaboration, the legal sociologist is highlighted as an active agent of social and political life, assuming a role that presupposes deep knowledge of the social reality, from which legal regulations derive and within which they are implemented. It is mainly in this context that the effectiveness of legal rules and the operation of legal institutions are studied.

Methodology vs. Method and a Twofold Socio-legal Perspective

At the outset, to facilitate analysis, the fundamental distinction between methodology and method can be adopted (Bailey, 1982: 32–33). Specifically, methodology pertains to the philosophy of the research process, while method is simply related to the research technique or tools used to gather data. Methodology "includes the assumptions and values that serve as a rationale for research and the standards or

criteria the researcher uses for interpreting data and reaching conclusions" (ibid.: 34). Thus, it determines such factors as how we write hypotheses and what level of evidence is necessary to make decisions on whether or not to reject a hypothesis, while in parallel it handles issues such as setting and defining, namely, specific "criteria of comparison of research resources". On the other hand, method provides the researcher with tools, namely quantitative or qualitative ones, which allow the drawing of inferences about research data.

Consequently, the scientific principles which determine the rationale of a socio-legal research venture potentially provide a twofold perspective or orientation. Firstly, as far as methodology is concerned, the Weberian "understanding sociology" ("*verstehende soziologie*") offers the framework within which the subjective meanings attributed by social actors to legal regulations are revealed. As a result, the sociologist of law can perceive and understand these meanings and how or to what extent legal regulations correspond with it. Secondly, with reference to method, legal effectiveness, deemed as the major thematic concern of contemporary sociology of law, provides the research tools necessary for a strategy of problem formulation, namely a comparison between legal regulations and social reality, aimed at revealing an assumed gap or, at least, a mismatch between law and what happens in real social life.

The Weberian Standpoint of "Understanding Sociology"

Although law was a major concern of many of the founding fathers of sociology, in the mid-1960s Parsons (1971: 40) suggested that "the core of Weber's substantive sociology lies in his sociology of law", thereby addressing, as Hunt (1983: 130) put it, "the most important and substantial contribution to the sociological movement in law". The influence of Weber's seminal work on contemporary research was strongly questioned during the 1990s (Tomasic, 1985: 8-10). Yet, whatever the impact of Weberian thought on contemporary socio-legal studies, one of the most influential features arising from his work – his so-called "understanding sociology" – can contribute substantially to inquiry into what happens to the meaning of legal norms when they enter the social domain of the community (Grawitz, 2006: 282-283). Through this theoretical approach, sociologists of law have relocated themselves at the heart of sociological observation.

In principle, what Weber's "understanding approach" introduces is a scientific method for going beyond practical common sense understandings of human behaviour, which rest mainly on what can be called "empathic comprehension", or the assumption of analogy between our mental experiences and those of other people (Andreski, 1981: 48-50). By contrast, knowledge attained through practical common sense understanding is outweighed by the systematic collection and verification of empirical data and by inductive inference which discover facts and explanations that would otherwise remain in obscurity.

In Weber's sociology of law this technical knowledge serves to examine the consequences of law for other aspects of social life, thereby revealing the immense complexity of the interaction between the law and other social circumstances (Andreski, 1981: 60-61) and grasping the interrelation among all the institutional orders making up a social structure (Gerth & Mills, 1946: 49). In this sense, Weber's standpoint can be described as an external approach to law that studies the empirical characteristics of law, as opposed to the internal perspective taken by legal sciences and moral approaches within the philosophy of law.

More specifically, social action, as the basic subject matter of sociological analysis, is behaviour which is subjectively meaningful to the individual undertaking it and is directed towards other actors with whom the individual interrelates. This subjective meaning of human behaviour is examined by the sociologist of law, on the grounds that the causal interrelations between social phenomena are merely external or superficial, in contrast to natural phenomena which are causally interrelated and interpreted. In this respect, the interpretation of human behaviour, notwithstanding its occasionally clear and comprehensive character, remains no more than a reasonable assumption. The interpreter appears unable to distinguish conscious from deeper motivations, which would probably remain latent or obscure even to the social actor they concern. In this case, sociology is committed to diagnosing and interpretatively describing social actors' intentions, by necessarily taking into account that seemingly similar behaviour or situations can potentially be predicated upon different meaningful relationships which are interpreted by the use of contrasting meanings (Weber, 1956/1983: 223-228).

As a conclusion, it can be noted that, having the individual person as his point of departure, Weber incorporated the problem of understanding in his sociological approach, thereby providing an interpretative perspective of motivated action to the sociologist of law (Gerth & Mills, 1946: 55-58).

Legal Effectiveness

If sociologists in general have been identified as consultants in the search for "technocratic solutions" to the many social problems identified today (Schnapper, 2001: 184), then they are especially called upon to investigate empirically observable acts involving law. Specifically, legal sociologists, as Black (1978: 97) puts it, "frequently become preoccupied with the policy implications of their research". Practical matters, such as the effects that legal regulations exert on real social life, incite the sociological study of law.

However, what needs to be kept in mind is that practical questions regarding the effects of law do not adequately justify the social scientific study of law. The major justification is that legal regulations have to be analysed by constantly stressing the complexity of their relations with other social phenomena and their 'reality' as a part of life. To understand law as a social phenomenon means that much about the society in which it exists is also comprehended (Cotterrell, 1984: 1-2).

Moreover, despite the apparent shortcomings of legal implementation studies, owing to the difficulty of measuring the 'impact' of legal regulations, legal-effectiveness research may be valuable to those in a position to reform the legal order and provide feedback to the legislator (Michailides-Nouaros, 1982: 167-171). In this sense, the socio-legal research field offers the context for studies in 'applied' sociology of law, so that research can be conducted by relating empirical findings to what is intended by legal norms.

As a consequence, insofar as legal reality is explored in comparison with identifiable empirical referents, socio-legal research might occasionally 'provide legal reformers with a kind of leverage for change', although evidence merely of a gap between law-in-action and law-in-theory would not suffice to bring about legal change. That these gaps exist is quite predictable, and yet legal effectiveness undeniably remains one of the major thematic concerns of contemporary sociology of law (Black, 1978: 98-100). Nevertheless, identifying such inconsistencies does not outweigh resistance to legal change, conceived as a kind of 'inertia' that law displays. The sociology of law still assumes a substantial role in orienting social action, constituting a strategy of direct social intervention, so that certain choices that potentially exist in the social domain are activated to bring about an impetus for institutional reformation (Intzessiloglou, 1990: 146).

