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Editorial

Revitalising Adult Continuing Education for Positive Social Changes and Personal Fulfilment

Rivitalizzare l'Adult Continuing Education per promuovere trasformazioni sociali positive e processi di sviluppo individuale

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1. ACE: Driving Social Change and Personal Fulfilment

"If you work hard enough and assert yourself, and use your mind and imagination, you can shape the world to your desires" (Malcolm Gladwell, 2008, p. 151).

A shared passion for Adult Continuing Education (ACE) brought us together – the three editors, female academics with diverse cultural backgrounds and perspectives on adult learning. The concept for this Issue emerged from our informal gatherings in Italy and Hungary in 2023 and 2024, followed by numerous online discussions about the core values of ACE that drive social change and enhance personal fulfilment.

Adult continuing education plays a vital role in fostering both individual growth and broader societal progress. At its core, ACE is a key component of lifelong learning, essential for adapting to rapidly changing economic, social, and technological environments (Field, 2006). For individuals, ACE provides opportunities for personal fulfilment, enhances self-efficacy, and improves employability through the development of new skills (Jarvis, 2010). From a societal perspective, it contributes to social cohesion by addressing inequalities, supporting civic participation, and combating the rise of populism, xenophobia, divisive nationalism, and crime, while also promoting active citizenship (Donlevy van Driel & Hoareau McGrath, 2019; Schuller & Watson, 2009). Our title "Revitalising Adult Continuing Education for Positive Social Changes and Personal Fulfilment" reflects these dual purposes, highlighting the transformative potential of ACE in achieving personal empowerment and driving positive social change. Both the title and sub-themes of this Issue have subsequently shaped the agenda of the 2024 Conference of the International Adult and Continuing Education (IACE) Hall of Fame and the Induction Ceremony hosted by the University of Florence, Italy (November 2024).

Within the scope of this Issue, personal fulfilment is understood as the realisation of one's potential and the continuous development of personal, social, and professional capacities through continuous Adult Learning and Education (ALE). Scholars emphasise that adult learning contributes to a sense of autonomy, well-being, and self-actualisation by fostering personal growth and active participation in society (Illeris, 2014). In this context, personal fulfilment extends beyond acquiring employability skills to encompass holistic

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development, enhancing an individual's sense of purpose and social connectedness (Larsson, 2010). Arguably, the task of adult learning and education, as demonstrated in some contributions to this Issue, is to empower individuals to regain control over their lives and develop a learning-oriented biography. These perspectives align with broader views which suggest that adult learning equips individuals with the ability to navigate complex life transitions, contributing not only to personal empowerment but also to the enrichment of communities (Schuller & Watson, 2009).

Unesco highlights self-fulfilment (referred to as "human fulfilment") as one of the four key guiding principles in its *Education Strategy for the period 2014–2021*, asserting that "education is a foundation for human fulfilment, peace, sustainable development, economic growth, decent work, gender equality, and responsible global citizenship" (Unesco, 2014, p. 4). This strategy aims to translate these principles into seven specific global targets, which include fostering knowledge and skills for sustainable and peaceful societies, along with promoting global citizenship education and education for sustainable development. Similarly, the Council of Europe (2016) emphasises the broader goals of education, including adult education, stressing the importance of complementing employability skills with those that focus on personal growth and self-fulfilment.

Recent debates on the wider benefits of adult learning and education have expanded the understanding of how ACE impacts various aspects of individual and collective well-being. ACE has been linked to improved health outcomes, including better mental health, as it fosters cognitive engagement, social interaction, and emotional resilience (Feinstein, Hammond, Woods, Preston & Bynner, 2003; Schuller, 2009; UIL, 2016). Additionally, ACE contributes to crime reduction by promoting social responsibility, empathy, and critical thinking (Lochner, 2011). ACE also plays a key role in enhancing political tolerance by encouraging openness to diverse perspectives and reducing prejudice, thereby fostering more inclusive and democratic societies (Hoskins & Sallah, 2011). In this sense, positive social change is inherently connected to personal fulfilment.

