Social Inclusion of Mid-Life Learners through University Lifelong learning
Discussion paper 2013/5.1.

Fikret Öz - Ileana Hamburg
Social Inclusion of Mid-Life Learners through University Lifelong Learning
Transnational Report Work Package 5

Discussion Paper 2013/5.1

Fikret Öz - Ileana Hamburg
Institute for Work and Technology
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Content

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 1
2. Social Inclusion and Tertiary Life Long Learning ......................................................................................... 3
3. Case Studies and Methodology .................................................................................................................... 14
4. Comparative Analysis of Case Studies ........................................................................................................... 19
5. TLL and future challenges in HE-Institutions with special focus on midlife learners ....................................... 36
6. ANNEX: Short Presentation of Case Studies ................................................................................................. 41
1. Introduction

In an aging society and in a globalised knowledge economy, people in mid-life are increasingly exposed to social risks and exclusion from the labour market. They have low levels of participation in formal Lifelong Learning (LLL) and, in general, have less access and suitable opportunities in Tertiary Lifelong Learning (TLL). The need for a constant upgrading of the skills, however, has increasingly been emphasised for the socio-economic sustainability of an ageing European society.

Lifelong learning may contribute to the continuing professional development of employees and to an enduring utilization of their expertise in organisations. Thus it may help to prevent that people in midlife drop out from employment or that their careers come to a deadlock. This is also a social loss.

The access of mid-life learners to Tertiary Lifelong Learning (TLL) and their retention in the system, thus, have an increasing relevance for the socio-economic sustainability of the European social model. Higher Education institutions have the potential to provide the constant upgrading of skills required by a fast changing labour market. Opening Higher Education (HE) for mid-life learners, designing flexible pathways from VET and professional experience to higher education, flexible learning arrangements conciliating family-work life and learning and the adaptation of didactical methods in HE are challenges to affront problems of the aging knowledge society.

The European Project THEMP (Tertiary Education for People in Midlife) focuses on the education and training mission of the universities and asks for the measures taken by them to expand their educational and training activities beyond the traditional students to a wider range of citizens and in wider range of learning environments (an objective sometimes labelled as HE's ‘third mission’).

The project aims to analyse Tertiary Lifelong Learning (TLL) programs at universities in 7 EU-member states (Germany, Italy, Spain, Hungary, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Netherland) with respect to inclusion of mid-life learners and social impact. It provides a description of the landscapes of TLL in these countries, but the core contributions are case studies of three universities in each country. Main focus lies in the analysis of the weak and strong points of the lifelong learning activities in the selected universities and their strategies in developing and implementing training programs for the mid-life learners.
Based on case studies with the selected HE-institutions in seven European countries, this synthesis report gives an overview and some insights for the general TLL-activities which would support capacity building and social inclusion of midlife learners. Such training activities can support the building of own capacities to cope with requirements of changing labour market. Furthermore, they can contribute to new orientation and reintegration of participants to the labour market and, hence, increase their employability. Main questions at the base of synthesis report are: How are such programs designed and implemented? Are there any effects and impact on the learners in order to improve the capacity building and hence increase the chances for the (re)-integration into the labour market? What are the major issues, aspects and obstacles for the opening of HE-Institutions for the target groups in question? What lessons can be drawn for the TLL-Activities?

In order to get insights for such questions, in the framework of the THEMP project three HE-Institutions have been chosen for case studies in each country. At the core of each case study stands an analysis with statistically available data, making series of interviews with decision makers, stakeholders, lecturers and mid-life learners. The report summarizes in a comparative way the major findings with a special focus of country specific issues regarding TLL and social inclusion of the midlife-learners. The report is structured as follows: After description of the general TLL at European level, national regulative framework in selected partner countries will be presented. The methodology part describes the empirical base of the report. Selected cases will be described comparatively with a focus on diverse dimensions. In the last section, some conclusions based on selected studies will be summarised where in particular, TLL and future challenges in HE-institutions with a special focus on midlife learners will be discussed. A summary of cases will be reported in the annex.
2. Social Inclusion and Tertiary Life Long Learning

Promoting social inclusion means advocating for a society for all people, based on mutual respect and solidarity, promoting equal opportunities and decent living standards regardless of economic status or ability, gender, sexual orientation, social or ethnic background etc. Combating poverty is a central component of social inclusion, since poverty can trigger a number of processes of exclusion – for example in the areas of education, employment as well as in different areas of social life and citizen participation (http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-policies/social-inclusion_en.htm).

### Table 1: Adult participation in lifelong learning: Percentage of the adult population aged 25-64 in formal and non-formal learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>9,1</td>
<td>8,9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7,5</td>
<td>11,4(b)</td>
<td>-0,4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>7,7</td>
<td>7,8</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>10,8</td>
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<td>6,2</td>
<td>5,7</td>
<td>-0,4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>2,8</td>
<td>2,7</td>
<td>-1,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>15,6</td>
<td>16,6(b)</td>
<td>16,7</td>
<td>1,4(2006-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>20,0(b)</td>
<td>19,4</td>
<td>15,8(p)</td>
<td>:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education and Training Monitor 2012, European Commission
b) Break in time series in previous years; p) provisional

The economic crisis, the need for new skills and the demographic changes facing Europe have highlighted the key role of adult learning in LLL strategies and as part of the policies for competitiveness and employability, social inclusion, active citizenship. To increase visibility of these challenges, 2010 has been labelled the European Year against Poverty and Social Exclusion. Social inclusion is promoted by the European Union within education and training which is a key part of Europe 2020, the European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The benchmark 2020 sets as target that by 2020 at least 15% of the adults (age group 25-65) should participate in lifelong learning. The monitoring report in 2012 highlights, however, that the participation rates stagnating in European countries. As of 2011 only 8, 2% men on average participated in lifelong learning. This rate amounts to 9, 6% for women. As
shown in the table 1, the participation rates among countries are subject to considerable variations:

| Table 2: Unemployment rate of 25-64 years old by educational attainment (%) |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
|        | Lower sec and less | Upper secondary | Tertiary  |
| EU 27  | 14,8               | 7,6          | 5         |
| Czech Rep. | 21,6               | 5,7          | 2,6       |
| Germany | 13,9               | 5,8          | 2,4       |
| Spain  | 26,4               | 19,3         | 11,7      |
| Italy  | 9,4                | 6            | 5,2       |
| Hungary | 23,1               | 9,6          | 3,9       |
| Netherlands | 5,4            | 3,8          | 2,8       |
| UK     | 10,4 (b)           | 6,1 (b)      | 3,7 (b)   |

Source: Education and Training Monitor 2012, European Commission

b) Break in time series in previous years;

As shown in the table 2 education attainment level is a decisive factor for economic and social inclusion. Unemployment rates at European Union level of those who have not achieved upper secondary education are nearly three times those of tertiary graduates.

Due to profound changes in the labour market, lifelong learning have been emphasized as a solution to cope with technological development, to stay in jobs, career advancement or returning back to jobs. Lifelong learning, adult education and training after initial education have been regarded as prerequisites for maintaining and acquiring new skills as well as adapting to structural changes in the labour market. Facing ageing European labour force and future risks of shortage of qualified workers in the labour market, new emphasis has been put on middle age working groups. Several studies point out that middle age groups are more prone to social and economic exclusion. They participate less than other age groups in lifelong learning activities and training and education activities do not address them.
In general, participation in adult learning tends to decline for older people. In many countries, participation rates for 25-34 year-olds are much higher more than 55-64 year-olds. Among participants, there is an imbalance in participation between highly skilled and low skilled adults as well. Reducing inequity in participation and investment in adult learning can alleviate tensions and problems associated with the needs of a changing labour market. The role of adult learning and benefits both at individual and societal level is, meanwhile, recognized for building a knowledge based economy. Nevertheless, most education and training systems are still largely focused on the education and training of young people. Further action is needed to reflect the requirements for lifelong learning throughout the life course and confront the socio economic challenges facing the European countries. Taking into account recent reforms in pension systems, demographic changes and the lack of highly qualified workforces in the European Union, this topic will become more and more relevant in the education and training strategies of the future. In Europe, qualification levels have been growing and are expected to continue to grow in the near future. In year 2020 it is expected that in EU the 33,6% of the population will have tertiary level education, the 48,3% intermediate levels, and the 18,1% low educational levels.
Social Inclusion of Mid-Life Learners through University Lifelong Learning

Adult education in general and TLL-Activities in Higher Education Institutions in European countries are characterized by a diversity of institutions and regulatory framework. Despite some approximations in the regulations in recent years, this diversity would still persist in near future. Central aim of this section is to give an overview of the regulatory framework in the partner countries. Although HE-institutions experience increasingly more autonomy in certain countries with respect to design and implementation of further training programs, the scope and movement space still remains highly restricted and bounded by the national regulations.

2.1. Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic several actors are providing further trainings: Schools, including universities, employers, public administration and self-governing bodies and their educational institutions and non-governmental non-profit organisations, including professional and commercial organisations.

Referring HE the Velvet Revolution in 1989 resulted in profound changes of Czech political and economic landscape. This also influenced education. Private colleges began to appear and make competition to the traditional public colleges and universities. Several new public colleges and universities were founded as well.

Within its educational activities, colleges and universities can offer programs of LLL outside the framework of regular study programs. Participants of TLL are not students as defined by the Tertiary Education Act, however, credits gained within LLL programs can be transferred to regular study programs with some restrictions.

Universities provide tertiary lifelong learning opportunities, mainly in the form of accredited bachelor, master and doctoral programs. The number of such programs is increasing, especially in private universities. Three distance learning university programs are accredited and supported now by the National Network of Distance Education. It consists of the National Centre for Distance Learning at the Centre for Higher Education Studies in Prague and many centres at 24 higher education institutions. Referring the target group private colleges seem to be very open to offer programs for professionals with special demands like mid-life learners.

Conclusion: From the analysis of participation of adult in learning particularly of middle-aged people in the partner countries can be concluded that, although there are some improvements in recent years, lifelong activities in general and involvement of HE-institutions in training activities are still underdeveloped and lie far behind its possibilities. Participation in lifelong
learning varies greatly in THEMP partner countries and as a consequence the employment rate and the poverty rate depends highly on educational level. The biggest differences can be reported in post-socialist countries. The share of those with the lowest education level is much bigger in Czech Republic and in Hungary. One of the biggest challenges facing tertiary institutions also HE is the identification of and target of under-represented groups like low-skilled and older adults. For the success in supporting social inclusion of such groups and for the improvement in research and performance measurement in tertiary education, HE-institutions should reorient education policies and develop and implement new target group specific programs. Institutional and regulatory framework should allow HE-institutions much more thematic and financial movement room. THEMP project tries to have a closer look on the basis of case studies about existing structures in the practice and tries to find out main future challenges.

2.2. Germany

In Germany there are around 15 thousand organisations that provide further training: Private organisations (commercial or non-profit), community colleges (Volkshochschulen), education institutions run by churches, unions, political foundations, vocational schools and vocational higher schools, and other providers. They are financed by the training participants’ or companies’ contributions, state or federal supports and employment agencies, as well. HE-Institutions are also involved in continuing vocational training activities; they run 348 further training centres altogether. They provide various programs with different content, duration, degree and target group.

Referring HE and LLL, the last one is still in the beginning stage in the German HE-Institutions. In 2004 the strategy for LLL in Germany was formulated with the aim of promoting LLL activities among different age groups in Germany with a special attention to those who have low qualifications. According to the strategy, financial incentives have been created to support people with low income to participate in further education and training.

Higher education institutions, therefore, play only a minor role in the continuous training market, although in the recent years the share of distance learning has been increased within the HE system. Referring TLL there is still a way ahead to go and the higher education institutions should be engaged much more than before.

Referring the project target group a central question is recognition of their prior learning experiences in order to ensure matures students’ participation in tertiary lifelong learning activities. Although the legislation allows explicitly the recognition of prior experiences, the
share of adult learners in non-traditional training courses offered by German universities is still very low.

2.3. Hungary

In Hungary there are different forms of secondary education for adults: Vocational and special vocational schools, secondary general schools, secondary vocational schools and tertiary education. In the last decades there has been a dramatic shift from vocational training to the general education for adults.

Referring HE-Institutions there are five important tendencies: The first one is the higher education expansion that is often labelled as ‘massification process’. The second important characteristic is the structural reforms of higher education within the framework of the Bologna process. The third tendency is the increasing share of part-time programs within higher education. The forth is the radical change in university management structure and the fifth is the restructuring of the relation between HE institutions and the economic actors.

LLL has to be seen as an attitude and it should be embedded in the culture of the university and as such should be actively promoted by the society. But the universities don’t have an efficient and effective support structure in place. Hungarian HE-Institutions suffer from the consequences of the badly prepared structural reforms and of massification, the worsening financial conditions. Structural governance problems are not very active in providing further training courses and not surprisingly the adult education market is dominated by private enterprises. The skill supply provided by the HE-Institutions does not seem to meet with labour market demands, accompanied by the weak training needs of the Hungarian enterprises.

In connection with the target group and specific middle-aged TLL activities, the Hungarian governments always have followed a “passive” policy in order to protect workplaces instead of increasing the employers’ and employees’ interest in skill development. The support of those in mid-life is restricted to special employment conditions that should be applied for employees over 55 which mean that the termination of their contract is allowed only in extraordinary cases.

2.4. Italy

In Italy adult education is coordinated at three different levels: national, regional and local. At the national level the coordination is in the hand of a joint committee that is composed by the representatives of several ministries, the representatives of the regions, local authorities and the
social partners. The committee aims to set the strategic priorities, define general guidelines and available resources, defines the criteria of resource allocation, and the guidelines for monitoring and assessment of recognition of various certificates. Regions committees are responsible for curriculum design. Based on the strategic guidelines elaborated by the national and regional committees, training activities are carried out by different types of providers: Companies, training agencies and bodies or educational institutions.

As for the quality issues, at the moment there is no formal quality control in case of adult education and training, but the providers should be accredited. In the recent years several attempts have been made in order to ensure to introduce a unified and transparent competence recognition system, but most of Italian companies that provide training to their employees do not use any evaluation system. Another related issue is the recognition of prior learning, which is supposed to be solved by a recent law (DDL 5256, 31st May 2012) which attributes this task to accredited national HEIs.

Referring higher education and LLL in Italy only 6% of people aged 25-64 attend to LLL initiatives at the moment. In the Italian higher education debate, the importance of lifelong learning issues has been recently underlined in several circumstances, focusing on the need for a law for HE lifelong education. Albeit the legislation on higher education allows HE institutions to decide freely about the recognition of prior learning and professional experiences, this is not a widespread practise among universities. In sum, it can be concluded that Italian HEs are quite far from acknowledging TLL.

Referring target groups the social composition of those attending adult education courses is also problematic. Men between 26 and 40 with HE degree are overrepresented at the expense of women and people with low education and/or social status.

2.5. Netherlands

In the Netherlands adult education consists of three different fields: General adult education, vocational adult education and socio-cultural adult education. General and vocational adult education is mainly the competence of secondary vocational education institutions, while socio-cultural adult education has been left to municipalities and private actors. All three forms of adult education are primarily addressed to lower educated people in order to increase employability and protect them from labour market and/or social marginalisation.

Referring the role of HE-Institutions in adult training, it must be stated that the Netherlands has a binary HE system with a relatively sharp distinction between academic universities and
schools for higher professional education that provide higher professional training courses (Hoger Beroepsonderwijs, HBO). The latter traditionally have strong connection with their professional fields and offer several continuing training courses. Because of this division of labour, universities mainly do not participate in adult professional education. An exception is the Open University, which was opened in 1984 with the aim at providing higher education programs for anyone, regardless of their former qualifications.

Because the Open University focuses on lifelong learning, the readiness of regular universities to involve in LLL programs is less. If universities want to take up a role in LLL, they usually confine themselves to opening their standard initial courses to adult learners. Adjustments to the needs of adult learners are rare. The case of accreditation of prior learning (APL) serves as a good example for this. Except of the Open University, Dutch universities do not have any APL procedures.

Referring the adjustment of the TLL to the situation of project target groups, different models allow to learners different possibilities to participate in learning activities. Not only may the planning of programs but also the design of programs fit better or worse to the work situation of the participants.

2.6. Spain

In Spain, the political responsibility is parcelled out between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour: The first is responsible for the planning, administration, monitoring and control of lifelong learning including initial vocational education and training and higher education, but autonomous communities also plan, manage and finance adult education activities.

The second is responsible for continuous vocational training for employed and unemployed persons integrated in the active employment policies. The management of continuing professional education and training is based on the cooperation between the central, regional and local administrations, but social partners and the state also plays a decisive role through national, regional and sectorial level bargaining.

The responsibility for university adult learning programmes is not so clearly defined. As education institutions - universities are under the responsibility of the ministries of education. This includes also the university adult education. But the students can ask for funding by labour market entities including founds of the Foundation Tripartit. But the universities enjoy
autonomy in providing adult learning courses. The public administration has created and monitored only minimum legal background.

The Spanish education system separates structurally the tertiary vocational education (higher technicians) clearly from the universities. Vocational tertiary education forms part of the vocational track allowing later the access of the higher technicians to universities.

Referring universities, they provide adult education courses, mainly in form of unofficial postgraduate certificates and unofficial complementary training, which are very loosely coupled to the Bologna scheme allowing that 15% of the credits of the bologna titles can be provided by recognised prior learning activities.

In connection with LLL the strategic governmental document <Strategy University 2015> tried to give a new impulse to universities. It defined the whole higher education as LLL that means undergraduate and postgraduate cycles. The document integrated the adult education programs, that means own university degrees, as essential part of the university LLL. Taking as point of departure that the universities should play a role in tertiary adult education, there are some major challenges. However, in the actual situation of the Spanish economy and the government policies, to cut public spending also in education, TLLL is not one of the main priorities of the university debate and the aforementioned paper hasn’t had a real application in the design of university adult education.

Referring the target group of learners in mid-life, the statistics indicates an increase of participation in formal and non-formal education and training of people between 45 and 54 years form 27.5% in 2007 to 36, and 1% in 2001 and also in the age group of people between 55 and 64 years from 17% to 23, 2% in the same period. And the participation rate of people with an attained higher education level has increased from 51,1% to 57.7% from 2007 to 2011.

The university must provide the potential midlife learners also with a better guidance of labour market opportunities and funding possibilities. There are possibilities of funding by public funds for continuous training, but the universities (or other networking agencies) must inform the learners of such possibilities so that they can reduce their investment risks. Another element to reduce investment risks is facilitating information about labour market trends so that the learners can take informed decision about their formal learning trajectories.
2.7. United Kingdom

The system of post-compulsory education within the UK is complex and consists of universities, higher education colleges (HECs), further education colleges (FECs) and private providers. FECs are providers of both non-advanced vocational below HE level and of short cycle Higher Education provision of one or two years. Parry et al. detail their role in England, where some 349 FECs exist, the majority (283) offering some HE level provision.²

This report can only provide a brief snapshot of the other countries of the UK since education provision is the devolved responsibility of the Scottish Government, Welsh Assembly and the Department of Education Northern Ireland.³ The most important point perhaps to make is that there are different fee regimes in the four countries. Universities in England for example are able to charge the individual up to £9000 per year for a Higher Education course, whilst there are no fees in Scotland for its own residents, and other residents of the EU, England, Wales and North Ireland accepted.

For many universities TLL is not a priority when set against undertaking research and mainstream teaching. There are pockets of provision that create flexibility for adults such as the use of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), Open and Distance Learning (ODL), Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and part-time or summer undergraduate programmes. As noted, all of these elements featured strongly and were major components of provision, specifically at two of the case studies (Open University in Scotland; and the Lifelong Learning Academy at the University of the West of Scotland). In general though and perhaps as indicated by our other case study (Community Development at the University of Glasgow) these activities tend to only be found in certain institutions, and typically not those that are research-intensive. The funding incentives for TLL are not great enough and there are few levers in place to force universities to focus on learners in mid-life.

That provision which exists and which is targeted to adults often is vocationally relevant. For example in FECs there are a range of courses to prepare students for work-related degrees. There is little or anything which has been designed for those in mid-life specifically although as our cases indicate this group is often the beneficiaries of provision.

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¹ Insert links to National Report for UK
The biggest challenge still appears to be to create true flexibility within the system. The paucity of provision in either full-time or part-time mode offered at times and locations that suit the needs of adults, including via the use of information and communications technology, and the lack of routes based on accreditation of learning achieved other than through formal qualifications, is evident despite notable exceptions including at the University of West of Scotland (UWS), Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) and the Open University in Scotland. For example, the long-standing Part-time Forum at UWS together with the OU has recently been focusing on flexible study for higher level skills development of the workforce, and GCU through the Scottish Centre for Work-based Learning offers a BA by Learning Contract for individuals, linking learning at work to credit within an academic programme. There are also smatterings of APEL in the system, but very much at the margins and only offered for limited amounts of credit at a small number of institutions. Despite having the mechanisms in place in the system such as the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, there are few incentives either financial or regulatory.4

3. **Case Studies and Methodology**

The synthesis report on social inclusion is based mainly on the findings of case studies carried out in partner countries. The THEM project adopts a Multiple-Case Study research strategy, which compares different TLL programs involving midlife learners across a cluster of EU universities. It is important to note that the Multiple Case Study research design adopted by the project does not require a probabilistic sampling strategy for selecting the cluster of programs of interest. The cases have thus been ‘conveniently’ selected as a function of their relevance to project aims.

Due to huge diversity of HE-institutions and institutional units dealing with Tertiary Lifelong Learning (TLL), the selection of those three cases in each country can only show illustratively some examples of TLL-activities in the general HE-system. Although not representative at all, during the selection it has been striven for to identify typical institutional forms which could give insights about the general praxis.

At the core of each case study stood beside an analysis of statistically available data, documentary analysis, interviews with several actors. The majority of the interviews have been face to face interviews. Some interviews have been carried out by phone. The interview protocol has been designed as semi-structured questioner in order to enable the interview partners to express their opinion and thoughts as much as possible.

The interview protocols were adapted to each interviewee category (decision makers; learners; program coordinators and lecturers), however all having the following general structure:

- General Information about the Institution and TLL-Strategy;
- Target groups;
- Decision Making;
- Implementation and Process Analysis;
- Didactical Aspects;
- Evaluation and Impact;
- Social inclusion and social impact;
- Recommendations and future developments.
Interview questions have been addressed mainly at two levels. At the institutional level, institutional representatives, decision makers, stakeholders and lecturers within the HE-institution or a specific program have been chosen for interviews. At the individual level, however, main interest has been directed to the students who have been currently participating in the TLL-activities in question or who had been participated in the recent past.