Quest for an empirical approach. "Sociological imagination", according to Wright Mills, employed in order to interpret detailed knowledge of law in a wider social context, tries to understand law as interacting in complex ways with the social environment, while constantly attempting "to approach these matters systematically with a sensitivity to the need for sound empirical data and rigorous theoretical explanation" (Cotterrell, 1984: 7). From this viewpoint, it was at an early point established by legal scholars that theoretical studies in law based on an empirical approach are complementary and indispensable to understanding the operation of law (Podgórecki & Whelan, 1981: 13). Indeed, the emphatically stressed need for empirical research has actually been identified with a need for a corresponding sense of relevance to contemporary social problems. Thus, it is essential that theoretical analysis and empirical research remain firmly linked, so that the sociology of law fulfils its potential as a rigorous and imaginative science of law in society. In this sense, the idea that the sociology of law ought to be both theoretical and empirical has been firmly suggested (Ferrari, 1989: 63) – responding to serious questions about of its intellectual importance unless jurisprudence and social research are integrated (Intzessiloglou 1990: 46; Selznick, 1968: 57).

In this respect, the sociology of law is characterised by its specific commitment to the problems of empirical social theory and by its use of methods derived from the discipline of sociology. In this sense a researcher who conducts an empirical legal study has a dual option: as Treves (1987: 203) puts it, to analyse both documents, whether legal or non-legal, and facts, taking place in social reality. Therefore, content analysis implemented on a sample of 'soft law' policy documents can be

supplemented by content analysis of research interviews conducted with a specific target population. This type of integrated research plan corresponds to an 'applied sociology of law', as a category also included in Alf Ross's definition of the sociology of law, and comprises, theoretically and practically, a highly important research field (Dalberg-Larsen, 2005: 47).

Concluding Remarks on the Theoretical Socio-legal Analysis

In the light of this theoretical analysis, special emphasis is undeniably placed on what Intzessiloglou (2012) describes as the "three-dimensional" interdisciplinary field of the sociology of law as a realistic science.

> The first theoretical dimension consisting of a set of epistemological choices, which conceive, interpret, describe or apprehend law as a social phenomenon, […] together with the second empirical dimension, which entails empirical sociological research techniques gathering empirical data in the framework of certain hypotheses, […] set up the scientific field of the 'positivistic' sociology of law. […] Yet, a third dimension of the field is identified with a 'praxeology' related to the legal phenomenon, which utilises the above positivistic knowledge in order to orient social behaviour related to law generation, interpretation and implementation, and comprises a 'post-positivistic' sociology of law. (Intzessiloglou 2012: 125-126, 373-374)

Finally, legal phenomena are conceived and studied in their totality, under the assumption that law comprises an organic and inextricable part of an active, living and developing social reality. In this sense, a critical stance toward law *de lege lata* can be adopted, giving way to setting out proposals *de lege ferenda*.

A SOCIO-LEGAL RESEARCH PARADIGM ON LIFELONG LEARNING

Introduction: The Greek Socio-Legal Academic Background

In about the same period as the sociological study of law advanced internationally, Greek legal sociology was initiated by the influential theory of Georgios Michailides-Nouaros on "living law". This was inspired by Eugen Ehrlich's theory, and Intzessiloglou's seminal application of systems analysis in legal sociology – Intzessiloglou is the leading figure in contemporary Greek sociology of law (Nikolao Intzessiloglou, 2012; Michailides-Nouaros, 1982; Tsaoussis, 2007). In this academic context, the research reported here in adult education law is deemed as one of several legal sub-disciplines developed by contemporary legal scholars nationally. These include family law (Tsaoussis, 2003[1]), labour law (Papachristou, 2004), information law (Iglezakis, 2013), European law (Rethimiotaki, 2012), criminal law and criminology (Lambropoulou, 1999; Petoussi-Douli, 2010) and institutional reform (Karkatsoulis, 2011).

As mentioned above, what follows is a synopsis of a specific piece of research of this type conducted in the socio-legal methodological context.[2]

Research Overview and Contribution

The aim of this research, which belongs to the field of the sociology of education law, is to explore the manner in which the EU and Greek statutory frameworks on lifelong learning are implemented in Greece, in relation to two vulnerable social groups, the Roma and the Pontic Greek repatriates.

The first part of the study, involving a critical examination and analysis of Greek and international academic literature, is mainly focused on theoretical and conceptual analyses of lifelong learning, interculturalism and soft law. This part comprises the theoretical and conceptual foundation which constitutes an indispensable precondition for designing and conducting the research study, as well as for a proper understanding and interpretation of the research findings. The second part of the study presents the research method, how the project was conducted, as well as the research findings and their interpretation.

The main contribution of this type of research is that it examines the social effectiveness of education law, considered as a specific area of socio-legal inquiry, and, more specifically, it explores the extent to which the goals of educational policy on lifelong learning are achieved. Specifically, this inquiry was undertaken by means of quantitative and qualitative empirical research, in order to ascertain the views of target population groups which the policy directly benefited.

The research demonstrates the discrepancy between lifelong learning goals, as set out in the statutory framework, on the one hand, and how adult learners apprehend these goals, on the other. Consequently, in the light of the sociology of law, this research into the effectiveness of implementation of the legal framework provides evidence that there is a mismatch between the goals set by legal regulations in the field of lifelong learning and the apprehension and acceptance of these goals by the target groups concerned. In essence, the literature review reveals issues related to or stemming from this assumed mismatch; this point of view was adopted as the basic research hypothesis, which was then tested using appropriate research tools.

Research Design and Conduct: Issues of Socio-Legal Interest

Numerous distinct issues inherent in legal sociology arise out of the research framework outlined. What follows is an attempt to point out and elucidate several focal aspects of a socio-legal inquiry, accounting for the essential role they assume in terms of methodology and method.

