

Editorial Note

It is our pleasure to introduce this second issue of the *journal of ADULT EDUCATION Critical Issues*, containing selected papers focusing on critical topics in the field of Adult Education. All the papers in this second volume of AECI clearly encourage emancipatory and transformative learning – mostly important to the Adult Education community for stimulating a critical approach towards research and practice, with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and international perspectives. In this forthcoming issue we are also very happy to host in the Forum section Book Reviews and presentation of new, very interesting editions, published by some of the most active and well-known in the field of Adult Education academics.

In this volume, articles seem to follow a transparent line, a common axis, which is underlying in some papers and is foregrounded in others: the epistemological exploration leads to an analysis of dynamics regarding transformative processes and critical approaches in Adult Education, related to social phenomena, assumptions and practices experienced in the difficult framework of the pandemic, creating a need for reflection upon the pass from local to global, from biography to labor market, from education to mentoring. It is clear that the content of this second volume of AECI mirrors the long and strong link between the international Adult Education community to the Hellenic Association of Adult Education (HAEA), founded in 2004 in Athens-Greece. Over the years, HAEA has become a recognized, popular and very active community of research and practice in Adult Education within the Hellenic and the International framework, bridging the theoretical approaches of critical Adult Education with practical outcomes through innovative, provocative, diverse epistemological orientations and methodologies within organizational and/or academic settings.

In his profound contribution *“Biographical Learning” reloaded. Theoretical grounding of a challenging approach*” Peter Alheit discusses his favorite - always ‘fresh’- concept of learning within the lifespan, although he calls it ‘outdated’, since the term ‘biographical learning’ has been replaced by ‘lifelong learning’. He critically examines the importance of the biography for all learning experiences and argues about what the peculiarity of biographical learning actually is. The emphasis on ‘temporality’, ‘contextuality’ and ‘reflexivity’ and the introduction of the concept of ‘biographicity’ point out the political significance of lifelong learning and suggests a counter-concept to the dominant political strategy during turbulent times.

Taking into account the turbulent momentum of the Covid-19 era, the article of Dimitris Deligiannis, Alexis Kokkos and Ted Fleming: *“Larissa – Learning City: From Local Learning to Global Actions”* brought out the challenges but the vulnerabilities of learning cities, too. Starting from the critical tradition of Adult Education through Freire’s point of view the authors focus on connecting the local with the global, an issue that is increasingly relevant especially after the recent pandemic crisis. In their article a critical question is raised: What kind of city would enhance the lives of all citizens? They argue that this question attempts to bring together adult and citizenship education to address community and social problems through a pedagogy of a Learning City, according to the relevant project, since Larissa is a very good demo of the UNESCO’s project The Learning City. In the article its concept, goals and reality, the usual cultural and educational obstacles, actions and tasks facing Larissa - Learning City and the solutions to be taken are presented.

The third contribution, by Anna Tsiboukli and Angelos Efstratoglou, "*Active Labor Market policies and Lifelong Learning in Greece*" discusses how and under what circumstances, active labor market policies and Adult Education could meet to assist employees to cope with stress and enhance skills and abilities to achieve employment. The study, based on data revealing a rather high unemployment -and its main reasons- in Greece today, suggests that active labor market should be aligned to Adult Education's projects to ensure future developments -not only for the working but also for the general population to increase social and other skills, as a way of ensuring access to the labor market. The paper presents not only the challenges but also the common interest, assumptions and critical changes that labor market and adult education must share in order to reduce prolonged unemployment, brain drain and brain waste.

Since training is a well-known, usual, and popular tool to face skills' gap needed to face the new era, Konstantinos Zogopoulos and Labrina Gioti continue with a contribution focusing on the perceptions of Secondary Education teachers in the Region of Western Greece about in-job-training in the light of the 4th industrial revolution. The research, based on data collected from 422 teachers, shows that they have a rather poor knowledge about the elements of the 4th industrial revolution that influence their lives, although they consider it significant to their work. In this paper specific proposals are gathered along with the critical approach regarding teachers' educational needs, as a mean leading to a reflective career.

