Research on Administrative Staff of Adult Education Organisations

Work Situation
Qualification, Training Needs and European Dimension.
1st and 2nd Report of the Pro-SAL Project
225279 - CP 1- DE - Grundtvig - G1,

Latvia
Latvian Adult Education Association

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of the survey is to give an overview as regards the situation of the administrative, non-teaching support staff working in the field of adult education in Latvia.

In order to produce the results described in the survey the respondent has used the following methods:

a) Literature search – internet, publications, reports, etc.

b) Information gathering from representatives of the target group through telephone interviews

c) Analysis of the existing statistical data on the national level as well as within Latvian Adult Education Association network

1. Administrative, non-teaching support staff

1.1. Job titles of non-teaching support staff in Latvia

There are many different job titles for non-teaching support staff. In adult education in Latvia the borders between different jobs are not very strictly defined, in many cases and in many organisations there are people performing many functions. Especially if we are talking about a small adult education organisation with only 2 – 3 employees, they all have many functions – they can be adult educators + adult education organisers + secretaries, etc. all in one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Latvian</th>
<th>In English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grāmatvedis</td>
<td>Bookkeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galvenais grāmatvedis</td>
<td>Chief Bookkeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biroja vaditājs</td>
<td>Office manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sekretārs</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metodiķis</td>
<td>Methodologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projektu / u.c. koordinators</td>
<td>Project / etc. Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IKT speciālists</td>
<td>ICT specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pieaugušo izglītības koordinators</td>
<td>Adult education coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lietvedis</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speciālists</td>
<td>Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vecākais speciālists</td>
<td>Senior specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mācību centra vaditājs / asistents</td>
<td>Head / Assistant Head of Training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2. **The most common term used in Latvia**

It is difficult to choose the most common expression due to the wide variety of expressions and situations, but the most widely used expression is Secretary. In the network of Latvian Adult Education Association the most common expressions are: employees of adult education centres as well as employees of training centres of different enterprises.

The generic expression used to describe the target group as a whole is administrative staff.

1.3. **School leaving certificate for non-teaching support staff in AE**

There are different education levels among the members of the target group depending upon their specific job description, position, responsibilities.

According to the tentative survey conducted for the purpose of ProSal project research, the results obtained were the following:

87% of those target group members who work in managerial jobs (e.g., project managers, bookkeepers, organisation leaders) have higher education level. The rest have either secondary education or professional education.

Almost 100% of those target group members who work in technical capacity have either Secondary education or professional education.

It must also be noted that many people working in adult education do not have the education corresponding directly to adult education area. It is not possible to get BA or MA in Latvia on andragogy and adult education. Such education programmes do not exist.

Thus, most of the target group members with higher education have pedagogic, economic or managerial education.

1.4. **Number of people working in the area**

There is no common existing statistics as regards the non-teaching administrative staff in Latvia.

For the purposes of ProSal project research the following national statistics sources were analysed:
There exists some statistics about vocational training, but it only concerns the number of "students" involved and the number of teachers, but not the non-teaching support staff.

1.5. Research and development activities concerning the target group

There have not been any research activities directly concerning the target group. However, there have been some researches, which indirectly refer to the target group:

- Survey as regards the member organisations of Latvian Adult Education Association – the staff, the technical facilities, the courses offered, etc., 2005.

2. WORK AND TASKS OF THE TARGET GROUP

2.1. Type of work of the target group

As already mentioned the work is very versatile as are the job titles of people involved in this area. There does not exist one specific definition, the scope of the work and the responsibilities is defined in the labour contract as well as in the formal job descriptions (see 2.4.). The type of work of the target group ranges from managerial tasks, to organisational, technical, secretarial duties.

2.2. Content of the work of the target group

The contents of the work is also very different ranging from managerial duties to administrative work – financial management of the organisation, planning and strategic planning, telephone service, course booking, organising trainers, organising course participants, organising the premises, etc., budgeting, support for trainers and trainees, ICT, copying, faxing, preparing presentations and many more duties.

2.3. Fields of responsibility of the target group

Depending on the organisation and on the respective job contract they can be different. (see 2.4.)
2.4. **Formal job descriptions**

In most cases there is a formal job description for every person working in an organisation.

