

## **New perspective for lifelong learning at University "Roma Tre"**

Aureliana Alberici, Paolo Di Rienzo  
*University "Roma Tre", Rome, Italy*

The overall aim of this paper is to describe, at local context, the methodologies, the strategies and the operative processes to put the traditional Italian universities system into a lifelong learning perspective: this is the case of C.A.P. (University Centre for Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education) of University "Roma Tre".

Starting from the strategies of changes proposed by the European lifelong learning model and the Bologna Process, the modernisation and innovation in the Italian University depend on the kind of answer we are able to give to social, economical and cultural challenges.

In the Italian context, against a low level of participation in continuing education activities, the change in the university population (the phenomenon of an increasing adult participation at the university) is a national trend.

The universities can act as a facilitator and capacity builder and organization which fosters the development of the learning potential of human beings and consequently the successful growth of a democratic and civil society implying inclusive cultural models and policies. In this way the CAP represents a local resource able to promote an active partnership between social actors, with the aim to enhance skills, preserve human capital and employability, in a social and economical development perspective.

The project of the CAP focuses on the educational interpretation of lifelong learning, according to orientation which goes beyond a merely economic-functional logic, founded instead on the vision of cultural and social complexity in which lifelong learning is considered as a resource for human and social growth, as social capital. In this way the conceptual framework is basically defined by the adoption of a perspective which considers the "development as a freedom": the capability of people to live lives that they can reasonably appreciate, and widen the range of choices that are actually available for them represent the centre of individual and collective growth strategies.

The valorisation of competences becomes crucial in a lifelong learning-oriented system also including the educational institutions of higher education, such as universities. In fact, the new economic scenario emphasises individual learning and the different ways and settings in which it takes place. The development of qualitative strategies competence-based, such as recognition and validation of prior experiential learning or the Bilan de Compétences, turn out to be a key element to support transitions of individuals towards the job market and educational system. The qualitative methodologies, applied to adults, reinforce their capacity of reflection on their educational and work paths/experiences, and of developing a critical and proactive thinking on their life experience.

The last part of this paper takes into consideration methods, tools and strategies of the developing project of implementation of the CAP of University "Roma Tre".

# NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

## THE PROJECT ON University Centre for Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education

The Academic Senate of “Roma Tre” University, on 24th February 2010, approved a Guideline for the implementation of a University CENTRE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION within “Roma Tre” University (Italy)

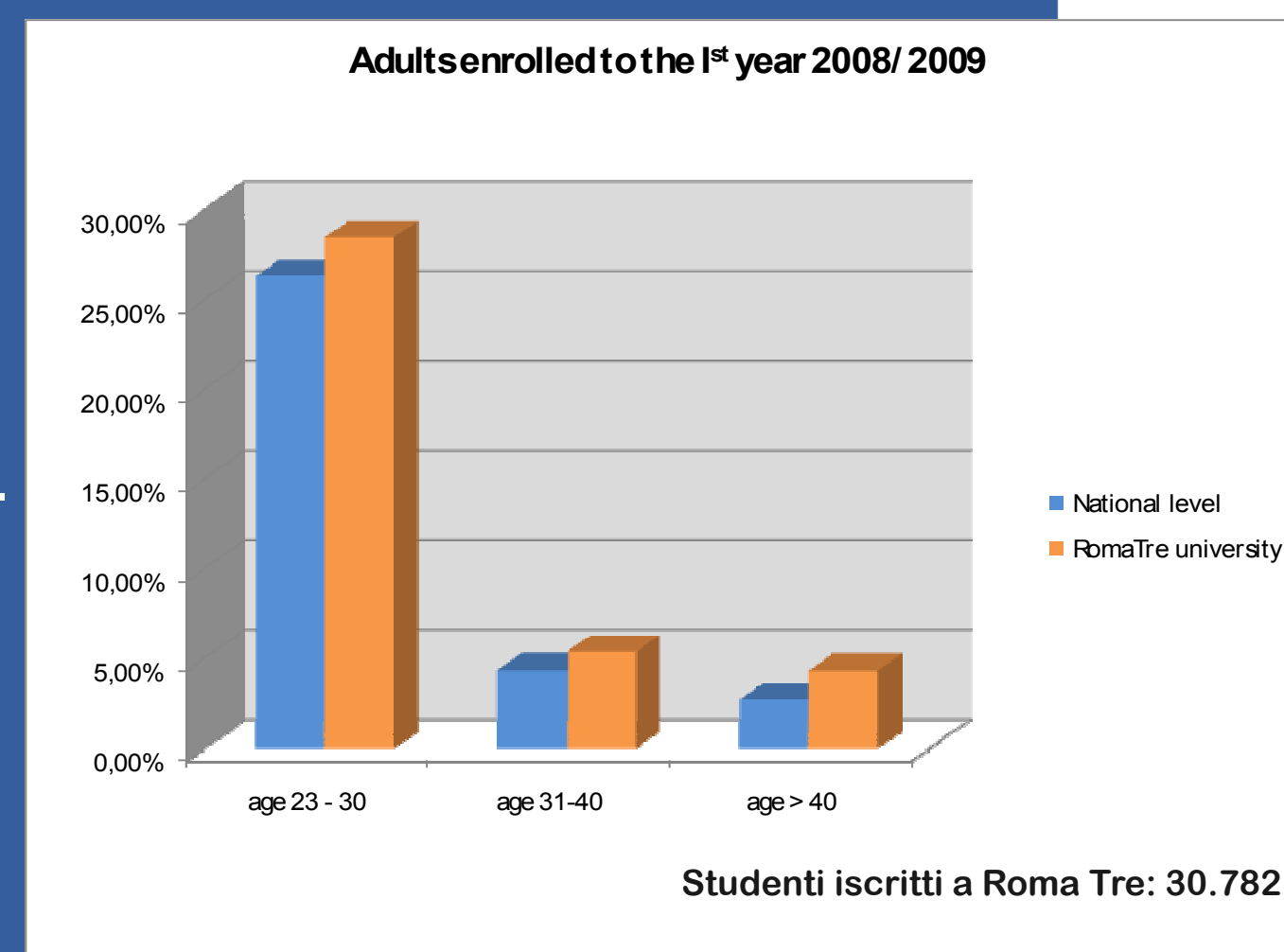
### BACKGROUND

Starting from the change approach proposed by the *Lisbon Strategy*, by the *Bologna Process* and by the *European Universities Charter on Lifelong Learning*, the modernisation and innovation in the Italian University system depends on the response that can be given to social, economical and cultural challenges.

This assumption generates the need to identify a third innovative *mission* for Universities, besides the two traditional missions of research and higher education: a new mission related to the necessity to provide adequate feedback to potential beneficiaries who are already integrated in a work context and to fulfill newly acquired educational needs.

### WHAT DO WE NEED IN THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM?

Universities should therefore go through a comprehensive reorganization and develop actions aimed at broadening and facilitating access to lifelong learning, as a new educational strategy. This will allow to face constantly increasing demand for education coming from the society, also considering the latest developments on the increasing adult participation at the University.



### OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE CENTRE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

*“Universities can act as an enabler, capacity builder and organization which empowers the development of the learning potential of human beings and consequently the successful growth of a democratic and civil society, implying inclusive cultural models and policies. The Centre represents a local resource capable to promote active partnerships between social actors, aiming at enhancing skills as well as preserving human capital and employability in a social and economic development perspective.”*

### SPECIFIC AIMS

- ⇒ Explore e-learning and lifelong learning opportunities in order to extend the participation of a new target of students (adults, workers, etc.) to Rome Tre activities, providing high qualitative levels in education and promoting different teaching methods
- ⇒ Improve teaching and research activities aimed to address new learning requests (i.e. adults who wish to re-enter university), and face new needs in relation to social dimension and gender issues, employability and

workers' continuing education

- ⇒ Support active citizenship
- ⇒ Improve professional qualifications in order to achieve economic development and innovation

### METHODS AND TOOLS

- ⇒ Development of competence-based qualitative strategies as a key element to support life transitions (e.g. professional, educational and personal)
- ⇒ Development of methodologies such as: *participatory action research*, Bilan De Competence
- ⇒ Validation and certification (VAE, APEL, etc.) of competences acquired in professional and experiential context
- ⇒ Reinforcement of adult students' capacity to reflect on their educational and work paths/ experiences and to develop a critical and proactive thinking on their life experiences
- ⇒ Development of new and more effective initiatives to foster relationships and partnerships with social, economical and industrial bodies at regional, national and international level

### IMPLEMENTATION PHASES

1. Implementation of a Research and Service Centre on *Bilan de Competences* and Competence Certification, aimed at:
  - students placement and empowerment
  - external service dedicated to adult workers or institutions for the benefit of active work policies
2. Research of partnerships and fund raising activities to support University's programmes
3. Creation of a joint Committee, internal and external to University, in charge of defining proposals concerning:

- university Guidelines for actions in LLL (with the involvement of the Faculties)
- Regulation for the newly created Centre for LLL (institutional tasks, goals, functions, intervention areas)
- set up of the Centre for LLL through a three-year plan: the framework in which proposals of actions by the University in the area of LLL can be deployed (reorganisation of University system; building of a new synergy between university and territory for know-how and skills development)

RECTOR PROF. GUIDO FABIANI

PROF. AURELIANA ALBERICI  
In charge of the project

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