International governmental organisations, such as Unesco, the OECD, and the European Union have been instrumental in promoting ACE by shaping global policies, providing frameworks, and fostering collaboration among nations. Through initiatives like Unesco's Global Network of Learning Cities and the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme, these organisations advocate for inclusive and accessible adult education opportunities.

2. Learning Unlimited: A New Renaissance for Lifelong Learning

The 2022 Marrakech Framework for Action (MFA) reaffirmed that lifelong learning, including adult learning and education, is a fundamental human right that is essential for the exercise of other rights and the overall achievement of the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The MFA also reiterated that "adult learning and education is a key component of lifelong learning, noting that adult education policies and practices apply to a wide range of ages, education levels, learning spaces, and modalities, and recognising that lifelong learning is the major engine of a learning society at different levels, involving individuals, families, organisations, workplaces, neighbourhoods, cities, and regions" (UIL, 2022, p. 3).

Regardless of the policy documents, our everyday practice and experience, reflected in the articles in this Issue, clearly demonstrate that adult continuing education is present in all

aspects of life, societal situations, and economic sectors. The profound individual, social and economic consequences of the global megatrends we face every day, including but not limited to industry 4.0, digitalization, an ageing society, the climate crisis, migration, COVID, wars, and the limitation of human rights, are radically changing our lives, work, and social connections. In order to effectively adapt to the rapid changes and growth, it is crucial for ALE/ACE to become more essential, stronger, and prevalent than ever in the pursuit of justice, well-being, and change, ensuring that all adults have equal opportunity for inclusive and equitable quality learning at the level to which they aspire. By mobilising people's transformational capacities, ALE/ACE can help them become agents of change rather than passive beneficiaries.

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of numerous outstanding professionals and organisations, after a long time we have finally reached the stage where the recognition of ALE has evolved from the margins to the mainstream (Špolar & Holford, 2024, p. 35). ALE/ACE is now recognised as a critical and indispensable component of global education policies and the skills development agenda. It is no longer considered a secondary or subordinate branch of formal education. ALE/ACE is seen as one of the fundamental pillars of society, which is responsible for the continuous renewal and enhancement of the knowledge and competencies necessary for socio-economic progress. As a result, ALE/ACE has become a priority in political debates and actions.

By examining the policy documents from the past three decades, we can conclude that the European ALE policies have addressed several concerns like unemployment, social exclusion, discrimination, marginalisation, the digital divide, the competency gap, and more. The main drivers behind these measures were economic productivity and competitiveness rather than social values, such as inclusion, cohesion, equality, and fairness (Mikulec, 2018). However, the function of ALE/ACE extends beyond the mere acquisition of job-related skills. ALE/ACE undoubtedly contribute to rendering professional knowledge. However, it also has a crucial role in addressing the challenges faced by individuals in various life situations such as adults living in poverty, unemployed, adults with disabilities or limited working capacities, mothers on child allowance, family caregivers, adults residing in rural community, prisoners, refugees, etc.

The purpose of ALE/ACE should also prevent or mitigate burnout, navigate challenging circumstances and offer psychosocial support. The growing complexity of society also makes it more and more difficult for people to find their way in it. Our existence is burdened by a growing number of stress factors. Several groups of society are found to be in uncertain living conditions. These factors also make it important to address adult education. In this respect what is primarily required is not profession-oriented activities, but rather courses and focus on psycho-social support, mentoring, life skills, counselling for problem-solving and personality development. ALE/ACE has a core role in this since there is an ever-growing individual and social demand for the above functions of ACE (Farkas, 2013).

