

# ACADEMIC CONTINUING EDUCATION AS A STRATEGIC RESPONSE TO DEMOGRAPHIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES

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# AGENDA

1. DGWF - German Association for University Continuing and Distance Education
2. Basic Principles
3. Five Claims
4. Conclusion – Next Steps

# DGWF - German Association for University Continuing and Distance Education

- **non-profit association**
- **Aims:** promotion, coordination, representation of continuing and distance education (HE system)

## DGWF

- represents its members,
- is a **working group**, carrying out public tasks, especially in the fields of information and counselling
- is paying increased attention to the role of **new media** and **digitalization** in its fields

# Basic Principles

- **Academic Continuing Education (ACE)** is offered by universities.
- **Target groups:** academics with a degree, individuals respectively professionals with interest in scientific based knowledge
- **Higher Continuous Vocational Education Training (HCVET):** the research-based development of professional expertise on the one hand and
- the skills-oriented education training for vocations (**VET**) on the other.

# Basic Principles

- **HCVET is a special part of ACE and ACE is part of Universities' Lifelong Learning (ULLL)**
- **Digital Learning within Academic Continuing Education (ACE) and the link to HCVET strengthen participation in education!**



Therefore **ACE is the strategic response to the demographic and technological changes!**

# Claim I: Academic Continuing Education and VET as equivalents

- **HCVET** is part of a concept of an “**Open University**” and leads to **more equity** and **permeability** in the **education system**.
- The big target:  
**to overcome the sectorial segregation** and  
**to link** the **HCVET** and the **VET**
- One **instrument to achieve this aim**:  
the **mutual recognition of** (also non-formal and informal) **learning**

# Claim II: ACE is and has to remain a non-commercial governmental task

- **Academic Continuing Education is not commercial.**
- **HCVET in Higher Education System means more than a mere professional qualification.**
- **Academic Continuing Education *is* part of the universities' governmental task.**

# Claim III: The funding of ULLL = part of the big European funding programmes

- **Digital Learning** within **Academic Continuing Education (ACE)** and **the link to HCVET** strengthen participation in education!
- With respect to the **labour market** and the **demographical change** it should be a **special aim of the EU to promote ACE**.
- Especially because the **increasing importance of HCVET** as an „add on“ within the Higher Education Sector, **the funding of it** should be **part of the big European funding programmes!**



# Claim IV: European wide Control of Quality + Practice of European standards

- In the age of digitalization HE is **globalized**. This **requires quality management systems and quality control**.
- **EQF and NQF show a very wide range** in the field of **ACE** of how different European countries practice it.
- Therefore certain **benchmarks of quality** (content, work-load etc.) are **necessary to be established, to be agreed on and to be put into practice**.

# Claim V: ULLL as part of the European Digitalization Strategy

- **HCVET is frontrunner and pacemaker of a digital education by using digitalization to open new ways of access to Higher Education.**
- **Flexible studying formats enable especially working people to combine work, family and social life.**
- **The formats offered by HCVET providers have to answer to this challenge.**
- **Therefore ULLL should be part of the European Digitalization Strategy.**

# Conclusion – Next Steps

For a **successful European Lifelong Learning Strategy** it is nessecary:

- 1. to link HCVET and VET**
- 2. to recognise, that Academic Continuing Education is part of the universities' governmental task**
- 3. that ULLL takes part in the big European funding programmes**
- 4. to establish benchmarks of quality**
- 5. ULLL becomes part of the European Digitalization Strategy**