

Welcome to the International Workshop

# Civil Society and Adult Education – Traditions, practices and shaping a „new normal“

hosted by Katarina Popović, DAAD Visiting Professor  
at the Professorship for Adult & Continuing Education,  
University of Würzburg

28 May 2021

## INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP | 28 MAY 2021

moderated by Prof. Dr. Katarina Popović,  
DAAD Visiting Professor at University of Würzburg

### CIVIL SOCIETY AND ADULT EDUCATION - TRADITIONS, PRACTICES AND SHAPING A „NEW NORMAL“ -

University of Würzburg, together with International Council for Adult Education, aims the exploration of the role of civil society in adult learning in education, taking a closer look at different contexts, challenges and restrictions current crises imposes on civil society, and its potential to help shaping “new normal” aligned with the human rights commitments and principles of justice and equity.

#### OPENING REMARKS

*Regina Egetenmeyer,*  
*Professor at University of Würzburg*  
*Roberto J. Guevara, ICAE President*

09:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (CET)

#### WHAT IS CIVIL SOCIETY?

##### Origin, emergence, transformations and the current role of civil society

*Christophe Aguiton, Professor at Université Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée,*  
*Researcher at Orange Labs, founder of Attac France, Paris*  
*Katarina Popović Professor at University of Belgrade and*  
*DAAD Visting Professor at University of Würzburg, ICAE Secretary General*

##### Modern civil society and adult education – a fight in a global spaces

*David Archer, Head of Participation and Public Services at ActionAid,*  
*Board member of the Global Campaign for Education*  
*Ricarda Motschilnig, Policy and Advocacy Officer, ICAE*

#### WHAT DOES CIVIL SOCIETY MEAN AROUND THE WORLD?

2:30 p.m. - 17:30 p.m. (CET)

##### Civil society - the main pillar of adult learning and education in Asian context

*The Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education*

##### Civil society – a recognised partner in adult learning and education in Sweden and Nordic countries

*Cecilia Palm, Secretary General of Folkuniversitetet, Stockholm,*  
*ICAE Executive Committee Member*

#### CLOSING REMARKS

*Katarina Popović, Professor at University of Belgrade and*  
*DAAD Visting Professor at University of Würzburg, ICAE Secretary General*

Venue: Zoom\* - Registration (until May 22nd): [lifelong.education@uni-wuerzburg.de](mailto:lifelong.education@uni-wuerzburg.de)

\*By participating, you agree that the workshop may be recorded. The recordings are used for academic and research purposes only.



## Opening Remarks

**Univ.-Prof.´in Dr. phil. Regina Egetenmeyer**

Professorship for Adult &  
Continuing Education,  
University of Würzburg

**Associate Prof. Roberto Guevara, PhD**

President of the International  
Council of Adult Education



# Opening Remarks

we are



[www.we-are-ale.org](http://www.we-are-ale.org)



Jose Roberto Guevara  
President, ICAE  
A/Professor, RMIT University





Session 1: Origin, emergence,  
transformations and the current role  
of civil society

**Christophe Aguiton**

Guest Speaker

**Prof. Dr. Katarina Popović**

DAAD Visiting Professor,  
Professorship for Adult &  
Continuing Education,  
University of Würzburg



# Session 1: Origin, emergence, transformations and the current role of civil society

## Q&A + Discussion:

I have a very general and open question: What is the definition of „civil society“? Or your definition of civil society.

I have two questions: If education and access to digital Technologies today is influencing the Formation of Civil Society, isn't this causing the Civil Society today to be very exclusive? 2. How is Covid-19 impacting the Civil Society?

How can civil society movements successfully fight back authoritarian regimes trying to monopolize education and trainings? Or is a „new normal“ too weak to allow people reconfigure autonomy and freedom for their own needs?



## Session 2: Modern civil society and adult education – a fight in a global spaces

**David Archer**

Guest Speaker

**Ricarda Motschilnig**

Guest Speaker

# Modern civil society and adult education - a fight in a global spaces

**Ricarda Motschilnig, Policy and Advocacy Officer**  
International Council for Adult Education (ICAE)

## Advocacy for Adult Education at the UN - High Level Political Forum (HLPF)



## Key role of Civil Society in 2030 Agenda

=> Major and other Stakeholder groups are the main channel

## Major Groups

- Women
- Children and Youth
- Indigenous Peoples
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Local Authorities
- Workers and Trade Unions
- Business and Industry
- Scientific and Technological Community
- Farmers

## Other stakeholders

- Education and Academia SG
- SG on Ageing
- SG on Persons with disabilities
- SG on Volunteer groups
- Civil Society Financing for Development (FfD) Group
- Together 2030
- Sendai Stakeholder Mechanism
- LGBTI SG
- SG of Communities Discriminated by Work and Descent
- Asian Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism
- ECE-RCEM
- ARMMGoS

## Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS)

- self-organised through the MGoS HLPF **Coordination Mechanism (CM)** and its **Sub-Groups**
- **Led by UNDESA/Division for Sustainable Development**

UN GA  
Resolution  
67/290 ensures  
the rights of  
MGoS as  
follows:

To attend all official meetings of the forum

To attend preparatory meetings of the Forum

To intervene in official meetings

To submit documents and present written and oral contributions

To make recommendations

To organize side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat

## Education and Academia Stakeholder Group

- Set up in 2016 - wish to advocate for SDG 4
- working for the realization of the right to a quality education
- implementation of Agenda 2030 and of SDG 4 in particular
- the engagement with the monitoring and review of the SDGs
- **OPEN GROUP:** all interested organisations, human rights-based education and academia organisations: [www.educationacademia.org](http://www.educationacademia.org) , [contact@educationacademia.org](mailto:contact@educationacademia.org)

## EASG since 2016 at the ECOSOC HLPF

- ⇒ its about influencing policy by effective and meaningful participation in UN policy spaces
- ⇒ Through coordinated advocacy at all levels
- ⇒ Developing messages
- ⇒ Raising awareness of critical education issues

In particular at: HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## Goals under review in 2021

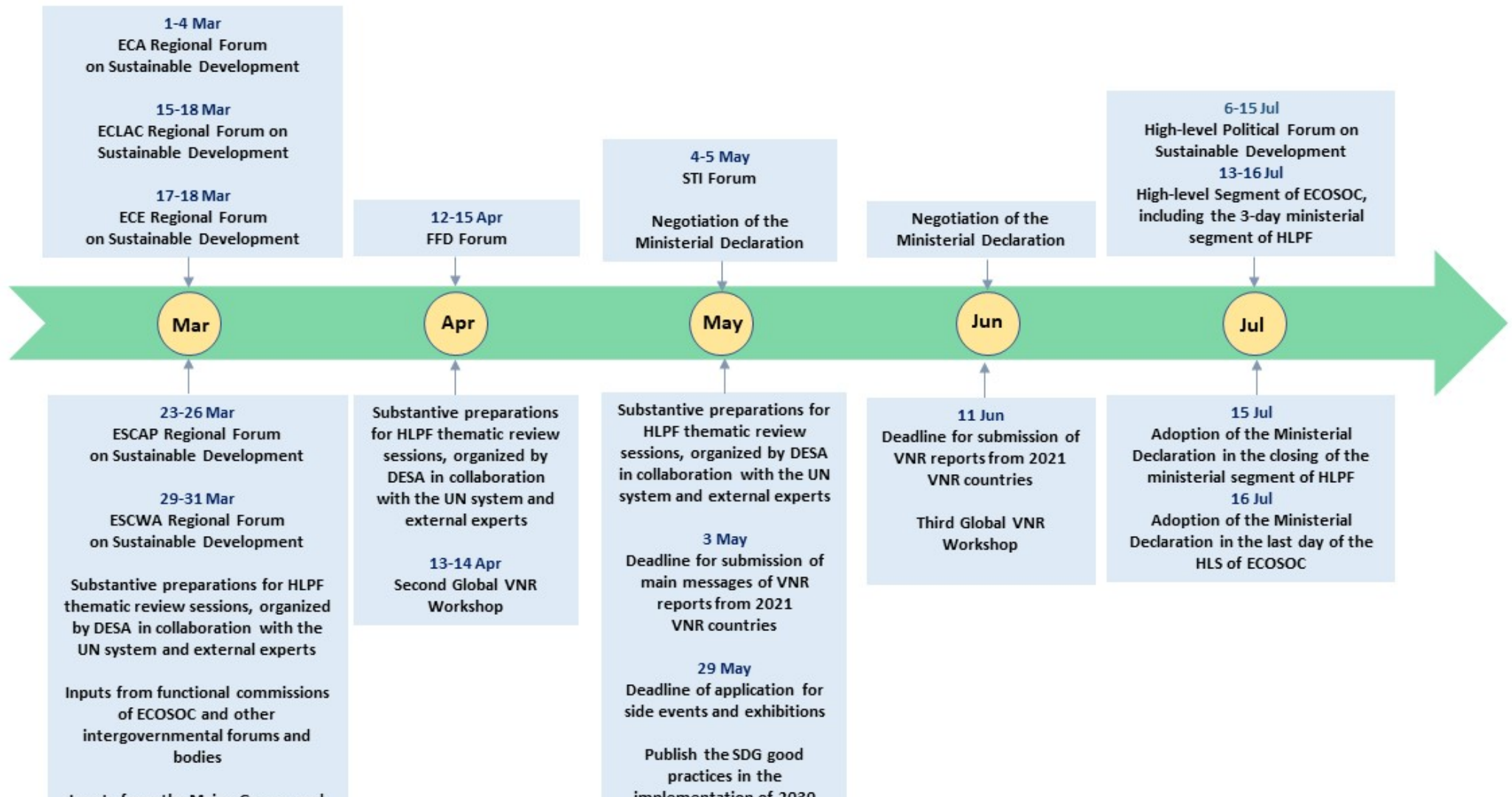
- SDG 1 on no poverty
- SDG 2 on zero hunger
- SDG 3 on good health and well-being
- SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth
- SDG 10 on reduced inequalities
- SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production
- SDG 13 on climate action
- SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions
- SDG 17 on partnerships