The main selection criterion of the TLL-programmes in the HE-institutions has been their relevance to the main target population of the midlife-learners. Nevertheless, the analysis of the TLL-Activities has shown that in general only a few programs have been directly addressed to midlife learners. In several programs, one would find, however, a mix of certain age groups. Hence, midlife learners do not build the specific target group in TLL-Programmes in the case studies.

<table>
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<th>Institutional Setting</th>
<th>N° of Interviews</th>
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<td>Programme for School Consultants</td>
<td>Department of Psychology of the Faculty of Arts</td>
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<td>Supervised by a specially established board from the cooperating universities</td>
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<td>Infernum: The interdisciplinary Distance Learning Program for Environmental Sciences</td>
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<td>C) outsourced university owned organisation</td>
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<td>Social Economy and Management of Non-profit organisation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Politechnic University Valencia - Centre of</td>
<td>Photovoltaic Energy, Car design</td>
<td>B) Special university administrative unit</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3

#### Case Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Institution</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Institutional Setting</th>
<th>N° of Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Training</td>
<td>European Financial Advisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HUNGARY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Szent Istvan University</td>
<td>Faculty of Mechanical Engineering</td>
<td>Joint programme based on the cooperation of the Faculty and the KITE Co.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Debrecen University</td>
<td>Faculty of Engineering</td>
<td>Faculty-based postgraduate training course</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Budapest Business School</td>
<td>Business Coach</td>
<td>Joint programme cooperation School and Flow Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ITALY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 University of Bologna</td>
<td>Form Area Educational Campus</td>
<td>External independent organisation (Form Area)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 University of Genoa</td>
<td>‘International Business Leadership’</td>
<td>Outsourced university owned organisation (PerForm)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 University of Bolzano</td>
<td>“CasaClima” Environmental Design</td>
<td>Own Faculty (Science and Technology Faculty)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE NETHERLANDS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Campus The Hague, Leiden</td>
<td>Course Public Affairs</td>
<td>Separate faculty of the university for (a.m.) professional learning</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Expertise Centre for</td>
<td>Learning Network Management of Innovation</td>
<td>Intermediary organisation between universities and the field of vocational education</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 The Dutch Police Academy</td>
<td>Master of Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>Recognised college for higher education, cooperating with universities</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNITED KINGDOM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 University Glasgow</td>
<td>BA Community Development</td>
<td>School of Education, College of Social Sciences</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 University of the West</td>
<td>Health and Social Care, Business and IT</td>
<td>Lifelong Learning Academy – university department with responsibility for all part-time enrolment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Open University in Scotland</td>
<td>Health and Social Care, Community Education</td>
<td>National Centre with degree of autonomy at both regional and local levels in relation to provision</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With respect to institutional setting, the cases show huge diversity. The programs are designed and implemented within different institutional framework. Several organizational units are outsourced mainly due to regulative and financial reasons in order to offer training programs to a wider population groups other than traditional degree students. This allows the program managers to a certain extend to overcome some regulative and stuff related constraints and achieve certain autonomy regarding design and implementation of the programs. Among cases
studies there are some programs which are integrated in the usual organizational form. Especially, master programs which require accreditation and certification are organized in the universities. As shown in the graph 2, the vertical dimension gives an overview of the institutional setting. The central categories in the table point out the institutional framework whether the organisational unit operates as an integrated one or it is outsourced or function as a partly or completely independently.

The programs can be also classified with respect to general focus as shown in the horizontal axes in the graph. Some programs are oriented in line with classical teaching units and learning methods which aim mainly at transmitting knowledge and competencies to students. Generals focus lies in university cantered design and implementation of the programs. The majority of the programs, studied so far, however, concentrate on specific issues which go behind academic
fields and have more or less practical focus and higher level practice relevance which is defined as shown in the graph as field cantered. A general comparative analysis of cases selected within THEMP-project will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

The **general research interest** for the case studies can be summarized as below:

- Why, how and to what extent HE-Institutions are involved in the TLL-activities?
- What were the driving factors in the **decision-making** process? What is the main target group for such activities?
- If and how such programs are designed and tailored to the special needs of the learners in **middle-life**
- What was the **social impact/effect**?
- Is there any evaluation procedures and how they are applied?
- Which experience has been made and what are the challenges, recommendations and expectations in the future?
4. Comparative Analysis of Case Studies

One of the main research interests of the THE-MP project has been the question how and in which forms higher education institutions are involved in lifelong learning with a special focus on midlife learners. The state of art regarding lifelong learning programs and activities had been studied in seven European countries. Despite the diversity among programs, they have in common that they refer to learning activities in general and hence, build a link between scientific knowledge and professional development. The programs make a bridge between the scientific world of HE-institutions and the labour market. For a better understanding of the cases studied in the framework of the project, programs and lifelong learning activities will be summarised in the following section under four major thematic headings. If and how do the design and implementation of the lifelong learning activities take the age specific issues into consideration? How relevant are those programs for midlife learners and how is the curriculum development designed and adapted? How such activities evaluated and what are the impacts? What are their relevance with respect to labour market orientation and social inclusion in general?

Target group specific needs and activities are related to the background of the participants. Who are the target group at which such programs have been addressed? HE-Institutions in the selected European countries have long been involved in lifelong learning activities and offer a variety of programs. Nevertheless, the major target group have been either graduates or persons with somehow academic background. HE-institutions either did not offer any specific programs for wide audience without any academic background or the participants have been mostly reluctant to get into connection with HE-institutions. Opening of HE-institutions to a wider public, permeability and recognition of occupational experiences for access to study have been major topics on the agenda for restructuring European education systems. That the HE-institutions would play an important role in lifelong learning and reach new target groups have been emphasised. Although lifelong learning activities of HE-institutions in partner countries have different intensity and development stage, the analysis of cases studies show that the programs are addressed at different age, occupations or target groups in general not to traditional students in HE-institutions with an academic background: students, graduates, employees, self-employed, police officers and a variety of occupational groups.

The analysis of 21 cases in partner countries shows that midlife learners or persons over 40 are involved in the programs to a certain extent. However, only a few programs directly address such age groups. In several lifelong learning activities, midlife learners could be found among participants, but in general, they are not the main target group of the special programmes. They
are treated as other age groups and their participation occur rather at random and not as a result of specific objective of the programs. Participants are mostly heterogeneous groups of people with respect to age, education and previous work experience. Although huge progress have been made with respect to opening of HE-institutions and improvement of regulatory framework, design and implementation of programs and activities for incorporation of midlife learners will constitute one of the major challenges in the European lifelong learning system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Target group specific needs and activities</th>
<th>Curriculum Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Programme for School Consultants</td>
<td>Employed (teachers who are to become school consultants). Access: (degree and professional experience)</td>
<td>Traditional lectures, discussions, interactive training, networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 PREFEKT</td>
<td>Employed + students (researchers and research administrative staff, doctoral students): (from within the university or partner universities)</td>
<td>Predominantly traditional lectures, some interactive activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Traffic Psychology</td>
<td>(Self-) employed (psychologists who want to take up a career of the traffic psychologist or continue it). (degree and professional experience)</td>
<td>Traditional lectures, discussions, interactive practical trials, web forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Change Management</td>
<td>The program is oriented to people who work in positions as employee’s representatives particularly members of work councils. The participant have usual no academic background and even never had contact to an academic institution. They have long years of occupation practice and experience. The participants belong middle-aged groups</td>
<td>The programs focus is on linking the theoretical background knowledge with practical implementation of newly gained skills. The lecturers must be able to transmit academic finding, show practical content and adapt it to the target group. Most of them are professors of the university in Bochum, but also external lecturers with economic background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 VAWi Business Computer Science</td>
<td>Following target groups are in the focus: People with migration background and people who want to acquire a degree in the tertiary education. A minimum 3.0 in a qualifying program at a university or equivalent At least one year occupational experience IT-related competencies equivalent to one year BA-program in computer science, economics or ingenieur science</td>
<td>The program is based on 100% e-Learning and has modules with different specialization possibilities. 20 lecturers, 40 tutors are involved in the course. There is a central online portal for documents and information, some lecturers put videos online. The content and structure of a lecture is not adjusted to midlife learners needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Infernum: The interdisciplinary Distance Learning Program for Environmental Sciences</td>
<td>The program is addressed to employees in business, science, administrative bodies, freelancers and qualified junior scientists who want to acquire environmentally-related skills. The master’s program Infernum requires a university degree and can be completed with 60, 90 or 120 credits, depending on the previous degree</td>
<td>The curriculum combines different elements of blended learning to provide students a largely space and time-independent studies. It consists of: • Study letters (teaching texts and readers) • Virtual Learning Environments • Classroom seminars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4
**Target group and Curriculum development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Target group specific needs and activities</th>
<th>Curriculum Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Human Resource Management</strong></td>
<td>A first university degree or college degree are required</td>
<td>The lecturers have experience in teaching and adult building mostly from practical work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Social Economy and Management of Non-profit organisation</strong></td>
<td>It addresses learners from different academic fields. The students are persons without work experience with the objective to enrich and specify their education curriculum, or students with work experience, who to refresh their professional knowledge, prepare themselves for new working opportunities or to prepare their re-entry in the labour market.</td>
<td>The two year programme is modular providing two kinds of certificates. It combines theoretical knowledge about Human Resources Management with problem based learning in small groups, project based learning and internships in enterprise to reinforce the practical aspects of the students without direct access to work practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. 1. Photovoltaic Energy</strong>&lt;br&gt;2. Car design&lt;br&gt;3. European Financial Advisor</td>
<td>It addresses people who have professional experience or experience as volunteers in the sector of non-profit organisation. The majority is work in non-profit organisation. They want to be prepared for new work tasks at management level or to improve their management performance. Due to this characteristic, the main part of the learners has around 35 years. The majority of the learners have higher education qualifications, but also people without such certificate can access to the course. The participants are selected by personal interviews with the programme director.</td>
<td>It is a blended learning programme combining on-line learning with three face-to-face sessions. The programme is modulated and counts with a central place (Moodle) where documents and information are available. This central place is also the means for collective learning of learner groups moderated by the tutors. The design is adjust to have learners from all parts of the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. 1. Photovoltaic Energy</strong>&lt;br&gt;2. Car design&lt;br&gt;3. European Financial Advisor</td>
<td>1: Target group: young graduates without work experience but also people with work experience in the sector. The objective is to prepare them to handle a new working field in the sector improving so their work opportunities. To have a higher qualification certificate isn’t an admission criteria</td>
<td>1: Modulated online programme with asynchronous tutorials and online examinations. The-learning process is reinforced with practical examples and problems developed from information acquired from real installations and virtual tours to the facilities that are available in the university (videos showing the photovoltaic plants). It includes also the offer to participate voluntary in face-to-face session in the installations of the university. 2: is a face-to-face programme organised in evening session from Monday to Friday of 3,5 hour. The students learn the theoretical basis and practice car design taught by academics and professionals. It is based on project learning. The student must present three individual projects and perform an original project as a thesis. 3: It is a blended learning programme including face-to-face sessions and online learning allowing self-directed learning including group learning to solve hypothetical problems. It is based on standardized programmes to obtain the certificate of European Financial Advisors including 13 modules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. 1. Photovoltaic Energy</strong>&lt;br&gt;2. Car design&lt;br&gt;3. European Financial Advisor</td>
<td>2: Target group: Mainly people with high interest in car design coming directly from other official university careers. It is a course oriented to a very specific professional sector offering also access to new labour opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. 1. Photovoltaic Energy</strong>&lt;br&gt;2. Car design&lt;br&gt;3. European Financial Advisor</td>
<td>3: Oriented to people working in the sector facilitating professional training as a requisite to work in the sector. Their objective is to obtain a training certificate, which is compulsory to work in the sector. Many of the participants are preparing labour market transitions due to the critical situation of the branch.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KITE Farmers' training programme</strong></td>
<td>Employed &amp; Companies (potential) buyers of premium machinery distributed by KITE; companies operating in the field of plant production.</td>
<td>Stand alone (demand for training emerges at KITE and the firm cooperate with the faculty in the organisation of courses).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>Target group specific needs and activities</td>
<td>Curriculum Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Management Engineering Studies</td>
<td>Professionals further training of postgraduate quality specialists</td>
<td>Integrated (the programme is integrated into the curricula of the university, it can take form of complementary modules as well as complete programme)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Coach Postgraduate Programme</td>
<td>Professionals 3 target groups identified: (1) those already possessing professional experiences (psychologists, HR consultants, trainers, etc.) wanting to improve their existing competences. (2) those who want to change their professional career and learn a new profession. (3) Those that use the programme in order to support their personal development.</td>
<td>Stand alone (the programme aims to satisfy market demands and consists of two semesters and does not require any previous studies at BBS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FormArea Educational Campus</td>
<td>Unemployed The Occupational Campus has been taught as a series of laboratories/learning modules which are embedded into larger training programs with technical and professional contents (Corsi di Qualificazione Professionale), awarded by the Emilia Romagna Region. In general, each edition of the programme is articulated in traditional lessons focused on the development of transversal competencies like decision making, rationality, autonomy, team work, and communication. Other parts of the programme might be dedicated to activities like career counselling, skill balance and evaluation, enterprise culture, entrepreneurship, employability.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘International Business Leadership’</td>
<td>Managers The program was designed and implemented following the scheme of a ‘Temporary Enterprises Association’ that was stipulated among Fondazione Ansaldo, University of Genoa (Department of Economics and PerForm), three companies (Ansaldo STS S.p.A., Oto Melara S.p.A., SIIT Sistemi Intelligenti Integrati e Tecnologie) and the Italian National Research Council (CNR). The master had a mixed didactical model: two days per week (12 hours) of “classical” lecturing plus work experiences and stages in Italy and abroad. The programme lasts 1,500 hours on overall: 288 hours in class, 40 hours E-Learning, 40 hours abroad, and 410 hours of Project Work and 748 hours of individual study.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“CasaClima” Environmental Design</td>
<td>Professionals in environmental planning The Master in “CasaClima” is articulated into basic courses (sustainable development and low energy consumption, efficiency, building physics, solar plants and others), for about 350 hours of lessons, and specific or complementary courses (timber buildings and architectures, fireproofing, waterproofing, marketing, management), for about 150 hours of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>Target group specific needs and activities</td>
<td>Curriculum Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lessons. In addition to traditional lectures, the program includes a 150 hours internship in domain-related companies or institutions. External courses within industries, conferences, seminars, trips and activities in laboratories also contribute to the didactical offer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Course Public Affairs</td>
<td>Professionals working in the field concerned. Open access for higher educated professionals</td>
<td>Series of lectures and workshops, study trips; participants work on assignments and take part in discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL Learning Network Management of Innovation</td>
<td>Professionals working in vocational education. Access for professionals holding or acquiring a staff position in that field</td>
<td>Learning network: participants share experiences, discuss practices and develop knowledge, supported by researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Master of Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>Police officers wanting to develop their careers and ‘lateral influx’ from outside the police. Both groups having or acquiring HE level; transition courses and APL available</td>
<td>Dual programme: integration of learning and working; study projects and working projects are connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 BA Community Development</td>
<td>Formal qualifications are not required for entry. The focus of the programme is on the provision of a professional qualification to work in Community Development, Youth Work, Community Work and related fields. In relation to branding, in keeping with the ethos of the programme there is a focus appropriate to the target group and ethos of inclusion, empowerment and social change.</td>
<td>Mix of academic and Practice orientation – extensive use of group-work, and practice placements; entry restricted to existing lower level practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Health and Social Care, Business and IT</td>
<td>Students are a mix of those seeking professional qualifications to further chosen career (BA Childhood Practice/Studies; BSc Health Studies), or to gain new qualifications to advance in present career, or provide them with more options and opportunities (BSc Information Technology BA Business Studies).</td>
<td>Flexible provision, pre-entry and on-going personal guidance and support, mix of face to face, blended and distance opportunities. Preparatory and access courses available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Health and Social Care, Community Education</td>
<td>Student funding is a mix of personal finance, Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs), and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) grants. In addition, for some courses in areas of CPD or professional areas there may be some employer support. Some activities receive stakeholder and/or central/local government support. 53% of OU students in health and social care are sponsored by their employers.</td>
<td>Almost unlimited flexibility, true open access; supported learning environment with both personal and professional orientations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The basic structure of the further training programs for adult learners is characterized by the diversity of learners. Therefore, the questions are important: How to adjust contents and didactical aspects to the requirements and needs of the learners constitutes one of the main challenges in TLL-programmes; how and in which form do the HE-institutions integrate and
incorporate didactical issues for the design and implementation of training programs with a special focus on midlife learners?

In comparative perspective, the analysis of case studies show that in some programs the participants have, in general, no academic background and had even no contact to any academic institution during their previous working experience, whereas in some programs the target groups are graduates with professional experience. Depending on the structure of the programs and on the target group, the lecturers and program initiators take target group specific issues into account during planning study design and content preparation. This allows a balance of professional-oriented contents and scientific knowledge in order to achieve optimal learning process. Some programs target directly an increase of employability of the participants. The participants with an academic background want mostly either to upgrade their knowledge and skills or to acquire new qualifications in order to achieve better payment or positions. In general, programs addressed on persons with an academic background focus on a combination of scientific-knowledge with the professional needs of the participants. Since many participants are working part time or fulltime and have, hence, professional experience, this leads to incorporation of practical experiences into program contents.

For curriculum development several forms of teaching and learning applied. Besides traditional learning methods like classroom seminars, e-learning, blended-learning, project works, study letters and documents, virtual learning environments and study trips are used. Learning networks among students encourage to share experiences and to discuss practices.

The central issues with respect to curriculum can be classified under general topics.

- **Supply driven/ demand driven:** Curriculum can be based on applying teaching methods without taking the target group specific issues into account. This approach can be labelled as supply driven. As in the case of Czech programs, the central focus for curriculum are oriented in line with traditional teaching and learning form with a strong emphasis on learning and transmitting the knowledge to students without being sensitive to age, experience and academic background. In demand driven programs, like in the case of the program “Change Management” lay a strong emphasis on specific background and needs of the participants. Former professional experience and labour market requirements are taken into consideration at the stage of curriculum planning. Both supply driven and demand driven approaches may use new teaching forms via e-learning, and virtual platforms and apply interactive methods.

- **Academic and scientific base, Practical dimension (improvement of general ability):** Selected programs differ with respect to academic and practical orientation. Master programs like infernum, VAWI (Business computer science) requires academic degree for
an access to the program. In some others like Change Management, KITE Farmers Training, an academic background is not needed, although the programs are settled in HE-institutions. Programs, in general, may concentrate on practical dimensions without spending much time in academic theoretical aspects. Furthermore, programs like FromArea which is addressed on unemployed or Course Public Affair which attracts professionals working in the field, they all emphasize at general improvement of skills and abilities in order to enhance changes in the labour market.

- Inclusive/exclusive (general orientation or experience): curriculum may include professional experience as an integral part of the training program. Several programs examined so far highlight the importance of such program design. Project works, workshops, learning network, flexible provision, personal guidance and support may enhance participation of learners interactively. In some master programs, however, a general orientation in accordance with degree program is followed which allows limited room for integrating professional experience of participants.

- Connection to working activity: Practical use or integration of learning and working: if curriculum enables any connection with the working activity of participants, may increase the learning motivation. In case of Change Management, for example, the learners may choose their own subject for project work which they can drive from their own working place and, hence, integrate, the contents with practical usage and application.
### Table 5
**OVERVIEW OF TARGET GROUP DIMENSION AND FINANCES OF THE PROGRAMMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Target group orientation</th>
<th>Access conditions</th>
<th>Programm Finance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>employed</td>
<td>unemployed</td>
<td>Academic background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZ 1</td>
<td>Programme for School Consultants</td>
<td>XXX*</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZ 2</td>
<td>PREFEKT</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZ 3</td>
<td>Traffic Psychology</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE 1</td>
<td>Change Management</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE 2</td>
<td>VAWi Business Computer Science</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE 3</td>
<td>Infernum:</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES 1</td>
<td>Human Resource Management</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES 2</td>
<td>Social Economy and Management of Non-profit organisation</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES 3</td>
<td>Photovoltaic Energy, Car design European Financial Advisor</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU 1</td>
<td>KITE Farmers' training programme</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU 2</td>
<td>Quality Management Engineering Studies</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU 3</td>
<td>Business Coach Postgraduate Programme</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT 1</td>
<td>Form/Area Educational Campus</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT 2</td>
<td>‘International Business Leadership’</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT 3</td>
<td>“CasaClima” Environmental Design</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL 1</td>
<td>Course Public Affairs</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL 2</td>
<td>Learning Network Management of Innovation</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL 3</td>
<td>Master of Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK 1</td>
<td>BA Community Development</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK 2</td>
<td>Health and Social Care, Business and IT</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK 3</td>
<td>Health and Social Care, Community Education</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*) XXX high, XX medium, X low.
The first dimension in the graph points out access conditions and general orientation of the program. The majority of the programs require an academic degree in order to get an access. Some programs require a combination of an academic degree and professional experience. Students and professionals working in the field are addressed as well. With the exception of the OuiS (UK3) which operates a true open access policy, only a few programs like BA Community Development Program (UK1), for example, do not require any formal qualification for entry although it does require practical experience. In Spanish Cases, Social Economy and Management of Non-profit organization (ES2) as well as Photovoltaic Energy, Car design (ES3) orient to specific training needs without definition of target groups in term of labour status.

The second dimension of the graph highlights the relevance of the programs for labour market. Nearly all of the programs have somehow certain effects on employability of participants. The effects take place in the long run or in the short run, they may be direct or indirect. Through capacity building and upgrading skills and competencies, participants have better chances on the labour market. Some
participants interviewed in case studies have stated that they would either get a better position in the current company where they work or they may change the work place.

The programs address unemployed and employed participants. Some programs, however, do not differentiate between those groups. FormArea Educational Campus, for example, offers several series of learning modules which are embedded into larger training programs with technical and professional contents. Main target group constitutes unemployed, whereas majority of programs are oriented to specific training needs without definition of target groups in term of labour status. Employed people and professionals being active in the labour market follow the training programs either part time base or divided in short block modules. Labour market status is of importance especially for financing such programs.