Ioannis Kesopoulos and Remos Armaos continue with a contribution on "*Studying the process of transformation of adult learners in a Second Chance School*". The study aims to examine the possible transformation of dysfunctional assumptions of adult learners due to schooling in a Second Chance School. Transformation regarded their previous assumptions in fields as the stereotypes and the social roles, the ability to improve their skills, the capability of comprehension of Greek language and processing their personal tasks, the awareness of their personal value and the ability to achieve personal targets. An important finding of this study is the adult learners' consideration that Adult Education in a Second Chance School led them transform the habit of mind for the importance of studies and their contribution to the self-consciousness and the reinforcement of learner's self-confidence.

Marios Koutsoukos in his article "*In search of a model of mentoring adult educators*" focuses on mentoring as a significantly important tool not only for adult learners but also for adult educators. The article presents a study aimed at exploring adult educators' views on mentoring as a tool to support their role and teaching work. It seems that adult educators seek for mentoring and describe a scheme that incorporates teamwork and reflection. On this basis, a reflective model of mentoring is proposed which aims to the inspiration, development, empowerment and action of adult educators.

In the FORUM section we are happy to host Aliki Nikolaides' personal reflection, regarding an experience of penetrating the underlying assumptions she has built about learning. Inspired by Dewey's philosophy of learning through experience, she is struggling to connect the personal to societal, transformative assumption, as ruptures of civil unrest and the cloud of the global Pandemic have revealed weaknesses in the power of learning. In this deep, profound note she tries to reveal the learning that connects the two worlds she feels we live in: The world that is known and that continues to be reproduced with all of its inequities and exclusions, and the world not-foreknown that wants to be different, liberating the creative

potential that learning unfolds. Therefore, she let us take a glimpse of a method that she has created, an in-scending practice of staying close to undergoing experience, where in-scend(ing) is a word she has made of moving beneath experience to undergo it, a tool of generative knowing, as she suggests.

In this issue of AECI we host three BOOK REVIEWS introducing to three interesting and recently published books, confirming the dynamics of the field of Adult Education. The first Review, written by Professor Danae Vaikousi, introduces us to Alexis Kokkos' new book, *"Exploring Art for Perspective Transformation"* published in 2021 in Brill/Sense Editions, focusing on the importance of aesthetic experience for the development of learners' critical reflection and the transformation of meaning perspectives. The book includes twelve chapters, among which the last one involves the author's concluding reflection on the ideas presented in the book as well as on his method titled Transformative Learning through Aesthetic Experience (TLAE). The second Review, written by Professor Em. Dimitris Vergidis (in Greek), bring us together with Freire's ideas through the book *"Pedagogy of Evaluation"*, published in Greek by the Labor Institute of the Trade Union Confederation of Greece (INE GSEE) to commemorate Paulo Freire's centennial. In fact, the book is a translation into Greek of the 155 issue of *"New Directions for Evaluation"*, where distinguished scholars from the field of Evaluation as well as colleagues of Paulo Freire investigate the impact of Paulo Freire's ideas on the theory and practice of Evaluation. The original version of the book is edited by Michael Quinn Patton, while the Greek one is edited by Thanassis Karalis. In the third Review Assistant Professor George Koulaouzides is introducing us to Eleni Prokou's book *"Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Policies in Europe"*, published in 2020 in Greek by Dionikos editions, which focuses on issues related to the formulation, criticism and implementation of Adult Education's policies in Greece. The book is based on a comparative and thus critical analysis of the relevant policies, especially in the context of the European Union, revealing the strong effects that the orientations coming from the institutions of the European Union have on the formation of Greek national policies in the field of Adult Education -especially in the countries of the European South.

With these thoughts we hope you will find interesting and useful this second issue of AECI and we welcome your contribution to our newly launched journal.

Professor Thanassis Karalis
Assoc. Professor Katerina Kedraka

Editors of ADULT EDUCATION *Critical Issues*