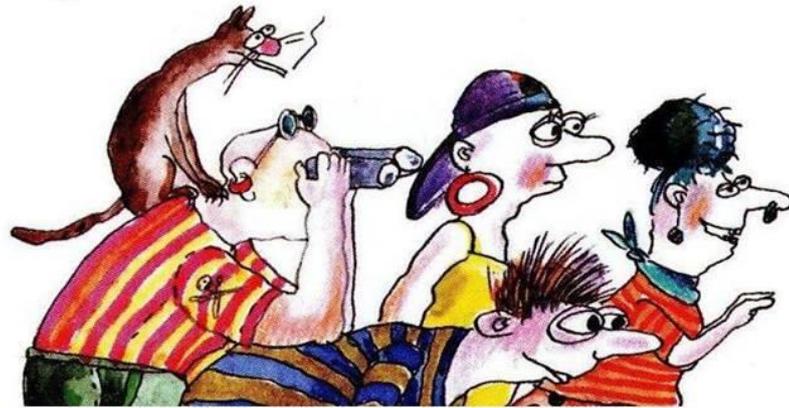


**Learn to Learn for Adult Returners
(L2L4AR)**



Analysis of Strategic Documents

Arūnas Bėkšta, Lithuanian Association of Adult Education

August 2014

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
EUROPEAN UNION	6
Memorandum of Lifelong Learning.....	6
Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning	6
Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on competences supporting lifelong learning and the ‘new skills for new jobs’ initiative (2010/C 135/03)	8
ESTONIA.....	9
Introduction.....	9
Legislation.....	10
Regulations of Government	13
Strategies.....	15
Estonian Qualifications Framework	16
GERMANY	20
Overview: Organisation and Governance	20
Adult education and training.....	24
Initial Education for Teachers and Trainers Working in Adult Education and Training	30
Support Measures for Learners in Adult Education and Training	31
Adult Education in Germany - a brief portrait.....	34
Conclusions.....	38
Summary	38
Sources of information:.....	41
ITALY	43
About Italy	43
Legislation on Education system and VET	44
Learning to learn in the laws	46
Governmental Strategies.....	46
Italian Qualifications Framework	48
Providers of Adult Education.....	50
Conclusions.....	53
Sources of information.....	53
LITHUANIA	55

The educational system in Lithuania	55
Strategies.....	59
Legislation.....	62
Lithuanian Qualifications Framework	64
General programs of secondary education.....	66
Conclusions.....	67
Sources of information.....	68
THE NETHERLANDS.....	69
Short introduction of the Dutch case	69
Objectives of LLL and future concerns	70
Legislation.....	70
History of formal vocational education.....	71
Policy debate	71
Tackling illiteracy	73
National qualification framework (NLQF)	75
Conclusions.....	75
PORTUGAL.....	77
Introduction.....	77
Lifelong Learning	80
The Portuguese Educational System	84
The Portuguese National Qualifications Framework	96
Conclusions.....	98
Sources of information.....	99
SWEDEN.....	100
Introduction.....	100
Legislation.....	100
Strategies.....	102
National Qualifications Framework.....	107
Conclusions.....	108
Sources of information:.....	109
FINAL OVERALL CONCLUSIONS	110

INTRODUCTION

Technological and social changes in all areas of human activities force the majority of adults for continuous learning. Lifelong learning is important today and will be even more important in the future for implementing the goals and provisions of long term strategies and other program documents (Lisbon strategy (2000), Bologna (1999) and Copenhagen (2002) processes) regulating the role of education for increasing employability, for strengthening the intellectual potential of society in Europe Union.

Implementation of regulations raises new requirements for teaching of and learning for adults. Trying to ensure the quality of adult learning member States shall invest in designing and updating teaching and learning methods and materials, in establishing new means of development for upgrading qualifications and skills.

In this context, the learning to learn competence of adult persons becomes one of most important basic competencies ensuring effective development of other key competencies. The importance of learning to learn competence is stressed in many documents of UNESCO, European Commission and Council of Europe.

UNESCO conference on adult education CONFINTEA in 1997 adopted “Agenda for the future” encouraged developing strategies, which “provide opportunities for people to apply their own experience and knowledge in making diagnoses and choosing possible lines of action”. The Memorandum of Lifelong Learning (2001) stresses that most important now is that everybody learns to learn and is able to use the abundance of available information. Learning to learn is recognized as part of active learning alongside with motivation and ability to make decisions. The necessity of development of learning to learn competence is stressed in the Communication from the Commission “Adult learning: It is never too late to learn“(2006).

Contemporary challenges raise great demands for adult learners: learning to learn or developing learning to learn abilities in order to learn faster and more efficient, using newest learning methods, acquiring new skills shaping attitudes, effectively applying innovations in practice and taking responsibility for the results of learning.

Strategic documents describe learning to learn competence as one of most important, but in practical terms it is not as widely discussed as for example literacy, learning of foreign languages or ICT.

The Grundtvig partnership project „Development and recognition of key competences in disadvantaged groups” (2010 -2012) (Project number 2010-1-IT2-GRU06-13864 4) in which Lithuanian Association of Adult Education and Stephanstift Zentrum fuer Erwachsenenbildung were partners found that „learning to learn competence is very low in all disadvantaged groups (disabled people, women, senior, drop out, immigrants, unemployed). Despite being one of the most important it is the less known and understood. Very often it is hard for people to really understand what it is since they have never heard about it and so it is a completely new concept; even the formal education system does not refer to it or, at least, not in an explicit way“.

We believe that this project addressing learning to learn abilities of adult returners to learning will contribute to solving above-mentioned problems and its results will increase the effectiveness of adult teaching and learning:

- The analysis of strategic documents of the partner countries will help to understand how learning to learn competence is apprehended by political (State) level.
- The analysis of apprehension of learning to learn competence in the institutional (teachers) level will show how teachers understand the importance of learning competence for self-development and for the development of learners.
- The analysis of the apprehension of learning to learn competence in individual learners level will show how adult learners understand the learning to learn competence and what do they lack for effective learning.
- Search for the means of developing the apprehension of importance of learning to learn competence in all three levels will show concrete steps, which should be taken by adult education organizers and implementers to make learning to learn competence the real key competence.

This report firstly analyses major documents of European Union regarding Key Competences in general and regarding Learn to Learn competence in particular. Partners provide analyses of strategic documents of their countries. For the purposes of this report the “strategic documents” will be:

- National strategies on general education, VET, higher education, lifelong learning and similar if available
- Legislation (Laws on General Education, on VET, on Higher Education, on Adult Education and similar, if available)
- National qualification frameworks

The term “learning to learn” is interchanging in the text with the term “ability to learn”. It depends on the context and on translations of documents. This interchangeability signals of ongoing discussion on the term in international and national levels.

Arūnas Bėkšta, Lithuanian Association of Adult Education

EUROPEAN UNION

Compiled and edited by Arūnas Bėkšta, Lithuania (Lietuvos suaugusiųjų švietimo asociacija)

Memorandum of Lifelong Learning

Commission staff working paper “A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning”, Brussels, 30.10.2000 SEC (2000) 1832 was communicated in 2000. Its purpose was to launch a European-wide debate on a comprehensive strategy for implementing lifelong learning at individual and institutional levels, and in all spheres of public and private life. Here we provide several excerpts from the document, which emphasize the need for Key Competences in general and learning how to learn specifically.

Key Message 1: New basic skills for all

Objective: Guarantee universal and continuing access to learning for gaining and renewing the skills needed for sustained participation in the knowledge society. This is the essential foundation for active citizenship and employability in 21st century Europe. Economic and social change are modifying and upgrading the profile of basic skills that everyone should have as a minimum entitlement, enabling active participation in working life, family life and all levels of community life – from local through to European. The new basic skills included in the Lisbon European Council conclusions (paragraph 26) are IT skills, foreign languages, technological culture, entrepreneurship and social skills. This is not necessarily an exhaustive list, but it certainly covers key areas. Nor does the list imply that the traditional basic skills of literacy and numeracy are no longer important. But it is important to note that this is not a list of subjects or disciplines as we know them from our schooldays and beyond. It specifies broadly defined areas of knowledge and competence, all of which are interdisciplinary: learning foreign languages, for example, involves acquiring technical, cultural and aesthetic capacities for communication, performance and appreciation. General, vocational and social skills hence increasingly overlap in content and function.

As a starting-point for discussion, this Memorandum defines new basic skills as those required for active participation in the knowledge society and economy – in the labour market and at work, in real-time and in virtual communities and in a democracy, and as a person with a coherent sense of identity and direction in life. Some of these skills – such as digital literacy – are genuinely new, whereas others – such as foreign languages – are becoming more important for many more people than in the past. Social skills such as self-confidence, self-direction and risk-taking are also increasingly important, because people are expected to be able to behave much more autonomously than in the past. Entrepreneurial skills release capacities both to improve individual job performance and to diversify company activities; they also contribute to job creation, both within existing enterprises – especially SMEs – and for self-employment. **Learning how to learn, to adapt to change and to make sense of vast information flows are now generic skills that everyone should acquire. Employers are increasingly demanding the ability to learn and acquire new skills rapidly and to adapt to new challenges and situations.**

Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning

The main document of EU regarding Key Competences is the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on Key Competences for

Lifelong Learning (2006/962/EC). We provide here several important parts of the Recommendation.

Key competences are those, which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment.

The Reference Framework sets out eight key competences:

- 1) Communication in the mother tongue;
- 2) Communication in foreign languages;
- 3) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
- 4) Digital competence;
- 5) Learning to learn;
- 6) Social and civic competences;
- 7) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and
- 8) Cultural awareness and expression.

The key competences are all considered equally important, because each of them can contribute to a successful life in a knowledge society. Many of the competences overlap and interlock: aspects essential to one domain will support competence in another. Competence in the fundamental basic skills of language, literacy, numeracy and in information and communication technologies (ICT) is an essential foundation for learning, and learning to learn supports all learning activities. There are a number of themes that are applied throughout the Reference Framework: critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision taking, and constructive management of feelings play a role in all eight key competences.

Learning to learn definition

"Learning to learn" is the ability to pursue and persist in learning, to organize one's own learning, including through effective management of time and information, both individually and in groups. This competence includes awareness of one's learning process and needs, identifying available opportunities, and the ability to overcome obstacles in order to learn successfully. This competence means gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skills as well as seeking and making use of guidance. Learning to learn engages learners to build on prior learning and life experiences in order to use and apply knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts: at home, at work, in education and training. Motivation and confidence are crucial to an individual's competence.

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

Where learning is directed towards particular work or career goals, an individual should have knowledge of the competences, knowledge, skills and qualifications required. In all cases, learning to learn requires an individual to know and understand his/her preferred learning strategies, the strengths and weaknesses of his/her skills and qualifications, and to be able to search for the education and training opportunities and guidance and/or support available.

Learning to learn skills require firstly the acquisition of the fundamental basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that are necessary for further learning. Building on these skills, an individual should be able to access, gain, process and assimilate new knowledge and skills. This requires effective management of one's learning, career and work patterns, and, in particular, the ability to persevere with learning, to concentrate for extended periods and to reflect critically on the purposes and aims of learning. Individuals should be able to dedicate time to learning autonomously and with self-discipline, but also to work collaboratively as part

of the learning process, draw the benefits from a heterogeneous group, and to share what they have learnt. Individuals should be able to organize their own learning, evaluate their own work, and to seek advice, information and support when appropriate.

A positive attitude includes the motivation and confidence to pursue and succeed at learning throughout one's life. A problem-solving attitude supports both the learning process itself and an individual's ability to handle obstacles and change. The desire to apply prior learning and life experiences and the curiosity to look for opportunities to learn and apply learning in a variety of life contexts are essential elements of a positive attitude.

Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on competences supporting lifelong learning and the 'new skills for new jobs' initiative (2010/C 135/03)

Further developing the idea of Key Competences the Council adopted several documents:

- *Council resolution of 15 November 2007 on the new skills for new jobs (2007/C 290/01)*
- *Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on competences supporting lifelong learning and the 'new skills for new jobs' initiative (2010/C 135/03)*

Here we provide short excerpt from Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on competences supporting lifelong learning and the 'new skills for new jobs' initiative (2010/C 135/03).

Acquiring and further developing competences are crucial to improving employment prospects and contribute to personal fulfilment, social inclusion and active citizenship, since they signal the ability of individuals to act in a self-organised way in complex, changing and unpredictable contexts. As set out in the Key Competences Recommendation, a competent individual is able to combine knowledge, skills and attitudes, and to apply and make use of prior learning (whether acquired formally, non-formally or informally) in new situations.

— Efforts are needed to show how key competences are relevant at all levels of education and training and in all stages and situations of life. In addition to supporting the implementation of key competences in the areas identified by the 2006 Recommendation, attention should also be paid to making best use of the Recommendation in order to support lifelong learning beyond the end of compulsory education.

— More should be done to support the acquisition, updating and further development of the full range of key competences in the areas of vocational education and training and of adult learning.

— In order to equip students with the competences required by the labour market, as well as for further learning and research activities, priority should also be given in higher education to the updating, acquisition and further development of key competences. It is particularly important that higher education institutions provide opportunities for students to develop the ability to communicate in foreign languages, as appropriate, as well as a strong set of transversal key competences, since these are essential for acquiring other skills, adapting to various working environments and being active citizens.

ESTONIA

Compiled and edited by Tiina Jääger, Estonia (Eesti Vabariidusliit)

Introduction

Children who turn 7 years of age by 1 October of the current year are obliged to attend school. Before starting school children usually attend preschool child care institutions. The compulsory schooling obligation applies to children until they acquire basic education or turn 17 years of age.

Pupils in grades 1 to 9 acquire basic education. In grades 7 to 9, they also have the opportunity to enter into vocational training in the field that interests them.

Pupils who do not finish basic school and who are at least 17 years old can enter vocational education without the requirement of basic education (0.5 to 2.5 years, only professional skills are acquired) and/or continue acquiring basic education in an adult upper secondary school.

After basic education, pupils have four options for further studies:

- upper secondary school – general secondary education is acquired (3 years);
- upper secondary school with vocational training (preliminary vocational training) – general secondary education and some professional skills are acquired (3 years);
- vocational educational institution – secondary vocational education is acquired (at least 3 years);
- vocational educational institution – professional skills are acquired without general education (1 to 3 years).

After secondary education, pupils have three options for further studies:

- vocational educational institution – vocational education (0.5 to 3 years) or professional higher education (3 to 4.5 years) is acquired;
- professional higher education institution, colleges of universities – professional higher education (3 to 4.5 years) is acquired;
- university – academic higher education is acquired; Bachelor's degree (3 years) -> Master's degree (2 years) -> doctoral degree (3 to 4 years).

Further education in the adult education system allows employed persons to:

- complete unfinished basic or general secondary education in the form of evening classes or distance learning or as an external student;
- acquire vocational or secondary vocational education in the form of part-time study;
- acquire higher education in the form of part-time study or as an external student.

Acquisition of general secondary education and secondary vocational education is free whilst acquisition of higher education in the form of part-time study usually requires students to pay tuition fees.

Adult people can also attend:

- professional training courses for adults in vocational educational institutions, higher education institutions and universities. Also at professional associations;
- non-formal training courses at adult education centres, folk high schools, cultural centres, libraries etc.¹

The organisation and principles of the education system are prescribed in the Education Act of the Republic of Estonia.²

Legislation

The educational legislation, created to regulate the structure of the education system, is built up on the institutional basis. The paradigm of education is described in education standards (or national curricula) approved by the Government.

Republic of Estonia Education Act ³

Education Act emphasizes the importance of the learning to human development wider but not mentions the importance learning to learn competence.

Article 1

§ 2. Definition, objectives and levels of education

(1) For the purposes of this Act, education is a system of knowledge, skills, experience, values and behavioural norms which is determined by study modules, which is recognised by society and the acquisition of which is controlled by society.

(2) The fundamental principles of education are based on the recognition of universal and national values, of the individual and of freedom of religion and conscience.

(3) The objectives of education are to:

1) create favourable conditions for the development of the individual, the family and the Estonian nation, including ethnic minorities, and economic, political and cultural life in Estonian society and also nature conservation, within the context of the global economy and global culture;

2) shape individuals who respect and abide by the law;

3) create opportunities for everyone to engage in continuous learning.

§3 (4) Non-formal education provides the opportunity to develop personality, creativity, talents, initiative and a sense of social responsibility and to accumulate the knowledge, skills and

¹ Educational possibilities in Estonia <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?148627> (04.03.2014)

² Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (s.a.). Education and Research in Estonia. p.2 <http://www.hm.ee/raamat2010-2011/en/theeducationsystem.html> (04.03.2014)

³ Republic of Estonia Education Act <http://www.legaltext.ee/et/andmebaas/tekst.asp?loc=text&dok=X70039K3&keel=en&pg=1&ptyyp=RT&tyyp=X&query=Eesti+Vabariigi+hariduseseadus> (12.02.2014)

abilities needed in life. Learning takes place in the form of courses, study circles or any other form suitable for learners.

Adult Education Act⁴

Not any comments have dedicated to learning to learn competence in Adult Education Act.

§ 1. This Act provides the bases for adult education and training and the legal guarantees for adults to be able to access the learning they desire during their lifetime.

Preschool Child Care Institutions Act⁵

This act refers indirectly to learning to learn competence.

§ 2. Preschool education

(1) Preschool education is the set of knowledge, skills, experience and behavioural rules, which provides the prerequisites for coping successfully in everyday life and at school.

(2) Preschool education is acquired at a preschool institution or at home.

§ 3. Main function

Taking into account the age, sex and individual needs and characteristics of each child, the main function of a preschool institution is to:

1) create possibilities and conditions for the formation of a healthy personality who is socially and mentally alert, self-confident and considerate of others and who values the environment;

2) maintain and strengthen the health of the child and to promote his or her emotional, moral, social, mental and physical development.

Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act⁶

The learning skills are mentioned directly and also the elements of learning to learn competence.

§3 Fundamental values of general education schools

(1) General education schools support the mental, physical, ethical, social and emotional development of students. Conditions for the balanced development of the abilities and self-realisation of students and for the materialisation of their research-based worldview are created.

(2) The values arising from the ethical principles specified in the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the fundamental documents of the European Union are considered important.

⁴ Adult Education Act

<http://www.legaltext.ee/et/andmebaas/tekst.asp?loc=text&dok=X70035K1&keel=en&pg=1&ptyyp=RT&tyyp=X&query=t%E4iskasvanute+koolituse+seadus> (12.02.2014)

⁵ Preschool Child Care Institutions Act <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/Riigikogu/act/520122013003/consolide> (12.02.2014)

⁶ Basic Schools Upper Secondary Schools Act. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/Riigikogu/act/513012014002/consolide> (12.02.2014)

(3) The socialisation of the new generation is based on the traditions of Estonian culture, common European values, and the recognition of the main achievements of world culture and research. People who have acquired general education are able to integrate into society and contribute to the sustainable social, cultural, economic and ecologic development of Estonian society.

§ 4. Functions of basic schools

(1) Basic schools have both educating as well as edifying functions. Basic schools help students become creative and versatile personalities who are able to effectively realise themselves in various roles: in the family, at work and in public life, and choose a study path corresponding to their interests and abilities.

(2) The function of basic schools is to provide students with a learning and teaching environment that corresponds to the age of students, is secure, has a positive impact and develops students, supports the development of their interest in learning, learning skills, self-reflection, critical thinking, knowledge and will-based characteristics, their creative self-expression and the development of their social and cultural identity.