All stakeholders involved have a legitimate expectation to demand concrete action rather than mere rhetoric. However, implementing global activities is challenging due to the vast diversity of the ALE/ACE educational field worldwide. Here are a few instances that demonstrate its complexity: ALE/ACE encompasses basic skills, general education, vocational training, ongoing professional development, life skills, global competences, guidance and counselling, validation of nonformal learning outcomes etc., and various target groups, such as illiterates, migrants, rural, women, elderly, and so on as previously mentioned. ACE system also includes training provisions, providers, structures, legal regulations, and financing (Nuissl, Sava & Farkas, 2024). A cohesive strategy can be

achieved primarily by adhering to principles and objectives, but practical measures must be formulated at the local level. This is because the functional approach to skills highlights that the adequacy of skills for basic well-being is contingent upon an individual's life circumstances and the expectations of their socio-economic context. This message is of the utmost importance for ALE/ACE. Learning opportunities should be created to be flexible, tailored for the target group, responsive to individual needs, and adaptable to specific situations in life.

The most effective strategy for governments, businesses, social institutions, and people to address challenges to develop and invest in human resources. Human resource theories and research demonstrate that education is one of the most profitable expenditures for all stakeholders (Polónyi, 2002; Schultz, 1983). Education generates a lot of externalities that have a considerable impact on other policy areas. Higher levels of education and literacy are not only related to higher levels of employment and income, but also have a positive impact on life expectancy, health, quality of life and overall well-being, as well as reducing the risk of poverty and social exclusion. Investing in education thus provides benefits in terms of more effective achievement of goals in other policy areas than education. These include employment and economic policy, health and social policy, demographics, equal opportunities, regional development, and culture (Farkas, 2023). Consequently, investment in education (including ALE) by governments could prove to be one of the most effective measures to achieve not only the objectives set out in education policy, but also those pursued in policy areas outside of education.

The most well-recognised and strongly emphasised fact is the correlation between educational achievement and the advantage in the job market. Higher levels of educational achievement are correlated with higher employment rates, increased economic competitiveness resulting in a direct influence on gross domestic product, and higher salaries. The impact of education on salaries and earnings can be observed through the changes in income based on different levels of educational achievement. The association between educational achievement and labour market advantages has been extensively studied. However, it should be noted that educational attainment is also correlated with life expectancy, health, social interactions, and overall life satisfaction (OECD, 2021).

The Global Reports on Adult Learning and Education (Grale) provide a reliable and comprehensive analysis of how ALE contribute to the functioning and development of many sectors of society. The third report demonstrated that ALE yields a significant benefit in a number of policy areas. Countries reported positive impacts on health and well-being, employment and the labour market, and social, civic and community life. The report shows that ALE has a direct impact on reducing health costs by promoting healthier lifestyles. The report also highlighted the significant economic benefits of investing in ALE. The report also pointed out that ALE increases social cohesion and inclusion as well as improves engagement in social, civic and community activities (UIL, 2016). In this context a recent publication that deserves attention is the Manifesto for Adult Learning in the 21st Century published by the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA). This Manifesto demonstrates how ALE can effectively address various challenges, create chances, promote peace and democracy, encourage active citizenship, foster social justice, support active ageing, provide accessible and affordable learning opportunities for migrants and asylum-seekers, and initiate positive transformation. The Manifesto provides arguments, research evidence, good practices and learners' stories to prove the transformative potential of ALE in both individual lives and societal contexts (EAEA, 2024).

It is important to have an honest and open dialogue on the accumulating challenges, as well as meaningful reflections and real solutions with wide involvement of stakeholders. This is the purpose of this Issue and the upcoming conference, which will take place in the beautiful city of Florence, Italy, from November 7 to 9, 2024. (https://www.hoflorence.unifi.it/index.html#). The conference (including the Hall of Fame induction ceremony) will be hosted by the University of Florence, Italy and organised by the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame in partnership with numerous European and North American ACE organisations and journals.