For the purpose of the ProSal project research a number of existing job descriptions were collected from the target group members. Depending on the level of detail necessary for the purposes of the respective organisation the job descriptions may contain the following information:

- name of the position,
- profession code,
- name of the department in the organisation (NB-for bigger organisations),
- subordination – the direct supervisor (position), additional instructions by (position),
- communication relationships: aim, with whom, frequency,
- description of the job responsibilities,
- qualifications, work experience, skills and knowledge necessary for performing the respective job,
- signatures.

For illustration of the above-mentioned issues the job description of a Training Course Coordinator / Desk Clerk has been translated from Latvian into English:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONFIRMED BY:</th>
<th>03.2006.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JOB DESCRIPTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Name of the position</th>
<th>Training Course Coordinator / Desk Clerk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Profession code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Name of the department in the organisation, sector</td>
<td>General Management, Training Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Subordination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Direct supervisor (position)</td>
<td>Director of the Training Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2. Directly subordinate staff (position)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Job description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1. Objectives of the job and main tasks</td>
<td>- to organise office work and circulation of documents; - to ensure recruitment of participants for training courses and seminars,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2. Description of the tasks</td>
<td>organisational preparation for the courses and their implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to organise the office work of the Training Centre, circulation of documents, control of fulfilment, to take and to submit the mail of the Training Centre;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to record the working time table of the staff members;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to organise recruitment of participants for training courses and seminars, make a list of demand for training courses and seminars, to organise signing of orders, preparation of informative letters, copying, sending to managers of departments, lectors and participants;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to organise signing of agreements with lecturers – consultants;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to copy, put in folders and on the tables the training materials, programmes, evaluation questionnaires, etc. lists of participants, name tags;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to record the number of participants attending the training courses and seminars, to inform the Personnel Department about it, to periodically summarise information about non-attendance;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to design and register course leaving certificates;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to enter information about the training courses, participants, trainers, as well as statistical data into the Training Centre’s data base;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to prepare quarterly, half-year and annual reports and summaries about the conducted training courses;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- to cooperate with the Daugavpils office of the Training centre;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- to collect and put stamps on the participants’ business trip warrants;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to organise specific marketing activities;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to prepare and submit to the bookkeeping the report documents about the respective courses or seminars;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 6. Responsibility | - to participate in improving the procedures and policy of the Training Centre. | - as regards observing the labour contract conditions, normative acts of Republic of Latvia and internal procedures of the … (organisation)  
- as regards the entrusted tasks, their results;  
- as regards the decisions taken within the scope of own competence;  
- as regards the work resources and objects entrusted. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Rights</td>
<td>In accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, the labour contract and the internal regulations of … (organisation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Substitution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1. The employee shall substitute (position)</td>
<td>Housekeeper of the Training Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2. The employee shall be substituted by (position)</td>
<td>Housekeeper of the Training Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Qualifications necessary for performing the duties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9.1. Education and qualification | - secondary professional or secondary education  
- knowledge of English desirable |
| 9.2. Work experience | - experience with office work and documentation |
| 9.3. Knowledge and skills | - ability to use computer in MS Windows environment and other office equipment;  
- ability to organise one’s own work;  
- ability to work in a team;  
- continuous raising of qualification within the scope of one’s competence. |
| 10. Signatures |  |
| Direct supervisor |  |
| Employee |  |
| 11. Date | ____ 03. 2006. |
2.5. **Fields of cooperation with other staff groups**

According to the results of telephone interviews conducted for the purpose of the ProSal project research, usually (especially in small organisations) there is a good cooperation and coordination between different staff groups. In bigger organisations the areas of specific responsibilities are more defined and this cooperation is more formal. The communication and cooperation issues are in some cases defined in the formal job descriptions.

3. **TRAINING NEEDS OF ADMINISTRATIVE, NON-TEACHING SUPPORT STAFF**

The results for replies to the following questions were obtained from the Survey as regards the member organisations of Latvian Adult Education Association – the staff, the technical facilities, the courses offered, etc., 2005, as well as from telephone interviews conducted for the purpose of ProSal project research.

