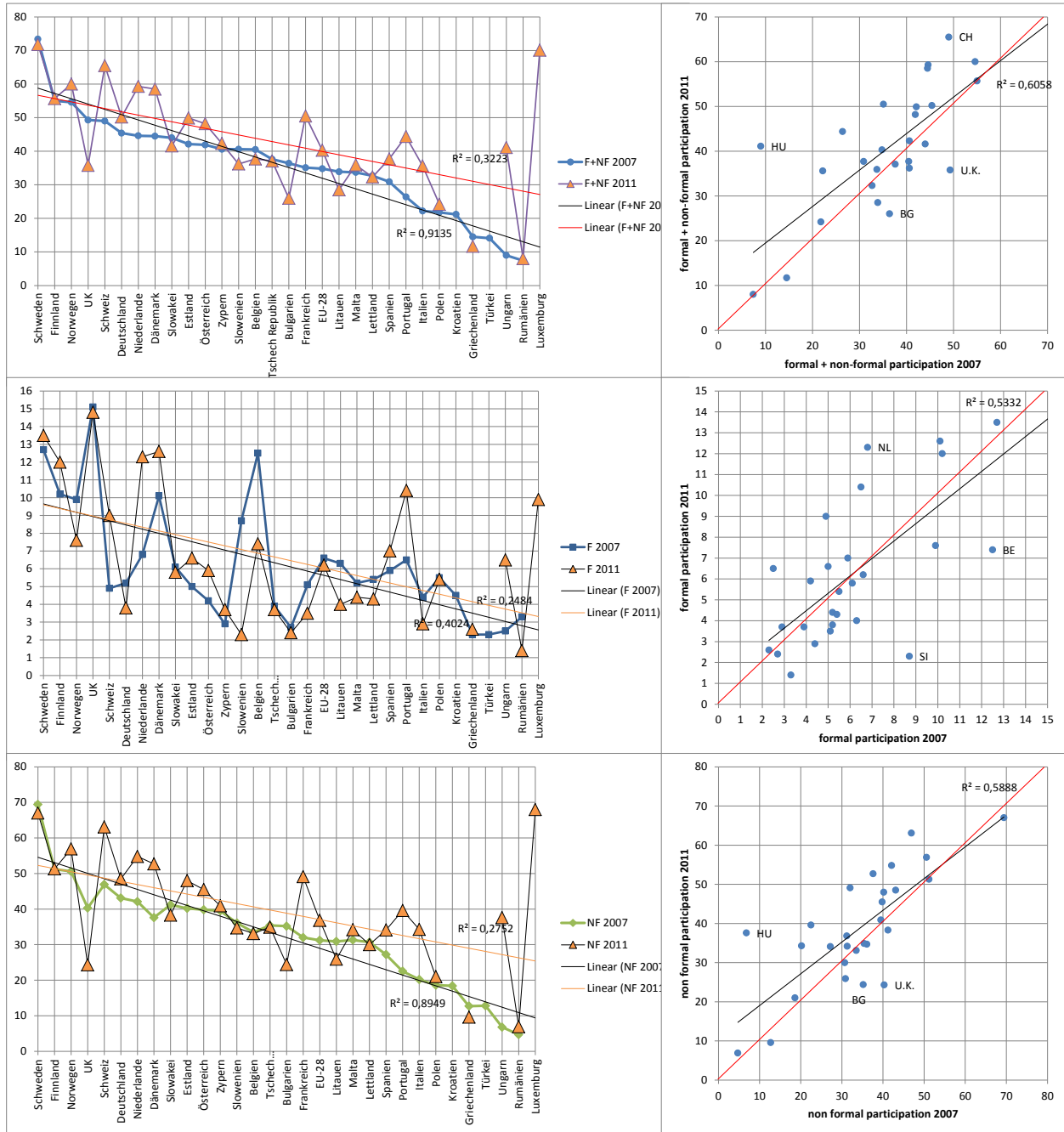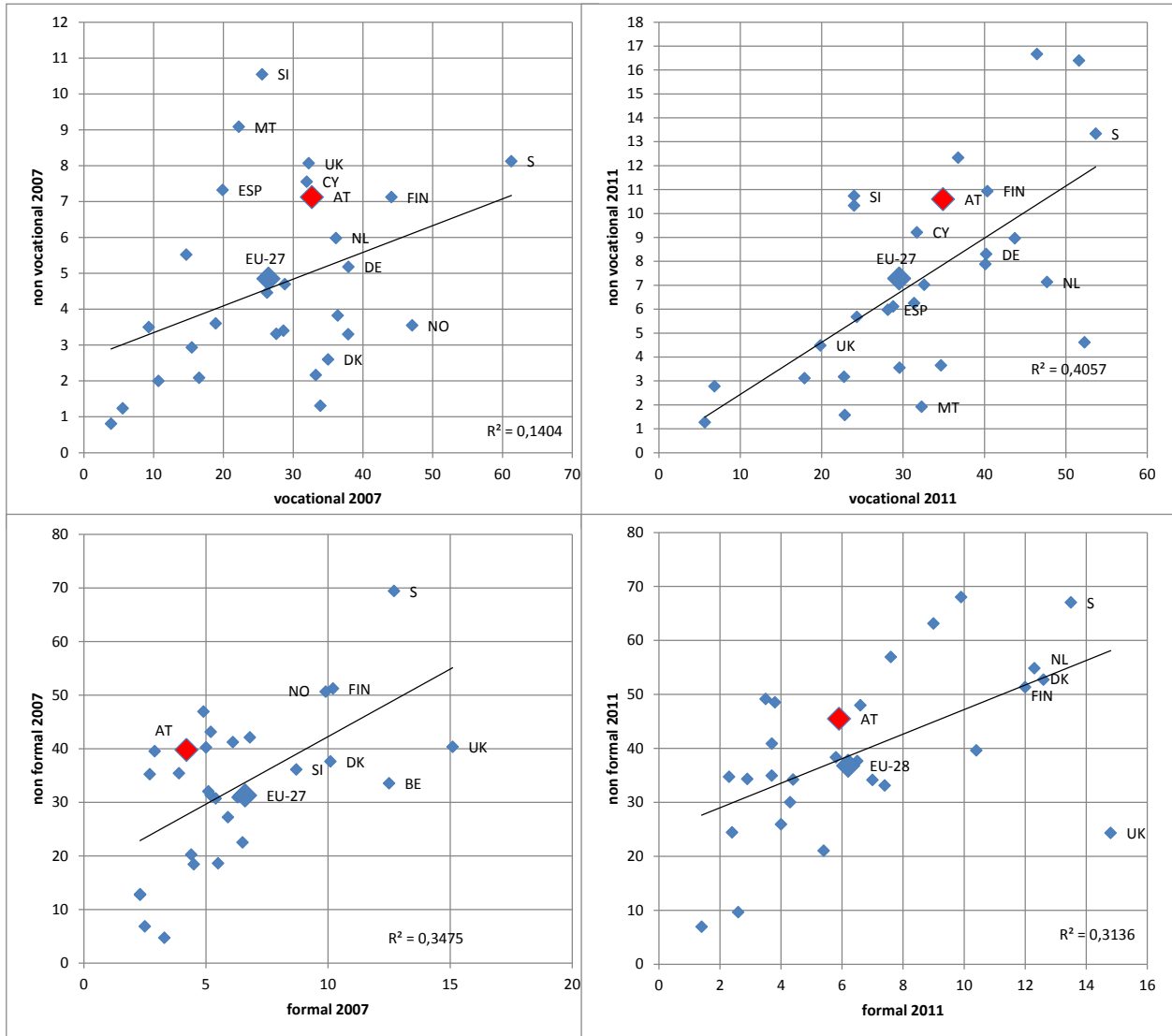**ANNEX to chapter Comparative political perspectives of adult education – subsuming to qualification and competence strategies or searching for new missions?**

