

Chapter 3

Active Participatory Citizenship for and with Young Adults in Situations of Risk – *On the Cover and Under-Cover*



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Introduction

The link between Active Participatory Citizenship (APC) and Adult Education (AE) is not always evident and explicit, acting *on the cover or under-cover* of educational programmes and practices. The extent to which AE contributes to promoting APC depends on the meaning of APC and the role of AE in European contexts.

Grounded on the available literature, this chapter will further explore the role of APC in AE practices. Based on a first phase of desk research focusing on adult education policies in the European Union (EU), EduMAP first findings revealed that Active Participatory Citizenship often remains *under-cover* in the education programmes' visions and objectives as well as in the overall designs. Yet, the APC conceptual approach may be embedded in many European programmes and initiatives. Despite the lack of explicit use of the term, the different APC dimensions have been driven by the national policy framework and agendas, and different AE initiatives have been therefore seen as tools for promoting one or more of its three above mentioned dimensions (Kersh and Toiviainen 2017).

Adopting an inductive approach, the EduMAP field research has provided the opportunity to collect primary data and give voice to young adults in situation of multiple vulnerabilities and at risk of social exclusion, and participating in AE programmes, about their understanding of APC. Due to its nature, a deeply

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contextualised research work at the country level was necessary to understand the embedded link between the two concepts (Schmidt-Behlau 2019).

Framed within the empirical work carried out in EduMAP and within both the European and contextual research at the country level, this chapter is dedicated to investigating the complex relationship between adult education and APC in four selected concrete cases. These consist of a second chance programme in France, a Youth Integration courses and an example of Youth Forum, both in Germany, and the programme of three production schools in Austria. Deeply contextualised, the chapter will present and analyse the providers' perspectives on APC and their educational approaches. It will then investigate the APC understanding of young participants and the experienced learning processes in terms of developed competences and gained knowledge. Based equally on the interviews with young beneficiaries participating in the programmes with practitioners and providers and on the study of their programmes and/or policies of implementation, participants' learning processes will be compared vis-à-vis the methods and strategies adopted and in light of the APC definition.

The Framing of APC in AE

APC has developed as a comprehensive and multi-layered concept with a proper relevance going beyond the meaning of the single terms composing the expression. Despite the term *citizenship*, APC is not limited to the legal bound between the state and its citizenry. All subjects of a community can potentially participate actively in the society, even if they cannot entirely benefit from the rights that a citizen status in strict and legal sense may confer to them. The community is here conceived as membership of a politico-legal group that serves as a forum for political, social and economic participation (EduMAP Concept Note 2017). Starting from the premises that APC entails a range of actions that are framed within and at the same time work for perpetuating democratic values (Mascherini et al. 2009), the EduMAP research project has contributed to investigating how APC has been implemented throughout Europe, endorsing the definition provided by Hoskins and Mascherini (2009), according to whom APC implies the *participation in civil society, community and/or political life, characterised by mutual respect and non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy*. APC in practice encompasses a range of actions, from the involvement in participatory democracy, including holding governments accountable, to representative democracy and participation in the everyday life of the community. The *active* connotation clarifies that APC is not participation as objective presence in or exposure to society, rather it implies awareness acquisition and change in attitude, as the fieldwork proved.

As investigated by the extensive research at the country level in the first phase of the EduMAP project, the concept of APC varies across Europe, according to the counties' policy priorities. Historical but also recent social and economic trends, as for instance the migration phenomenon in different countries, have impacted on its

conceptualisation and implementation (Kersh and Toiviainen 2017). Across literature, APC has been studied laying emphasis on its different dimensions, namely the economic, social and political ones. In EduMAP, a comprehensive approach has been adopted, considering equally all the aforementioned aspects of APC. Policies and practices related to the development of employability skills – the economic dimension- has been analysed alongside programmes focusing on civic and political participation – the political dimension- and/or on the acquisition of social competences and communication – the social dimension.

How adult education and lifelong learning (LLL) contribute to APC and which are the outcomes and possible effects of participation in education practices fostering APC have been at the core of the EduMAP research project. As described in the UNESCO Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (UIL 2019), learning is not only linked to economic development, but also with social and political participation in society. It has been proved that adult education enables people to gain civic skills and knowledge about the opportunities to become active and resourceful members of their communities (Campbell 2006; Ruhose Thomsen and Weilage 2018). Taken into account the various interpretations and differences in countries' approaches and experiences (Hefler and Markowitsch 2013), adult education remains pivotal as a means to learn and understand how to address modern challenges (Evans and Kersh 2017). It can enable adults to *activate* their participation in their communities and societies at large, *acquiring, recognizing, exchanging, and adapting* their capacities (UNESCO 2015). Conveying the values imbued in Active Participatory Citizenship conceptualisation, adult education is called to contribute to helping forge more inclusive and democratic societies for the future.

