

**Marija Krstanoska<sup>1</sup> and Elena Rizova<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> SUGS Nikola Karev High School, Skopje, Macedonia

e-mail: [krstanoskam@gmail.com](mailto:krstanoskam@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia

e-mail: [elenarizova@fzf.ukim.edu.mk](mailto:elenarizova@fzf.ukim.edu.mk)

## **Professional Development of Teaching and Training Staff: Identifying Educational Needs for Sustainable Development**

The professional development of teachers and trainers working with youngsters and adults represents a strategic priority for ensuring quality education and for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the context of ongoing socio-economic transformations and ecological challenges, the teaching workforce needs to possess advanced andragogical competencies and the capacity to integrate sustainability principles into educational practice.

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The sample included 330 participants—teachers and trainers from secondary schools, workers' universities, and institutions for adult basic education across the Republic of North Macedonia. The aim was to map their educational needs, experiences, and motivations regarding professional development in the context of education for sustainable development. The findings indicate that although many educators are engaged in informal professional activities (such as webinars and peer learning communities), only about one-third have participated in structured, formal training focused on andragogical aspects of sustainable development. Nevertheless, 57% expressed a strong interest in future professional development opportunities, reflecting significant potential for capacity-building in this area.

The study highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive, institutionally supported model of continuous professional development based on interdisciplinarity, accessibility, and international cooperation. Recommendations include the development of national standards for andragogical competences, increased access to relevant professional literature, and enhanced mobility and exchange of best practices through European education programs. Such an approach would strengthen the systemic capacity for adult education and contribute to the achievement of global sustainable development goals by transforming the role of teachers into key agents of change.

**Keywords:** adult education, professional development, andragogical competences, sustainable development, educational policy.