# HLPF 2021, 6 July- 15 July 2021

“Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”



# 2021 HLPF TIMELINE



## Regional Forums for Sustainable Development

Forum	dates, venue, format
Economic Commission for Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development	1-4 March 2021, Brazzaville, Republic of Congo (hybrid)
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Forum on Sustainable Development	15-18 March 2021, Costa Rica (virtual)
Economic Commission for Europe Regional Forum on Sustainable Development	17-18 March, 2021, Geneva (hybrid)
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Regional Forum on Sustainable Development	23-26 March 2021, Bangkok (hybrid)
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Regional Forum on Sustainable Development	29-31 March 2021, Beirut (hybrid)

## Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)

- Cover all SDGs and their progress at national levels and circumstances
- Following guidelines by UN Secretary
- Members state led
- Should include relevant all relevant partners and stakeholders

### ACTION:

- ⇒ CSO consultation in preparation of VNRs
- ⇒ Speakers/Representatives of VNR countries at HLPF (2 min Statement - written in a collaborative procedure weeks ahead of the HLPF!!)

## 44 VNRs to HLPF 2021

1 <sup>st</sup> time Presenters (10)	2 <sup>nd</sup> time Presenters (25)		3 <sup>rd</sup> time Presenters (9)
Angola	Bahamas	Madagascar	Azerbaijan
Antigua & Barbuda	Bhutan	Malaysia	Colombia
Bolivia	Cabo Verde	Namibia	Egypt
Cuba	Chad	Norway	Guatemala
DPRK	China	Pakistan	Indonesia
Djibouti	Cyprus	Paraguay	Mexico
Marshall Islands	Czech Republic	Slovakia	Qatar
Myanmar	Denmark	Spain	Sierra Leone
Nicaragua	Dominican Republic	Sweden	Uruguay
San Marino	Germany	Thailand	
	Iraq	Tunisia	
	Japan	Zimbabwe	
	Lao PDR		

## EASG position papers & CS Parallel/Shadow reports

- MGoS CM provide **officially recognized thematic sectoral position papers** before the HLPF
- HLPF process does not recognize formally the status of the parallel reports
- MGoS CM is fighting for that recognition

### **ACTION:**

- ⇒ **EASG thematic sectoral position papers**
- ⇒ **Shadow reports (either sectorial or regional)**

## (ACTION) spaces in NY at the HLPF

- ⇒ Speakers: for thematic reviews, VNR Statements and MGoS events and sessions
- ⇒ Side events
- ⇒ Cooperation with member states/governments and other MGoS
- ⇒ Exhibitions, receptions ...
- ⇒ Preparations BEFORE and during the HLPF: sub-groups, meetings, mouth to mouth, etc.

## Lessons learned

- Few countries have taken a ‘whole of society’ approach
- Participation and Engagement of MGoS varies much:
  - on member states level
  - during HLPF (interventions and contributions) depend on “good will”
  - depends on UN DESA as well
- Threats and intimidations of CS representatives
- Identify key member states which champion your interest
- Collaborate with other players that share your agenda

## Concluding from our experiences, there are still many challenges!

- main challenge => involvement of CSOs and MGoS in the processes
- opportunities for engagement are still limited, even though Agenda 2030 foresees meaningful participation of civil society
- What is our “impact”?
- Education is still a “small voice” in UN



## HOWEVER:

- HLPF, MGoS CM and SG are the **multilateral space** we can connect, expand our messages
- **our collective voices are heard**
- took CS many years to win the space in UN and to formalise it
- improve the space we have
- we need to connect with other sectors
- strategic thinking, long-term, well-coordinated actions and PATIENCE are needed

## Advocacy at Global Level is demanding!

- Results of advocacy works is not seen immediately
- Goals are “high” and decision makers and places are “distant”
- work even closer and more **intensively on the national and regional level** => make meaningful achievements on the global level possible
- **CM, ICAE´ s and EASG´ s role is to facilitate the connections** of the national level to the regional and to the global = ICAE Capacity building for national and local policy makers

Because we need and want a  
world of many voices!

**Ricarda Motschilnig**

**International Council for Adult Education**  
Conseil International de l'éducation des adultes  
Consejo Internacional de Educación de Adultos

[www.icae.global](http://www.icae.global)  
[policy@icae.global](mailto:policy@icae.global)

## Further Links:

- ICAE [www.icae.global](http://www.icae.global)
- EASG <http://www.educationacademia.org>
- Official UN DESA website:  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>
- Livestream of UN events: <http://webtv.un.org>
- Major Groups and other Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism:  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/majorgroups/hlpf>



## Session 2: Modern civil society and adult education – a fight in a global spaces

### Task:

Please join the working groups in the breakout rooms with at least five other participants in order to discuss the following:

1. Share some examples of successful "fights" you have won for adult education.
2. What are the most important advocacy spaces for advancing adult education in your regions or countries?
3. How can we most effectively connect the struggle for adult education with wider struggles for social and economic justice?

Use the Etherpad to note down your thoughts. Afterwards we will present and discuss some of the outcomes from the working groups.



## Session 2: Modern civil society and adult education – a fight in a global spaces

### Results:

Room 1:

Room 2: We can't really remember wins, but there are lots of losses (e.g. in the budget); mass media as an important advocacy space in adult education (for adequate awareness and mobilizations)

Room 3: We believe that we have an active and reflective civil society platform as EAEA, a digital platform of EPAL and that the EU has become engaged in the development of Agenda in ALE - it is a certain success. Also, Erasmus programme to have integrated project calls on ALE and its dimensions is a certain level of success.



## Session 2: Modern civil society and adult education – a fight in a global spaces

### Results:

Room 4: one area that could effectively connect that struggle of adult education to the wider struggle for social and economic justice is to engage the electorate in mass political education to enrich them with the knowledge required to vote right and hold accountable those at the aim of social and economic affairs of my dear country. Another the struggle for adult education is based on combating the situations of hardship and poverty from which most of the world's social and economic injustices arise. the principles of adult education involve people and society from the earliest years of their education, but only when most if not all people can benefit from forms of education, do not live in situations of educational poverty, can one think about achieving they will not experience situations of educational poverty, then it will be possible to think about achieving equity between educational, social and economic conditions throughout the world.



## Session 2: Modern civil society and adult education – a fight in a global spaces

### Q&A + Discussion:

A question referring to the gap in between Public opinion and current capacities of public policy in the light of civil Society trying to make states /govts to work for welfare and well-being – with a scope to internationalisation?