As showed by the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) (OECD 2012, 2015), the Eurostat Adult Education Survey (2011, 2016) results, adult education has not always been able to target socially marginalised and economically disadvantaged groups in Europe, whose needs have rather been catered for by the social sector. However, with the rise of more extremist and populist tendencies, a new demand to find approaches to make APC relevant for people in situations of social exclusion has emerged above all from a political perspective and from the interest of institutions to safeguard democratic values (Waller et al. 2017; Taylor 2018). The adult education sector also interacts with people who, by definition of authorities responsible for social inclusion issues, are '*less integrated*' and, to different extents, '*less active participating*' individuals. Against this backdrop, adult education has already taken up the challenge to try to match demands for APC learning with the necessities and motivations of the traditional adult education beneficiaries (de Greef et al. 2012).

Methodology

In the past 10 years, studies on AE were structured around dominant topics, as for example learning in the community for change (Chungil et al. 2017), or they were framed within the social justice, inclusion and participation discussion (Jarvis 2008) or in terms of social and civic responsibility (Ahrari et al. 2014). By answering the research question: *What policies and practices are needed in the field of adult education to include young adults at risk of social exclusion in active participatory citizenship in Europe?* EduMAP tries to investigate how adult education contributes to strengthening individuals' participation in their civil society and community (Hoskins and Mascherini 2009), according to an economic, civic-political and social perspective, framing this within a social cohesion perspective.

After having identified the cases through stakeholders and experts in the field of adult education, accessibility for research purposes was negotiated. Other relevant stakeholders were identified using snowballing or utilising contacts gathered during a first phase of desk research. Data collection was carried out through individual semi-structured interviews and/or focus groups and was conducted among three categories of respondents: policy-makers,¹ including educational authorities, politicians, policy officers, policy experts, national programme coordinators, adult education practitioners, such as educators, social assistances, counsellors, coaches, and adult education participants, aged 16–30 and living in a situation of disadvantage.

The sample to the investigated cases here consisted of 130 respondents in total. 21 respondents² for the Second Chance Programme in France, of whom 13 learners, 21 respondents³ for the Youth Integration courses in Germany, of whom 13 learners, 78 respondents⁴ for the Production schools in Austria, out of whom 42 were young adults, and ten respondents⁵ in the Youth Forum in Germany, out of whom eight

¹The EduMAP project endorses the definition of policy-maker as a person with the authority to influence or determine policies and practices at an international, national or local level.

²Interviews for the Second Chance Programme, France, were conducted in July 2017 and involved 21 respondents. Out of these, 3 were policy-makers, 5 practitioners, and 13 learners, of whom seven boys and six girls. All respondents were interviewed in French.

³Interviews for the Youth Integration courses, Germany, were conducted between June 2017 and July 2017 and involved 21 respondents. Among the five youth migration services providing the courses throughout the country, one has accepted to participate in the study. In particular, out of the 21, two were policy-makers, 6 practitioners, and 13 course participants, of whom eight boys and five girls. All respondents were interviewed in German.

⁴Interviews for the Production schools, Austria, were conducted between October 2017 and November 2017 and involved 78 respondents. Among the providers offering the programme throughout the country, three agreed on participating in the study. Out of the 78, 11 were policy-makers, 25 practitioners, and 42 young adults, of whom 26 boys, 13 girls, and three unknown. All respondents were interviewed in German.

⁵Interviews for the Youth forum, Germany, were conducted between December 2017 and January 2018 and involved ten respondents. In particular, one policy-maker has been interviewed via Skype; one practitioner has been interviewed face-to-face, and eight participants, of whom four

were participants. With the written consent of the participants, interviews were audiotaped, transcribed and then coded.

The four case-studies' approaches to APC were examined by comparing selected variables, including the type of respondents and gender. The results presented in this chapter will compare and contrast views from the providers, based on conceptual documents and the interviews with practitioners and programme managers, with the learners' experiences and perceptions. The analysis among participants' voices on their perception on APC aims to investigate the different outcomes based on their learning experience.

