

Preparing Educators for the 21st Century

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Which competences do professional adult educators require?

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Findings from a literature review

- Analysed in a comparative perspective over time, countries, cultures and educational settings
- Based on studies primarily from European countries

The main findings was that

- Adult educators' required competences are wide-ranging, heterogeneous, and complex

However

- The required competences are relatively stable over time
- The required competences are relatively stable over place
- The required competences are relatively stable over educational settings
- The required competences are weighted different in different cultures

The required competences are relatively stable over time

- Delphi-studies in USA and Canada (1978 and 1988) compared with European countries (2011).
- Different concepts: knowledge and skill versus competences
- The similarities is 'communication' and 'recognition of students' needs and experiences'
- The differences: classroom management is changed to 'the learning atmosphere' and cooperation.

The required competences are relatively stable over place

- Comparing curricula in five European countries (France, United Kingdom, Germany and Switzerland, 2008)
- Different categories and different concepts (some use competences others use learning outcome)
- The similarities: e.g. ‘communication’ and ‘ability to support learners’
- The differences: different weight on the teachers’ social competences

The required competences are relatively stable over educational settings

- A comparative study on vocational trainers' competences in nine European countries (2013)
- The similarities: the transversal competences and pedagogic competences, e.g. 'the learners' needs' and 'a positive learning environment'
- The differences: technical competences related to the demands from the companies

The required competences are weighted different in different cultures

- Comparison between India, Latvia and Lithuania and between 'Europe and China'
- Validpack as a common tool to improve teachers' competences
- The similarities: teachers' competences to be flexible
- The differences: the content and purpose of the adult training and personal performance

The general and recurrent requirements can be summarised in four themes

The teachers should be able to:

- Communicate the subject to students in an understandable and inspiring manner using the appropriate pedagogical methods
- Relate to the students' preconditions taken in a broad sense
- Create a constructive learning environment characterised by commitment, confidence and tolerance, and positive relationships between students and between students and teacher
- Reflect on one's own experiences in order to constantly improve performance.

The presented findings are described in:

Wahlgren, B. (2016). Adult educators' core competences. In *International Review of Education*. 62:343-353. DOI: 10.1007/s11159-016-9559-4

Including references to the analysed studies.