Legal documents and interview data: Quantitative and qualitative approach.   In order to meet the aim of the study, two distinct pathways were followed as far as research method is concerned: quantitative and qualitative content analysis of both European and Greek legal documents on lifelong learning on the one hand;

qualitative content analysis of interview data with the target groups concerned with the relevant legal regulations on the other. In effect, this study takes place in the context of the 'empirical dimension' of the field of sociology of law, thereby seeking to constitute an integrated research project in the field. Apart from analysis of legal documents, primary empirical sociological research is also involved. It is worth noting, however, that research interviews were also theoretically justified in the light of the technique of content analysis. A 'living' research tool, who contributes to assessing the effect of documents without confining their analysis merely to their content, but, in parallel, provides evidence about the recipients whom these documents concern, is indispensable (Grawitz 2006: 134; Holsti, 1969: 35-36). Besides, social science research often employs interviews as an auxiliary method, in conjunction with others (Kvale, 2007: 46); this enhances the validity of research findings (Merriam, 2002: 12). With regard to the specific conditions under which the technique of content analysis was applied, the research problem was defined and primary and secondary hypotheses formulated. Research data were then identified, consisting of two distinct categories of sources: (i) European and Greek legal documents on lifelong learning, produced during the decade 2000-2009, and (ii) interview data with target groups concerned with the relevant legal regulations, that is, Roma and Pontic Greek repatriate adult learners.

Subsequently, content analysis norms were applied, while performing the various operations: setting up research material; selecting the units of analysis of legal documents ('theme' as the recording unit, 'frequency' and 'space' as the units of enumeration); defining and operationalising a categorisation of the theoretical conceptions, predicated on the categories and subcategories of analysis, so as to determine – by using specific indicators – whether content data fell into them (Berelson, 1952: 135-145; Holsti, 1969: 94-104).

Some final remarks concerning the quantity-quality debate related to content analysis are in order. The position adopted in this research rejected a rigid dichotomy between the two methods of analysis, which, on the contrary, normally co-exist and supplement each other (Holsti, 1969: 5-11). Both quantitative and qualitative attributes fell along the same continuum, because a fundamentally non-numerical procedure was adopted at an initial stage of the research, while selecting the categories and operationalising the subcategories of analysis. Specifically, quite a large sample of research material was read before constructing the set of subcategories, thereby providing a 'pre-qualitative' meaning to the research process. Furthermore, adding a qualitative dimension to the legal documents being processed was achieved through a rich selection of quotations and illustrations from the content. These were used to enliven the report of the frequencies of the various categories (Berelson, 1952: 115). This technique, both quantitative and qualitative, is also often utilised by sociologists of law, mostly in documentary analysis (Treves, 1987: 205).

The EU's and Greek lifelong learning policy and other essential comparisons.   The period studied was the first decade of the current millennium, a period during which

significant progress was made toward the establishment of key policy principles on lifelong learning. European and Greek legal frameworks on lifelong learning were studied comparatively. What was also at issue was the manner in which European Union policies on lifelong learning influenced Greek national policies in this field. Consequently, questions related to the correspondence or consistency between national and EU lifelong learning policy were also addressed. Thus, a general rule was applied: a meaningful analysis required that at least one type of comparison was held, either intra-content or between different bodies of content (Berelson, 1952: 188-190; Grawitz, 2006: 219; Holsti, 1969: 29-30, 103).

On the basis of this general rule, several 'criteria for comparison of research sources' were initially set and defined. The criteria employed either referred to legal documents (for instance, their European or Greek origin, their binding or non-binding force, the social and economic circumstances under which they were produced or the subject matter of the adult learning programmes), or they concerned the target groups of the research (in particular, their ethnic origin, cultural characteristics or communal organisation).

EU soft law, soft EU lifelong learning policy agenda and its national specification. The EU's adult learning policy agenda, whether 'coherent' or 'fragmented', has been growing continuously since its emergence in the 1990s, as discussed elsewhere in this book.[3] What needs to be drawn out at this point is the overarching mode of governance which has been established recently by the widespread use of 'soft law' regulations.

One of the major changes which has occurred in the EU governance landscape has been the dominance of soft legal regulations as an integral part of Union law, reportedly accounting for 13% of all EU law (Chalmers, Davies & Monti, 2010: 101). Moreover, taking the form of certain non-legislative acts (a term that was firstly introduced by Article 289 of the *Lisbon Treaty* (TFEU, 2010), soft law constitutes, alongside the legislative acts, a body of secondary EU legislation, that is the second important source of EU law (Borchard, 2010: 80-81). Additionally, in accordance with the principle of "subsidiarity" (as stated in art. 5 par. 3 of the *Treaty on EU*) (TEU, 1992), the *Lisbon Treaty* (Articles 165 and 166) establishes fundamental supporting and supplementary competences for the Union in the field of "education and vocational training". As a consequence, in these areas, given that harmonising measures involving the setting of common standards through Regulations, Directives and Decisions are excluded (TFEU, 2010: art. 166, par. 4), norm-setting is done almost exclusively through soft law.

Three core elements can illuminate the concept of legal 'softness': firstly, soft law is concerned with 'rules of conduct' or 'commitments'; secondly, these rules or commitments are laid down in instruments which have no legally binding force, but are not devoid of all legal effect; and thirdly, they aim at or may lead to some practical effect or impact on behaviour. Based on these elements, the following definition of soft law can be adopted:

> Rules of conduct that are laid down in instruments which have not been attributed legally binding force as such, but nevertheless may have certain – indirect – legal effects, and that are aimed at and may produce practical effects (Senden, 2005: 22).

On the basis of this definition, three categories of soft law have been proposed under which concrete forms of legal documents can be subsumed. First, preparatory and informative instruments, performing a 'pre-law' function, including legal acts such as, in particular, green papers, white papers, action programmes and informative communications. Secondly, interpretative and decisional instruments, such as the Commission's communications and notices and also certain guidelines, codes and frameworks, fulfilling a 'post-law' function and aiming to supplement and support already-existing EU law. Thirdly, steering instruments, in particular recommendations, resolutions and codes of conduct, can often be said to fulfil a para-law function (referring to rules structured in a way analogous to legal rules) (Senden, 2005: 23).

For instance, by means of iterative benchmarking of national progress to commonly agreed objectives, the so-called Open Method of Coordination (OMC) enhances interaction among intergovernmental groups (e.g. social actors) through discussion, bargaining and coordination of policies in supranational and domestic arenas (López-Santana, 2006: 485).[4] Moreover, it can even increase the possibilities for national parliaments to monitor and evaluate executive power, so that the accountability of the political system as a whole can be increased (De Ruiter, 2010: 877).

