

# The Role of Adult Education in the Countries in Transition

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**The aim of the research** is to define the scopes of Adult education in the countries in transition.

**The objectives of the research** are the following:

1) to define different approaches to the term "Adult Education",

2) to describe the general situation in Central and Eastern Europe, their introduction to the market economy,

3) to analyse changing values in the countries in transition and according to the analysed parameters to define the scopes of Adult Education in the countries in transition.

**The method of the research** is comparative analysis.

## 1. Understanding of Adult Education

P. Hartl from Czech Republic writes "under the term "adult education" I understand any education of people over 18 years of age. Of course, it does not usually correspond to the psychological and psychological conditions of maturity and the border of 18 years is artificial, as nothing happens merely overnight in human life. [...] Adult education comprises all kinds of education from self-help groups, all hobby activities, basic skills training (including literacy courses), to highly specialised professional adult

education. In this sense adult education does exist as uniform system, all over the world, yet there are big differences in priorities and the extent of it in different parts of the globe." [14]

Other authors understand adult education as a movement, for example, John A. Henschke wrote: "adult education is an important worldwide movement that is gaining increasing momentum as the pace of change accelerates and human beings become more aware of their own need to keep abreast with change throughout their life." [17]

Well known andragog Cyril O. Houle wrote, that "adult education finds its central inspiration in fulfilling the potential of men and women, singly and collectively; it accepts only the limitations of human capacity though it always hopes to extend them." [17]

The other expert of adult education Alan B. Knox describes that the most useful definition of adult continuing education in any country "is a broad one that helps us appreciate the variety of learners, content, methods and providers. It includes all intentional and systematic learning in which adults engage on a part-time or short-term basis after they terminate or fail to begin their full-time preparatory education. Thus,

adult education is a broad umbrella concept that includes self-directed study projects as well as non-formal education in which experts help adults learn. Included are adults with all characteristics and backgrounds who study any topic using any method. Provider organizations of such educational opportunities and resources include both educational institutions (schools, universities) and all types of other organizations (enterprises, labour unions, religious institutions, military, cultural and community agencies, and voluntary associations.” [35]

American researcher Jack Mezirow is focusing his attention to the adult education as facilitation of learning: “adult education is the process by which one adult deliberately facilitates the learning of another adult so as to expands his or her range of choice in decision making. An adult is one who is deemed fully responsible for his acts by his society” [46].

Other researchers remember, that adult education also includes personality development of learner and adult educator also: “adult education includes also personality development. Man can make conscious efforts to develop a new feature of his personality (tolerance, self-initiative, active engagement in his environment, replacing a negative attitude by a positive one, sense of responsibility, increasing aspirations, developing a sense of deliberation and, the most necessary, creative imagination).” [36]

Summarizing adult education definitions, Peter Jarvis [22] noticed “I feel that the term “adult education” has become so nebulous, meaning so many different things to different people that I am moving to a position where I think that it would be wise abandon it! [...] I think that we should see adult education in the same way but we may

have to talk about the education of adults in order to communicate our meaning. We also need to recognise that while the field is education, it is an expanding one which can take place in a variety of social settings, so that education is an institutionalised process of teaching/learning and that it does not have to occur in the sector of society that we call education.

Malcolm S. Knowles (1991), defining adult education wrote: “I understand the term “adult education” to encompass all the activities and processes engaged in by mature men and women for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and interests, and the institutional resources committed to serving these adult learners. In this dimension, it is a field of practice consisting of self-directed learners, educational institutions, voluntary organization, government agencies, religious institutions, and business and industrial firms. It is also a field of study, which such research questions as how do adult learn? How are adult learners different from youth learners? What are the most effective methods and techniques for facilitating and how can it be facilitated? What are the implications of the concept of lifelong learning for all of education? Adult education is not a uniform system, but rather a dynamic complex of individuals, groups, networks, institutions, activities, processes, materials, and methods engaging in or facilitating learning for an infinite variety of purposes.”

Looking for the answers to the Malcolm S. Knowles questions “how do adults learn? How are adult learners different from youth learners? What are the most effective methods and techniques for facilitating and how can it be facilitated?” it is possible to find 3 different approaches to these themes.