Figure A1: Participation in adult education 2007 and 2011 measured by AES, formal and non formal

Source: own calculation and figure based on EUROSTAT (download March 2013 and May 2015)

Figure A2: Participation in adult education measured by AES, formal and non formal, vocational and non vocational, 2007 and 2011

Source: own calculation and figure based on EUROSTAT (download March 2013 and May 2015)

Figure A3: Participation in adult education measured by AES, formal and non formal, vocational and non vocational, 2007
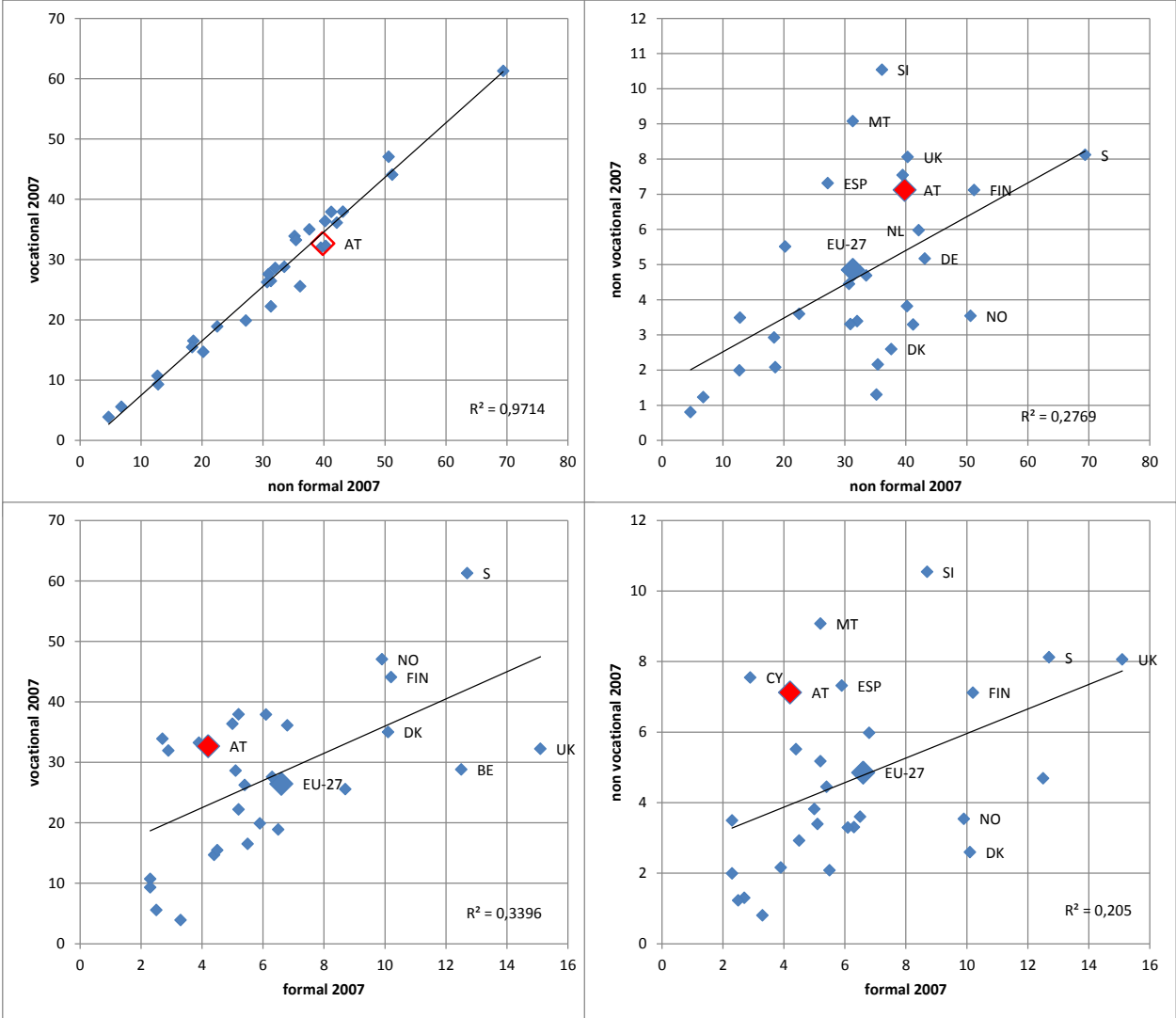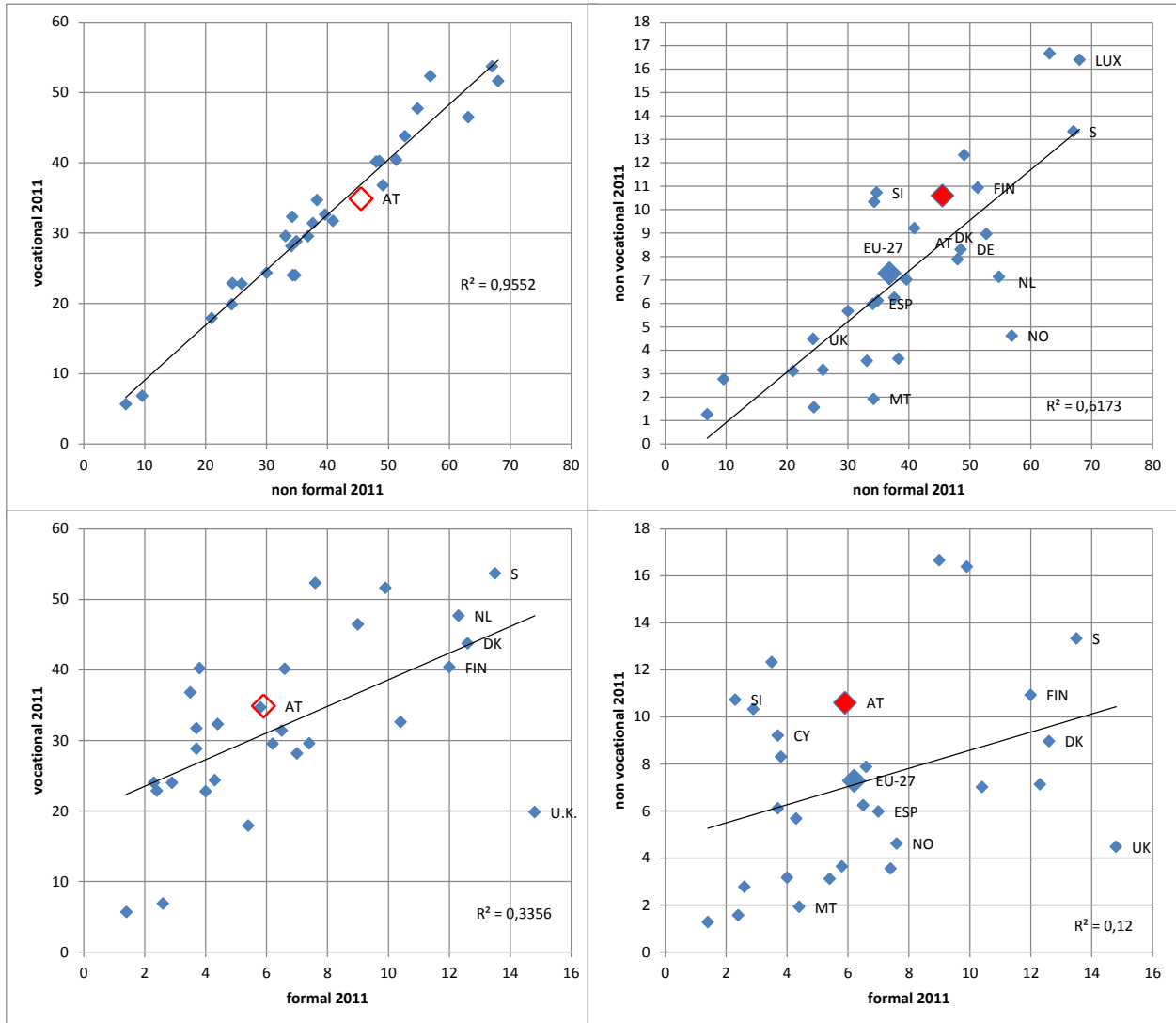