It may expected that professionals working in the field concerned regard a participation in the programs as an opportunity to upgrade qualifications and acquire new skills. As in the Dutch case Course Public Affairs (NL1) and Learning Network Management of Innovation (NL2), participants are already active in the field and expect improvements in employment status. Change Management (DE1) on the other hand, tries to prepare working council members to new positions and accompany them in finding new orientation either in the labour market or in their employing companies. In some other programs, students are a mix of those seeking professional qualifications to further chosen career or to gain new qualifications to advance in present career. In general, the majority of the programs have a direct or indirect connection to labour market. Since some of the participants are already professionals in their field they are expected to further their own career. Training programs have positive effects for self-employed participants as well. Master programs require besides academic degree some professional experiences on the field in question as well. For such programs, the relevance for labour market is rated as high as well. In general, all programs have more or less relevance for labour market. Any direct connection leading to labour market transition, however, cannot be concluded from participation activities in the training programs studied so far.
## Table 6
### Evaluation of Impacts and social inclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Evaluation and Assessment of Impacts</th>
<th>Social Reach and Social Inclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Programme for School Consultants</td>
<td>Informal unstandardized evaluation (not for all classes), accreditation (professional recognition), impact not measured, but can reasonably be expected to somewhat increase responsibilities and income</td>
<td>(Mainly) human capital (accreditation), social capital (networking, sharing experience), social mission (positive impact on children with difficulties and their families)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  PREFEKT</td>
<td>Continuous external evaluation (questionnaire); Certificate of completion, credits for students; Not measured</td>
<td>Human capital (research management skills)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Traffic Psychology</td>
<td>Informal unstandardized evaluation (not for all classes), accreditation (professional recognition), accreditation (professional recognition), not measured, but can reasonably be expected to increase (in some cases significantly) income</td>
<td>(Mainly) human capital (accreditation), social capital (networking, sharing experience)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Change Management</td>
<td>Constant evaluation in every teaching unit particularly through evaluation forms fulfilled by the students</td>
<td>The program has successful contribution to social inclusion of participants by capacity building where a new orientation and reintegration of participants to the labour market is strongly emphasised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  VAWi Business Computer Science</td>
<td>Introductory Meetings are evaluated by students with the use of questionnaires. Each module is evaluated at the end of the semester by using questions related to lecturers, content, organisation and structure. The administrative unit of the program analyses the results and publishes them to improve the course</td>
<td>The program supports the building of own capabilities to cope with requirements of change labour market. The master program has little relevance for social inclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Infernum: The interdisciplinary Distance Learning Program for Environmental Sciences</td>
<td>Each module is evaluated with a special questionnaire or through a feedback discussion at the end of the course</td>
<td>The program “Infernum” is particular attractive for working people in middle age due to the flexible design of the training and individual focus and can contribute to the development of new networks and social integration of middle-aged learners and affect social inclusion positively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Human Resource Management</td>
<td>A systemic approach for evaluation is not implemented. At the programme level, the students and the lecturers made an evaluation at the end of the module.</td>
<td>Graduate students complement their studies with practical training to improve their labour market opportunities, technical professional improve their work performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Social Economy and Management of Non-profit organisation</td>
<td>No systematic impact measurement. Student satisfaction is evaluated at the end of the course.</td>
<td>It’s oriented to improve human capital &amp; tacit social capital stock. No information available about impact on employability and quality of work. No systematic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- **CZ:** Czech
- **DE:** German
- **ES:** Spanish
### Table 6
**Evaluation of Impacts and social inclusion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Evaluation and Assessment of Impacts</th>
<th>Social Reach and Social Inclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Photovoltaic Energy, Car design European Financial Advisor</td>
<td>No systematic impact measurement. Student satisfaction is evaluated at the end of the course.</td>
<td>It’s oriented to improve human capital &amp; tacit social capital stock. No information available about impact on employability and quality of work. Student satisfaction is evaluated at the end of the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 KITE Farmers’ training programme</td>
<td>Formal evaluation made by the participants after the programme</td>
<td>Human capital (specific technical knowledge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU Quality Management Engineering Studies</td>
<td>Complex internal evaluation (by evaluation questioners, by intensive communication with the participants, by testing the competences of the students at the end of the course, and finally by intensive and regular communication with the labour market participants such as enterprises, chambers etc.)</td>
<td>Human capital (specific technical knowledge related to quality management and personal skills and competences, e.g. problem solving, systemic thinking, communication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Business Coach Postgraduate Programme</td>
<td>Complex evaluation: Formal evaluation made by the participants (questionnaire). A programme mentor responsible for mediating between students and lecturers. The programme management both at the university and at the Flow Group regularly monitor the programme and suggest changes if necessary.</td>
<td>Human capital (the training offers specific professional knowledge which increase the labour market value of the participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 FormArea Educational Campus</td>
<td>The effectiveness of the Campus Laboratories is evaluated both at the end of lessons and some months after course conclusion. The evaluation takes place through ad-hoc questionnaires which are jointly edited by the University of Bologna, FormArea and the funding institutions. The questionnaire evaluates both learners’ satisfaction and their occupational outcomes. The first assessment pointed out that about 30% of participants successfully found a new job after attending the program.</td>
<td>Indirect (soft skills): decision making, rationality, autonomy, team work, communication, career counselling, skill balance and evaluation, enterprise culture, entrepreneurship, employability. The programme is specifically targeted to support adults going through transitions in their professional lives. The Occupational Campus is open to all adults; however, its main focus is on those workers who have been adversely affected by crisis (people who have lost their job or are risking losing it, people who are requested to acquire new competencies to maintain their occupation, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT ‘International Business Leadership’</td>
<td>The effectiveness of the program was measured by two different means, an internal (made by Perform) and an external auditing.</td>
<td>All employed participants covered managerial positions within big and middle Italian companies operating in the high-technology sector. The main aim is to enrich the skills of those who are already</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 6
**Evaluation of Impacts and social inclusion**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Public Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Process evaluations during the course. No formal assessment of impact.</td>
<td>Open to newcomers, but mainly addressing people already having a position in the field concerned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Network Management of Innovation</strong></td>
<td>Informal process evaluation. No formal evaluation of impact.</td>
<td>Exclusively directed at staff members of organisations in the field concerned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Master of Criminal Investigation</strong></td>
<td>Formal evaluation of educative process and learning outcomes Semi formalised evaluation of impact, through field committees and evaluations among alumni.</td>
<td>Explicitly aiming at career development opportunities up to tertiary level to people both from inside and from outside the police organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BA Community Development</strong></td>
<td>Credit rating mapped onto SCQF plus professional accreditation and validation if relevant. University wide evaluation systems Retention, progression and Retention, progression and Retention, progression and completion. Completion. Sector wide KPIs and both internal and external Quality Assurance mechanisms</td>
<td>Social inclusion, personal capital and empowerment as key part of programme ethos slightly at odds at institutional level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health and Social Care, Business and IT</strong></td>
<td>Credit rating mapped onto SCQF plus professional accreditation and validation if relevant. University wide evaluation systems in relation to retention, progression and completion. Sector wide KPIs and both internal and external Quality Assurance mechanisms</td>
<td>Social inclusion and personal capital as key part of LLA mission and ethos as well as provision of vocationally relevant degrees and programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health and Social Care, Community Education</strong></td>
<td>Credit rating mapped onto SCQF plus professional accreditation and validation if relevant. University wide evaluation systems in relation to retention, progression and completion. Sector wide KPIs and both internal and external Quality Assurance mechanisms</td>
<td>Social inclusion, social justice and empowerment through personal capital development key to institutional ethos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, evaluations are of great importance with respect to efficiency of the programmes in the study cases. Programme managers are interested in feedbacks from participants which could give orientation for changes in design, content, implementation and impact of the programs. Whereas some programs conduct continuous evaluations during the implementation stage, some others evaluate
satisfaction of the participants at the end each module or program. With respect to reach and diversity, evaluations can be assessed in different dimensions:

- **Accreditation:** the effectiveness of the programs can be formal recognized or non-formal. As in the Italian case “International Business Leadership” the measurement can be conducted by external auditing. Non-formal evaluations are applied nearly in all cases. In the two of the Spanish cases, no systematic impact measurement is carried out during the course. The programs or training units, however, are evaluated with a special questionnaire or through a feedback discussion at the end of the course.

- **Professional Certification:** In the UK cases, programs are evaluated by help of credit rating mapped onto SCQF plus professional accreditation. Mostly, programs are evaluated for internal purpose in order to get insights about satisfaction of the participants as well as professional outcomes. Professional certification would have high relevance if the programs are settled as a part of university degree programs.

- **Follow-up studies:** the majority of the programs studied so far have direct or indirect effects on employability and, hence, high labour market relevance. The effects take place, however, after certain time lag, which would make any measurement and evaluation about the outcomes difficult. Professional outcomes may be related to transition from unemployment to employment or job integration success. Skills acquired during the program would have impacts in the current work place, if the participants are employed. Unfortunately, in none of the case studies, a follow-up evaluation after certain time period is a part of evaluation concept. Program managers are mainly interested in evaluations during and at the end of the courses for future optimization and adaptations. Some of the interview partners claimed that the success of the program would be measured if the program has a good reputation in the training market. Unsuccessful programs without positive impacts on participants would disappear due to lack of interest of participants. Hence, the long history of the program can be interpreted as a success factor. Furthermore, follow-up studies are cost and time intensive. Due to lack of know-how and experience for such analysis, the program managers would be overwhelmed and exhausted.

With respect to social inclusion, the programs in question have direct or indirect contribution. Whereas some of them have a strong focus on providing adults with opportunities either to embark on tertiary level study in order to enter graduate, postgraduate or professional level employment, to move or change career direction or trajectories or to allow them to progress within their existing career or profession. Some lifelong learning activities have indirect relevance to capacity building where participants are supported to build up human capital and social capital (networking, sharing experience) which may help social inclusion positively.
The reach of the programs in the case studies is somehow limited with respect to scope and content of the programs and access limitations of the universities. As in the case of Bochum-University and Fern-University Hagen, for an access to the programs, the participants should attest a first university degree or at least certificate for accessibility to a university. Persons without such certification or degree cannot attend such programs. Even though in the past some measures were taken in order to ease the participation of people without degree, only in few universities in partner countries one would find corresponding programs.

Especially, distance learning and virtual learning platforms offer valuable opportunities for participants who want to keep staying employed and nearby to acquire new degree or upgrade qualification and skills which would eventually allow further promotion possibilities on the job and increase employability. Such platforms would be a useful extension and complementary to the regular study programs at the university. In the face of diminishing financial resources of the universities and overcrowded seminar rooms in many universities, this would relieve certain problems and offer students new possibilities for an effective learning.
### Table 7
Social inclusion of the programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Labour market orientation</th>
<th>Capacity building</th>
<th>Connection to working activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct relevance</td>
<td>Improvement of skills</td>
<td>General orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Z</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Programme for School Consultants</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  PREFEKT</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Traffic Psychology</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D E</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Change Management</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  VAWi Business Computer Science</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Human Resource Management</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E S</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Social Economy and Management of Non-profit organisation</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Human Resource Management</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Photovoltaic Energy, Car design, European Financial Advisor</td>
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<td>XX</td>
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<tr>
<td>H U</td>
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<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  KITE Farmers’ training programme</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Quality Management Engineering Studies</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Business Coach Postgraduate Programme</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I T</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  FormArea Educational Campus</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  ‘International Business Leadership’</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  “CasaClima” Environmental Design</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>N L</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Course Public Affairs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Learning Network Management of Innovation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Master of Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>XXX</td>
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<td>XX</td>
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<td>XX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*) XXX high, XX medium, X low.
The programs investigated in this case studies have high contribution to several dimensions of social inclusion. Especially with respect to **labour market relevance**, the programs would aim at improvements of employability directly in terms of degree achieved which would enhance chances in the labour market. **Improvements of skills** would have direct or indirect effects as well. Contribution to soft skills like communication, time management or network building would be side effects of training programs, which enable the participants not only to practice it at the workplaces but also to apply in their private lives. Some programs like Change Management define the training of such skills as an integral part of the program.

Programs can be also evaluated with respect to their contribution to **capacity building**. They may give a general orientation and would hence, support participants for further learning practice. This orientation would be dependent on the scope and structure of the program in question. If a specific group of participants in a specific labour market segment just like traffic psychology or farmers training program, capacity building would be tailored to those specific needs and orient to upgrading **professional experience**. A general orientation would be somehow limited. In general, the majority of the programs studied so far would address both objectives. Beside a general orientation also support professional capabilities. Master programs settled in the university framework would open the participants’ new perspectives in the labour market.

Some programs incorporate working experience into the design and content. If the participants are employed, their needs for application of learning contents into **practical use** are an integral part of the program. In case of Change Management, the participants are encouraged to choose a topic for the final project work from their working place. The practical use of training and learning would be increased, which would affect learning motivation as well. Some master programmes, even targeted a certain group of participants with academic degree and professional experience, pay less attention for incorporation of professional experience and **integration to working and learning** of learners into teaching practice. In general, from such a combination both teaching staff as well as participants would profit. Whereas participants would connect the new knowledge and skills with their own experience and profit from exchange of experiences with other participants, the teaching staff would get new impulses from working life outside their own academic boundaries and, by this way, get insights whether their academic knowledge function in practice or not.

How the diversity of participants with different age, working experience and labour market status would be taken into consideration during design and implementation of the programmes constitute one of the main challenges in future.

Flexibility in teaching and learning, adjustments of didactical contents to diverse participant groups, part-time study opportunities as well as incorporation of professional experience would be of great importance with respect to increase of TLL activities in HE-institutions.
5. TLL and future challenges in HE-Institutions with special focus on midlife learners

Social inclusion and support of labour market integration are major factors underlying widening participation agendas and is the central focus of the THEMP project. This agenda has its roots in the historical view of the university education as being accessed by only a small proportion of the population who could benefit from it. However, in many countries and systems increasing of attendance to education occurred to a great extent in response to demand. An increase in participation in higher education has not necessarily resulted in widening of participation for under-represented groups. Gender and social background specific issues are still major determining factors for attendance of higher education in several European countries. The agenda issues like opening of higher education to wider groups, development of procedures for recognition of prior work experience and improvements of access barriers have undergone profound progress in recent years, but they are still underdeveloped and constitute major challenges in coming years in the European education systems.

Universities that want to develop policies regarding tertiary lifelong learning may consider a number of challenges that are revealed by our project. Some conclusions based on selected case studies can be summarized as follows:

• Universities have, in general, two main missions: The conduct of scientific research and the provision to initial students of educational programmes that meet the requirements of the scientific disciplines concerned. Tertiary lifelong learning has no structural position among the missions of universities. As the need to keep up, to refresh and to renew competences is continuously growing in a knowledge society, it is a serious challenge both to the universities and to government policy to adopt such a ‘third mission’. Among partner countries investigated in the project, such a third mission is only adopted by universities in Great Britain. The ageing population and the need to maintain employability until a later retirement age intensify this need.

• A closer look at the lifelong learning activities demonstrates that HE-institutions follow more or less the same strategy with respect to organization. Either such training activities are outsourced or are organised within the university as a different administrative unit, although the forms and the degree of autonomy varies among HE-institutions.

• Universities have all kinds of knowledge that is relevant to professional practice. Opening this knowledge to professionals in more or less the same way as they do in courses for initial students will not be sufficient. To reach adult and professional learners, among others modularisation of programmes, developing modern learning materials and an extensive use of e-learning are necessary. This approach is especially directed at learners who want to follow an individual learning pathway.
• Tertiary lifelong learning that aims to contribute to the sustainable employability of adult professionals has to make the connection to the collective, professional context where people are working. Universities should consider developing programmes that respond to the needs of specific professional groups and to companies and organisations in specific sectors. A close cooperation with these groups and sectors is therefore desirable. Such cooperation may make programmes more distinguishable and contributes to the access to programmes.

• Universities have the best resources to deliver a scientific input in tertiary lifelong learning from an independent position and to provide a broad approach that open new perspectives to professional practice.

• Professional groups and companies and organisations bring their professional expertise into the programmes. This expertise concerns among others the implementation and contextualisation of knowledge and the diagnosis of new questions that originate from their practice. It has a growing importance in a knowledge society for the improvement of scientific knowledge. ‘Expertise centres’ may thus be an adequate format for the connection of fundamental and disciplinary research with practice-oriented and interdisciplinary knowledge development. Such expertise centres should have a structural cooperation both with universities and with the sectors concerned.

• Post-initial programmes have to build on the expertise that people have acquired in their professional practice. Programmes should contribute to making professional knowledge explicit and to making links to scientific knowledge. Instead of one-way traffic, two-way traffic may then be developed. That approach supposes an active role of the participants and should be flexible to some degree. In these mutual learning projects the distinction between education and research diminishes. The integration of education and research is always an aim of universities. In this way lifelong learning activities may get more in the interest of universities. A process of co-creation will also advance the transfer of knowledge to professional practice.

• Under actual circumstances such mutual learning projects will probably have the character of non-formal programmes. Formal programmes now mostly demand a design that starts from a series of required subjects and fixed learning outcomes that are to be tested. A deliberate modularisation may contribute to resolve this problem. A number of non-formal lifelong learning activities may be combined with a formal completing module. The access to this formal module may be arranged by means of APL procedures that also take into account non-formal activities. This also allows the formal modules to be independent from parties that have an interest and their funding.

• Particularly programmes with a dual structure offer an appropriate format for joint learning projects organised on the basis of cooperation between universities and organisations in professional practice. Dual programmes offer good opportunities for creating links between
professional practices and studying activities. These programmes also offer good conditions to a mutual adjusted planning of studying and working activities.

- Dual programmes also support integration of lifelong learning activities in human resources management. This is important from the viewpoint of sustainable employability underlying the project THEMP. A knowledge economy needs a flexible and dynamic labour market. Organisations may use dual programmes for the recruitment of new staff, for the career development of employees and for improving the external mobility.

- In general, access to tertiary lifelong learning for people with a weaker position on the labour market is very limited. An integration of lifelong learning and human resources management may contribute to widening the access, also for these groups. A broader use of APL and transition courses also add to improving access. In some countries, financing of further training activities within the HE-system differs from regular study forms. Taking part in higher education is mainly considered a personal investment. Post-initial programmes are completely left to the ‘market’. Students who are willing to take a second course after their first studies have to pay a much higher fee. Policies do not provide any support to adult learners with a weaker position on the labour market. For example, both in Germany and in the Netherlands further training doesn’t receive any financial assistance from the state and all activities and programs must cover the costs by themselves, whereas such financial incentives exist in Spain, however, with limited access possibilities. In all countries, there is, in general, a growing tendency to commercialisation and market orientation with respect to HE. Consequently, the selection and implementation of the programs depend highly on the cost-coverage and attractiveness to the potential participants.

- The organisation of further training in autonomous administrative units allows design and application of flexible and effective solutions. This allows academic staff much more freedom in search of programmes. The fact that the initiation of such programmes, however, would be highly dependent on consideration of cost coverage and market relevance, would constitute one of the major drawbacks. Some interview partners claimed that fluctuations in the demand and changing labour market conditions and needs may threaten initiation and continuation of certain programs which do not have enough cost coverage.

- Program managers perceive strong competition in the training market. As stated by some interview partners, marketing activities are still underdeveloped and need to be improved. During initiation and design period, program managers observe labour market demand and needs for further training. But the decisions for training programs are made usually on the basis of cost considerations.

- Except a few cases, most of the programs and activities are not oriented exclusively on midlife learners. In some programs, specific needs of adult learners with professional experience in the labour market are taken into account during design and implementation stages. Due to low share of midlife learners in such programs, neither content nor didactics are adjusted to special needs of
such age groups, so they have to cope with study material and contents like other usual participants.

- In general, development of further training programs by the universities is regarded by some lecturers as problematic because majority of university staff concentrate mainly on teaching and research, have no practical experience or job experience in companies. Nevertheless, widening of HE for further target groups as well as development further training programmes have been regarded as necessary. Faced with increasing financial constraints, HE-institutions regard such reorientation as a possible strategy for getting access to further financial resources.

Opening up HE-Institutions and increasing further training activities will remain important issues in the near future in Europe but as positive conclusions it is to observe that:

- Regulatory framework in most of the European Countries with respect to extension of training activities has been improved in recent years.
- The design and implementation of TLL-programs have experienced new impulses in order to establish further training as a third pillar beside research and teaching in the higher education institutions.
- HE-institutions enjoy nowadays much more autonomy with respect to organisation of such activities.

The incorporation of midlife learners in TLL is, however, still underdeveloped and lifelong activities of the HE-institutions with a special focus on this age group should be improved.

Some proposals for improvement of TLL programs of HE in order also to support social inclusion of middle-life learners are the following:

- Very recently, persistent, turbulent and fluctuating conditions in global markets of competitiveness and extremely low rate of growth in EU regions provides a sharpened and more urgent need to ensure that HE institutions, as major source of highly skilled, knowledge intensive human capital, embrace a modernisation agenda. Therefore, a new orientation of HE is necessary with respect to the role of universities in the Life Long Learning strategy with a special focus on diverse target groups.
- The institutional settings and legal framework referring financial support for further training activities as well as to recognizing a part of staff effort for preparing and carrying out of training should be improved.
- The selection and implementation of TLL should not depend highly on cost-coverage considerations but should assure a content and structure consistent with the middle and long term labour market needs. HE-institutions would require more financial freedom and resources for long-term orientation.
TLL activities can have other locations than campus environment: In workplaces and in other off-campus locations, new forms of digital technologies and online learning platforms are enabled by using distance education.

One key factor is related to creation of flexible pathways through HE-institutions in order to lessen barriers for adult participation. In fact, this is related to both regulatory framework and design and development of suitable programs. Flexibility in the context of opening HE to adults and widening their participation is seen as crucial. Restrictions in the regulatory framework in some partner countries limit part-time solutions.

The analysis of case studies has point out the fact that follow-up studies in order to evaluate labour market perspectives of the former participants and to assess impacts of the training programs in questions are missing. Developing evaluation procedures and follow-up studies would deliver indicators for optimising the reach of the programs.

In general, HE-institutions have the capacity to play a role in lifelong learning strategy. To achieve this target, however, improvements of regulatory framework as well as additional financial support are needed.