§ 5. Functions of upper secondary schools

(1) Upper secondary schools have both educating as well as edifying functions. The function of upper secondary schools is to prepare young people to act as creative, versatile, socially mature and trustworthy personalities who are conscious of their goals and objectives and able to attain them in various fields of life: as partners in their personal life, carriers and upholders of culture, in various occupations and roles in the labour market, and as citizens responsible for the sustainability of society and the natural environment.

(2) The main aspiration of teaching and educating in upper secondary schools is that students find a field of activity that interests them and corresponds to their abilities in order to continue their studies in the field. The function of upper secondary schools is to create conditions where students acquire the knowledge, skills and values that allow for continuing their studies in an institution of higher education or vocational educational institution without any impediments.

Vocational Educational Institutions Act⁷

Key competences are mentioned in this Act.

§ 3. Functions and obligations upon organisation of vocational training

- (1) Vocational training shall be organised by schools. The purpose of organisation of vocational training is to create the possibilities for the formation of such individuals who possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes or competencies, and the experience and social readiness for working, participating in social life and for lifelong learning. In order to achieve the given purpose, the school shall perform the following main functions:
- 1) support the acquisition of competencies necessary for self-realisation and development, civil activity, social involvement, continuing education and employment (hereinafter key competencies) in order to enable the learner to manage successfully in the changing learning, physical and social and working environment;
 - 2) support the formation of the student's vocational, professional and occupational competence in order to enable the student to perform successfully in the labour market;
 - 3) develop and support the student's motivation for participation in lifelong learning.

⁷ Vocational Educational Institutions Act <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/504022014002/consolide> (12.02.2014)

Regulations of Government

National curriculum for basic schools⁸

The competence learning to learn has important place in this document. The concept of learning supports attainment of learning to learn competence.

§ 1. Scope of application and structure of regulation

The national curriculum for basic schools establishes the national standard for basic education.

§ 4. Competences (3) The following are general competences: 4) learning to learn competence – ability to organize the learning environment and procure the information they need for learning; to plan studies and follow the plan; to use the outcome of the learning, including learning skills and strategies, in different contexts and for solving problems; to analyze one's knowledge and skills, strengths and weaknesses and on that basis, the need for further learning;

§ 5. Concept of learning

(1) The national curriculum for basic schools treats learning on the basis of output, stressing changes in the behavioural abilities of the pupil or group of pupils. More specifically, this means the acquisition of knowledge, skills, experiences, values and attitudes that are necessary for coping in everyday life. The psychological basis for learning is the experience that the pupil acquires in combination with physical, mental and social environment. As the pupil acquires experiences, the pupil begins to behave in a more goal-oriented fashion. The learning environment shall be ensured in school on the basis of systematic and goal-oriented learning and educational activity taking place on the basis of the curriculum, and the learning environment shall also encompass impacts from home and the broader environment. The pupil is an active participant in the learning process who takes part according to his or abilities in setting goals for his or her studies, studies independently and with companions, learns to value his or her companions and him or herself and to analyze and manage his or her studies. In acquiring new knowledge, the pupil shall proceed from previously acquired knowledge and shall construct his or her knowledge on the basis of the new information. The acquired knowledge shall be implemented in new situations, for resolving problems, making choices, discussing the correctness of arguments, providing supporting evidence for his or her arguments and in the course of further studies. Studying is a lifelong process for which the necessary skills and work habits shall be shaped in the course of acquiring basic education.

(2) In the national curriculum, teaching is considered to be organizing of the learning environment and learning activity in a manner that places the pupil before tasks that conform to his or her development but require effort, and through which he or she has the opportunity to acquire the planned learning outcomes.

National curriculum for upper secondary schools⁹

The competence learning to learn has important place in this document. The concept of learning supports attainment of learning to learn competence.

Chapter 1

General provisions

§ 1. Scope of application and structure of regulation

⁸ National curriculum for basic schools file:///D:/Downloads/Pohikooli_riiklik_oppekava-ylcosa.pdf (12.02.2014)

⁹ National curriculum for upper secondary school

file:///D:/Downloads/Gymnaasiumi_riiklik_oppekava_ylcosa.pdf (06.03.2014)

The national curriculum for upper secondary schools establishes the national standard for general upper secondary education.

Chapter 2

General part

Division 2 Learning and Educational Objectives

§ 3. Setting of goals for upper secondary schools

(1) An upper secondary school has a role to play in both education and upbringing. The function of the upper secondary school is to prepare youth for functioning in different walks of life as a creative, diverse, socially mature, trustworthy person who is aware of his or her goals and able to achieve them: a partner in personal life, standard-bearer and promoter of culture, in various positions and roles in the labour market, and as a citizen responsible for sustainability of one's society and natural environment.

(2) The primary objective of learning and education in upper secondary schools is to allow students to find themselves areas of activity that conform to their interests and abilities with which to integrate their future educational career. The function of an upper secondary school is to create conditions for students to acquire knowledge, skills and values that enable them to continue their educational career in a higher educational institution or post-secondary vocational education.

(3) The following are priorities for fulfilling these functions and achieving these objectives:

- 1) independence of students, shaping their worldview and readiness for coping in life;
- 2) shaping an adequate self-esteem;
- 3) developing independent learning and cooperation skills;
- 4) introducing and assessing opportunities for a future educational career;
- 5) shaping of civic skills, activity and responsibility.

§ 4. Competences

4) learning to learn competence – ability to organize the learning environment and procure the information they need for learning; to plan studies and follow the plan; to use the outcome of the learning, including learning skills and strategies, in different contexts and for solving problems; to analyze one's knowledge and skills, strengths and weaknesses and on that basis, the need for further learning;

Vocational education standard¹⁰

The competence learning to learn has important place in this document. The concept of learning supports attainment of learning to learn competence.

Chapter 2 Curricula

§8 Curriculum modules

(8) The basic and elective study modules learning outcomes described in the professional and vocational knowledge, skills, independence and accountability of the scale, learning competence, social competence, self-definition of competence, operational competence, digital competence, and a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship through the powers which are defined as follows:

...

4) learning competence is the ability to manage their own learning by using appropriate learning style and effective learning strategies;

¹⁰ Vocational education standard <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/128082013013?leiaKehtiv> (06.03.2014)

Strategies

The Strategy of General Education¹¹

The strategy stresses the importance of readiness for lifelong learning.

Chapter 3. Goals and measures

Main goal:

General education system through the creation of opportunities for each student development; personal, work and social life saving knowledge, skills, values and preparation establish foundations for lifelong learning.

Primary and Secondary School's graduates must:

- be able to ethical decision-making and responsibility values of active members of the public both as consumers and creators;
- harmonious personality to be sufficiently prepared to cope with life and continuing education whether academic or vocational direction;
- have a success-oriented, valuing others and to be valued by others;
- be able to navigate the world's different cultures, to be tolerant of differences of --- maintaining their own culture and identity;
- must be prepared for lifelong learning.

Development Plan for Estonian Adult Education 2009-2013¹²

Key competences include learning to learn are named in this document in learning provision context and as an action.

Introduction

Key competences of lifelong learning

In Estonia, the necessity of lifelong learning is usually considered in the context of increasing professional competitiveness, but stressing the importance of liberal adult education has meanwhile been regrettably left without attention. A survey carried out by the Estonian Non-formal Adult Education Association showed that people who had attended liberal adult education courses valued most highly the fact that the course would help them to be more successful at work.

It is less frequently realised that a learning person is an active person and participation in training courses supports the development of social networks. Liberal adult education values activities that help filling gaps in the formal education system and that support people who are educationally, socially or culturally left in a more disadvantageous situation. Liberal adult education system is in its nature most suitable for the adult population in order to obtain extensive key competences.

The European Parliament has approved eight key competences on the basis of the Lisbon Strategy, which are improved namely by liberal adult education.

Goal 3 Enabling non-formal study for adults in order to increase their competitiveness and to develop their creativity, talent, initiative and social responsibility

¹¹ The strategy of General Education <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?03236> (06.03.2014)

¹² Development Plan for Estonian Adult Education 2009-2013 [file:///D:/Downloads/10228%20\(1\).pdf](file:///D:/Downloads/10228%20(1).pdf) (06.03.2014)

Measure 3.1 Provision of non-formal training

Action 3.1.4 Improving learning to learn (key competence of lifelong learning) of the adult population

It will be determined how to develop learning to learn in people who have alienated from learning and need help in order to create interest in leaning or in order to continue their studies. For this purpose, specific methods and courses aimed at learning to learn will be developed and implemented in various educational and training institutions.

Lifelong Learning Strategy 2014-2020¹³

There is new approach to LLL Strategy – it covers all stages of learning during lifespan.

Strategic goals and actions

1 Changed study concept

All levels of education standards (state curricula) in the last decade have emphasized the centrality of the learner, importance of key competences, need to link the learning process of new knowledge to the existing, connect it to different spheres of life and subject areas, learn / teach not only the factual knowledge, but learn how to learn and solve problems and to do it in a team. The coming years efforts should be targeted to that these requirements would take effect. Teachers (including adult educators) are not a source of information in 21 century, but the link between the creator and the value of attitudes, whose mission is to develop in learners' critical and creative thinking, analytical skills, entrepreneurship, teamwork and both written and verbal expression skills. The teacher's role is to support the development of student to self-directed learner, who manages independently with changes in the environment and takes responsibility for their own development and study choices. The teachers' and support groups' approach to each learner gives an opportunity to the weaker student ability to cope with challenges and to offer more challenge to productive students.

The goal is to implement the new, students' supportive learning, concept in all educational levels and types.

The goal is to create high-quality, flexible, with diverse options and social development needs considering learning opportunities and career services. The target is to increase the number of people with professional qualifications in different age groups and to increase the participation of adults in lifelong learning.

Estonian Qualifications Framework

EstQF is a comprehensive framework, consisting of four sub-frameworks for: general education qualifications; VET qualifications; higher education qualifications; occupational qualifications. The formal education qualifications correspond to the EQF levels. The occupational qualifications are distributed on levels 2-8 of the EstQF. Occupational qualifications can be gained through formal education as well as through adult education and in-service training.

¹³ Lifelong Learning Strategy 2014-2020 <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?0513767> (06.03.2013)

Occupational Qualifications Act ¹⁴

Passed by Estonian Parliament 22 May 2008

The act describes qualification levels and framework, also the functions of occupational qualifications institutions. There is no specific indication to learning to learn competence.

Chapter 1

§ 4. Occupational qualification level and qualification framework

- (1) An occupational qualification level is the scope of knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy required in an occupation.
- (2) Occupational qualification levels are comparable to levels of education, and the occupational qualifications system and education system belong to a common qualification framework, which is internationally comparable.
- (3) The qualification framework classifies occupational qualification levels and educational qualification levels on the basis of criteria imposed on the acquired knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy.
- (4) The qualification framework is divided into eight levels where level 1 is the lowest and level 8 is the highest. Descriptions of the levels are provided in Annex 1 to this Act «Qualification framework».
- (5) The lowest occupational qualification level (initial occupational qualification level) shall be established for each occupation. Awarding an occupational qualification on this level is referred to as awarding an initial level occupational qualification.
- (6) The body of chairpersons of sector skills councils shall determine the placement of initial level occupational qualifications in the qualification framework, as well as the need to award higher-level occupational qualifications.

¹⁴ Occupational Qualifications Act <http://www.kutsekoda.ee/fw/contenhelper/10445708/10445709> (07.03.2014)

Estonian Qualifications Framework (EstQF) level descriptions

EstQF level descriptions EstQF level	Knowledge (described as theoretical and/or factual)	Skills (described as cognitive: involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking, and practical: involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)	Scope of responsibility and autonomy
Level 1	Basic general knowledge	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured content
Level 2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools	Work and study under supervision with some autonomy
Level 3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study; Adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems
Level 4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change; supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities

Level 5	Specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; Review and develop performance of self and others
Level 6	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; Take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups.
Level 7	Highly specialised knowledge; some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in the field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields	Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; Take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams
Level 8	Knowledge at the most advanced frontier in the field of work or study and at the interface between fields	The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

GERMANY

Compiled and edited by Johann Theessen, Germany (Stephansstift Zentrum fuer Erwachsenenbildung)

Overview: Organisation and Governance

Introduction

In the Federal Republic of Germany responsibility for the education system is determined by the federal structure of the state. Unless the Basic Law (Grundgesetz) awards legislative powers to the Federation, the “Länder” have the right to legislate. Within the education system, this applies to the school sector, the higher education sector, adult education and continuing education. Administration of the education system in these areas is almost exclusively a matter for the “Länder”. Detailed regulations are laid down in the constitutions of the “Länder” and in separate laws of the “Länder” on early childhood education, on the school system, on higher education, on adult education and on continuing education. The scope of the Federal Government's responsibilities in the field of education is defined in the Basic Law, according to which the Federation bears responsibility particularly for the regulations governing the following domains of education, science and research:

- In-company vocational training and vocational further education
- Admission to higher education institutions and higher education degrees (here the “Länder” may enact laws at variance with the legislation of the Federation)
- Financial assistance for pupils and students
- Promotion of scientific and academic research and technological development, including the promotion of up-and-coming academics
- Youth welfare (in particular early childhood education and care in day-care centres and child-minding services)
- Legal protection of participants of correspondence courses
- Regulations on entry to the legal profession
- Regulations on entry to medical and paramedical professions
- Employment promotion measures as well as occupational and labour market research

Fundamental Principles and National Policies

In the Federal Republic of Germany responsibility for the education system is determined by the federal structure of the state. Under the Basic Law (Grundgesetz) the exercise of governmental powers and the fulfillment of governmental responsibility is incumbent upon the individual “Länder” as far as the Basic Law does not provide for or allow for any other arrangement. The Basic

Law contains a few fundamental provisions on questions of education, culture and science: thus for example it guarantees the freedom of art and scholarship, research and teaching (Art. 5, Paragraph 3), the freedom of faith and creed (Art. 4), free choice of profession and of the place of training (Art. 12, Paragraph 1), equality before the law (Art. 3, Paragraph 1) and the rights of parents (Art. 6, Paragraph 2). The entire school system is under the supervision of the state (Art. 7, Paragraph 1).

Lifelong Learning Strategy

There is general social agreement that lifelong learning including continuing education is increasingly assuming a key role in today's information and knowledge society. In July 2004, the Federation and the "Länder" adopted a joint strategy for lifelong learning in Germany (Strategie für Lebenslanges Lernen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland). The strategy is aimed at demonstrating how learning can be encouraged and supported for all citizens of all ages and at all stages in their lives; this takes place at different locations and teaching is offered in various forms. Lifelong learning includes all formal, non-formal and informal learning. The strategy is oriented around the various phases in a person's life, ranging from early childhood to old age, as well as around key elements for lifelong learning that represent main development focuses. Within this framework, realistic prospects are to be developed for the long-term that build on the existing educational structures, activities and experiences and define a structured framework for lifelong learning that is flexible and open for the necessary continuous further development. Development focuses of this strategy are:

- inclusion of informal learning
- self-guidance
- development of competences
- networking
- modularisation
- learning counselling
- new learning culture / popularisation of learning
- fairness of access

The relevance of these development focuses and how they form part of a strategy of lifelong learning is shown on the basis of the life phases of children, young people, young adults, adults and older people. Linking the life phases with development focuses simultaneously counteracts a separation of educational areas. Depending on their specialisation in accordance with educational policy, the framework defined with this strategy paper should be completed by Federation and Länder.

The institutions involved have reached a general consensus with regard to the necessary reforms in continuing education. The main points are as follows:

- measures to improve the transparency of the continuing education market by developing local and regional centres for continuing education as well as the further development of the continuing education InfoWeb (www.iwwb.de)
- further development of quality assurance in continuing education through recognised testing agencies and suitable certification methods
- the modularisation of study courses and the award of credit points
- promotion of participation in continuing education and of continuing education institutions that align themselves with current supply and demand
- the enabling of continuing education times (learning-time accounts)
- the development of scientific and academic continuing education
- new financing instruments

The Information on the Federal Government position paper on lifelong learning, Konzeption der Bundesregierung zum Lernen im Lebenslauf was adopted in April 2008.

Organisation of the Education System and of its Structure

The education system in the Federal Republic of Germany is divided into

- early childhood education
- primary education
- secondary education
- tertiary education
- continuing education

(Please find more of the German Education system and structure on Internet)

Administration and Governance at Central and/or Regional Level

Responsibilities of the Federal Government

Within the Federal Government, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – BMBF) is primarily responsible for the Federation's areas of responsibility. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Bundesministerium für Familien, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend – BMFSFJ) is responsible for the instruction, education and care of children in day-care centres and in child-minding services.

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research was created as the Federal Ministry of Education and Science in 1969 in connection with the amendment to the Basic Law (Grundgesetz), which gave the Federation additional responsibilities in the educational sector. It was then merged in 1994 with the Federal Ministry of Research and Technology. Wherever necessary, consultations between Federation and Länder take place in the Bundesrat, the Joint Science Conference (Gemeinsame

Wissenschaftskonferenz – GWK), the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Kultusministerkonferenz) and the Science Council (Wissenschaftsrat). The Federal Ministry of Education and Research is organised in one Central Directorate-General and seven Directorates-General:

- Directorate-General 1: Strategies and Policy Issues
- Directorate-General 2: European and International Cooperation in Education and Research
- Directorate-General 3: Vocational Training; Lifelong Learning
- Directorate-General 4: Science System
- Directorate-General 5: Key Technologies – Research for Innovation
- Directorate-General 6: Life Sciences – Research for Health
- Directorate-General 7: Provision for the Future – Basic and Sustainability Research

For current information on the direction of the Ministry, see the website (www.bmbf.de).

The purview of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research embraces the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB). It is a major instrument for cooperation between employers, trade unions, Federation and Länder (States) at the national level. The Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz) defines the institute's responsibilities as follows:

- to carry out vocational education and training research under a pre-defined research programme;
- in accordance with the instructions of the competent federal ministry, to take part in the drafting of training regulations and other ordinances, to take part in the preparation of the Report on Vocational Education and Training, to take part in the compilation of vocational education and training statistics, to promote pilot schemes, to take part in international cooperation in the field of vocational education and training, as well as to assume further administrative tasks of the Federation for the promotion of vocational education and training;
- in accordance with general administrative provisions of the competent federal ministry, to implement the promotion of intercompany training centers and support the planning, establishment and further development of these facilities;
- to maintain and publish the register of recognized occupations requiring formal training;
- to carry out the tasks described in the Law on the Protection of Participants in Distance Education (Fernunterrichtsschutzgesetz) and to contribute to the improvement and extension of vocational distance learning through the promotion of development projects. With the consent of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Federal Institute for Vocational Training may conclude contracts with other parties outside the Federal Administration for the assumption of further tasks.

Vocational education and training in Germany is based on the consensus principle. Whenever major decisions on structure and substance have to be taken, such decisions are reached in a joint effort by Federation and “Länder”, employers and employees. These groups – as well as a representative of the municipal associations, of the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) and of

the Research Council acting as advisors – are members of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training's board, which thus represents the Round Table of vocational education and training. The Research Council is intended to control, assure and evaluate the quality of the institute's research efforts.

Adult education and training

Introduction

Adult and continuing education institutions offer a variety of courses and subject areas covering general, vocational, political and continuing academic education. The aims, content and duration of courses vary accordingly.

