

William Evans

Summary Survey on the Administrative Support Staff in Adult Education in Norway

Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung

Online im Internet:

URL: <http://www.die-bonn.de/doks/evans0701.pdf>

Online veröffentlicht am: 05.11.2007

Stand Informationen: August 2007

Dokument aus dem Internetservice [texte.online](http://www.die-bonn.de/publikationen/online-texte/index.asp) des Deutschen Instituts für Erwachsenenbildung

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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Summary

Survey on the Administrative Support Staff in Adult Education in NORWAY

The Norwegian Association for Adult Learning represents the whole field of adult and lifelong learning in Norway. There are 20 study associations and 440 nationwide study organisations in the non-formal adult learning "world" in Norway, due to a Ministry of Education "White paper" (NOU 2007:11) we now have the official number of administrative support personnel within the study associations, by 05.2007, it was 357 persons centrally and locally.

An overwhelming number of administrative staff in the study associations has higher education and they are mostly females over 50 and predominantly have pedagogic, economic or managerial education.. Among the study associations there are few employed from a foreign cultural background.

However there is no official information on the number of administrative staff within the 440 study organizations. We know that around 40-45.000 courses are done by the study associations and study organizations in Norway each year and there is good statistics on theme and subject, place and duration and age and gender of the participants. Most of the management around many of the courses are done by local volunteers in cooperation with personnel from the study organizations who again work with the study associations. People working with adult education and lifelong learning in the study organizations mostly do not have the educational background corresponding to their task within the adult education area.

Very few job descriptions exist and there are a lot of crossover duties. This is especially visible in small adult education organizations with fewer than 10 employees. The type of work the target group performs ranges from upper management tasks, to organizational, technical, marketing, and secretarial.

In addition the following skills are required: good interpersonal communication skills, good organizational skills, sense of responsibility, accuracy, ability to meet tight deadlines, ability to work under pressure, ability to work in a team, etc.

At the moment there is no national or regional training possibilities tailored specifically for the administrative, non-teaching support staff, except some organisations internal training. The target group members identified the following training needs in the following subjects: ICT, team work, financial management, communication, time management, social skills and conflict resolution.