Despite wide discussions about it, government policies do not give any priority to tertiary lifelong learning. Also against this background cooperation between universities and social partners in specific sectors (organisations of employers and of employees) may be necessary to create the conditions for initiatives in tertiary lifelong learning. Such initiatives influence government policies aiming to promote the knowledge economy, to pay more attention to the facilitation of tertiary lifelong learning.
6. ANNEX: Short Presentation of Case Studies

6.1. Czech Republic

6.1.1. Programme for School Consultants

The focus of the first case study was a Programme for School Consultants organised by the department of psychology at the Faculty of Arts of the Charles University in Prague. The school consultant is one of teachers at each primary and secondary school who is available to pupils, parents as well as their fellow-teachers for consulting various issues and problems including problems in family, behavioural problems, questions of further education or career of the pupils etc. He or she is usually one of the teachers and consultancy is just a minor part of their job. This programme was offered in response to legislative demands, which require every school consultant to attend a special training. This concerns both teachers who have already worked as school consultants and those who want to or are supposed to take up this position in the future. As a result, there are both experienced school consultants and teachers with no experience as school consultants enrolled in the programme. Interviewed participants were from two different courses of the programme. There were about 25 participants in each course. Overall, this case study is based on nine people interviewed. People of mid-life were highly represented among the participants as this is the age when teachers already have sufficient experience and yet still enough energy to take up this position. There were more women than men. For most learners, the major motivation for participations in the programme was the prospect of becoming a school consultant at their school, which includes a small pay rise. The second most frequently mentioned motivational aspect was personal interest and hope of personal development. Some interviewees mentioned support by the employer, which was important for their participation.

The choice of the particular programme at the department of psychology of the Charles University was motivated by good reputation of the institution and its instructors (L1 from CS1, L3 from CS1) as well as positive references (L2 from CS1, L4 from CS1). One learner (L4 from CS1) also mentioned it was the cheapest accredited programme offered, which mattered to her despite the fact the costs are covered by her school. Most participants picked this programme over some other programmes considered (based on price, recommendation, etc.); some did not take other programmes into consideration.

5 See the appendix for details on people interviewed and abbreviations used in text where we refer to specific interviewees.
The core of the studied programme is related to psychology. There is also some overlap to pedagogy and sociology. Some of the topics covered are:

- Psychological aspects of new conception of education in the Czech Republic
- Development of consulting systems in dependence on theories of pedagogics and psychology
- Consulting services in the school milieu
- Legal frame for execution of consulting
- Specifics of the role of school consultant in the school milieu
- School class and its management and diagnostics
- Communication with parents
- Fundamental skills of consultancy communication
- Support of pupils with health handicaps in education
- Integration of pupils with special needs
- Career consultancy
- and others

Most participants expected practical focus of the course and professional development. They also mentioned the following among their expectations: learning how to deal with specific problems (including knowing what to do when they cannot deal with a problem by themselves), confirmation if what they do as school consultants is right, and orientation in relevant legislation. Some interviewees mentioned their expectation of better social life and meeting new people within the programme (L3 from CS1, L4 from CS1). Most participants of the programme were in the following situation: the current school consultant was about to retire and the participants of the course were picked as his or her successors.

The programme takes 220 teaching hours and 30 hours of practice at accredited school consultancy facilities. Overall, the programme takes four semesters. The classes take place once a month on Friday and Saturday. Learners are also expected to study individually, materials are provided. The programme costs 13 000 CZK (about 520 EURO), but is usually covered for the participants (teachers) by their employer (school). At the end, its successful participants are provided with a certification signed by the dean of the faculty which accredits them for execution of the profession of school consultant. The prerequisites for participation is being a teacher and having a two year practice.

There were different forms of teaching applied in the programme such as classic one-way lectures, discussions as well as interactive training. Participants took part in two one-day workshops outside Prague; there were interactive games and trainings of dealing with specific situations such as bullying. Overall, however, participants estimated the passive form of lecturing to have prevailed over
interactive methods. Participants also reported frequent use of consulting opportunities, both face to face and via email. They very much appreciated the library of the department at their disposal.

Networking opportunities and exchange of information with other colleagues were also very appreciated by the participants. The weak point of the programme, according to some interviewees, was the missing conception of the programme as a whole. Different lectures were often put together without clear linking. This was perceived as a result of so many lecturers from different fields providing the programme.
6.1.2. Programme PREFEKT

The focus of the second case study was a programme called PREFEKT. It was a programme of complex educating of academic staff in research management. The aim of this programme is to provide research staff from the Masaryk University in Brno, the Brno University of Technology, and the Mendel University in Brno with managerial skills complementary to their expert knowledge in order to increase their capacity for participation in both national and international research projects. The programme is designed primarily for young researchers, doctoral students, and administrative workers in research. It is organized by the Masaryk University in Brno; the other two universities are its partners. Altogether, 8 people were interviewed for this case study.6

The participants of the programme are of fairly young age on average. The mid-life learners among them were selected for the interviews, but the project is not designed to attract primarily mid-life learners. On the contrary, its primary focus was young researchers and doctoral students. According to documentation received from programme representatives there were 42 % of men and 58 % of women enrolled in the programme.

Generally, the participants were motivated by the opportunity to develop professional competencies both general and specific. Some perceived the content as very related to their work; others rather thought it was interesting for them personally and maybe for the future:

“I applied to learn something I can use in my profession. (...) I expected useful and complex information about things I deal with here [at the university].” L3 from CS2, in response whether she rather expected improving her competencies for her current position or whether she thinks about using it for finding a new job.”

“It [the program] only has a marginal impact on my work here. (...) I applied to expand my perspectives.” L2 from CS2

A special feature of development of the programme PREFEKT was constitution of the project board. The reason for it was the interconnection of three universities within the project as well as the connection of the project to broader strategy of educating staff in science and research. The project board had a number of responsibilities which normally rest with the faculty or department responsible

6 See the appendix for details on people interviewed and abbreviations used in text where we refer to specific interviewees.
for a LLL programme such as determining selection criteria, guaranteeing quality, selecting personnel etc. There were about twenty lecturers involved in the program. The full list of lecturers is available online. Most of them were academicians with practical experience in research. There were also two external lecturers from a private firm PM Consulting specialized in project management.

The programme takes two semesters and its costs for the participants are covered by their university from a European grant. The prerequisite for participation is being a doctoral student, young researcher or an administrative worker in research at one of the above mentioned universities, but some Master students were also allowed to take part. The first semester is more theoretical and teaches the following fields: Research Organization and Research Management in the Czech Republic; International Cooperation in Science and Research; Structural Funds and Operational Programmes; European Framework Programmes; Evaluation of Science and Research in the Czech Republic; Information Sources in Science and Research; Financing of Universities; and Intensive Seminar. The second semester is more practical and the participants learn specific skills. The subjects taught in the second semester are as follows: Project; Project Writing; Planning and Keeping Record of Financial Sources; Project team; Protection of Intellectual Property; English Language in Project Writing; Czech Language in Project Writing; Intensive Seminar (project step by step). As Navreme Boheme conducted an external evaluation of the courses within PREFEKT, we know the courses in the second semester scored somewhat better in the evaluation. Also the interviews show that practical courses are more appreciated.

There are 92 teaching hours within the programme. The programme is taught in blocks of about 6 to 8 teaching hours. Requirements for successful participation are 70 % participation rate in the classes, participation in both semesters, and successful passing of tests in respective subjects. Successful participants are provided with a certificate issued by the university, but with no professional accreditation unlike certificates issued in the other two case studies.

Classic kind of lecturing was more dominant. Interactive methods require more preparation and organizational skill. When unsuccessful, they can be perceived as chaotic or confusing. This may be the reason why some lecturers avoid these techniques. Another reason might be the topic of the program, which may be considered as not very inviting for interactive methods. The lecturers made their presentations and materials available, which was much appreciated; some of the lecturers gave their contact and offered consulting possibilities.

Different level of experience and different expectations among interviewed learners led to different overall evaluation of the impact of the program. However, most interviewees thought they learned valuable information they will be able to use at their work.

6.1.3. Programme of Traffic Psychology

The focus of the third case study is a programme of Traffic Psychology. It was developed in response to a legislative change in the Czech Republic, based on which every psychologist who wishes to pursue the career of traffic psychologist needs to have a special certification/accreditation. This requirement applies to both the psychologists who want to enter the field of traffic psychology and those who already pursue their career in this field. This assures a various age structure of the programme participants. The traffic psychologist is a specialized profession within psychology. They examine people who apply for a drivers’ licence level C or higher, people who lost their drivers’ licence for violating traffic rules before they can get it back, and traffic psychologists also work for transport and logistics companies. Their practice encompasses both diagnostics and intervention (coaching). Traffic psychology is a field with good perspectives because the demand for traffic psychologists is assured by state regulations. Overall, this case study is based on seven people interviewed. It would have been better to have conducted more interviews, but we did not manage to either persuade or make contact to some more suitable target persons.

All participants of the programme without exceptions must have a degree in psychology and some practice (one year minimum for participation in the course, yet three years prescribed by the Czech Ministry of Transport for executing the profession of traffic psychologist). Most of the participants are self-employed. There were about 30 participants of various age groups (from late 20s to early 70s) in this programme. 

The accreditation acquired in the programme will have a direct impact on the income of the participants. It will help the participants to either expand or maintain their work opportunities (field of expertise). The additional motivational factors mentioned by the interviewees were expanding perspectives and sharing experience with colleagues. One of the interviewees worked as a manager and not a psychologist at the time of the interview, but had worked as a psychologist before. Her motivation for participation in the programme was her interest in the content and the idea that she might work as traffic psychologist later after she retires (L3 from CS3). The interviewees expected to learn about up-to-date findings, legislative norms, to get to know new working places, to confront own expertise with the others and the contemporary development in the field. Some of them had information from participants of previous course of the programme and knew very well what to expect.

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8 See the appendix for details on people interviewed and abbreviations used in text where we refer to specific interviewees.
Traffic Psychology is a one semester long programme. It has a longer common part and a shorter individual part. The common part mainly consists of lectures and workshops (120 hours) and takes place at weekends once in fortnight on both Saturdays and Sundays (there are also common excursions). The individual part of this programme is represented by supervised practice at a diagnostic workplace (40 hours). The study fee is 9 500 CZK (about 380 EUR). Most participants are self-employed and cover the costs by themselves; one interviewee had the fee covered by her employer who supported further education of their employees (L3 from CS3). The fee was mostly referred to as reasonably high. As one programme director points out, it equals about 4 to 5 traffic-psychological examinations; the real obstacle can be the price of machines and tools used for diagnostics (P/LC2 from CS3).

The programme covers psychological topics (such as diagnostics, intervention, driver typology, driver aggression, accidents and other) as well as other related topics (cooperation with medical staff, legislative issues, perspective of the ministry etc.) (P/LC1 from CS3). The core of the programme is diagnostics methods and “professiograms”. Successful attendance of the programme is conditioned by participation in the classes and passing the final test at the end of the programme. This is rather unorthodox for a LLL programme, where a written thesis is more often required as the final outcome.

Advantages of the programme from the perspective of the organizers are caused by the fact that the accreditation is demanded for execution of the profession of traffic psychologist by law and the demand for traffic psychologists is ensured by the recent expansion of drivers who are obliged to undergo a traffic-psychological examination (this was caused by a legislative change). The interviewees themselves appreciated the possibility to learn about new workplaces and to network with other participants. Some of them thought the contacts acquired could also be beneficial for their work. One respondent reported that an idea was discussed among the participants to set up a working group when the programme was over and share data to evaluate new diagnostics methods (L1 from CS3). Weaknesses stem from the additional costs connected to commuting and accommodation for some participants. Furthermore, different age groups and experience levels appearing in the group can be hard to manage by the lecturers (P from CS3).
6.2. Germany

6.2.1. Ruhr University Bochum

The Ruhr University Bochum (RUB) was founded in 1961. With its 20 faculties on one integrated campus, the university is home to 5,000 employees and more than 36,500 students from 130 countries.

Research and teaching is carried out in a total of twenty faculties at the RUB. The term "Faculty" is used for RUB’s disciplinary institutional units. The holder of the chair, i.e. a professor, leads a team of academic staff, administrative staff, technical staff and student assistants. In some cases, thematically related chairs are organised together in institutes and departments.

Ruhr University Academy

Main unit for the organization and coordination of training activities is the Ruhr University Academy. The Ruhr University Academy is organised by private business and realises all-encompassing, interdisciplinary educational measures. It provides academic-standard, job-oriented continuing education for specialists and management in companies, local authorities, organisations and educational facilities. The close cooperation with teaching and research at the Ruhr University creates ideal conditions for positioning in the continuing education market with distinctive programmes. Its close cooperation with teaching and research activities at the Ruhr University Bochum creates ideal conditions to position itself in the education and training market with profiled programs. In general, the number of further training and tertiary education activities of the RUB tailored to the people in mid-life is limited. In most cases, they address mostly persons aged between 30 and 40 years.

Case Study: Ruhr University Academy “Change Management”

“Change Management” is a 3-semester extra-occupational program for people with work experience as employee’s representatives and members of work councils, offered by the Ruhr University Academy, in cooperation with m5 Consulting, a consulting agency specialized in work councils.

Target Group

The program is oriented to people who work in positions as employee’s representatives, especially members of work councils (in some cases also members of the staff council) of enterprises. The admission to the program presupposes priory a professional education and work experience in employee representation. Participants come from all over Germany, the average number of students within a seminar is approximately 20. The age structure is (roughly) as follows: 50% are between 40 and 50 years old, 25% over 50 years and 25% under 40 years. The number of participants is on average 18-24. The Change Management program lasts 3 semesters and requires 30 presence days. So the participants require permission of the employers. The interview partners claim that work council
members insisted on one day a week presence or at most two days a week. But the Academy has regarded this due to didactical consideration not that much feasible.

**Social Reach**

The reason for the initiation of such a program was based on the recognition of changing demands with respect to working environment of the target group. It has been developed in cooperation with the members of work councils. Work council members are elected by the company workforce for a four year term. They are expected to reduce workplace conflicts by improving and systematizing communication channels. Depending on the size of the company, they are released from their duties and spend their time in representative issues.

The program “Change Management” is an offer based on a systematic further training to endow themselves with necessary tools for improving their daily work in the work councils. In general, most of them are unlikely to return to their previously position after working in the council. Mostly they take over other responsibilities within the company (or elsewhere, if desired). Therefore, the program aims at supporting them for time after work council activities.

The interviewed students see themselves confronted with huge changes in the labour market. Some of them are in charge of work council task for several years or even decades. The fact that the participants had probably in their life time never a contact with an academic institution was the major obstacle to overcome. The Academy offered overview seminars. Mostly, the participants are informed about the course by former participants or own network with trade unions and other institutions. The thoughts about the time coming beyond work council period lead them to a new orientation. The fact that they cannot go back to their original occupation, motivates them to do something new or even in the old company they can overtake eventually managerial tasks.

**Teaching & Learning**

Concerning the didactic approach of the program, the focus is on linking the theoretical background knowledge which is provided in academic lectures and seminars with the practical implementation of the newly gained skills. The starting module “Self-Management” is designed to transmit some study skills and to encourage the participants to an active way of seminar. The participants bring certain experience, based on it, the seminar tries to deliver a substantive input, shows new methods and procedures, upon which they can build up and finally to canalize this into the progress of their project. Individual needs or interests are acknowledged and supported for the formulation and realisation of the project.

The program “Change Management” takes into account real demands of participants and integrate the treatment of them into the seminar program. In the module “Self-managent/Self-Organisation” such specific needs are articulated and a basic idea of a project work will be developed which is a prerequisite for a certificate at the end of the program.
Participants work on the individual project along the entire training program and at the end it will be finalised in a form a report, which constitutes their final output, for which they get a certificate. The certificate will be designed in cooperation with the IHK (chamber of commerce) and enjoys a high level reputation. Mostly, the content of the projects are related to specific plans or targets of the participants what they want to do after the duration of council membership.

**Evaluation, Assessment, Outcome**

Constant evaluations in every single teaching unit of the program are an essential part of the conceptual framework. Students fill in evaluation forms after courses. They deliver ratings with respect to individual aspects of a lecture or seminar. They are asked to assess via open questions the quality of the program units. Critical issues mentioned in these evaluations are usually adopted as soon as possible – this applies, however, for smaller or organizational changes. In case that a majority of students is very dissatisfied with a certain lecturer, the lecturer might eventually be replaced.

Feedback from and regular contact with several Alumni-students encourages the program management in their impression that many of the skills acquired during the program could actually be applied within the professional surroundings of former participants. Some of them have reached higher positions within their companies, while for others a desired change of employer was possible.

Principally, the adult education programs differ from typical university courses. In general, in the University studies job experiences are not required or asked for at all. If someone has occupational experience, this had seldom to do with the content of the current study. What the programs of the Academy differentiate from typical university programs is the fact that the needs of the participants are taken into account in each step of the program from developing and design to the implementation. They are designed to a certain degree flexible in order to incorporate and adjust the content as well as didactical issues into the current level and needs of participants.
6.2.2. University Duisburg Essen

With 410 professors about 2,300 academic staff, 1,270 employees and 32,000 students, the University Duisburg-Essen (UDE) is one the largest universities in Germany. It emerged in January 2003 from the merger of two universities: Gerhard-Mercator University in Duisburg and Essen University. The range of subjects includes humanities, economics, engineering and natural sciences and medicine.

In many disciplines the UDE ranks amongst the TOP 10 of German research universities. The five main research areas are Nano-sciences, Biomedical Sciences, Urban Systems, Empirical Research in Education, and Change of Contemporary Societies.

Case Study: Ruhr Campus Academy

A majority of the further training activities are carried out over the Ruhr Campus Academy (RCA) which is founded in 2001. The collaboration with the faculties and the university is regulated under a cooperation agreement.

Especially fields are appreciated by the students:

- In-service, continuing education online master's program Educational Media (Education Sciences at the Department Media Didactics and Knowledge Management)
- Business computer science (VAWi - Business Computer Science)

As a case study in the framework of the THEMP-Project, the master study VAWi has been chosen, mainly due to the e-learning or blended learning concept and possibilities of part-time studying and a shorter duration which would enable participation of older age groups.

For the selection of students, face-to-face meetings where organized. They were invited for an interview in order to evaluate and assess their motives and perspectives. Meanwhile, the students should apply over online platform and they are then evaluated if they fulfil the requirements of an attendance in the master program.

The Master course has been developed in cooperation with other partners and HE-Institutions. The original idea to develop a virtual learning platform has emerged from the need to use wide range possibilities of internet for online learning. It has been designed as an extension to further training activities carried out at the University. The management of the university has regarded the idea in order to satisfy the apparent demand for IT-related issues and part-time learning forms. The use of internet enables access for students from whole Germany.

With respect to study duration there are different regulations, mainly due to different HE-systems in the federal states. In Baden-Württemberg, for example, there is a maximum studying time of 16 semesters. In North Rhine-Westphalia, on the other hand, there is no maximum limit of study time. If a student fails in attendance of tests or if they do not have success in tests they would get so called
penalty points. They should have certain credit points within a certain time. If the number of penalty points exceeds a certain level, they should leave the program.

**Target Population**

The main requisite for attendance of VaWi is the existence of first university degree of students. It is not necessary that the students should have studied IT- or Economics. Some students have even degree in art history or social pedagogy. But they should have at least some connection in their working experience with IT-related issues. Most of the students live in the federal state Baden-Württemberg where the University Bamberg is also located, followed by North Rhine-Westphalia and Niedersachsen.

Students have experience with computers and hence, less problems with the type and form of online courses. Online form makes the participation much easier by being independent of time and space. Most students feel the necessity to update stills and get a degree for further promotion on the job and increase employability on the labour market. Students have mostly a job and attend the master program at the same time. They can arrange studying time flexible and according to their own daily time management. The costs are high but affordable for many students, because they expect to earn more after finishing the course. During master program there are rather informal contact with external companies and employers. The contacts emerge mostly in form of project work. It may also happen that some students get financial contribution and further assistance from companies in the framework of master thesis.

**Social Reach**

The master course is not directly related to people in mid-ages but the possibility for their participation due to online character is much higher than in regular studies.

According to own statistics of program managers, two third of the students are between mid-twenty and 40 years old. There are, however, only few students in the master program who are over 45. Among students, especially lawyers and chemical engineers belong to elderly group. According to opinion of interview partners among students, they think that they always wanted to do something about business informatics and master program with online possibilities would be a good start. The young students are in the beginning of their own career and could start easily with a master program. Older students look mostly for possibilities for a new orientation. Majority of students have a job and nearby attend online master program. Some students try to get a doctoral program and start with academic degree.
Teaching and Learning

The lecturers are mostly teaching at the universities, but they have to adjust themselves to the peculiarities of online learning. They must prepare material and offer to download. The teaching themes must be all related to business informatics. Some topics like simulation cannot be easily grouped into one single discipline. The lecturers have mostly free hand to design the modules by themselves. The students decide in the beginning of the semester which modules they would like to attend.

With the beginning of the semester in 2003 at the University, a new teaching concept has been initiated which was known as Essener learning environment and which could be regarded as first application of e-learning. The basic idea has been related to the combination of text structures and video-combination.

In the beginning of each semester, introductory meetings are organised. Each student becomes name shields with regional labels. It is aimed that regional groups of students come together and build up regional learning networks in some federal states like North Rhine-Westphalia, Bayern and Thüringen. Students can organise learning meetings among themselves or exchange information via e-mail and other social platforms. In certain modules, the students build learning teams or groups in order to achieve project work together. The lecturers assist students to find and build learning groups. The lecturers affirm that alumni network and discussion groups in internet function astonishingly well. The contents and structure of the lectures are not specifically adjusted according to the needs of midlife-learners. However, the modules must be designed in accordance with the necessities of virtual learning. Students demand, however, better adjustment to the online form of lectures. Time guidance and better advice services for students need to be improved.

Evaluation and Assessment, outcome

Evaluation methods and procedures are, in fact, well developed. Regular evaluations and the analysis of internal evaluations provide feedback for continuous improvements of the master programs. The master program should be accredited and certified by the accreditation commission in Germany in regular periods. As a prerequisite, the university should deliver evaluation reports to the commission. Lately, the master program has been certified in 2011.

After each introductory meeting, the student becomes an evaluation questioner to assess the meeting and to give some feedback for program managers. In addition, at the end of the semester, each module is evaluated by students through standardised questioner which is filled in anonymously. The questions are related to lecturers, content, organisation and structure of the modules. The administrative unit of the master program analyses the results and give feedback to the lecturers so that they can have the opportunity to carry out some adjustments, if necessary.
In summary it can be stated that the UDE increasingly are looking after the group of people in middle age. The master program offers new chances for participants to improve employability and enhance promotion possibilities on the job. The contents and structure of the lectures are not specifically adjusted according to the needs of midlife-learners. In the framework of the virtual learning platform, practical experiences have been gained to a great extent. The coordinators of the master program claim that such platforms would be a useful extension and complementary to the regular study programs at the university. However, the question of financing seems to be one of the most crucial aspects which may set back valuable programs and plans with respect to further training activities. Furthermore, there is no coherent Lifelong-learning strategy at the university. Main strategic preference is related to building up a research profile in academic community.