General objectives

The original objective of learning for learning's sake increasingly gave way to the task of responding to the educational needs arising from the demands of the state, society and industry. Since 1970, a more vocational slant, an emphasis on formal qualifications, systematisation and a new understanding of continuing education have been gaining importance.

With regard to the further development of the sector of continuing education within the scope of lifelong learning, the aim is to provide a foundation for the individual to

- develop the willingness for lifelong learning
- acquire the competences necessary for lifelong learning
- use institutionalised as well as new possibilities for learning in his or her life and work

Guiding ideas are

- reinforcement of self-responsibility and self-guidance
- redress of unequal opportunities
- cooperation between providers of education and users
- reinforcement of the relations between all sectors of education

Specific legislative framework

Continuing education in Germany is regulated by the state to a lesser degree than other areas of education. The justification given for this is that the diverse and rapidly changing demands on continuing education can best be met by a structure which is characterised by diversity and competition among the institutions and the range of courses and services on offer. A central principle of continuing education courses is that attendance should be voluntary.

The activities of the state in the field of continuing education are, for the most part, restricted to laying down principles and to issuing regulations relating to organisation and financing. Such principles and regulations are enshrined in the legislation of the Federal Government and the

Länder. State regulations are aimed at establishing general conditions for the optimum development of the contribution of continuing education to lifelong learning.

The joint responsibilities of the Federation and the Länder include research and pilot schemes in all sectors of continuing education. In addition, Federation and Länder are responsible for statistics on continuing education and for drawing up reports on continuing education in their respective areas of responsibility.

The responsibilities of the LÄNDER include in particular the following powers to regulate and promote:

- continuing general education
- continuing education leading to school-leaving qualifications
- continuing academic education at higher education institutions
- continuing cultural education
- some elements of continuing political education
- some elements of continuing vocational training

The prerequisites and principles for the promotion and funding of continuing education are laid down in continuing education legislation and employment release legislation. Continuing and adult education legislation describes continuing education as an independent education sector which incorporates continuing general and political education and continuing vocational training and the development of which is the responsibility of the public sector. Continuing education legislation guarantees a diverse range of institutions maintained by a variety of organizations and lays down a state approval procedure for such institutions. All Land legislation includes regulations which recognise their freedom in the preparation of curricula and independence in staff selection.

In addition to continuing education legislation, school legislation at Land level contains regulations on continuing education within the school system (e.g. the attainment of school-leaving qualifications) and higher education legislation regulates the development of academic continuing education. Regulations regarding continuing education offers at Berufsakademien are contained, if necessary, in the Berufsakademie legislation.

In 11 of the 16 Länder legislation allows employees to attend continuing education courses (paid educational leave – Bildungsurlaub) for several working days per year (usually five) with no loss in earnings, provided that certain conditions are fulfilled.

In addition to the above-mentioned responsibilities, which are carried jointly by the Federation and the Länder, the Federal Government's responsibilities include in particular:

- continuing vocational training outside the school sector
- regulated further vocational training
- basic regulations for the protection of those on distance learning courses which are offered under private law
- some areas of continuing political education

- international cooperation in continuing education, including within the European Union

Therefore, regulations for the continuing education sector have been adopted at national level in the following legislation in particular: the Social Security Code III (Sozialgesetzbuch III), Upgrading Training Assistance Act (Gesetz zur Förderung der beruflichen Aufstiegsfortbildung), Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz), Handicrafts Code (Handwerksordnung), Federal Training Assistance Act (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz) and Law on the Protection of Participants in Distance Education (Fernunterrichtsschutzgesetz).

Responsibility for the promotion of continuing vocational training under the Federal Government's Social Security Code III lies with the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit). Promotion under the Social Security Code III includes the following measures:

- Further vocational training: schemes to assess, maintain, extend or adapt the vocational knowledge and skills of adults who have a vocational qualification or appropriate work experience.
- Vocational retraining leading to a qualification in a anerkannter Ausbildungsberuf (recognised occupation requiring formal training): targeted mainly at unemployed people with no vocational qualifications.

With the coming into force on 1 January 1996 of the Upgrading Training Assistance Act (Aufstiegsfortbildungsförderungsgesetz), a new comprehensive funding instrument was created in Germany for financing training designed to lead to promotion at work. With the coming into force in 2002 of the first amendment of the Upgrading Training Assistance Act, the promotion of professional career advancement was further improved.

The amendment led to an increase in participation in continuing education and a significantly higher number of business start-ups. Within the scope of the Qualification Initiative for Germany “Getting ahead through education” (Aufstieg durch Bildung), promotion under the Upgrading Training Assistance Act was further extended in 2009.

Under the Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz) and the Handicrafts Code (Handwerksordnung), responsibility for examinations in further vocational training generally rests with the chambers (e.g. chambers of handicrafts and chambers of industry and commerce). Where there is a national regulatory interest, examinations in further vocational training are regulated by ordinances of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The content of examinations is laid down by regulations of the competent bodies or by ordinances passed by the Federal Government. Further vocational training communicates, amongst other things, the vocational knowledge, skills and competences that enable individuals to assume middle and sometimes also higher management responsibilities within companies.

Institutions Providing Adult Education and Training

Under various continuing education legislation of some Länder it is mainly the task of the Volkshochschulen, the local adult education centers, but also of other maintaining bodies from the private sector, to take care of basic provision of continuing education courses in the field of general continuing education, in other words to provide a regular and comprehensive range of courses which meets the most diverse social requirements and individual needs.

The Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung) and the respective bodies of the Länder (federal states) hold events in the field of continuing political education and promote private sponsors of continuing political education.

It is usually possible to acquire school-leaving qualifications later in life at evening classes (Abendhauptschulen, Abendrealschulen, Abendgymnasien) and in what is called Kollegs. Abendhauptschulen prepare adults in a one-year course (two semesters) for the acquisition of the Hauptschulabschluss. Abendrealschulen take adults through to the “Mittlerer Schulabschluss” in evening classes (four semesters). Abendgymnasien allow suitably capable adults to obtain the higher education entrance (Hochschulreife) qualification usually in a three-year period. Kollegs are full-time schools where adults can obtain the Hochschulreife.

In parallel with this, the Länder and maintaining bodies from the private sector offer qualification courses for young people and adults to obtain school leaving certificates. These measures are designed to give young people with migrant backgrounds in particular, but also others, the opportunity to obtain a school-leaving certificate.

As institutions of continuing vocational training, so called Fachschulen offer courses lasting between one and three years. At “Fachhochschulen”, special graduate study courses culminate in the award of a second Diplom degree or proof of academic achievement (certificate).

Distance Learning offers adults in employment the opportunity to take up continuing education on a flexible basis while remaining in employment. Distance learning courses offered by private organisations have required state approval in the Federal Republic of Germany since 1 January 1977 under the Law on the Protection of Participants in Distance Education (Fernunterrichtsschutzgesetz). The decision to approve a distance learning course is taken by the Central Office for Distance Learning (Staatliche Zentralstelle für Fernunterricht – ZFU) of the Länder of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Under an approval procedure checks are carried out not only on the factual and didactic quality of the teaching material in relation to the course objective, but also on advertising and on the form and content of the distance learning agreement which has to be concluded between the student and the distance learning institute. Just over 203,000 people were registered on distance learning courses in 2010. The range of subjects is wide and comprises social sciences, education, psychology, humanities, languages, business and commerce, mathematics, natural sciences and technology, leisure, health and housekeeping,

school leaving qualifications – e.g. Hauptschulabschluss, Realschulabschluss, Abitur –, qualifications for state-certified business manager, engineer and translator, computer courses. The most popular subject area is business and commerce which accounts for about 25.3 per cent of all students.

Provided that the Berufsakademie laws at Land level contain the necessary provisions, the “Berufsakademien” may also offer continuing education courses. According to the Framework Act for Higher Education (Hochschulrahmengesetz) and the legislation on higher education of the Länder (Hochschulgesetze) in addition to providing research and study courses, the main responsibilities of higher education institutions is to provide continuing education in the academic and creative field. Continuing education courses offer people the opportunity to specialize, to extend existing knowledge or to obtain an additional vocational qualification. Courses last from a few weeks or months to several semesters, with modular courses also being offered increasingly in the area of continuing education. Through continuing academic education, higher education institutions also contribute to regional development in cooperation with partners from industry.

Continuing General and Political Education

Admission requirements

In terms of size general and political further education remains an important continuing education sector with an especially broad range of subjects. There are usually no entry requirements for continuing general and political further education courses.

Teaching Methods and Approaches

As in the school sector, the teaching staff takes responsibility for teaching in their classes taking background and aptitude of each participant into consideration.

The use of new information and communication technologies as an effective tool in self organised learning is also becoming an increasingly important aspect of adult education/continuing education. The majority of distance learning offers are supported online, either in full or in part. Many initiatives and projects have been launched to promote the use of these technologies.

Continuing Vocational Education and Training

Admission Requirements

Continuing vocational education and training is targeted at groups with the widest possible range of educational qualifications, from unemployed people with no school leaving or vocational qualifications to executives.

Certification

Only some of the courses for continuing vocational training are designed to lead to qualifications which are recognised by law or awarded by industry's self-governing organisations (chambers).

Second-Chance Education

Admission requirements

Applicants for evening classes for the acquisition of a higher education entrance qualification (Abendgymnasien) must provide evidence of a vocational qualification or evidence that they have been in employment for at least two years. They must also be at least 19 years old and have obtained the Mittlerer Schulabschluss. Applicants who cannot provide evidence of the Mittlerer Schulabschluss or an equivalent qualification have to complete at least a half-year preliminary course teaching mainly German, a foreign language and mathematics. The Länder may adopt special provisions on examinations for admission to and on the qualification for the preliminary course. Course members must be in employment except during the last three half-years. The admission conditions for Kollegs are the same as for Abendgymnasien. Those attending such schools are not allowed to combine their study with work.

Learner assessment/progression

The principles and objectives for the assessment of performance and the examinations in courses leading to school qualifications are comparable to those that apply in the secondary sector.

Certification

For information about how adults can attain school-leaving certificates through the so called Zweiter Bildungsweg (second-chance education), i.e. evening classes and Kollegs The Volkshochschulen also offer courses in this area.

Continuing Education in the Academic and Creative Field

Admission requirements

The entry requirement for continuing education in the academic and creative field at higher education institutions is usually that participants have a degree, though sometimes continuing education courses are also open to applicants who have achieved the necessary skills through a period of employment or another means. Master's study courses providing further education require, as a rule, a first higher education degree followed by relevant skilled work experience of at least one year.

Learner assessment/progression

For continuing education in the academic and creative field, the amendment of the Framework Act for Higher Education (Hochschulrahmengesetz) of 1998 provided for the introduction of a credit

point system at German higher education institutions. In the future, credit points may also be obtained outside the sector of higher education, e.g. through non-formally obtained competences and further vocational training. For this, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs has laid down the conditions by adopting a resolution on the recognition of knowledge and skills acquired outside the sector of higher education in June 2002. In November 2003, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, the German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz HRK), and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research in a joint declaration appealed to higher education institutions to recognise credits for, by way of example, qualifications achieved in further vocational training in respect of higher education courses of study if they meet certain standards.

Certification

Continuing education in the academic and creative field leads to certificates and, in the case of study courses, higher education degrees as well.

Initial Education for Teachers and Trainers Working in Adult Education and Training

Most of the legislation in the Länder governing continuing education stipulates the qualification requirements demanded of the teaching staff. According to a resolution adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in 1970, members of administrative and teaching staff at institutions of continuing education are supposed to have a higher education degree.

Assistant tutors must have acquired a higher education degree, a further qualification in a profession (Fachschulabschluss) or a vocational qualification plus several years of practical experience.

Conditions of Service for Teachers and Trainers Working in Adult Education and Training

According to a joint recommendation of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Association of German Cities of 1981, institutions of continuing education generally are to employ full-time tutors.

Continuing Professional Development for Teachers and Trainers

Working in Adult Education and Training

The professional further training of tutors in the field of continuing education takes place within the scope of the responsibility of the Länder for continuing education. In addition, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung -BMBF) promotes various projects for the improvement of academic and pedagogical competence of tutors in the field of continuing education.

Quality Assurance in Adult Education and Training Responsible bodies

The employment agencies entrusted external certification bodies with the task of inspecting maintaining bodies for continuing education in the area of vocational continuing education as promoted by the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit).

The Central Office for Distance Learning of the Länder of the Federal Republic of Germany (Staatliche Zentralstelle für Fernunterricht der Länder der Bundesrepublik Deutschland – ZFU) decides whether or not a distance learning course is to be approved. Furthermore, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – BMBF) promotes comparative tests of continuing education media, continuing education measures and continuing education advice by Stiftung Warentest, Germany's independent consumer-product testing agency.

Approaches and methods for quality assurance

The increasing importance of lifelong learning has also promoted the awareness of binding quality standards in the field of continuing education. The plural structure of maintaining bodies which support continuing education is also expressed in the number of different efforts and approaches for quality assurance in continuing education. Both jointly and individually, Federation and Länder promote numerous projects for improving quality assurance in continuing education.

Support Measures for Learners in Adult Education and Training

Definition of the Target Group(s)

The target group of the National Strategy for Literacy and Basic Education (nationale Strategie für Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung) are functional illiterates.

Specific Support Measures

Within the scope of the national implementation of the Literacy Decade announced by the United Nations for the period up until 2012, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – BMBF) has placed priority on research and scientifically-backed development projects for literacy and adult basic education. At the same time, within the scope of its responsibilities the BMBF supports the manifold activities of the Länder in the area of basic adult education. Together with appropriate partners, such as the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge), the Länder plan to develop and expand educational offers for migrants ranging from literacy up to career maturity (Berufsreife).

The Volkshochschulen (local adult education centres) make a significant contribution to improving the situation of people who cannot read or write.

Guidance and Counselling in a Lifelong Learning Approach

Academic Guidance

Within the framework of lifelong learning, educational guidance has become increasingly important in recent years. It is perceived as a prerequisite for the assurance of the individual right to education and creating more permeability and equal opportunities in the education system. Despite increased efforts, given the numerous institutions and competences and the different legal rules, educational guidance is still very heterogeneous.

Psychological Counselling

No information is available on psychological counselling for participants in continuing education.

Career Guidance

In its recommendations the Committee on Innovation in Continuing Training (Innovationskreis Weiterbildung) appointed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – BMBF) called in 2008 for an integrative system of educational guidance covering all stages of learning and incorporating career advice. The Committee on Innovation recommends the following individual measures inter alia:

- increasing the transparency of guidance offers
- setting up and extending neutral guidance centres, and cross-educational/crossprovider guidance centres
- creating a uniform state financing basis
- improving quality management
- expanding educational guidance for small and medium-sized enterprises,
- professionalising staff
- introducing accreditation and certification

Mobility in Adult Education

Learner Mobility

As a sub-programme of the European Lifelong Learning Programme, the LEONARDO DA VINCI programme for initial and further vocational education and training shall contribute by means of promoting cross-border collaboration to the development of quality and innovations, as well as to intensifying the European dimension in initial and further vocational education and training. In particular, the programme includes the promotion of the mobility of trainees and instructors, as well as innovation projects. The GRUNDTVIG adult education sub-programme aims to provide facilities and institutions as well as their teachers and learners of all age groups and levels of society with new knowledge on the European dimension of their subjects and fields of work. In Germany, the National Agency Education for Europe (Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa) at the Federal Institute for

Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB) is responsible for the implementation of LEONARDO DA VINCI and GRUNDTVIG (www.na-bibb.de).

Teacher and Trainer Mobility

Teacher mobility is also supported within the framework of LEONARDO DA VINCI and GRUNDTVIG. Placements abroad for employees

Through the LEONARDO DA VINCI sub-programme of the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme, the National Agency Education for Europe (Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa) also supports training placements abroad for employees, the unemployed and graduates of higher-education institutions. The placements abroad provide, as part of continuing vocational education, international professional qualifications and linguistic and intercultural skills. In 2011 2,085 grants were awarded within the framework of this project. Many projects are available to this target group facilitating individual access to financial support (so-called pool projects).

Learning Mobility

In May 2010 the Standing Conference adopted a declaration on mobility in the education sector in Europe (Erklärung zur Mobilität im Bildungsbereich in Europa) in which it emphasises that the mobility of pupils/students and teachers/lecturers forms a key element of education policy collaboration in Europe and represents a core task of the Bologna Process and of the European Union in the education sector. The Standing Conference considers the main obstacles to mobility in the school sector and in higher education to be insufficient information, financial difficulties and problems in recognising credits obtained abroad. Young people are, moreover, to be given an understanding of the many advantages of undertaking mobility and informed about funding opportunities, while the above obstacles to mobility are to be dismantled. Against this background the Standing Conference welcomed the diverse initiatives of the European Union and of the Bologna Process to promote cross-border mobility in the education sector. It particularly welcomed the Lifelong Learning Programme of the EU and the European Qualifications Framework for the Higher Education Sector and Lifelong Learning.

Federation and Länder also advocate including a greater share of the financially or socially disadvantaged and those with special needs or with a migrant background in mobility programmes, and considering additional support in the form of increased rates of funding.

Attractiveness and Relevance of VET

In the National Pact for Training and Young Skilled Staff in Germany (Nationaler Pakt für Ausbildung und Fachkräftenachwuchs in Deutschland – Training Pact) the Federal Government is also cooperating with leading industry associations and the Standing Conference to guarantee a sufficient number of training places for young people.

To increase the attractiveness of vocational education, in autumn 2011 the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology with the support of the partners to the pact, launched a nationwide campaign “Berufliche Bildung – Praktisch unschlagbar” (‘Vocational Education – Practically Unbeatable’). Various instruments are being used to also attract young high achievers to in company vocational training and vocational further education.

General adult education and further vocational training provide, through a diverse network of privately-maintained bodies, further teaching and consolidation of transversal key competences. The Länder support this area through the promotion of measures and institutions. In the higher education sector the Länder support the expansion of work-related study and continuing training courses through target agreements with higher education institutions.

New correspondence courses and online study courses, eLearning, eCampus initiatives, distance learning programs and inter-higher education institution continuing education centres and networks are being promoted to this end among others.

Adult Education in Germany - a brief portrait

The following part of the paper is from an overview on Adult Education in Germany by Dr. Peter Brandt, German Institute for Adult Education in Bonn, Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning (DIE).

Relevant umbrella associations and national (service) organisations

The most important supporter groups of continuing education have the following umbrella associations on a federal level:

- Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband - dvv (German Adult Education Association)
- Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag - DIHK (Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce)
- Bundesverband der Träger beruflicher Bildung - BBB (Federal Association of Institutions of Vocational Education)
- Dachverband der deutschen Weiterbildungsorganisationen - DVWO (Umbrella Association for German Continuing Education Organisations)
- Fachverband für Fernlernen und Lernmedien - Forum Distance Learning (Professional Association for Distance Learning and Learning Media)
- Katholische Bundesgemeinschaft für Erwachsenenbildung - KBE (Catholic Association for Adult Education)
- Deutsche Evangelische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Erwachsenenbildung - DEAE (German Evangelical Association for Adult Education)
- ver.di and GEW (Education and Science) trade unions

- Bundesarbeitskreis Arbeit und Leben e.V. - DGB/VHS (Federal Working Group for Work and Life)
- Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten - AdB (Working Group for German Educational Establishments)
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft katholisch-sozialer Bildungswerke - aksb (Association of Catholic Social Educational Organisations)

National service organisations:

- Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung -DIE (German Institute for Adult Education - Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning)
- Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung - BIBB (Federal Institute for Vocational Education)

Societies:

- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaften - DGFE (German Society for Educational Sciences), Adult Education department:
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung und Fernstudien - DGWF (German Association for University Continuing and Distance Education):

Providers of Adult Education

In Germany, it is estimated that there are approximately 25,000 continuing education institutions (2008). These are: institutions that provide regular and publicly organised education as a primary or secondary task. This includes commercial units, i.e. institutions with branches are counted several times.