Because I could not introduce our small "fight" at the group discussion. I would introduce here. I and three unstable staff of Adult Education made research on the working conditions suffered from Covid19 and made a open message to get recognition for profetionality and stable working condition of adult education workers. We wrote it not only for goverments ans private employers but also adult education workers ans resident learners who are supported form adult education workers although they may not recognized.

Response to the third question: One area that could effecively connect the struggle of adult education to the wider struggle for social and economic justice is to engage the electorate in Mass political education to enrich the with the knowloedge required to vote right and hold accountable those at the aim of social and economics affairs of my dear country, Nigeria.





## Session 2: Modern civil society and adult education – a fight in a global spaces

### Q&A + Discussion:

I presume we also have to adress civil Society groups be involved in the discourse on better financing and using effective and supportive financial incentives, tools etc. to be intensively shared by member states and candidate country represnatatives ans practitioners at the planned Fall 2021 European Presidency Conf on ALE. We ust do NO have to reinvent the Wheel, just learn from good practices.

David Archer: FYI – this is the toolkit on tax justice we are using in adult learning – about the updated: <https://actionaid.org/publications/2016/tax-power-campaign-reflection-action-toolkit>

In Nigeria the Southern part especially have not gained much recognition on adult education and most practitioners maintain themselves. The Government has very low budget for adult education. And those that head parastatals are not professionals hence there is a need for advocacy and empowerment!



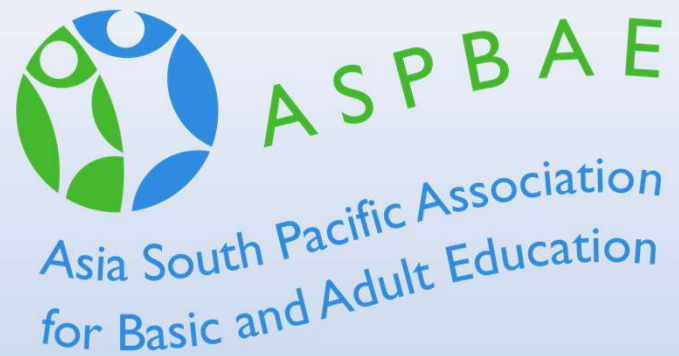
## Session 3: Civil society - the main pillar of adult learning and education in Asian context

**Nani Zulminarni**

Guest Speaker

**Anita Borkar**

Guest Speaker



# **Civil society as the main pillar of Adult Learning and Education in the Asia Pacific context**

The Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) is a regional network of more than 200 civil society organisations and individuals operating in around 30 countries of the Asia-Pacific region

ASPBAE works towards promoting the right to quality education and transformative and liberating lifelong adult education and learning for all

ASPBAE lobbies with governments to uphold education as an empowering tool to combat poverty and all forms of exclusion and discrimination, enable active and meaningful participation in governance, and build a culture of peace and international understanding

## **About ASPBAE**

**INEQUALITY**

**SHRINKING  
DEMOCRATIC SPACES**

## **Context of ALE**

**NATURAL  
DISASTERS**

**UNEMPLOYMENT**

**The existing inequality in the region has also been exacerbated by the impact of COVID. The UNESCAP (2021) SDG progress report estimates that Asia and the Pacific will experience a greater impact of COVID-19 on poverty than any other region of the world.**

**POVERTY**

**CONFLICT**

## ALE is poorly financed

According to the GEMR, 1 in 4 countries do not meet the benchmark of 4-6% of GDP on education, or 15-20% of public expenditure to education. ALE fares even worse.

There is a chronic lack of reliable data on youth and adult education

The discourse in the global policy platforms on education and development is shaped to a large extent by issues around funding

Years of neglect and low funding has relegated adult education to a perception of sub-standard, poor quality education, low in prestige.

ALE is complex to deliver and manage. It doesn't offer 'outcomes' that are easy to explain and count.

ALE has less champions but:  
Adult education advocates in civil society are organised and positioned well in several SDG-SDG 4 policy spaces



# CSO ALE Practices in Asia Pacific

- Azad Foundation video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkRgfFbWluk>

Azad Foundation is a **professional feminist organization** working since **2008**, to enable **resource poor women** to earn a “**livelihood with dignity**” by engaging them in **non- traditional livelihood (NTL)** options



## CONTEXT

Women constitute 48.2% of the total population

Women's literacy rate 65%

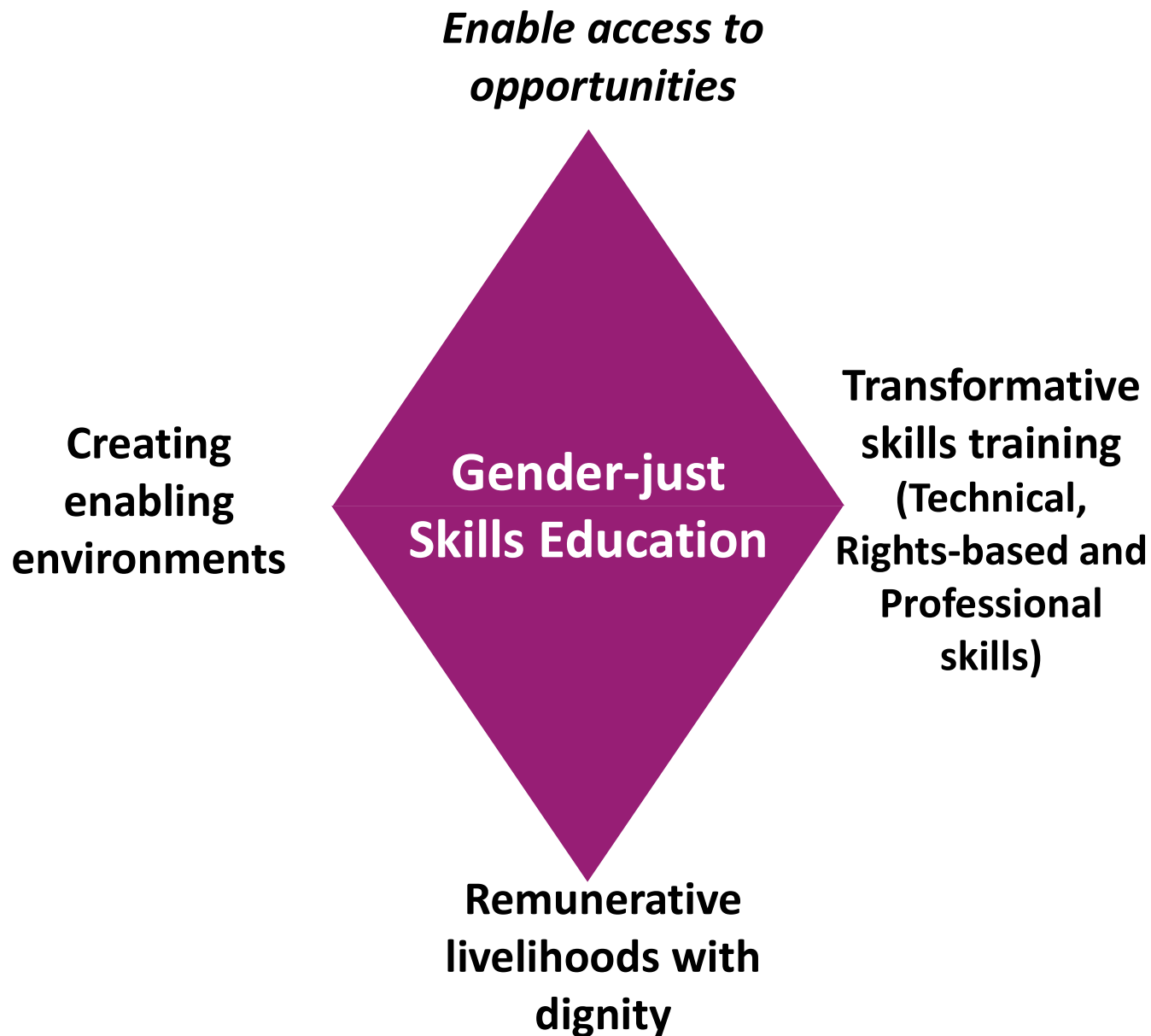
Women from marginalized communities have higher incidence of illiteracy as compared to the rest of the population

1 in every 3 women face violence in their lifetime

Restricted mobility, household work negatively impact women's education and work

Women in low paid informal jobs

Despite growth in economy and focus on skill building women's participation in the work force has decreased to 24%



