



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



**confintea VI**

living and learning for a viable future:  
the power of adult learning

sixth international conference on adult education  
belém, brazil, 1 – 4 december 2009



## GREETING FROM THE STATE GOVERNOR OF PARÁ

In the name of the people of the State of Pará, I would like to express my pleasure that we will soon be welcoming the participants in CONFINTEA VI to the Hangar Amazon Convention Centre in Belém during the first week of December.

We are honoured that CONFINTEA VI will take place in Pará – not only because it is a landmark event, but also because the goals of the Conference reflect those of the State government by providing a platform for dialogue on policy and the promotion of adult learning and education.

Just as the last CONFINTEA, twelve years ago in Hamburg, recognised adult learning and education as key tools with which to face the current social and developmental challenges facing the world, this event will, without a doubt, serve as a milestone in the process of constructing appropriate public policies tailored to the realities of the Amazon region.

In Pará, our experience in the field of adult and youth education has been positive and our existing initiatives will certainly be enriched by the CONFINTEA debates. We recognise, however, that we still have a long road ahead, above all if we are to reach those who live far from the urban centres in the vast Amazon region.

It is because we understand education to be the most reliable means of supporting our population's development that the Government of Pará extends its warm welcome and friendship to all those who will be travelling to Belém to debate, discuss, teach and learn how adult education can equip us to build a better world for all. We look forward to welcoming you in December.

Ana Júlia Carepa, *State Governor of Pará*

### Registrations received for CONFINTEA VI

As of 13 November, 155 of 193 UNESCO Member States had confirmed that they will be taking part in CONFINTEA VI. A fair proportion of the delegations from Member States will be headed by their respective Ministers of Education, 88 of whom have confirmed their attendance to date.

With a response rate of 93% and 42 Ministers in attendance, the Member States in the Africa region currently lead the field in terms of the number of confirmations received. An increase in the number of registrations worldwide, including representatives from UN agencies and NGOs, is predicted for November.

### International Civil Society Forum (FISC)

The FISC is being organised by the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and will be held in Belém, Brazil, from 28-30 November, 2009, immediately prior to CONFINTEA VI. FISC is a global event to mobilise and prepare civil society representatives to participate in CONFINTEA VI and to liaise with other movements, networks and civil society organisations that have been working to assure the right to youth and adult education. In this sense, FISC offers an open space where people, entities, civil society organisations and movements, from different countries can gather to reflect, hold democratic debates, exchange ideas, formulate proposals, exchange experiences freely and establish links that will enable action to be taken in support of youth and adult education. Thematic panels will be held on diverse themes, such as migration, financing, interculturality, environmental and rural education and literacy. Self-organised events on a variety of themes are being encouraged. For further information, please consult the FISC website: [www.fisc2009.org](http://www.fisc2009.org).

**Note to all participants who require visas for Brazil:** The Brazilian Ministry of External Relations has sent an Official Communication No. 73603 to all Brazilian Embassies and Consulates throughout the world, requesting them to issue a new visa free of charge to participants who had already obtained a visa in May. The Brazilian Ministry of External Relations has suggested that participants contacting an embassy or consulate again should refer to this Official Communication, which was distributed on 25 August 2009. Please contact the embassy in your country (or the nearest embassy or consulate) and enquire whether it will grant you the visa free of charge and accept the Communication. However, it is important to bear in mind that, despite the Ministry's request, each Brazilian Embassy or Consulate is free to decide whether or not it will accept this recommendation, and each also has the authority to charge a visa fee if it sees fit to do so.



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UNESCO Institute  
for Lifelong Learning



Secretaria de Estado  
de Educação

Ministry  
of Education



## ON THE PROGRAMME AT CONFINTEA VI:

CONFINTEA VI's main aim will be to draw attention to the ways in which adult learning and education relate and contribute to sustainable development in all its facets – social, economic, ecological and cultural. It will explore the issues affecting adult learning and education today, including policies, structures and financing; inclusion and participation; quality; and literacy.