- 37% of the institutions offer general and vocational continuing education
- 56% only vocational continuing education
- 6% only general continuing education (with political and cultural education)
- 41.3% are private providers
- 23.5% are adult education centres
(all figures from www.die-bonn.de)

Funding

Approximately 1.2% of the GDP in Germany is spent on AE. This is approximately 28 billion euros (2007, conservative estimate, only direct costs).

The most important financers of AE in Germany are the participants themselves, followed by companies (again only direct costs). Public sponsors (federal government, states, communities, EU) take third place with taxes and revenue from unemployment insurance used for educational measures for job-seekers.

In 2007, the percentage of public funds amounted to 11% of the total expenditure.

Funding from insurance contributions for job-seeker measures experienced the greatest decrease: the funds here dropped from around 8 billion euros in 1996 to just 1 billion euros in 2006 and 2007.

In recent years, a reversal of demand financing was observed, i.e. public funds are assigned to individuals demanding it via vouchers, bonuses, loans or tax relief. Institutional support for the providers is also in decline.

The federal government and states invest public funds increasingly in structure and model projects that are assigned in competitive procedures.

Participation Rate

The federal government aims to increase the participation rate in continuing education to 50% by 2015. The recently increased rates fluctuate at 43 or 44% depending on the course design.

According to the Adult Education Survey (AES), these are the following rates for 19 to 64-year-olds in Germany (2007):

- Percentage of those participating in non-formal education: 44% (= continuing education participation)
- Percentage of those participating in formal education: 11%
- Percentage of those active in learning: 69% (those who were in formal, non-formal or informal education)

AES distinguishes participation in relation to occupations:

- 16% of participation was not related to occupation
- Out of the 84% of participation related to occupations, the majority was organised by companies (60%) and considerably less were organised by individuals (24%)
- 39% of all participation took place with private providers.
- 38% of all participation took place at adult education centres.

Since AES was first carried out in 2007, a range of different years is not available. However, this can be seen by the Reporting System for Continuing Education (BSW) who delivered a participation rate of 43% for 2007.

The most significant factors that influence participation in continuing education are gainful employment, secondary school qualification and professional qualification.

Topics

The central tasks of AE in Germany include the ability to participate in society - as political and vocational participation. For occupational-related education, adaptations to changes in technology and globalisation are necessary; whereas on a personal level, adaptation is required for the challenges and impositions connected to these.

With regards to social cohesion, political education is just as important as the integration of immigrants, as well as the literacy and basic education of those who were not able to learn the relevant cultural techniques at school.

In 2008, the volume of classes with the five main institutions for general adult education was divided into the following topics (<http://www.die-bonn.de>):

- Languages: 34.5%
- Health: 16.9%
- Work/Professions: 15.0%
- Culture/Design: 11.0%
- Basic education/Secondary school qualifications: 8.6%
- Family/Gender/Generations: 8.2%
- Politics/Society: 3.4%
- Religion/Ethics: 1.8%
- Environment: 0.6%

Staff

Almost one million people work in the field of adult education according to estimates. However, most of them only work in education as a second job and do not substantially earn their living from adult education. A considerable number are also volunteers. Following a survey in 2005, there were 185,000 employed teachers who were paying social insurance contributions.

The development in the sub-sector of general adult education shows that, from 2002 to 2007, the number of positions for full-time employees declined from 13,000 to 10,600, but then increased to 11,00200 by 2008 .

There are still no mandatory qualifications for employment in adult education, even though the recruitment of staff with the required qualifications appears to have increased thanks to the introduction of study courses specialising in adult education/continuing education.

Quality Management

There are various quality management systems in Germany's continuing education. In addition to ISO models, there is the EFQM and the "Learner-oriented quality testing in continuing education" (LQW) model. To apply for public financial assistance, the introduction of a QM model is a part requirement. In this way, the State wants to avoid costly validation processes for continuing education establishments and substitute this for a self-imposed quality assurance.

Conclusions

Lifelong learning is considered a key for supporting both individuals and societies in their development in an increasingly globalised and competitive world.

Key competences represent a transferable, multifunctional package of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for individuals to achieve personal fulfillment and development, inclusion and employment. Such key competences should have been developed by the end of initial education and training, and should act as a foundation for further learning as part of lifelong learning.

Key competences for lifelong learning

Key competences in the form of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to each context are fundamental for each individual in a knowledge-based society. They provide added value for the labour market, social cohesion and active citizenship by offering flexibility and adaptability, satisfaction and motivation. Because they should be acquired by every citizen, Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning [Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006] proposes a reference tool for European Union (EU) countries to ensure that these key competences are fully integrated into their strategies and infrastructures, particularly in the context of lifelong learning.

Summary

Key competences for lifelong learning are a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. They are particularly necessary for personal fulfillment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment. Key competences are essential in a knowledge society. They ensure flexibility in the labour force, allowing it to adapt more quickly to changes in an increasingly interconnected world. They are also a major factor in innovation, productivity and competitiveness, and they contribute to the motivation and satisfaction of workers and the quality of work.

Key competences should be acquired by:

- Young people at the end of their compulsory education and training, equipping them for adult life, particularly for working life, whilst forming a basis for further learning;
- Adults throughout their lives, through a process of developing and updating skills.

The acquisition of key competences fits in with the principles of equality and equal access. This applies in particular to disadvantaged groups whose educational potential requires support, e.g. people with low basic skills, early school leavers, long-term unemployed, people with disabilities, migrants, etc.

These key competences are all interdependent, and the emphasis in each case is on critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision taking and constructive management of feelings.

In Germany the design of lifelong learning focuses on increasing permeability and integration between the educational sectors, expanding educational counseling, more effective integration through education, and the recognition of competences. Lifelong learning is also to be anchored in public awareness. The Federal Government regards lifelong learning as a key political and social challenge in Germany, which demands commitment from all social forces. Its realization is viewed as vital to ensuring equal opportunities for individuals and to social participation, economic success and the future of society. Since the school-leaving certificate forms the basis of every educational biography, every citizen should be enabled to achieve such a qualification, either on regular educational pathways, or in later stages of his or her life. Continuing education should remain attractive to people of any age and any life circumstances, enabling them to maintain and develop their knowledge and skills and to participate fully in society.

In their spheres of competence the Federation and the Länder (federal provinces) are implementing, within the framework of the lifelong learning concept, measures in the following areas:

- improving educational opportunities for children under six years of age
- improving the training situation
- helping disadvantaged young people to integrate into the labor market
- facilitating transition from school to higher education and access to higher education without the A level/high school diploma (*Abitur*) for vocationally qualified applicants
- making learning paths more flexible
- admitting up to 327.000 extra first-year students until 2015
- increasing interest in mathematics and the natural sciences
- improving opportunities for women
- improving opportunities for people with a migrant background
- taking account of the interests of people with disabilities in participating in LLL

By 2015, participation in formal continuing education is to be increased from 43% to 50% while participation in continuing education by the low-skilled is to be raised from 28% to at least 40%. It is therefore important to further strengthen the motivation for lifelong learning still and thereby initiate educational activities, facilitate access to continuing education, improve continuing education courses, increase the permeability and integration between the educational sectors and consolidate knowledge of and insight into the processes and effects of lifelong learning.

There are now in Germany many possibilities, courses and programmes in the area of adult education and second chance education. They form a link between compulsory schooling, tertiary education and the labour market. Adult education is able to connect different learning destinations and to take young adults where they want to go in life. Thus it overcomes the limits of the

conventional structure of education including the divide between the levels of a fixed step-after-step way of learning. Many of those who profit from adult education offers are persons who have been excluded from other learning context, such as migrants, women facing social barriers, and participants with learning disabilities. Adult education comprehends formal, non-formal and informal lifelong learning. It is the tool for the individual realization of positive chances of life and work, so the measurable outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The courses give new chance to those who broke off their conventional career in the compulsory school system before examinations and help them to re-enter formal education paths by providing the experience of learning within a group of quite different biographies. The curricula helps future school leavers retain as broad range of study as they wish, whilst ensuring that the combination interests them and helps them to secure their place at employment. The courses free the young adults from their frustrating status quo and accompany them to new, clearly formulated aims.

As a learning to learn concept most of the second chance courses in Germany today offer the participants an awareness of:

- How they prefer to learn and their learning strength
- How they can motivate themselves and have the self-confidence to succeed
- Things they should consider such as the importance of sleep, positive environment for learning and so on
- Some of the specific strategies they can use for example to improve their memory or make sense of complex information
- Some of the habits they should develop such a reflecting on their learning so as to improve next time.

Also teachers and adult educators who help individuals acquire new competencies play a key role in making lifelong learning a reality. Their professional skills and qualifications must be considered being of vital importance for the quality of learning that is taking place. As a matter of fact, teachers working in adult and continuing education as well as especially teachers related to vocational education and training in Germany come from very diverse backgrounds. They possess very different formal qualifications and professional experience from various fields. Only a part of them has actually undergone specific training in the subject of adult learning and teaching. There is, thus, no widely shared common understanding of the competencies which are needed by this professional group. This has also to do with the fact that the field itself is very heterogeneous and much more diverse than school education in terms of, e.g. learners and target groups, training contents, aims and objectives, institutional settings and training formats.

Moreover, the work of adult educators has become more complex and needs new and enhanced skills and competencies as intercultural skills or guidance skills etc. increasingly needed by the professionals. The term 'teacher' itself may seem inappropriate to refer to this professional group,

since it carries mainly connotations of a traditional classroom setting, whilst adult education and professionally adult learning take place in a variety of other contexts and settings. This may include work place learning or in social and cultural spaces or counseling and so on. Instead of ‘adult education teachers’ it might be more useful to speak about adult learning facilitators for referring to the entirety of professionals working in direct contact with adults in order to support and enhance learning processes of these participants.

Today also guidance and counseling becomes more and more importantly in the adult and continuing education in Germany, because the possibilities and educational options in professional life are getting as complex as they are in traditional formal education for young people. The only thing to help is education consultation, provided for free to everybody.

In addition, increasing immigration (from EU countries as well from third countries) is becoming a topical situation in Germany. As a rule, those who immigrate are lacking language skills and often have no (or very different from German standards) vocational and educational training. These are huge challenges for the Federal provinces (who are responsible for education), and for the municipalities with high immigrant rates, as well as for the entire society. But this also concerns the adult and continuing education sector which has outstanding experience in activities to help immigrants to integrate into German society and into the world of work, as well as in activities to foster tolerance and understanding for other cultures in the traditional German milieux.

Sources of information:

UNESCO Confintea VI National Report Germany, <http://www.unesco.org>

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF), 2008. Status of Recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Germany within the framework of the OECD activity "Recognition of non-formal and informal Learning

Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 08.12.2008, ‘Lifelong learning’, <http://www.bmbf.de/en/lebenslangeslernen.php>, accessed May 2011 Federal Ministry of Education and Research, ‘Staff and Organisation’ <http://www.bmbf.de/en/5625.php>, accessed May 2011

Katholische Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft für Erwachsenenbildung, ‘Wer wir sind’, <http://www.kbe-bonn.de/kbe-selbstdarstellun.html>

DEAE, ‘Profil’, <http://www.deae.de>

dvv international, ‘About’, http://www.iizdv.de/de/index.php?article_id=116&clang=1 DIE, <http://www.die-bonn.de/portrait/english/index.htm>

Agentur für Erwachsenen- und Weiterbildung, <http://www.aewb-nds.de/cms/>

German Institute for Adult Education (DIE), ‘Short-Facts’ http://www.die-bonn.de/international/short_facts.htm

Arnold, R./Nolda, S./Nuissl, E. (2010): Wörterbuch Erwachsenenbildung. URL: www.wb-erwachsenenbildung.de 4

Nuissl, E./Brandt, P. (2009): Porträt Weiterbildung Deutschland. Bielefeld, 91 Seiten, ISBN: 978-3-7639-1970-3

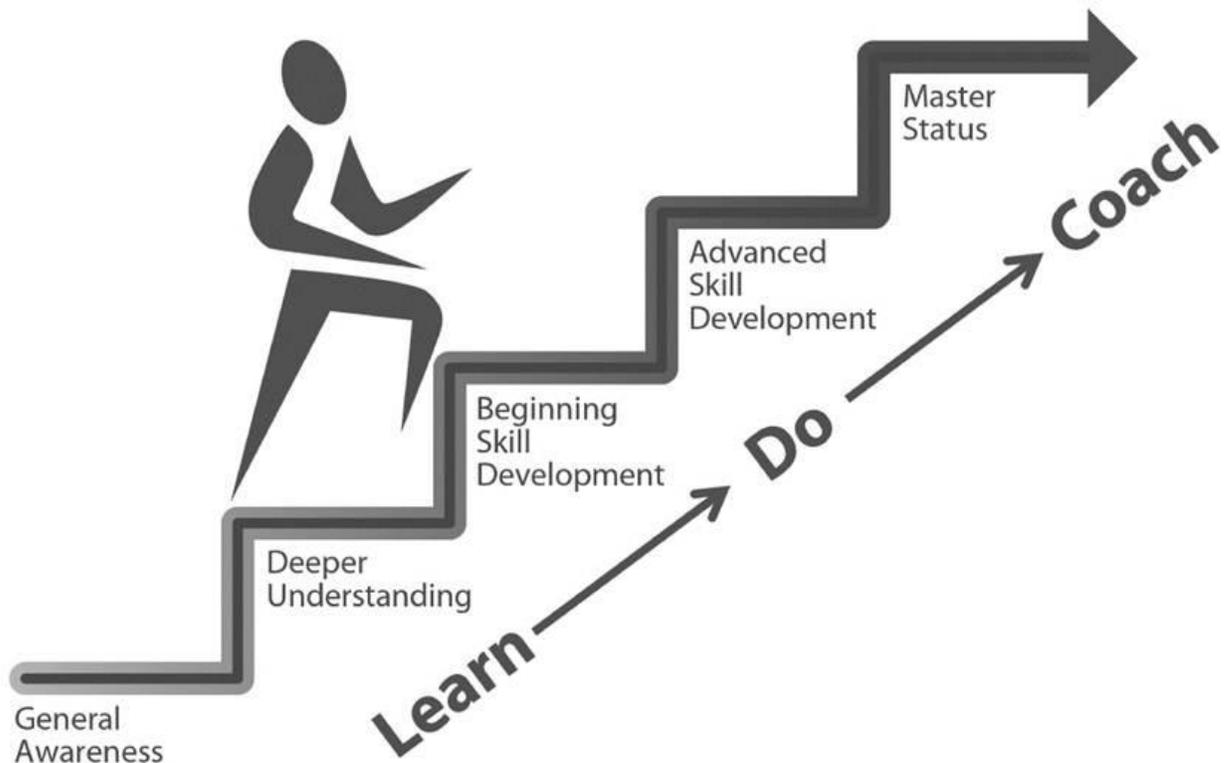
Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung (2010): Trends der Weiterbildung. DIE-Trendanalyse 2010. Bielefeld, 183 Seiten, ISBN 978-3-7639-4242-8

Relevant links

- Euridyce: Structures of Education and Training Systems in Europe
- EAEA Country presentation: Germany
- Country overview: German Institute for Adult Education - Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning (2004)

General country information

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany> (Wikipedia country information)
- <http://destatis.de> (statistical information)



ITALY

Compiled and edited by Fernanda Spina, Italy (ARACNE associazione di promozione sociale)

About Italy

Italy is divided into 20 regions, 5 of which have a particular level of autonomy. Regions are autonomous entities with their own statutes, powers and functions in accordance with the principles laid down by the Constitution (Article 117).

Italy has been a democratic Republic since 1948 and has 20 Regions, 107 Provinces and 8 100 local authorities. Under the on-going Constitutional reform the total number of the Provinces is to be reduced with a view to saving costs. The Italian economy, after a slight recovery in 2010, entered into a new recession in the second half of 2011.

About population and demographics: according to EUROSTAT, the Italian population was over 60 million in 2011 (i.e. a 0.32% increase compared to 2010). This population increase was mainly due to the migratory flows which have occurred in the last few years and which counterbalanced to some extent the drop in the birth rate and population aging.

About economy and labour market indicators: under the negative impact of the economic crisis, the average number of employees in Italy has dropped to 22.9 million and the employment rate to 56.9%

(2011). In particular, in 2011 the employment rate was 56.9%, the unemployment rate 8.4% (unchanged since the previous year) and the activity rate had fallen from 63% in 2008 to 62.2%. Although the unemployment rate was still lower than the European Union average (9.7%), concerns arose about the gap between the North and the South of the country, as well as about groups such as women, young people and migrants. The unemployment rate in the South was on average 13.6% in 2011 vs. the national average of 8.4%; female unemployment rate was 16.2% and 44.6% of young women (15-24) in the South of Italy were unemployed (the national average was 32.0%).

About education rate: in Italy the share of people aged 25-64 that have acquired at least a secondary education diploma is about 17.5 percentage points lower than the EU27 average (56% in Italy and 73.4% in the EU27).

Regarding EdA supply and demand (delivered by schools and the CTP), the latest available data (2007/08) from reports (carried out by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the National Agency for School Autonomy Development) demonstrate a growth in the number of training courses carried out. However, adult participation is still low and most of those registered are young adults (up to age 29) and those with higher level diplomas.

Regarding adult training (formal and non-formal) more generally, the ISFOL-Doxa 2005 report revealed an increase in interest to participate in training courses: this is mainly from employed people (58%) and those with a higher level of education.

According to ISTAT (National Statistics Institute) data, participation in training courses in 2007 for the target group of 25-64 years was 6.2% of the total population (the goal was set at 12.5% and the EU-27 average was 9.6%). This data places Italy in 17th position in Europe for LLL participation.

As regards the causes for low participation, some research refers in particular to the shortage of training and guidance, to the logistical characteristics of the organisation and the type of training offered (unsuitable times, excessive cost, lack of decentralised venues, etc.) as well as psychosocial factors (lack of motivation, limited training culture, lack of awareness and low self-esteem).

Legislation on Education system and VET

The legal framework for education is rooted in a number of articles of the Italian Constitution¹⁵. In which are under lighted the freedom of education; the state's obligation to provide a network of educational institutions of every type and level; the rights of universities, academies and higher cultural institutions to create their own independent guidelines.

The structure of the Italian school system, in particular with regard to secondary education, remained for a long time defined during the Fascism by the Gentile reform in 1923.

The Act n 264 of 1949, which will remain, until the seventies, the main legal instrument of the system of vocational training, regulates for the first time the matter of training and professional assigned it to the Ministry of Labor. This Act is addressed to adults (for the most part), providing

15 Article 34 of the Constitution stipulates that "The lower education, given for at least eight years, is compulsory and free. The capable and deserving students without means, have the right to attain the highest levels of education".

both for the retraining of unemployed workers, both to the workforce already employed (Maximum age of 45 years old). The organization of vocational training courses is assigned to corporations, institutions, associations, training centers of various nature and cultural matrix.

Further changes were made to the Law of 16 June 1977, no 348. The first national program for High Schools only were approved in 1963, new programs were introduced in 1979 and then, after some further changes introduced by Law 348/1977, as part of school policies aimed at ensuring the educational success.