Malcolm S. Knowles [33] as the best representative of the **first approach** describes, that there are important differences among adults and children education and learning: “The andragogical model of adult learning was initially proposed as separate form and antithetical to the pedagogical model of children and youth as learners. It was based on the following assumptions: 1) Adults have a deep psychological need to be self-directing in determining their needs, defining their goals, planning their learning activities, and evaluating their learning; whereas children and youth perceive themselves as being dependent on teachers to make all the decisions about what they should learn, how they should learn, when shall learn, and if they have learn. 2) Adults have accumulated a growing body of experience that is a rich resource for their own learning and that of others; whereas children and youth enter into learning with a limited body of experience and so are dependent on the experience of teachers and other adults as the primary resources for learning. 3) Adults become ready to learn something when they experience a need to learn it in order to cope more satisfyingly with real-life tasks or problems; whereas children and youth become ready to learn whatever society (especially schools) dictates they need to learn. 4) Adults enter into learning with a task-centred or problem-centred (e.g., life-centred) orientation to learning; whereas children and youth enter into learning with a subject-centred orientation. A growing body of research into learning by both youth and adults suggests that these two models are not antithetical, but parallel: these are some situations in which the pedagogical model applies to adults (such as when they are confronting a body of content that is totally

new and strange to them) and in which the andragogical model applies to youth (such as when they are confronting a body of content with which they indeed have had some experience).”

To this approach we can attribute Estonian researcher Talvi Märja and Slovenian researcher Ana Krajnc. Talvi Märja [36, p. 182] described differences between adult and children education in such a way: “we conceive andragogy and pedagogy as different but interlinked subjects. The basis of andragogy is constituted by the following factors: differences, arising from the 1) personality of adults: psychological differences, differences in reception, understanding and preserving information; 2) the social status and roles of adults; 3) educational needs and motivation of adults, goals and principles of training; 4) the roles of trainer; 5) methods of teaching”.

Ana Krajnc agrees with K. Knowles, too: “the pedagogical process and the process in adult education are two different processes. Pedagogy is a scientific discipline about the education and teaching of children. Since, at the time of attending school, one form of education mainly predominates, i.e. instruction, it is also in the pedagogical theory that the study and conception of the school system of instruction and teaching predominates. The units for scholarly observation are: school, class, instruction, lesson. [...] Out of school, methods of education are conceived and studied, followed up and systematized by adult education. With adults, persons with completed or intermediate schooling, their education is varied, ranging in content in form and directions, and is not subordinated to one single, closed system. It is also generated by tourism and by the urban way

of life. [...] The education of children in school is arranged according to disciplines, while in workplace with adults, it is arranged according to problems (in an interdisciplinary manner). The education of children is primarily oriented towards making progress at school (to complete the class, to continue school). Adults learn in order to deal with a problem that has arisen or to implement their plans. With a child, the goal of education is still far away in the future, while with an adult it is “here and now”.

Pavel Hartl [14, p. 100–101], describes the psychological differences of learning processes: “adults’ learning differs from children, it is necessary to say that there are important differences. First of all, the brain is different, in adulthood, it’s psychologically mature, and secondly, the social situation is different. On the other hand, it is not possible to suppose that there is more than 14 kinds of learning, i.e., classical conditioning, extinction, habituation, imprinting, latent learning, instrumental learning, imitation, discrimination, exploration, group learning, memory-conceptual learning, reasoning problem solving, social learning.

While the first 10 of these are common for man and animals, and the following four are exclusively human, and all the 14 are used both by adults and children, yet the difference between them is in the extent and effects of using them. For example, classical conditioning is often used, with very good results, in early childhood (hygiene basic skills), but in adulthood it is scarcely used, as it takes a lot of time and results and not that effective at the later stage. It can be illustrated by the slogan that a person does or does not have “kindersturbe” i. e., if not achieved in childhood, it cannot be achieved later. This fact has also been proved by trials to treat alcoholics by aversive therapy, i. e.,

through classical conditioning. It becomes soon clear that the method simply does not work. The similar situation can be seen with imprinting, also very important for a child and hardly used at all by an adult. On the contrary, learning by problem solving is the most successful method in adulthood, whilst with children it is difficult to apply this method at early stages. These facts have to be reflected in teaching methods, as well as in the structure of lessons and programmes.“

**The second, totally different approach** is expressed by Walter Leirman. He says, that there are no essential differences between adult and children education: “adults are “self-responsible, independent, experienced, creative,” etc., whereas children do not (yet) have these qualities. Both empirical research into the nature and the principles of human learning or into socialisation and theoretical reflection concerning the relationship between person-community and the teacher learner have led to strong doubts as to the well-foundedness and the radicality of that difference. The basic fact here is the criticism of the Kantian model of education.