*Mere skill education does not bring sustainable change.*

*The resource poor women need to be equipped with the knowledge to interpret their context while learning new skills and take control of their lives*

*We call this the Gender Just Skill Education (GJSE) Framework*



REMUNERATIVE LIVELIHOODS WITH DIGNITY FOR RESOURCE POOR WOMEN



PRINCIPAL BREAD WINNER IN THEIR FAMILY; EMPOWERED DECISION MAKERS AT HOME



*'It was during my training only that I learnt that I could still study at my age. So I started studying again at 24 years and will be completing my graduation soon. Becoming a driver has helped me get 'wings' to fly, and I hope it will be for many others too.'*



INVESTMENTS IN HEALTH, EDUCATION, HOUSING LEADING TO INTERGENERATIONAL IMPACT

ABILITY TO LEAD VIOLENCE FREE LIVES



TRANSFORMATIVE CAPACITY BUILDING IN NON TRADITIONAL LIVELIHOODS (DRIVING)



OFFERING SAFE RIDES TO WOMEN AND MAKING PUBLIC SPACES SAFE



**pekka**

**Community Life Long Learning Center**



# AN ECOSYSTEM OF CHANGE

- Sustainable grant aid
- Support women's organizations for advocacy and capacity building
- Ensure the implementation of SDGs

**GOVERNMENT DONOR**

- Policy on marginalized women
- Sustainable programs and financing

**MARGINALIZED WOMEN**

- Be organized
- Explore resources for expanding their potential.
- Advocate for policies and budget
- Fact findings and data

*Community Organizing,  
Popular Education Technical  
assistant, Support system*

*Cooperation  
Support, linking and  
Bridging*

**CORPORATE**

- Capacity building marginalized women.
- Linking marginalized women up with the market,

**NGO - ACADEMIC**

- Tracking policies and program financing
- Advocate for policy and financing
- Cooperation with private sector for empowering marginalized women.
- Develop advocacy platforms for marginalized women

**PEKKA ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK**



TERIMA KASIH - THANK YOU

# • YOUTH-LED ACTION RESEARCH

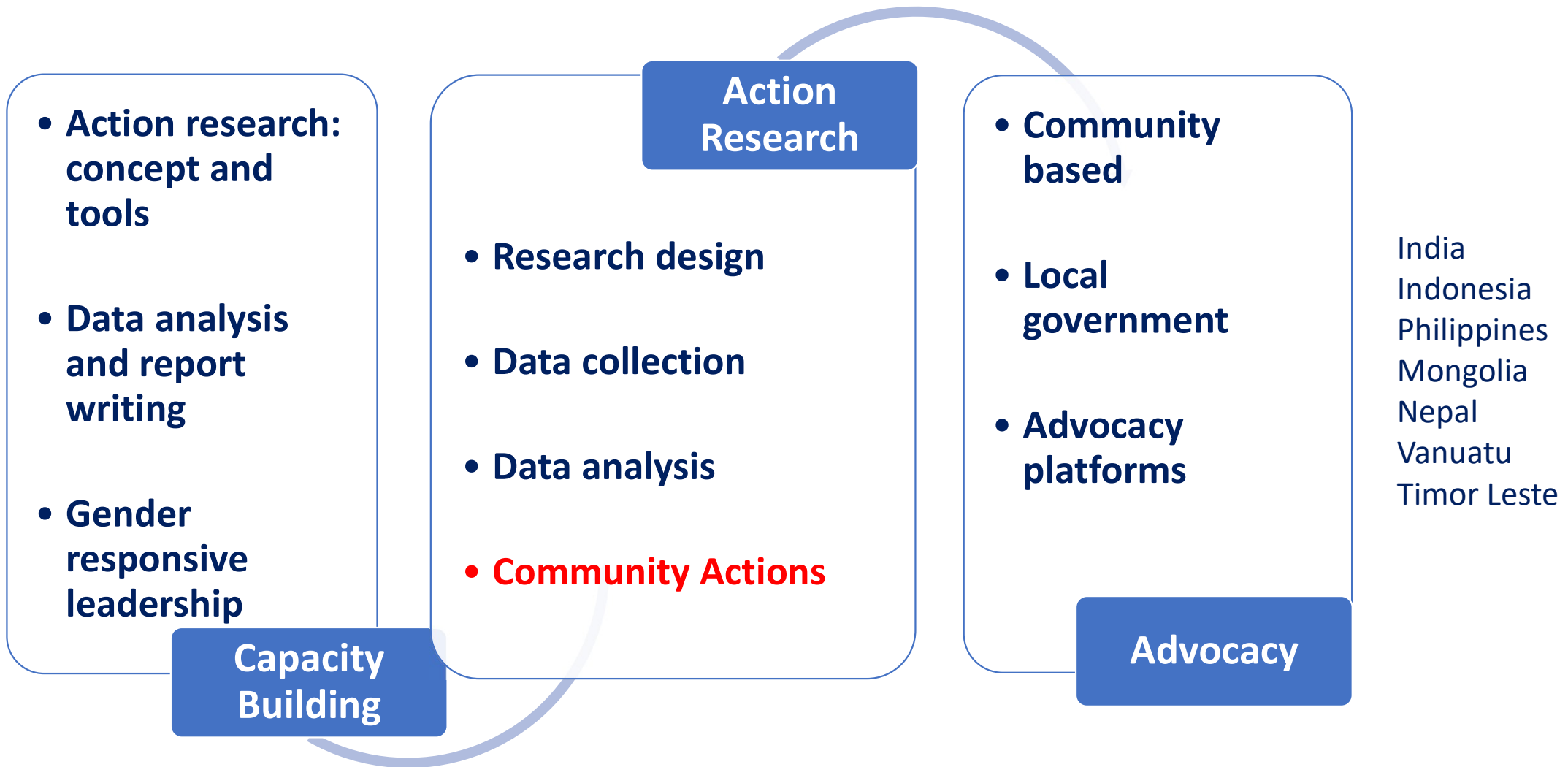
- Vanuatu video

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f5-SsUSAo0cWNh1tFNrwJm4JhJol\\_442/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f5-SsUSAo0cWNh1tFNrwJm4JhJol_442/view?usp=sharing)

**Use of research as a tool for collective intervention, for learning and advocacy and, enabling transformation in the lives of young people and their communities**



# The YAR process



# Outcomes of the Youth-led Action Research

Built an **identity** of marginalised young people as researchers, advocates and community leaders

Ability to **negotiate better** with their families – stall early marriages and go back to school

## **Co-create learning spaces for young people**

Community library for girls and women in India, construction of a CLC in the Philippines and a circle of young women to discuss community issues in Indonesia

**Producers of knowledge**, based on their own lived reality

## Manisha's video

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/19\\_93JO-J9VNJLec\\_HTOP4sKuDiezUtVW/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/19_93JO-J9VNJLec_HTOP4sKuDiezUtVW/view?usp=sharing)

# Applied Digital Literacy (AppDil)

## Nirantar

Women bought basic mobile phones – **knowledge leads to access**

Women started using **digital skills to strengthen their livelihoods** work

**Negotiated mobility, access and control** over their devices as well as finances

**Teachers and learners could connect and continue literacy activities during lock down period** – learners shared their experiences regarding burden of work, violence, children's education through letters, videos and audio recordings

**On-line forums** to build teachers perspective and capacity building

Basic Literacy & Numeracy skills +  
Digital Literacy + Leadership  
building

Audio-visual aids prepared by  
Nirantar based on the learners'  
needs and experiences

Real life exposure as part of  
pedagogy to build confidence to  
use technology

Technical skills and knowledge  
with a gender perspective

# Digital Literacy and COVID-19 Relief Work

Through a coalition network of 7 organizations, Nirantar reached out to people from most marginalized communities in 13 districts of 3 States in India

Reached out to over 160,000 families - through online as well as offline platforms

Connecting with women and girls in the field through video calls and whatsapp groups

Access to mobile phones helped deal with tensions in the families and communities, which included gender violence

# PRACTICE INFORMS POLICY

## CSO Recommendations for ALE



# Policy Development

- ALE policy which is well-informed by credible data and defined in the context of the needs of diverse learners, especially including marginalised communities
- Expand the limited definition of ALE
- Multi-stakeholder participation, including of CSOs in ALE policy and practice
- The learning loss of adults during the pandemic needs utmost attention