Adult Education Programmes: Providers' Perspectives

Second Chance Schools, France

The Second chance schools in France are considered institutions under the general name of *Établissement pour l'insertion dans l'emploi* (E2C) (translated hereinafter as institutions for integration into employment). Jointly managed by the Ministry for Social Cohesion and by the Ministry of Labour, they are targeted at 16–25-year-olds who are experiencing severe challenges in finding a job. The institutions apply a work-based learning methodology, which takes into account individual participants' learning styles. The French Second Chance System facilitates school-to-work transition by providing personalised training lasting 6–9 months. The learning approach is based on three key elements: the Training Hub, which updates young people's basic competences, the Business Hub that establishes partnerships with local companies, and the Social Life Hub, which encourages inclusion in the wider community.

The programme entails the opportunity to experience internships in a company based in the neighborhood. The 9 months are organized as one-month counseling and guidance after 2–3 months from the beginning and 2–3 months before the end, respectively. In-between, young people make the experience of the internships. Participants may ask for an interview with the staff any time. The internship opportunity is clearly an element of success of the programme, alongside the key aspect of the work-based learning program, which characterizes the comprehensive experience in partner businesses.

Educational Approach to Foster APC The mission of any Second chance school is first and foremost to equip participants with an occupational project and the means to achieve it. This may vary from school to school, to the extent that some make the job placement their priority – and they are aiming at full time unlimited contracts or at any lower alternative such as internship or short-term contracts –,

boys and four girls, in individual face-to-face interviews. All respondents were interviewed in German.

whereas others work more on providing participants with key tools, such as learning by doing. The approach can be more pragmatic: finding participants a job is the priority, but also understanding and using pieces of information. In general, the goal of the Second chance schools is to teach young people to become independent in potentially acquiring new competences and looking for an occupation.

The word citizenship is barely used as such, but approaches promoting citizenship and democratic values in general, are at the heart of the Second chance schools' activities. The topic, and its many declinations, is covered on a daily basis, such as in the context of voluntary projects, to which most of the participants contribute.

On many occasions, citizenship is embedded in their activities. The choice to rely on the cognitive remediation allows the staff and the participants to nicely connect the content of the course and the overall objective of becoming better citizens since the method insists on learning to explore, to observe, to draw conclusions and to relate issues to one another.

The school uses different catalysts to include APC in the curriculum, such as team work, elaboration of projects for improving the commitment and the sense of belonging of the young adults, involvement of teachers and administrative staff to create a positive atmosphere, internship opportunities, and the creation of partnerships to build bridges between the school and local enterprises.

Some practitioners consider that citizenship is just as important as occupational competences and the E2C aim at using to the extent that help E2C participants exit from their neighbourhood, where they tend to be ghettoized.

Barriers Amongst the main barrier identified is the structural disadvantage of young people, as defined in one interview with the direction of one E2C. A structural disadvantage means that for example through multiple vulnerabilities a situation of social and economic exclusion is created. Many of the young people are poor or homeless or have health issues and low self-esteem. All factors are multi-layered and reinforce their further social exclusion. Individual difficulties even to access learning offers are greater and social support is a large dimension for the school, even before young people can give education and training a thought. A rising number of young people have been reported not having the basic skills needed, such as in numbering, language and literacy, which are considered prerequisites in order to find an employment.

Youth Integration Courses, Germany

Selected due to the federal nature and main integration instrument for young people, the Youth Integration Courses were created in 2005. The programme is funded by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and has reached out to 53.516 young migrants and refugees in about 12 years (BAMF 2018).

The current framework for the Integration programme was developed in 2015. The programme consists of a language course (900 teaching units) and an

orientation course (60 teaching units), which occur sequentially. The language course aims to teach German as a second language,⁶ while the orientation section can be considered as a civic education course, providing knowledge about aspects of everyday life and about the German legal system, history and culture. Particular emphasis is laid on democratic values and how they are implemented in Germany and the principles of the rule of law, equal rights, tolerance and freedom of religion.

The courses are officially targeted at migrants, living and working in Germany and refugees with the right to stay in the country,⁷ who are up to 27 years old without basic skills of German language. The concept for the Federal Youth Integration courses identifies multiple elements that can be traceable to a situation of vulnerability. Young learners have experienced migration at an early stage of adolescence or adulthood, mostly dependent on external reasons (BAMF 2015).

Educational Approach to Foster APC The link with APC finds an explicit expression in the orientation course. With the aim to provide learners with basic civic and legal notions and an overview of the German customs and traditions, it applies a standardised curriculum for all participants in the courses. Far from being a personalised programme, the orientation course does not have the ambition to activate young people, as defined within EduMAP research project. The educational approach of the programme and its assessment modalities, which is based on a multiple-choice test, limits it to an instructional course.