Further training as an idea is in general appreciated in the university. However, the question of financing seems to be one of the most crucial aspects which may set back valuable programs and plans with respect to further training activities.
6.2.3. Fern University Hagen

Established in 1974 as a university of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, this university was one of the first universities in Germany which offer distance education and go online with teaching, supervision of students as well as administration, thus breaking completely new ground. The goal: high quality study opportunities, optimally adapted to a great variety of situations in life, for all those who cannot or do not wish to enrol in a campus university, whether for job-related or private reasons, such as persons in employment, trainees, aged people.

With respect to LLL, the Open University has a special status. People aiming for a degree in the second or third chance education build the central target group; therefore, the concept of lifelong learning plays a special role. This orientation is also confirmed by the following figures: 80% of students go to a regular professional activity besides studying, 40% have already completed a course of study before. The university has more than 79,000 students in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Central and Eastern Europe, with a slight preponderance of male students (55:450). 10,944 of them are over 45 years old. In general, there are no age specific offers for persons in middle ages. The university has no age specific orientation, but rather a thematic one. A number of programs are offered for people who are already engaged in the labour market and who want to acquire further qualifications.

Prospective students find a wide range of subjects and combinations of subjects for study in the faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Science, Business Administration and Economics and Law. Of course, the Open University also offers opportunities to earn doctorates and to take a great variety of further higher education courses.

The interdisciplinary Program “Infernum”

“Infernum” ("Interdisciplinary Distance Learning Program for Environmental Sciences") is a Master’s course in environmental science and is the first academic degree course nation-wide. It has been developed in cooperation with the Fraunhofer Institute UMSICHT. This cooperation with the Fraunhofer Institute aimed at providing a practical and future-oriented further education in the areas of ecology and sustainability. Tailor-made programmes for various occupational categories and individual study opportunities in open access studies round off the range.

In November 2000 the master studies program, which is offered in cooperation between UMSICHT and the Open University in Hagen, started with 43 students. Meanwhile 550 students are enrolled. This number proves the success of this program as future-oriented further training in the fields of environment and sustainability.

The master's program Infernum requires a high school degree and leads to an internationally recognized qualification degree "Master of Science". The master program can be completed with 60, 90 or 120 credits, depending on the previous degree. For an Infernum master degree, a total of 300
credits are required. The curriculum combines different elements of blended learning to provide students a largely space-and time-independent studies. It consists of study letters (teaching texts and readers), virtual learning environments and classroom seminars.

**Target Population**

The central idea behind the program has been related to supporting the further education of employees to work in a desired field. It was one of the few further higher education courses which prevailed in the market and which was supported by the university. Infernum imparts environmental know-how from more than 10 disciplines and qualifies its students – who are mainly enrolled in the program parallel to their job – to think and act in interdisciplinary ways. In 2005 Infernum was assigned the label “official project of the United Nations Decade for the Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014“. The students have interested in research in the field environment science.

One major criterion for accessibility is related to relative low costs of the program compared to training offers in the market. Target audience of the course is the professionals with a first university degree or college degree who want to acquire environmentally-related skills.

**Social Reach**

The profile of the program “Infernum” as distance learning is particularly attractive for working people in middle ages due to the flexible design of the training and individual focus. After completion of the study, students could extend their tasks in the domain of environment science and other closed domains. The program does not directly address people in middle ages. Since a university degree is a prerequisite access to the program, students are over certain age. In general, the age range is between 25 and 60 and most of students are between 30 and 40. Persons over 40, though small percentage, attend the program as well.

The program delivers training and additional qualification possibilities and opens new job perspectives. Students want to acquire additional skills either for their current job or expect new opportunities in the labour market with a higher level of qualification. The students have mostly a full-fledged job so that distance learning is more suitable for them. 5 to 10 per cent of the students are partially financial supported by their companies. The others have to carry the costs by themselves.

The lecturers claim that the students participating at this further training program are much more motivated than in the normal university presence courses. The students know, in opinion of interview partners, mostly why they study. They possess, of course, a university degree and experience in learning. In their professional life, the content and the fields of their work have also something to do with the major topics of the program. The students can acquire in their working life somehow an expert status in the fields of environmental issues. Either they want to promote in the current work or reorient themselves and overtake new management or institutional tasks.

**Teaching and Learning**
The lecturers have experience in teaching and adult building. Their experience results, however, mostly from practical work and professional teaching function. The lecturers have experience in adult education; some of them work at the Fraunhofer UMSICHT, the cooperation partner of this program. However, there is no systematic didactical approach and training for the lecturers. The mostly used method is learning by doing. The major aim is that the students cope with the teaching material alone and presence sessions serve to deepening of topics.

In general, print materials should be adapted and rearranged for online learning platforms. They should include all relevant information to a specific topic, all technical terms should be explained, and all necessary literature, further material and sources should be listed. Furthermore, the text should contain examination or test part so that the students can check on their own if they have understood the content. The students can choose desired parts and modules and link them with other courses.

**Evaluation and Assessment of Impacts, Outcome**

Each module is evaluated with a special questionnaire or through a feedback discussion at the end of the course. The course has been positively evaluated by the students helping them to fulfil new tasks in the environmental research. Interdisciplinary know-how has a great impact for the further employment. The students criticized that for some modules; too much previous knowledge is required.

In general, according to program directors, the program “Infernnum” has still some difficulties to be accepted within the Open University Hagen. The main reason for this results come from the fact that it is a further training program, which has, like other further training programs in Germany, still problems with the regulations. For the lecturers and professors or other stuff who invest time and resources in such training programs, it means simply an additional work time. It is not regarded as core working time. Another reason is related to the general strategy of the Distance University, which considers graduate students and courses for them as major target group and main activity.

The program provides graduates knowledge and qualification for new employment possibilities in the field of environmental sciences. With a strong focus on working people and professionals, the University differentiates itself with respect to competing offers from other universities. This course can contribute to the development of new networks and social integration of middle-aged learners and effect social inclusion positively.
6.3. Hungary

6.3.1. Szent István University - KITE Farmer’s Training Partner Programme

The first case study was carried out at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering (GÉK) of the Szent István University. Its predecessor, the Hungarian Agricultural University was established in 1950 with the aim to satisfy the demand for agricultural appliance-station specialists. As a result of a considerable structural reform (university integration) in 2000, GATE was renamed to Szent István University (SZIE, an acronym based on the Hungarian name of the university). Since then, the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of SZIE has co-ordinated the training of technical specialists. 1,600 students were registered at the Faculty in September 2012, and 65 lecturers provide educational duties.

GÉK Adult Education Portfolio (training structures, programme development, lecturer and student circle)

GÉK has been dealing with the organisation of (agricultural) technical trainings for fifty years and pursues adult education activities almost from the beginning.

The adult education portfolio of SZIE GÉK consists of three programme types. There are special further training programmes (at ISCED level 5A), advanced vocational programmes (ISCE 5B) and the company trainings. Special training programmes are not part of the Bologna Process and typically organised for 2-4 semesters in the form of part-time (correspondence) courses. The tuition fee varies in between EUR 520-640 per semester. Students apply for special further training programmes (or are schooled by the employer) in order to enhance employability and extend domain-specific knowledge. Students are all graduates with higher education degrees. As a result of the technical aspect of the topics, there are more male than female students. From among adult training programmes, special further training programmes resemble university education the most as their arrangements and undertakings with the traditional dedicated staff take place smoothly.

The second type of programmes in the adult education portfolio are the advanced vocational programmes. The terms for launching the courses (minimum headcount, budget etc.) are equivalent to special further training programmes, although the adult education centre plays a much bigger role in organisation (course announcements, administration, issuance of certificates.) The specialised engineering trainings are short-cycle programmes lasting for a couple of weeks on the basis of face-to-face participation. Their aim varies; topics may include either the enrichment of technical knowledge or the attainment of new knowledge (for example design software trainings) as well as the development of general competences (for example negotiation techniques). Courses are recommended for adult employees or job seekers between the age of 18 and 60 who are motivated in extending their
technical knowledge. Tuition fees show considerable spread depending on the duration and device need; the most competitive course costs EUR 85 whereas the most expensive is EUR 1 250.

Company trainings are the third type of programmes in the adult education portfolio. As the KITE Farmers’ Programme investigated during the case study belongs to this category of adult education programmes we will describe it in a more sophisticated way. These trainings organised for large companies have been gaining more importance especially in the last two years. These are not similar to the programmes presented before in any way but represent an entirely new direction. A common feature of the company trainings is that the initiator is always a partner company that provides sales related trainings for its customer and/or resellers. The aim of the training is to prepare users for the safe and efficient application of the purchased technology. Companies elaborate the curriculum, prepare the lecturers and recruit participants, while the Faculty is responsible for the accreditation and organisation of trainings, provides instructors and classrooms, holds the training and exams, and issues certificates of attendance and successful exams.

GÉK is connected with three such companies at present, all of which are distributors of agricultural cutting-edge technologies in Hungary. The co-operation is well-established as experience of one another was already gained in the course of joint conferences, professional events and innovative assignments. These companies got directly involved in BSc and MSc programmes a year ago; one option is when the specialists and the management (design engineers, managers of various areas) of international brands distributed by the partner companies give lectures 5 times per semester in English. The partner company is also entrusted with the specification of the curriculum when courses are held in Hungarian. In this case, lectures are held by the Hungarian specialists of the partner company. These as well are very attractive to students.

**Information about the KITE Farmer’s Training Project Programme**

The initiator of the programme: KITE Zrt. KITE was established in 1972. By today, it became the largest commercial agricultural and service provider in Hungary that offers all input substances and devices necessary for cultivation. Its headquarter is located in Nádudvar and there are also offices in 19 locations throughout the country. KITE plays a major role in the domestic acclimatisation of new technologies. Its technological activity is determined by the distribution and technical support of John Deere machines. The number of employees is 760 and its net turnover exceeds EUR 357 million per annum.

The organiser and the co-ordinator of the programme: SZIE GÉK and KITE Zrt.

**Aim:** the handling and operation of premium John Deere machinery (fitted with precision agricultural techniques) distributed by KITE, and the preparation for the handling of automatic steering system in practise.
Demand: lack of knowledge from the side of John Deere machinery procurers resulting from the appearance of new technology.

Target group: the (potential) buyers of premium machinery distributed by KITE; companies operating in the field of agricultural raw material production (plant production) from all company size categories.

Participants: machinery operators in the above mentioned company category. Typically engineers but the course is very heterogeneous in terms of various education levels; the scale ranges from university to vocational qualifications. Most participants are employees with secondary school qualifications. The average age of the participants is 40-45 years.

Lecturers: two people are employed by SZIE GÉK and engaged in TLL solely as part of this programme plus in some cases (at the beginning) an additional KITE employed service engineer deals solely with TLL as part of this programme as well. They are aged between 30-40 years. The lecturers of SZIE GÉK did not take part in either the structuring of learning materials nor in methodology planning. KITE professionals draw up the curriculum (ppt) based on the materials (simulator software and user’s manual) of the technology producer.

Time span: 30 hours (6 hours on 5 consecutive days) during winter months when agricultural works are ceased.

Locations: major cities of domestic agricultural regions and the seat of the university (4 locations in total)

Framework: personal participation in technical courses held at institutions equipped with an IT laboratory

Financing: the costs of the programme are paid by participating companies and entrepreneurs. The course is accredited and the tuition fee can be eligible for companies’ vocational training contribution.

Admission requirements: none

Requirements: from the management of participating companies’ point of view the main objectives are the exploitation of the potential in technology, improvement of workplace performance and quality of work, continuous employability of machine operators, fewer breakdowns through knowledge extension, safer operations and cost reduction. From KITE’s point of view the objectives are to have more satisfied business partners, the reduction of service and support time that resulted from operational failures and fewer guarantee issues.

Certificate of competencies: certificate of course attendance and successful exam

Approximately there have been 300 participants of the programmes so far (10 groups).
6.3.2. **Debrecen University - Quality Management Engineering Postgraduate Training Course**

The University of Debrecen is situated in the second largest city of Hungary, the number of inhabitants is around 200,000. The roots of the HE in Debrecen go back to the 16th century. The Reformed College of Debrecen, founded in 1538, had a nationwide leading role in the preservation and development of Hungarian education and culture for centuries. In its current form the university was established in 2000 by uniting three formerly separately operating universities, namely, the Medical University, the University of Agriculture and Kossuth Lajos University. With its past of more than 450 years, the University of Debrecen is the oldest institution of higher education in continuous operation in Hungary based in the same city. The University of Debrecen has a student body of 30,418\(^9\) out of which 20,713 are full-time students. More than 1500 scholars teach at the University, making it one of the largest higher education institutions in Hungary. Its 15 faculties and 25 doctoral schools undoubtedly offer wide choice of majors and other forms of training. According to the annual report of the Hungarian Ministry of Education, it is the best institution outside Budapest and is in the top three in the country, possessing 14-15% of the research volume carried out in Hungary.

The Faculty of Engineering is the third largest faculty of the University of Debrecen. At present the Faculty has three thousands students. Courses are provided in the following fields: mechanical engineering (building services, operation and maintenance, motor-vehicles), architectural engineering, civil engineering, environmental engineering, mechatronics and management. The Faculty has 78 lecturers, 37 of them have a Ph.D or a DLA degree and three have a DSc. degree. The main laboratories of the Faculty are: Building materials, Building Physics, Heating, Ventilation and Air conditioning, Mechatronics, Measuring and Control, Electrotechnics-Electronics, Biomechanics, Diagnostics, etc. In many ways the Faculty has a monopoly status in the eastern part of Hungary. It offers special TLL programmes that do not exist in other higher education institutions in the region.

The next chapter presents the methodology of the case study.

The university has no general orientation of the LLL programmes. Responsible of the strategic orientation are the centres and/or faculties of the university. A partial cooperation between the faculties is necessary because of the mutual educational collaboration. TLL programmes have existed for 15 years at the Faculty. These programmes form a very significant part of the programmes offered by the Faculty. The importance and the market value of these programmes necessitate a responsible person, who coordinates them. The responsible person of TLL programmes at the Faculty has a longer professional and teaching experience.

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\(^9\) Data 2011
Figure X illustrates which kind of programmes of the Faculty can be considered as lifelong learning (LLL) programmes (the programme investigated in the case study belongs to the second category, i.e. postgraduate training course):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type LLL program</th>
<th>Training courses</th>
<th>Postgraduate-training courses</th>
<th>Master courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td>few months</td>
<td>few months – 1 year</td>
<td>1.5-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interaction</strong></td>
<td>Face-to-face (correspondent course)</td>
<td>Face-to-face (correspondent course)</td>
<td>Face-to-face (full-time or correspondence course)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>Complete specified course</td>
<td>Modules and complete programmes</td>
<td>Complete programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge relevance (up-dating)</strong></td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>5-10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim</strong></td>
<td>Keep existing knowledge up-to-date</td>
<td>Keep existing knowledge up-to-date; Expand existing knowledge and acquire new knowledge</td>
<td>Expand existing knowledge and acquire new knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Certification specialization</td>
<td>Specialization</td>
<td>Specialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Certification</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (90 or 120 credit points)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditions of access and admission</strong></td>
<td>Work experience; Credit points collected</td>
<td>State approved college degree or BSc; Work experience; Certification e.g. in the case of architect portfolio</td>
<td>BSc in Engineering or Natural Sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8**

Type of LLL programmes at the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Debrecen (Hungary)

**General Information about Quality Management Engineering Studies (postgraduate training course)**

Capacity: 25 students

Training time: 2 semesters

Training costs: HUF 160,000/ semester (appr. EUR 570)

Actors Responsible for the Training: professor, dean, quality assurance commissioner of the University of Debrecen

The final examination admission: 60 credits in the manner of a prescribed curriculum
Conditions of Admission

- Anyone who has a Bachelor degree in mechanical engineering, information technology engineering, engineer in mechatronics engineering, engineering manager, civil engineering, electrical engineering, chemical engineering, or bioengineering and respectively environmental engineering. In this case their certification will be "quality management engineer"
- Application of those with a Bachelor degree in non-engineering studies, e.g. Engineering Management, Economics, and Natural Sciences or in Information Technology can be also accepted but in this case their certification will be "quality assurance expert".

A basic goal of this training is to provide general knowledge about quality management. In this way the students can acquire professional knowledge on the integrated systems and can better understand the affecting factors of it. They are able to use specific computer programs, procedures to ensure a proper management of the integrated systems. At the end of the training these graduates possess the ability to build and operate integrated systems. As concerning the target audience, the programme is mainly designed as a further training of postgraduate quality specialists. It provides comprehensive theoretical and practical knowledge that makes students capable to use their specific skills in the whole quality management process of an enterprise but first and foremost in the product manufacturing (quality improvement, quality planning, quality assurance, quality control, inspection). Graduates are able to develop and operate management systems based on international standards (ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 22000, ISO 13485, IEC 28001, ISO / TS 16949) in companies of the industrial or of the service sector. At the end of this training the students have the specific knowledge to work in quality management positions of producing and service enterprises, to work in a specialized consultant positioned or to work as an expert in quality management.
6.3.3. **Budapest Business School - Business Coach Postgraduate Programme**

The Budapest Business School, Hungary's market leading and largest college, educating some 20,000 students, was established as a result of the Hungarian higher education integration and on 1 January 2000 the three legal predecessors - the College of Commerce, Catering and Tourism (CCCT), the College of International Management and Business (CIMB), and the College of Finance and Accountancy (CFA) - were merged. These legal predecessor institutions have a long history. In the academic year 2010-2011 the Budapest Business School (BBS) offers 8 undergraduate programmes (in the case of four programmes in foreign languages as well: in English, French, German), 6 postgraduate programmes, 21 post-secondary vocational training programmes, 48 post-graduate diploma courses, Business Administration doctoral school, and numerous adult education programmes to its prospective students.

The BBS provides three types of programmes for adult learners:

1. two-year advanced vocational programmes (ISCED 5B) for those who have finished their secondary education and do not wish to entrance to HE programmes
2. post-graduate programmes (ISCED 5A) for those who have already graduated and wish to obtain a specialised degree. Some typical fields: HR specialist, Market Research, Advertising, Financial management, Business informatics, etc.

The Adult and Further Training Centre (AFTC) was established in 1993 in order to satisfy the increasing demand for specialized further training programs. At the beginning of the transition period from the state socialism to the market economy, there was a rapidly increasing demand for new knowledge that was in accordance with the dramatically changed environment. On the other hand the collapse of the state socialism was accompanied by the radical restructuring of the size structure of the Hungarian enterprises, e.g. to the fact that large state-owned companies were replaced by small- and medium sized private enterprises that represented new demand for leaders educated in economics. The AFTC provides both advanced vocational programmes and post-graduate programmes.

The Business School offers its training portfolio for the following major target groups:

1) Innovative entrepreneurs.
2) External trainings for firms.
3) Fresh graduates having an ambition to continue their studies.
4) Those between 30-50 years of age who want to change their career trajectory.

5) The so-called “diploma-accumulators” who want to get as many diploma as possible (this category may be found in any age group).

6) There is a special segment in the age group above 40 who start to follow their studies. They are mostly successful entrepreneurs who did not have time to learning besides doing their businesses.

At present the Centre has 405 students, 190 of them are female which represents a share of 47% of the total number of students. Unfortunately, we do not have data on the share of students by age groups.

We asked our interviewees to give an overview on the most important segments of the demand side of this market. There was a consent that the global economic crisis had a negative effect on this market and the volume of the demand is decreasing. Beside this general trend the following demand segments were distinguished:

1) Micro- and small firms: the most numerous segment lacking not only the necessary financial resources but often even the need for further training.

2) Hungarian-owned medium-sized firms: they have a need for further training but lack the necessary financial resources.

3) Foreign-owned medium-sized enterprises: they also face with financial constraints and instead of buying external courses they rather organise in-house trainings.

4) Public sector: in most of the cases these institutions (e.g. National Tax Authority) have they own training centres.

5) Large foreign or multinational companies: they have clear training strategy and dispose the necessary financial resources.

As concerning the supply side, the competition is increasing as the high schools and vocational training schools also offer trainings in the market of the tertiary lifelong learning. The training programmes have their own thematic elaborated by the head of the training course that closely cooperates with the head(s) of the related department and with the director of the Centre. The basis of these thematic is always the existing teaching material used in the normal academic programmes which are slightly modified according to the actual needs and to the time limits of the actual courses. The most important difference between the courses offered by the Centre and by the Business School is that the former intends to provide practice-oriented programmes to students belonging to different (i.e. older) age groups having different training needs. This sometimes involves that they invite external lecturers disposing the necessary practical knowledge. The Centre regularly surveys its students by questionnaires in order to evaluate the quality of its training programmes. The problem is that the response rate is very low, probably due to the fact that they provide short term training programmes and therefore the linkages between the students and the Business School are not strong.
enough and the students do not feel that it would be important to send feedbacks on the content and quality of the training programmes.

General Description of Case Study:

- **The programme investigated:** Business Coach Postgraduate Programme. This is a joint programme of the BBS and the Flow Group which is one of the largest HR service and organisational development (OD) provider companies in Hungary. The first semester takes place at the BBS and aims to provide theoretical foundations of business coaching. The Flow Group is responsible for the second semester where the aim is to develop the basic competences of a business coach in various forms of practical training (actions learning, peer learning, problem-based learning, etc.)

- **The organiser and the co-ordinator of the programme:** BBS PSZF and Flow Group.
- **Aim:** to transfer the basic competences required in professional business coach praxis.
- **Target group:** No specific target group. Everyone can apply who has a HE degree.
- **Positioning:** compared to other training programmes in the field the programme investigated is neither psychological nor technological oriented. It represents an HR and management oriented approach of coaching.

- **Participants:** there are three identifiable groups: those who already possess professional experiences in the area (psychologists, HR consultants, trainers, etc.) and want to improve and/or expand their existing competences. The second group is formed by those who want to change their professional career and learn a new profession. The third group covers those participants who use the programme in order to support their personal development. The main motivation in all three groups is seeking for knowledge that can be applied in the participants’ professional practice.

- **Lecturers:** lecturers are recruited from the BBS and from among experienced trainers and coaches from the Flow Group

- **Time span:** 1 year (two semesters)

- **Locations:** Budapest

- **Extra-curricular effects:** participants learn how to improve their sales and marketing capabilities.

- **Financing:** the costs of the programme are paid by participants. The tuition fee is approximately 1200 Euros for the whole programme which is far below the average price.