Source: own calculation and figure based on EUROSTAT (download March 2013 and May 2015)

Figure A4: Participation in adult education measured by AES, formal and non formal, vocational and non vocational, 2011

Source: own calculation and figure based on EUROSTAT (download March 2013 and May 2015)

Draft chapter

Comparative political perspectives of adult education – subsuming to qualification and competence strategies or searching for new missions?

Introduction and questions[1]

A main political instrument that is promised to support lifelong learning by its advocates in the European Union (EU) and beyond is the qualification framework, which should provide systematic information about the qualifications available in education and training at national or sectoral levels. This contribution asks some basic questions about the implications and potentials of qualification framework (QF) policies for the development of non-vocational adult education (NVAE): Can the NQF help for development of NVAE?

The focus of the reasoning lies at a political and strategic level, starting from an ambiguous constellation of QF-policies in the broader attempts to develop and support lifelong learning. At EU-level, the QF is one of the main instruments in politics towards education; at the same time the QF concerns qualifications that are primarily oriented towards employment and vocational purposes, or towards progression within the educational trajectories. Thus the role that the QF can play in NVAE is not self-evident. Nevertheless, a closer look at this relationship can be motivated by two arguments: First, the QF policy is such a strong political strand that if NVAE does not participate in it might lead to a disadvantage of this sector in terms of political support, financing, etc. Second, the question of how the relationship of NVAE to overall adult education and lifelong learning should be tackled politically is more generally at stake: is it at a political strategic level more favourable to conceive adult education as an integrated sector with NVAE being a part of this, or is it more favourable to handle NVAE as a separate sector within adult education with its own needs and logics? This alternative is closely related to the QF-policies because an integrated view would 'naturally' imply an integration of NVAE into the qualification framework.

An integrated or separate conception of NVAE is related to some more general political-

_____

[1] An extended version of the paper including more information about the literature search and the analysis of the Adult Education Survey data is presented in the internet: http://www.equi.at/dateien/nordic16.pdf

strategical assumptions and controversies. There is widespread consensus that among the proposed basic aims of EU lifelong learning policies, (a) furthering employability and economic competitiveness, (b) political and civic participation, and (c) social integration and inclusion, the main attention is dedicated to the economic aims, whereas NVAE is more closely related to the political and social aims. An integrated conception might lead either to an implicit co-optation of the non-vocational activities with the mainstream, or to a disadvantage of these activities, which might be put aside or crowded out. If the latter is true a separate conception of NVAE would be necessary if we want to develop these activities at par with the economic and vocational aims. The starting point for the analysis and discussion has been a question asked by the Austrian Ministry of Education, of whether the sector of NVAE (in Austria named general adult education: 'Allgemeine Erwachsenenbildung') should be included into the national QF-policies, or whether it shoul be kept separate and supported by other policies. A commissioned research project should undertake a literature review about evidence and experience at the European and international level with QF-policies in relation to NVAE, and develop support strategies for this sector. This chapter presents some selected results from these analyses, which are rather meant to open up discussions than to establish conclusions. Some parts of the argument are conceptual, some are empirical and explorative.

What is meant by NVAE could also be named differently, e.g. the concept is used interchangeably also for general adult education, popular adult education, or liberal adult education, as the sector is named in different countries or cultures (the term 'non vocational' is considered as giving a kind of common denominator, to draw the distinction to vocational and directly employment related continuing education).

In particular the following topics will be discussed in the chapter: First an overview of the structure of discourses about the relationship of QF and NVAE found in the literature review is sketched out; second some thoughts about the role of the institutional structures in adult education in relation to QF-policies are presented; third some explorative (quantitative and qualitative) empirical approaches towards the shape of NVAE in a comparative perspective are tried out; fourth a more general argument about the purpose of NVAE in relation to available theories of knowledge production in society.

Discourse structures concerning NVAE found in the literature review

The literature review aimed not primarily at the policy documents but in particular on the academic literature which provides established evidence about the role of QF-policies in relation to NVAE. For this purposes systematic searches were performed in March 2012 in the Ebscohost Education Research Complete Data base. At this time the European Qualification Framework (EQF 2008) has been already under way for some years, developed since 2004, and officially amended in 2008 (see Fig. 1 for an overview about the searches).