Nevertheless, teachers point out the importance of a learner-focused approach in their courses, recognising the individual predisposition of everyone as fundamental to enhance participants' potentials.

For me as a teacher, it is definitely important to first go into a course and to look who I have in front of me, what strengths do the young people have and which are their interests (Teacher and local director of a school, Germany).

Therefore, an empathic approach, showing interest and respect towards the learners' cultural values is fundamental for a successful relationship of exchange. Building the group relationships and inclusion is also pivotal: one of the teachers reported strengthening this sense of belonging. Excursions are also seen as a good opportunity and a different way to socialise, to integrate the group, to get to know the neighbourhood, and to show learners the services available in the city.

When compared with the EduMAP definition of APC as membership of a community, the concept for the Federal Youth Integration courses can be seen to overlap to a certain extent with that of integration, namely social and economic participation in the host society. In particular, language skills and knowledge about the

⁶With the expression second language, it refers to a new language that as an adult, adolescent or child, one learns in the country of migration, in everyday life, at work, in school life and, if necessary, during leisure time.

⁷At the time of the interviews, in the Land considered, the legal status to stay in Germany and automatically attend the courses was given to people coming from Syria, Eritrea, Somalia, Iraq and Iran.

fundamental values of German society and legal system are considered the basis for enabling participants to be active and motivating them to integrate into their future communities. The expectations through the concept also include that it will encourage the *voluntary engagement*,⁸ conceived as the individual contribution and commitment to German society by participating in the labour market and/or in education. Thus, although the economic dimension of APC is predominant in practice the concept does relate to an implicit notion that the overarching outcome of the integration course should be an actively engaging and engaged person.

So the personal commitment of the individual, I would say [it should be] changed, maybe put even more emphasis on it. We have the opportunity here at school [...] to suggest them in concrete: 'Do that. Try to go into sports associations.' (Teacher, Germany)

Barriers According to the local programme coordinator interviewed in the specific case, participants in the courses cannot be actually considered or become active as they are experiencing a situation of vulnerability that can be defined as structural. In their juridical status as migrants or refugees and therefore as 'denizens' they are not entitled to the same rights as German citizens; for instance, they cannot take part in all social and institutional processes in the country and they cannot easily or fully access the labour market due to limited language competences.

They are not disadvantaged as individuals. [...] But I would consider them as being disadvantaged in structural terms because as migrants or immigrants they are denied access to a great number of processes [...] And this constitutes a structural disadvantage. They are not on the same footing as other people living in Germany (Local programme coordinator, Germany).

On the other hand, teachers recognise some common barriers among learners, such as the lack of language skills, the necessity to rearrange living conditions and problems with the residential status. Yet, what marks the difference most is the attainment of or access to education these people have so far experienced which determines their potential for participation in society.

I tend to see the strengths that simply these people bring along, because they have already graduated from high school in their hometown. Most of them have studied one or two years or they have learned a profession [...] and acquired a lot of social skills. So from this perspective, for me, strengths are more important than the assessment results (Teacher and director of a school, Germany).

Production School Programme, Austria

Framed within the Austrian Network for Professionals (NEBA) and inspired by a Danish model, the Production schools have developed their educational provision as part of a federal programme, which aims to support young people in their need to

⁸ *ehrenamtliches Engagement* in the source.

identify their professional orientation. In the first half of 2018, 2.949 young people participated in the Production school programme, with a majority of 60% being young men (Sozialministeriumservice 2019).

Targeted at young people up to the age of 21, or 24 years maximum, with special educational needs, and/or social or emotional impairments, the programme intends to further develop social and personal competencies through dedicated training and especially offering young people more time to find their way into the job market. Production schools offer educational provision that consists of four core components, including training modules, coaching, knowledge workshops and sports activities.

Educational Approach to Foster APC According to the concept for inclusive implementation rules of the Production schools, the educational approach can be defined as highly personalised and individually tailored. The focus is on learners with their abilities and strengths, and the aim is to teach young people to look at their own capacities and help them explore their personal potentials. This element finds a particular expression in the individual coaching practice. Individual assistance is guaranteed through a constant supervision of the coach according to the principle of resource orientation, namely the focus on the participant's resources, with the intent to further strengthen them (Sozialministeriumservice NEBA 2014).

The concept states that the aim is to enable young people to actively take part in the Austrian job market. It is worth noticing the linguistic differentiation in German using the term *Teilhabe* that – differently from the synonym *Teilnahme* (participation) – implies a conscious activation and willingness to take part (Sozialministeriumservice NEBA 2014). It will therefore be here translated into English as *active* participation to underline the terminological difference. Against this backdrop, it can be inferred that conceptually the Production school defines APC as limited to active participation in the job market. Yet, the pedagogical approach of the Production schools reveals that other dimensions of APC may also be taken into account and cultivated. APC is embedded in the programme design and scope, but as potential by-product of the work done at the individual level.