However, since the mid-2000's there has been a fierce debate over the value of soft law in the EU. This is arguing that it lacks the clarity and precision needed to provide a reliable framework for action, that it is a covert tactic to enlarge the Union's legislative hard law competence, or that it bypasses normal systems of accountability (Chalmers, Davies & Monti, 2010: 101-102; Di Robilant, 2006: 504-511). Nevertheless, its several advantages over traditional hard law are indisputable, such as ensuring tolerance for significant diversity among member states, constant adjustment to situations of uncertainty, achieving optimal results through frequent change of norms, and avoiding difficult enforcement of hard law at the national level. In this sense, soft law comprises a remarkable variety of alternative flexible forms of action for shaping the EU legal order. Furthermore, it has been argued that the emergence of secondary Union legislation lends vitality to primary legislation deriving from the Union Treaties, and progressively enhances and reproduces the European legal order (Borchard, 2010: 81). Apparently, soft law meets a need for experimentation over new or even innovative modes of governance, while at the same time it promotes voluntary compliance of member states with flexible policy instruments of politically binding nature, but not tied down by legal requirements and obligations.

Soft law research sources.   The central place in this study is occupied by the policy measures coming under the generic heading of 'soft law'. These made up

the large majority of non-binding legal documents studied. The binding force of legal documents on lifelong learning has been described above in the explanation of 'criteria for comparison of research sources'. Analysis of research findings provided the potential for pointing out the extent to which the binding force of the statutory framework exerts influence on the hierarchisation of lifelong learning goals, as well as on the manner in which these policy goals are understood and accepted by adult learners (as social actors concerned with policy implementation).

Among the numerous documents studied, certain forms of flexible legal regulation in the EU and the Greek context can be indicatively addressed.[5]

Firstly as regards the EU soft legal instruments, a great variety appears in the case of lifelong learning policy, such as memoranda, communications from the Commission, resolutions of the European (Education) Council or of the European Parliament, recommendations of the European (Education) Council and the European Parliament, opinions of the Economic and Social Committee or the Committee of the Regions, reports by the European Council, action plans or declarations and communiqués. Indicative examples are the Communication from the Commission *Action Plan on Adult Learning: It is Always a Good Time to Learn* (CEC, 2007), the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning* (EP & CEU, 2006) or the Bordeaux Communiqué on *Vocational Education and Training* (EM, 2008).

As far as the Greek legal order is concerned, certain aspects of soft law bear a close relation to a 'law-making' power or competency of public administration, and have the effect of summoning material and human resources for turning legislative policy into social reality (Selznick, 1968: 56-57). More specifically, apart from the binding legal documents, namely laws on adult education passed by the Greek parliament (e.g. Law 3369/2005 on *Systematization of Lifelong Learning*), soft legal instruments mainly include: (i) 'operational programmes' (e.g. *Education and Lifelong Learning 2007-2013*) drawn up by competent public authorities, (ii) 'public notices' released by the same authorities (concerning, e.g., "integrated interventions for disadvantaged groups"), and (iii) 'issues of technical offer' (documents of least binding force) which correspond to the provisions of the aforementioned notices, submitted for endorsement by accredited vocational training centres (KEK) acting as the competent implementation bodies.

Adult education goals under investigation.   Since content analysis, as has been argued, stands or falls by its categories, the latter were carefully formulated, in order to provide proper 'binding' of the research aim with its outcomes by denoting the meaning of the research hypotheses (Berelson, 1952: 148, 162; Grawitz 2006: 197, 221).

In this respect, in the light of earlier critical analysis of the research theoretical framework, four broad goals of lifelong learning were addressed as the categories of analysis: those stated in a Communication from the European Commission entitled *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality* (CEC, 2001).

These were employability/adaptability, social inclusion, personal fulfilment and active citizenship. These objectives were the product of an all-embracing European policy strategy, urgently aiming at an equilibrium between economic and socio-cultural learning objectives. This has been formulated in policy documents over the last decade (e.g., CEC, 2006: 8; CEC, 2008). In this sense, they can be seen as corresponding to a holistic approach to adult education, central to the academic literature elaborating humanistic learning theories, which brings adult learners and their personality characteristics to the forefront (Freire, 1977a, 1977b; Gougoulakis, 2012; Jarvis, 2004; Mezirow, 1991, 2000; Rogers, 1994, 1995). In such a theoretical context, it is necessary to explore whether these particular goals play a part in individual learning experiences and throughout learners' lives.

An inherently sociological intercultural perspective.   Apart from what has already been mentioned, a critical point to be addressed is the empirical research undertaken in this study adopted a dual intercultural perspective, since it concerned two vulnerable social groups of population, Roma and Pontic Greek repatriate adult learners. Indeed, this study primarily examined the extent to which the objectives of educational policy on lifelong learning have had an impact on two directly affected vulnerable social groups, both marked by ethnic and cultural diversity from the dominant social group, while also differing from each other in several social characteristics, such as communal organisation of social life (stronger in the Roma population) or educational level (higher among the repatriates). Such matters of special interest to legal sociology, resting on the basic assumption that law both affects and is affected by the surrounding social conditions, have been taken seriously into account when interpreting research findings, thereby providing differentiated data, based on their cultural diversity, about the two social groups (Bourdieu Chamboredon & Passeron, 2009: 83).

   Furthermore, research on the adult education of diverse social groups, that is, for and about groups defined by race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc., needs to be strengthened. For instance, although publication of such diversity-focused scholarship has increased over the last few decades, marginalised groups are still under-represented in academic journals (Taylor, Angelique & Kyle, 2003: 408). Besides, the scarcity of research of this kind may well be related to study limitations, such as difficulties of access to "disadvantaged" social groups (Cohen & Manion, 1994: 126; Adler & Adler, 2002: 521; Warren, 2002: 87). In this case, sensitive personal data, regarding vulnerable groups with diverse language history, ethnic origin or value codes (Iglezakis, 2003), were accessed only after filing a complaint with the Hellenic Data Protection Authority (HDPA), in order to intervene and serve as a facilitator of the research project (Koutidou, 2011).

