

## Development of Social Competence in the Preparation and Continuing Training of Adult Educators

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**Abstract :** The aim of this paper is to reveal the deployment and development of the social competence in the higher education programmes of adult education and in the continuing training and competence development of the andragogues. There will be compared how the issues of cooperation and communication in the learning and teaching processes are treated in the study programmes and in the courses of continuing training of andragogues. Theoretical and empirical research methods were combined for research analysis. For the analysis the following methods were applied: 1) Literature and document analysis helped to highlight the communication and cooperation as fundamental phenomena of the social competence, it's important for the adult education in the context of digitalization and globalization. There were also analyzed the research studies on the development of social competence in the field of andragogy, as well as on the place and weight of the social competence in the overall competence profile of the andragogue. 2) The empirical study is based on questionnaire survey method. The population of survey consists of 240 students of bachelor and master degree studies of andragogy in Lithuania and of 320 representatives of the different bodies and institutions involved in the continuing training and professional development of the adult educators in Lithuania. The themes of survey questionnaire were defined on the basis of findings of the literature review and included the following: 1) opinions of the respondents on the role and place of a social competence in the work of andragogue; 2) opinions of the respondents on the role and place of the development of social competence in the curricula of higher education studies and continuing training courses; 3) judgements on the implications of the higher education studies and courses of continuing training for the development of social competence and it's deployment in the work of andragogue. Data analysis disclosed a wide range of ways and modalities of the deployment and development of social competence in the preparation and continuing training of the adult educators. Social competence is important for the students and adult education providers not only as the auxiliary capability for the communication and transfer of information, but also as the outcome of collective learning leading to the development of new capabilities applied by the learners in the learning process, their professional field of adult education and their social life. Equally so, social competence is necessary for the effective adult education activities not only as an auxiliary capacity applied in the teaching process, but also as a potential for improvement, development and sustainability of the didactic competence and know-how in this field. The students of the higher education programmes in the field of adult education treat social competence as important generic capacity important for the work of adult educator, whereas adult education providers discern the concrete issues of application of social competence in the different processes of adult education, starting from curriculum design and ending with assessment of learning outcomes.

**Keywords :** adult education, andragogues, social competence, curriculum

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