I believe that the ability to be self-determined, self-responsible, able to secure one's existence, one's own existence, is the basis. [...] I think that everyone defines his/her existence differently. And yet, for me it is really important they secure existence, without fear for their lives, in order to survive (Trainer and Coach, Austria).

Different from the original Danish model that conceived the Production school as a pure job-oriented training – as one programme coordinator emphasises – the role of the Production school is not limited to the professional training of participants, its mission is rather to encourage their personal development, so that they can act in and for their individual life and furthermore in the community and in society at large. One of the local directors defines APC in terms of social participation, while a third provider endorses a civic engagement conception. Practitioners point out that

participants firstly need to become cognizant of their capacities and capabilities. The exercise of APC is thus implemented to a different extent, starting with the first step:

I think that civic engagement is being able to stand up and say “I can make at least a whole working day” (Trainer and Coach, Austria).

We create the opportunity that makes the participants feel useful [...]. We have families [Note: in the community] [...] who do not manage to paint a room or cut wood for the winter time. So, learners help this family cut the wood for the winter and bring it down to the cellar. [Note: the lesson learnt is]: “I have been able to help” and that is a tremendously good feeling [...] this creates new perspectives (Programme coordinator and local director, Austria).

Barriers Practitioners identify the main barrier to the exercise of APC in learners’ lack of consciousness and understanding of their capabilities and limited autonomy. Being active is perceived as “too far away” from their everyday life and concerns. From the provision perspective, it clearly emerges that young people in situation of vulnerabilities are seen to have the potentials to become active in all the dimensions of APC, but their current situation needs to be addressed first. It can be deduced that in order to be *activated*, some basic premises have to be satisfied. The Austrian production school works on and with the person to identify and address the needs, and on that basis, build on and strengthen the grounds for becoming a future active agent.

Youth Forum, Germany

Framed within the Federal Programme of Urban Development Assistance of the Social City model set up in 1999 (Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community), the participatory Youth Forum is part of a more comprehensive project of stabilizing and upgrading economically and socially deprived quarters and communities in German cities through the involvement of local stakeholders and the people living in the concerned area. Jointly financed by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, the Federal Agency for Civic Education and the Federal Youth Council and established back in 2007, the Youth Forum offers young people from the district opportunities to discuss thematic issues with social relevance on a monthly basis. It is targeted at youth at minimum age 14, mainly living in the deprived district of a German city. The overarching aim of the Forum is to bring together young people from different cultures, provide assistance in conflict resolution and promote identification with the district and help them develop more self-confidence.

Educational Approach to Foster APC The Forum is conceived as an opportunity for active participation and political involvement of young people and for generating concrete experiences of neighbourhood interaction. The vision and aim of the project is to promote Active Participatory Citizenship according to a civic dimension.

Based on the approach of active participatory engagement, the Youth Forum offers young people a platform where they can articulate their specific needs and interests. It gives them the possibility to propose the topic of discussion and a problem they wish to address, or discuss together in order to find potential solutions and present the proposals for change in committees active at the city district level. It can therefore be considered a specific form of civic engagement related to political decision making as it enables young participants to experience themselves as potential social change agents. This experience is seen as a key by the provider to disclose the opportunities at hand:

We do not approach (Note: the young people) with a stereotype, but we say that there are different situations of risk in a life time. And a young person is anyway in such a situation of risk, young people are, anyway. And then a lot can come together, unemployment, lack of education, language problems... and the project tries to identify which conditions are needed, so that these young people engage actively, in spite of this situation (Coordinator and Facilitator, Germany).

The Youth Forum experience enables participation on a structural level in the sense that young people can identify their interests and needs and are given the space to voice them. Although the provider does not identify as an adult education institution, the pedagogical approach is experience-based with the aim to purposefully *provide* young people with the specific space and possibilities to acquire skills closely related to active citizenship by for example giving young people responsibility. One example for this is that a young person is asked for instance to moderate one of the sessions.

APC is the prevalent component of the Youth Forum. Linked to the social sector through the urban development assistance, differently from other education practices, the informal learning experience has from the beginning a clear and extrinsic orientation to activate young participants. As proven by the experiential approach and the action-oriented learning process, young adults have the opportunity to already experiment by engaging actively.