- **Admission requirements:** higher education degree

- **Certificate of competencies:** postgraduate diploma
6.4. Italy

6.4.1. University of Bologna “Occupational Campus”

Program overview

The Occupational Campus is jointly developed by the University of Bologna (Department of Education) and FormArea&Partners (formarea.it), a private company specialised in adult education and training. FormArea is the operational unit administratively and organisationally responsible for courses delivery.

The program has started in year 2009, and it is designed within the governmental framework regulating the national active policies for work. Unemployed citizens receive an insurance granted by the Italian Government but must participate to vocational education courses to continue to receive the insurance. As such, the program stems from agreements among social partners (representatives of employees and employers) who recognized the importance and the necessity to teach ‘soft skills’ to adults who want to acquire/renew a set of work-related transversal competencies.

Subscription is free of charge, as the courses are funded on public or private (Fondoimpresa\textsuperscript{10}) money. Prerequisites for access may vary, depending on the specific aim of the program edition (that might change), and being settled by the institution that funds the program. For instance, if the program is directly promoted by a private company, it is necessary to be or have been an employee of a company that is part of the funding pool. If the program is publicly funded, then it’s open to everybody.

Target population and social reach

The Occupational Campus is primarily conceived for those workers who have been adversely affected by crisis (people who have lost their job or are risking to lose it, people who are requested to acquire new competencies to maintain their occupation, etc.).

The attendance to the learning program is certified by the University of Bologna, but the course does not provide formal credits to learners.

The program is mainly focussed to provide people with orientation skills by making them reflecting on their aspirations, match such aspirations with the opportunities offered by the local economical context, and co-define a path to acquire the needed competencies.

Up to now, the Campus has had about 150 alumni, mainly aged between 40 to 50, mostly coming from manufacturing SMEs of the Emilia Romagna Region. For the most part, they have been employed in a

\textsuperscript{10} Fondoimpresa (www.fondimpresa.it) is one of the most relevant Italian private fund which belongs to the Joint Interprofessional Funds (JIF) for continuing training. The JIF tool was set up in 2001, becoming operative in year 2004.
single company during their life, and they have performed always the same job, or different jobs but always within the same company.

Learners are quite an heterogeneous group of people with respect to age, education and previous work experiences. They are more homogeneous with respect to the life transitions they are experiencing and to the motivation that convinced them participating to the program.

**Teaching and learning**

Up to now, the Occupational Campus has been taught as a series of laboratories/learning modules which are embedded into larger training programs with technical and professional contents (Corsi di Qualificazione Professionale), awarded by the Emilia Romagna Region.

As an example, one of these modules was made up of five subjects:

1) To restart from ourselves (16 hours). Tools to redefine a personal life/work/educational path; tools to acquire better copying strategies; tools for self-motivation and self-analysis; tools to be able to plan a personal strategy to act.

2) Knowing to choose (12 hours). Tools to find information that support personal decisions; tools to present oneself in front of others.

3) New media and professional trajectories (8 hours). Tools to enforce communication skills; tools to be able to use new and social media to support personal projects.

4) Labour market changes and reform (4 hours). Tools to acknowledge market labour changes and workers’ rights.

5) Local context (8 hours). Meeting with key experts coming from the local labour context.

In sum, each edition of the program is articulated in traditional lessons focused on the development of transversal competencies like decision making, rationality, autonomy, team work, and communication. Other parts of the program might be dedicated to activities like career counselling, skill balance and evaluation, enterprise culture, entrepreneurship, employability.

The Occupational Campus is said to provide people not only with knowledge but also with a methodology to enable students to redefine their occupational trajectories. In each edition, contents and activities of the laboratories are tailored to the group of participants at hand, on the basis of their specific work experiences, their background and their personal future objectives.

Teachers are directly recruited by FormArea, without any formal public competition. They can be both University Professors or professionals coming from the private sector and from consultancy, depending on the contents of the learning modules. For example, Occupational Psychologists are responsible for contents related to change management, motivation and skills balance. Communication specialists teach subjects related to information seeking and new media. Sociologists and Jurists deal
with matters related to labour market and workers’ rights. Many teachers have previous experiences in the University, where they have worked as lecturers or collaborators in research projects.

Teachers actively participate to the definition of course contents and learning methodology. As reported by the interviewed teachers, the learning methodology for adults is more centred on practice and less on theory. Adults, especially those who are experiencing life transitions, need to compare themselves with other people facing with similar life transitions. For this reasons, the course provide much spaces for group discussion in which people have the possibility to talk together, to exchange points of views, to make comparisons about their previous experiences and their future plans. Audiovisual equipment, case discussions or simulation of real situations (for example a meeting with a potential employer) are used too.

**Evaluation and impact**

Up to now, the effectiveness of the Campus Laboratories is evaluated both at the end of lessons and some months after course conclusion. The evaluation takes place through ad-hoc questionnaires which are jointly edited by the University of Bologna, FormArea and the funding institutions. The questionnaire evaluates both learners’ satisfaction and their occupational outcomes. The first assessment pointed out that about 30% of participants successfully found a new job after attending the program.

Some relevant information about evaluation and impact comes from the interviews. Participants say they have appreciated the contents of the program (e.g. the ‘soft skills’ focus), and its being practice-oriented. They report that, thanks the program, they have become more aware of their competences, and about what they can do to cope with the actual difficult labour context. By the program they have acquired valid tools and instruments to search for another job and to improve their employability in the labour market. Those sections of the program that were devoted to activities like career counselling, skills balance and evaluation and entrepreneurship were mostly appreciated. In learners’ opinion, the room that was dedicated to group discussions was very useful, especially as a chance to compare one’s own personal and work experience with those of the others. Meetings with representatives of local institutions are highly appreciated, especially with representatives of public or private services offering job opportunities in the local context. Many students report they would like to continue or repeat the Campus experience.
6.4.2. University of Genoa-PerForm “International Business Leadership Master”

Program overview

The Master in ‘International Business Leadership’ is operationally managed by University of Genoa LLL Centre PerForm\(^\text{11}\). Primarily, it is promoted by the Department of Economics, in conjunction with the Fondazione Ansaldo\(^\text{12}\) and Finmeccanica\(^\text{13}\).

The Master is designed to respond to specific educational needs expressed by an Italian leading industrial group (Finmeccanica) that needed to train personnel to cover managerial positions and to learn how to manage human, technical and economical-financial resources within a given project.

Specifically, the Master has the following aims:

- to shape managers able to plan and coordinate international projects and customer-oriented activities, to manage a business unit within international companies operating in the high-technology domain;
- to improve the cooperation among University, private and public institutions, companies and stakeholders for the development of LLL programs;
- to contribute to the development of a managerial culture in Italian companies, with specific reference to the high-technology sector.

\(^{11}\) PerForm (http://www.perform.unige.it) is an integral part of the University of Genoa. The Centre focuses on the development of LLL programs targeted to respond to specific professional needs coming from different companies. PerForm’s activity is especially focussed on postgraduate education and specialisation courses for high-level professional profiles acting both in the public and in the private sector in scientific, medical, economic, technical, legal, humanistic and social domains. PerForm supports the educational activities of Faculties and Departments within the University, especially in the design of Masters and vocational courses. It also develops LLL programs required by companies or institutions. PerForm operates in close cooperation with national and local companies, public and private institutions and acts to create a stronger relationship with the local territory with the intent to effectively respond to the needs of a changing labour market. Since its foundation, PerForm has followed more than 200 educational projects. Currently, PerForm is managing eleven Master courses.

\(^{12}\) Fondazione Ansaldo (www.fondazioneansaldo.it/) is funded by Finmeccanica SPA, the Municipality of Genoa, the Province of Genoa and the Liguria region. It is devoted to the development of an enterprise, labor and economical culture.

\(^{13}\) Finmeccanica (www.finmeccanica.it) is Italy’s leading industrial group in the high technology sector and ranks among the top ten global players in aerospace, defence and security. The Finmeccanica Group focuses on three strategic sectors: Helicopters, Defence Electronics and Security and Aeronautics.
The program was designed and implemented following the scheme of a ‘Temporary Enterprises Association’ that was stipulated among Fondazione Ansaldo, University of Genoa (Department of Economics and PerForm), three companies (Ansaldo STS S.p.A., Oto Melara S.p.A., SIIT Sistemi Intelligenti Integrati e Tecnologie) and the Italian National Research Council (CNR).

All partners actively participated to the definition of the educational objectives and of the contents of the program, each one with specific tasks:

- Fondazione Ansaldo was the main coordinator of the project, being responsible for marketing and communication, internships and tutorial activities;
- PerForm was responsible for the definition of the didactical programs, it provided lectures and coordinated project works and the final evaluation. It also dealt with administrative aspects and learner’s recruitment;
- the Italian National Council of Research (CNR) looked after the didactical module on management of research and development projects;
- the other partners cooperated to the general development of the program, to the marketing activities and provided professionals and top managers for seminars and meeting with students.

The program is free of charge, being funded through the European Social Fund (ESF) and by companies’ founds. It lasts two years and 1,500 hours on overall: 288 hours in class, 40 hours E-Learning, 40 hours abroad, 410 hours of Project Work and 748 hours of individual study.

**Target population and social reach**

The Master in ‘International Business Leadership’ is targeted to managers, mostly employed in international high-technology companies, who need to improve their leadership skills to manage competitive and client-oriented projects. It is also opened to unemployed people with relevant experience in managerial positions.

A second level degree in Technical, Scientific, or Humanistic disciplines is required to be admitted to the program. At the end of the program students discussed a final project to pass the final exam. The program provided 60 ECTS credits and a certificate awarded by the Italian Higher Education System.

In the last edition, the twenty students admitted to the program came mainly from the Liguria region; they were mostly (19/20) employed people, with an average age of 42. All employed participants covered managerial positions within big and middle Italian companies operating in the high-technology sector.
Teaching and learning

The didactical activities were designed to improve leadership skills through the acquisition of four main key competencies: Business Focus, Process, Knowledge & People Value, Execution, Innovation & Change. The master had a mixed didactical model: two days per week (12 hours) of ‘classical’ lecturing plus work experiences and stages in Italy and abroad.

Teachers involved in the program were either University Professors or professionals with experience in teaching. Some managers coming from companies were also recruited to teach lessons. All teachers were selected by PerForm with a public competition aimed to find the best experts in the field.

A mixed teaching approach was preferred with the aim to put in evidence the practical aspects of learning: traditional frontal lessons were blended with presentation of case studies, discussions in group, practice-oriented exercises and group work.

Evaluation and impact

The effectiveness of the program was measured by two different means, an internal (made by Perform) and an external auditing. Four different questionnaires were administered at different times:

- at the beginning of the program;
- six months after the beginning the program;
- at the end of the program;
- at the end of each didactical module.

On overall, students interviewed report a good general evaluation of the program, they appreciated the contents, which matched their specific professional needs. Specifically, the module on decision making was very appreciated as well as the practical activities, like classroom exercises, case study analysis, and meetings with experts and top managers coming from high-end Italian companies. These seminars were very appreciated because top managers and professionals discussed in class examples of practical situations coming from their work experience and they explained students how they faced critical situations or resolved specific problems. Students suggest to increase these seminars and practical activities in general.

Most of participants complain about the high commitment requested by the program, too much tough and demanding to be easily attended by working students. They suggest to modify the organization of activities to reduce the time devoted to frontal lessons and study.

Students interviewed also suggest the settlement of a placement service to help learners to find a job at the end of the program. One of the students interviewed said he was in a difficult employment situation at the time of the program and he didn’t receive a real help from attending the course. After
the Master he had difficulties to find another job at his level of qualification. A placement service for learners was lacking and this was reported as a relevant weak point of the program.
6.4.3. University of Bolzano "CasaClima Master in Environmental Design"

Program overview

In year 2005, the University of Bolzano has started the post-graduate Second Level Master in Environmental Design “CasaClima” (“ClimateHouse”; “KlimaHaus”)\(^\text{14}\), an high level program in environmental planning and on the use of renewable resources in architecture. The program is implemented in cooperation with public institutions and private companies (primarily ‘CasaClima’\(^\text{15}\)) located in the Trentino Alto-Adige region, where there is great expertise and knowledge in the field of sustainable building. Also the Department of the Italian National Research Council (CNR-IVALSA in Florence) cooperates in the program. The operational unit responsible for its implementation is the administrative department of the University of Bolzano.

Local institutions and companies wanted to formalize a HE program settled in the territory, to make Trentino Alto Adige a reference point in the field of sustainable building. Thus, the program leverages on knowledge and expertise coming from the territory (especially local companies), not only from the University. CasaClima is therefore designed to respond to specific educational needs expressed by the local labour market, and, more specifically, to meet the rising demand of ‘green jobs’. Even if the social and economical positive impacts of the ‘green economy’ are well known, at the moment in Italy there are few university programs specifically targeted to educate qualified workers in this sector.

The program lasts two years. The program is mainly funded by students’ fees, the admission fee totally amounts to 7,500 Euros. Limited scholarships and other economic benefits for students, granted by Trentino Alto Adige region or Italian state, are available.

Target population and social reach

The program is both targeted to young graduates who want to develop specific competences and to access the ‘green building’ labour market as well as to professionals who need to improve, widen and update their knowledge.

In its first five editions, students admitted to the program came from different Italian regions (north, south and centre) and also from Poland, Germany, Austria, Portugal and from other non-European countries.

From 2005 to 2009 a consistent percentage of participants - almost one half - was constituted by adult students (on average of 38,8% of students from 37 to 45 years old in five editions)\(^\text{16}\).


\(^{15}\) See [http://www.klimahaus.it/en/climatehouse/1-0.html](http://www.klimahaus.it/en/climatehouse/1-0.html)

At the end of the program students must discuss their final project to attend the final exam. The program provides 60 ECTS credits and a certificate awarded by the Italian Higher Education System.

Second level degree is required to be admitted to the program. Only twenty students per year are admitted. Degrees in architecture, civil engineering and structural engineering are required but also economics, agronomics, buildings and other degrees are accepted. People who haven’t a second level degree or a university education can participate to the program as auditors only.

Teaching and learning

The main educational goal of the course is to create professionals able to plan and coordinate projects based on low-energy consumption, conserving energy in existing timber-made buildings. Specifically, the Master “CasaClima” has the following didactical and occupational aims:

- to provide specific competences in a sector with a great importance for social, scientific and occupational reasons;
- to facilitate the access and the transition of people into the labour market, providing participants with more specific and valuable skills;
- to test new teaching methods with more emphasis on practical experience;
- to improve the cooperation between University, private and public institutions and companies for the creation of a “Centre of Excellence” for Higher Education in the field of renewable energy and environmental planning in architecture.

The Master in “CasaClima" is articulated into basic courses (sustainable development and low energy consumption, efficiency, building physics, solar plants and others), for about 350 hours of lessons, and specific or complementary courses (timber buildings and architectures, fireproofing, waterproofing, marketing, management), for about 150 hours of lessons. In addition to traditional lectures, the program includes a 150 hours internship in domain-related companies or institutions. External courses within industries, conferences, seminars, trips and activities in laboratories also contribute to the didactical offer.

Teachers involved in the program are University Professors and/or professionals who work in the field of sustainable building and who have experience in teaching. They are mainly coming from other Universities (not only from Italy but also from Germany, Greece, Switzerland, Austria). Teachers are selected by a public competition aimed to find the best experts in the field.

On the side of didactical approach and teaching methodology, teachers interviewed underline the importance of practical experience. They report that, to stimulate students’ participation, they use different teaching methods mainly focussing on evidencing the practical aspects of learning. Thus,
traditional frontal lessons are combined with the discussion of practical cases or with the presentation of tools and instruments used in the work practice.

To facilitate the participation of workers, all activities take place in one week (six days) every month, eight hours every day. Lectures are taught both in Italian and in English.

**Evaluation and impact**

The effectiveness of the program is measured every year, at the end of activities, with a questionnaire aimed to investigate learners’ satisfaction.

The learners who have been interviewed have completed the program from a few years and they reported overall a good level of satisfaction. The main motivation that has guided them to enter the program was the need to develop specific skills to pursue a career in the environmental design. They have particularly appreciated the didactical approach, especially the practical activities, laboratories and meeting with professionals.

Also, students appreciated the organization of activities gathered in one week every month (eight hours a day), a setting that facilitated the participations of workers and the work-life-study balance.

Many students point out the difficulties to face the financial costs of the master, especially adults and workers, because scholarships and other economical benefits were available only for those people who have a degree, or for the unemployed. Also adult workers coming from other Italian regions or from other countries couldn’t accommodate in students’ residences, because of the limited availability of places. Many workers had to pass from a full-time to a part-time job or to temporarily leave their job, because the program study was tough and demanding. Therefore, in many cases, the financial costs for the participation to the master were supported entirely by students themselves.

Participants appreciated the heterogeneity of the learners’ group, composed by students of different ages, with different education and work experience.

Interviewees report that, thanks the master, they are now part of a professional network made up of students, teachers and people working in the environmental design sector. Also students who have finished the master long ago, say that even now the community that was formed along the Master is an important reference point for them, e.g. to solve problems related to work and to exchange information.
6.5. Netherlands

6.5.1. Campus The Hague, Leiden University

Institutional setting

Campus the Hague was opened in 1999 as a kind of ‘extension centre’ of Leiden University. The Hague is the residence of the Dutch Government and also the domicile of many institutes in the field of international law. The Hague is at a distance of twenty kilometres from Leiden, the seat of the University. In 2011 Campus The Hague became a faculty of Leiden University.

Campus The Hague aims to provide academic and post-academic teaching and research in the fields of International Law, Political Science, Public Administration and Safety & Security. A wide range of continuing education courses is offered. These courses are specifically meant for professionals with an academic background who aim to deepen their knowledge and skills in a public sector related field. These continuing education courses focus on Politics, Public Administration, Political Sensitivity, Public Affairs, Governance & Media, International Relations and Development Cooperation.

Programme studied

The case study focuses on a course in the domain of public affairs for people in government organisations or NGO’s. The programme consists of an introduction and five modules of two days each among which two days in Brussels is included. Between modules periods of two weeks allow for preparatory activities.

The consecutive modules have the following themes.

1. Public influencing, a module about the ways in which the public affairs work and how the various actors in the field operate, what there mandates are, the legislative context in which they work and what to do to influence policy and decision-making processes within these circumstances.

2. Public affairs and agenda management, a module on how to get issues high(er) on the political agenda or priority list. It is about the obstacles, opportunities and the adequate momentum for political change.

3. Public affairs in Brussels, a module on the particulars of public affairs in the Brussels political arena and scenery. During this 2 days module they work on international public affairs. The purpose is to de-mystify Europe a little.

4. Public affairs and media is the fourth module. It is on how to influence the media and how to make use of media (traditional news media as well as the digital media and modern social media) for purposes of influencing policy making and decision making. It also includes an element of training in rhetoric.
5. **Grass roots and parallel sessions**, a module focusing on how to mobilize key players in local communities, how to gain support among societal groups and how to make things move this way. In parallel sessions participants are offered the opportunity to share and discuss their experiences in such matters. In this final module, there are also slots in the programme which are filled in accordance with specific learning goals of the current participants.

The course has as its over all aims to raise the level of performance with respect to competences referred to as:

- Organizational sensitivity
- Communication
- Political and governance sensitivity
- Strategical analysis
- Co-operation
- Pragmatism

75% of the programme is fixed and 25 % flexible. The programme is not individualized or tailor made for individual participants, but it is flexible in view of collective needs, or wishes.

As for the didactics: a lot of course work includes working with cases. 60 to 70 % of the offer is practically oriented; 30-40 % is university/theory based and staffed. Participants tend to appreciate the input of experienced experts somewhat better than the inputs of regular university professors. Some teachers are both.

Participants work in intervision (peer review) groups. A follow up course is being developed at present.

The modules are being evaluated internally. The evaluation focuses on learning outcomes and the level of satisfaction with the programme offered among the participants. External consistency of the course programme, meaning whether the programme brings to the work situation what is needed in order to improve things or solve problems, is not included in the evaluation at present.

The course has gradually developed, grown and improved. The focus has shifted from a more academic approach towards a more professional orientation, as is indicated by the proportion of academic versus professional content as well as by the kind of staff recruited from either background (30 – 40 % academic versus 60-70 % professional).
6.5.2. The Expertise Centre for Vocational Education (ECBO)

Institutional setting

ECBO is the national expertise centre for vocational education. ECBO is founded in 2009. ECBO originates from a merger between the CINOP expertise centre and the Max Goote expertise centre. CINOP is a research and consultancy agency in the field of learning, training and development. The Max Goote expertise centre is a research institute of the University of Amsterdam on the field of vocational and adult education. The three main activities of ECBO are:

- synthesizing of and opening access to knowledge
- development of knowledge, research
- dissemination and exchange of knowledge

Programme studied

The case study focuses on the ‘Learning Network Management of Innovation in Secondary Vocational Education’. The network operates for a number of years now. The network aside its virtual communications meets four times a year. It is aimed at sharing knowledge and experiences among managers or staff with strategic tasks in vocational education centres. The focus is on strategy development and innovation management.

Target group

Participants are professionals from the field of vocational education. They are involved in managing innovations and usually are involved so for many years. Most of them have reached advance positions in their careers. Their ages vary from 30 – 50 years of age. Their background generally is a higher education one. The focus of the meetings is on mutual inspiration and empowerment rather than on career development. The participants take part as individuals but their institutions may also be considered participants. If someone cannot attend, stand ins are arranged for to see to it that the network meeting can proceed still. Even though career development is not the direct aim sometimes it happens to be the outcome anyhow. Network members come to share and validate their knowledge and experience in order to find support in dealing with the challenges of their complicated practices.

Funding

The network is being financed by ECBO. Fromm the participants a contribution of 400,- Euros is asked on a voluntary basis. Usually this contribution is covered by the employer (The centre for vocational training where the participant works)

Nature of the programme
The programme is not a programme in the traditional sense of the word; it is an ongoing series of activities to exchange and develop knowledge together. The programme does not have a fix start or end. Participants may step in or out as they like, or need. Nonetheless the issue of formalizing the activities and the outcomes somewhat wore has been raised. A pay off in terms of credits may be worth considering.

The meetings and other activities are aimed at finding a link between scientific knowledge development and the professional practice. This is a mutual process in which practical issues serve as triggers for scientific research and research in turn provides inputs to enhance professional practices.