All this also implies that the so-called boundaries between pedagogy as “science of the education of the child” and “andragogy” as “science of the education of adults” have become blurred. There are, of course, psychological and social differences between children and adults, but they are differences in degree along the same scales. For us, andragogy is an integrative part of pedagogy.” (Walter Leirman, 1993, p. 165–166).

Other researchers say, that there are differences in psychology of learning, methods of learning, the role of the tutor/teacher, but it is possible to overcome them. Liam Carey says, that in the psychology of learning “differences have been noted as

how children learn and how adults learn; the role of function of memory for children and adults may also vary; the use and function of life experience may differ in both cases, perhaps more dominant or obvious in the case of adult learning. However developmental and analytical psychology (perhaps more adult centred) have much to say as regards the learning needs of adults and the methods of adult learning.” Talking about methods (or methodologies) of learning and development Liam Carey says that “there may be differences in the past but today methods of adult learning are being more frequently used in pedagogical activities (e.g. group discussion, field work, experiential learning activities, case study, portfolios and learning journals, critical reflection, self-directed learning, etc.)”.

Describing the role of the tutor/teacher in both processes Liam Carey wrote: “until recently there were major differences between the teacher of children and the adult educator/tutor. But now one can identify a host of roles and functions which are common to both teachers. During the last fifteen years the complex and manifold roles of the adult educator have been tested and clarified. These have helped to humanize and inform the child-teacher as regard to how he/she should operate. Both tutors/teachers today are seen as resource persons, counsellors, subject experts, evaluators, change agents, facilitators, leaders and communicators, team workers, etc.”, (Liam Carey, 1993, p. 51).

**The third approach** – the compromise approach is expressed by American researcher Alan B. Knox: “there appears to be important similarities and differences between preparatory education of the young (pedagogy) and continuing education of adults (andragogy). In theory, these two

segments of lifelong learning should be interlinked and complimentary. In practice, they are often rivals for scarce resources. The similarities are fairly abstract and include the psychological process of learning and memory, and the pool of instructional methods from which both can select. I believe that there is a distinctive theory and practice of adult education. It is based on characteristics of adults as learners (learning abilities and needs, personality development, self-concept); on their interest in use of what they learn in their concurrent adult life roles, and in “why” questions as well as “what” and “how” questions; and on the plurality of educational opportunities for adults. It would strengthen the entire continuum of education of preparatory and continuing education were viewed as complimentary aspects of a lifelong process and not as competitors.

English researcher and editor Peter Jarvis (1992) describes the same approach: “I am not convinced that there should be a separate theory of andragogics, although I do believe that there should be specialist institutes, to research and promote the education of adults because we do need special advocacy. I do not think that andragogics and pedagogics should ever be rivals – they are not so in this country, but I do think that we need to create a constructive dialogue with scholars of pedagogics so that we can create a genuine theory of lifelong education.”

Cyril O. Houle describes lifelong learning as a process, which is started in childhood and is going through all life: “my own conception, based on the underlying idea of lifelong education is that each human goes through many broadly definable stages from birth to death, each of which is relevant to his or her learning potential and pattern.

When we examine a large number of such people, we find a general succession of stages. Each analyst tends to define a distinctive way of counting and defining them, thus Jung had four, Erikson had eight, and other analysts have proposed other sequences. Broadly surveyed, however, they are essentially congruent. It seems more useful to think in such terms than to try to mark out human life as having only two stages.”

To our understanding adult education is the largest part of lifelong learning, which is starting in the childhood, when child is learning to understand and to change his environment and in this process he is developing his own knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes, and this process stops together with the end of the life of individual.

The bridge among pedagogy and andragogy is lifelong learning and aim of it is human development, which leads to the development of the society and all mankind.

The term “learning” means “growing”, according Maslow (1970, 1971, 1972), Rogers (1983, 1986, 1987), and we would like to agree with them. This growing is lifelong process. Adult personality is growing personality, too. The personality is growing, developing attitudes, values, news motives of learning and always is looking for news ways of self-actualisation.

So adult education is responsible to answer to the needs of growing personality and to help to grow the all “learning” society and this is the only way of achievement of democratic, educated and developed industrial country. This is a way of any country in transition, and at first of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. And these countries are developing their adult education, they are trying to prepare

their people to the positive attitude to lifelong learning, but every country is going his own way, looking for his own ways of reaching this aim.

**II. General situation in Central and East European Countries before political, cultural and economical changes.** The countries of Central and Eastern Europe can be more reliably identified if we call them European countries which used to have a centrally planned Socialist (or Communist) order. Their share is accordingly – at least in quantitative terms – far more significant than it would appear at first sight. “The area includes 21 nations, 13 of them of Slavic origin. Since the collapse of Communist rule, these states have been undertaking lively restructuring, not only politically and economically, but also in their national and governmental-legal identity”, describes Polturzycki [55, p. 348]. A few new states, not previously (at least in the last 45 years) independent (the countries of the former Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia) have arisen, while some states have regained their former independence (Baltic countries occupied by Soviets). In order to bring about these changes, some of them (Croatia) resorted to military means. Regardless of all the linguistic, national, cultural, economic, geographical and other differences among the countries, all of them after the Second World War came from part of so-called Eastern bloc, which fatefully shaped their internal system and activities for almost half a century.

**Introduction to market economy.** Such a form of state organisation was characterised by low productivity and an unsuccessful economy, and this substantial contributed to its downfall. As guaranteed employment, guaranteed basic social and health-care rights for all conforming citizens, access to

basic education for all, and for many among them, also access to higher education free of charge. There were no competition to get the job. Professional career of the individual depended not on his or her competence but on the ideological criteria. "The states on which this social order was imposed, regardless of their past varied in degrees of their development (some, for example Czechoslovakia, were among the most developed in the World) finished this "dark" period as less developed states compared to Western European countries. In all the countries affected, this period interrupted the normal course of development, and advancement of their own culture and their own economic trends. It interrupted their integration into "Europe", and caused divisions in communications and a retardation of socio-historical developments" [23, p. 38].

This situation orientated the economy of Central and Eastern European countries to fulfil the needs of Soviet and Eastern bloc "socialist" market. Baltic states as well as other Eastern and Central European countries lost their contacts with the rest of the world, but different that they were oriented to fulfil only needs, which were planned in Moscow and for Soviet needs. All labour forces in Baltic countries were more or less oriented to food industry, the development of such scientific areas as atomic physics, specialists of Nuclear Station, (which in Ignalina, Lithuania is one of the largest in Europe) and other fields were forbidden in spite of the fact that there were the best possibilities to study such fields in Lithuanian Universities.

So this is why it is difficult to recover from such isolation and retardation.

In the Period of changes which started in these countries since 1989 all Central and

East European Countries more or less are characterised by the introduction of a market economy; private property; restructuring of the labour market; concern for the development of production and new technology; competitiveness; deregulation of management and legislation; on going changes for the guaranteed civil rights and democratic participation in decision-making; introduction of a multiparty parliamentary democracy; bigger divisions across social classes; life according to the principles of personal responsibility; openness to the world; searches for ties with European organisations; internal regulations determined by the principles of the rule of law; guaranteed human rights for citizens; concern about environmental protection, and so on.

The changes are ongoing from the command economic system which ensures jobs for everybody, even in the firms with average or old-fashioned technology; from guaranteed social rights in predominantly large, state-owned enterprises, to the uncertainty of the market economy, where firms are quickly being set up, but also closing down; difficult and risky processes of restructuring; the emergence of the private economy; through the demand for new technology and the rash adaptation to them; through the new taxation system; through the new monetary and banking system.

From almost full employment (and thereby less responsible and consequently less difficult work) to rising unemployment, increased personal responsibility, difficult work and struggle for jobs. All these characteristics are common to all Central and Eastern European countries.

The idea of joining the European Community, based on traditional economi-

cal and trade ties, was easily accepted by different societies, especially in the area of social politics. There are many uncompromising leaders of associations and political parties, labour unions, and women's and youth organizations, who brought to life these ideals. These social workers were active in the social sector of the previous era and are also active in today's new structures. This idea is acceptable not only in Poland, but also in other Central and Eastern European countries.

**III. Changing values in the countries in transition.** Political, economical and cultural changes in Central and Eastern Europe changed psychological values of population, too. It is difficult for the adults to survive ongoing changes from full employment to raising unemployment, to the changing social structure of society. These feelings are clearly not pleasant—they have their positive as well as negative aspects, but they “cannot please anybody”, (Ratman-Liwerska, 1994), because the creation of market economy and the implementation of market reforms and new social order is based on private ownership and competition and this is frustrating society.