Fig.1: Search results in Ebscohost Education Research Complete

a. No. of hits from searches <adult education(ae)>, <lifelong learning(lll)> and <qualification framework(qf)>

Search <expressions>	Search location	Hits absolute	Hits %
a. combinations of <adult education(ae)> + <lifelong learning(lll)>			
<adult education>	text	55.287	100,0%
…+ <lifelong learning>	text	7.971	14,4%
…+ <lifelong learning>	title	685	1,2%
<adult education>	title	2.677	100,0%
…+ <lifelong learning>	text	559	20,9%
…+ <lifelong learning>	title	48	1,8%
.			
b. combinations of <lifelong learning(lll)> + <qualification framework(qf)>			
<lifelong learning>	text	28.644	100,0%
…+ <qualification framework>	text	875	3,1%
…+ <qualification framework>	title	37	0,1%
<lifelong learning>	title	1.459	100,0%
…+ <qualification framework>	text	73	5,0%
…+ <qualification framework>	title	10	0,7%
c. combinations of <adult education(ae)> + <qualification framework(qf)>			
<adult education>	text	55.287	100,0%
…+ <qualification framework>	text	677	1,2%
…+ <qualification framework>	title	12	0,0%
<adult education>	title	2.677	100,0%
…+ <qualification framework>	text	31	1,2%
…+ <qualification framework>	title	0	0,0%

Source: own calculations, repeated searches in January 2016

Legend: The searches are based on how often the <expressions> appear in the whole body of Ebscohost either in *text* or in *titles*, and the combinations indicate to which degree the topics are interrelated in the publication sources. There are no publications included in the source that carry both expressions, <adult education> and <qualification framework> together in the title, and only 1.2% of publications that carry <adult education> in the title or in the text (absolute 31 or 677 hits) include also <qualification framework> in the text. The expression <lifelong learning> is more often combined with <adult education> (20,9% or 14,4%), and <qualification framework> also is more often combined with <lifelong learning> than with <adult education>.

b. No. of hits from searches by time periods: specialized <expressions>

ABSOLUTE	-2003	2003-10	2011-16	total
<adult education TITLE	1176	854	647	2677
<learning> TEXT	643	604	474	1721
<teaching> TEXT	376	387	297	1060
<lifelong learning> TEXT	152	237	170	559
<qualification> TEXT	91	85	74	250
<outcome> TEXT	171	197	192	560
<learning outcome> TEXT	40	58	60	158
<qualification framework> TEXT	6	16	9	31
RELATIVE (%)%	-2003	2004-10	2011-16	total
<adult education TITLE	100%	100%	100%	100%
<learning> TEXT	55%	71%	73%	64%
<teaching> TEXT	32%	45%	46%	40%
<lifelong learning> TEXT	13%	28%	26%	21%
<qualification> TEXT	8%	10%	11%	9%
<outcome> TEXT	15%	23%	30%	21%
<learning outcome> TEXT	3%	7%	9%	6%
<qualification framework> TEXT	1%	2%	1%	1%
ABSOLUTE	-2003	2003-10	2011-16	total
<lifelong learning> TITLE	476	561	422	1459
<outcome> TEXT	97	165	119	381
<learning outcome> TEXT	38	82	62	182
<qualification framework> TEXT	14	31	28	73
RELATIVE (%)	-2003	2004-10	2011-16	total
<lifelong learning> TITLE	100%	100%	100%	100%
<outcome> TEXT	20%	29%	28%	26%
<learning outcome> TEXT	8%	15%	15%	12%
<qualification framework> TEXT	3%	6%	7%	5%

Source: own calculations, repeated searches in January 2016

Legend: The distribution of expressions shows how certain key concepts of the policy discourse have been displayed in the periods before the development of the EQF (-2003), in the period of its development and early implementation (2004-10), and the later period of implementation 2011-16. The concepts related to QF-policies show a small increase from 2004, however, in the publications related to <adult education> their weight is small; in the publications related to <lifelong learning> their weight is a bit larger.

Basically, the review did not find material about the direct relationship between NQF and NVAE, and generally little material about NVAE was found. The literature search rather found 2 separate discourses instead of one, with the topic of lifelong learning (LLL) as a separating device. The relationship between the NQF and NVAE is actually addressed by two distinct bodies of literature, one dealing with the relationship between the QF and LLL, and the second concerning LLL and NVAE. (fig 2 illustrates the complex relationships)

Discourse 1: NQF and LLL. This discourse comprises two quite separate and different discourses, one could be termed advocacy of the NQF in a more applied and policy related sense, the other includes the critical academic literature about the meaning and impact of qualification frameworks. NVAE is covered only very marginally in these bodies of literature. The main topics are how the 'outcome orientation' and the new focus on the formulation and assessment of

competenc(i)es would influence the development of education and training in a wide sense. Advocates expect that the better transparency based on the specification of learning outcomes in the OF and the positioning of the qualifications at certain levels of the educational structures would increase effective learning and accessibility of education. The critical academic literature has argued that the basic mission of the new outcome orientation would undermine the institutional bases of education (termed the 'supply side' by advocates) and subsume the professional role of educators (termed 'input oriented') under the leading roles of policy makers and the enterprise sector representing the 'demand side', thus leading to a de-professionalisation of the educators.

Fig 2: Approach and topics of the research project (will be redrawn, simplified)
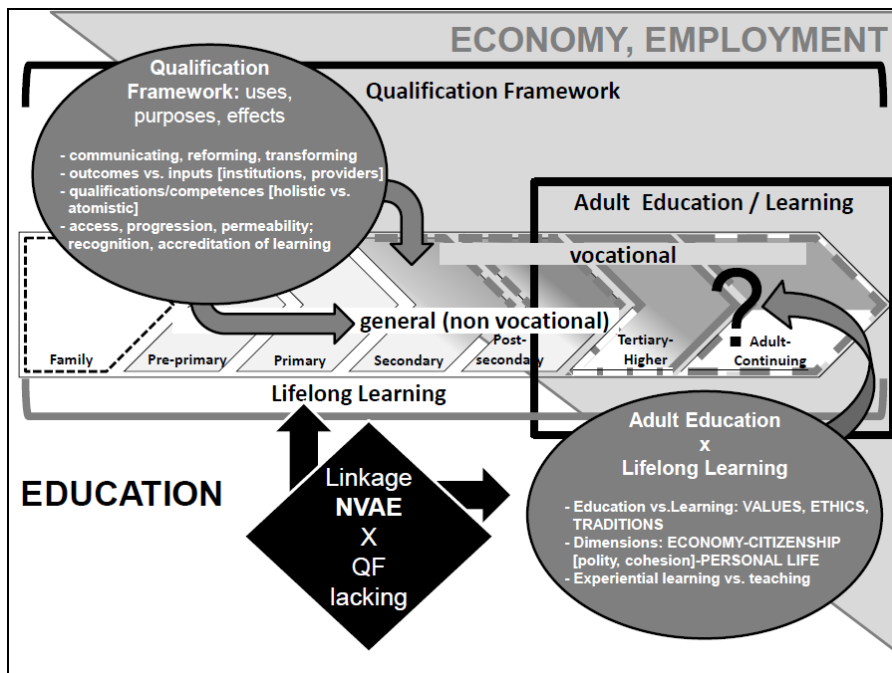
Source: own picture

Discourse 2: LLL and NVAE. This discourse critically analyses how the new policy paradigm of Lifelong Learning would be related to the established meanings of adult education. LLL is mainly seen in a wider context of the 'economization' of society and politics in a neoliberal sense that puts emphasis on the pragmatic and utilitarian purposes of employment related learning, and discards the wider educational missions of traditional adult education related to 'enlightenment' and its established social and political dimensions. Enlightenment would particularly also include

reasoning about the purposes of the economy and the wider consequences of putting the imperative of economic growth over all other aspects of society.