Further aspects of sociological inquiry.   Two further issues concerning the definition and processing of research sources bear strong relation to the socio-legal character of this study. Firstly, since the "archive of sources", encompassing the legal documents, was set up through electronic processing of legal databases, several

issues relevant to sampling and critical elaboration of electronic sources of law were pointed out and highlighted (Treves 1987: 213-215, Intzessiloglou 1988: 28-37, 93). Secondly, primary research was conducted in parallel, in an attempt to identify the total number of lifelong learning programmes conducted in relation to the target groups concerned during the period under investigation, and demographic data referring to the target population of the empirical research.

De lege lata versus de lege ferenda inquiry.   Last but not least, the aim of this socio-legal research exceeds the formal limits of a normative inquiry ("*de lege lata*"), in order to be associated with the broader issue of providing feedback to future law-making on lifelong learning. In particular, the present research reveals the views of social actors concerned with the implementation of the legislative policy, which lead this policy to be governed by social realism and to appear as highly effective. From this point of view, some recommendations are made concerning the readjustment and hierarchical reformation of educational policy on lifelong learning scope and its objectives ("*de lege ferenda*"), with the aim of strengthening the legal effectiveness of relevant regulations in both the European and Greek legal orders.

Key Research Findings and hypothesis Testing

The first section of the presentation of research findings involves the quantitative and qualitative content analysis of the legal documents, with reference to the four goals of lifelong learning that constitute the basic categories of analysis (employability/adaptability, social inclusion, personal fulfilment and active citizenship). The second section includes the qualitative content analysis of the interviews of the empirical research. Research hypothesis testing was conducted on the basis of the research findings presented, and their analysis and interpretation, in conjunction with variables related to the "criteria of comparison of research resources" employed. These included the binding force of legal documents (concerning the first research hypothesis), the prioritisation of lifelong learning goals as it arises out of the twofold subject matter of lifelong learning programmes (Greek literacy and vocational training, concerning the second research hypothesis), the role that the global economic crisis of 2008 assumed in reinforcing the economic dimension of the EU's statutory framework on lifelong learning (concerning the 3rd research hypothesis), and the lifelong learning benefits obtained by the Roma and Pontic Greek repatriate adult learners both on the economic level and, at the same time, in relation to their social inclusion, personal fulfilment and active citizenship (concerning the fourth, fifth and sixth research hypotheses). The third and last section discusses the research findings and presents the general conclusion of the study.

EU and Greek legal documents.   With regard to the hierarchisation of lifelong learning goals on the basis of different documentary sources, the general quantitative analysis of the research findings, relating to the total set of European and Greek

legal documents, demonstrated that employability/adaptability is ranked as the primary goal of lifelong learning, whereas active citizenship is the least significant. A difference in hierarchisation is noted regarding the second most important goal of lifelong learning:this is social inclusion in the European legal documents, while it is personal fulfilment in the Greek legal documents.

As far as the particular goals of lifelong learning (corresponding to the subcategories of analysis), are concerned, the following indicative inferences can be drawn. Firstly, as regards employability/adaptability, European legal documents prioritise growth, economic/technological and educational, over unemployment reduction, as the most important goal of lifelong learning, placing emphasis on: (i) the competitiveness and effectiveness of lifelong learning policies implemented, (ii) the assimilation of technological change and innovative action, and (iii) the lifelong learning funding required. On the other hand, Greek legal documents on the whole focus primarily on combatting unemployment rather than on growth, highlighting in particular acquisition of vocational knowledge and skills improvement, the development of vocational and educational guidance, and strengthening of individuals' positions in the labour market.

Secondly, as regards social inclusion, European legal documents lay more emphasis than Greek documents on equity and the intercultural dimensions of lifelong learning. Thirdly, as far as personal fulfilment is concerned, in comparison with European documents, Greek documents place more emphasis on personal empowerment, the formation of a new learning culture and, above all, the development of communicative social skills. Finally, when referring to the fourth goal (active citizenship), European and Greek legal documents differ little: both show low rates on issues such as social and political involvement.

Legal documents' binding force.   While testing the first research hypothesis, the hierarchisation of lifelong learning goals was studied under the criterion of the binding force of the legal documents examined. It was noted that as the binding force of the documents decreases, the quantitative presence of the first category (employability/ adaptability) diminishes as well, whereas personal fulfilment and active citizenship are both reinforced, while at the same time social inclusion undergoes no important change. However, this trend appears to be stronger in the Greek documents with less binding force, especially those that seem to be closer to the target population's needs regarding specific lifelong learning programmes (such legal documents are either Public Notices or Issues of Technical Offer, submitted to the competent authorities by the implementation bodies for lifelong learning activities, that is, the Centres of Vocational Training KEK).

Consequently, according to the above findings (and others not included in this synopsis), there are significant differences between the European and the Greek statutory framework concerning lifelong learning in respect of both binding and non-binding legal documents. These concern the priority placed on each of the four

categories of analysis representing the four broad objectives of lifelong learning, and relate either to the quantitative presence of the categories or to the emphasis laid on them in the documents. In conclusion, what needs to be stressed is that the "softer" the legal documents are, the more they state attainable educational goals of a broad character, conceived within a personal and civic perspective, rather than supporting merely economic imperatives.

The subject matter of lifelong learning programmes.   While testing the second research hypothesis, the hierarchisation of lifelong learning goals was studied in relation to a twofold criterion of the subject matter of lifelong learning programmes, that is, Greek literacy and vocational training. Significant differentiations were noticed regarding the priority placed on each of the four broad objectives of lifelong learning; this leads to the following dual inference. (i) When lifelong learning concerns Greek literacy, personal fulfilment is highlighted as a fairly significant objective, appearing for the first time in Greek legal documents as equal in percentage to the (generally dominant) employability/adaptability. (ii) When lifelong learning concerns vocational training, active citizenship is reinforced considerably, reaching the same level as the goal of social inclusion, which generally comes third in Greek legal documents. In conclusion, although the economic goals of lifelong learning are stressed in both European and Greek legal documents, this priority is minimised in Greek legal documents of lesser binding force, such as those concerning specific programmes. The research outcomes provide the opportunity to illustrate and interpret the emphasis placed on objectives such as personal fulfilment (by general adult education programmes), or active citizenship (in vocational training programmes).