Barriers The living context of the city district can be generally characterized as disadvantaged in terms of a high long-term unemployment rate of most of its inhabitants, environmental issues and congested area. Asked about the barriers to APC, the coordinator and facilitator of the forum does not identify any substantial limitations, rather the potential situation of disadvantage are related to external factors, such as discrimination and unequal treatment.

Learning APC: Young People's Perspective

Understanding APC

Analysing the learners' perspectives reveals that the interpretation of the meaning of Active Participatory Citizenship is multidimensional and often not clearly defined. As concept, it is too abstract and distant from young people's everyday life and set of priorities. The capacity of reflecting upon its meaning and implications varies, according to the approaches implemented by the single educational practices.

In the French Second Chance case, for example, young people mention mainly the *participation* in neighbourhood activities when asked about their concept of APC. Due to financial constraints, they often have a feeling of being limited in terms of mobility, therefore they have particularly appreciated organised visits that enable them to exit from their living environment and *encounter new experiences*. Participants report having done activities to which they had not been exposed before taking part at E2C, such as visiting a museum, a theatre or other cultural activities.

I'm 28 years old and if I were in school today that would piss me off. I was forced to do it and so much the better. I used to get beaten up by my brother when I wasn't there. Now I am with the [Name] association to help young people find their way around. We can do volunteer work (Youth, France).

The understanding of APC was also limited among participants in the Austrian production schools. A few young people bring as example of their active participation the fact of being at school or to wake up in the morning and follow a schedule. Others relate it to a *social dimension*, such as meeting friends or being part of a sports association or helping others. A few examples are reported about their *personal approach*, such as being focused or interested in looking for an internship.

On the other hand, learners in the Youth Integration courses in Germany provided various answers in relation to APC. Some respondents conceive it as *professional engagement*, thus having a job, an internship or simply attending an education course, some understand it as *political engagement*, in particular being informed about politics and taking part in elections. Other young people consider APC as *social engagement*, as participation in activities outside the course, such as practicing sports, and having social contacts. Six participants out of ten answered the question reporting examples of voluntary activities, helping older people or supporting friends. Most of them relate the APC exercise to an *individual attitude*, in particular having a daily structure, being focused, having an objective, having a positive approach to life, respect other opinions, being interested and committed and doing everything possible according to the own possibilities.

In contrast to the above-mentioned answers the perspectives and understanding of the Youth Forum participants about APC do not differ too much from those of the provider and the coordinator and facilitator. The answers of some of the interviewees confirm that the objective to make young people understand themselves as active citizens in the district and contribute to its development, even though holding a stigma, is successful:

Personally, I've learnt to be critical and changed my points of view on some aspects of the district (Youth, Germany).

[I've learnt] That everyone can bring an idea and be listened to. Young people without family support can freely talk about their problems and questions that are important to them are discussed. The problems of the district are discussed together, we get information how to engage politically for example by learning how to demonstrate, we engage through the activities of the YF (Youth, Germany).

Despite the difficulty in reflecting upon the concept and sometimes in the novelty of the term, it was possible to identify common patterns in the definitions or examples provided by the young respondents. Adopting a pure inductive approach in the analysis of the different answers, Active Participatory Citizenship seems to be perceived in a *solidarity and social dimension* and as an attitude to help or support other people. It is also defined in *socio-economic* terms as having a job and being economically independent or more related to a *personal dimension*, as the capacity to have a daily routine and being able to follow a schedule. In general, it is clear that Active Participatory Citizenship understanding is not a predefined concept and it varies according to the situation of vulnerability and related needs of the interviewees.

Learning Processes and Outcomes

From the point of view of young learners, in most cases Active Participatory Citizenship had not been the priority that led them to participate in an adult education programme. Yet, many interviewees, to a greater or a lesser extent of awareness, reported about a learning process towards APC. Not always directly identifiable as prerequisites for becoming active, in describing their experience and advantages gained from the programme, participants identified positive achievements, from knowledge acquisition about democratic values, to awareness increase in their opportunities up to a concrete change in attitude.

Many learners in the Second Chance school programme in France appreciate especially the opportunities to participate in projects, get out of their 'ghettos' and find support in their internships. Youth Integration courses have provided learners with practical knowledge about the political and legal rights and European democratic freedoms. Some reported having acquired notions about the administrative division of the country, about the state bodies, the democratic decision-making process, and the recent German history. Participants were also provided with practical information about social and supportive services, educational and recreational opportunities in the city.