Since 1998, many of the MIUR¹⁶'s responsibilities regarding non-university education have been delegated to regional and local authorities. Since 1999 a number of important reforms have taken place, particularly in higher education. The binary system was introduced, with the three degrees of university education on one side, and post-secondary professional education on the other. Another reform was the introduction of a credit system, adapted to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and with the aim of making the individual curricula more flexible and facilitating the continuity of education programmes. A third innovation was the introduction of a quality assurance system with an evaluation unit at every university.

In 2000, the Ministerial Decree no. 234 has acknowledged the experimentation of the school year 1999-2000. Since the entry into force of the 'autonomy', then, schools can be activated, in agreement with the regional and institutional actors in the context of Legislative Decree no. 112/1998, new training.

The Law of 28 March 2003, n. 53, reform ed the entire educational system that is divided into kindergarten, in a first round including primary school and lower secondary school degree, and a second cycle including the system of schools and the education system and vocational training.

The school reform law (53/2003) included among the principles and criteria that define the system of education and training, that of " life long learning". To realize this purpose the law provided a financial assistance program also to support "the development of interventions for Technical Education and Training (IFTTS) and for adult education".

Currently, the adult education system is undergoing reform. the Ministerial Decree of 25 October 2007 has given impetus to the reorganization, which provides for the establishment of the Provincial Centers for Adult Education. The system is still undergoing re-organisation and should reach its optimum operating level by school year 2011/12.

On June 12, 2009 the Council of Ministers, in first reading, approved the scheme of regulation laying down general rules for the restructuring of the organization of the educational centers for adult, including evening classes, in accordance with the provisions of the law of 6 August 2008 n.133.

In February 2010, the National Guidelines on Vocational Training were defined.

Currently there is a "draft decree by the President of the Republic governing the general rules for redefining the organisational educational structure of adult education centres, including night school". With modification to the text, the 7th Senate of the Republic Commission dated 20 October 2010 and the 7th Chamber of Deputies Commission dated 20 November 2010 have expressed their own favorable opinion.

16 the Law n. 168/1989 transformed the Ministry of the University (MURST) into the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR).

*In order to **develop the quality assurance system**, following Law 240/2010 and the creation of the National evaluation Agency (Anvur), the Ministry of Education, University and Research has issued decree No. 47/2013, which defines the procedures and indicators for the accreditation and evaluation of study programmes and universities.*

Learning to learn in the laws

Italy have strated to pun in Italian Law the key competence Learning to learn in the 2007 in *Indicazioni per il curricolo per la scuola del! 'infanzia e per il primo ciclo di istruzione* (DM 31 luglio 2007), nel *Regolamento dell'obbligo di istruzione* (DM 22 agosto139/07) e nelle *Linee guida sull'Obbligo di istruzione* (DM 27 dicembre 2007). With DM n. 9 del 27 gennaio 2010 by MIUR we have certification model for all key competencies.

Decreto 139, 22 august 2007, *Regolamento recante norme in materia d'adempimento dell'obbligo di istruzione*, in Allegato 2 *Competenze chiave di cittadinanza*

First comma say:

“The raising of compulsory education to ten years aims to encourage the full development of the person in the construction of the self, to correct and meaningful relationships with others and a positive interaction with the natural and social reality.

- ▲ Learning to learn: to organize their own learning, identifying, choosing and using various modes of information and training (formal, non-formal and informal), also depending on the time available, their strategies and their own method of study and work.
- ▲ ...”

Before these, the official documents did not refer explicitly to the skills/competencies of problem-solving or ‘learning to learn’, but curricula emphasis that schools encouraged always the development of critical faculties and the creativity of pupils.

Governmental Strategies

The law 53/8 March 2000, article 5 stipulates that employees in public and private employment, who have worked for five years with the firm can request suspension from work as educational leave.

Educational leave is geared towards the completion of compulsory education, the obtaining of a second grade degree, the laurea diploma (degree).

Article 6 of the same law states that workers, both employed and unemployed, have the right to follow vocational education courses throughout their life in order to enhance their knowledge and professional competencies. The State, regions and local entities ensure provision in this regard is in keeping with article 17 of law no. 196 enacted on 24 June 1997. Provision must be made for personalised learning pathways that are certified and credited in accordance with national and

European practices. The formation can be chosen either by the employee or else provided by the firm in accordance with regional or specific plans agreed with the social partners.

A reform of university education is being proposed by Minister Gelmini. The reform calls for cuts in the number of courses being offered by universities. It remains to be seen what effects this reform will have on the development of university continuing education.

About educational and career guidance, in line with one of the 2012¹⁷ and 2013¹⁸ CSRs, a national plan on guidance and dropout was published in 2011 following guidelines on guidance for lifelong learning issued in 2009. The plan, which has been further defined at regional level for full implementation, aims to shift current guidance services from an informative role into a proper career and guidance counselling function. It also provides for the activation of ‘local integrated services’, ensuring the appropriate reception, needs analysis and response to each individual case.

Future developments in monitoring systems are envisaged In Italy, the national plan for guidance and fighting early school leaving, which has been further defined at regional level, envisages the systematic collection of useful information, including non-completion date. However, it has not yet been fully implemented.

In Italy, to facilitate connections between labour supply and demand and to increase transparency in learning and the recognition of certifications, a legislative decree has established a national system for the certification of skills, including the identification and recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The recognition and validation of prior non-formal and informal learning goes hand in hand with moves towards establishing National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) based on learning outcomes.

In an effort to boost the labour market relevance of higher education qualifications, in Italy, the new higher technical institutes have been set up, together with the regions to respond to the skills demands of local economies, in particular in technological areas that correspond to the projects for industrial innovation in the plan 'Industry 2015'.

17 CSR 3: Take further action to address youth unemployment, including by improving the labour market relevance of education and facilitating transition to work, also through incentives for business start-ups and for hiring employees. Enforce nation-wide recognition of skills and qualifications to promote labour mobility. Take measures to reduce tertiary education dropout rates and fight early school leaving.

18 CSR 1: Pursue the structural adjustment at an appropriate pace and through growth-friendly fiscal consolidation so as to achieve and maintain the MTO as from 2014.

CSR 4: Ensure the effective implementation of the labour market and wage setting reforms to allow better alignment of wages to productivity. Take further action to foster labour market participation, especially of women and young people, for example through a Youth Guarantee. Strengthen vocational education and training, ensure more efficient public employment services and improve career and counselling services for tertiary students. Reduce financial disincentives for second earners to work and improve the provision of care, especially child and long-term care, and out-of-school services. Step up efforts to prevent early school leaving. Improve school quality and outcomes, also by enhancing teachers' professional development and diversifying career development. Ensure effectiveness of social transfers, notably through better targeting of benefits, especially for low-income household with children.

To increase work experiences opportunities and work placement the Italian Government in the 2011 signed an Action Plan on Cohesion, agreement with some southern regions, includes actions for the employ ability of young people.

The Action Plan on adult Learning describes the following five priorities

- ⤴ Analyse effects of reforms in other educational sectors on adult learning
- ⤴ Improve the quality of provision and staffing
- ⤴ Increase the possibilities to achieve a qualification at least one level higher
- ⤴ Speed up the process of assessing and recognising non-formal and informal learning for disadvantaged group
- ⤴ Improve the monitoring of the adult learning sector

Italian Qualifications Framework¹⁹

The Italian Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (QTI), first published in 2010, was developed as a tool describing the qualifications awarded by Italian Higher Education institutions, in terms of expected competences and learning outcomes. The QTI comprises the three Bologna cycles and is modelled on the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF for EHEA).

The actors involved in the governance of the Italian education and vocational training system are the following:

- ⤴ the Ministry of Education, University and Research responsible for the whole education sector, from pre-school up to higher education. The ministry is responsible for the criteria relating to the organization of the school system and its evaluation, tasks related to the determination and assignment of financial resources, and for the allocation of school staff.
- ⤴ National Agency for School Autonomy Development: Aims to support school autonomy and innovation at educational institutions (www.indire.it); the ANSAS is a research institute of the Ministry of Education;
- ⤴ National Institute for Assessing the Educational System of Instruction and Training (INVALSI): Carries out research and assessment of the overall quality of training offered by educational institutions and professional training courses, even in the context of continuing education. In particular, it manages the National Assessment System (www.invalsi.it); the INVALSI is a research institute of the Ministry of Education;
- ⤴ the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies that is responsible for setting the minimum public service performance levels (Livelli Essenziali delle prestazioni – LEP) for the vocational training system;
- ⤴ Institute for Workers' Professional Training Development (ISFOL): Carries out and promotes study activity, research, assessment, information, consultancy and technical assistance for

19 First Italian Report on the referencing of the national qualifications to the EQF is in June 2012; Law 53/2003 Delegating the Government to Establish General Regulations Regarding Education and the Minimum Service Performance Levels for Education and Vocational Training

- developing professional training, social policies and work (www.isfol.it); Isfol is a research Institute of the Ministry of Labour;
- ⤴ the Regions and Autonomous Provinces that are the administrations in charge of planning, organising and supplying VET;
 - ⤴ the social partners that contribute to designing and organising active labour policies and particularly VET policies.

The Educational System is based on compulsory education lasts 10 years (i.e. up to 16 years of age) and includes the whole first education cycle and the first two years of the second (either upper secondary schools or three/four-year vocational training courses).

ISCED levels are indicated as the courses do not lead to national qualifications.

- ⤴ scuola dell'infanzia (pre-primary school): not compulsory, lasts 3 years and is for children aged 3 to 6 (ISCED 0);
- ⤴ first cycle of education (8 years): includes scuola primaria (primary school – ISCED 1) that lasts 5 years and is attended by children aged 6 to 11 and scuola secondaria di I grado (lower secondary school – ISCED 2) that lasts 3 years and is attended by children aged 11 to 14. At the end of the third year pupils sit a state exam and if successful are awarded a lower secondary school diploma;
- ⤴ second cycle of education comprising two different pathways (ISCED 3):
 - upper secondary school: falls under the responsibility of the State, lasts 5 years and caters for students aged 14 to 19. This level of education is provided by lyceums, technical institutes and vocational institutes which have been recently reformed (2010). On completion of the 5-year path students sit an exam and if successful are awarded an upper secondary school diploma;
 - three and four year education and vocational training courses (percorsi triennali e quadriennali di Istruzione e Formazione professionale – IFP): organised by the Regions, they cater for students who have completed their first cycle of education. A vocational certificate is awarded on the completion of three-year vocational courses and a vocational diploma is awarded on the completion of four-year courses.
- ⤴ post-diploma/post-vocational qualification courses: regional courses (400-600 hours) generally co-financed by the European Social Fund. On completion, a regional vocational certificate commonly referred to as a ‘second level qualification’ is awarded. Although they are provided on the whole national territory, the professional profiles and skills that can be acquired through them vary depending on the specific employment and skills needs of the Regions;
- ⤴ post-secondary non-tertiary education comprising two different training paths (ISCED 4): higher technical education and training pathways (percorsi di Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore – IFTS) on the completion of which a higher technician certificate is awarded; courses provided by Higher Technical Institutes (ITS courses - Istituti Tecnici Superiori) on the completion of which a higher technician diploma is awarded.

- ⤴ higher education (ISCED 5 and 6) comprises academic and non-academic higher education courses (i.e. those provided by the Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale –AFAM -Higher Artistic and Musical Training). The higher education system is divided into State and non - State institutions which cater for students holding a secondary school diploma. Courses lead to 1st and 2nd cycle qualifications:
 - three-year courses lead to a laurea (degree, 1st cycle);
 - two-year courses lead to a laurea specialistica/magistrale (specialization degree, 2nd cycle). The second cycle also includes a Master universitario di primo livello (first-level university Master) lasting at least one year.
 - The 3rd cycle includes Research Doctorate courses, Specialization courses (Corsi di specializzazione) and Masters universitario di secondo livello (second-level master degrees). University and AFAM courses have a similar structure.

Universities are also very autonomous as regards management, finances and the manner in which education is provided.

There are three recently reformed types of apprenticeship (2011) in Italy:

- ⤴ Apprenticeships leading to a qualification and a professional diploma' (ISCED 3) that last three or four years, cater for 15-25 year old and lead to a certificate or a vocational diploma. This type of apprenticeship allows young people to complete compulsory education and to fulfil the right/duty to education and training; - 'Professional apprenticeships' that cater for 18-29 year old, cannot last more than 6 years and lead to a regional qualification;
- ⤴ 'Higher education and research apprenticeships' that cater for 18-29 year old, enable apprentices to obtain upper secondary school (ISCED 3), IFTS/ITS (ISCED 4) and university (ISCED 5-6) qualifications.

Providers of Adult Education

- ⤴ Provincial Centres for Adult Education (CPIA): Offer courses to obtain the elementary diploma and mid-level diploma, short and modular functional literacy courses (IT, literature, foreign languages, etc.) and courses for linguistic and social integration for foreigners.
- ⤴ Regional Professional Training Bodies: Offer professional training courses for workers, courses for functional literacy (IT, foreign languages), courses for linguistic and social integration for foreigners and non-formal education courses.
- ⤴ University: Apart from degree courses, they offer various types of adult training courses.
- ⤴ Italian Adult Education Union (UNIEDA): The sector's promotional body made up of associations, foundations, Public and Third Age Universities, and other bodies involved in lifelong learning www.unieda.it;
- ⤴ National Anti-Illiteracy Union: mainly across the regions of southern Italy- www.unla.it;
- ⤴ Public Technical and Professional Institutions
- ⤴ Companies: Training and refresher courses for workers (Continuing education – FC).
- ⤴ Associations and non-profit organisations
- ⤴ Training bodies
- ⤴ Third Age Universities

The current adult education system in Italy does not seem interested in a genuine lifelong learning strategy. It is totally absent from the Italian national legislative context, which is centred mainly around school instruction and is managed by the MIUR through Provincial Adult Education Centres (CPIA); Adult formal vocational training is not included in Italian Qualifications Framework because of the autonomy of Italian Regional Governments. In fact each Italian Region has its own vocational training courses coming from the Regional programmes linked to the European planning aimed at improving the social and economical development of the Region. Up to now the Regions have no shared framework aimed at acknowledging and recognizing vocational training certifications from a Region to another. Thus, in Italy we are living the paradox that it is easier that a vocational training certificate may be recognized and acknowledged in another EU country than in a different Italian Region. Anyway, the formal vocational training for adults in Italy is carried out training centres recognized by the Regional government where the centre is settled.

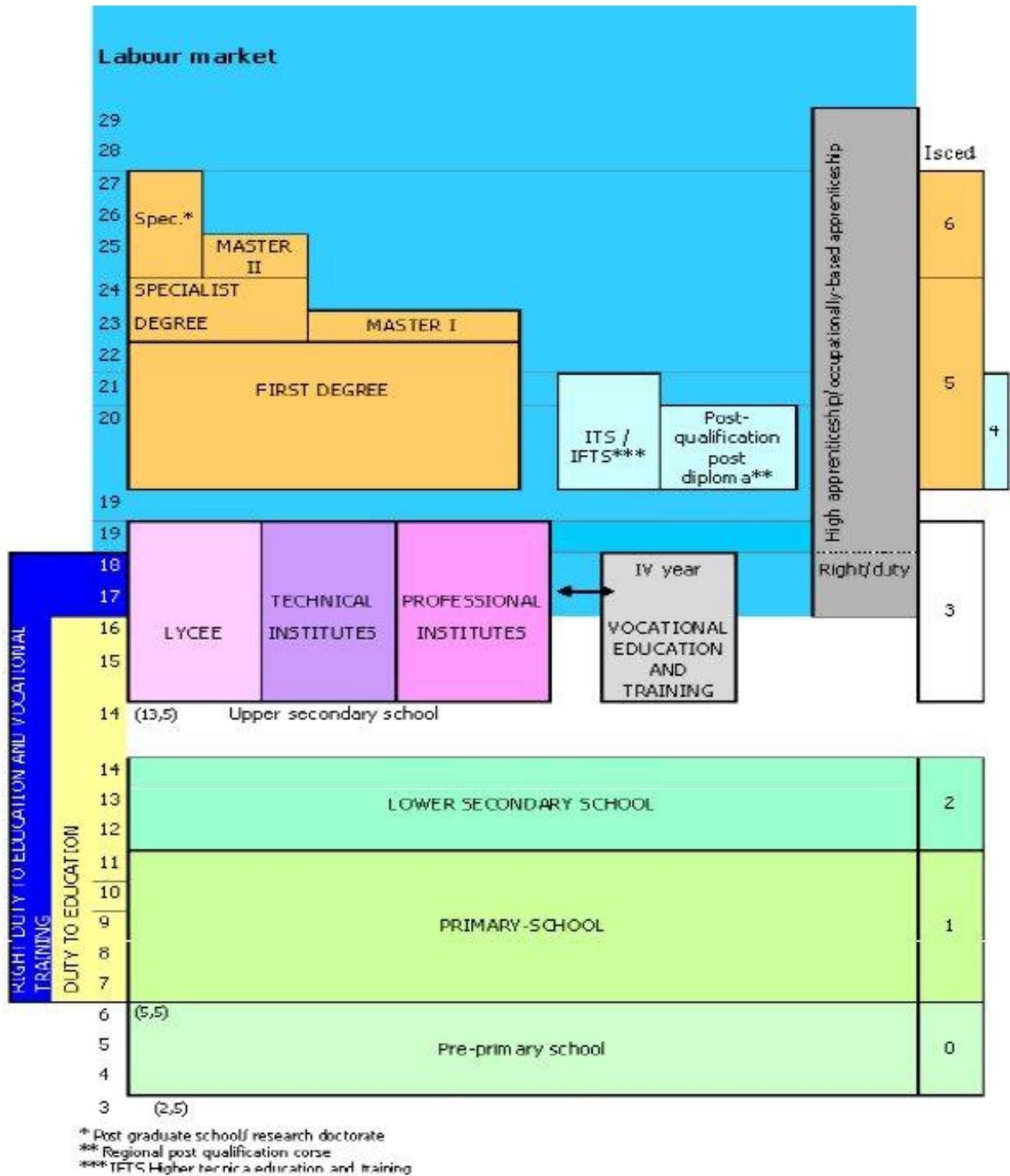


Table 1. Italian Educational System of Qualification²⁰

Conclusions

On the National level the level of awareness of importance of Key Competences and L2L competence in particular is still low in formal law and not enough cascades down into education system. Starting by recommendations provided by EU documents that Key Competences should be developed in all education levels the Italian Government started to change the educational system and improved legislation to encourage adult education and implementation of tool for evaluation, and certification of competencies. National indication for key competencies exist only for science, foreign languages and digital competence; there are large activities about mother tongue and mathematics, but not exist a systemic action about social and civic competencies or enterprise spirit.

The laws describe only deputy and right for people involved, organization and responsibility. About L2L there is only a simple definition and a form to certificate the level achieved.

In last few year many teachers, theoretical experts, politicians are debating in forum and some experimentation have been carried out, nevertheless National Qualifications Framework does not mention Key Competences and L2L competence, even whether the entire framework bases on the understanding that ability to learn is one of key competences for personal development and for needing to adapt constantly to the changing environment.