Impact of the recession on lifelong learning.   Testing of the third research hypothesis explored the role that the global recession of 2008 assumed in reinforcing the economic dimension of the EU's statutory framework on lifelong learning.[6] The results indicated that, in the European legal documents issued after the economic crisis broke out, the first research category (the economic goal of employability/ adaptability) continued to hold significant priority over the other (non-economic) goals of lifelong learning. More specifically, the frequency of employability/ adaptability increased markedly in comparison to personal fulfilment and active citizenship, which showed considerable decreases.

Empirical research findings in a dual intercultural framework.   The second section of the empirical research – qualitative content analysis of the interviews held – yielded findings of great significance to the integration of the overall research plan. Specifically, testing the last three secondary hypotheses provided results which can be interpreted on the basis of social characteristics, as well as on the basis of how these characteristics differed between the two social groups concerned.

Firstly, as far as the fourth research hypothesis is concerned, regarding whether and to what extent (in the views of the research target groups) the lifelong learning

goals stated in legal documents were attained, it is clear that neither Roma nor Pontic Greek repatriate adult learners see lifelong learning as helping them find paid work, or as contributing to the security of their labour market situation. On the contrary, both research target groups perceive lifelong learning as a cultural and experiential domain, within which they achieve a considerable measure of social inclusion, personal fulfilment and formation as active citizens.

With reference to the fifth research hypothesis, concerning whether and to what extent the views of the research target groups are differentiated in terms of attaining lifelong learning goals, it was concluded that, when compared with Pontic Greek repatriates, the Roma obtained benefits mostly in relation to non-economic lifelong learning goals. More specifically, to a considerable degree they met their need to communicate with other people and express their feelings, they went through significant positive transformations regarding their relationship to learning, and they took a more active stance toward longstanding discrimination against their group members, while in parallel they assumed a more active role in defending their group's interests, even outside the Roma community.

Lastly, as regards the sixth research hypothesis – whether and to what extent lifelong learning contributes to adult learners' "emancipation", either on a personal or on a broader social level – it was noted that Pontic Greek repatriates are less receptive to the programme's effects, owing to the fact that their social characteristics, such as their educational level, their occupation and their lack of strong communal organisation in social life, differ considerably from those of the Roma. On the other hand, albeit rather ineffectively, the Roma aspired to transform their individual or collective life conditions, in spite of the fact that they took a more positive attitude to issues such as overcoming their negative self-concept or being emancipated from communal influence.

General conclusion.   Although the economic goals of lifelong learning, as set out in both European and Greek statutory frameworks, take considerable priority over the other three goals, a priority which appears magnified in legal documents of greater binding force, yet at the same time it appears that these economic goals are not achieved in the educational context, at least in the opinion of two directly benefitting vulnerable target groups, that is, Roma and Pontic Greek repatriates. On the contrary, goals other than the economic ones are considered more realistic and feasible by the target social groups concerned, who mention that these are achieved to a considerable extent, despite being of less importance in the legal framework.

As a consequence, having inquired into how the EU and the Greek statutory framework on lifelong learning are implemented in Greece, it is clear that there is a mismatch between the goals set by the statutory framework in the field of lifelong learning, on the one hand, and the implementation of this framework concerning two

vulnerable social groups of population, the Roma and the Pontic Greek repatriates, on the other.

Policy recommendations.   Lastly, in the light of these research results, some recommendations can be made to help bridge the gap between the goals pursued by educational policy on lifelong learning and the goals it attains. The recommendations relate particularly to the readjustment and hierarchical reformation of the scope of lifelong learning, and its policy objectives, with a view to augmenting the legal effectiveness of relevant regulations, both in the European and Greek legal orders. The recommendations put special emphasis on the personal, social and political issues at stake concerning lifelong learning in the light of its dominant economic character, on the reduction of the distance between legal documents of the greatest binding force and their application, and on the achieving an appropriate sequencing of lifelong learning programmes that take into account the social, economic and cultural values of the vulnerable social groups involved and place these values at the centre of attention.

EPILOGUE

As highlighted throughout this chapter, the socio-legal lens through which adult lifelong learning as a dynamic field of study has been examined has the potential to establish a renewed bond between policy discourse, on the one hand, and social needs, on the other. To paraphrase Rasmussen (2009: 97), socio-legal research, as described above, can reconnect adult learning to people's real-life contexts and experiences, thereby informing policymaking with social messages, while at the same time keeping pace with innovation and competitiveness as cardinal requirements of the EU's educational policy under both the Lisbon or current meta-Lisbon ("ET 2020") strategic development frameworks. Thus, in line with its admittedly "softened" economistic perspective at the European and international policy level (Rubenson, 2006: 329), lifelong learning – if perceived and explored in realistic terms – can move hand in hand, and fully comply, with social reality. This would reinforce its "social dimension", the importance of which EU policy documents have recently stated – or rather, re-stated.[7] As has been argued in this chapter, such a move of lifelong learning toward social purposes can potentially even more "soften" its economistic version through a dominantly and literally "soft" statutory framework.

The sociology of law offers a methodologically rich, epistemologically autonomous, and ample domain to scholars aspiring to explore the assumed and often explicitly stated difference or inconsistency between the political intent of policies on lifelong learning, on the one hand, and what actually happens, on the other. In this way, we can study the impact and effectiveness of adult education policy from an interdisciplinary angle and with a very different methodology. In

essence, we have an opportunity to deepen and broaden the overall research agenda as regards adult lifelong education at both EU and national levels.

NOTES

[1] For a new approach to legal sociology, see: Tsaoussis, A. (2013). *Law and Collaborativity: A new approach to legal sociology*. Athens: Papazissis.

[2] A thorough presentation of the research design and findings by means of tables and charts is included in: Koutidou, E. (2013). 'Lifelong Learning in terms of Interculturalism: European and Greek Statutory Framework and its Implementation.' Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. [in Greek]. For an indicative but all-embracing presentation, as regards the realisation of the broad goals of adult education by social actors, also see: Koutidou, E. 'Lifelong Learning in terms of Interculturalism and Transformative Learning: A Research in the field of Sociology of Law.' Paper presented at the 9th International Conference on Transformative Learning: "Transformative Learning in Time of Crisis: Individual and Collective Challenges", Athens, May 28-29, 2011. In Proceedings available at: http://www.academia.edu/787737/Transformative_Learning_in_Time_of_Crisis_Individual_and_Collective_Challenges accessed 12.04.2013, 170-176).

