Joint Module
Comparative Studies in Adult and Lifelong Learning

incl. Winter School at Julius-Maximilian University Würzburg in Bavaria, Germany

The International Winter School methodological approach

- Is based on a theoretical framework including several policy models
- Allows critical discussion of adult education and lifelong learning policies in the European Union and in several countries (European or non-European)
- Is aimed at promoting comparison of subtopics of adult education and lifelong learning in other to develop a comparative analysis among several countries.

The Winter School is based on an innovative joint-module methodology in which the role of students attending the Winter School is central. This joint-module methodology involves several pedagogical moments:

1. Students’ individual writing of “country reports”
2. Students’ tutoring in their own higher education institutions
3. Oral exposition of subjects by professors in large international students’ groups
4. Students’ international group work
5. Data gathering during field visits and the listening of guest lecturers representatives of international adult education and lifelong learning institutions
6. Critical analysis of data gathered
7. Comparative analysis and discussion of “country reports” in small groups of students
8. Preparation of posters in small groups of students concerning subtopics reflecting the analysis of adult education and lifelong learning practices in Europe and outside of Europe.

Three moments of the joint-module methodology

- Online preparatory phase of the Winter School: with the support of students’ own higher education tutors involved in COMPALL project and in their home countries. Students willing to join the Winter School will have to read several articles and policy documents concerning adult education and lifelong learning policies in their own country. Students will also have to write a “country report” referring to a specific subtopic of adult education and lifelong learning in their home country to be presented in part 2 of the Winter School.

- Part 1 of the Winter School: to be held at the Julius-Maximilians Universität Würzburg/Bavaria, Germany, the Winter School includes a first part in which students are working international groups with around 30 participants and attend classes devoted to debating education policy models. Afterwards, for data gathering students will have the opportunity to discuss with practitioners and European stakeholders adult education and lifelong learning policies and achieve field visits to German providers of adult education and lifelong learning programs and activities located in Würzburg/Bavaria, Germany. The data gathered will be analysed later on in classes in order to bring theory and observation of practices together.

- Part 2 of the Winter School: to be held at the Julius-Maximilians Universität Würzburg/Bavaria, Germany, the Winter School includes a second part in which students are working in small international groups with around 8-12 participants directed at debating a specific subtopics and comparing practices of several countries. In these small groups students are asked to present and debate the “country report” they have written during the online preparatory phase as well as to prepare a poster concerning the subtopic to be presented at the last day of the Winter School to large international groups.