Funding

The main policy goals for funding Adult Education are outlined in the National Lifelong Learning Strategy [1] and can be summarized as follows:

- improvement of the legal framework in adult education in order to ensure and facilitate the implementation of the LLL concept and encourage participation of larger groups of the society in LLL activities (better access to Adult Education);
- setup of better structures for coordination with clear division of responsibilities on national, regional and local level;
- creating of various opportunities for formal, non-formal and informal learning according to the labour market needs;
- establishing a comprehensive and transparent system for validation of all types of learning outcomes - knowledge, skills and competences, including those acquired in a non-formal educational setting;
- encouraging the decentralization process in adult education management in terms of organization of the learning, quality assurance, validation agreements, lifelong guidance, information provision, etc.

The main sources for investments in adult education are:

- Public funding from the State budget. This is valid for the school system (esp. vocational schools), the cultural centers, a lot of the current programmes to retrain unemployed people, etc. One of the largest shares of the public budget for adult learning is the National Employment Action Plan which every year allocates millions of leva for various educational programmes.
- Funding by European programmes and the ongoing European structural funds. Concerning LLL and human resources, the European social fund is of special interest;
- Private funding trough fees paid by training participants themselves, or by the employers who want to invest in the qualification of their employees.

One of the main aims of educational policies is to improve literacy among adults. For those purposes the following activities are receiving funding:

- Programs for improving adult literacy;
- Programmes with courses which offer educational support for adults in order for them to complete basic education;
- Developing instruments for validation and certification of basic education;
- Organising explanatory activities for adult education;
- Qualification of teachers for adult education;
Specifically funded goals include:

- Ensuring organized and methodical training of illiterate and poorly literate people over 16 years old;
- Involving illiterate and poorly literate persons (over 16 years old, who have not completed primary stage of basic education) in educational activities;
- Certifying people completing such programmes in order to facilitate their access to the labor market.

Funding is also available for programmes and activities tackling adult literacy. These include:

- Literacy training;
- Developing instruments for validation and certification;
- Additional qualification of teachers for adult education;

Adult education/training can be provided by schools, universities and centres for vocational training. When these institutions provide training for individual or group learners, who are not involved in organised training funded by MEYS or MLSP, they have to supply themselves the budget necessary for carrying out the training (usually through fees).

### Fees Paid by Learners

Learners who are educated/trained through MEYS or MLSP programmes for adult literacy do not pay fees. When education/training is not under activities funded by MEYS or MLSP, it is presumed that learners pay fees. The fee is payable to the institution or organisation providing the education/training. That organisation is responsible for determining the exact fee.

According to the Public Education Law [2], fees are payable for:

- activities outside of the state educational requirements in state or municipal schools and service units
- vocational education after completed secondary education

According to the Vocational Education and Training Law [3], vocational schools and centres for vocational education gather fees for training individual learners and corporate bodies.

### Financial Support for Adult Learners

The main source of support to adult learners are the European funds such as Lifelong Learning Programme [4] and the National Operative Programme Human Resources Development [5].

As of 2012, there is funding for providing scholarships for adult learners. There is one for class attendance and another one for successful graduation. To encourage class attendance, travel expense can sometimes be reimbursed as well.

### Private Education

Adult educational private institutions are centres for vocational education, which are independent and attract funding themselves. That is why they are financially autonomous when it comes to spending their budgets.

Education and training can be provided by private schools and universities too. They are also financially independent concerning their budgets. Despite that, they are obliged to follow the
obligatory programmes and requirements set by MEYS concerning the content of education and training.

Centres for vocational education determine learners’ fees themselves, depending on the professional field of the training and the necessary budget for providing good quality education/training.