Learning outcomes and assessment/recognition of prior learning as key elements of QF. Non-advocatory analyses of LLL in EU-policy have partly pointed to the strong and one sided emphasis put on the aims of employability and economic competitiveness at the expense of the social and political aims (Maniscalco 2013); to other parts a more complex picture, including various and also contradicting traits, has been observed that has in particular identified two different strands: the EQF-policies emphasising lifelong learning with its primarily economic objectives, and the European key competences which would give room to the political and social objectives in a broader approach of lifelong education (EERJ 2008. Zepke 2013). However, the more recent policy documents are quite clearly subsuming the key competences under the logic of learning outcomes and the QF (EU-COM 2012). This document proposes to establish tight assessment procedures also for the attitudes in the very delicate realms of civic and social behaviour, objectives seem not easily comply with human rights of freedom of opinion or personal integrity.

However, the main linkage of the NQF to adult education is going through the newly proposed practices and frameworks of assessment and recognition of results of learning outside the formal education provision. Notwithstanding that general idea that the dominance of the documented results from formal education frameworks over informal learning is biased and questionable, the implications and effects of the assessment and recognition approaches are also put under question and are ambiguous in their effects on adult education. The emphasis on learning over education puts the role of educational institutions under scrutiny, and as some argue, undermines trust in the professional authority of the education institutions based on – sometimes fundamentalist – neoliberal preferences for the market over institutions (e.g., Young/Allais 2009). Clearly, if someone owns competenc(i)es which are needed for progression in education or employment and have been acquired outside educational institutions but are not certified, this should be recognized without any additional costs for 'learning' what is already there. However, the quite substantial costs of assessment are often underestimated (Werquin 2008, 2010). The institutional separation of summative assessment on the one hand, and teaching-learning in educational programmes on the other, is also criticized for having not only positive consequences to education. Important issues are the methodological problems in assessment, possibly leading

to reductionist formulations of competenc(i)es assessment practices, and the establishment of 'teaching to the test' practices by educators, which overall might lead to the paradox of better assessment of worse learning outcomes.

Institutional structures of adult education and NQF policies

A basic premise of the research has been that an assessment of the (potential) effects of NQFs for NVAE can only be done reasonably if the basic structures of education are taken into account, or – in other words – that an interaction between NQF policies and the existing educational frameworks must be expected. This means that not only NQF policies musts be analysed, but in order to get a proper understanding of this interaction, the basic educational structures must also be identified and analysed. Next, different approaches towards NQF policies must be taken into account, e.g., how much the frameworks are devised only to document the national structures, or to which degree they should have an impact on the change of existing structures. Some authors have expected that the establishment of NQFs would have an automatic impact on change if outcome orientation is taken seriously, as this would gear attention away from inputs towards results, and would also automatically give the learners and the stakeholders from the 'demand side' (i.e. employers) a stronger position vis-à-vis the providers at the 'input side' (educationalists).

For the question of the project, of how NQF policies could support (or hamper) NVAE, the hypothesis was taken that the effects of NQF policies would very much depend on the existing strength of NVAE in an overall framework of education. Michael Young and Stephanie Allais (2011) have pointed out that the aim of a weakening the educational institutions through the questioning of their professional authority by the neoliberal policy of outcome orientation would have less serious consequences for strong institutions than for weaker ones. Their argument is based on the comparison of 'developed' and 'developing' countries, but can be extended to different sectors of education also: we can assume that the formal education system for the young is more strongly institutionalised than adult education everywhere, so effects of NQF policies can be expected to be different for these sectors. Concerning different sectors within adult education the question is trickier and also leads us to some basic appraisals: can we assume different degrees of institutionalisation of different sectors of adult education? Can we expect a

certain relationship between vocational and employment related continuing education and NVAE? Is the latter as a rule more weakly institutionalised than the former? And how can we assess these relationships?

A basic premise in adult education has always been that it must be learner oriented because of its voluntary character. However, this is considered to have changed with the upcoming of the 'education gospel' about the education as the celebrated solution of all our problems (Grubb, Laszerson 2004). The responsibility of updating and developing the vocational and employment-related competenc(i)es was shifted to the individuals, promising them all kinds of gains from further education. As a consequence continuing education is considered being less and less voluntary and more and more 'compulsory' in a sense of individual commitment. The attention of the involved actors then shifts to the expected outcomes of education, and the actors representing the 'demand side' gains influence in continuing adult education. When the responsibility of the individuals to invest in learning for economic gains increases, this shift tends to result in a change of the weights in the overall adult education landscape towards the utilitarian vocational and employment related sectors and practices of provision. Placing the emphasis on the NQF can consequently reinforce this change of the weights, as the main focus is laid on competenc(i)es as part of qualifications that are finally used and needed for employment. The impact of these changes on NVAE can be expected to depend on the strength of this sector in a national framework of adult education – this is an important conceptual assumption in the course of this analysis. From the Austrian perspective an expectation at the outset of the project has been that in the Nordic countries, where adult education is conventionally perceived as being stronger developed than in other regions, the resilience of NVAE would be relatively well established. Another question was, whether in the nations of the U.K., or in other Anglo-Saxon countries, where an established critical discourse about AE and LLL has taken place, the sector of Adult and Community education would show some resilience against the overall vocationalisation and economisation.

Empirical explorations of the structure and content of NVAE

Based on the overall reasoning two empirical explorations are presented in this section. First the scarce European comparative (quantitative) data are used to gain a superficial glance at the

structure and development of participation in adult education; second a European study is used to chart the basic structures of the purposes and the content of NVAE in qualitative terms.

a. Structures and changes of adult education between 2007 and 2011

The data allow to compare the change in participation in vocational and non-vocational AE in several EU countries, in order to see whether the strong political focus on the economic and vocational dimensions of AE is actually reflected in an increase of participation in vocational programmes at the expense of non-vocational ones. As a second dimension the participation in formal AE can be interpreted as an indication for the institutional strength of AE in a country. A positive relationship between the participation in formal and non-vocational AE could indicate that the institutional strength is in fact important for the support of NVAE.

An overview of the patterns of the different categories of adult education can be given at two points in time (2007 and 2011) based on the European Adult Education Survey (AES; see http://www.equi.at/dateien/nordic16.pdf). First, we can compare formal and non-formal adult education. The participation rate in formal AE is much less than in non-formal AE (up to 14% vs. up to 70%; EU average 6% vs 30-40%), and there is a weak positive correlation at both points in time (R^2 about .30). The participation in vocational and non-vocational AE is not related to each other in 2007, whereas there is some positive relationship in 2011 (R^2 .41). In any case this does not indicate that the shift towards vocational AE would lead to a systematic decrease of NVAE. A look at the relationships between the dimensions of formal/non-formal and vocational/non-vocational AE shows some pattern. As most AE participation is taking place in non formal AE and in vocational AE these two are strongly correlated in 2007 and 2011; a weak positive correlation can be found between formal and vocational AE; however, NVAE is neither related to formal nor to non formal AE. This might indicate that more specific factors are at work in NVAE, or that the measurement of this dimension is less consistent. In sum a hypothesis that an overall stronger system of AE (represented by higher participation) would support NVAE is not really compatible with these data; if there is a positive relationship, it is very weak.

