

The formation of the additional adult education system has been a long and laborious process. A huge role therein belongs to those who organize and carry out the educational process. In Belarus, they are often called educators, which in the Belarusian language means all employees of the education system (both pedagogical and managerial staff). The term became widespread in the third sector organizations in the 1990s. In the context of changes, civil society organizations involved in non-formal\* education proved to be more flexible and mobile in responding to the emergence of new educational needs among the adult population. Of course, along with this term, the sphere of non-formal and formal adult education uses a number of other definitions, such as trainers, moderators, facilitators, managers or training organizers. Despite the variety of roles, the opportunities for professional growth were rather limited. However, the more professional and competent the specialists are, the “stronger” the sphere of adult education is and the more high-quality educational services adult “students” receive.

That is why DVV International Belarus pays so much attention to projects and programs aimed at increasing the potential of specialists representing various additional adult education providers and initiatives.

\* In accordance with the UNESCO classification, non-formal education includes curricula and courses beyond the traditional education system framework, whose learning outcomes are not always confirmed by relevant documents.

## EDUCATION FOR EDUCATORS

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## PRIORITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

One of the priority goals set by the Representative Office includes promotion of the adult education system professionalization through the development of the potential and competencies of additional adult education system specialists. Like any system goal, it includes the solution of various complementary tasks:

- **Expansion of the range of non-formal education and training programs for trainers, leaders, moderators and other adult education specialists.** Adult education had long been denied recognition as a separate direction in education. Moreover, the formal education system had not offered relevant courses and specializations. The rapid growth of non-formal education in the last decade of the twentieth century triggered demand for teachers with “specific” knowledge and skills and the emergence of various kinds of educational programs, trainings, seminars for specialists. The practice-oriented training format (most often intensive and short-term) was the most accessible one and allowed to satisfy the need for new knowledge and competencies among hundreds of educators across the country.
- **Support for formal education initiatives/programs for adult education professionals.** Courses, trainings and seminars have become the first step towards a new professional activity for many people. However, they offered their participants neither fundamental theoretical training nor officially recognized qualifications. Therefore, drawing attention to the new teaching profession, as well as supporting various initiatives that contribute to the development of andragogy, are an important direction for adult education professionalization.
- **The development of competencies among managers** who represent organizations providing educational services to adults contributes to the educational services quality improvement. After all, it largely depends on both teachers and qualifications of the organizations' managers responsible for preparation of training programs and effective operation of their organizations.
- **Exchange of experience and information on international processes and trends in adult education** are an important source of innovation and professional growth. The involvement of local experts and stakeholders in the international agenda is facilitated by internships and study visits, support offered for participation in conferences and other professional events.
- **Methodological support:** the projects implemented by the Representative Office and its partners include creation and publication of manuals on organizing the process of adult education and working with various target groups; description and analysis of best practices; monitoring and research practice.

## SUCCESS STORY



### Andragogue: the Emergence of a New Teaching Qualification

At the end of 2010, the Education Code of the Republic of Belarus was adopted, where the term “additional adult education” appeared for the first time; the Code described 12 educational programs, some of which related to non-formal education. A legislative basis for the development of the system thus appeared, and training and advanced training of specialists in adult education started gaining momentum.

An important milestone along the way was the project “Lifelong Learning: Model Program on Andragogues Training”, which was prepared and implemented jointly by the State Educational Institution “Academy of Postgraduate Education” and the Representative Office of the German Adult Education Association in the Republic of Belarus (2010–2011) under the German Support Program for Belarus (FpB).

In addition to a study visit to the Republic of Poland and other activities, the project included preparation of a curriculum for the advanced training course “Contemporary Adult Education Models”. It was piloted at the Academy of Postgraduate Education in the format of a five-day course for the representatives of the professional development system and a three-day seminar for adult education practitioners from the public and private sectors. The developed curriculum was approved by the academic board of the State Educational Institution “Academy of Postgraduate Education” and included in the Academy’s plan for further work as a career development course.

The course materials formed the basis for the manual **“Model Program on Andragogues Training”**.

The participation of representatives of private and public organizations in the model program piloting resulted in the creation of a network of multipliers capable and ready to contribute to the development and promotion of the adult education culture in Belarus.

Following the Academy of Postgraduate Education, specialists from the Republican Institute of Professional Education and the Republican Institute of Higher Education contributed to the creation of the new pedagogical speciality. A team of professionals was formed over the course of several years through mutual consultations and studying foreign experience; their efforts resulted in the addition of the andragogue qualification to the Uniform Wage-Rates and Skills Handbook in December 2017.