[3] See in particular: Rasmussen's "Adult Learning Policy in the European Commission: Development and Status" (this volume).

[4] To consider intergovernmentalism and the OMC as a soft legal instrument under a political science perspective, see Klatt's "Understanding the European Union and its Political Power: The Contribution of European Studies to Adult Education Policy" (this volume).

[5] For a further elaboration of the soft EU and Greek policy context on adult education policy, see (under paragraphs 2.1. and 2.2.): Koutidou, E. (2014), 'European Union and Greek lifelong learning policy within an intercultural context: Preliminary insights from research in the sociology of law'. *International Journal of Lifelong Education* (in press).

[6] It has to be mentioned that there are no Greek legal documents on lifelong learning to be examined under the recession criterion, because the country had not yet arrived at the heart of the crisis during the time period investigated (2000-2009).

[7] For an elaborated presentation of the recent European lifelong learning agenda, in which the above social dimension of lifelong learning has been re-adopted, see also Mohorčič Špolar and Holford's "Adult Learning: From the Margins to the Mainstream", this volume.

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CONCLUSION

The starting point for this volume was the growing importance – but limited exploration – of the European Union's (EU) policy role in adult education. While the authors and editors have no single view, the book does seek to promote a particular perspective: the need to problematise, both theoretically and methodologically, the features that characterise the EU's role in adult education policy. The starting point for most of the chapters has been an historical perspective on the growing number and density of the strands that connect the EU to adult education, in order to reveal the broader socio-political conditions under which the EU and its member states concurrently gain and lose power in this field of action. Against this background, this volume has also questioned the political apparatus that emerges from the power relations between the EU and member states – that is to say the lifelong learning regime, of which adult education is now part – both ideologically and at the level of practice. It has also offered some suggestions on how research on the effect of the relations between the EU and member states on the government of adult education can be carried forward.

In this final chapter we draw together the main features of the arguments presented, and highlight what appear to us to be shared understandings across the diverse approaches and perspectives of our contributors: matters which we believe may be valuable when considering adult education policy and issues within the European region. We then turn to methodological challenges and insights, drawing together – from across the foregoing chapters – criticisms and suggestions which we offer to adult education policy researchers for consideration, application, development and further exploration.

REGIONAL TRANSNATIONALISM IN ADULT EDUCATION

At the most general level, all contributors to this volume share a presumption that adult education, although implemented nationally, can no longer be understood as a policy concern which is delimited by the nation-state. Well-established fields of theoretical and empirical research on global education (e.g., Ball, 2012; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010) or European education (e.g., Dale & Robertson 2009; Saar, Ure & Holford, 2013) suggest that governance in education has surpassed the traditional operation of national governments in scope and way of working.

When we restrict our attention to the European region, we see that governance is intimately connected to the creation, development and future prospects of a common European community, and its operating institutions. Analysis and diagnosis of the

European communitarian 'project' abound (e.g. Beck, 2013; Giddens, 2006, 2013), mostly revolving around basic but at the same time complex questions such as: Why did it start? How has it grown and expanded? What problems has it encountered? How can it move forward? Yet many of these analyses continue to ignore how this wider context of evolution, and sometimes uncertainty, has impacted on the values and grammar of education, and specifically on the education of European citizens and others living on European soil, who stand outside national education systems.

Within the field of adult education growing attention has been directed to this issue (e.g., Lima & Guimaraes 2011), unpacking how adult education policy, and its inclusion within an encompassing lifelong learning regime (see Fejes, this volume; Normand & Pacheco, this volume), are intrinsically related to the very existence and persistence of the EU as a competitive actor within the world system. Uncovering the reasons and mechanisms that sustain regional transnationalism in adult education constitutes a pre-requisite to broadening our understanding of what enables European citizens to engage in learning – or precludes them from doing so.

For decades collaborative efforts across member states, generally supported by EU programmes, have led to the implementation of initiatives for the education of adults. These initiatives – undertaken by national and local governments, academia, and professional organisations, to mention just a few – were aimed at both adult citizens of member states and their counterparts from other European countries. However, adult education as such represents a relatively new element of the policies generated in Brussels (see Mohorčič Špolar & Holford, this volume), and an element on which regional transnationalism has only lately begun to exert power. We return to this issue below. Here we draw attention to the steps which occurred (see Rasmussen, this volume). Adult education has been conceptualised at the European level predominantly in terms of vocational training or training for the job. Accordingly, it has received growing attention in those divisions of the European Commission charged with employment and social inclusion. In education and training, new conditions for EU-member state relations (Phillips & Ertl 2003; Nóvoa & Lawn 2002) were created with the Lisbon process. In the process, adult education has gained recognition as a political object for regional transnationalism.

CHANGES IN THE MEANS FOR EXERTING POLICY WILL

The contributions to this volume also share an awareness of a radical transformation in the means by which policy will is exerted within the European region. This refers primarily to the means through which traditional forms of power – in the hands of national and local governments – regulate and control the diverse dimensions of individuals' lives. But it also denotes the means by which non-governmental political actors contribute to these shifts. While these actors have expanded in number and type under neo-liberal regimes, and the multiple forms of 'liberalisation' that they brought (Ball, 2012; Rhodes, 1997), in this volume attention has been focused on those that operate within the EU as a pooling of national sovereignties.

Particularly prominent in our accounts are the EU's institutions, such as the European Council, the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the sub-national levels of government that participate in these institutions. Much less attention has been given to the business organisations and citizenship associations that operate within and across European national borders (see Klatt, this volume; Milana, this volume).

Drawing on social constructivism, understood in its political science interpretation as an ontology of the relation between agency and structure (see Klatt, this volume), we understand European adult education policy as the emergent outcome of continuing interactions among European diplomats, officials, politicians, citizens and, most importantly, member states as politically or technically represented. The channels through which these interactions occur are multi-faceted. The most powerful are undoubtedly deeply intertwined within the principal EU institutions – institutions that still rely significantly, though no longer exclusively, on the mechanisms and procedures of 'hard' governance.

Accordingly, the European Council initiates, thanks to the Conclusions of its Summits – the result of negotiations and bargaining between heads of state or government. The Council of Ministers holds decision-making powers that affect implementation of the Council's initiatives in the field of education and training, through negotiations with national governments' representatives. The European Commission initiates legislation, controls national implementation of community decisions, and holds responsibility for agenda-setting at regional level. Finally, the European Parliament holds legislative power, yet only in agreement with the European Council and on the basis of proposals by the European Commission.