The International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame (IACE Hall of Fame, https://halloffame.outreach.ou.edu/) was founded at the University of Oklahoma, United States. The mission of the IACE Hall of Fame is to recognise exceptional ACE professionals (including policymakers, scholars, and practitioners) and organisations who believe passionately in the power of learning and have devoted their professional lives to adult and continuing education. Annually, around 10 ACE professionals from all over the world are chosen and inducted into the Hall. Since the first induction in 1996, the fantastic society of the IACE Hall of Fame has grown to encompass 429 members. In 2024 the induction ceremony will be integrated into the conference in Florence on 7-9 November. The inductees of the Hall reflect the great diversity of ACE practice and scholarship, as well as the expanding global leadership community that constitutes the IACE Hall of Fame.

This diversity will be reflected and captured at the Florence conference. We believe that this conference has the potential to be a truly unique event, departing from traditional formats to provide an immersive and collaborative experience in the field of ACE. The aim is to bring together the world's leading professionals and organisations in ACE to engage in meaningful discussions, create collaborations, and launch new projects that will drive the field forward. The conference will be more than just a gathering; it will demonstrate the vital role of ACE in all aspects of life. By enhancing its clarity, visibility, and value, we aim to emphasise how ACE contributes to societal well-being and individual fulfilment. In this context, we invited submissions from scholars and practitioners for this Issue of Form@re Journal, collecting relevant contributions in line with the themes of the conference. This Issue contains 30 excellent insightful articles which explore the multifaceted dimensions of ACE and its transformative potential. These articles are categorised into research papers and commentaries or reflection articles, delving the complexity of ACE and highlighting that adult learning is fundamental to human life.

3. Adult Learning and Education: Challenges in the Research

The research articles published in this Issue cover 10 out of the 14 topics suggested in the Form@re Call for Papers.

Professionalisation raised interest as the highest number of articles are dealing with it (33%). Indeed professionalisation of adult educators and trainers is a key issue also for future adult education strategies, policies and programmes as research shows (Boffo, Federighi & Torlone, 2015; Torlone, Federighi & De Maria, 2023). Adult educators and trainers are the skills intelligence builders and developers. The more research helps in knowing who they are and play this function the better their learning opportunities might be (Del Gobbo & Federighi, 2021; Federighi, 2021). This is because the set of professionals working in adult learning and education is everywhere very wide.

In the articles published in this Issue professionals and professionalisation are treated from

different perspectives, in relation to a variety of professionals working in various working contexts and to diverse thematic areas for their professional development.

Professionalisation of university teaching staff is the core theme treated by Beatrice Doria, Valentina Grion and Cristina Zaggia. They focus on that in relation to the evaluation thematic area.

Two papers refer to the need of professionalisation of teachers for students with special needs. School teachers attending the "specialisation course for special needs teacher" at the University of Trieste (Italy) are the kind of professionals that two articles consider. The first is by Chiara Urbani. In this case the author is focused on investigating how the construct of collaborative agency can help teachers in building their knowledge and developing collective learning processes while they are attending higher education specialisation courses. The second paper is by Filippo Bruni, Fabio Filosofi and Vincenzo Antonio Gallo. They point out the fear and worries that teachers have about the role they play towards students with special needs, while teachers are having their pre-service and in-service training. This is what comes out of the survey implemented with one group of teachers from Molise (Italy) and analysed in the paper.

Methodological aspects are also considered. Professionals in the care sector and the way Continuing Medical Education (CME) can support them in rethinking about their work represent the object of the contribution by Carla Benaglio, Valentina Concia, Gisella Rossini and Lucia Zannini. Their focus is on the reflective writing method enabling care professionals to reflect on their care profession and on the related aspects, especially connected to pain and suffering. Hospitals environment is also investigated in the paper written by Maria Valentini and Juliana Elisa Raffaghelli. Here adult education professions are investigated in relation to the use of social robotics within hospitals and the way it interferes (with) or support personal relations with patients playing the function of mediation and facilitation.