Fig 3: Participation and change of participation in vocational AE related to NVAE

(a) change of participation in vocational AE 2007-11 in relation to level of participation in NVAE 2001 (*left*) and to change in NVAE 2007-11 (*right*)
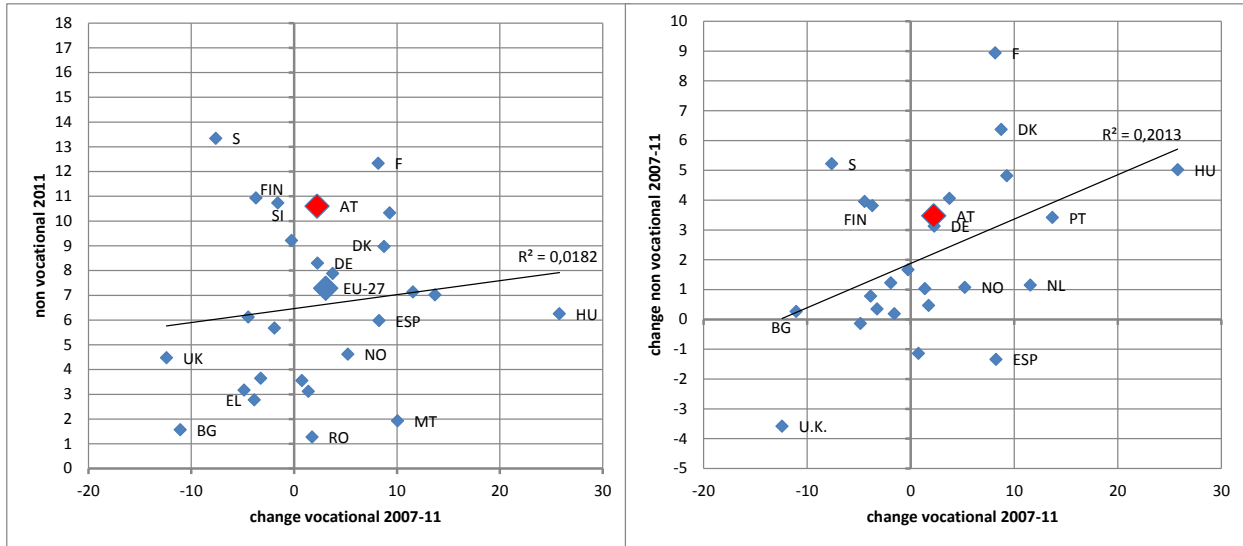
(b) patterns of participation in formal AE related to participation in NVAE 2007 (left), 2011 (right)
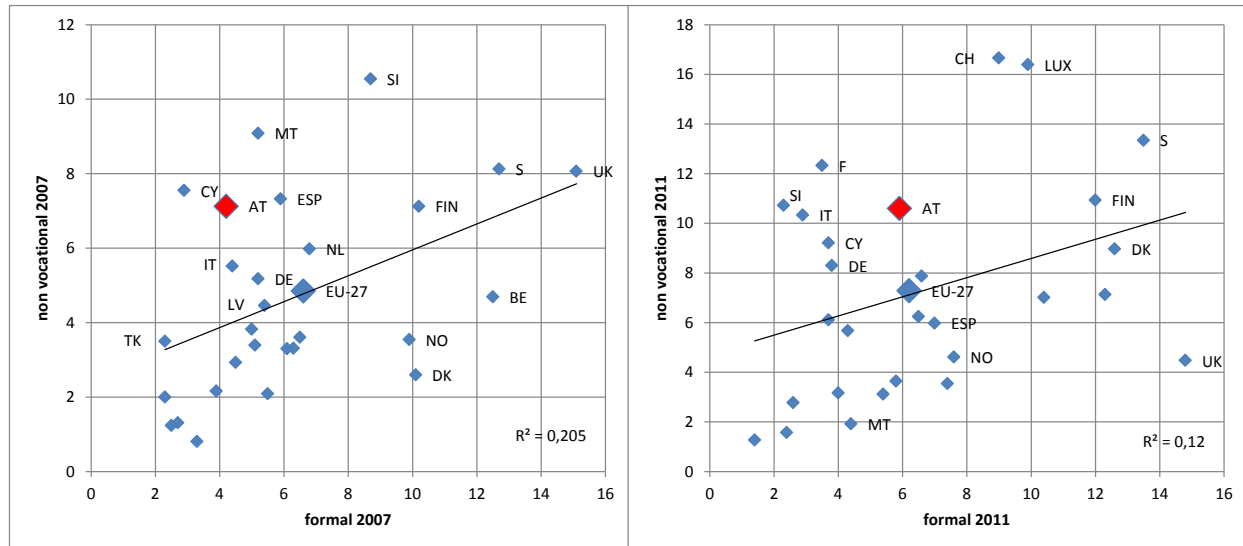
Source: own calculations based on EUROSTAT (download March 2013 and May 2015)

A closer inspection of individual countries shows that the participation in formal AE is quite unstable between 2007 and 2011 with only one third of countries lying at or near the regression line. The Nordic countries show quite different patterns of participation in 2007, with formal AE being consistently above average, but participation in NVAE differing. The U.K. with the highest

participation in formal AE lies near the regression line with NVAE, and the countries with the highest participation in NVAE show rather around average participation in formal AE in 2007 (Slovenia, Malta); in 2011 the highest participation in NVAE is related to high (Luxemburg) and low (Germany) formal participation. Thus, the participation rates measured by the indicators calculated from the AES do not give clear accounts of structures of AE in different countries; either the indicators are not good representations, or the structures are not stable.

In sum, this constellation leaves serious open questions for the overall purpose of finding AE structures which could explain policies in NVAE and NQF:

- high and rising participation in vocational AE is not systematically related with low or declining participation in NVAE (fig 3a)

- more established patterns of AE, represented by high participation in formal AE are very weakly related to higher participation in NVAE, if at all (fig 3b).

b. Purposes of NVAE and NQF policies: why should a QF relate to NVAE?

Another way to approach the questions is to look qualitatively at the purposes of NVAE and QFs, and to relate these to each other in order to find communalities and/or conflicts. The purposes of qualifications frameworks are distilled from a wide bulk of literature (see Lassnigg 2012; Cort 2010; Bjørnåvold/Coles 2007/8). The following main purposes of QFs can be found in the literature:

(a) direct practice-related purposes of QF- Matching: relate education/training (supply) to skills/employment needs (demand)

- Credentialing: relate elements on supply side (programmes, modules, etc.) to levels and to each other

- Recognising, validating informal learning

(b) indirect system-related purposes of QFs

- Outcome orientation: relate qualifications to learning outcomes

- Pedagogy/assessment: induce new modes of competence based education/training/learning

Asking if these purposes are relevant for NVAE, one must first concede that QFs are primarily related to qualifications which are in turn matched to purposes of employment and occupations. Second, the purposes of NVAE can be distilled from an EU wide study (fig. 4, based on

EURYDICE 2007, p.35-36).