As several contributors to this volume highlight, however, since the start of the present century these institutions have increased their power by expanding their modes of operation to include 'soft' governance instruments, and in particular through the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). The OMC facilitates networking between national officials and other interest groups, like social partners and non-governmental organisations on specific issues of concern. This has significantly extended the power of the European Commission in particular, while contributing to the emergence of monitoring and controlling mechanisms at European level. While attention to the working of the OMC in education and training has grown exponentially over the years (e.g., Borras & Jacobsson, 2004), the impact of the OMC on regional inasmuch as national adult education policy is still underexplored.

Within this scenario, a major claim made in the present volume is that EU member states have not – as much of the literature on Europeanisation seems to assume (cf. Lawn & Grek, 2012) – 'lost' their sovereign power to regulate and control adult education. On the contrary, member states have occupied new interstices for political negotiations and bargaining within Europe. This is not to say, however, that their political power is limited to that embodied in heads of states, government officials and civil servants, or that such influence is necessarily the result of coherent national approaches to adult education.

THE MORAL IMPERATIVES OF CAPITALISM

An additional point of convergence across our contributions is that adult education can no longer be taken to be a separate or marginal area of policy concern. Within the EU's political realm, adult education is intimately intertwined in lifelong learning ideologies, agendas and regimes. As several chapters show, it is precisely this intimate relationship that 'justifies', and indeed expands, a tendency in European thinking and political initiatives to equate adult education with education for employability and economic competitiveness. In our opinion this underplays, among others, adult education's potential for moral, political and social development at either personal or community level; both have even more potential in times of worsening of living conditions for great sections of the European population, and growing discontent with neo-liberal regimes.

These shared views, however, open up a spectrum of possible approaches for adult education policy researchers to interrogate the politics of lifelong learning and its ethical dimensions, or question the values it carries, its regulatory functions, and its effects on people's lives.

In this volume we have given considerable attention to one particular strand of scholarly work that approaches lifelong learning and the education of adults from a governmentality perspective (e.g. Fejes, this volume; Normand & Pacheco, this volume). This work looks at lifelong learning as a 'regime of practice' that is constituted by a range of conceptual, institutional and discursive elements. When combined with specific scientific knowledge and propositions about learning, these frame both the objects and subjects of learning (see Fejes, this volume). Accordingly, a European regime of lifelong learning not only conditions what is understood as relevant knowledge that citizens shall acquire, but also creates new pockets of exclusion among European citizens who are unwilling or incapable to acquire such knowledge.

In other words, citizens living within Europe are governed by framing procedures such as the setting of national and international standards, classifications and indicators; examples are those emerging from the implementation of Education and Training 2020, or the Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competences (PIAAC). Such forms of governmentality re-frame traditional relations between public and private, and more specifically, between state and market, as well as the relationships between formal, non-formal and informal education and learning opportunities and experiences. Several scholars see this as the result of a self-evident trend in lifelong learning ideologies, agendas and regimes that builds on their liberal elements – such as a technocratic approach to knowledge, and a faith in individual competition for the reproduction of elites. In their chapter, Normand and Pacheco develop this approach by pointing to three 'horizons of justice' that feed into the politics of lifelong learning: the maintenance of citizens' productive capacities, the redistribution of resources for education (and learning), and the determination of merits for the selection of elites.

What should be of special concern to adult education policy researchers are the principles of justice embedded in contemporary understandings of the 'common

good'. While we believe that governmentality studies are not the only approach, they constitute a powerful contribution. Quite apart from their intrinsic value, we believe they have played a significant role in raising awareness of the breadth and depth of contemporary European lifelong learning politics.

CRITICALITIES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Taken together we hope the chapters above raise awareness of the complex relations between European polity, politics and policy in adult education; this poses several challenges for those adult education policy researchers whose main focus is on the European region or European nations and localities.

One critical dimension is how to move towards a theory of European governance in adult education – or rather, towards a complex theoretical apparatus that can capture conceptually the dialogical relation between national and supranational levels as they play out within the European region. A second critical dimension lies in the operationalisation of this theoretical apparatus in ways that can fruitfully guide empirical exploration and analysis – not at supranational or national level, but rather in the interstices where these levels meet. This points to a third critical dimension: the need to identify primary and secondary units of analysis, in ways that reproduce neither 'methodological nationalism' (Smith 1983, Wimmer & Glick Shiller 2002) – the assumption of EU member states as the 'natural' unit of analysis – nor generate some kind of 'methodological regionalism' by postulating the European Union as the conventional unit of analysis.

None of our contributions has explicitly engaged with these criticalities. Yet across the foregoing chapters several suggestions emerge for further exploration and to better 'unpack' the working of European adult education policy and its ultimate effects on people.

By engaging with conceptual tools and analytical insights from political and social sciences, some authors suggest conceptualising adult education as one of the building blocks of a socio-political communitarian project (see Rasmussen, this volume), which can question the specific cause it serves, how it does so (Normand & Pacheco, this volume), and what its social effects might be (Fejes, this volume). Other authors suggest conceptualising adult education as one among many battlefields where power relations and positions are constituted, maintained or modified through continuing negotiations and bargaining among political actors (Klatt, this volume). This in turn directs our attention towards those who participate in these negotiations, and their room for manoeuvre; and to question the interests at stake (Milana, this volume). It also raises the question of whether the specific social needs of those who reside within Europe's sovereign member states find concrete answers (Koutidou, this volume).

Yet from a methodological viewpoint, while discourse analysis and the analysis of secondary data, which abound in adult education policy analysis, will continue to provide viable strategies to investigate some of the issues at stake, more careful consideration of the philosophy that guides the research process is needed. Our contributors have given emphasis to methodological explorations and proposals that

explicitly engage with the challenge of overcoming methodological nationalism, and seek to connect structure and agency (Cort, this volume) or the supranational and national scales (Koutidou, this volume) in the study of European policy.

We are conscious that many other gaps (and openings) remain in the path of adult education policy researchers who focus on Europe. Our hope is that this book will encourage and stimulate further the interdisciplinary dialogue and exchange which is the essential foundation for meaningful empirical scholarship in this field.

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