When referring to adult and continuing education as learning environment we refer to prison, amongst the others. Articles by Stefania Basilisco and Daria Becker-Pestka are about that. The former provides the theoretical frame for the construct of "re-educational treatment" that inspires penitentiary law and practices. Critical approach of adult education as well as the way it can lead to transformation and emancipation are the leading themes that help in looking at the daily routine in prison as ways for being educated and/or mis-educated (Dewey, 1938) while being sentenced. This brings us to the wide interdisciplinary fields of study that want to analyse the embedded learning processes in prison (Torlone, 2021). Daria Becker-Pestka brings reflections to the employment as learning place also for inmates: which services can help inmates to search for a job? Vocational counseling is being discussed in the paper being a not so common research interest for penitentiary researchers.

Two more papers are related to the workplace seen as a learning environment. They both treat the issue from the methodological perspective. Agnese Rosati, Edoardo Renzi and Keren Ponzo analyse the reverse mentoring as a useful approach to foster intergenerational learning while working. The quality of workplaces in terms of places that promote learning (and/or mis-education) is analysed by Vincenzo Scalcione. He presents two different methodological approach being the social reporting and the social impact assessment. The former is aimed at measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of the organisational-educational performances achieved. The latter one is for analysing the training needs of organisation actors.

The Call for Papers of Issue 2/2024 also included the ageing issues and the way it is connected to adult education. The theme is challenging for different reasons and perspectives. Readers will find two papers on that dealing with two different approaches. Social ageism is the theoretical frame where Fabio Togni and Vanna Boffo tries to figure the way any learning context should be seen in the skill development perspective for elderly. Any place old people live in is a place where they learn. So places should be treated considering their potentialities of learning for them. Elisa Bruni, Aurora Ricci and Elena Luppi go into the active ageing in an interdisciplinary perspective as well. Here the issue is ageing and the way it is conceived as being the chance for old people to get their own continuous personal development thanks to the role played by the senior care professionals.

How adult and continuing education supports personal fulfilment is something that research continues to follow and bring to social attention (Federighi, Torlone & De Maria, 2024). The field of research and practices is wide and implies the debate of how adult education can promote personal achievement and control on powers in education. It is in this frame that research debate on the role of education not only for professional fulfilment but also for leisure and recreation, civic participation, improved health and any other development related to the personal sphere and well-being. The theoretical approach beyond that is what is discussed by Carlos Higuera Ramos, María del Rosario Estrada García and Diana Juárez Popoca as they debate on how critical pedagogy can influence the curriculum design in higher education. This might promote learning for personal development as well.

Theoretical insights and basic concepts for gender education are the core of the contribution by Gina Chianese. In sciences of education gender issues are usually related to formal and non-formal education whilst little is being investigated on women empowerment via informal learning processes. The article provides a panorama of statistical data and focuses on women and power and the way power can be recognised and practiced by women in any life setting.

This reminds us of the role higher education needs to play in adult education development. Global recommendations are described by Monica Fedeli, Paula Guimaraes, Heribert Hinzen, Rose Kando, Balázs Németh and Julia Saamf Concetta Tino and considered them in a wider context where higher education should be driving personal fulfilment and social growth.

The initiative of learning city launched by (UIL, 2015) goes towards the same direction: *Roberta Piazza* in her paper emphasizes the importance of integrated strategies to improve community well-being and to reinforce interconnection between economic, political and social fields of action that can lead towards change within cities.

Integration, cooperation, connection are also key words that help in building and developing policies supporting empowerment and integration of migrants in the European territories. Access to education can be real and effective when active and collaborative partnerships are enhanced to meet the unique challenges adult migrants have. This is a matter adult education is investigating on both from public policies and local development perspectives. Morena Cuconato and Virginia Signorini give evidence to these issues.

This Form@re Issue could not miss to deal with artificial intelligence, its ethical implications and effects on the way of thinking. Maria Chiara Michelini in her paper focused on that.