If we confront these purposes of NVAE with the above mentioned purposes of QF-policies (matching supply-demand, credentialing, recognition and validation of informal learning, outcome orientation, competence based education), and ask how they fit, then the answer must be that the purposes clearly do not fit to each other.

What can be expected from the NQF as a support to NVAE? If the purposes do not fit to each other it is not easy to see what can be expected on the positive side. On the negative side two aspects can be brought forward: First, the NQF policy is to some degree shaping the policy discourses about adult education, and does take energy away from explicit endeavours to develop NVAE; second, the application of the NQF to NVAE does subsume it under the instrumental logic of learning outcomes; the new approaches in the European policies/discourses that are forcefully trying to apply the logic of the formulation and assessment of learning outcomes to the key qualifications underline this (EU-COM 2012), whereas the approach of the European Key Competences was previously observed as a broader approach towards the societal aspects of lifelong learning than the NQF policies (Hoskins 2008). European research focused to some part on the broader societal implications of citizenship, however, more recent developments point strongly in the direction of measurement, extending this approach into the very personal non-vocational competences also. In this sense, the genuine topics of NVAE are pulled towards the utilitarian logic of vocational and employment related AE, so in sum, why should we expect that the NQF policy should help to develop NVAE?

Figure 4 Topics of NVAE

Overarching topics

- **social** issues (including ageing, crime, environment, health, heritage, parenting and poverty)

- **cultural** matters (arts, crafts, cuisine, dance, languages, literature, media, music, theatre)

- **political** matters (community development, current affairs, democratic participation, history, international relations, law)

- Further fundamental topics

       Literacy learning

       Language learning: general foreign language learning; Language learning for immigrants

       Information and communication technology (ICTs)

Key competences 6 and 8

- 6 KC: '*interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, civic competence*': 'all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary.' Civic competence 'equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation'.

- 8 KC: '*cultural expression*' 'appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts'.

Initiatives (examples)

- 2001, *adult learning for active citizenship*

- 2004 '*Citizenship in Action*': funding of civil society, faith based, youth and cultural organisations, trade unions and family associations that promote active citizenship (learning for interculturalism, civic participation), significance for community-based non-governmental and civil society groups and organisations throughout Europe.

Non-governmental organisations (types and services)

- education providers;

- campaigning NGOs promote ideological aims (environmental protection; multiculturalism; social justice; women's empowerment)

- services to NGO- members or targeted education service delivery (individuals with a disability; literacy provision; cultural development; community development)

Country practices mentioned

- **Nordic countries, Germany**: explicitly recognise the role of non-formal NVAE in developing active and participatory citizenship and social capital and strengthening social inclusion and social cohesion; *study circles*: challenges of the local communities in which the study circles are located

- **Finland**, liberal education: the main mission of non-formal NVAE is to promote democratic values, active citizenship and social cohesion; achievement of personal growth, maturity and independence, understanding of social and human relations

- **France**: movement inspired by Christian, working-class and/or social principles: making education available to all, promoting citizenship and emancipating people through access to knowledge and culture

- **Greece**: parenting skills and volunteer responses to emergencies

- **United Kingdom (Scotland)**, Community Learning and Development (CLD): community-based adult learning, community capacity building and youth worth outside of formal institutions. *Community education* encompasses formal and informal learning opportunities, core skills including adult literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology.

Source: Eurydice 2007, p.35-36.

Turning the question around: How to support NVAE?

One aspect of the question concerns how NVAE can/should reasonably been defined, and how it can/should be related to the other sectors of adult education in terms of policy making. How can we distinguish it from other forms of AE? Shall we distinguish NVAE as a separate sector and

policy issue?

Currently most observers/stakeholders rather support subsuming NVAE into some kind of overarching hybrid AE (e.g., in Germany and Austria this was clearly advocated during the last decades by the NVAE-stakeholders). This reflects to some extent commercial interests: if there is a relatively small demand for NVAE, it is often argued that vocational AE could raise funds to be made available for NVAE. A counter position can be formulated: because of the strong trend – at least in rhetoric – towards vocational AE, the non-vocational provision would come into a danger to be ‚crowded out‘ by the other more powerful sectors, if subsumed under one umbrella with them. Starting with the separate purposes of economic, social, political and cultural aspects of adult education we observe that all these purposes are commonly agreed on as being important (e.g., all these purposes are included in the official European policy documents). However, it is also quite commonly agreed by observers that the economic and employment related purposes are very much predominating, and that the others are without similar support, and maybe in decline also (even if the quantitative data do not support this common belief as shown above); some observers – which have been forgotten a bit in the discourse – have tried to turn the question around by pointing to the inherent political missions of adult education (Fields 2005). If we reconsider the topics and purposes of NVAE in the 2000s (as shown above in fig.4), we can find an overall characteristic: the activities are to some extent ‚subversive‘, and catering for those ‚in the shadow‘ of society (excluded people and groups at risk), being also outside of the mainstream politically (often related to NGOs who are trying to give groups or topics recognition and a voice that are otherwise neglected), – in short, most of these purposes are to some extent conflict loaded, and considered by their advocates as being something ‚to fight for‘.
This character of NVAE poses the question if there would be a need for a (new) mission for NVAE to support its development. Currently the overall discourse of AE and LLL is overwhelmed by the various functional (economic) imperatives related to technology and globalisation. The social and political aspects are subsumed under the functional discourse in a double way, first by pointing to the increasing manpower/skill needs to be satisfied, and second by seeing employment as the main integration mechanism into society. However, there are also many indications that skills and employment are not enough for social integration/inclusion, many other aspects of society are necessary which can be supported by NVAE. At the same time

citizenship and democracy are strongly under contest by influences of globalisation and the neoliberal mission of putting the market and the (multinational) business corporations over the state. These contradictions are reflected by the concepts of post-democracy and civil society (e.g., Crouch 2004).

Most actors in adult education do not react ‚subversively‘, but rather opportunistically, by trying to subsume the problematic aspects under the mainstream of skills demand by displaying the functional aspects of NVAE, and subsuming democracy under the market by commercialising services. The need for a (new) mission for NVAE can be based on the argument that the above mentioned ‚subversive‘ purposes of NVAE are key for societal development and, consequently would need an institutional base as well as financial means, however, to other conditions than the commercialised market and the new-public-management-oriented outcome guided policies can provide. In the discourse about NVAE this trend towards 'economisation' is widely and heavily criticised, however, we cannot fins a similar forceful search for alternative approaches and missions.

If we go back to the empirically observed wider societal purposes of NVAE, what could the mission of NVAE be and what could NVAE specifically do to support those purposes? A proposal for an answer to these questions concerning a new mission can be made by the two dimensions:

- support of transdisciplinarity in knowledge production and
- widening the institutional base for the support of the new modes of knowledge production in society.