# Financing

- National and local governments should deliver on their commitment for ALE through adequate financing for ALE
- Increase investment and financing in ALE
- Need for Domestic Resource Mobilization in addition to ODA
- Prioritize ALE to strengthen the fight against the current and future health emergencies

# Access

- Address specific barriers for girls, people with disability, people from marginalised sections for convenient access of the public provisioning of ALE programmes
- Social mobilisation to extend participation from communities and people
- Widespread availability of information about ALE, especially on government's programmes
- Efforts to mitigate digital inequality

## Continuity, Content and Quality of Education

- Quality education should have transformative educational content, which will address pressing and emerging issues such as climate change, conflict, health, digital literacy, ageing population. In light of these emerging needs, we also need capacity building of ALE educators and government agencies
- Use of technology in a creative and sensitive way to make it inclusive for people with disability

## Capacity Strengthening

- Capacity strengthening of ALE institutions, trainers, local governments and other ALE supporting agencies
- To adopt appropriate strategies addressing challenges of unequal resource allocation, digital divide, etc. and the key lessons from diverse content and delivery of ALE programme

# Information Management

- Evidence-based research in ALE
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of ALE programmes
- Management of data and its availability for use in policy making & programme implementation

**we are**





## Session 3: Civil society - the main pillar of adult learning and education in Asian context

### Q&A + Discussion:

I sincerely like the way this presentation is linking us to the reality of people's situation under the project assisted ASPBAE. Thanks to all who involve the organization of this workshop. Thank you very much for these great insights into the work of ASPBAE!

I really enjoyed your input on the ecosystem approach for change! Thank you – it was inspiring!

Thank you, my question is on what type of advice could you please give to a situation in my country (Nigeria) with regards to civil society engagement, in respect to a group of internally displaced persons to help reintegrate them into their normal life?



Session 4: Civil society – a recognised partner in adult learning and education in Sweden and Nordic countries

**Cecilia Palm**

Guest Speaker

**Prof. Dr. Katarina Popović**

DAAD Visiting Professor,  
Professorship for Adult &  
Continuing Education,  
University of Würzburg



# Civil society and adult education in Sweden and the Nordic countries

Cecilia Palm

Secretary General, Folkuniversitetet

Member of the ICAE Executive committee

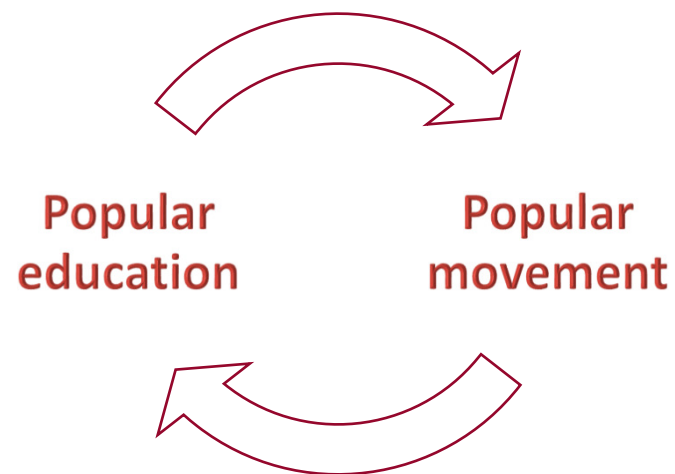
May 2021

# Folkbildning/popular education in the north

- Regulated by law and/or ordinance in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden
- Public funding in various degrees
- 29 recognized study associations
- 386 folk high schools

# The history of folkbildning

- Popular movements and folkbildning grew forth together
- Libraries and lecture associations
- 1844 – the first Folk High School in Denmark
- 1894 – the first Study association in Sweden
- 1903 – the study circle as we know it today



# Folkbildning and civil society

- A *cumulative* relationship between voluntary work and participation in folkbildning
  - 77 % of study circle participants are also voluntary workers (compared to 53 % of the population in general)

”Mer engagemang? Folkbildningen i det svenska civilsamhället” Study from Folkbildningsrådet 2015, written by researchers from Ersta Sköndal Högskola

- **75 %** of Swedes 16-84 years were members of at least one association (2020)
- The Study associations cooperate with more than **10 000** other associations

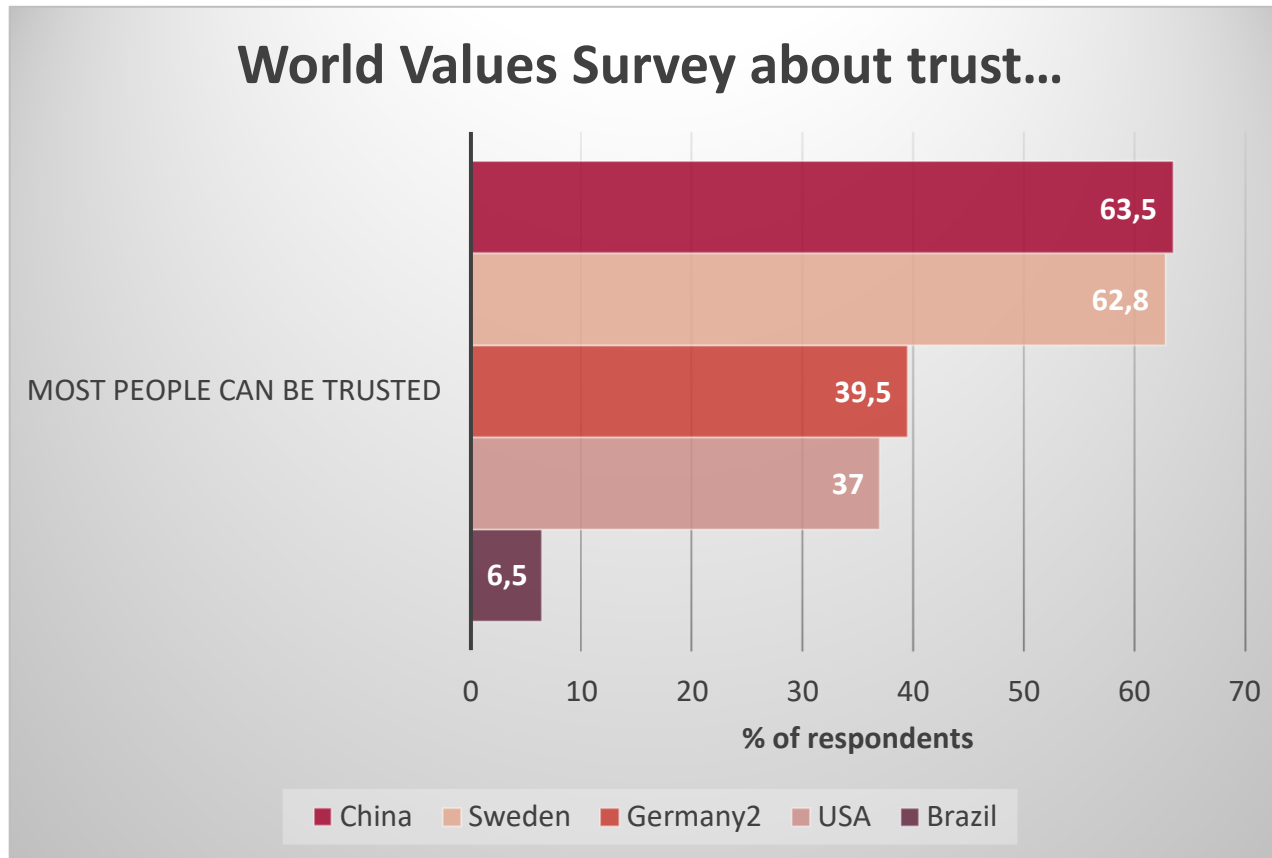
Stockholms Universitet



Popular  
education

Popular  
movement





WWS Wave 7: 2017-2020

# Folkbildning – for lifelong learning

- Part of the liberal non-formal educational system
- Free from detailed national control
- Open to everyone (i.e. adults)
- Always voluntary
- Participants influence the content
- Learning and social interaction go hand in hand
- Contributes to strengthening of civil society through close cooperation with NGOs



# The purpose of folkbildning is to...

- ...strengthen and develop **democracy**
- ...enable a diversity of people to **influence** their life situation and participate in society
- ...to **bridge educational gaps** and raise the level of education and cultural awareness in society
- ... to broaden the interest for and increase participation in **cultural life**