4. Adult Learning and Education: Practices and Reflections

Papers submitted in forms of "experiences and reflections" cover six out of the 14 topics of the Form@re Call for Papers. Also in this Section professionalisation of adult educators and professionals has attracted the highest number of contributions (34%).

Professionalisation processes are mainly investigated in the school system. Iolanda Sara Iannotta, Deborah Gragnaniello and Rosanna Tammaro describe the training model for tutors who are supporting future school teachers in the primary school in their professionalisation activities including traineeship. Philipp Botes focuses on global citizenship in educational institutions, both for teaching staff and students. His theoretical reflections are inspired by the new legal rules innovating the Italian school system and the disciplines to be taught including civic education. The method-oriented approach in professionalising adult educators is connected to the reflections proposed by Andrea Spano. The autobiographical interview is described as a training practice useful to foster professional development of adult educators, adult education projects designers, adult education consultants. The last thematic experience on adult educators professionalisation is proposed by Daniela Frison. Her interpretation of professionalisation is linked to well-being construct referring to various aspects of education staff's professional lives, including their satisfaction with working conditions, the physical environment of schools, decision-making autonomy, and experiences with workplace recognition and support as well as their physical and mental health.

Professionals teaching a foreign language by using innovative device are the ones the paper by Santolo Ciccarelli, Francesco V Ferraro and Maria Giovanna Tafuri is about. Authors experimented the TRIP a-Bike device and used it to support learning a foreign language. To go on with it, further training is needed for any teacher who would like to use it in his/her teaching activities. The theoretical frame refers here to the embodied cognition theory and artificial intelligence for teaching purposes.

Experiences collected in the Issue are also about prison. It is looked at in the frame of well-being. It concerns the training of penitentiary managers and security officers. We have an example of it in the Hungarian system thanks to the contributions by Márta Miklósi. The paper provides readers with the description of the training pathway as set up by the Hungarian legal rules. If we look at well-being from the perspective of inmates, we can frame services like the social library therein. Marta Pampaloni details the PhD study she has been conducting in Sollicciano prison (located in Florence, Italy). How the library was set up, organisational accommodations, staff arrangements (both security and educational areas), librarians, motivation and induction of inmates are some of the components that allowed the development of the social library. Results and satisfaction by inmates were positive and would motivate to go on with that. Institutional and organisational constraints play a key role.

Well-being is the key concept also for Laura Vernici. Her reflections lead readers to a supportive adult and continuing education towards the human being development. It is what the university laboratory project is doing and what she describes in this experience. The role of higher education and its interaction with the territory for social development is well focused on by Chiara Biasin, and Stefano Bonometti and Letizia Ferri. Chiara Biasin provides an interesting experience related to the way university plays its institutional function of "third mission" by interacting and cooperating with local institutions and organisations to reach vulnerable adults and provide them with learning opportunities as much suitable as possible to their individual aspirations. Stefano Bonometti and Letizia Ferri describe some of the projects that are being implemented by the University of

Insubria. Change Laboratory and Service Learning are just two of the methods used to support local cooperation.

In the view of local cooperation, the equal leadership action reinforces this idea: the education on gender issues for women development and growth in the workplace as well as in their social and political life is possible through the capacity of people of networking, sharing common goals, defining concrete actions. This is what is happening in the national community that the University of Florence is coordinated in the frame of equal leadership management issues. Gabriella Campanile goes into that.

The issue of communities is investigated when dealing with intergenerational education in medicine by Francesca Marone and Maria Navarra. Community of practices, including the virtual ones, in the workplace can work as theoretical approach to learn from seniors to juniors. The closing reflections of this Issue are by Mejai B.M. Avoseh. They try to answer the question on the contribution of adult learning and education to positive social change for indigenous African contexts.

5. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

With this Issue, we call for genuine cooperation in participatory research among academics and practitioners who together can renew, expand and deepen the knowledge of ACE in their capacities. The research methods used in the articles represent a diverse and innovative range, including autoethnography, case studies, reflective writing, surveys, and statistical analyses. We also encourage the publication of articles that spotlight lesser-known authors whose knowledge and innovative approaches have influenced local or national practices.

Drawing on the articles selected for this Issue, we present the following key findings and recommendations aligned with the sub-themes outlined in the Call for Papers.

1. Professionalisation and training of adult educators in ACE.
    - The professionalisation of adult educators and trainers is key to the success of future adult education strategies, policies and programmes.
    - To create meaningful learning opportunities, it is important to recognise the diverse range of adult educators across different professions and address their specific needs for professional development. Examples of adult educators discussed in this Issue include healthcare professionals, prison offender supervisors, vocational counsellors for inmates, librarians, special educational needs teachers, university lecturers, language teachers for adult migrants, and workplace mentors, among others.
2. The role and potential of higher education to support ACE.
    - Higher education could place greater emphasis on its social mission (often known as the “third mission”) and its contribution to communities by facilitating the targeted transfer and application of academic knowledge to address local societal and economic challenges, including the development of adult education.
    - Universities, local governments, and organisations need to collaborate more closely and effectively to provide learning opportunities for vulnerable adults that are aligned with their personal aspirations. Two inspiring examples of

higher education and local cooperation featured in this Issue are Change Laboratory and Service Learning.

3. The impact of Artificial Intelligence on ACE.
    - Rapid technological advancement, particularly in artificial intelligence has greatly impacted the professionalisation of adult educators, leading to pedagogical innovations, new cognitive competencies, and a continuous need for ongoing professional development. Two articles highlight the importance of professional development for care professionals in using social robots to interact with patients, and for foreign language teachers in using the a-Bike device to support language teaching and learning.
4. Learning conditions for people working in prison and inmates living in prison.
    - More interdisciplinary research is needed to testify and validate the methods of social impact assessment used to evaluate the effectiveness of adult education in prisons for both officers and inmates (e.g., workplace as a learning space, vocational counselling, staff arrangements).
5. The construction of learning cities, learning communities.
    - More practical lessons should be drawn from the Unesco Global Network of Learning Cities to develop effective nationwide public policies and targeted local development strategies aimed at empowering and integrating migrants in European cities, particularly through adult education and learning.
6. Gender equalities and leadership.
    - Expanding informal learning opportunities for women, such as experience sharing and networking, could lead to greater equality in leadership roles, both in the workplace and in their social and political lives.
7. ACE and personal fulfilment.
    - Critical pedagogy and innovative curriculum design in adult education are essential for promoting learning that supports not only professional development but also personal fulfilment, including leisure and recreation, civic participation, and improved health and well-being.
8. ACE and ageing society.
    - Targeted research on the social impact of active aging is essential to inform public welfare policies. Active aging can create opportunities for the elderly to engage in learning activities, such as volunteering, playing a musical instrument, or learning a new language, while also fostering intergenerational learning.
    - Living spaces can serve as learning environments for the elderly, particularly with the support of care professionals, as highlighted in this Issue.
9. Effects of ACE on health and well-being.
    - Well-being is a transversal issue. Adult education opportunities, such as professional development for educators, are linked to their satisfaction with working conditions, decision-making autonomy, and workplace recognition and support, all of which positively impact their well-being, physical and mental health. Similarly, social libraries in prisons can offer adult learning

opportunities that enhance the well-being of inmates, as evidenced by articles in this Issue.

We extend our gratitude to all the authors/contributors and to the Journal *Form@re* for making this collective endeavor possible.

We hope that this Issue will inspire adult educators, researchers, policymakers, practitioners and learners alike to recognise the transformative power of ACE. By embracing the varied perspectives and recommendations presented here, we can collectively work towards a future where ACE drives positive social change and personal fulfilment.

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