On other hand in Italy teachers and all people involved in lifelong learning process recognize importance of Key Competences in general and L2L competence in particular. The debate about learning to learn is close to the actual debate on the theoretical base of critical thinking (Problem-based learning is over the problem solving). If the teachers have a critical thinking they can guide their pupils toward it. It is true important to note that if is necessary to know the notions more important is to learn to do a questions, looking for answers, arrange an individual path to search resolution to achieve a personal goal. And it is possible through each tradition discipline. The *Guide line for secondary school (2012)* encourage the use of “laboratory approach” to the learning and some network of schools are testing a Critical Thinking Toolkit to help the teachers in this changing educational approach. So to improve the learning to learn competence.

Sources of information

About educational system, adult education and data:

1. Adult education in Italy- by Teresa La Marca, Bruno Schettini, In InfoNet-Correspondent - December 2010 URL: <http://www.infonet-ae.eu/en/adult-education-in-italy-1117>
2. European Commission with GHK in cooperation with Research voor Beleid, COUNTRY REPORT ON THE ACTION PLAN ON ADULT LEARNING: ITALY, (March 2011)
3. EURYDICE (2002), Key Competencies. A developing concept in general compulsory education, Eurydice European Unit, Brussels (Documento prelevabile dal sito web:

20 More information on the QTI can be found on - the website of the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research: www.istruzione.it/alfresco/d/d/workspace/SpacesStore/488f990c-b3a7-43cb-8fac-9f1bc8b37ccd/TitoliiItaliainglese.pdf
- the website of the Information Centre on Mobility and Equivalence (CIMEA): http://ehea.info/Uploads/qualificatiion/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

<<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/showPresentation?pubid=031 EN>>. Data di ultima consultazione: 28 novembre 2008).

4. EURYDICE(2007), Thesaurus europeo dei sistemi educativi, (Il documento è prelevabile dal seguente sito web: http://www.bdp.it/eurydice/contentindex.php?action=read_cnt&id_cnt=3474. Data di ultima consultazione: 28 novembre 2008)
5. Euridyce: Structures of Education and Training Systems in Europe – Italy
6. FREDRIK.SSONU., HOSKINSB. (2006), Learning to learn
7. Farinelli F. (2004), Lungo il corso della vita. L'educazione degli adulti dopo le 150 ore: opportunità e forme, Ediesse, Rome;
8. First Italian Report on the referencing of the national qualifications to the EQF, June 2012, <http://bw5.cilea.it/bw5ne2/opac.aspx?WEB=ISFL&IDS=18746> in ITA;
9. Florenzano F., Negarville M. (a cura di) (2009), Rapporto sull'apprendimento permanente in Italia 2009, Edup, Rome;
10. ISFOL, ReferNet Italy - *VET in Europe – Country report: Italy*, 2012

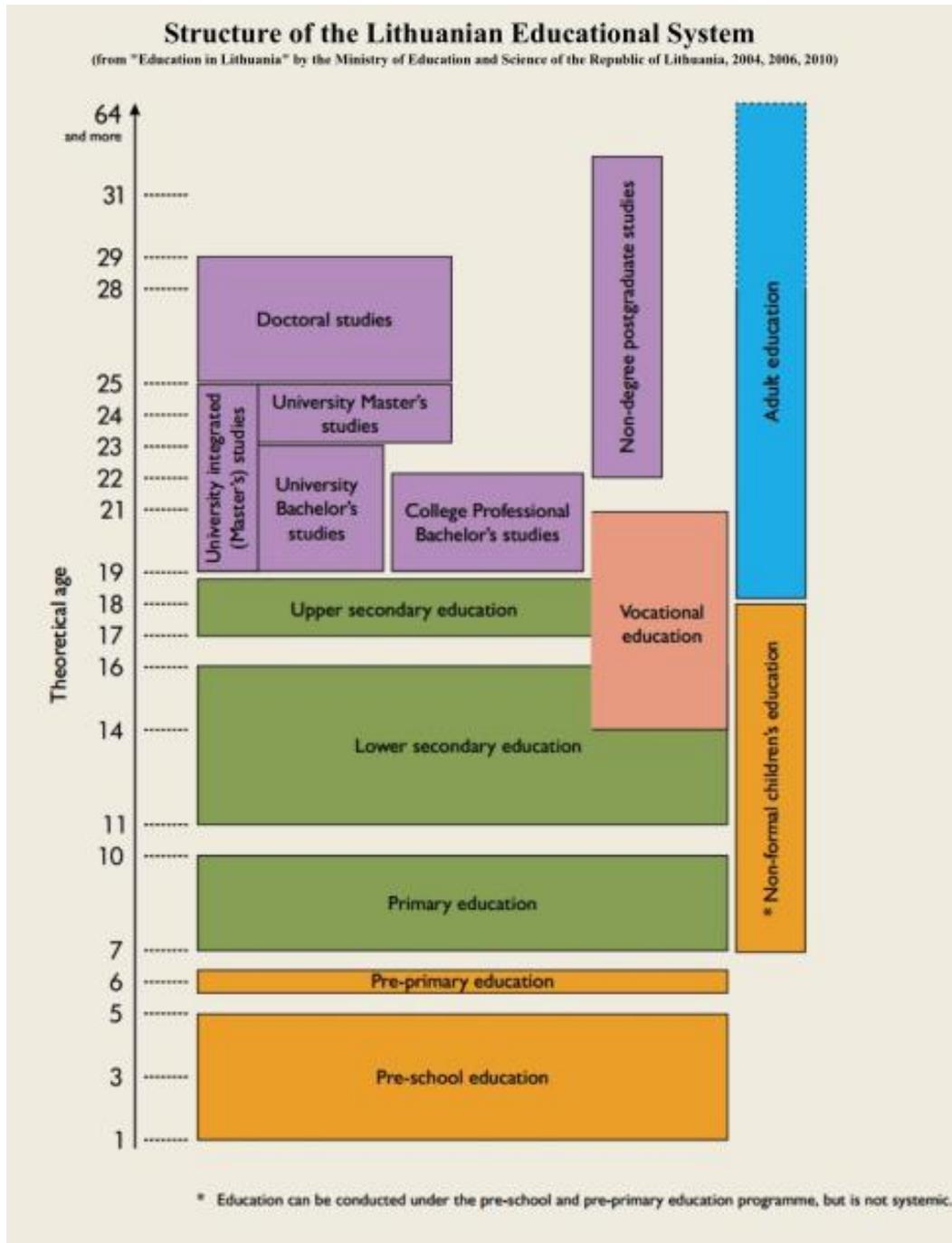
About L2L in Italy:

11. ANNALI della pubblica istruzione, Rivista bimestrale del Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca - 3/4 2012, Metodo di studio e capacità critica
12. ATTI DEL VI CONGRESSO SCIENTIFICO DELLA SIRD **Le nuove sfide della ricerca didattica tra saperi, comunità sociali e culture**, Roma 11, 12, 13 Dicembre 2008 , M. Marcuccio
13. Cornoldi C., De Beni R. Gruppo MT, 1998, <<Imparare a studiare>> Ed. Erickson, Trento.
14. Schettini B. (2010), L'apprendimento degli adulti tra educazione e istruzione, Scriptaweb, Naples;
15. Schettini B. (2009), Governare il lifelong learning. Prospettive di Educazione degli adulti, ESI, Naples. Verso una nazione che pensa criticamente a cura della Direzione Generale per gli Ordini scolastici e per l'Autonomia scolastica, Le Monnier -2012 <http://www.annaliistruzione.it/issues/2012/SFOGLIALIBRO%203-4/index.html#/2/zoomed>

LITHUANIA

Compiled and edited by Arūnas Bėkšta, Lithuania (Lietuvos suaugusiųjų švietimo asociacija)

The educational system in Lithuania



Explanation of the Lithuanian educational system²¹

1. Pre-school

The pre-school program is on offer for children aged from 5 to 6 at nursery schools, school nursery schools and primary schools, is conducted by qualified teaching staff and is voluntary.
2. Primary and lower secondary school

School begins at the age of 6 - 7, ten class system for primary and lower secondary education. The 4-year primary school is followed by 6 years of basic education. If a pupil is successful in the final examination, this concludes with a basic education certificate (the equivalent of the intermediate school leaving certificate in Germany).
3. Upper secondary education

After completion of basic education, a two-year course of upper secondary education may be embarked upon.

It is also possible to transfer to an upper secondary school upon completion of class 8, this school then continuing until class 12. In classes 11 and 12, pupils are permitted to select subjects in a targeted way in accordance with their personal interests and strengths.
4. Vocational education and training

Vocational education and training can be completed in vocational schools by young people from the age of 14. The training comprises the imparting of both theoretical and practical knowledge. Four types of training programme are differentiated.

Type 1 For young people from the age of 14 who have not gained a basic education leaving certificate which forms the basis of vocational education and training. This framework also affords the opportunity of gaining the lower secondary school leaving certificate.

Type 2 3-year vocational education and training for those who have gained the basic education leaving certificate. They acquire a VET qualification (skilled worker status).

Type 3 For those who have passed the upper secondary school leaving certificate, 1 to 2 years of vocational training

Type 4 For those who have passed the upper secondary school leaving

²¹ http://www.sdcentras.lt/credo/res/Lithuania_esystem.pdf

certificate, 3 to 4 year course of training comprising higher education and occupational qualification. Some modules correspond to Bachelor level, and credit for these may be transferred to a later course of higher education study.

Vocational education and training, however, is not very popular with young Lithuanians, since it provides only limited knowledge, which is no longer sufficient on the current labor market in the form is imparted. Many young people wish to obtain more knowledge about work within the private sector or about self-employment.

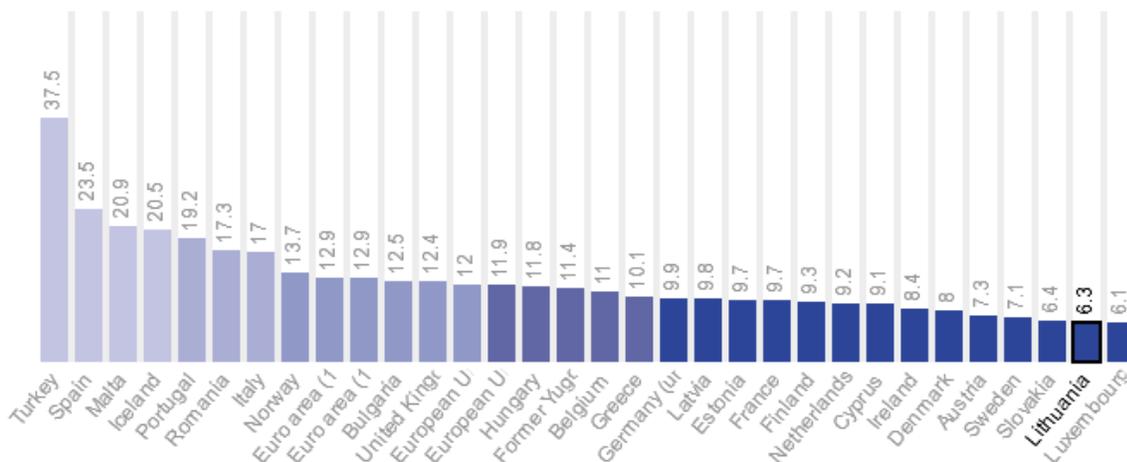
5. Higher education

Lithuania has academic (universities) and non-academic institutes of higher education (colleges). Students gain entry via selection procedures, which mostly involve consideration being accorded to marks obtained in the upper secondary school leaving certificate. Higher education is based on the European credit system. The duration of the course of study leading to the acquisition of a Bachelor degree (basic higher education study) is 4 years. This can be followed by a one or two year vocational qualification diploma, such as a teaching qualification or a Masters degree which in turn can be followed by a doctorate.

Early leavers from education and training

On 18 January 2008, the School Improvement Programme Plus was launched. One of the goals for programme implementation is to develop educational services, their quality and availability by facilitating the improvement of assistance provided by the education system to general education, vocational education and training and higher education through upgrading the infrastructure of general education and developing the system of assistance to the pupil. The share of population aged 18-24 with basic education not taking up further education is projected at 9.0 percent in 2013 (compared with 9.2 percent in 2005). Lithuania has one of the lowest levels of early leavers from education and training.

Picture 1. Early leavers from education and training²²



In November 2006, a Strategy for the Development, Implementation, Assessment and Renewal of the Content of General Education for 2006-2012 was adopted. The Strategy provides for the upgrade of the curriculum on the basis of the development of key competences. Following the Strategy, general education content has been undergoing revision: Programs of Primary and Lower Secondary Education have been developed and approved. The new content of general education is targeted at developing the key competences of the knowledge society. The revision of the content of general education programs is geared to the differentiation and individualization of learning with the main focus on learning outcomes and the relationship between the educational content and life. The Strategy also sets out the principles of management of the education content and provides for the municipalities to take decisions on the adjustment of the state level education content to the demands of the local communities, for schools to adapt the education content to the needs of the pupils and the school community, and for teachers to decide on adjusting the education content to the needs of the class and individual pupils. The Strategy does not provide for decentralization of the general education content, rather it defines more precisely the principle of the interpretation and adaptation of the education content, and the rights of the education providers to do so.

Students with special requirements

In educational system as well as in the labour market Lithuanian government is following integration policy. There are some schools in Lithuania organised specially for students with special needs. If needed, general education programmes can be adapted taking into account pupil's special education needs. Free assistance of special pedagogues, speech therapists, psychologists, and other specialists can be provided to pupils in schools as well as to parents and teachers in other institutions. A child's

²²

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/europe_2020_indicators/headline_indicators/statistical_dashboards/education/early_leavers

need for special education is determined by a municipal pedagogical psychological unit or by a school special education commission.

Strategies

The National Education Strategy 2003–2012

The National Education Strategy 2003–2012, approved by the Parliament of Lithuania, Resolution No. IX-1700 of 4 July 2003. These are important parts of the strategy in the context of Key Competences and Learning to Learn.

In the light of the challenges faced by society today, as well as taking into account that knowledge society, secure society and competitive economy are defined as priorities in the Long-Term Development Strategy of the State; the mission of education is as follows:

- 1) to help an individual to understand the contemporary world, to acquire cultural and social competences and to become an independent, active and responsible person who is willing and able to learn and create a life of his own and life of society;
- 2) to help an individual to acquire a vocational qualification corresponding to the level of modern technologies, culture and personal skills, and to create conditions enabling life-long learning, which encompasses continuous satisfaction of cognitive needs, seeking to acquire new competences and qualifications that are necessary for the professional career and meaningful life;
- 3) to ensure balanced and knowledge-based development of the economy, environment and culture of this country, domestic and international competitiveness of the economy, national security and evolution of the democratic society, thus strengthening the creative powers of the society;
- 4) to guarantee continuity of culture nourished by the nation and the country, continuous process of creation, protection of identity, as well as to foster the open and dialogic nature of the culture.

To ensure the quality of education development the contents of education shall be updated and related to new competencies of an individual:

*The Strategy stresses that “the contents of education is related to the provision of values, general skills and competencies that are necessary for the life of an individual and society; targeted development of the main literacy skills, social, cultural and communication competences, critical thinking, problems solving skills and **ability to learn**”.*

Taking into consideration the abovementioned facts it is clear that the role of teachers and lecturers should change, therefore the Strategy points to the new developments in the training and work of teachers:

An integral teacher training and qualification upgrading system shall be developed; it should be oriented towards the changing role of a teacher in knowledge society, and the new competences and

values that are necessary for a contemporary teacher. Knowledge society will change the role of a teacher: the holder of knowledge will be replaced by the organizer of the learning process, creator of learning opportunities, learning adviser, partner, mediator between the learner and different modern sources of information. At the same time a teacher in the present day society should remain an educator, a witness of the facts of life, a conveyor and creative developer of traditions;

The Strategy recognizes importance of Key Competences and ability to learn in particular.

The National Education strategy 2013-2022

Goals of the Strategy:

1. To achieve such level of the education communities that most of them are comprised of reflecting, constantly self-perfecting and high-scoring working professional teachers and lecturers.
2. To introduce the education quality culture, based on data analysis and self-evaluation, which ensures harmony of self- management, social partnership and leadership of management.
3. To ensure the accessibility of education and equal opportunities by developing coverage of education for children and youth, providing most favorable opportunities for opening individual abilities and satisfying special learning needs. To provide effective pedagogical and psychological support for pupils with learning difficulties.
4. To guarantee the effectiveness of education system, to develop the system of incentives and conditions for equal opportunities for lifelong learning, based on effective support in recognizing self and for choosing the path in work world. Coordinate individual choice with state planning.

Until now, we could not turn the education process to and organize social partners and communities for development of Key Competences. More often, we face lack of motivation to learn. Society confidence in education system is not low, but it also imposes high expectations – society requires that schools together with parents will develop creative people, persons, knowing state history and history and culture of the neighbors, willing to seek new knowledge and improve, being able to take responsibility for themselves and for the country. Those objectives are more than ever connected with exceptional requirements for teachers and lecturers. Their personal traits, motivation, creativity and willingness for constant improvement, ability to absorb the best practice is the main guaranty of success of education. Therefore, it is important to find the incentives and conditions for creation of communities of creative and professional teachers and lecturers, to develop leadership of education institutions.

The society knows too little about new objectives of education, about competences it is developing, about new official educational documents because it is not involved into their development. Prevailing opinion is that necessary competences, especially connected with creativity, with technological practical applications of knowledge, communication, entrepreneurship, self-discipline

and others, cannot be developed because there are no instruments of measurement and recognition of those competences.

Unemployment and emigration challenge education for quicker reactions to the changes of labor market, to help people to orient themselves faster, to recognize their strengths and to apply them for finding new job, being able self-manage the carrier, to choose more prospective directions of carrier, independently to create businesses and work places for themselves. Education should open and offer new learning possibilities, helping people to improve their abilities based on qualifications and constant improvement of self, acquiring self-confidence, responsibility for self and for society, state and environment.

Strategy of Securing Lifelong Learning

Strategy was approved by Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania and Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania on October 15, 2008.

In the section describing the situation of LLL in Lithuania, the strategy recognizes the importance of key competencies:

11.2. Non- formal education is closely related with development of key competences. The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 (2006/962/EB) on key competences for lifelong learning formulates the eight key competences, which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment. The Reference Framework sets out eight key competences: 1) Communication in the mother tongue; 2) Communication in foreign languages; 3) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; 4) Digital competence; **5) Learning to learn;** 6) Social and civic competences; 7) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and 8) Cultural awareness and expression.

In the section of objectives the Strategy points:

4. To improve the quality of life of population and its integration into contemporary society, to develop evenly in all the country vocational education and training and non-formal adult education in all types of adult education and cultural institutions.

4.1. Develop and implement learning programs and modules designed for development of **key competences**, citizenship, sports activities, healthy lifestyle, management of career and other competences, necessary for everyday life.

Legislation

Law on Education

The Law on Education was last amended on 15 October 2013 – No XII-553. Here we provide some articles related with our subject.

Article 3. Goals of education

The goals of education shall be as follows:

1) to develop a person's values enabling him to become an honest, knowledge-seeking, independent, responsible and patriotically-minded human being; to cultivate the communication skills important in modern life; to assist in internalizing the information culture characteristic of the knowledge society, by providing for command of the state language, foreign languages and the native language, information literacy as well as modern social competence and the skills to shape one's own life independently and to live a healthy lifestyle;

2) to identify a person's creative abilities and upon this basis to help him acquire competences and/or a qualification conforming to contemporary culture and technology and assisting him to get established and successfully compete in the shifting labor market; to convey the basics of technological, economic and business culture necessary to ensure the progress, competitiveness and sustainable development of the country's economy; to create conditions for continually satisfying cognitive needs as well as improving oneself through life-long education;

3) to reinforce the capability of society to ensure sustainable development of the country's economic, environmental and human resources, internal and external economic competitiveness, national security and the advancement of a democratic state;

4) to convey to a person the basics of national and ethnic culture, the traditions and values of the humanistic culture of Europe and of the world, to foster the maturation of a person's national identity, moral, aesthetic and scientific culture as well as personal outlook; to guarantee the continuity of ethnic and national culture, the preservation of its identity and continuous renewal of its values; to promote the country's openness and inclination for dialogue;

5) to ensure conditions enabling a person to acquire the basics of civic and political culture that embody democratic traditions, and to develop the abilities and experience needed by a person as a competent a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania, a member of the European and global community as well as of a multi-cultural society.

