Adult learning plays a major role in the implementation of the "Europe 2020" strategy. The aim is both, facilitating employability and paving the way for social participation. In order to pursue these aims, three teams are located under one roof at the National Agency 'Education for Europe' at the Institute for Vocational Education and Training, (NA at BIBB): the Erasmus+ team for Adult Education, the National Coordination Point for the European Agenda for Adult Learning and the National Support Service for EPALE (ePlatform for Adult Learning in Europe). Together, they form a joined work section for European Adult Learning. This work section addresses stakeholders across the whole field and across all levels of adult learning. It is responsible for implementing the Erasmus+ programme in the adult learning sector, informs about the European Agenda’s topics and objectives and thus makes a vital contribution to the linkage of European and national processes. Therein, the ePlatform for Adult Learning in Europe EPALE is a key instrument which strongly targets the community of experts.

www.na-bibb.de
As the National Agency Education for Europe, we promote the education of adults in Europe

We, the National Agency Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (NA at BIBB), work in the field of adult learning in Germany to implement the European programme ‘Erasmus+’ for education, training, youth and sport (2014-2020), run by the European Commission.

We are convinced that inclusion and equal opportunities are an asset for unity and diversity in Europe, and that adult learning has an important role to play in this. We are convinced that general, cultural, political and vocational training and education is one of the cornerstones of Europe. We therefore play an active role in the development of adult learning, both in Germany and in Europe.

We aim to work with adult learning professionals making them feel open to and inspired by European topics and international collaboration. We support adult learning providers to become more international and to introduce this process sustainably. In this way, we campaign for lifelong learning to become a reality, taking our lead from European strategies such as the promotion of language learning, intercultural skills, the recognition of qualifications, the validation of skills gained informally and basic education.

We target stakeholders across all fields and levels of adult learning, we inform about the topics and the objectives of the European Agenda for Adult Learning and intend to build linkages between European and national processes. A key tool here is the ePlatform for Adult Learning in Europe, EPALE. EPALE puts emphasis on the community of professionals and experts. Its main objective is to promote the exchange of ideas and information about adult learning via news, blogs, resources and a calendar of events and training opportunities throughout Europe.

We aim to inspire multipliers, stakeholders, and representatives from both academic and practical fields, providers of further education, interest groups, professional bodies and social groups, journalists, students and all those who we do not yet even know to become interested in educational cooperation throughout Europe.


The national coordination point for the European Agenda for Adult Learning is tasked with raising public awareness of the role and key topics as well as of current developments in the field of adult learning. A main objective are the linking of European and national topics and setting priorities. In addition to this, the team informs about the Agenda as an instrument itself.

The ePlatform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE) is the focal point for finding information and resources as well as for exchanging ideas and cooperation between various different stakeholders. EPALE aims to sustainably improve and support the quality of adult learning providers. The platform can be used to develop, distribute and discuss joint concepts, thereby supporting learning within a European community of practice.
The European Agenda for Adult Learning describes the challenges regarding educational policy in the field of adult learning in Europe, covering the period up until 2020. It also highlights the role and importance of adult learning in implementing the strategy “Europe 2020”. Above all, low-skilled and older workers should be given greater motivation to take part in learning processes and to improve their skills and abilities. The objective here is to pave the way for social participation.

**Recommendation of the European Council:**

**Upskilling pathways – new opportunities for adults**

In December 2016, the EU Council of Education Ministers adopted a new initiative entitled “Upskilling pathways – new opportunities for adults”, which makes up a major part of the new European “Skills Agenda”. Basic education, that is, strengthening basic skills plays a vital role in this. Low-skilled adults should receive greater support to help them attain a minimum level in all basic skills (numeracy, writing, reading and digital skills). These educational pathways comprise three levels – evaluation of skills, provision of tailored, flexible and high-quality learning opportunities and validation and recognition of the skills gained.

National Coordination Points have been set up across Europe with the purpose of implementing the European Agenda for Adult Learning. In Germany, the National Coordination Point for the European Agenda for Adult Learning is based at the National Agency of Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (NA at BIBB). The German National Coordination Point works on behalf of the European Commission and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

**The renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning defines the priorities for European collaboration in adult education policy up until 2020. This renewed Agenda is much more closely linked equally to general and vocational adult education/further education than the previous action plan. The recommendation for “Upskilling pathways” from the EU Council of Ministers made in 2016 sets the topics of basic education and validation and recognition of skills as priorities within a national context.**

**Erasmus+ Adult Learning:**

*Promoting European education cooperation*

The European Commission’s Erasmus+ programme is pursuing clear objectives: to improve Europe’s competitiveness, to allow its citizens to acquire new skills throughout all phases of their lives and to support educational institutions in becoming more international.

**Using time abroad strategically**

Educational staff are the key to ensuring high quality of education, and it is them who drive innovation within educational institutions. Increasing requirements and awareness for quality on the part of education providers demand educational staff to continuously improve their qualification. Therefore Erasmus+ promotes visits to other countries for educational staff (further training, jobshadowing, teaching), lasting between two days and two months.

**New perspectives with strategic partnerships**

Strategic partnerships are cross-border projects that target the development, transfer and/or implementation of innovative ideas or the exchange of best practices. Strategic partnerships comprise three partner organisations from at least three different countries. There is no upper limit for the number of partners who can be involved, however financial support is limited to ten partners. The projects can be carried out over a period varying from 12 to 36 months.

**Example for a strategic partnership to exchange good practices:**

- **3 institutions from 3 participating countries**
- Objective: Exchange of ideas and peer learning
- Funding: approx. EUR 38,000.00
- Duration: 2 years

**Example for a strategic partnership to support innovation:**

- **10 institutions from 9 participating countries**
- Objective: Development of innovations
- Funding: approx. EUR 282,000.00
- Duration: 2 years
European adult learning in Germany

Social media

European adult learning is represented on Facebook and Twitter.
https://www.facebook.com/EU.Erwachsenenbildung
https://twitter.com/eueb_de

The National Agency of Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training on Twitter.
https://twitter.com/nabibb_de

National Support Service EPALE
(ePlatform for Adult Learning in Europe)

What is EPALE?
EPALE is a multilingual online platform and a virtual meeting place for those who are active in the community of adult learning and further training across Europe. The platform invites to read and to ask questions and to get involved in topics such as participation in adult learning, programmes for specific target groups or digitization. It enables users to become part of an international and national network and thus to create a European community for adult learning.

Similarly, EPALE raises awareness about current European policy initiatives concerning adult learning and vocational training, and it attends the Erasmus+ programme, for example through the project partner search tool and through expert information from all over Europe. Social media channels are disseminating information uploaded by users through the community.

EPALE National Support Service

A Europeanwide network of National Support Services is running the EPALE platform. In Germany, the EPALE National Support Service is based at the National Agency of Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (NA at the BIBB).

www.ec.europa.eu/epale/de