3.1. **Qualifications needed to perform the duties**

The minimum education level requirement for the target group is secondary education or post-secondary diploma. In many cases, e.g. bookkeepers, project managers, etc., the requirement is higher education (e.g. in economics, pedagogy, other). In addition the following skills are required: good interpersonal communication skills, good organisational skills, sense of responsibility, accuracy, ability to meet tight deadlines, ability to work under pressure, ability to work in a team, etc.

3.2. **Qualifications to be needed in the future**

In the future the following skills might become more necessary: information management skills, ICT, social skills, foreign language skills, project management skills, etc.

3.3. **Subjects considered to be an important part of a training provision**

According to the results of the Survey as regards the member organisations of Latvian Adult Education Association – the staff, the technical facilities, the courses offered, etc., 2005, the following subjects were identified as an important part of training provision in adult education: civic education, IT, languages, project management, social processes.

3.4. **Training needs considered to be important by the target group itself**
According to the results of the telephone interviews conducted for the purpose of ProSal project research the target group members identified the following training needs in the following subjects: ICT, team work, financial management, communication, time management, social skills, conflict resolution, English language.

According to the Research “Accessibility of Lifelong Learning and the Education Opportunities in Latvia”, 2006, commissioned by Latvian Adult Education Association within the framework of the National Programme “Development and Implementation of Life-Long Learning Strategy” (2005-2008), the majority of respondents prefer to attend short training events (lasting for half a day or a day) – 56% or self-education by using books, magazines (48%), internet (39%). A smaller part of the respondents have attended longer courses (38%). The skills mastered most frequently during these courses are skills connected with education, pedagogy and research (17%), IN skills and programming (15%) as well as information about changes in legislation (14%).

4. TRAINING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE, NON-TEACHING SUPPORT STAFF

There is no training tailored specifically for the administrative, non-teaching support staff. There are specific training provisions for specific needs in adult education. For example, there are different bookkeeping courses for raising the qualification of bookkeepers. There are many different ICT courses. There are communication skills training offers, etc. This training is offered by Adult education centres (municipal), by private training centres and other training providers. Some organisations (big) have their own training centres and can cater for the education needs of their staff themselves.

Usually this kind of training is of short duration – 1 to 2 days.

There is no statistics on the number of people participating.

There is some (tentative) statistics as regards the training offered by member organisations of Latvian Adult Education Association, but they are not representative.

5. CONCLUSION ON NATIONAL BASIS OF INFORMATION ON THE TOPIC

1. Are there any (research) projects dealing with the target group in the last 5 years?
   NO

2. The researchers were working on

   - management of AE
     Yes (but not specific to the target group of this research)

   - organisation of AE
     Yes (but not specific to the target group of this research)

   - quality of AE
     Yes (but not specific to the target group of this research)

   - professionals/professional approach towards AE
     Yes (but not specific to the target group of this research)
| - administration of AE | Yes (but not specific to the target group of this research) |
| - the AE system | |

3. Did you find publications on the topics above? (Please name them here)

4. Among them were X research studies on
   - management of AE
   - organisation of AE
   - quality of AE
   - professionals/professional approach towards AE
   - administration of AE
   - the AE system

5. What are the main AE statistics in your country? (Please name the sources)
   The main statistics is about vocational training.
   There is also statistics made by Latvian Adult Education Association as regards the member organisations.
   The sources:
   Central Statistical Bureau
   www.csb.lv
   Ministry of Education and Science
   www.izm.gov.lv
   Latvian Adult Education Association
   www.laea.lv

6. The national AE statistics give information and number
   - how many organisations do exist?
   More or less
   - how many people are working in A.E.?
   No
   - how many staff groups exist?
   No
   - how many people work in each staff group?
   No

7. You had conversations/interviews with X
   - managers
   Yes (9)
   - target group members
   Yes (10)
   - researchers
   - other experts (which?).
8. You collected and interpreted X training provisions. You found them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Yes (how many?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>via Internet (how many?)</td>
<td>Yes (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the help of our partners (how many?)</td>
<td>Yes (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>via other means (how many?) – LAEA member organisations</td>
<td>Yes (1117)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>