In the Austrian Production school case, beyond the acquisition of professional techniques and practical abilities, the greater learning outcomes are related to social skills. Young people reported becoming more self-confident and aware of their strengths and potentials. They were trained in conflict management and have learnt how to cope with everyday life challenges, without discouraging, but disclosing

them and learning to find a solution. The importance of the acquisition of a daily structure and of the value of punctuality and the respect for rules was particularly stressed.

Before the Production school, I slept every day until three o'clock or four o'clock in the afternoon. I did not know what to do. I did not have any employment in my life, because I did not have any motivation to look for training, whilst in the course I have a regular every-day life and have support (Youth, Austria).

I'm (here) with people and work with them and talk to them. That actually helps me a lot become more social (Youth, Austria).

Through non-formal and informal learning by doing, young people in the Youth Forum have developed better critical thinking skills and have become politically more self-confident and better informed. Some reported having learnt to ask questions, listening to other perspectives and changing their own thinking when appropriate, others stressed the acquisition of a positive attitude and a broader horizon. In terms of personal development, a few participants said to have become more tolerant, open towards other people, and able to accept different opinions. Young people also appreciate in general the experience of being in a group, making new friends and even being able to talk about personal problems:

By character, I am not so open but thanks to the Youth Forum I've improved my self-confidence, the communication with others, my vocabulary. I've made new friends and met new people. It is possible to talk about personal problems as well (Youth, Germany).

Adult education programmes, on purpose selected for their differences in the conceptualisation of APC and in the educational strategy design, present differences in relation to the educational approaches and methods implemented to transmit knowledge and develop competencies for APC. Comparing the different extents of APC learning processes expressed in the interviews with young learners and comparing these with the specific educational strategy adopted by the selected programmes reveals a correlation between approach and outcome. According to the study, the more experiential and personalised is the learning process, the more effective is the impact on young people's capacity of self-reflection, upon their potentials and attitudes towards APC.

Adult Education's Contribution to Active Participatory Citizenship

In the analysis of the cases' concepts, one specific aspect or dimension of the multidimensional APC concept tends to prevail in the educational design, such as either the economic focus through company internships in the Second Chance Schools in France or the political dimension in the Youth Forum in Germany. Whilst on paper this characterisation emerges clearly, the opportunity to interview providers and practitioners implementing the programmes sheds more light on the complexity of

the relationship, since respondents emphasised the comprehensive potentials of *activation* of learners through the education provision. The most emblematic case is the Production school programme in Austria which, though initiated as a vocational orientation course, has in practice acquired a more individual dimension thanks to the specific educational strategy that providers decided to adopt.

Comparing the learners' responses with the APC description or references as presented in the programmes' concept reveals that a clear explicit intention of the education initiative to foster APC has led to a more comprehensive and less distant understanding on the side of the young interviewees. This is demonstrated especially by the more articulated responses of the participants of the Youth Forum, who proved to be more aware of the meaning of APC.

In France, a widely accepted assumption is that successful transition into the labour market of young adults encompasses a reasonable integration into the society. The concept of citizenship therefore imbues the idea of social integration. However, the analysis of the French case reveals that the embedded definition of APC has not led to a change in the attitude of the learners. Indeed, the explicit or implicit reference of the programme to fostering APC does not show consistent results.

While participants in the Austrian Production schools report having acquired a daily structure and having become more cognizant of their strengths, namely having experienced a personal development, the young adults in the Youth Integration courses were less able to reflect on their learning process and just reported having gained more knowledge. Not surprisingly, migrants and refugees in the Youth Integration courses respond to have acquired knowledge about the German society, system and culture and have improved their language skills. Following a standardised concept developed at the federal level, the educational approach of the courses is aimed at providing young adults with useful information and general notions.

Conversely, the Austrian Production school programme has developed an individually tailored pedagogical strategy, which finds its main expression in the individual coaching practice. Young people's learning process in terms of APC does not mirror the economic goal of the programme, rather, with an increased awareness of their strengths and potentials, the individual dimension has emerged preponderantly.

Analysing the results of the learning process of young adults attending the Youth Forum in Germany, it emerged that participation led them to a real change in their former attitude seeing themselves as *active participatory citizens*. They had in fact the opportunity to take part in the educational experience, bringing up their ideas and implementing them in form of socio-cultural and political projects. They have challenged themselves against and within the group and have become agents of change in the deprived city district where they live.

Linked to the definition of APC endorsed in the EduMAP project, the learners of the Youth Forum have acquired a greater awareness of APC and their potential as participatory members in their community and/or group compared to all the other

cases. The adult education component, expressed in the educational approach adopted, was pivotal and the explicit reference to APC in the programme.