The programme will consist of a series of plenary sessions (keynote addresses, presentations and roundtable discussions), commissions and workshops. The timetable for CONFINTEA VI can be downloaded from the official website ([www.unesco.org/en/confinteavi/confintea-vi/programme](http://www.unesco.org/en/confinteavi/confintea-vi/programme)).

### Keynote Addresses:

- “Living and Learning for a Viable Future: The Power of Adult Learning”  
Speaker: Senator Maria Osmarina Marina Silva Vaz de Lima, Senado Federal, Brazil (Tuesday, 1 December)
- “Towards Lifelong Learning”  
Speaker: Kasama Varavarn, former Secretary-General of the Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education, Thailand (Thursday, 3 December)
- “From Rhetoric to Action”  
Speaker: Paul Bélanger, Professor for Lifelong Learning, Université du Québec à Montréal, and President of ICAE (Friday, 4 December)

A series of **Roundtables** will offer participants the opportunity to attend moderated discussions with a range of high-level panellists and respondents from Member States, most of them ministers. These sessions will focus on the following key issues:

- Policies and Governance for Adult Education
- Financing of Adult Education
- Literacy as a Key Competence for Lifelong Learning

- Assuring Quality of Adult Education and Assessing Learning Outcomes
- The Way Forward

A special session will be held on “Inclusion and Participation in and through Adult Education”.

The **Commission** will be open to all delegations. Its role will be to carry out discussions and reach agreements on pending issues and recommendations based on the draft outcome document. The Commission's proposals will then be submitted to the Drafting Committee for consideration.

Apart from these statutory elements, **workshops** will be held by UN agencies, NGOs and international organisations. Their aim is fourfold: to highlight implementation mechanisms and achievements in ALE; to facilitate the exchange of best practices; to debate potential strategies; and to develop recommendations that may be embedded in the conference outcome document. The themes of the workshops reflect the key issues of the Conference.

The main working documents for CONFINTEA VI are available on the website, including the Annotated Agenda and the preliminary draft of the Belém Framework for Action. All official documents will be circulated to all delegations prior to the conference.

### Workshop on South-South Cooperation

The Third Workshop on South-South Cooperation between Portuguese-speaking countries took place in the city of Praia, Cape Verde, from 14 to 16 October. The meeting brought together representatives of the governments of Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, as well as Radio ECCA from the Canary Islands (Spain) and representatives from the UNESCO Brazil office.

The meeting debated themes related to the collection of educational statistics and information; the evaluation of learning outcomes and impacts; the training of trainers; access to and the use of information and communication technologies; and the recognition, validation and certification of competences.

“With regard to adult education, all the countries can offer examples of good practices but also have their weaknesses. The idea of the cooperation is to share the good practices and the difficulties. In addition to creating a horizontal relationship, we hope to create a network of solidarity,” commented Timothy Ireland, a UNESCO specialist in adult education.

Brazil presented its experience in the areas of evaluation, educational statistics and information gathering, and took the opportunity to launch a publication which presents the results of the Second Workshop held in Salvador, Bahia (Brazil) in February 2008, as well as two other reports produced by UNESCO, the Portuguese version of *The Global Literacy Challenge* and *Education and Learning for All: Views from the Five Continents*.

### **Not to be missed – The Cathedral**

- After closing for four years for restoration work, the oldest church in Belém, the Metropolitan Cathedral or the Church of the See, reopened its doors for visitors and religious celebrations in September 2009.
- Construction work on the Cathedral, located right in the heart of the Old City, was initiated in 1713, and would later involve the Italian architect, Antonio José Landi, one of the greatest architects of the period. Work on the building was officially concluded on 8 September 1771.
- In 1941, the church was included on the country's Historical and National Artistic Heritage list. Among the jewels to be found in the building are paintings by Domenico de Angelis and an organ, of Italian inspiration, made in the workshop of Aristides Cavaillé-Coll in Paris. The instrument is similar to that in the chapel at the University of Coimbra in Portugal, which was installed in 1882.