The programme is the result of mutual negotiations and planning and is meant to meet the needs of the participants and their organizations. Staff of ECBO also suggests themes and speakers. Elements that tend to be returning themes are:

- Presentations and discussion with researchers on themes relevant to the field of vocational education and training;
- Exchanges of experiences in ongoing innovation/change processes in the schools;
- National educational policy issues;
- Evaluation of the process and progress of the network activities.

**Support**

Staff of ECBO is involved in organizing and facilitating the network activities. They are responsible for involving relevant experts form various fields of expertise. They also take the lead in bringing the results of the activities together in publications.

**Impact**

The programme is said to have the followings kinds of impacts:

- Checked and cross checked ideas and insights;
- Professional development
- Mutual dissemination and implementation of scientific and professional knowledge
- Mutual support
- Strengthened Networks
- Benchmarking
- Publications
6.5.3. The Dutch Police Academy

Institutional setting

The Dutch Police Academy is a separate department of the Dutch police. The Police Academy is concerned with recruitment and selection, with education and training and with research and knowledge development for the Dutch Police. The Police Academy is a recognised college for professional education and it offers a broad range of professional training, from secondary vocational education and higher professional education to a specialised masters and leadership programme at academic and post-academic level.

The Police Academy offers both initial and post-initial programmes. The initial programmes are directed at people who are starting to work in the police. These programmes provide education to the level of secondary vocational education, to bachelor and to master level. The post-initial programmes offer further education to experienced police staff. As part of career policy, it is possible to follow these programmes after completion of initial education.

Programme studied

The case study focuses on the course ‘Master of Criminal investigation’. This course has, like all courses at the Police Academy, a dual structure. The size of the programme is 60 ECTS, which equals to one full year of study. The programme is spread according to the dual nature over two years, constituted by alternating periods of studying at the academy and working in police practice.

The course has two influxes; one consists of experienced policemen/women who wish to further develop themselves towards a higher level of police work. They often have to pass a kind of APL trajectory to prove their adequate entry levels. They are experienced in police work and acculturated in the force. The second influx consists of those who come through lateral access. They already have their bachelors or master degree often in a non police related field of study but now they wish to enter the force. They have an additional preparatory year to make them acquainted with regular police work and the organisation/culture of the police. (Practical skills are also included such as shooting skills, local research; it is a mix of theory and practice).

Throughout the years of the existence of this course the balance theory practice shows an increasing emphasis on work learning arrangements. This applies especially to the two years master phase.

Having inexperienced policemen enter higher positions in the force, created quite a few hierarchy problems. In the eyes of the experienced members of the force, it is unacceptable to be advised, or managed by people without in depth experience and sensitivity to the culture of the police organisation.
Also the mentors in the force who served as facilitators/advisors in the work learning itinerary of the participants did not have the level that allowed them to share the necessary wavelength with the students. It was the vocational culture colliding with the academic culture. The mentors today share their knowledge and experience mentoring the students, thus they work on the upgrading of their mentoring competences. The connections with the regular police work and the policemen/women working in it are also intensified.

The reasons to subscribe for the course are often reasons of a need for work and a level of stability, but still a lot of participants join because they wish to be part of the police force out of idealism, a kind of responsibility for the common cause. Most participants are between 25 and 35 of age, but some also join in at a later age and increasingly the ones that come in through lateral access increasingly are students that enter immediately after their initial or second master elsewhere. This is to either avoid unemployment, or to postpone career choices. The majority at the moment are women (60%)

In the past students who gained lateral access could only participate in a general course strand, but today they are also allowed and even stimulated to take part in specialist strands such as ICT, taxes, environment, forensics, etc. It is in these specialisms that they can bring in their background and share their expertise with others.

The relation with universities and research is mainly based upon personal links with experts and guest teachers and representatives of the work field. Apart from that there are also guest assessors/examinators who administer exams. This is also a way to validate and update the curriculum and its outcomes.
6.6. Spain

6.6.4. Universitat Rovira i Virgili - Human Resource Management

The Universitat Rovira i Virgili has created an own foundation, the Centre of Continuous Training (CCT), to manage its adult education programmes offered to graduated students and professionals with official university degree.\(^\text{17}\) They entitle students with an own university degree that could be an \textit{<Own Master>}\(^\text{18}\) (with an extension among 60 and 90 ECTS) or \textit{<University Specialist>} (with 30 ECTS). The CCT offers also tailor-made programmes to enterprises and public institutions and short-term courses, oriented to people with or without academic degree on a full-time, part-time or on-line basis. In 2010, the CCT offered 220 programmes and courses for 4,130 students.\(^\text{19}\) The majority of programmes are by fees paid by the learners or the enterprises. The CCT offers guidance to the learners to obtain public funding.

Programmes are generally created by academics. They present an idea of a programme to their faculty. After the approval, the programme passed to the CCT for its commercialisation, administration and quality control. This structure can be called internal decentralised programme management. The academics themselves are responsible for its internal organisation including the design of the programme, selection of the lecturers and the examination procedures.

The Programme “Human Resource Management”

The analysed \textit{<own master>} programme of \textit{<Human Resource Management>} is a two years programme and costs 6,000 €, which is paid by the learners or by enterprises. The program is face-to-face and the lessons are taken on Fridays and Saturdays in blocs of 4 hours. The course is structured in a modular pathway that integrates an \textit{<own master>} degree, about also a \textit{<university specialist>} degree (1 year) and three courses of continuous training to obtain one of the following certificates: planning and selection of human resources; management a social responsibility of the company; and group management and team work.

There are no additional activities offered like cycles of old students, organized conferences for older students etc. Counselling and guidance after completing the course are underdeveloped. However, the programme director and the coordinator have the idea to put in action some additional activities with

\(^\text{17}\) In 2011, the University Rovira i Virgili of Tarragona had around 13,790 students and employed 1,173 academic and 571 administrative staff. Source: Estadística de la Enseñanza Universitaria, INE, curso 2010-2011

\(^\text{18}\) To avoid confusion with the Master of the Bologna scheme, we use here the term \textit{<own master>} for certificates of these longer type of adult education programmes.

\(^\text{19}\) Data provided by the CCT.
the intention of improving the relation with ex-students. Therefore, the programme team is working to create additional services for the alumni once the program is concluded, for instance a network of counselling between students, alumni and companies.

**Target Group**

The analysed programme, as other programmes of the CCT, doesn’t start from a coherent analysis of the labour market. It addressed essentially 3 students’ profiles:

- Recent graduated students in psychology, pedagogy, work sciences and labour relations.
- Technical professional or corporate manager with different degrees.
- Student with work experience but without relation to the human resources area.

Due to the strong employment crisis in the region and in Spain, there are also more and more unemployed students aiming to be more competitive in their employment search. This can be considered as a 4th emerging profile.

**Social Reach**

45.6% of the students in own degree programmes of the CCT have a age between 26 to 35 years, and 35.8% of the students are between 35 and 55 years old.

In the programme of <Human Resource Management>, currently there are 18 students in the first and also in the second year. Almost all students came from the region of the URV, but there are some from Latin-America and China. Taking up the aforementioned learner’s profiles, we can distinguish
different potential situation of transitions:

- Recent graduate students that expect to complement their studies with practical training to improve their labour market opportunities
- Technical professionals or companies’ managers are looking for updating their professional competence and improving their work performance. Their main objective is to update their knowledge and acquire new capabilities.
- The third profile of students with work experience, but not in human resource management. They try to improve their labour market opportunities preparing changes of work places, but also preventing unemployment.
- The fourth emerging profile of the unemployed adult learners wants to acquired new skills and competences or update their skills and competence to improve their possibilities to re-entry in the labour market
Training and learning aspects

60% of the lecturers are professionals that work in companies. Usually, the lecturers are selected by the director and the coordinator based on their CV and a personal interview. None of the lecturers has received specific training for adult education. The lecturer staff is quite stable.

The planning of the course and the teaching methodology has evolved over time to respond the profiles according the needs. It has dynamic and practical oriented methods adjusted to have an active participation of the students. During the master it is incorporated practices to motivate students through the performance of the management and task groups’ module in which they self-training with other teachers. The programme combines different teaching and learning methods: master classes, ICT supported methods, group work, work on projects and internships.

They work by modules with group projects that may develop in the facilities of a company. In the work by projects, the students develop a practical case with real information that may apply in the future in a company. The personal experience of the older students may take part of the learning process. The purpose of the project is the acquisition of capacity and abilities, searching information and developing tools to face a real situation in a company. Recently, it has been incorporated a coach to lead the working groups. Some students do internships in companies.

Evaluation and Impact

We must distinguish between the quality evaluation at the institutional and the programme level. The institution has the ISO 9001 certificate and others, with accredited the quality of the management system of the institution fulfilling the standards of quality. The CCT has also implemented an evaluation system to make a follow-up of the programmes measuring, for instance, by an on-line survey among students asking for the degree of satisfaction. But, a systemic approach for the evaluation of the quality of all programmes is not implemented. That means, nor CCT nor the faculty evaluates regularly the quality of the programmes.

At the programme level, the students and the lecturers made an evaluation to measure the methodology at the end of the module. The students express their satisfaction through a poll at the end of the course. But, the programme directors considered that the quality of the program is not duly evaluated systemically. The evaluation of the academic performance is done through an evaluation system for subjects, a written presentation of the project and its public defence.
6.6.5. Universidad Politecnica Valencia: Three Programmes

The Universitat Politècnica Valenica is a medium size university. For the management of adult education programmes, it has created an independent administration entity called Centre of Continuous Training (CCT) offering the following types of programmes are offered:

- Degrees: Own Master (500h); University Specialist (200h) and Professional specialist (400h).
- Special courses with a shorter duration and oriented to people who want to improve their knowledge on concrete issues (on line and face-to-face).
- Tailor-made courses.

In 2011, the CCT offered 1,900 activities including learning programmes, seminars, conferences and other services. The number of accepted participants is about 42,122. Through the analysis of training needs, the CCT creates an informed environment, in which programmes can be proposed, commercialised and carried out. The CCT has standardized procedures for the creation of programmes and quality control including a follow-up, but does not trace the social quality of the programmes.

The main procedure for the creation of programmes is that academic staff elaborates proposals, which must be approved by the university faculties. In general, these proposals are not based on a labour market analysis, but on the knowledge about training needs and intuitions of the academics. The programmes, which are included in this case study, followed this procedure. They started as a stand alone initiative of the programme director. The CCT is commercialising the programmes e.g. through its website, where the catalogue of programmes can be consulted.

The case study is based on a 3 programmes with a significant percentage of students in mid-life:

The programme for <Specialist in Solar Photovoltaic Energy> is a modulised on-line programme with asynchronous tutorials and the examinations are done on line. The programme fee is 1,400€ with a discount for ex-students of the UPV and unemployed people.

The second programme <Master in Styling and Car Design> is a one year face-to-face programme organised in evening sessions from 16h30 to 21h. Currently the fee for participation is 7,800 €. There is no additional economic funding for the programs. During the year, students learn the theoretical basis and practice car design. The student works on three individual projects. They also have to perform an original project as a thesis.

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20 The university has 40,419 students, 1,534 administrative staff and 3,635 academic staff specialised in the transfer of technological skills, as well as a humanistic and cultural education. Source: Estadística de la Enseñanza Universitaria, INE, curso 2010-2011
21 Data provided by the CCT.
The third programme of <Specialist of Financial Advisor> prepares for European financial advisor. The students’ fee is 2,700€ with a considerable discount for unemployed people. The programme has 13 modules, which can be attended independently or as part of the whole programme. The programme includes face-to-face session and e-learning by Internet.

In all cases, the design and organisation of the program, including the selection of teaching staff and the teaching method is responsibility of the program directors. The function of the CCT is to commercialize the programme and to evaluate the teaching quality of the programmes. In so far, we can talk about a decentralised system of creating and designing new programmes and a centralised system concerning commercialisation and quality control.

**Target Group**

71% of the participants in all CCT’s activities are older than 36 years, and 39% are older then 46 years. Going to the training activities, the main part of the tailor made programmes is for people between 26 and 45 years old (86%). 54% of the learners in these programmes are older than 36. The age structure changed significantly in the specific training programmes and the programmes for the own university degree. In both areas, the participation of people younger than 25 is significantly higher, meanwhile the participation rate of the cohort between 36 and 45 is significantly lower. In the specific training programmes, the participation rate of the people older than 35 years is around 41% and in the own degree programmes 33%.

The target groups are the students who want expand their knowledge and acquire of new professional capabilities in preparation for new responsibilities in their current enterprise or new work opportunities. In so far, the programmes have a labour market orientation helping students to consolidate or improve their labour market position, but they are conceived under the exclusive perspective of training needs. The programmes are not focused on specific labour market transitions and aren’t forming part of labour market policies. Other programmes do not measure their impact on the labour situation of the students in terms of employability or quality of work.

**Social Reach**

The three analysed programmes address and reach different target groups:

In the programme for <Car Designer>, there are more young graduates with some (voluntary) work experience, but also some mid-life students with a university degree. The students are coming to obtain new job opportunities in this very specific sector. It is a highly specialised course addressing a very specific group of students, which are highly interest in car design, but also in design in general. The programme requires a considerable dedication of time as it is done 4h30 min a day from Monday to Tuesday in the evening. But it seems to offer considerable opportunities to work on design not only in Spain, but in the world.
The programme of <Financial Advisor> is oriented to graduates with long work experience in the financial sector. Most of students in this programme participate seeking a compulsory certificate which is demanded by theirs companies. Nonetheless, there are also some students participating voluntarily. There is a slight change in the student profile, coming more people from enterprises but paying by themselves. Most of adult students participate in the course to prevent situation of collective firing, which is the big threat of the financial sector due to its deep restructuration. Currently, about 60% of the students are funded by enterprises.

The students of the programme of <Photovoltaic Energy> are mainly young graduates without work experience, but there is also a significant part of older graduates with work experience. In this programme around 10% of the students are non-graduates. The programme is focused to complement contents, which aren’t in the regular learning programmes of the official degrees. In spite of the problematic situation of the sector of photovoltaic energy in Spain, the programme director perceives that the programme offers access to new job opportunities also in international enterprises.

**Training & Learning Aspects**

There is a trend towards online courses or blended learning combing electronic means with traditional teaching and learning means. The staff of the analysed programmes comes from the academic and practical area. Neither the academic staff nor the professional have received training for adult education. The selection of the teaching staff is usually made by the programme director. The applied teaching and learning methods are dynamic and praxis oriented. Usually they are based in project or group work with a strong supervision considered as highly relevant.

**Evaluation and Assessment of Impacts, outcome**

The CCT is responsible of controlling the programmes’ quality in terms of student’s satisfaction. There is a systemic follow up at the end of activities such as courses, congress, seminars, etc. It is an automatic system that generates reports of the activity of lectures and courses, and indicates activities that are below the standard deviation. Based on the results of this quality control, the CCT has the capacity of proposing to lecturers some measures to improve their adult teaching competence and in extreme cases, it can also exclude lecturers.
6.6.6. *Universitat de Barcelona - Social Economy and Management of Non-profit organisations*

The University Barcelona is one of the main Spanish universities considering itself a world research university. For managing the university learning programmes, it has created an own foundation called IL3. It has a wide organizational flexibility, for instance in terms of contracting personnel. Besides the foundation, faculties, university schools and other university’s centres administrated by an internal administrative unit are offering also adult education programmes. IL3 offers tailor-made programmes and general programmes. In 2011/2012, it has carried out 80 tailor-made programmes with 4,534 students, and 390 general programmes with 12,837 students. Of these total 470 programmes, 43 were distance learning with 2,801 students, 244 online learning with 10,390 students, 122 face-to-face programmes with 2,767 students, and 61 blended learning programmes with 1,413 students. In total we are talking about 17,371 learners.

In the IL3, there are academic promoted and institutional promoted non-tailor made programmes. For the institutionally promoted programmes, the IL3 is analysing first the tertiary lifelong learning landscape in terms of contents and applied methodology. It also carried out studies to detect training needs. The next step is the study of the viability of planned training programmes, asking groups of experts in the respective professional fields. These experts bring knowledge about the economic sectors applying the professional criteria of the sectors. The expert groups included also staff from the university that is working in the respective fields. Once the viability of the programmes is approved, the IL3-staff design and implement the programme including the selection of the lecturing staff. That means IL3 is in charged of the whole management of the new programme, from the creation of the programme to its implementation.

Regarding academic promoted programmes, every member of university’s academic staff is able to design and manage courses themselves requiring the previous approval of the department or faculty. Currently most of IL3 courses have this feature. It is a decentralised mode to create, promote and manage tertiary lifelong learning. In this case, the IL3 has a mere administrative role.

For the case study, we selected an academic promoted modulised programme titled *Social Economics and Management of Non-profits Organizations*. It is handled by the multidisciplinary Research Centre on Economics and Society Foundation (CIES) at the University of Barcelona. The fee of the course is 4,000€. In some cases, students – mostly from Latin America – receive financial aid from enterprises or foundations. Since the beginning of 2000, the programme introduced on-line methodology organizing blended learning.

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22 The university has 59,964 students, 5,247 academic and 2,448 administrative staff.

23 Data provided by the IL3 and available also at the web of the university.
**Target population**

The programme <Social Economics and Management of Non-profits Organizations> is designed for people with university degree, who are working in or who would like to work in the area of social enterprises or organizations that provide public services. It is also addressed to professionals in the public sector who are interested in learning about designing, implementing and evaluating public policies. They can obtain an <own master> degree. The programme is also open for people with the mentioned characteristics but without university degree. They can obtain the certificate of <university specialist>.

The target groups of the programme are persons between 30 and 40 years or older, who are working in non-profit organisations and who carries out, or will carry out- management tasks. It focus on the professionalization of people, who are working or who want to work in the social economy in position of responsibility such as foundations, associations, non-governmental organisations or social enterprises.

**Social Reach**

Participants come from all over Spain, Portugal, and Latin America. The average number of students within a cohort is about 25. The age structure is (roughly) as follows: 45% under 30 years old, 30% between 30 and 40, and 25% over 40. Recently, the number of participants older than 40 has increased. There are two main students’ profiles:

- Most of students have experience working in non-profit social enterprises. Their objective is to acquire knowledge, abilities and competence to improve their work performance in managing positions or to be prepared for new managing positions, but also to share problems and to look jointly for solutions,

- A little share of students is not currently employed in the sector, but they have experience working in the sector of social economy either with a labour contract or as voluntary. They are in a transition period and are looking for professional competences to work in the social economy

**Training & Learning Aspects**

In the cases of institutional owned programmes of the IL3, the teaching staff is composed by academics and practitioners working in the sectors. Depending on the programme, the teaching staff will participate in all stages of the programme development and implementation. To promote the institutional owned programmes, the institute has established procedures to select teaching staff, has created a common information space to reinforce the communication among the staff and has reinforced the training programmes for trainers. In the analysed programme, the teaching team is formed by 18 persons, around 75% are academic staff and the rest are experts from the field of social economy. It is selected by the programme direction.
The course is classified as blended learning since it combines on-line learning with three face-to-face sessions. At the beginning of the programme, there is an inaugural session focused on sharing some days together and knowing each other. Likewise, students from previous year also attend to this session. The second session is hold in the university in the USA. Managers of enterprises and practitioners are invited to explain their business model. In the third and closing session, the students present their projects. This session is put together with the first session of the next programme. During the three face-to-face session, the programme offers also visiting programmes to entities working in the sector of the social economy. The programme is based on participative learning processes. The working methodology encourages student participation, especially in discussion forums, via chat, activities, and so on.

**Evaluation and Assessment of Impacts, outcome**

The programme is evaluating the learning processes continuously, for which the participation in the face-to-face sessions and the on-line forums count. Once a month, they make also group evaluation using the chat, during which the cases of the different working groups are compared and discussed. The results are reflected in synthesis reports. At the end of the course, the programme team carries out an assessment survey among the student about their satisfaction. Likewise, the quality of the programme is evaluated by the students at through a survey organised by the CIES. The students have also the opportunity to express their opinion about the programme quality in a meeting with the programme director.

The programme does not make a quality audit as it is considered inefficient. The international audit standards and norms are not useful if the student want to make a comparative analysis of the programme. The programme does not make a follow-up of the students regarding to their labour market situation or work performance. On the contrary, the course is not evaluated by the IL3.


6.7. United Kingdom

6.7.1. University of Glasgow, College of Social Sciences, School of Education, BA Community Development

Founded in 1451, the University of Glasgow is the fourth oldest university in the English-speaking world. More than 16,000 undergraduates and 6,000 postgraduates from 120 countries worldwide study at the University each year.

The programme of interest is embedded within School of Education which has a Full-time equivalent (FTE) academic staff of around 90, augmented by a number of part-time and associate tutors. The School of Education is ranked 2nd in Scotland and in the top 15 in the UK for the volume of world-leading and internationally excellent research in education. It is also host to a number of important research and development centres (CRADALL; Centre for Science Education; Robert Clark Centre for Technological Education; the PASCAL International Observatory; STRADA)

The specific nature of the programme under consideration is to provide professional development opportunities to those engaged in paid or unpaid activity in the area of Community Learning and Development. The Student interviewees were a mix of long time volunteer and community activists looking to gain formal qualifications to either aid them in the search for more secure employment, to perhaps gain promotion in existing employment and to also provide better prospects in the Community Development labour market. Others were looking to new careers after changes in personal circumstances or changes in outlook. Given this focus and the nature of the employment and course materials, a strong element of social justice and issues such as empowerment and emancipation featured in the narratives. Most funding from traditional undergraduate sources (Student Loans) while employer support in relation to funding students is decreasing.

In addition to University regulations concerning academic awards, the Degree programme is validated/accredited by the Standards Council for Community Learning Development (CLD) in Scotland. Local Authorities, third sector and voluntary sector act as both stakeholders in and beneficiaries of the programme.

The programme was originally developed as a result of demand from unqualified community work assistants and they were mainly in the Community Development Department of Strathclyde Social Work Department around 18 years ago:

'It was, the very first impetus I suppose was, came from unqualified community work assistants and they were mainly in the Community Development Department of the Social Work Department and it was council workers. So they were getting leave to go on course and they were trying to, the council were behind it because they all wanted their workers to
be fully qualified. So the bulk of the students were coming from that kinda background. And also, they also gave us a secondment of a community development worker to come and do some of the practise teaching on it. This is the very, very beginning. I’m talking about, you know, like eighteen years ago. And then we moved from that to expanding to other kinds of organisations. So we then had the voluntary sector coming in and it was very much the employer would either pay for the fees or pay for the support and there would have to be a negotiation for them to release the student for one and a half days. And then as time goes on, you know, there are much more, a much more diverse group of organisations in community development now to include things like asylum seekers support and, you know...’ (Lecturer, UoG)

The course is designed to develop both the practical and analytical skills of the students to effectively work with a range of communities to bring about personal and social change. The programme is structured with a balance of 60% academic and 40% practice based carried out on organised and assessed placements. The programme is specifically designed for people who are working, paid or unpaid in the field. They attend classes a day and a half per week from September to May. Students explore a range of themes including social justice and equality, local and global contexts, social action, sustainable change and participatory approaches: all of these are linked back to the work they are doing in the community. A major component is the practice placement which provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate competence as workers in a different setting, thereby demonstrating the transferability of their skills. A range of placement opportunities are available by negotiation with the teaching team and in association with stakeholders mentioned above.