What has actually made the difference in terms of the learning process *for becoming active* is the strategy adopted by the providers, both in terms of educational approach and pedagogical methods. Adult education turns out to be a key instrument for fostering and promoting APC for young people facing multiple situations of risk. On the other hand, whether APC acts *on the cover* or *under-cover* makes a difference as long as the space for experiencing a learning process related to APC competences is provided, as represented in Fig. 3.1. The visualisation summarises the components considered and analysed in each case-study. The conceptualisation of APC in the programmes, described as explicit – *on the cover* – or implicit – *under-cover* – does not have in these cases a direct correlation with the learning outcomes, as reported by the interviewed participants. Conversely, the educational approach comes out to have an impact on the learning development of the young respondents. It can therefore be concluded that the more participatory and personalised is the learning experience, the more effective is the impact on young people's capacity of self-reflection upon their potentials and attitudes towards Active Participatory Citizenship.

Conclusion

The selected adult education practices present differences in the conceptualisation of Active Participatory Citizenship and in the educational programme design. Whilst in both the German cases the goal of fostering APC is clearly mentioned and designed at the conceptual level, the French and Austrian practices have a less direct and explicit link. The analysis of the different extents of the APC learning process and the multiple programme strategies adopted by the selected cases reveals a correlation between the adopted approach and the resulting outcome.

As long as the education approach and methods are key and determinant components, the analysis bears out that AE is instrumental not only to promote specific skills and competencies, but also as driving factor to a real change in the individuals' attitudes. It remains therefore fundamental as a means for change (Evans and Kersh 2017). Despite the differences among the countries' traditions and strategies in AE (Hefler and Markowitsch 2013), and the considered case-studies, all have contributed to fostering the *participation in civil society, community and/or political life*, as defined by Mascherini (2009). However, to a different extent.

Amongst the four cases, only the Youth Forum has proved successful in leading to a change in attitude and implementing participatory community-oriented activities by young participants. By contrast, more standardized educational provision, even with a clear goal to foster APC such as in the Youth integration courses, run the danger of being limited to mere knowledge acquisition or awareness raising missing out on the opportunity for fostering a holistic experience of Active Participatory Citizenship in all its dimensions.

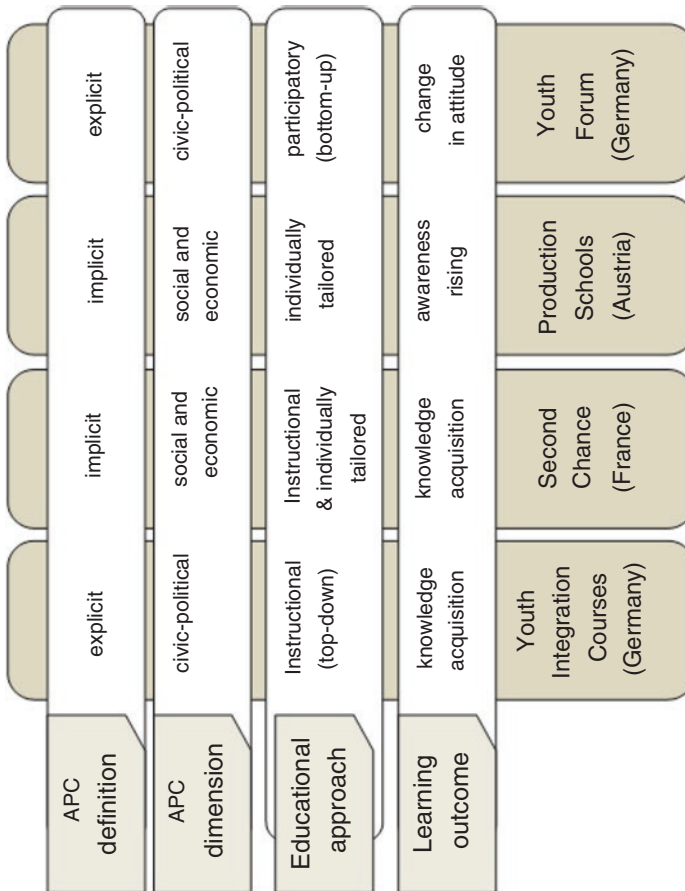


Fig. 3.1 Cases' visualization

Active Participatory Citizenship can be conceived *on the cover* or *under-cover* in adult education provision and learning opportunities. Yet, despite the more or less direct vocation for APC, those adult education programmes with a more participatory and learner-focused approach and pedagogical strategy are more suitable for conveying APC values and have a higher impact on young adults' learning experiences and attitudes, confirming that adult education enables individuals to become active and resourceful members of their communities.

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