***10 Study  
Associations***

***154 Folk High  
Schools***

- From 18 years of age
- General long-term, full time course 1-3 years
- Specialized long-term full time course 1-3 years
- Eligible for study grants
- Many boarding schools
- Free of charge

- From 18 years of age
- General long-term, full time course 1-3 years
- Specialized long-term full time course 1-3 years
- Eligible for study grants
- Many boarding schools
- Free of charge

- From 13 years of age
- National coverage
- Study circles and exploratory study groups, extensive courses
- Cultural events
- Course fees possible

# Folk high schools – a second chance

- Minimum 15 % general long-term courses
- Validation of knowledge for further studies, corresponding to upper secondary diploma

## Study associations – the origin of lifelong learning

- Active in all of Sweden's 290 municipalities
- 43 % music, art and media
- 21 % humanities
- 9 % Civics and behavioural science

### The Study circle

Active participation, all contribute

No given study plans/curriculums

Minimum 3 meetings, maximum 20 participants

## Folk high schools

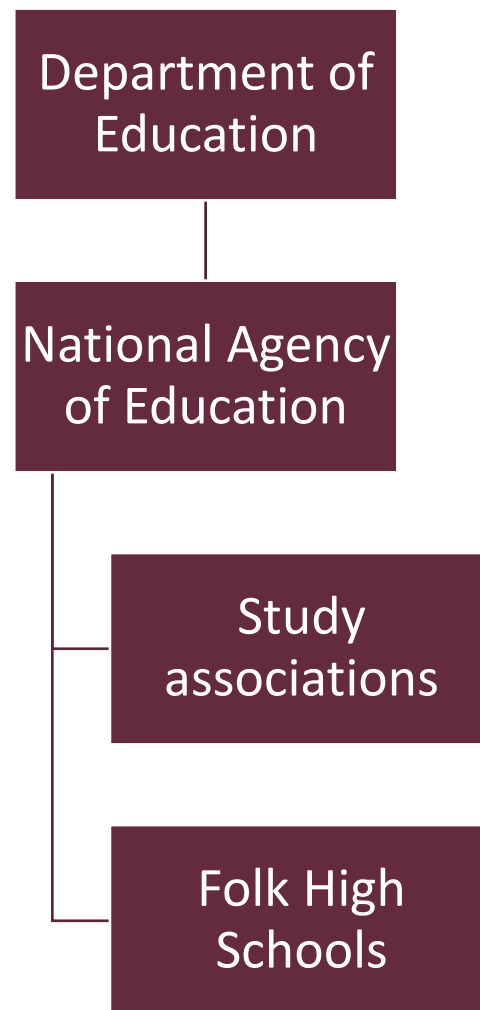
- **59 000** students in long courses
- **50 000** students in short courses
- **2 400** students qualified for further studies at university level

## Study associations\*

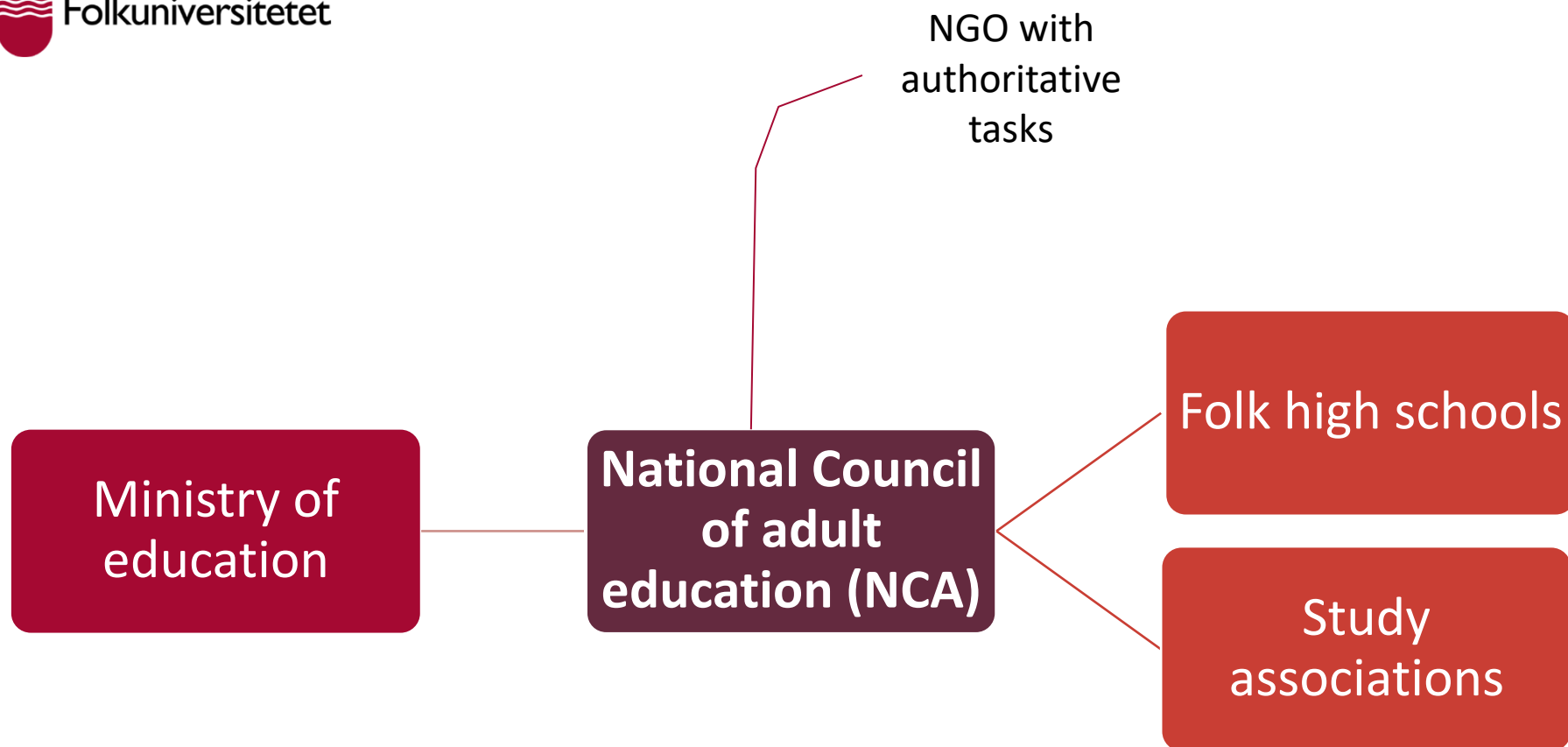
- **1 100 000** participants in study circles and exploratory study groups
- **19 000 000** participated in the cultural events

(Data from 2019. In 2020 figures went down approx. 40 % due to covid-19)