Formal qualifications are not required for entry. The focus of the programme is on the provision of a professional qualification to work in Community Development, Youth Work, Community Work and related fields. In relation to branding, in keeping with the ethos of the programme there is a focus appropriate to the target group and ethos of inclusion, empowerment and social change.

The programme is generally three years full-time (although direct entry to later years of the programme with advanced standing is possible and dedicated links exist) with 60% academic based and 40% practice elements directly linked with a specific area of employment; and indeed a specific form of professional practice – namely Community Development. The programme team work to create innovation of the professional field through development and sharing of best practice updated as required to address social and economic changes in field and as a requirement of accreditation.

Support for students is available through Programme, School, College and University level support systems and standard university regulations are in operation relating to suspension and resumption of studies. Students may also exit the programme and may use the acquired credit to transfer to other programmes. As noted above, dedicated lecturing staff (one full-time lecturer and 2 x 0.6 University
teachers) have both academic qualifications and practice experience in the field. Teaching staff are well aware of the specific demands in relation to the target group:

'Well there’s two, there’s kinda, I think there’s maybe three differences. The first one is that we have to put extra effort into getting people who are on that kind of course who have no qualifications usually. ... To get them up to the scratch for that kind of level. And then there’s also the fact that they’re all working. Which means that there’s extra pressure on them so we have to be aware of that and sensitive to that..... So we have to put in that extra effort and we’ve got to take coherence of the fact that they’re working and they’re actually, and I suppose it’s quite unusual to be merging the academic thing with the professional qualifications.' (Lecturer)

The course draws on traditions of adult education, community learning and development, social inclusion, empowerment and critical social theory with an emphasis on group work and interactive problem solving approaches to learning. It is generally of three years duration, to Bachelor level, but students can exit at year 1 or year 2 at either Certificate of Diploma level. Students are organised by Level and of mixed age and gender composition; although due to entry criteria there are few younger students and while in earlier years the intake was predominantly female, the gender balance in recent years has been more equitable. Entrants must have 12 -16 hours practice experience prior to starting the course.

There is the possibility of carrying out an overseas placement in the third year of the programme. In addition there are annual study trips which, although not part of the degree programme, are run by the course team and enrich the learning of students by exposing them to different cultures and alternative forms of practice. In recent years students have visited Kathmandu, Mumbai, New York, Amsterdam and Ireland.

In terms of the impact of the programme on their career, both lecturing staff and students recognise its impact:

Yes, job wise, uh ...., yea.... Well it does, uh huh,... It can make a whole difference, it can make a difference to the whole family actually because it propels people into being able to earn a middle class income, it’s encouraging for the families ..... it’s incredibly empowering because they feel as if they have come through something. (Lecturer)

And

I, well, I think I’m more confident in knowing that I’ve come to this level on the course, that I’m able to pursue learning at this level .... (Student A)
It has changed me, it has changed me. I was, I was shy but I got on with people right, but I was very quiet on first meeting, I would wait and gradually they’d get to know me. I’m still like that but I think... (Student B)

This programme provides a good example of how higher education can provide a route to professionalisation for under-qualified staff in the sector and as such is directly related to project aims. In order for provision such as this to be main-streamed, it needs to clearly identify a need in collaboration and partnership with external stakeholders. But the success shows that with appropriate teaching and learning strategies students can be developed to a professional standard even for those starting with low, or no formal entry qualifications. It is argued that this programme through ongoing development and in conjunction with external stakeholders is subject to updating and improvement and claims to be responsive to students and external stakeholders feedback.

In general this can be seen as a regional initiative (and indeed developed to cater for demand form local authorities in the West of Scotland. but also has national level input in the form of the Community Standards Board. However, it does engage with issues at the global level.

In general students apply as individuals, but in the past, organisations, predominantly local authorities would send their staff to take the programme. However, there may also be connections between organisations in relation to practice placements and assessment. It could be argued that the end-users are the people in the communities where students and graduates of this programme work. But students are keen advocates of the programme in relation to word of mouth recruitment.
6.7.2. University of the West of Scotland, Lifelong Learning Academy (Programmes of Interest: IT, Business, Health and Social Care)

The institution was founded in 1897 as a College of Technology - granted university status in 1992 as University of Paisley; and merged with Bell College Hamilton, to form the University of the West of Scotland in 2007. It has always maintained close links with local and surrounding industry including engineering and textile design and manufacture. It was granted university status in 1992, and merged with Bell College Hamilton, to form the University of the West of Scotland in 2007. This encompasses four campuses with Ayr, Dumfries, Hamilton and the main campus in Paisley. It has a long standing tradition of widening participation and adult learning through the delivery of vocationally relevant programmes. It has the highest proportion of part-time students in Scotland. The University is organised into 3 faculties and 8 academic schools (Business, Education, Social Sciences, Engineering, Science, Computing, Creative and Cultural Industries, and Health, Nursing and Midwifery). UWS is currently home to 17000 undergraduate and postgraduate students with around 35 % being part-time. It has a tradition of vocationally relevant and career focused degree programmes often in collaboration with local industry. More recently it has diversified into media, technologies and gaming. However, it maintains its links with business and public and third sector organisations.

It vision suggests:

For UWS to have a transformational influence on the economic, social and cultural development of the West of Scotland and beyond, by producing relevant, high quality, inclusive higher education and innovative and useful research.

The Lifelong Learning Academy (LLA) is the latest incarnation of what started out as a Department of Continuing Education at the University of Paisley, and then in a period of restructuring and change in focus became the Centre for Lifelong Learning, before finally in part as a result of the recent merger which resulted in the creation of the University of the West of Scotland became the LLA. The LLA has responsibility for part-time students who comprise at least a third of all students. It operates a team of Educational Guidance Advisors (EGAs) which are responsible for assisting students in all aspects of the programmes of study.

Flexibility in the delivery of our programmes, excellent student support, and help with funding – with over 20 years experience in delivering part-time programmes, we understand what’s really important to our students. At UWS, you’ll find an inspiring environment and a range of career-focused study options designed to enable you to develop personally and professionally. (Professor Anne McGillivray, Dean of Students)
Academic staff are almost all located in Faculties and Schools. The LLA is a University Department with responsibility for all part-time provision and comprises Academic related and Administrative and Clerical Staff. Overseen by Dean of Students (Academic) and Director (Academic related) the LLA comprises around 40 staff with 13 Educational Guidance Advisors (EGAs), five Lifelong Learning Coordinators and three Lifelong Learning Coordinators.

Degree programmes are generally under the control of the relevant School although in Business, Computing and Health/Social Care and Nursing there are programmes which are specifically designed for direct entrants from FE and which are also scheduled to allow the flexibility part-time students require. Lecturers are located in Schools. Access courses and other provision is organised and delivered through the LLA but with School and Faculty support. CPD is organised by LLA with teaching staff either in house or 'bought in' from Schools.

In relation to duration of courses, provision is from short CPD provision to post-graduate degree provision with flexible entry and delivery. The EGAs make wide use of RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) and APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning) as part of their role and this is conjunction with flexible modes of study on individual modules and programmes that allows students a degree of choice in when and where to study and also provides support in the transition to Higher Education.

Financial support for students is mostly through the Scottish Funding Council but CPD, service agreements and initiatives with public, private and third sector providers. Financial aid and access to funding is dependent upon circumstances although many students will qualify for some form of aid. In addition, there may in some cases and in some instances be some form of employer support. Student transcripts provide evidence of a number of elements of flexibility in operation. Students are a mix of those seeking professional qualifications to further chosen career (BA Childhood Practice/Studies; BSc Health Studies), or to gain new qualifications to advance in present career, or provide them with more options and opportunities (BSc Information Technology BA Business Studies).

In relation to provision, courses are offered across the University's campuses and portfolio, it also promotes flexible day, evening, off-site and online study options with qualifications from Certificate in Higher Education to Degree and MSc level and thrice yearly entry with intakes in September, February and June. As with mainstream provision, all part-time programmes are subject to university quality assurance procedures which include University wide student evaluation surveys and a student representative system. Academic provision is subject to UWS Regulations concerning academic awards within the SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) and EGAs are active in providing opportunities for credit transfer.

The flexibility on offer would appear to be a major driver for students who can study at their own pace and choice of time and also allows them to take breaks and then resume studies while continuing to
build credit towards an award. Students are a mix of those seeking professional qualifications to further chosen career (BA Childhood Practice/Studies; BSc Health Studies), or to gain new qualifications to advance in present career, or provide them with more options and opportunities (BSc Information Technology BA Business Studies).

This flexibility and the range of provision, means that much of the provision and many of the students served by the LLA meet THEMP project criteria and many of the students are seeking new and improved career opportunities, professional recognition and/or CPD. The LLA operates an inclusive environment with a strong focus on access and widening provision but with associated academic and professional focus.

In relation to the professional development of the learners, this is dependent upon area of study, but obvious examples are Child/Social Care and Health and Nursing provision in relation to degree study, often allowing adults already employed in the sector to widen career and life opportunities; other examples are Microsoft, Oracle and Cisco IT Academy qualifications.

The LLA takes students from all stages of educational attainment and has provision such as First Steps at University (a Credit Bearing Access Course) completion of which guarantees a place on a part-time programme. It also actively promotes the use of credit accumulation and transfer and the Recognition/Accreditation of Prior or Experiential Learning.

Students on programmes of interest (Business, IT & Computing, Nursing, Health and Social Care) meet the criteria of the THEMP project in terms of their expectations and aspirations in relation to labour market expectations and issues of career entry, progression and change. For some professionals there may also be requirements in relation to CPD. Courses are subject to regular evaluations by students with feedback possibilities during and at the end of the programme. All programmes are subject to university systems for student feedback and also student representatives on programme committee.

Lecturers are generally positive about students who match THEMP criteria. Lecturers noted the commitment and motivation of older students;

Yeah, yeah, I think wider access and part time provision are very much the things which UWS is spectacularly good at and which sits apart from other of the other universities and I think it's something that should be... it should be commended for 'cause again, all we hear in the press is the struggle that other universities have to actually... but because it's heavy going and you're getting very often a type of student that requires far more mentoring, far more care, but in the long run, you know, we're producing a finished product. (Lecturer, Business School)

While students mentioned the flexibility but also the personal guidance and support from EGAs from pre-entry to exit.
My first module at UWS was First Steps to University. I would say this was invaluable to me as it helped me with the foundations of studying at university. I chose to study at UWS as it has a good reputation and offered me the flexibility I needed to fit around being a mum and working part-time. I am now studying towards a BA Business degree. The guidance and support I have received with my module choices has been excellent. I would, and have already recommended UWS. (Student)

The LLA in operation at the UWS provides a range of programmes which are aligned with project targets both in expected outcomes, and also in terms of age, motivations and labour market transitions. The creation of a dedicated information guidance and support department to deal with all part-time students and which comprises pre-entry, ongoing and exit-guidance are seen as crucial to the continued success of the Academy in attracting part-time students and offer UWS a particular niche in competition with three other universities in its immediate vicinity.

This case study suggests that such programmes can be improved and implemented effectively. What is required is support at both strategic and managerial levels, and also support from relevant staff at Faculty and School levels. As has been stressed the role of EGAs in providing not only guidance, career planning and information but also acting as Personal Tutors to students is crucial and the importance of this dedicated and personalised study support and guidance on the transition to study at higher education has been outlined above.

While the LLA operates within the university strategic plans and mission, it maintains a clear identity in relation to access and widening participation while still recognising that academic requirements have a role. In relation to employer and community engagement, the target group may well have considerable input. As has been noted, dependent upon programme there is collaboration between university and other stakeholders and in the case of employer and community engagement the initiative may be from stakeholders. Given the university's four campuses the programmes have both local and regional relevance.
6.7.3. **Open University in Scotland (Programmes of interest: Health and Social Care, Nursing and Community Education)**

The Open University in Scotland (OUiS) is a National Centre of the Open University (OU) founded in the late 1960s with specific responsibility for the provision of higher educational opportunities to those unable to access traditional provision. It is truly Open Access and a leading global player in distance learning. In relation to provision, the case study focuses on areas of Community Development (and Engagement) and Health and Social Care, all of which attract a substantial proportion of students fitting the THEMP criteria.

The OU is the largest academic institution in the UK, in terms of student numbers. It has: more than 240,000 students, close to 7,000 tutors, more than 1,100 full-time academic staff and more than 3,500 support staff. They are the largest provider of higher education for people with disabilities, 45% of students had one A level or lower qualification at entry and 71% of OU students work full or part-time during their studies.

The OUiS is a National Centre in the OU structure. In relation to the project criteria, the ethos and mission of the OUiS aligns well with issues of widening participation and the creation of opportunities for adults through true open access to higher education. It works closely with stakeholders and in response to local and Scottish government actions and priorities in relation to social work and health and social care provision.

The selected programmes and staff are based around areas of Community Development and Health and Social Care which is one of the largest areas of provision for OUiS and also attracts students well matched to THEMP criteria. Courses are available at a number of levels but the structure is premised on the accumulation of credit to allow the achievement of awards at degree level, although as noted there is a range of provision including work based learning, and a range of related professional areas of practice through its flexible open access distance learning model.

Student funding is a mix of personal finance, Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs), and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) grants. In addition, for some courses in areas of CPD or professional areas there may be some employer support. In relation to community engagement, third sector and other stakeholder involvement, some activities receive stakeholder and/or central/local government support. 53% of OU students in health and social care are sponsored by their employers.

... the vast proportion of our income is through the, well primarily through the teaching grant from the Funding Council, and then increasing over the last three, or four years, and particularly now with the outcome agreement regimes in, a certain amount of strategic funding for specific policy objectives. ....
... I mean it’s interesting we’re getting—we get about half a million pounds a year at the moment for... ’cause we put a proposition that we could make a distinctive contribution to reconceptualising the relationships between the HE study and the workplace.... We also do get a certain amount of sponsorship funding, but main—it’s interesting these days, it’s almost entirely public sector, and I mean it runs, there’s about—I think it’s running at about nine per cent now. ... within the public sector it’s very much in local authority health service... And, even within that it’s predominantly within the social work actually.

(Director OUiS)

The Open University in Scotland has 116 staff and 526 part-time Associate Tutors supporting the 16,000 local students. Associate tutors have responsibility for specific courses and groups of students, organised generally by area. Dependent upon provision for example in areas of CPD or employer and community engagement provision may be stakeholder or industry led or a mix of both as outlined above in the areas of Community Development and Health and Social Care. Main provision is university led albeit in response to demand. The OUiS operates with a range of Third sector and public and private bodies including trade unions employers and local authorities.

..... areas that I’ve put a lot of time into over the last three, or four years is we’ve got a very strong partnership with Scottish Union Learning, you know the learning arm of the STUC (Scottish Trades Union Council) ......... .... and sometimes more organised I mean we’ve got—we’ve now got about fifty shop floor workers at Rolls-Royce in ?? (overtalk) for example, studying on Bachelor of Engineering degrees, and that was always from the beginning a kind of tripartite thing between the OU, Unite – the union – and the employer.

(Director OUiS)

In relation to the target market for OuiS provision in general, and more specifically in relation to the programmes of interest to THEMP, OuiS students are traditionally mature (average age of new undergraduate students is 31) although in recent years, the number of traditional age students has increased and there has been a slight reduction in average age. More than two-thirds work full or part-time during their studies.

The THEMP target group would probably be a majority in a range of OUiS provision and groups would reflect overall composition, although there may be some provision where gender or age imbalances do occur but normally by chance rather than design.

Most of my students tend to be mature students. I get a handful, I was sorta saying a group of 25, I might just get something like, I think 4 or 5 that would come, you know, would be under 20. That sorta 18, 19 category. Most of the, most of them are mature students. (AL)

It also focuses on access and widening participation, employees wanting to up-skill, employers wanting employee training, individuals wanting new or improved opportunities are all catered for. In
addition, as noted it is expanding its work in areas of policy delivery, community engagement at all levels and partnership with trade unions and employers.

Associate tutors have academic and/or practice experience and qualifications directly relevant to the course they support; and, some may also have other roles within the OUiS as is the case for the academic staff interviewed for the project.

Well I have two roles at the OU. I’m Associate Lecturer, for two modules, and I’m also a Project Officer for Work Based Learning. (AL)

Degree programmes will be organised and implemented at school or faculty level, although other programmes as noted may well be in partnership with other stakeholders. Provision ranges from short introductory courses, taught undergraduate and postgraduate and also post graduate research degrees. In addition, as noted there are also specific professionally accredited courses, work-based learning and community engagement provision. Where provision is credit rated, this will be mapped on the levels of the SCQF.

A major attraction of the OUiS is the quality of its support and its ability to have true open access within a supportive learning environment which allows them to succeed.

Our Openings courses are designed for people who may feel daunted by the idea of university-level study. This range of short courses aims to build confidence and study skills and prepare students for the challenge of our regular undergraduate courses.

The most obvious examples of the professional development of the learners in relation to the selected programmes are in the areas of Health and Social Care. For example:

Social care services are changing rapidly - increasingly services are delivered by multi-professional teams and staff involved in supporting vulnerable adults and children need a greater range of knowledge and skills. Organisational changes are also increasing the demands on support staff.

In response to changes in the sector, we have launched a new Diploma of Higher Education in Social Care (Scotland). The diploma has a strong emphasis on working across professional boundaries – with clients, service users and patients placed firmly at the centre. (Social care (Scotland) )

University systems exist for student feedback and representation and surprisingly perhaps given the lack of face to face contact, the OU is regularly voted among the top 3 universities in the UK in relation to student satisfaction in National Student Survey (NSS).

Lecturers frequently comment upon the motivation and commitment of OU students who as noted earlier are likely to be in employment as well as studying; and, students appreciate the quality of
provision and the support that goes along with it. Associate tutors also note the change in students as they progress:

And, it’s quite an experience from an AL perspective when you see, you’ve seen the student journey with them the sort of, you know, right at the beginning from, you know, I’ve got a long journey ahead of me, I don’t know how to write an essay, and in, in fairness it’s, it’s because of their, some of it’s related to their previous study skills or that fact that some kind of disability hasn’t, you know, like dyslexia hasn’t been picked up fairly early on. But certainly by the time we get to TMA, I’m looking at the K101 here, by the time we get to TMA sorta 5, the confidence, ..... You see the progress and you see the, you can see it when you, when you talk to the students you can hear their liveliness, “I’m doing really well”, you know, and passing and “I didn’t think I’d get there”. And it is, it is good to hear, it’s good to hear. (AL)

It could be argued that the provision of the OU and OUiS in general, and also specifically the programmes and areas of focus in the case study align closely with THEMP criteria and aims. They are a leading brand in distance learning not only nationally but globally. They operate what might be seen as ‘true’ open access (although in some instances funding may be a barrier or constraint) and have been in the forefront of developments in the delivery of high quality technologically sophisticated distance learning. As noted earlier collaboration will be in part dependent upon programme but there is collaboration between university and other stakeholders and in the case of employer and community engagement the initiative may be from stakeholders. Moreover, as recognised above, collaboration does exist with other HEIs in a number of areas.

A key to their success is a long-term investment in systems and procedures along with technological innovation aligned with quality in relation to pedagogy and student support. The OU would argue that they are constantly seeking to improve the effectiveness of their provision. The creation of high quality training and support for part-time Associate Tutor system and creation of a quality learning and support environment appropriate for distance learning. However, as noted it must also be adaptable and aware of changing trends and demands. Evidence of this has been noted above with initiatives in work-based learning and partnerships with both trade unions and with employers. It has developed links and partnerships with local authority provision in areas of social care and social work and a number of programmes in these areas attract a considerable number of students who match the THEMP criteria.
Main challenges of the ageing knowledge economy are constant upgrading of the skills of the active population and mitigating new and old social risks. In the aging society and the globalised knowledge economy, the people in mid-life are increasingly exposed to social risks of exclusion from the labour market. They are also excluded from formal Lifelong Learning (LLL), specifically Tertiary Lifelong Learning (TLL). The access of mid-life learners to TLL and their retention in the system have an increasing relevance for the socio-economic sustainability of the ageing European knowledge society. TLL is considered a key to develop more inclusive and responsive universities. Opening HE for mid-life learners, designing flexible pathways from VET and professional experience to higher education, flexible learning arrangements conciliating family-work life and learning and the adaptation of didactical methods in HE are challenges to affront problems of the aging knowledge society. Opening Higher Education (HE) to this group is still a minor aspect of education and training reforms, but it is a strategic goal to raise the skill level of the adult EU population, as well as closing the mismatch between supply and demand for high-skilled workers.

The project THEMP aims to study the TLL of HE institutes in several countries with respect to inclusion of mid-life learners. At the core stands a comparative study with concrete example analysing statistically available data, making series of interviews with decision makers, stakeholders, lecturers and mid-life learners. The study will analysis the efficiency of TLL programs in achieving the integration of mid-life learners in terms of access to and retention in programs, their duration, the creation of learning pathways and didactical innovation. The results of this study will allow advances in the design of core conditions of socially and economically effective TLL programs for mid-life learners. The project will use a combination of social research and active participation of the university under scrutiny facilitating mutual learning between HE-decision-makers, stakeholders, practitioners and learners.

For the social research, the project uses an innovative combination of Transitional Labour Market approach to define and measure situation of social risks; and the Capability and Capital approach to operationalize employability and well-being. It will provide differentiated tools to analyse TLL programs and their integration in the general higher education systems based on adequate definitions of efficiency and quality to evaluate the inclusion of mid-life learners. It will also analyse the regulation of the TLL system, not only with respect to labour markets and society, but also its internal regulation in terms of access, learning pathways, certifications, recognition of prior learning and funding. Special attention will be paid to the relation to the Bologna three-cycle system and the ECTS. Another area of analysis will be the analysis of didactical innovation in the TLL programs to assure the retention of non-traditional students in the TLL-system.

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