The next important milestone was the approval of the educational standard for retraining managers and professionals in speciality 1-08 01 79 “Adult Education” with professional qualification as an “andragogue” by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus in 2019. Among other things, the document defines the terms “andragogue” (qualification of a specialist whose professional field of activity is adult education) and “adult education” (name of a speciality whose subject area is the design, organization and implementation of educational programs for additional adult education).

It is great that, in addition to general professional training modules, the standard includes (at the choice of an educational institution) modules in such topics as “Professional training of persons held in correctional facilities”, “Organization of adult education in the workplace”, “Information technology in adult education”, “Education of adults with special needs and the disabled”, etc.

Retraining of specialists in accordance with these standards is planned for the near future on the premises of the Republican Institute of Professional Education. The Representative Office will be happy to contribute to the process, including the invitation of international experts in the field of andragogy and adult education.



«Model  
Program on  
Andragogues  
Training»



## PARTNERS AND OUTCOMES

### The strategic partners of DVV International in professional development of specialists in adult education include:

- The Association of Life-Long Learning and Enlightenment, [www.adukatar.net](http://www.adukatar.net)
- Educational Institution “Republican Institute for Vocational Education”, [www.ripo.unibel.by](http://www.ripo.unibel.by)
- State Educational Institution “Academy of Postgraduate Education”, [www.academy.edu.by/](http://www.academy.edu.by/)
- State Educational Institution “Republican Institute for Higher Education”, [www.nihe.bsu.by/index.php/ru/](http://www.nihe.bsu.by/index.php/ru/)

Below you will find some key steps and activities dedicated to professionalization of the adult education system carried out between 2009 and 2019:

- The non-formal education program «**School of Educators**» has long become a brand of the Association of Life-Long Learning and Enlightenment. Its main goal is to increase the level of competence in the field of short-term educational programs' development and implementation. Thanks to the joint project “Learn to Act” (with the support of the European Union), new prospects have appeared in the program. The international **Curriculum globALE** was piloted in Belarus in 2016 within the framework of the project and the long-term modular course “School of Educators”. Moreover, the best graduates of the course completed one-month internships in Germany within the framework of the Learn to Act project, where they consolidated their learning experience in practice.

- In addition to general programs for specialists, the Representative Office pays a lot of attention to educators working with various target groups, **e.g. the elderly**. A number of thematic discussions, presentations, seminars, trainings on working with the elderly have been held since 2010; a 4-module training course was held on the educational aspects of working with the elderly within the framework of the project “TOLLAS – Towards a Life-long Active Society” (2011–2012, with the support of the European Union). Seniors are also starting to take the lead in organizing educational programs – 184 elderly multipliers have been trained with the support of the Representative Office.

Trainings for specialists working with **convicts or those released** from correctional institutions have been repeatedly organized. More than 750 specialists from various fields within the state and public sectors got acquainted with the theory and practice of training convicts.

- The Representative Office also strongly supports formal education programs for adult educators. Within the framework of the project “Lifelong Learning: Model Program on Andragogues Training”, a curriculum for **a model course for andragogues training** in the advanced training system for 40 academic hours was developed in 2010 and piloted in the State Educational Institution “Academy of Postgraduate Education”. An **advanced training course** “It's Never Too Late to Learn” on working with the elderly was implemented in 2014 together with the State Educational Institution “Republican Institute for Advanced Training and Retraining of Employees of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Belarus”.

- Much attention is also paid to the development of **managerial competencies** in the field of adult education. Two Schools for educational program managers were held in 2010 and in 2016 (within the framework of the Learn to Act project in partnership with the Association of Life-Long Learning and Enlightenment).

In 2019, the Representative Office launched the **Learning Cities and Organizations Program** aimed at organizational development and capacity-building of staff of adult education centres and initiative groups of the cities that have become or are striving to become the learning ones. Within the framework of the Program, more than 25 specialists (managers of educational programs and educational organizations) improve their competencies in various areas: development of educational programs, analysis of the educational needs of target groups, cooperation with qualified trainers, resource mobilization and funding, project management, etc. The Program is partially based on the elements of the Curriculum institutionALE program.

- A number of publications addressed to educators working with various target groups prepared by the Representative Office and its partners can be found in the “Publications” section [www.dvv-international.org.ua/ru/belarus/publikacii](http://www.dvv-international.org.ua/ru/belarus/publikacii) of our website.

*Curriculum GlobALE was developed by DVV International and the German Institute for Adult Education. It provides a basic qualifications framework for teachers working with adults worldwide. Curriculum globALE that offers the data covering all the continents is unique in its goal of promoting the professionalization of adult education on an international scale.*



Curriculum GlobALLE

*Curriculum institutionALE is one of a series of guidelines developed by DVV International in the field of adult learning and education. Curriculum institutionALE is a framework for adult learning and education institutions and organizations that describes the basic principles of capacity building and organizational development management, as well as indicators and tools to assess organizational changes and capacity development.*