### Europe and North America

The UNESCO Pan-European Region – comprising Europe, North America and Israel – is richly diverse, geographically, economically, politically, socially, ethnically, linguistically and culturally. Demographic structures are altering and the overall population (1.164 billion inhabitants) is shrinking and ageing. In the European Union (EU), the share of the population aged 65 or over is projected to rise from 84.6 million (17.1 per cent) in 2008 to 151.5 million (30 per cent) in 2060. Diversity is increasing in the vast majority of the region, with all the ensuing economic, social, cultural and political implications. In 2006, almost 2 million new immigrants settled in the EU, while 20 per cent of the Canadian and 13 per cent of the US population were foreign-born.

Both the EU and the OECD recognise the centrality of lifelong learning. The European Commission has developed several guiding policy documents on lifelong learning, starting with A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning in 2000. A European Qualifications Framework is currently under discussion. Awareness of the key role of adult learning and education has increased in the majority of countries and 17 of the 27 EU-countries have adopted overarching lifelong learning strategy statements in response to the Lisbon Agenda, aimed at making the European Union (EU) the most competitive economy in the world and achieving full employment by 2010. Literacy is being addressed seriously by some Western European countries (UK, Ireland, France, Germany, etc.), the most outstanding example being the Skills for Life Programme in the UK (with an investment of £3 billion in the period 2000-2007). In the USA, almost 50 per cent of adults aged 16+ participated in some form of adult learning in 2001. A bold new vision, Learn Canada 2020, was announced in April 2008 by Canada's Council of Ministers of Education, to address the education needs and aspirations of all Canadians by providing quality lifelong learning opportunities.

By 2020, 31.5 per cent of all jobs in the EU will need high qualifications and 50 per cent medium qualifications. This consistent trend across the region is one of the reasons why the emphasis in a wide range of countries is on vocational education and training for growth and competitiveness. The participants attending the CONFINTEA VI Preparatory Conference in Europe stressed the need for a more integrated approach to adult learning and education that addresses economic development, social cohesion, equity and diversity, democratic citizenship, sustainable development and community and personal development, especially in view of the financial crisis across the region and the wider world, and in the context of continuing conflicts, accelerating demographic change and environmental changes.

A further recommendation asked for a greater investment in research, evaluation and documentation in the field of adult learning and education in order to promote better-informed policy decisions and to improve quality.



### The Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission



The European Commission has integrated its educational and training initiatives under a single umbrella: the Lifelong Learning Programme. With a budget of nearly €7 billion for the period 2007 to 2013, the programme aims to contribute towards making lifelong learning a reality across the 27 states of the European Union (EU), recognising that it is key to economic growth, and give everyone the chance to participate fully in society.

The programme, which comprises four sub-programmes – Comenius for schools, Erasmus for higher education, Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training, and Grundtvig for adult education – enables individuals at all stages of their lives to participate in multilateral projects and training across Europe. The Grundtvig programme focuses on the teaching and study needs of those in adult and non-formal education.

There are a number of challenges that are shared by all EU member states. Faced with ageing societies, skills deficits of the workforce and global competition, countries need to learn from one another and work together to find joint responses. Since the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000 – which recognises knowledge as the EU's most valuable asset, particularly as global competition intensifies in all sectors – EU member states and the European Commission have strengthened their cooperation. This is reflected in the Education and Training 2010 work programme launched in 2001 and its follow-up, the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training adopted by the Council in May 2009.

European cooperation in education has led to the development of a number of EU reference tools to support national reforms in the areas of key competences; quality assurance in higher education and in vocational education and training; the quality of mobility; the validation of non-formal and informal learning; lifelong guidance mechanisms; and the European Qualifications Framework.

For more information, please visit the website:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm)