

# Professionalisation as development and as regulation: Adult education in Germany, the United Kingdom and India

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**Abstract** In this paper, the authors seek to disentangle what they see as contradictory uses of the term “professionalisation” with reference to adult educator development and training (AEDT). They set out to distinguish *professionalisation* from *professionalism*, and to identify the locus of control of AEDT in Germany, the UK and India. In these three countries, all of which have a long tradition of adult education, “professionalisation” and “professionalism” are used interchangeably to describe conflicting purposes. The authors aim to identify and critically explore the organisations and policies which control and support AEDT in their own countries using American sociologist Eliot Freidson’s “third logic” model, and drawing on his juxtaposition of “professions”, “the market” and “bureaucracy”. Applying Freidson’s models to the organisations highlights the role of bureaucracy and that where adult education is concerned, national governments, the European Union and aid organisations not only serve bureaucracy but also support the market rather than operating separately from it. While the term “professionalisation” continues to be used to mean professional

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development, either by adult educators and representative organisations (as in the UK) or by organisations acting on their behalf (as in Germany and India), it is also used to denote regulation and standardisation issuing from bureaucratic institutions and adult education provider organisations in the interests of the market. The authors suggest that Freidson's model provides a useful tool for adult educators in other countries to reflect on their professional position and to engage in the development of their own professional standards, both in their own interests and in the interests of those they educate.

**Keywords** Professionalism · Adult education · Professionalisation · Bureaucracy · Market

**Résumé** Professionnalisation synonyme de développement et de réglementation: éducation des adultes en Allemagne, au Royaume-Uni et en Inde – Les auteurs de cet article visent à clarifier ce qu'ils considèrent comme usages contradictoires du terme « professionnalisation » dans le domaine du développement et de la formation des éducateurs d'adultes (DFEA). Ils établissent tout d'abord une distinction entre *professionnalisation* et *professionnalisme*, et identifient le locus de contrôle dans le DFEA en Allemagne, au Royaume-Uni et en Inde. Dans ces trois pays, possédant chacun une longue tradition en éducation des adultes, les termes professionnalisation et professionnalisme sont utilisés indifféremment pour décrire des objectifs contradictoires. Les auteurs poursuivent le but d'identifier et d'examiner d'un œil critique les organisations et politiques qui contrôlent et soutiennent le DFEA dans leurs pays, en appliquant le modèle de la « troisième logique » du sociologue américain Eliot Freidson et en s'inspirant de sa juxtaposition de « professions », « marché » et « bureaucratie ». L'application des modèles de Freidson à ces organisations éclaire le rôle de la bureaucratie et montre que dans le cas de l'éducation des adultes, le gouvernement central, l'Union européenne ou les organisations humanitaires non seulement servent la bureaucratie mais soutiennent aussi le marché au lieu d'opérer indépendamment de lui. Le terme « professionnalisation » continue à être utilisé dans le sens de développement professionnel, soit par les éducateurs d'adultes eux-mêmes et leurs organismes de représentation (au Royaume-Uni), soit par des organismes agissant pour leur compte (en Allemagne et en Inde). Mais il est également employé pour désigner la réglementation et la standardisation émanant des institutions bureaucratiques et des prestataires en éducation des adultes dans l'intérêt du marché. Les auteurs suggèrent que le modèle de Freidson fournit un outil utile aux éducateurs d'adultes d'autres pays, leur permettant de considérer leur situation en termes professionnels afin de prendre en main leurs propres normes, dans l'intérêt de la « profession » quelle que soit sa forme, et de ceux auxquels ils dispensent une éducation.

## Introduction

Globalisation, particularly the growth of the European Single Market (ESM), requires a mobile labour force (Dhéret et al. 2013, p. v). Creating one is therefore high on the agenda of global enterprises and governments. In the European Union (EU), key interventions include the development of a standardised competence-based approach

to adult education (AE) and the training of adult educators (e.g. Research voor Beleid 2010). Whilst in Europe such interventions are designed to promote labour mobility, outside Europe<sup>1</sup> the focus tends to be on the development of adult educators for literacy and numeracy, along with management and other associated skills (Shah 1999; Desai 2012). Adult educators are also of value in the Indian market economy for “economic empowerment” and “financial literacy” (Zia 2010).

The terms “professionalisation”, “professionalism”, “professional development” etc. are regularly applied in the context of AE training, qualification and continuing development (e.g. Research voor Beleid 2010). Interestingly, for all the research and policy on “professionalisation” it is difficult to find a clear definition of the term in either past or present literature. From very early on, however, it is clear that professionalisation is something done “to” rather than “by” adult educators in the field (see for example Alexander Albert Liveright’s discussion of scholars’ views, published as early as 1958).

In this paper, we decline to enter into a discussion of professionalism, preferring to agree with Michael Eraut (1994) that it is an ideological notion. Malcolm Tight (2002, p. 88) argues, based on a literature search, that the term “profession”, when not used to describe the “classic” professions of medicine and law, is a “contested concept” (citing Hoyle and John 1995, p. 1). Nonetheless, it is fundamental to the notion of a profession that it is controlled by its members. A profession can be defined as a group of people who work within a common practice with a theoretical knowledge base and an ethical code for which education and training are needed. Entry into the practice is controlled by the group itself (Benn and Fieldhouse 1994). Moreover, the group is able to exercise power in relation to its own work: what American sociologist Eliot Freidson (2001) calls “occupational control”. In the German context, Ulrich Oevermann (1996) argues for professionalisation of educational activities from a structural-theoretical perspective. Oevermann outlines the structure of educational activities in terms of their “therapeutic function”, highlighting the need for members of the profession to act on behalf of one another.<sup>2</sup>

We begin this paper with an outline of current policies regarding the professionalisation and standardisation of adult education. We then critically explore the terminology employed to describe the activities of the relevant agencies in Germany, the United Kingdom (UK) and India. These countries, all of which have a long tradition of adult education, have been identified as using “professionalisation” and “professionalism” interchangeably. There are differences in the foci of influence on AE professionalism in each country. In Germany, universities and employers are both strongly involved and a number of EU-funded projects are under way. The UK government appears to be against regulation of adult educators, but is also influenced by EU policy. In India, international funding bodies and giant corporations exert a strong influence on government policy, as do organisations independent from government. The authors of this paper are all members of an ASEM (Asia–Europe Meeting) Lifelong Learning (LLL) research network (RN) focused on Adult

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper we take India as our example.

<sup>2</sup> For an overview of the German theoretical discourse on professions and professionalisation, see Egetenmeyer (2014).

Education Professionalisation in European and Asian countries. Our joint authorship allows for fruitful comparison of the three countries.

The aim of this paper is to help adult educators to identify how the terms “professionalisation” and “professionalism” are applied and by whom, to assess where occupational control is situated in their own countries, and to discover what they might do to take back control over their own profession.

To assist us in our analysis we use Freidson’s “third logic” models, with their juxtaposing of “professions”, “the market” and “bureaucracy”, to examine the organisations and policies which control the standardisation processes in the three countries. We seek along the way to disentangle what we see as contradictory uses of the term “professionalisation”.

## Policies and measures for standardisation

Standardisation and simplification are important for market mobility (Dhéret et al. 2013, p. vii). The EU has adopted a number of policies to promote standardisation. These include the 1999 Bologna Process (aiming to coordinate European educational architecture through the elaboration of common descriptors and quality standards) and the resulting European Higher Education Area, a variety of EU “Directives” (for example, Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications; EP 2005) and the Lisbon Treaty (EU 2007), enforced in 2009, the aim of which was “to complete the process started by the Treaty of Amsterdam [1997] and by the Treaty of Nice [2001] with a view to enhancing the efficiency and democratic legitimacy of the Union and to improving the coherence of its action”. Further support for standardisation and simplification has come through a series of large funded European projects which look for ways to create a sustainably mobile AE staff (Strauch et al. 2011, p. 11) and, by extension, to raise the calibre of the workforce they help to produce. The influence of EU policies since 2005 on standards of training and development in AE cannot be underestimated, as the following extracts illustrate:

“The professional development of people working in adult learning [is a] vital determinant of the quality of adult learning” (EC 2006, p. 7).

The “quality of staff involved in delivery” is the “key factor” for quality in AE (EC 2007, p. 8).

“Improving the quality of AE staff” is the focus for “improving the quality and efficiency of education and training” (Council of the European Union 2011, p. 5).

These and other documents develop competence profiles for adult educators in order to improve the quality of AE. In 2011, “effective systems for initial training and professional development” (ibid.) were included as part of the process.

Studies focusing on AE staff in different countries in Europe show similar results (see Nuissl and Lattke 2008; Research voor Beleid 2008). The policy-driven EU measures are presented throughout as the way to identify professional standards and

determine how to improve them using a competency-based model. This process is described as “professionalisation”.

In Europe, the prime driver of standardisation is the EU, working through national governments and employers and focusing on standardisation of competences/outcomes. In India, by contrast, the locus of control for AE is the Indian government itself, working on terms set by the private sector and funding agencies such as the World Bank (Ghatate 2013) and focusing on standardisation of training processes (Ravi 2011, p. 846). Standards for adult educator development and training (AEDT) are nominally the responsibility of the Indian Ministry of Human Resource Development, but in fact are largely driven by the interests of donors. Standards are designed to help increase the pace of development in the country and provide a sufficiently literate and skilled workforce to meet the needs of employers around the globe (Planning Commission 2011, pp. 99–102). In both the EU and Indian contexts, it is the state (what Freidson calls the “bureaucracy”), rather than the professional community itself, which drives standardisation.

### Choice and justification of the theoretical lens

We use Freidson’s theory of professionalism, with its juxtaposition of “professions”, “the market” and “bureaucracy”, not for his idealised understandings of professionalism but rather for the functionality of his models in helping to understand the locus of influence or control, and to help us disentangle the two concepts of professional(ism) and professionalisation. With its focus on “New Professional Management”,<sup>3</sup> more recent literature engages with the different understandings of professional practice across different interest groups and seek to reconcile them so that tensions regarding influence and control become less, or even no longer, relevant. Linda Evans, for example, argues that those “still clinging on to trait-based interpretations ... or [who], by extension, perceive accountability and performativity as threats to it ... are, from a scholarship perspective, out of date” (Evans 2008, p. 10). She concludes: “It is important to remember that the redefinition of professionalism and its links with management present opportunities and benefits for professional work and workers as well as important challenges” (ibid.).

Philippe Bezes et al. (2011) seem to concede that these tensions are indeed still relevant. They contend that the New Professional Management (NPM) variant of professionalism “includes a discourse of individualization and competition, whereby individual performance is linked to the success or failure of the organization” which introduces “powerful mechanisms of worker/employee control in which the occupational values of professionalism are used to promote efficient organizational management”. They also argue that NPM serves the market by strengthening employer/investor control (ibid., p. 43). Somewhat obscurely,

<sup>3</sup> The concept is not uncontested. Julia Evetts (2012) and Linda Evans (2008) discuss it and its efficacy.

Bezes et al. consider the involvement of “national institutions and European professional federations” in the “regulation of the occupational groups, including developing performance criteria, providing target setting, and making arrangements for continuing professional development (CPD)” a positive intervention. They see it as evidence of the professions’ “occupational control of the work” (ibid.), even though it means that development is driven by forces from outside of the professional organisations themselves.

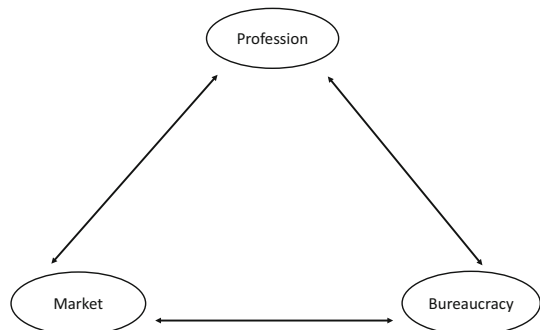
In the next section, we outline the relevant elements of Freidson’s models for our analysis of AEDT conditions in each of the three countries. We then move to some policy observations and an analysis of the main organisations in each of the three countries to identify how and by whom AE professional development and standards are controlled. Finally, we use Freidson’s model to plot the various organisations in relation to the market, the bureaucracy and the profession itself, and discuss the implications for adult education professionals.

### Professionalism as “third logic” – analytical context

Drawing on his research on the division of labour, Freidson (2001) distinguishes three ideal or typical models of organising work in societies: Adam Smith’s “free market”, Max Weber’s “bureaucracy” (see also Van der Krogt 2007) and his own concept of “professionalism”. Freidson (2001, p. 12) understands professionalism as “institutional circumstances in which the members of occupations, rather than consumers or managers, control work”. This institutionalisation of professionalism “permits the members of an occupation to make a living while controlling their own work”. Figure 1 illustrates the basic three-point model.

Freidson outlines the ideal–typical characteristics of professionalism as follows: Professional Knowledge, Skills and Qualification; Division of Labour; Labour Markets and Career; Training Programmes; and Ideologies. These ideal–typical characteristics differ in their provision of goods, division of labour, regulations, control of work and value, as indicated in Table 1.

**Fig. 1** Freidson’s basic three-point model



**Table 1** Characteristics of Freidson's three ideal-typical models

Characteristics	Models		
	Market	Bureaucracy	Professionalism
Provision of Goods	Free and unregulated competition	Controlled by administration and large organisations	Specialised workers with knowledge, skills and qualifications
Division of Labour	Competition & Costs	Efficiency through Standardisation	Discretion in Performance
Regulation	No regulations	Rules of Organisations	Associations of Occupations
Control of Work	Consumers	Management	Professions (member of Occupation)
Value	Cost	Organisation	Code of Ethics

Source Freidson 2001

## Influence and control

In the next three sections of the paper, we identify the key organisations which control AEDT in Germany, the UK and India and consider whether they have a primarily regulatory or developmental function.

### Germany

The key organisations for supporting AEDT in Germany are the German Institute for Adult Education or *Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung* (known as DIE), the associations representing the providers of AE, and the universities. DIE is a publicly financed extramural research institute supporting the broad field of AE and lifelong learning. As a Leibniz Institute<sup>4</sup> it combines research, practice and politics, supplying data and conducting research and development. Several AE providers in Germany are organised in federal associations with regional sub-groups. Examples are the Association of German Volkshochschulen<sup>5</sup> (DVV), the Catholic Adult Education Association and the Association of German Educational Organisations.

Federal and regional government do not regulate AEDT in Germany. It is significant that there are no associations representing adult educators directly.

<sup>4</sup> Named after German mathematician, philosopher and political adviser Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716), Leibniz Institutes are non-university research institutes specialising in a variety of academic fields. In April 2016, their Association had 88 members (<http://www.leibniz-gemeinschaft.de/en/home/>).

<sup>5</sup> A *Volkshochschule* [literally Folk high school] is an adult education centre offering a wide range of mostly non-academic courses (e.g. computer skills, languages, keep-fit, nutrition and cooking, arts and crafts) in local communities.

### *The German Institute for Adult Education (DIE)*

DIE was founded in the 1950s as the Educational Department of the Association of the German Volkshochschulen (Pädagogische Arbeitsstelle des Deutschen Volkshochschulverbands or PAS). The department saw itself as an information centre mediating between research and practice (see Nuissl 2008). Its staff were amongst the first to recognise the need to professionalise the field of adult education (Tietgens 1964; Schulenberg 1972). Here, the term “professionalisation” was used in the sense of supporting the professional development of those working in AE through education, training and qualification. At the beginning of the 1990s, after the reunification of Germany, the department became DIE and was given responsibility for the entire field of adult and continuing education, along with a mandate for more research. At the same time, the nature of the Institute’s professionalisation activities changed, so that “human resource management and continuing education were forced together in the workplace” (Gieseke 2008, p. 58, own translation). DIE developed study guides for the market on topics such as corporate identity (Nuissl and von Rein 1995a), public relations (Nuissl and von Rein 1995b) and marketing in continuing education (Schöll 1996).

DIE receives funding from federal and regional government as well as from EU projects. It adapts European policy to support professional development and standards for adult education. In 2009, DIE published a feasibility study on the development of a nationwide qualification for AE teachers and trainers (Kraft et al. 2009). For several years it has been working on a common framework of European competences for AE and the validation of AE practitioners (for example CAPIVAL<sup>6</sup>). Agreement must be reached with German AE providers through their associations on standards of training and development. In December 2014, DIE began working with providers on a project to develop a competence model and validation system for teachers and trainers in AE, financed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

The Institute’s role in supporting professionalisation in AE has changed over the years. Whereas at the beginning it was very close to the practice of German Volkshochschulen, in recent years it has taken on more of a mediating role between the broad practice of AE and the growing research community in the field. Today, DIE combines the roles of policy consultant, information provider and research institute. It continues to publish for practitioners and support them in their professional development, as well as working with universities on their AE study programmes. In the first decade of the 21st century, it has been involved in several EU-funded projects, taking a broader international perspective instead. Being a Leibniz Institute, it has to focus increasingly on research rather than development. It has no mandate as a regulatory body and is therefore obliged to reach agreement with stakeholders on matters of development and regulations, drawing on its expertise in AE.

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<sup>6</sup> CAPIVAL is the name of the European project which produced *Validpack*, a package of tools for supporting the identification, documentation, evaluation and validation of pedagogical competencies of adult educators for the purpose of certification and professionalisation in AE.



### *Association of adult and continuing education providers*

In Germany, the providers of AE and their associations are the main designers of non-formal qualifications. Until the beginning of the 1990s, PAS (DIE's predecessor) was a department of the German Volkshochschulen and provided AE professional development and training. Wiltrud Gieseke (2008) notes that at the same time other AE provider (employer) associations, particularly the Protestant and Catholic churches, were starting to develop their own private study materials and courses for volunteer and/or part-time trainers. Only about 10 per cent of those employed by AE providers had actually studied AE (Peters 1997, p. 195).

In the 1990s, as AE providers became commercial enterprises rather than a public service, professionals in the field became educational managers rather than educators (Gieseke 2000). They became responsible for quality management and finance as well as for education itself. Teachers are now obliged to undertake a variety of courses to ensure survival in the ever-changing AE market.

### *Universities*

Student numbers on specialist AE university courses have been growing in Germany since the 1990s (Huber 2004). The AE section of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft (DGfE) – the German Educational Research Association – has agreed on a Core Curriculum for Bachelor and Master's Programmes in AE (DGfE 2008), combining academic theory and reflection on practice in their early stages (Egetenmeyer and Schübler 2014). This approach could be interpreted as going beyond the European (soft) skills approach, because it offers a combination of theory and practice. The Bologna Process requires universities to develop market-oriented vocational Master's programmes to maximise student recruitment. Nevertheless, the common core curriculum continues to be based on subjects and topics rather than outcomes or competencies, and to focus on the intellectual and theoretical basis of the discipline as well as the practice.

Universities in Germany therefore play an important role in supporting the professionalism of adult educators. However, academics have to cope with pressures from the EU which continue to push universities towards the market, in Freidson's terms. Adult educators in Germany do not see themselves as belonging to an identifiable profession (Nuissl 2010) and have no self-regulated professional association. For this reason, universities play a very significant role in adult educators' professional development. DGfE is an association of researchers rather than adult educators, and is susceptible to EU influence. Universities, however, could be positioned nearer to the professions than other organisations, whilst still retaining links to the market (or quasi-market<sup>7</sup>).

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<sup>7</sup> A quasi-market is one which operates competitively, for example within and between public and private education providers competing for students, but which is dependent upon public sector funding as a source of capital investment and profit (Ball 2008, p. 229; France 2016, p. 88).

### *Limited federal and regional government influence*

Professionalisation in AEDT is not mentioned in documents at federal or regional *Länder* level as it comes under the auspices of AE providers (i.e. the employers) and their associations which have developed their own professional standards. A few federal initiatives have resulted in some regulation for the AE market. The Federal Ministry of Labour funds courses targeting unemployed youth and adults, and undertakes some regulation of the qualifications of the staff offering the courses. The providers of these courses employ teachers and trainers on low wages, as they are competing in a quasi-market. The same ministry commissions adult education providers to construct tailor-made university programmes (e.g. “Education with a focus on adult education”), but trainees are paid the minimum wage. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees also sets minimum qualification requirements for language trainers in “German as a second language” courses, which it finances. Like that of the federal government, the role of the German *Länder* in supporting and standardising AEDT is also limited – even though AE comes largely under the remit of the latter – and neither organisation is featured in the model.

### **United Kingdom**

In the UK, education policy is devolved to the regional governments of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Though there are differences between the policies, these are not significant as regards AEDT. There is, however, good evidence that successive governments, irrespective of region or party, maintain the high levels of accountability, inspection and specification described by Sonia Exley and Stephen Ball (2011, p. 103) – what Ball (2012a) calls “performativity” and Evans (2008) calls de-professionalisation. For example, Aileen Ackland (2011) argues that the Scottish Government’s support for the EU literacy competency/benchmark framework undermines the purpose of adult educators’ work. The Welsh Assembly works closely with the UK Department of Work and Pensions and focuses on adult education “outcomes” (Welsh Government 2010). Educational policy-making in Northern Ireland is performance-dominated, as evidenced by the insistence of the new Chief Executive of the Education Authority – himself an ex-businessman – that education must function as a business, and that outcomes, rather than “how you did your job”, are what matters (AgendaNI 2015).

In the UK, we identified the organisations that control AE professional standards by their membership and/or focus. They tend to fall into two camps. The first consists of employer- and government-sponsored organisations: the Association of Colleges (AoC) in England and similar organisations in other regions. Also in this camp is the UK-wide Association of Education and Learning Providers (AELP), though Scotland also has the Scottish Training Federation and Wales the National Training Federation. The Education and Training Federation (ETF) has an English focus, as does Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills), the non-ministerial government department of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools in England.

The other three regions also have a facility for inspection. In Scotland, this is under the auspices of the government agency which oversees adult educator development, Education Scotland. The first aim of the new government's Statement of Ambition is to ensure that "Scotland becomes recognised globally as the most creative and engaged learning society", demonstrating the same competitive focus as the other regions of the UK. Despite Jim Gallacher's (2009) hopeful description of how Scotland's approach to adult learning was different to England's, an increasing emphasis on "skills" is evident, albeit still of the "personal" kind. The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE),<sup>8</sup> an English/Welsh membership organisation (and its smaller equivalent, the Scottish Learning Partnership) are perhaps more difficult to place in the employer/government-sponsored camp; this is discussed further below. NIACE (2015a) states that it "works with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to support the learning and skills sector in providing more and better opportunities for all adults, and to advance the case for adult learning among policy makers".

In the second camp are the professional organisations and trade unions, in particular the University and College Union (UCU), a UK-wide organisation with regional committees in each of the regions. In Scotland, adult educators working in Further Education can also join the trade union Education Institute of Scotland.

In sum, whilst there exists a plethora of organisations with influence or control over AEDT in the UK both regionally and nationally, they are influenced by market forces which are evident in the educational policies they create. For the purposes of clarity rather than principle, it is the UK-wide and English organisations which are analysed below.

*The Association of Colleges (AoC; England) and the Association of Education and Learning Providers (AELP; UK)*

The established employer organisations with a declared interest in AE staff training and continuing professional development are the Association of Colleges (AoC) and the Association of Education and Learning Providers (AELP) (though only a small proportion of the myriad private learning providers are members). Within this camp, there can sometimes be a tension between the "standardisation" or "harmonisation" of competences and qualifications to facilitate European Single Market labour mobilisation (CEDEFOP 2010; BIS 2011) – between, in other words, what Geoff Whitty called "New Labour managerial professionalism" (2008, p. 37) and the "free market" approaches championed by more recent governments.

*The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) and the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted; England)*

In the UK, the debate about professionalism and the professionalisation of post-compulsory education can perhaps most clearly be understood with reference to a

<sup>8</sup> In 2016, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) merged with the Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion (CESI) to become the "Learning and Work Institute" (L&W).

government-initiated report on Professionalism in Further Education (BIS 2012a) known as the “Lingfield Report”. The report resulted in the demise of the Institute for Learning (IfL), which had been set up by the UK government with UCU support as a professional body to oversee qualifications. When paid membership of IfL was made obligatory by government rather than by members of the profession, the organisation was perceived as serving the needs of employers rather than promoting professionalism. Opposition to IfL from UCU members grew significantly as a result. According to UCU (2011) at the time, “the present arrangements [i.e. the training requirements and the fee-paying membership forced on members as conditions for employment] have lost the confidence of members who question their relevance in meeting staff development needs”. Perhaps not surprisingly given the prevailing market conditions, whilst conceding UCU’s demands and stating support for a professional workforce, the Lingfield Report at the same time expressed approval of government deregulation which would make it “up to employers to decide what is appropriate for their staff and organisation” (BIS 2012b). It was decided that Ofsted, the school inspection agency, would control standards. The recommendations were largely accepted by the government. From UCU’s perspective, this strengthened its position as the arbiter of professionalism, a role which, pre-Lingfield, had been occupied by IfL. UCU therefore regarded the demise of the IfL as a victory (UCU 2011).

The Lingfield report came after several years of criticism, from both the profession and training providers, of the complicated array of qualifications and the failure of further education (FE) providers to support the continued professional development of FE teachers (Doyle 2013). Yvonne Hillier and Yvon Appleby (2012) note that the teacher training which had been in place prior to government acceptance of the Lingfield report was having an impact, with good progress towards “ensuring a qualified and expert teaching profession” (BIS 2012b), but that teachers were too often not being supported by their employers in their professional development or networks. There have been several efforts (too many to discuss here) to reconcile, at least ostensibly, the “regulation” and “free market” approaches. The Lingfield Report occasioned the latest attempt: the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), a private limited company funded by government and the Gatsby Foundation for “teachers, leaders and businesses”, which claims to “support and enhance the quality, professionalism and efficiency of the education and training system” (Education and Training Foundation 2015).

### *The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)*

Another organisation which arguably fits into this first camp is NIACE, a membership organisation with a diverse set of individual and corporate members including colleges, local authorities, third sector organisations, universities, businesses, and iconic organisations in civil society such as the BBC, the Open University, the National Federation of Women’s Institutes and the Ministry of Defence. Ball (2007; 2012b) has carried out extensive work in tracking down the role played by such organisations in the arena of school education, charting their origins and the way their roles change, along with the demands they make. He notes

that they tend to leave those working in education unclear about their professional role:

Increasingly public service actors don't know who they are or who they are meant to be, unless perhaps they reside comfortably within the generic ontology of the market. The policy technologies of public sector reform are not simply vehicles for the technical and structural change of organisations but are also mechanisms for reforming public sector practitioners, for changing what it means to be a teacher, researcher, social worker or nurse (Ball 2013).

NIACE occupies a highly respected place in ACE in the UK, although Scotland is not a sponsor. It states that its role is to protect and advance the interests of lifelong learners (see NIACE 2014), rather than adult educators themselves. As mentioned earlier, it has recently amalgamated with the Centre for Social Inclusion to become the Learning and Work Institute (L&W), arguably a move away from adult education. NIACE has functioned as a "critical friend" of the UK government (Jarvis 2009, p. 329; Hughes 2011) from whom it receives funding (as well as from the EU and the J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation). Like DIE, NIACE is generally supportive of the EU professionalisation policy. Government funding has, however, been greatly reduced, which may affect its "critical" capacity. Although a membership organisation, many of the members of NIACE are also large employers; the Association of Colleges (AoC) is itself a member.

Whilst it appears to hold the middle ground between government, profession and market, there is therefore strong evidence that NIACE allies itself closely with the regulation of the workforce in line with EU policy and European Single Market requirements (see NIACE 2014, 2015b) in respect of AE. To that extent, we argue here that it sits nearer the market and bureaucracy.

### *The University and College Union (UCU)*

With over 100,000 members, including adult, youth and community education staff UK-wide (UCU 2015), UCU constitutes the second camp. Many AE tutors are employed on a part-time and casual basis (Merton 2009), which makes it difficult for them to identify themselves as members of an organised, unionised workforce (Bowl 2014, p. 155) or a professional network (Hillier and Appleby 2012). Though a trade union as distinct from a professional association, UCU places significant emphasis on the regulation of AE and its professionals. The union has been let down repeatedly by providers and government, as illustrated in the document "Towards a UCU Policy on Professionalism" (UCU 2013), which states that:

The sectors in which UCU members work are littered with the corpses of failed attempts at institutionalisation and regulation (or de-regulation) of professional requirements and recognition ... [they are] dominated by employers or government ... [the powers that be are concerned with] productivity rather than quality; prescription rather than autonomy; being called to account, rather than genuine accountability (ibid.).

UCU has been working with specialists in the field to devise something akin to a code of conduct, although it cannot provide standards of training and qualifications directly. Since its boundaries with other organisations are not grounded in law, it is able to some extent to negotiate them and to determine how the division of labour is organised and coordinated (see Freidson 2001, p. 55). Ideologically, UCU identifies with the satisfaction its members derive from “performing their work well [rather] than for its role in providing them [with] a good living” (ibid., p. 108). In Freidson’s terms, it is positioned closer to professionalism than to the market or bureaucracy, because it is resistant to market-oriented regulatory influences and advocates regulation by the profession itself.

### *Universities*

Adult education in the university sector has suffered a decline as a result of the disappearance of many continuing education departments and the transfer of others to vocational continuing professional development (CPD) provision (Jones 2007, cited by Osborne and Sankey 2009, p. 286). Michael Osborne and Kate Sankey (2009, p. 286) note that this has “all but (eradicated) the academic professional career in university AE”. Not surprisingly, given that its membership includes academics, UCU does not hesitate to use research-based support as distinct from the rhetoric one would normally expect from a campaigning organisation. This approach greatly strengthens its case (see UCU 2013). So whilst UK universities do not occupy as important a position as in Germany with respect to AE professionalism, there are nevertheless leading academics who provide research and expertise to inform UCU’s policy on professionalism (for example Ball 2013).

### **India**

The main aim of adult education programmes in India is to ensure universal adult literacy. Programmes are conceived and implemented by the government and its agencies. They are often short-term and implemented by volunteers rather than professionally trained staff (Shah 2009). AEDT standards in India are controlled primarily (but not exclusively) by central and regional government organisations. The most significant of these are the Directorate of Adult Education (DAE), a subordinate office of the Department of School Education and Literacy in the Government Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), and the State Resource Centres (SRCs), which are DAE agencies at regional level. The main function of the SRCs is to prepare training modules for adult educators. Also important is the University Grants Commission (UGC), a statutory body of the Government of India through an Act of Parliament responsible for the coordination, determination and maintenance of standards in university and polytechnic education (GoI 1956). Although AEDT standards are nominally the responsibility of MHRD, standards are largely driven by the policies and interests of donors such as the World Bank and UNESCO (Patel 2009, p. 22). The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), a public/private partnership under the aegis of the Ministry

of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, also influences standards. Its aim is to create large, high-quality, for-profit vocational institutions.

In India, AE is not perceived as a profession (Shah 2009), so unsurprisingly there is no AE professional association. However, organisations independent from government such as the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), a voluntary organisation established in 1939 for the promotion of adult, non-formal and lifelong education, and its sister organisation the International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education (IIALE) play a significant role in professional adult educator development and training alongside self-help groups (SHGs).

*Government organisations: the Directorate of Adult Education (DAE) and its agencies, the State Resource Centres (SRCs)*

The launch of the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) in the 1980s allowed government to streamline and strengthen training and development standards for staff through the DAE and SRCs at national and regional level. However, the NAEP's focus was confined to the administrative and financial aspects of the field-level programmes, with inadequate coverage of their academic components (Mathur and Subramanyam 1985). According to S. Y. Shah (2009), very few educators had themselves had access to formal training.

*Universities and the University Grants Commission (UGC)*

Selected universities in India provide academic courses and qualifications through Departments of Adult and Continuing Education (ACE). These courses link theory and practice through fieldwork. Their members carry out research and act as consultants for both governmental and non-governmental agencies to professionalise AE in India. However, AE is not a popular study choice (Shah 2009), and most ACE departments were established only to meet the mandate of UGC; few engage in extension activities (Karlekar 2004). Recent research (Singai 2015) suggests that they are also exposed to bureaucratic control from both UGC and outside the university system.

*The Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), the International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education (IIALE) and Self-help groups (SHGs)*

These organisations, which are independent from government, play a significant role in AE in India. They have evolved a participatory method of training (Shah 2009) which depends on the total commitment of both trainers and trainees, and also offer training programmes for AE volunteers. Self-help groups (SHGs) engage in capacity building programmes, particularly for women in a given locality. The International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education (IIALE; 2014) has a more specific objective: "to professionalise AE by strengthening and promoting it as a distinct but distinguished field of practice and discipline of study". It offers a wide range of certificate courses and engages with university departments and policy-makers in promoting its mission.



### *International organisations, the private sector and Public–private partnerships (PPP)*

International organisations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Action Aid and the World Bank design and implement literacy programme training modules for adult educators which align with the National Literacy Mission (MHRD) and Millennium Development Goals. These organisations gain both financial and organisational support from government agencies (Karlekar 2004). UNESCO and Action Aid also support Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) to design and coordinate training programmes under the supervision of the government (Chand 2007).

“Skilling India” is an important policy focus of the present government. Both the public and private sectors are currently engaged in a range of training activities to promote skills development. A number of private sector agencies are investing in training institutes to offer skills development programmes in the public–private partnership (PPP) mode (E&Y & FICCI 2012). For instance, TATA Sons Private Limited<sup>9</sup> provide training to construction workers and those working in the fields of software and hardware technologies, all of which are PPP focus areas (John 2011, p. 10). Thanks to the growing service sector and the demand for soft skills, private training institutes are mushrooming.

In India, the interventions of international organisations in AEDT are bureaucratic and government-led. There is little professional discretion and adult educators themselves have little control. Private organisations involved in AE are positioned near the market, but they are still to some extent bureaucratic. The PPP mode facilitates private agencies’ autonomy in providing specific courses to adult educator consumers. However, these courses require prior approval and are subject to government-controlled quality appraisal (particularly by the National Skill Development Corporation; NSDC).

## **Discussion and conclusion**

We have identified the organisations which control and support AE standards and training in Germany, the UK and India. We now set out to analyse their roles and functions, using Freidson’s ideal–typical model to theorise on their position in relation to the market, bureaucracy and profession. Some would argue that, due to its disparate and often part-time nature and the lack of discrete self-regulated professional organisations for adult educators, ACE is not a profession (see for example Nuissl 2010; Osborne and Sankey 2009). We consider whether the

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<sup>9</sup> Tata Sons is the promoter of the major operating Tata companies and holds significant shares in these companies. The companies provide products and services which reach into every area of production. Examples include agrochemicals, refrigeration, automobiles, construction, defence and aerospace products, and drugs. About 66 per cent of the equity capital of Tata Sons is held by philanthropic trusts endowed by members of the Tata family.



orientation of the various influential organisations is primarily professional or regulatory and market-oriented.

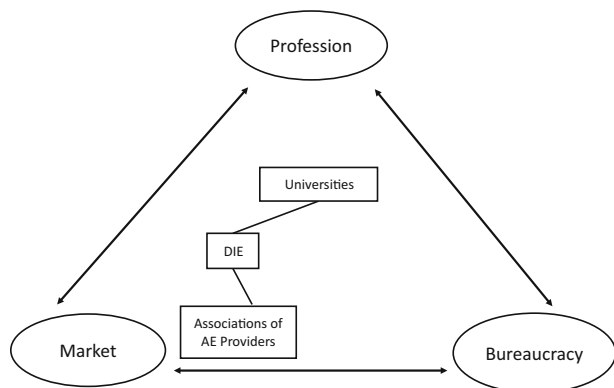
In Germany, the commercial activities of employers' associations link them closely to the market. At the same time, their introduction of new rules for the practice-oriented qualification of teachers and trainers orientates them towards bureaucracy. Their position in the model is therefore a long way away from the self-regulated professionalism which constitutes Freidson's ideal.

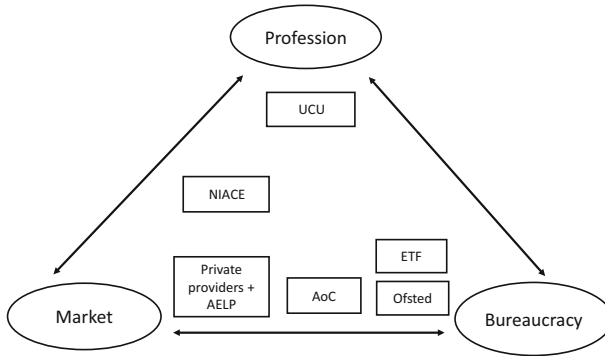
The role and function of DIE places it towards the centre of the triangle of market, profession and bureaucracy (Fig. 2). It exists on the line between market and profession, since it offers its services to both liberal and market-oriented AE providers. In providing statistical data and research results it resonates with Freidson's understanding of profession, but with its state and EU project funding it also supports the regulation of professionalisation, aligning it with Freidson's understanding of bureaucracy. The universities, which continue to insist on academic programmes, play a key role in the ongoing development of professional knowledge and skills, although higher education reforms are pushing them away from this approach towards the (quasi-)market.

Figure 3 depicts the situation of English regional organisations in terms of Freidson's model. There is a tension in the UK between adult educators who are members of a trade union with an AE professionalism policy and recent governments which support market-oriented employers and learning providers (for example the Adult Education Learning Providers and the Association of Colleges) through deregulation policies and performance accountability systems (Ofsted). NIACE works on European projects and is generally supportive of the European policy-driven professionalisation agenda and the European Single Market (e.g. NIACE 2015b, p. 3), arguably positioning it towards the market.

In India, many agencies, both governmental (for example DAE, SRCs and NSDC) and voluntary (for example IAEA), set standards for AE. They aim to bring about full literacy and enhance skills development, for the purposes of both social

**Fig. 2** German organisations' positions in relation to market, bureaucracy and profession, DIE = German Institute for Adult Education [*Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung*]

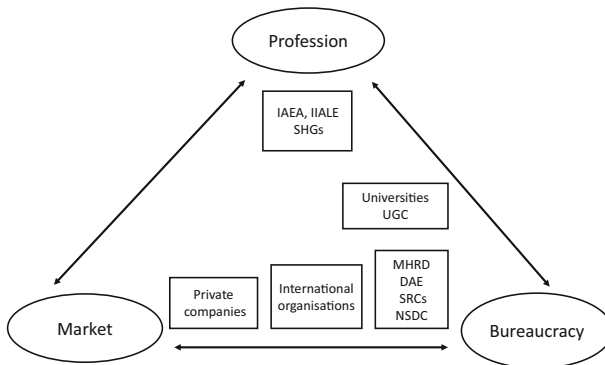




**Fig. 3** English organisations' positions in relation to market, bureaucracy and profession, UCU = University and College Union; NIACE = National Institute of Adult Continuing Education; AELP = Association of Education and Learning Providers; AoC = Association of Colleges; ETF = Education and Training Federation; Ofsted = Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

empowerment and labour market productivity. However, government and state organisations take a narrow approach to training and do not consult sufficiently with AE professionals or academics. They are controlled by regulation and follow a standardised norm. Government organisations are thus closely associated with bureaucracy in Freidson's model (see Fig. 4).

Although IAEA, IIALE and the SHGs are not controlled by adult educators, in their efforts to develop professional standards they work outside of government. Innovations such as the participatory training model position them nearer to Freidson's ideal-typical model of professionalism, especially since it is the trainers and trainees as "members of the occupation, rather than managers/administrators,



**Fig. 4** Indian organisations' positions in relation to market, bureaucracy and profession, IAEA = Indian Adult Education Association; IIALE = International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education; SHGs = Self-help Groups; UGC = University Grants Commission; MHRD = Ministry of Human Resource Development; DAE = Directorate of Adult Education; SRCs = State Resource Centres; NSDC = National Skill Development Corporation

who control the work” (Freidson 2001, p. 12). The training modules and teaching methods are planned and implemented by trainers from the grassroots in order to provide professional knowledge and skills to trainees.

Universities play an important role in conceptualising and implementing regulations. They could arguably be placed between “professionalism” and “bureaucracy”, because specialised professionals provide training for trainee adult educators. On the other hand, both faculty members and students are subject to regulation and control by the university administration and UGC.

Private-sector organisations in partnership with international agencies, which are regulated by the government according to standards often laid down by international agencies, cater to the needs of the market by supplying trained and skilled labour. Whilst seemingly bureaucratic, then, the market is their driving force, as indicated in Fig. 4.

Our analysis reveals that it is often difficult to separate bureaucracy (whether emanating from national government, the EU or aid organisations) from the market. We observe bureaucracy functioning as a support for the market where AE is concerned, rather than operating separately from it. In this paper we have sought to make a clear distinction between “professionalism” and “professionalisation”.

We have argued that, whilst the latter term continues to be used to mean professional development, either by adult educators and representative organisations (as in the UK) or by organisations acting on their behalf (as in Germany and India), in other contexts it denotes regulation and standardisation emanating from bureaucratic institutions and AE provider organisations, in the interests of the market. Whether or not one agrees with Evans (2008, p. 10) that traditional notions of professionalism are outdated, it is misleading for the term “professionalisation” to be used in contexts antithetical to the original meaning. “Professionalism” in this sense is no longer rooted in activities of value to society based on the relationship between academic knowledge (in the sense of abilities), practice (see Egetenmeyer 2014) and internally derived ethics (see Cervero 1989, p. 10). Instead, the term is requisitioned for its positive connotations and utilised in the interests of market-driven activities. Because adult educators do not always perceive themselves as members of a profession (as Nuissl 2010) they are vulnerable to market regulation even where individuals from the field are involved in the process. Anne Strauch et al. (2011) write about the role of senior adult educators in helping to

develop a competency profile and an instrument for the collation and validation of competences in AE ... with the aim of facilitating transparency and comparability of qualifications and increasing mobility on the European jobs market (ibid., pp. 7–8).

Although adult educators do not always recognise themselves as being members of a profession, they nevertheless receive support from organisations which seek to professionalise AE: that is, to define and promote professional standards and training in the field. To this extent, these organisations can be associated with Freidson’s ideal–typical notion of profession. That said, they can also be pulled towards bureaucracy and the market and find themselves engaged in standardisation and regulation.

The organisations which are most closely oriented towards Freidson's ideal-typical model of professionalism are the universities in Germany, UCU in the UK (which includes representation of AE staff), and agencies such as IAEA and IALL in India. The latter are independent research and development institutes which support AE practitioners by educating them and helping them to develop a professional identity.

In Germany and the UK, market pressure on the other organisations can be clearly observed; one example is the influence of the EU's education policy and its target of developing the European Single Market. In India, bureaucracy exerts a strong influence through the hierarchical plans of governments and international organisations, although these too can be seen to be operating in the interests of the market. In Europe, control is exercised over adult educators either by employers (as in the UK) or by bureaucracies operating via the EU to support the market. Professional regulation, according to Freidson's model, is vital for maintaining balance; but we have found that "professionalisation" in the sense of regulation and standardisation for the market has resulted in an imbalance in the three countries investigated here. For rebalancing to occur, adult educators will need to consider their position in professional terms in order to regulate and control their own standards, in the interests of the "profession" (however configured) and those they educate.

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