## Before 1991...

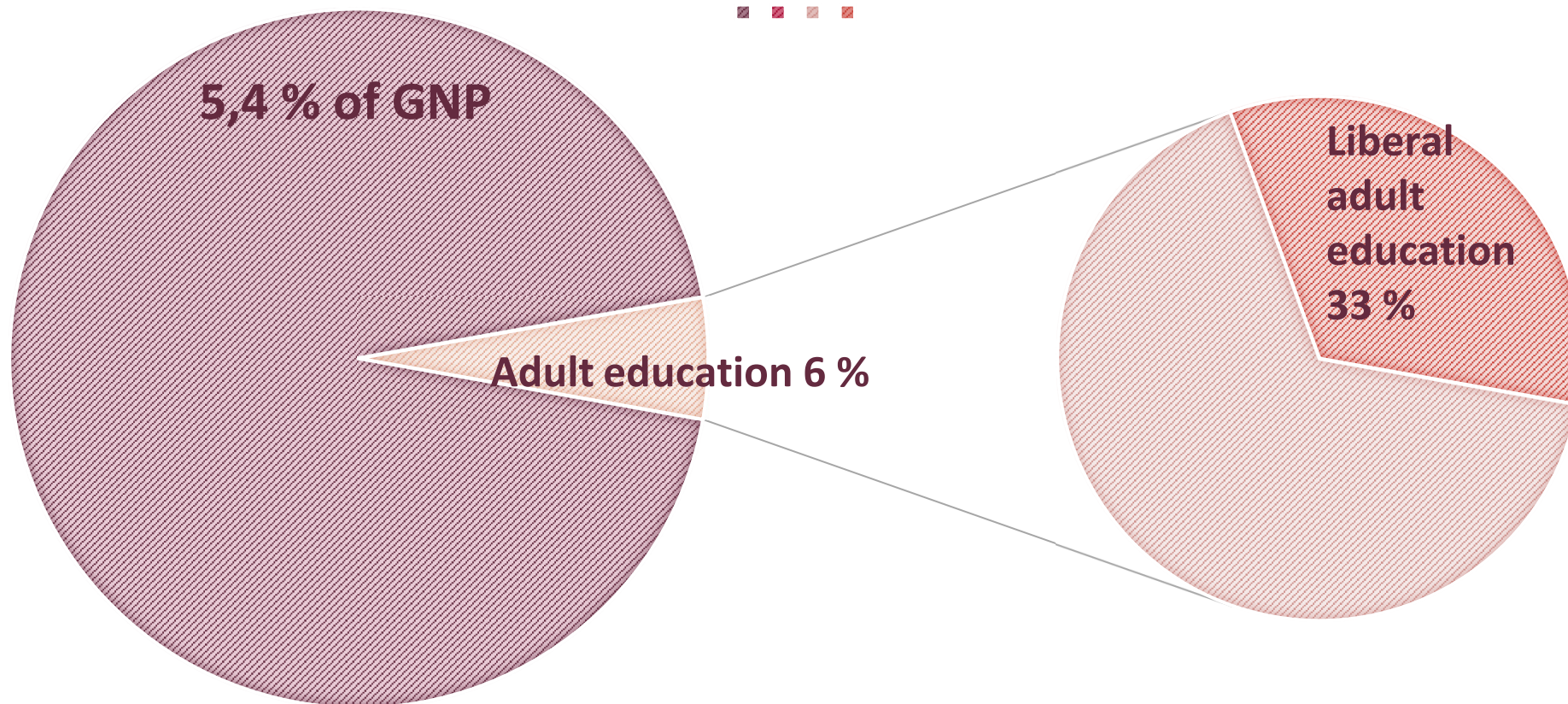




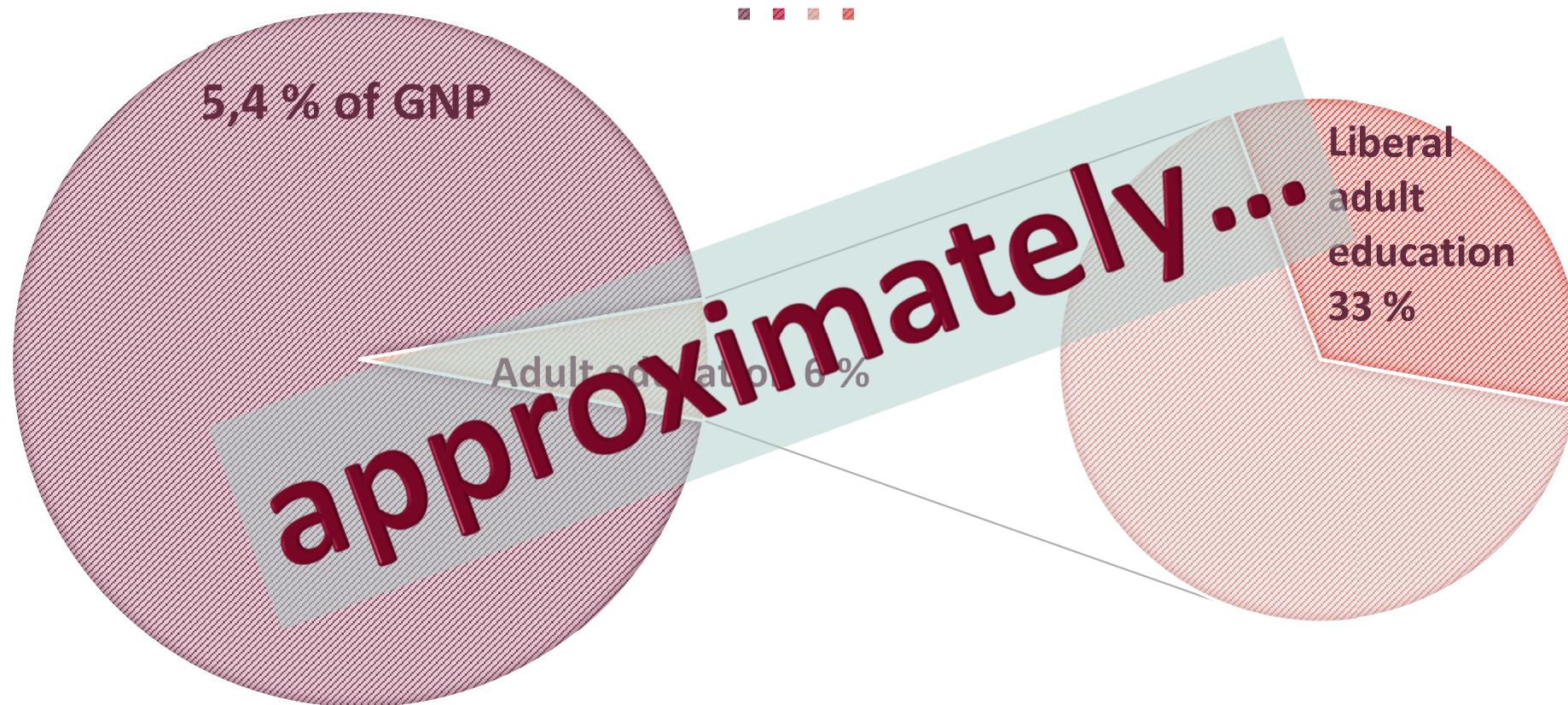


**After 1991...**

## EDUCATION IN SWEDEN



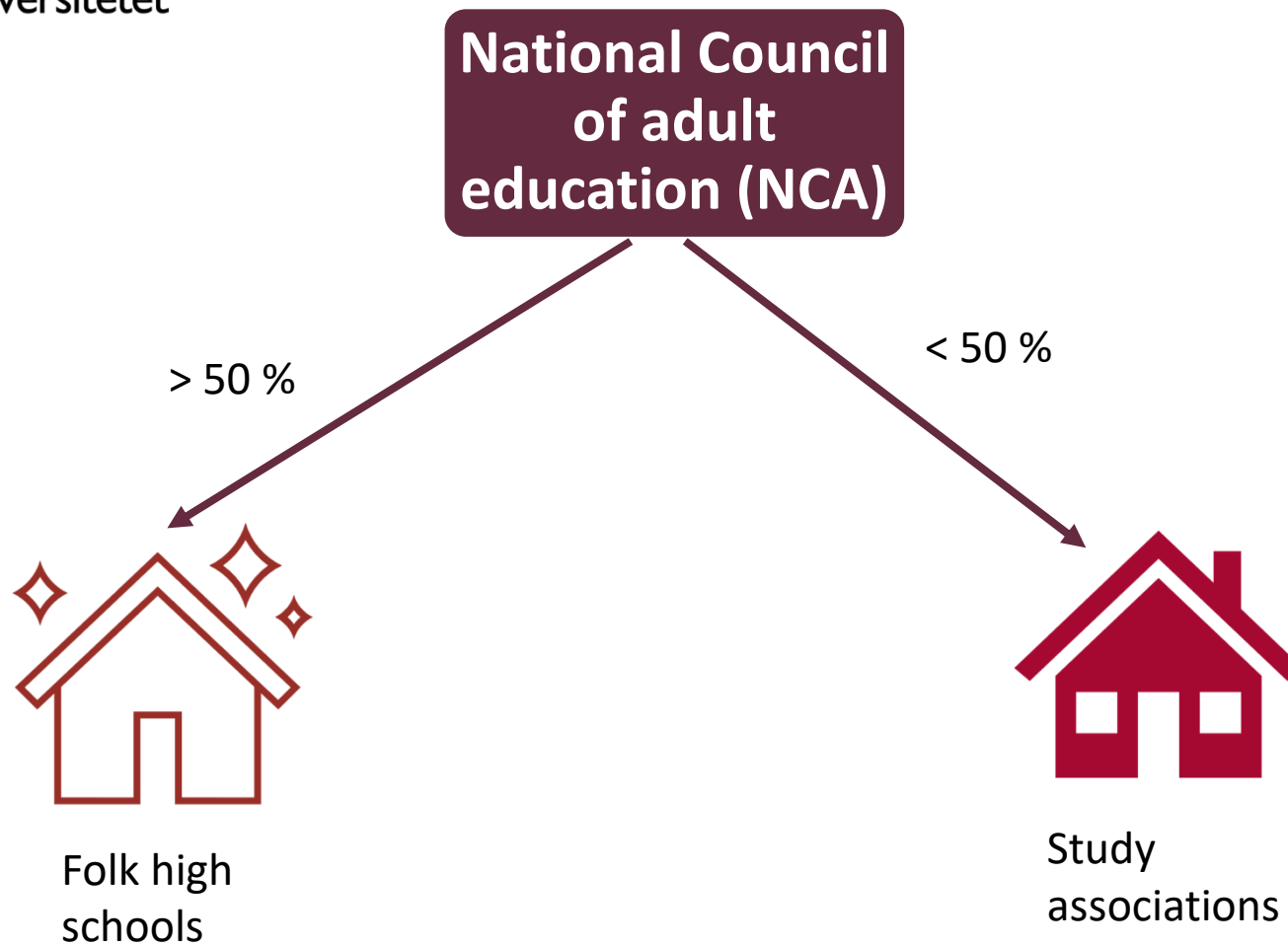
## EDUCATION IN SWEDEN



**Euro  
430  
million**



**National Council  
of adult  
education (NCA)**

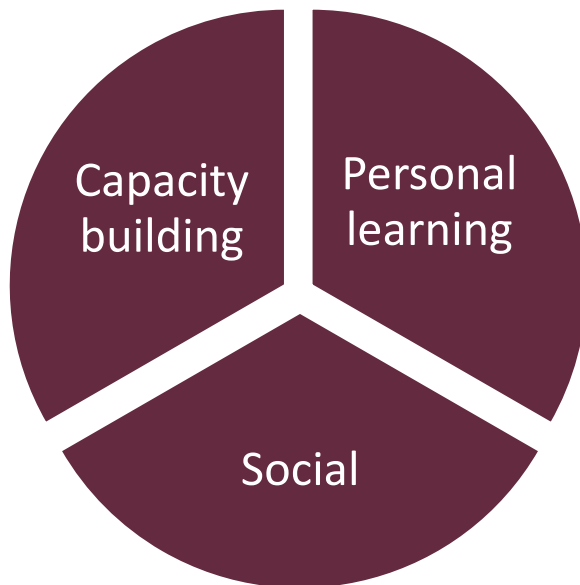


# The four requirements...

- ...strengthen and develop **democracy**
- ...enable a diversity of people to **influence** their life situation and participate in society
- ...to **bridge educational gaps** and raise the level of education and cultural awareness in society
- ... to broaden the interest for and increase participation in **cultural life**

# The results...?

# The importance of the study circle



Open study circles

Study circles within the association

Study circles with friends



# From the study circle to the labour market

- There is a positive relation between participating in a study circle and going from unemployment to a job
- The relation is stronger for participants with a foreign background
- The relation between study circle participation and higher income could not be established, except maybe for persons with lower education or with a foreign background

Cirkeldeltagares väg till arbetsmarknaden, Folkbildningsrådet  
2019

## The non-participants

- Not members or active in any association
- Lower income, lower education
- Married women with children
- Men of all ages in the outskirts of larger cities

Folk utanför folkbildningen, Folkbildningsrådet 2017

# Challenges

- Can formal and non-formal education work together?
  - Crossing borders and going back
  - Cooperation and recognition of non-formal without governance
- On what grounds should the grants be distributed?
- Transparency and show of results
- Compatibility of folkbildning and online courses
  - Can we keep up the presence in all the municipalities?

Thank you for listening!

Any questions?



# DAAD



*Civil society and adult education -  
Traditions, practices and shaping a “new normal”*

## Civil society in post-communist world (South-Eastern Europe)

Katarina Popović  
*University of Würzburg;  
International Council for Adult Education (ICAE)*

# Context

- ▶ Slow economic growth, irregular economies
- ▶ No long-standing democracies
- ▶ Political instability
- ▶ Hybrid or illiberal democracies
- ▶ Autocratic tendencies, populism, nationalism
- ▶ Weak partnership of various actors and stakeholders
- ▶ Mushrooming of CSOs after the political changes

# The importance of civil society

- ▶ Usually the most progressive voice in the society
- ▶ Representative of marginalized groups
- ▶ Important actions (political, social, economic)
- ▶ Main advocate and negotiator
- ▶ One of most important providers of adult education:
  - ▶ work with vulnerable groups
  - ▶ covers the topics and content neglected by the government
- ▶ Helps European integration processes
- ▶ Support international communication and exchange

# The role of civil society

► representing the interest of particular groups, interest and goals which do not have a systemic character. Typical for developed, stable democracies

► serving as a correction and compensation to the work of government, sometimes even as its opposition; cover crucial segments of the society

strong political character

'condemned' by authorities and public opinion

accused of of being deficient in patriotism



# The role of civil society

- ▶ Civil society as alternative and opposition
- ▶ Their status is still a matter of negotiations
- ▶ Poor legal regulation
- ▶ Unstable financing