Knowledge and knowledge production is an important, contradictory and contested ingredient in societal practice (encompassing economic, political, social and cultural practices). It was historically at the roots of adult education, if we rely on the non-religious parts and sectors of it, e.g., enlightenment (‚Aufklärung‘) vs. unjustified beliefs, or the university extension, trying to bring science to the people, also somehow reflected in the (partly contested) term of the folk high school (Volkshochschule). However, a simple and one-dimensional notion of enlightenment has run into serious conflicts (‚Dialektik der Aufklärung‘, knowledge as element in power and dominance, ‚reflexive modernisation‘, etc.). Thus NVAE has lost this as a clear historical mission (cf. Rinne/Heikkinen/Salo 2007) and various 'anti-movements' developed to some extent under the flag of post-modernism (this development might also be seen as a kind of diversion of its

subversivity, e.g., by versions of esoteric or sectarian movements that reproduce the old conflicts between enlightenment and religion).

A new mission for NVAE in the 'knowledge society'?

Since the 1990s new (and still contested) approaches to knowledge and knowledge production have emerged in science research that somehow try to combine democracy with knowledge production: Transdisciplinarity means a new kind of cooperative knowledge production by researchers and users by various kinds of a direct involvement of the users into also into the scientific production of knowledge. There are different concepts of this development, one is the rise of the 'mode 2' as part of the new knowledge production (Gibbons et al. 1994; Nowotny/Scott/Gibbons 2003; 2006), other are concepts of problem oriented or use oriented science that stick closer to traditional views of science ('mode 1') but also make much stronger relationships to users (e.g., Bechmann/Gorokhov/Stehr 2009; Stokes 1997; Stehr 2008).
We must contend also that all the various observed and proposed purposes of NVAE, in order to be processed in practice imply or need knowledge and, moreover, they need not only distribution and passive acquirement of knowledge, but also the active participation in its production, its co-construction, etc., exactly what is meant by transdisciplinarity. However, transdisciplinarity is difficult to achieve, it needs room and resources on the one hand, and on the other hand (traditional) science is somehow reluctant to participate in such broader practices and is also under pressure and ‚rationalisation' that reduces its room to move. There seem also distinct regimes to prevail in different sectors, in that the economy and the business organisations provide at least some room for transdisciplinary activities (innovation, technological development, etc.), whereas the public spaces where NVAE is situated (politics and policy, social and community development, environment, etc.) do not provide this room so much because they are more strongly under resource constraints. In particular the policy development is (increasingly) rather shaded away from the public, so providing additional room for these new kinds of transdisciplinary knowledge production could be a mission of NVAE institutions, which is quite arguable and clear, and this should be a topic of broader discussion also in adult education research.

References

Bechmann G., Gorokhov, V., Stehr, N., Eds. 2009. The Social Integration of Science: Institutional and Epistemological Aspects of the Transformation of Knowledge in Modern Society. Berlin: edition sigma.

Bjørnåvold, J., Coles, M. 2007/8. Governing education and training; the case of qualifications frameworks. European Journal of Vocational Training, no.42/43 (double issue: 2007, no.3 and 2008, no. 1). 203–35 [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/42-en.pdf].

Cort, P. 2010. Stating the Obvious: the European Qualifications Framework is not a neutral evidence-based policy tool. European Educational Research Journal 9(3). 304-316 [http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/eerj.2010.9.3.304].

Crouch, C. 2004. Post-Democracy. Cambridge: Polity Press.

EERJ 2008. European Educational Research Journal 7 (3).

EU-COM 2012. Assessment of Key Competences in initial education and training: Policy Guidance. Commission staff working document (20.11.), SWD(2012) 371 final. Strasbourg. [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012SC0371&rid=1].

EU 2008. European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. Recommendation of the European parliament and council (23.4.). Official Journal of the European Union C 111/1-7. [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32008H0506(01)&from=EN].

EURYDICE 2007. Non-Vocational Adult Education in Europe. Executive Summary of National Information on Eurybase. Working Document (January). Brussels.

Fields, M. 2005. To educate, empower or economise? Lifelong learning in civil society organisations. A comparative study of Finland and Great Britain. Turku: Turun Yliopisto.

Gibbons, M., Limoges, C., Nowotny, H., Schwartzman, S., Scott, P., Trow, M. 1994. The New Production of Knowledge: The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies. London: Sage [Introduction http://www.schwartzman.org.br/simon/gibbons.pdf].

Grubb, W. N., Lazerson, M. 2004. The Education Gospel: The Economic Power of Schooling. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

[http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/243728/Education%20in%20England.pdf].

Hoskins, B. 2008. The Discourse of Social Justice within European Education Policy
Developments: the example of key competences and indicator development towards
assuring the continuation of democracy. European Educational Research Journal 7(3),
319-330 http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/eerj.2008.7.3.319

Lassnigg, L. 2012. 'Lost in translation': learning outcomes and the governance of education,
Journal of Education and Work (JEW) 25(3). 299-330.

Nowotny, H., Scott, P., Gibbons, M. 2006. Re-Thinking Science: Mode 2 in Societal Context. In:
Carayannis, E.G., Campbell, D.F.J. (Eds.) Knowledge Creation, Diffusion, and Use of
Innovation Networks and Knowledge Clusters: A Comparative Systems Approach across
the United States, Europe, and Asia. Westport: Praeger. 39-51
[http://comparsociology.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Mode2-Science-Gibbons-
Nowotny.pdf]

Nowotny, H., Scott, P., Gibbons, M. 2003. Introduction. 'Mode 2' Revisited: The New
Production of Knowledge. Minerva 41. 179–194.

Rinne, R., Heikkinen, A. Salo, P., Eds. 2007. Adult education – liberty, fraternity, equality?
Nordic views on lifelong learning. Turku: Finnish educational research association.

Stehr, N., Ed. 2008. Knowledge and Democracy. A 21st Century Perspective on Democratic
Practice. New Brunswick: Transaction.

Stokes, D.E. 1997. Pasteur's Quadrant: Basic Science and Technological Innovation. Washington
D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Wilsdon, J., Wynne, B., Stilgoe, J. 2005. We need to infuse the culture and practice of science
with a new set of social possibilities. The Public Value of Science or how to ensure that
science really matters. London: DEMOS
[http://www.demos.co.uk/files/publicvalueofscience.pdf].

Werquin, P. 2010. Recognising Non-Formal and Informal Learning. Outcomes, policies and
practices. Paris: OECD.

Werquin, P. 2008. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning in OECD countries: A very
good idea in jeopardy? Lifelong Learning in Europe 13 (3). 142-149.
http://www.oecd.org/education/highereducationandadultlearning/41851819.pdf

Young, M., Allais, S. 2009. Conceptualizing the role of qualifications in education reform. In:

Allais, S., Young, M., Raffe, D. (Eds.) 2011. Researching Qualifications Frameworks: Some conceptual issues. ILO Employment Sector Working Paper no. 44. 5-22.

Young, M., Allais, S. 2011. The shift to outcomes based frameworks: Key problems from a critical perspective. In: Austrian Open Access Journal of Adult Education. Issue 14, 2011. Vienna. [http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at/magazin/11-14/meb11-14.pdf].

Zepke, N. 2013. Three perspectives on active citizenship in lifelong and life-wide education research. Lline-Lifelong Learning in Europe, Issue 2/2013, online http://www.elmmagazine.eu/articles/three-perspectives-on-active-citizenship-in-lifelong-and-life-wide-education-research