Some of researches of adult education these changes describes as “postcommunist schizophrenia”, caused by rapid changes in social status and the loss of past identity for all the people, quoting Šiklova (1993, p. 737).

From formed values people are on the searching for entirely new ones, but they cannot solve many social problems. In the vacuum of values and lack of orientation, socially negative outcomes are also possible.

The new economy is to be open to the world, autonomous, not conditioned by politics, and should take into account competition between many entities, which

replace monopolies, and which are regulated by market laws and the principles of rational functionality. In the area of reform of the political system, the perspective, which has been proven correct – West European models – have become dominant.

Reality causes problems stemming from inflation and unemployment. In an unbalanced situation between government policy and social aspirations conflicts of interest, frustration and rejection of recommended models occur. Theorists, as well as common citizens, are asking to what extent the reforms introduced lead to development. And another question: “Should we implement the democratic, liberal labourmarket model in a rapid, rigid, shock manner – even at the cost of social discontent? Or look for our own way?”

To answer to these questions we will try in this book. We hope, that only adult education can help for the country in transition to overcome these changing values to the more positive ones, to the trust for the future in the democratic, educated “lifelong learning” society. Answering to these questions at first we will define the scopes and understanding of the adult education in the different parts of the world and more detail will study the experience of ongoing changes in most developed countries in transition (in Slovenia) and compare it with the development and modernization of adult education in Estonia and Lithuania.

**IV. Scopes of Adult Education.** “Nowadays, adult education is offered new possibilities, both practical and theoretical. Social changes in Central and Eastern Europe are of crucial importance. It would be illusory to expect that these countries could achieve a democratic structure of public and private life overnight. It is

necessary to pay high price for “mastering” freedom and to develop the appropriate abilities for participation in the formation of a new society at all levels. This is challenge and unique opportunity for adult education. The implementation of freedom and self-determination gives birth to a new type of needs. Responsibility can not be left to future generations, it should be taken by adults today”, writes Paul Lengrand [39, p. 169].

Why do we speak about adult education? Why one of UNESCO leaders so crucial importance put on adult education? What are the scopes and possibilities of adult education? What does it mean “adult education” for other countries and other experts of the field? We will try to answer to these questions in this part of the book.

In the United States adult education primarily is involved in helping people to adapt to existing circumstances, new realities, new information, new jobs. The federal government of the USA is responding to the needs of society. If we look the history of adult education in USA, we will see, that Smith Lever Act in 1916 created the Cooperative Extension Service. It enlisted the cooperation of the federal, state and every country government to provide agriculture and home economics information to adults.

The different programs for adult education have been developed and supported by the government such as Americanization program of World War I, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program, the War Manpower Commission, World War II and the GI Bill following World War II. There have been other programs in the private sector such as Omnibus Series, the Great Books Program. There were developed programmes for

minorities, women and etc. All these activities have given the freshness to adult education. It has been alert to utilize new techniques (radio, TV, computers, etc.) to attract adults to participate in adult education programs.

When we talk about adult education programmes in developing countries, at first we will notice the programmes for illiteracy and this is understandable. Majority of population in India, Africa, other developing countries are illiterated, but when we talk about such country as a France for example, we will never think about illiteracy. Nevertheless, Paul Lengrand [39], talking about adult education in France, noticed: “The area of adult education concerns the fight against illiteracy. In France, as in other industrial countries, research findings have confirmed the high number of illiterates (reading and writing illiteracy). The authorities have declared the launch of a state campaign against the evil called illiteracy. Both the immigrant and native-french population with deficiencies in formal basic knowledge are included.” So even industrial countries have more and more programmes how to help adult to overcome the gaps of formal education. The both sectors of adult education – non-formal and semiformal are suitable to help adult to solve these problems. Recently even new form – associate sector – has been developed. It deals with a variety of groups, – from local fisherman associations to the associations of supporters of the Helsinki document. In the system of adult education, these associations participate with interests other than adult education. But in spite of it, the associations were established on the basis of a common goal and the status of membership demands active participation and learning of all members. And so persons

are growing and strengthening the democracy of society.