Interestingly, the Law mentions all Key Competences with the exception of L2L or Ability to Learn.

The Law on Higher Education and Research

The Law on Higher Education and Research was last amended on 24 April 2012 – No XI-1987.

The mission of higher education and research is to help ensure the country's public, cultural and economic prosperity, provide support and impetus for a full life of every citizen of the Republic of Lithuania, and satisfy the natural thirst for knowledge. The Lithuanian policy on higher education and research guarantees the quality of higher education and research, equal access to higher education for all citizens and favorable conditions for the best of them to conduct their research, and to seek academic and creative development; the said policy ensures that the system of higher education and research satisfies the needs of society and the economy, supports its openness and integration into the international area of higher education and research. A cohesive system of higher education and research is the foundation for the development of the knowledge society, the strengthening of the knowledge-based economy and the sustainable development of the country, a dynamic and competitive life of the national economy, and social and economic well-being; such a system cultivates a creative, educated, dignified, morally responsible, public-spirited, independent and entrepreneurial personality, fosters the civilizational identity of Lithuania, supports, develops and creates national and global cultural traditions.

The Law on Higher Education says nothing about development of key competences in general and of L2L competence in particular neither of the staff of Universities, nor of the students.

Law on Vocational Education

Law on Vocational Education last amended on 22 June 2011 – No XI-1498.

Article 3. Purposes of the Vocational Education System

The purposes of the vocational education system shall be as follows:

- 1) to help a person to acquire a qualification and competences which correspond to the current level of science, technology, economics and culture, help him to secure his position and compete in a shifting labor market, guarantee the progress of the national economy, competitiveness in the international market and sustainable development;
- 2) to create conditions for persons with various needs and abilities for life-long learning, upgrading qualification and requalification;
- 3) to ensure accessibility and quality of vocational education;
- 4) to ensure that qualifications meet the needs of the national economy, to guarantee the objectivity of competence assessment, qualification award and recognition;
- 5) to ensure the effective functioning of a system of vocational guidance.

The Law on Vocational Education says nothing about development of key competences in general and of L2L competence in particular neither of the staff, nor of the students.

Law on Non-formal Adult Education

The Law on non-formal adult education was last amended on 13 April 2010 – No XI-751.

Article 3. Goals of Non-formal Adult Education

The main goals of non-formal adult education shall be:

- 1) To help an individual to satisfy his (her) needs of informal learning and to develop his cultural interests;
- 2) To develop an individual's creative capacities and abilities;
- 3) To help an individual to become an active citizen of a democratic society;
- 4) To create conditions for acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills needed for an individual's professional activities and for developing qualifications.

Article 4. Directions of Non-formal Adult Education

Non-formal adult education includes:

- 1) Fostering of an individual's general culture
- 2) Acquisition and upgrading of knowledge and skills needed for an individual's professional activities.

The Law on non-formal adult education recognizes just few of key competences and says nothing about L2L competence.

Lithuanian Qualifications Framework

National qualifications framework (NQF) was approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Resolution No. 535 of 4 May 2010.

The Lithuanian Qualifications Framework corresponds to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (2008/C111/01) and 8 qualifications framework levels set out in it. Qualifications described in this Description are attributed to qualification levels set in this description, which define functional, cognitive and general competences necessary to perform the activity of similar complexity, autonomy and changeability.

Table 1. Learning competences as described in Lithuanian Qualifications Framework:

Qualification level	Learning competences
I	Capability to apply knowledge corresponding to the basic general education in the accomplishment of activity.
II	Capability to apply basic professional knowledge characteristic of activity pursued.
III	Capability to apply professional knowledge characteristic of activity pursued. Environment of activity may require a skill to adapt to simple changes at the site of work.
IV	Capability to apply factual and theoretical professional knowledge characteristic of the broad context related with the field of activity Environment of activity may require a skill to adapt to changes at the site of work, which are conditioned by the change of technologies and work organization.
V	Activity requires to match exhaustive knowledge of the activity field with general knowledge while resolving different specialized activity tasks in several different activity areas. Technological and organizational requirements of activity and its environment constantly change; changes are often unpredictable and may be related with new activity fields.
VI	Activity performance requires application of broad theoretical knowledge, which is based on results of new fundamental and applied research or is necessary for the implementation of different innovations. Environment of activity requires a skill to adapt to constant and usually unpredictable changes, which are conditioned by the progress of knowledge and technologies in specific professional activity. Qualification allows improvement and broadening of knowledge in a professional field, learn independently on evaluating one's own activity (develop cognitive competences), as this is required by changeability of professional activity.
VII	Accomplishment of activity requires evaluation and adaptation of latest expert knowledge in the fields of professional activity and fields close or relative to it, finding of new facts while carrying out applied research in professional activity and creative application of theoretical knowledge and results of scientific research. Qualifications of this level embrace skills to independently accomplish research of applied character, provide consultations in the area of activity, coordinate projects oriented towards the improvement of other person's qualification and implementation of innovations, analyze activity results and present them. Due to the organization of knowledge, technologies and work in different activity areas, activity of this level and its environment intensively change, changes are difficult to predict, activity consists of constantly changing task sets. Therefore, activity change requires a skill to take innovative solutions based on research results, assess alternative versions of the solution and potential social and ethical activity consequences.
VIII	Activity requires discovery of new knowledge in the fields of activity, building on the results of pursued fundamental and applied scientific research by integrating knowledge of different fields of activity. Activity is characterized by activity tasks of strategic character, which can embrace different activity fields or subjects of scientific research. Therefore, skills are needed to take strategic decisions of public importance, plan independently and carry out fundamental and / or applied research, transfer latest knowledge (disseminate experience) for specialists of a respective field, coordinate projects of scientific and applied research. Intensive and unpredicted changes of activity and its environment require readiness for constant changes, openness for novelties, positive approach to the development of the organization and society, skills to resolve creatively problems on assessment of their context, skills to initiate and create changes in different fields of activity and public life.

*The description of qualifications does not specifically mention the L2L competence. However, in fact the entire framework bases on the understanding that **ability to learn is one of key competences for personal development**. Ability to learn is necessary for moving through the levels of qualifications but also within the single level to be able to adapt to the changing environment.*

General programs of secondary education

General Program of Secondary Education were approved by the Minister of Education and Science on February 21, 2011 (Order Nr. V-269).

The Annex 10 of the General Programs of Secondary Education is devoted to development of Key Competences.

3. General programs of development of key competences is assigned to: all teachers, who teach pupils of 11- 12 classes; developers of teaching and learning materials; lecturers of higher education institutions; managers who organize and co-ordinate teaching and learning in schools.

4. Development of key competences should be integrated into the content of all other subjects; it should become part of the life of the school; it should be reflected both in school and after-school activities.

Part II describes the goals of development of key competences

6. The goal of educational area – to help pupils to develop competences, necessary for life in knowledge society: learning to learn, communication, cognition, social- civic, initiative and creativity, personal and cultural. It should enrich the content of education with actual for pupils and for the society assignments and activities.

7. Objectives of development of competences:

7.1. Objective of development of **learn to learn competence**: to develop the person who is responsible for his/her learning, able to regulate the learning processes, mastering basic learning abilities and being able to

7.2. Objective of development of **communication competence**: to develop the person, who is able communicate and co-operate in different communication situations.

7.3. Objective of development of **cognition competence**: to develop the critically thinking person, able to solve problems and analyze the reality.

7.4. Objective of development of **social- civic competence**: to develop responsible, honest, active, person, basing his/her actions on democratic values and loving his homeland.

7.5. Objective of development of **initiative and creativity competence**: to develop the person, not afraid of taking risks, persistent, valuing authenticity, being able effectively implement ideas, responsible creator and innovator.

7.6. Objective of development of **personal competence**: to develop positively thinking, honest person, able to overcome difficulties and responsibly creating his/her future.

7.7. Objective of development of **cultural competence**: to develop conscious conservator of culture and active and creative participant of culture processes.

Part III of the Annex provides recommendations for implementations of key competences and Part IV instructs about measurement of achievements of pupils.

*However, the implementation of this general program is probably the most complicated. National Education Strategy 2013- 2022 recognizes that “**up till now we could not turn the education process to and organize social partners and communities for development of Key Competences. More often we face lack of motivation to learn**”.*

Conclusions

1. Available strategies recognize importance of Key Competences in general and L2L competence in particular. Obviously, the authors were aware of existence of EU documents on lifelong learning and key competences.
2. Legislation which should be the instrument of implementation of Strategies lacks systematic approach regarding Key Competences, regardless clear recommendations provided by EU documents that Key Competences should be developed in all education levels: secondary education, VET, higher education and adult education:
 - a. The Law on Education describes most of Key Competences with the Exception of Learning to Learn competence
 - b. The Law on Non-formal Adult Education mentions several key competences but says nothing about L2L competence
 - c. The Law on Vocational Education and Law on Higher Education say nothing about development of key competences in general and of L2L competence in particular neither of the staff, nor of the students.
3. National Qualifications Framework does not mention Key Competences and L2L competence, however, in fact the entire framework bases on the understanding that ability to learn is one of key competences for personal development. Ability to learn is necessary for moving through the levels of qualifications but also within the single level to be able to adapt to the changing environment.
4. General programs of secondary recognize the importance of Key Competences and L2L Competence in particular. General programs recognize the Key Competences as necessary for life in knowledge society. Learning to learn competences should be integrated in all subjects of education.
5. Development of Key Competences and especially L2L competence in all levels of education should be improved.

Sources of information

1. Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on competences supporting lifelong learning and the ‘new skills for new jobs’ initiative (2010/C 135/03) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/policy-strategies_en.htm
2. Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC). <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0010:0018:EN:PDF>.
3. The National Education Strategy 2003–2012. (Lithuania) http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Lithuania/Lithuania_National_Education_Strategies_Provisions_2003-2012.pdf
4. Description of the Lithuanian qualifications framework http://www.kpmc.lt/LTKS_EKS/LTQF_official_translation.pdf
5. Law on Higher Education and Research (Lithuania) http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_e?p_id=438419&p_tr2=2
6. Law on Education (Lithuania) http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_e?p_id=460836&p_tr2=2
7. Law on Vocational Education (Lithuania) http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_e?p_id=404611&p_tr2=2
8. Memorandum of Lifelong Learning. http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/policy-strategies_en.htm
9. Strategy of Securing Lifelong Learning (2008-2013). http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=329216&p_query=&p_tr2=
(Available only in Lithuanian)

THE NETHERLANDS

Compiled and edited by Jumbo Klercq, The Netherlands (Participate in Diversiteit)

Short introduction of the Dutch case²³

Lifelong learning has been prioritised in The Netherlands over the last decades, and access to adult education for as many people as possible is often cited as an important or high priority goal. Lifelong learning and adult education is linked to the idea of self-reliance and personal achievement in society, but also strongly connected to employability and vocational training to the point where adult education and vocational education are often difficult to separate (or at least as seen by the Ministry of Education in terms of organisational structure and provision). They both emphasise basic skills and qualifications for workers to secure their positions or enhance their work life, which is seen to reflect in the labour market and society as a whole. To this aim educational institutions are given a high level of autonomy, and are encouraged to put the needs of the student first, especially related to devising learning pathways to meet the needs of disadvantaged students.

However, this importance of lifelong learning has not yet been transformed into structural state funding. In fact currently almost 50% of adult education is provided by private non-governmental institutions with no state funding (local folkhighschools, local community centres and commercial providers).

It is, however, also common that people access short vocational training courses, workshops and seminars through their employer, as there is significant funding invested in this annually. Learners can also undertake private professional training, which can amount to an acknowledged diploma (VWO, MBO, HBO, WO), or post initial education courses (marketing, accountancy, ICT, secretarial, administrative, languages etc.) The local folkhighschools also provide such courses.

Another key concern with adult education in the Netherlands is related to integration and social assimilation of immigrants. This usually takes the form of a compulsory civic integration programme, including the Dutch language, but also has a focus on providing opportunities for immigrant to gain professional skills and qualifications in order for them to find work of a suitable level. The courses aim to increase the self-reliance of newcomers, and give them more opportunities to undergo further training and find work.

There are also courses providing a broad basic education which teach the skills needed for people to function independently in everyday situations, for instance when in contact with a child's school or the healthcare services. They include speaking, reading, listening and arithmetic, and some also aim to foster self-reliance at a minimum level with, for instance, social skills.

²³ Text from EAEA Country Report on Adult Education in The Netherlands: Helsinki, 2011

Objectives of LLL and future concerns ²⁴

Social trends and the need for lifelong learning have made adult and vocational education of crucial importance for individuals, the labour market and society as a whole. One of the aims is to ensure that every person is able to obtain a minimum basic qualification. The learner should come first, meaning that institutions must offer courses that are geared to the needs of people who have no job experience, employed people and those seeking work. A priority for the future is that adult and vocational education courses should be better attuned to each other. Various options will be available, both full time and part time, to suit the learner's personal circumstances and preferences. It is also a future priority that a new quality assurance system should be introduced to improve the quality of teaching, together with a funding system designed to encourage better performance. An example is the introduction of performance-related grants for MBO students (post 18 years tertiary education aimed towards vocational training). Adult education is also seen as important in the Netherlands for various purposes, including preparation for vocational training, assimilation and social integration of migrants and the personal and social development of people who are at risk of becoming marginalised.

More information about the Netherlands: <http://goo.gl/gWuh1u>

Legislation

The Dutch educational system is governed by different acts. Each type of education has own legislation:

- Primary education: Primary Education Act (WPO), 1981
- Secondary education: Secondary Education Act (WVO), 1993
- Adult and Vocational Education Act (WEB), 1996
- Higher Education and Research Act (WHO), 1992
- National Qualification Framework (NLQF), 2012
- Participation Act, 2015

These Acts are organising and structuring the education. However, they do not much about the content and the strategies. So, no words are used to write about L2L.

The Adult and Vocational Education Act (WEB) is the most important act for us. It includes the MBO vocational training via the ROCs (regional education centres) and AOCs (agricultural education centres). All other vocational training is offered by private organisations, unified in the NRTO. Other non-formal education is decentralised and will be part of the Participation Act in 2015, which gives the municipality the opportunity to buy education from different providers.

²⁴ Text from EAEA Country Report on Adult Education in The Netherlands: Helsinki, 2011

History of formal vocational education²⁵

The current MBO is the result of more than a century vocational education. The government took more responsibility for vocational education. Initially vocational education is a matter of business. With the introduction of the Act on secondary education in 1863 was still Thorbecke government intervention unnecessary. Only resigned in 1919 the government to care for a wide spectrum of training in itself with the Industry Education Act. Gradually, the government responsibility still further. As apprenticeship (the current apprenticeship training) came in the sixties under the responsibility of the government . Other tasks, such as training and educational work, came ultimately the responsibility of the Ministry.

There is a growing emphasis on a good connection between education and the labour market. The influence of business on the training offer has increased. Beginning eighties, this was deployed with the opinion of the committee Wagner. This committee advocated for more involvement of the private sector in education. With the introduction of the Law Vocational Education and Training (WEB) in 1996, the industry has been given an important role in the development of the qualification structure. In the nineties, the WEB schools obliged to go to regional training centres, along the ROCs. The AOCs existed already. The ROCs were to provide better connection to the labour market and to combat youth unemployment. There was a demand for a wide range of training for the ROCs. Without a wide range a ROC was not eligible for funding.

A fourth trend is that of a smaller government and deregulation. For example, the lump sum financing was introduced. Responsibility for educational accommodation is decentralized to vocational schools.

After a broad, exploratory base period, students nowadays specialize in the superstructure from secondary school in one of the technical directions. Eventually, these young people are both a VMBO as an MBO diploma at level two.

Policy debate²⁶

The question is whether the initial vocational training is not too specific. The economy is dynamic. That may mean learning skills for a job is detrimental to the future employability. Especially the middle of the professions seems not immune. A well- educated workforce is even more relevant for our prosperity. A second reason why we need a flexible workforce is the shift to services and knowledge. This shift is a result of increased rationalization of production processes and associated with globalization. Many expect that this development will continue and there must be a global division of labour. Knowledge base is indispensable. According to the OECD, however, takes the

²⁵ Text from discussion paper *Een toekomstbestendig MBO* (a future sustainable MBO),2013

²⁶ Text from discussion paper *Een toekomstbestendig MBO* (a future sustainable MBO),2013

importance of broader 21st century skills (problem solving, social and communication skills, creativity, flexibility). Here we can also see the relevance of L2L.

The appeal route for many parents and students are now a negative selection. This may be partly due to the image of vocational education. According to the SCP²⁷ is a risk therefore that pupils generally are practical-minded, choosing secondary schools, while they have more talent for the professional route. That is a waste of talent, that extra detrimental because there is such a high demand for professionals. Only slightly more than half of the graduates took the degree within the nominal study. According to the inspectorate not all courses are in the basic in order. In particular, the development of the quality of examination with respect to the previous year deserves attention. Moreover, MBO is not challenging enough.

There are some good developments. Vocational scored as internationally well core skills (OECD / PIAAC). Furthermore, the number of early school leavers decreased for the tenth year in a row. And Dutch MBO students regularly win awards in the international World Skills competition.

On average, the connection with the labour market is in order. According to the ROA²⁸ MBO-graduates find a job usually in less than a month. However, some programs train more people than there is demand in the labour market. This leads to school leavers who find a job or a job below their level. Especially unemployment still before you started your career is negative for career opportunities, health and happiness. A good education and a good mastery of core skills increase the chances (good paid) work.

Future-proof MBO requires a high quality vocational education. Therefore been tightened in educational need is necessary. It is the quality of vocational education agreements, the increase the level of literacy and numeracy, shortening and intensifying MBO- learning pathways and the generalization of the training requirements for MBO2 that might be for certain groups of young people difficult to complete. These are vulnerable young people from the practical education, from secondary special education, dropped out or just after vocational school and youth in the entrance courses. In addition, these are young people at all levels of vocational training who have limitations. They face barriers in receiving education, or have to the end of the course some distance from the labour market. Each transition is a challenge for these young people, who once again have to become familiar with a new, initially less secure, environment.

This is why there is an entrance training opportunities should provide for these vulnerable young people. On the entrance training are no graduates. This allows vocational schools teaching in this target focus, which the educational efficiency will increase. Students with all kinds of problems to be admitted to the course entrance if they have no qualifications. Students of the entrance courses are broader education than the case is nowadays. Their chances on the labour market are therefore increasing.

²⁷ Dutch Social Cultural Plan Office

²⁸ Dutch Council for Education

The target exhibits also a wide variety ranging from natives and immigrants with low literacy and numeracy skills to highly skilled immigrants who want to learn the Dutch language. In addition, it is also about people without benefit to those with a paid job. It is important, that each of them can follow a training can that best suits his / her needs and opportunities. This can be a Dutch language or math program at a Regional Training Centre (ROC) or a private language service provider, but also trained by the employer or a section around provided by a volunteer. Municipalities should be able to see from the education budget all these different initiatives of formal, non-formal and informal education to purchase. In practice, there is need for this. Having regard to the intended goals the aim is to be the extension of the discretionary as much as possible to keep up with the decentralization of responsibilities to municipalities, which is equipped by 2015²⁹.