  - ▶ governmental: risk of control
  - ▶ international donors: risk of the stigmatisation in the country
  - ▶ business: risk of losing non-profit character
  - ▶ In all cases: financial dependency
    - ▶ risk of 'betraying' the mission (common good)
    - ▶ lack of continuity and sustainability
    - ▶ dependence on politics - national or international
- ▶ 'Refuge' for experts and intellectuals

# The treatment by the government

- ▶ Mishmash of the definition of civil society (even church, football clubs; non-democratic, populist and even violent NGOs...) - which eats up the support resources
- ▶ Emergence of GONGO: government-operated non-governmental organizations (Quasi-NGOs) - Blurring the boundaries of the state-private divide and enabling corruption
- ▶ Legal and administrative burdens
- ▶ Restrictive financial treatment
- ▶ Intimidation and harassment of civil society representatives (and free media, journalists, public intellectuals...)
- ▶ Stigmatisation („foreign agents“ , „lack of patriotism“ , accusation of „anti-state activities“)

## Civil society organisation in Serbia during COVID-19 crises

### Actions and initiatives to educate people and to raise awareness :

- about the environmental issues, against investors driven urbanism, against the pollution; against using lock-dawn as a smoke screen to perform environmentally disastrous actions;
- about the importance of civic and human rights and rule of law even in the time of pandemic, about freedom and need for civic participation, against using lock-dawn as a smoke screen for authoritarianism, and excuse for violence ;
- about the need to help the marginalised and vulnerable groups; organize concrete actions to support them; make learning going on whenever possible...



## Session 4: Civil society – a recognised partner in adult learning and education in Sweden and Nordic countries

### **Q&A + Discussion:**

How did you manage to convince the Government to change the Financing of AE in 1991?

Cecilia Palm: The initiative was actually taken by the prime minister of the time. I think he believed that regulated governance reduced the power built into civil society.

Dear Cecilia, at the beginning you were talking about being „a fat cat“. What Kind of Criticism are you facing?

Dear Katarina, do you think that there is a change that your work in Serbia will be done one day?



## Session 4: Civil society – a recognised partner in adult learning and education in Sweden and Nordic countries

### Q&A + Discussion:

Coming from Slovenia, also ex-communist country, I can only agree with professor Popović.

I see Scandinavia as most developed and democratic part of the world, but was a bit disillusioned with the system when I saw the documentary „The Swedish Theory of Love“

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4716560/> . Any comments on that? Thank you...

Ceilia Palm: I have not seen the documentary, but it is true that all Nordic countries have growing nationalist parties, and they are not friends of the civil society ALE.



## Feedback:

"Great presentations today. I learned lot. Thank you for the workshop Prof. Katarina Popović and the organisers."

The event was "great and rewarding. Thank you."

I've "found it very interesting. 'Well done' to all the visiting professors."

"Thank you! This was so inspiring on so many levels! Let`s start/continue acting."

"Thank you very much for all the input."



## Closing Remarks

**Prof. Dr. Katarina Popović**

DAAD Visiting Professor,  
Professorship for Adult &  
Continuing Education,  
University of Würzburg