There is another aspect of the possibilities of adult education nowadays. The life of individual prolonged. In industrialized countries, adult retire at the age of 60 and find themselves in the years, when work gives way to leisure time. What they are expected to do in this situation? How to avoid spending years in "false luxury"? The problem when many industrialized countries, for example, Germany has more adults, than children and youngsters and the development of age structure of the population is strengthening this trend all the time could be solved only by the adult education. And in these societies adult education gets a high priority in the education policy of the society.

The function of democratic society depends on the understanding and the cooperation of the majority of the people, it is public responsibility to care for adult learning facilities everywhere and for everybody, in spite of his (or her) age, knowledge, level of education, state of health and etc.

"Increasing failure of the political plans and activities largely stems from their lack of understanding of the consciousness of the people, any political progress will depend on a new emphasis on the development of knowledge, awareness, understanding, consciousness" (G. Dohmen, 1993, p. 68).

The other function of adult education is learning for peace – "as the rapid rise of nationalism, xenophobia, and fundamentalism leads to more and more hatred, cruelty and war, it is very important for the peaceful future of our planet that adult education is given all possible opportunities and support to promote tolerance, multi-cultural openness and delight in the rich

human cultural heritage, as well as to develop a sound balance to the necessary roots in familiar personal and social identities" (G. Dohmen, 1993, p. 68).

When we talk about industrial pollution and survival of mankind, we mean that the man should to turn away from industrial production, which through the consumption of energy and natural resources is destroying the planet and its environment. Man cannot stop the process, but he also cannot remain inactive. So the only way is to replace the industrial production by lifelong education. Solving these problems there are the other scopes for adult education.

The psychological scopes of adult education are to help person to grow as the personality, as a specialist, as a citizen, so that man as developing human being could learn, so that adult education was able to concern everybody. Each man represents a part of society and has his responsibilities, duties and rights. If everybody will be learning and growing, the society will be learning and growing.

## Conclusions

So summarizing the scopes of adult education we can say, that adult education is able to help to develop the following areas:

**1. Social and cultural development of society.** In every society (not only in the countries in transition) drastic social changes are taking place and society needs educational support for the adults who control it. Adult education is able to rich human cultural development.

**2. Scientific development of society.** Scientific and technological revolution is taking place in the society and every adult through the learning is able to continue to develop his knowledge, skills, attitudes and

abilities. Illiteracy or functional illiteracy programs forces adults to develop their scientific knowledge.

**3. Economical development of society.** Productivity has become a primary factor in success and growth of the individual and of the society. Worker knowledge, skills, abilities and productivity are interconnected and they are developing through adult education and learning.

**4. Political development of society.** Adult education could be designed to support

stable social order, multicultural openness, to learn for peace, democracy and tolerance, to help to solve industrial pollution problems, to increase political, environmental, cultural consciousness of the population.

**5. Psychological development of society.** Personal development of the learning individual helps him to receive satisfaction for his own personal growth and the expansion of adult education lead to a new "learning society".

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## Suaugusiųjų švietimo vaidmuo Rytų ir Centrinės Europos šalyse

### Santrauka

Straipsnio **tikslas** – išanalizuoti suaugusiųjų švietimo vaidmenį Rytų ir Centrinėje Europoje. **Tyrimo uždaviniai** – apibrėžti suaugusiųjų švietimo sampratą ir diferencijuoti pagrindinius požiūrius į suaugusiųjų švietimą, apibūdinti bendrąją situaciją Rytų ir Centrinėje Europoje, pereinant prie rinkos sąlygų, bei išanalizuoti besikeičiančias šių šalių gyventojų vertybines orientacijas; remiantis analize, pagal tam tikrus parametrus apibūdinti suaugusiųjų švietimo vaidmenį ir galimybes Rytų ir Centrinėje Europoje.

**Tyrimo metodas** – lyginamoji analizė.

Straipsnyje yra analizuojama suaugusiųjų švietimo samprata, išskiriant tris pagrindinius požiūrius:

1) pirmajam požiūriui atstovauja garsus andragogas Malcolmas S. Knowles [33], kuris taip apibrėžia suaugusiųjų švietimą, priešstatydamas jį vaikų mokymui: „Sąvoką *suaugusiųjų švietimas* aš suprantu kaip procesą, apimančią visas veiklas, kuriose dalyvauja subrendę vyrai ir moterys, norėdami įgyti žinių, įgūdžių, susiformuoti požiūrius, vertybes, interesus, bei institucijas, pasiruošusias patarnauti šiems suaugusiems mokiniam... Pedagogika ir andragogika yra du visai skirtingi procesai. Lankant mokyklą, joje dominuoja tik vienas ugdymo metodas – instrukcijos ir mokymas. Pedagogikoje yra mokykla, klasė, pamoka, instrukcijos... Suaugusiųjų švietime, kai mokymasis

mokykloje baigtas, ugdymas tampa labai įvairus: kinto jo turinys, forma, kryptys ir jis nėra subordinuotas į vieną atskirą, uždara sistemą. Suaugusiųjų švietimas gali apimti ir turizmą, ir gyvenimo mieste stilių. [...] Vaikų ugdymas mokykloje yra organizuotas pagal dalykus, kai tuo tarpu suaugusiųjų mokymasis darbo vietose yra organizuojamas pagal problemas (interdisciplininiu būdu). Vaikų ugdymas pirmiausia yra orientuotas į pažangumą, į klasės ar mokyklos baigmą. Suaugusieji mokosi, norėdami išspręsti iškilusias problemas, atsiradusias įgyvendinant jų planus. Vaikų mokymosi tikslas yra tolimoje ateityje, kai suaugusiųjų mokymasis yra *čia ir dabar*“.

2) antrajam požiūriui atstovauja Walteris Leirmanas, išreiškiantis priešingą nuomonę. Jis teigia, kad nėra esminių skirtumų tarp suaugusiųjų ir vaikų ugdymo ir labai abejoja pirmojo požiūrio idėjomis, kad tik suaugusieji yra „atsakingi, nepriklausomi, patyrę, kūrybiški“ ir t. t., o vaikai suvokiami kaip neturintys šių savybių.

3) trečiasis požiūris – tai kompromisas tarp abiejų kraštutinių nuomonių. Šiam požiūriui atstovauja Alanas B. Knoxas [35], neatmetantis skirtumų, bet randantis ir panašumų tarp pedagogikos ir suaugusiųjų tęstinio ugdymosi (andragogikos), ir Peteris Jarvis (1992), kuris teigia: „Aš nesu įsitikinęs, kad turėtų būti atskira andragogikos teorija. Aš manau, kad mes turėtume rasti konstruktyvų dialogą su pedagogikos tyrinėtojais, bandydami kurti tikrą nuolatinio ugdymo teoriją.“

Straipsnyje trumpai apibūdinama bendroji situacija Rytų ir Centrinėje Europoje, pabrėžiant, kad nepaisant lingvistinių, nacionalinių, kultūrinių, ekonominių, geografinių ir kitų skirtumų, visos šios šalys patyrusios ekonominį ir politinį priklausomumą vadinamajam Rytų blokui ir taip kūrusios savo vidinę sistemą beveik pusę amžiaus, dabar pereina prie rinkos sąlygų. Visose šiose šalyse, kaip pastebi dauguma autorių, iki 1989 metų nebuvo konkurencijos gauti darbą, profesinė karjera priklausė ne nuo individualios kompetencijos, bet nuo ideologinių kriterijų. Dabartiniu metu visos šios šalys siekia įstoti į Europos Sąjungą, ir spartūs pokyčiai, vykstantys šiose šalyse, iškelia naujas vertybes.

Vykstant visuomenės kaitai, plečiasi ir suaugusiųjų švietimo vaidmuo bei galimybės šiose Rytų ir Centrinės Europos šalyse.

**Išvados.** Suaugusiųjų švietimas gali padėti socialinei ir kultūrinei, ekonominei ir politinei mokslinei ir psichologinei visuomenės plėtrai. Tik suaugusiųjų švietimo dėka visuomenės nariai galės plėtoti savo įgūdžius, gebėjimus, žinias, formuoti požiūrius, įveikti funkcinį neraštingumą ir lavinti profesinius įgūdžius, gebėjimus bei didinti savo produktyvumą. Suaugusiųjų švietimas padės palaikyti socialinę tvarką, kultūrų atvirumą, taiką, demokratijos mokymąsi ir kartu padės įveikti pramoninį teršimą, skatins politinę, ekologinę, kultūrinę piliečių savimonę. Nuolat mokydamasis suaugusysis jaus pasitenkinimą, įgis pasitikėjimo savo jėgomis, augs kaip asmenybė ir padės formuoti „besimokančiai visuomenei.“