

Adult Students in the European Higher Educational Environment

Abstract. The paper considers the issue of accessibility of higher education for adults – the people of various ages and social status. The author analyzes the educational policy of the European Union and its different members, and demonstrates the priority of the given issue. The Bologna agreement involves the reforms aimed at guaranteeing the lifelong education at any level.

The interest to the adults education in the European Union results from the rising education requirements in the labor market; tough demographic situation and aging of professionals; redistribution of young people's educational preferences; prolonged educational programs; flexible and consistent adult education policies in the European Union. Various approaches to interpreting a definition of the adult student are analyzed; classification according to students' motivation and social status is given.

Keywords: higher education, adult student, adult education, the European Union.

References

1. Adults in Formal Education: Policies and Practice in Europe. European Commission, 2011 [Электрон. ресурс]. URL: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice>.
2. Davies P. Widening participation and the European Union: direct action – indirect policy? // European Journal of Education. 2003. Vol. 38 (1). P. 99–116.
3. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Action Plan on Adult Learning. Brussels 27.09.2007. European Commission, 2007.
4. Focus on Higher Education in Europe 2010: The Impact of the Bologna Process. European Commission, 2010 [Электрон. ресурс]. URL: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/122EN.pdf.
5. Higher Education Statistic Agency. Definitions. Age marker. [Электрон. ресурс]. URL: www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2379&Itemid=141.
6. Key Data on Education in Europe 2012 [Электрон. ресурс]. URL: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/978-92-9201-242-7/EN/978-92-9201-242-7-EN.PDF.
7. Lynch K. A Profile of Mature Students in Higher Education and An Analysis of Equality Issues [Электрон. ресурс]. URL: http://www.ucc.ie/publications/heeu/Mature/mature_8.htm.
8. McNair S. The invisible majority: adult learners in English higher education // Higher education quart. 1998. Oxford: N. Y., Vol. 52, № 2. P. 162–178.
9. Osborne M. Increasing or Widening Participation in Higher Education? – A European Overview // European Journal of Education. 2003. № 38 (1). P. 5–24.
10. Osborne M., Marks A. and Turner E. Becoming a mature student: How adult applicants weigh the advantages and disadvantages of higher education // Higher Education. 2004. Vol. 48, № 3. P. 291–315.
11. Powell R., Smith R., Reakes A. Defining common issues across Europe for adult education. Report National Foundation for Educational Research. London, 2003. 115 p.
12. Pre-study on the role of higher education institutions as providers of continuous professional learning and adult education [Электрон. ресурс]. URL: http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/doc/2011/higher_en.pdf.
13. Rautopuro J. and Vaisanen P. Non-traditional students at university: a follow-up study of young and adult students' orientations, satisfaction and learning outcomes.

Paper presented at the European Conference on Educational Research, Lille, 5–8 September 2001 [Электрон. ресурс]. URL: <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00001880.htm>.

14. Richardson J., King E. Adult students in higher education: Burden or Boon? // Journal of higher education. Columbus. 1998. Vol. 69, № 1. P. 65–88.

15. Student. Mature Student [Электрон. ресурс]. URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Student#Mature_students.

16. Tertiary education statistics. Eurostat [Электрон. ресурс]. URL: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Tertiary_education_statistics.