A future spending MBO requires the best possible connection with the labour market. Employability in the long term, a broader base are better. Given the unpredictable nature of the labour market is an important to have the choice of a young person in which between the general secondary education and vocational route is neutral. For the longer term, there are indications that the middle of occupations under pressure will be placed. The national qualification with all government-approved training should take this into account. Broader qualifications increase opportunities for graduates to participate. Broader qualifications do more justice to the dynamics of the labour market. Furthermore, this development requires that it remains possible to stack diplomas on the way to a higher level.

In an uncertain dynamic labour market, lifelong learning is crucial. The labour market requires a broad employability and therefore both generic skills and subject-specific knowledge. It is widely recognized that workers and employers have primary responsibility for organization and financing of the training of employees. For they enjoy the benefits. In practice, the responsibility of employers and employees are visible in the O&O funds³⁰. Government-funded vocational education plays a minor role in educating adult employees. Adults ask another pedagogical approach and a more flexible layout and organization of education.

Tackling illiteracy

The number of illiterate people is increasing rapidly despite of the well-known Dutch approach of combatting illiteracy. Approximately half of the illiterate people in paid work. In the group of 45-54 years, this is even 70%. Of the non-poor literacy (all ages) has about 66% paid job. From the PIAAC survey is clearly shown that participation in the labour clearly related to the level of proficiency. Low literacy have proven more trouble finding and keeping a job .1.3 million of the Dutch with a proficiency level below 2F (input level vocational education) is 30 % 'inactive', i.e. without paying

²⁹ Participation Act 2015

³⁰ Training & Development Funds

job, possibly part-time. An increase in illiterate elderly can go wrong the labour market when the "baby boomers" are going to retire.

More than half of the low literacy currently has a paid job, according to a recent research from the University of Maastricht to illiteracy in Netherlands. In the age group 45-55 years even 70 % is particular concern qualitative deficits rather than quantitative shortages. It is obvious that during the life of employees the mastery of core skills decreases gradually. This decrease causes a loss of productivity and possibly less good match between labour demand and labour supply (lack of quality). At this time, however, there are plenty of initiatives aimed at lifelong learning and one can use the current offer in adult education and general secondary adult education to counteract this decrease in core skills. Moreover, the illiteracy approach, where employers play a role, is aimed to reduce such a decrease.

Women are sadly over represented among low literate. That is not a coincidence but a legacy of the old breadwinner model. The same applies to female marriage migrants. The basic skills of people with little or no work going backwards faster than that of individuals who have an employment relationship. Moreover, the employer often plays an important role in encouraging workers to improve their level of reading and writing. There are programs as 'Language for Life' and 'Language for Home' of the foundation Lezen en Schrijven (reading and writing), where volunteers search low-literate women and teach them in-group. Other options to improve the language skills of women in an accessible manner are explored as well, for example working from a specific digital learning environment. This is a successful proven tool in achieving low-skilled and low-literate adults by provide support in an informal and accessible way. Following this way, the participants can for example, increase their language skills at home rather than in a course outdoors. In this way the non - working women increases their chances of economic independence.

The 'Action Plan Low Literacy 2012-2015' appoints literacy as a fundamental condition sustainable employability for self-reliance of citizens and social cohesion. The labour market dimension is central. The strategy to tackle illiteracy includes many forms, including a commitment to employees, job seekers and employers. For that reason, the foundation Lezen en Schrijven has been asked to identify in cooperation with employers branches, which are located large groups of low literacy. Another instrument is a language scan developed by employers' organisations and trade unions to test whether employees need training in language skills. In addition, there is the Ambassador network , which (former) employees in the field of illiteracy are asked to focus a few years their efforts in a certain sector (chosen by themselves) to encourage actions addressing illiteracy.

With the current Action Plan Low literacy (2012-2015), the government aims to address the agenda to combat illiteracy. In addition, there is € 53 million annually available for municipalities bet on adult education, specifically aimed at improving the Dutch literacy and numeracy. For the development of innovative methods for low literacy a series of pilots under the title 'Language for Life' has been running since 2012 to address and achieve more low levels of literacy. These pilots,

carried out by the foundation Lezen en Schrijven have a focus on the target group of 45-65 years and are continuously evaluated. Additionally the Dutch Parliament has recently decided to make € 5 million available for tackling illiteracy on annual basis. The current Action Plan includes a specific focus on the illiteracy labour component.

National qualification framework (NLQF)

The Dutch Qualifications Framework (NLQF) is a new way of describing Dutch qualification levels. It is a systematic organisation of all existing qualification levels in the Netherlands, from Level 1 basic education to the Master's degree at level eight. Qualifications are classified in NLQF levels and are given a level indication. The framework consists of an Entry Level followed by eight levels, Level 1 being the least complex and Level 8 the most complex.

The NLQF aims to facilitate students and labour market mobility by providing an insight into the levels of all qualifications recorded by the National Coordination Point NLQF in the National Coordination Point (NCP) register. The NLQF provides transparency in that it facilitates a comparison of qualification level nationally and, thus, national mobility.

The NCP records Government-regulated qualifications (The qualifications of the Ministries of Education Culture and Sciences; Healthcare, Welfare and Sports and Economics Affairs; Food and Natural and Living Environment) in the NCP Register of qualifications. All other qualifications are first assessed and level determined by the NCP and then recorded in the Register.

The Dutch Qualifications Framework offers providers of qualifications, which are not regulated by the Government the possibility of having such training programmes and qualifications classified at a level of the NLQF. Procedures and criteria for this process are in place. The NLQF offers opportunities to bring. Nationally formal education (secondary, vocational, college / university), the system of non-formal education and the development of APL in a binding framework. At the international level, the link with the EQF LLL creates more transparency, greater mobility and a better view of the achievement of a higher level of knowledge.

Conclusions

1. It is clear that the Dutch government demonstrates a backward and retiring attitude towards lifelong learning in general and L2L in particular. The focus is on access to the labour market and strengthening employability. Initiatives and responsibility are expected from the social partners. Adult and vocational training is decentralised more and more. There is only a national strategy for tackling and combatting illiteracy.
2. There is no attention for key competencies, new skills, etcetera in the legislation, but it is a main topic in policy development.

3. Current policy debates on vocational training and tackling illiteracy demonstrate a wide attention for L2L.
4. The National Qualification Framework does not mention L2L, but key competencies are included in the different levels. Moreover, NLQF makes it possible to qualify non-formal education courses if requested.
5. The retiring government's policy creates many spaces for public and private providers of education.
6. The awareness of the necessity to work on key competencies and skills for the future is high in the Netherlands, but due to the lack of stimuli by the Government there is only fragmented knowledge and experience. Most attention has been paid to writing and reading skills, and numeracy skills. There is also a rising interest in strengthening digital competences. However, there is less specific attention for other key competencies like L2L.



PORTUGAL

Compiled and edited by Céu Branco, Portugal (EPRALIMA Escola Profissional do Alto Lima)

Introduction

According to several authors, globalization has caused a shift in the global economy and a growing incorporation of knowledge in the economic sphere. There has been increased competition between worldwide companies, and consequently a need for added flexibility. Although there is a need for competitiveness regarding economic growth and employment, the need for more flexible employees with increased flexible skills highlight the uncertainty regarding employment. Unlike the previous century, now jobs are seen as unstable, with irregular schedules, multiple employers and diverse incomes.

Currently, for a company to be considered ideal it must be flexible, comprised by a reduced number of stable managers; professional and skilled employees that are very versatile and flexible, i.e., individuals who work part-time, with fixed-term contracts and contracted for specific tasks.

According to Moniz and Kovács (2001), economic globalization and the diffusion of ICT's leads to corporate restructuring, and follows the logic of the *lean production* and flexible company model, with particular emphasis on the following aspects:

- focus on main activity with high added value (core business), from outsourcing and off-shoring;
- simplification and decentralization of corporate structures;
- connection through information networks of a large number of small and self-employed companies;
- investment in human resources as producers and users of knowledge, promotion of autonomy, creativity, participation;
- increasing substitution of employment contracts, from an indefinite period of collaboration to definite period through temporary contracts;
- increasing substitution of the organization's principle to the market principle, as an activity coordination mechanism.

Not to mention the following: reduced number of permanent workers, in which only the skilled ones are kept, sub-contracted companies, use of flexible forms of employment, search for qualified personnel at a low price, use of hand-labour that has little or no skills for low prices and obtained consent from workers that accept low wages and less favourable working conditions in exchange to keeping their jobs.

Consequently, as the labour market is faced with turbulent and contradictory situations, increased “*knowledge*” is currently essential, implying higher education/qualification and desire to learn by the active population. It is, therefore, an attempt to respond to new economic demands, where the individuals’ academic levels increase, seeking not only a satisfactory income, but also a professional identity, participation in decisions and personal and professional development.

Simultaneously, according to Moniz and Kovács (2001), companies proceed to *flexibility* characterized by the following aspects:

- reduce hierarchical levels and delegation of responsibilities to the operational level;
- regrouping and integration of tasks and functions rather than fragmentation and specialization;
- change work contents at the operational level: initiative and autonomy so that individuals’ can schedule their work and determine the necessary procedures to be carried out;
- skilled and multi-skilled workers with hybrid or mixed professional profiles rather than specialized job profiles;
- team work instead of individual work, required by the growing technological interdependence;
- delegation of responsibilities to individuals and groups, identify decisions at the lower levels of the hierarchy to take advantage of the knowledgeable workers;
- clear information about the results obtained at work and self-control;
- continuous learning and the expansion of knowledge, instead of the type of training which aims at the final preparation regarding a profession, function or task;
- trust between employers and employees.

Consequently, Moniz and Kovács (2001) indicate that this flexibility identifies new qualification requirements, very different from Taylor’s organization of work, because the goal is to release as much knowledge as possible allowing “*quick responses to changes based on the promotion and use of intelligence and creativity and effective cooperation.*”

However, authors such as Azevedo (2002) and Castells (1996), warn of a labour market *dualization*. That is, on the one hand, we have a primary segment that consists of companies that are more modern and competitive, with prestigious and well-paid jobs and, moreover, a secondary thread, which groups the jobs that are less well-paid, unskilled, exercised in an uncertain manner and without security, usually within smaller companies and employers of ethnic minorities and disadvantaged groups.

It is within these markets that several fluxes exist, which work autonomously and complementary, because the secondary segment is assigned an important role as regulator of the entire economic

system. According to Azevedo (2002), this is where “*the flexible arches of the market economy model are concentrated*” and assigned “*predominant management of labour practices, characterized by precarious employment contracts and the so-called equilibrium of low skills and low wages.*”

For this author, segmentation still runs through many other paths, which are more related to the different working conditions, highlighting many other types of segments, “*so many understand the different recruitment strategies (internal and external), competition and international competitiveness (exposed and protected), the mobility of labour (closed and open), the age and the trajectories of young people during their first job experiences.*”

Therefore, three new work categories emerge, routine production services, interpersonal services and symbolic-analytic services, which allow opening important new perspectives for market and labour markets’ analysis.

Considering the changes that have occurred within the labour market, it is clear that currently more qualified human resources that have not been conditioned by learning are required. In this context, the perception of traditional learning becomes unacceptable, i.e., the notion of learning, exclusively during the first phases of life in order to later exercise a professional activity, have become a conditioning factor that hinders keeping a job. Therefore, there is a need for continuous education/training through continuous learning, i.e., lifelong learning, which involves constant updating and improvement of knowledge, and accompanying the changes in the labour market, which simultaneously promotes new professional profiles.

The teaching and training system needs to meet the growing demand for qualified human resources, especially in Portugal, where, according to Moniz and Kovács (2001), the greatest needs are located in technical-professional intermediate-level and short-term technical training (polytechnic). Since these trends have a tendency of increasing, the only way to prevent disparities between the education/training system’s offers and the needs of businesses is through the development of training activities. As a result, it is essential to have education/training policies that support lifelong learning, recognized as a national and international political priority. According to the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (2000), lifelong learning “*is an essential policy for the development of citizenship, social cohesion and employment.*”

Thus, one must question the education/training system, with regard to the preparation and adaptation of individuals faced with an increasingly demanding society, as well as the actual organization of work in reference to the ability to promote the necessary learning for individual and organizational development (Pires 2005). Currently, despite the fact that the world of business has a more active role in training, it is not sufficient to blame only the companies, it is necessary to make individuals take responsibility and make them aware of the importance of their own individual training.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that due to competitive pressure experienced by companies it is difficult to create conditions conducive to learning, and secondly, according to several authors, it is necessary that the individual take responsibility regarding the upgrade of their individual skills, such as a job and relatively stable life, which provides the opportunity, desire, interest and ability to promote self-learning.

Lifelong Learning

Over time Lifelong Learning has occupied a very particular place because it seeks to achieve a large number of objectives related to equal opportunities, encompassing individuals of various age groups, regardless of their social position or employment status. The idea that emerged in the sixties was not limited to the exercise of activity associated to the first years of life.

European Policies and Lifelong Learning in Portugal

Over the years Europe has been confronted with a set of issues, namely the globalization of economies, as well as the technological and social changes that resulted from the change of an industrial society to a post-industrial society (knowledge society).

The emergence of the knowledge society, together with the existing economic trends at the turn of the century, resulted in a meeting in March of the year 2000 in Lisbon, where the European Council and the Member States agreed on a new strategy for the European Union: The Lisbon Strategy. According to several authors, at this meeting Member States agreed that by 2010 they would make

(...) the European Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge society, able to face economic growth with better jobs and greater social cohesion.

The Lisbon Strategy, European Council 2000

Lifelong Learning is therefore assumed as the main strategy, in which Member States undertake and determine their policies in favour of higher qualification for their populations. According to several authors, in the case of Portugal, since its integration into the European Union in 1986, it has made a huge effort to qualify the population and as a result reduce the *distance* that separates Portugal from the more developed countries. Therefore, Lifelong Learning is considered one of the most important political priorities of the European Union, with the major goal of increasing the average level of citizen participation, aged between 25 and 64, in Lifelong Learning actions to at least 12.5%.

According to the Eurostat report, *Progress Towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training_Indicators and Benchmarks* (2009) participation in Lifelong Learning is becoming a reality

in most European Union countries and the progress can be observed in almost all countries. However, the average of the European Union reached 9.5% in 2008, already existing, at that time, countries that exceeded this rate in addition to the rate presently stipulated by *Europe 2020* (15%), namely: Sweden (32.4%), Denmark (30.2%) and Finland (23.1%). Despite the clear progress since 2000, this was still not enough to reach *Lisbon's 2010* 12.5% or the 15% of *Europe 2020*, therefore the participation of adults in Lifelong Learning actions continues to be a major challenge for many European countries and Portugal in particular.

According to the working document of the Commission, *Key competences for a Changing World: Progress Towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training Analysis of Implementation at the European and National Levels (2009)*, Portugal has shown some progress since 2000, increasing the rate of participation in Lifelong Learning actions from 4.3% to 5.3% in 2008, although this figure is still below the European average.

The desirability to increase the average level of citizen participation, aged between 25 and 64 years, in Lifelong Learning actions, up to at least 15%, set by *Europe 2020* is directly linked to the social and economic changes that come from a population aged over 50 and quickly growing, making it necessary to acquire *know-how* that supports active aging, because this requires improving working conditions and simultaneously adapt individuals to the state and the needs of each employee, as well as the promotion of upgrading skills through specific training activities.

These goals are interrelated and according to the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (2000), “*contain two equally important objectives for lifelong learning: promote active citizenship and stimulate employability.*” Meaning, since active citizenship is reflected by the way people participate in various social and economic contexts, “*what opportunities and risks do they face and to what extent does their participation provide them with a sense of belonging to the society in which they live in, and in which they have something to say*” (Commission 2000).

Thus, the acquisition and continuous upgrading of knowledge, skills and qualifications are essential for the personal development of all citizens, considered prerequisites for active citizenship, in all aspects of society, through integration in the job market. Since Lifelong Learning encompasses all learning activities, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences it is considered the critical point that distinguishes these learning activities from other activities, such as cultural or sports activities. The continuous upgrading of labour force skills has been repeatedly stressed in EU policies after defining the goals of the Lisbon Strategy. This appears in the 2010 Education and Training Programme of the European Union and the European Employment Strategy, which emphasizes the need to include strategies for Lifelong Learning, to maintain workers constantly adaptable and employable.

According to several authors, in Portugal the strategy for Lifelong Learning was oriented according to quantified targets that point to the growth and competitiveness of the country. In this sense, according to the Technology Plan (2008), the goal was to qualify one million active citizens by 2010 and increase the percentage of the population involved in Lifelong Learning training activities to 12.5%. The Technological Plan emerged as a political measure, marking the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in Portugal, within the framework of the National Action Programme for Growth and Jobs.

According to the Technological Plan, Strategic Axis 1, "Knowledge", the aim of the New Opportunities Initiative was to promote readiness for Lifelong Learning through the qualification of adults, where the 12th grade is defined as a qualification minimum. The initiative is directed towards

(...) increasing the basic training of the adult working population by providing flexible qualifying offers and, in particular, structured from acquired and recognized skills.

Technology Plan 2008

Thus, one of the Portuguese priorities is related to the system of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC) that represents one of the goals of the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, which values learning acquired through various contexts: formal, non-formal and informal. According to this document,

People will not want to invest time, effort and money in further learning if the knowledge, skills and competencies already acquired are not recognized in a tangible way, whether at a personal or professional level.

Commission of the European Communities 2000

Therefore, RVCC processes are a way of recognizing skills acquired throughout an individual's life, providing the individual with a school certificate, Basic or Secondary level, which, for all purposes, is legal and equivalent to any other diploma issued by the Ministry of Education. Certification via this pathway has equal stature to any other method of obtaining the same certification and allows the holder to continue their studies.

The Portuguese Initiative: The New Opportunities Centres

RVCC processes are a way of recognizing skills acquired throughout an individual's life, providing these with a school certificate, Basic or Secondary, which for all purposes is legal and equivalent to any degree awarded by the Ministry of Education.

The New Opportunities Centres (present Centre for Qualification and Vocational Training) are responsible for implementing the process, according to the guidelines of the National Agency for Qualification (present National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Training), through the implementation of the Quality Charter which defines a set of intervention steps by the technical teams. The mission of the New Opportunities Centres is to ensure that all citizens over 18 have the opportunity to qualify and certify their skills at both the basic and secondary level (National Qualifications Agency 2009).

Therefore, an adult can attend a RVCC process if the adult demonstrates he/she has acquired skills within various contexts: formal, informal and non-formal. If this is not the case, and the adult needs to acquire skills and is therefore referred to training offers according to his/her preferences and profile.

Regarding the RVCC process, adult skills are analyzed within a framework of Key-Skills which defines:

The concept of key competence is ... the ability to act and react appropriately in more or less complex situations, by mobilizing and combining, personal attitudes and procedures, in particular, significant contexts and informed by values.

Alonso et al. 2002

However, if during the course of the process adults demonstrate a lack of skills in relation to any one area, they have the opportunity to further develop/acquire knowledge through "Further Education". Therefore, modular training pathways were created, and in the case of adults, demonstrating a large lack of skills these have the opportunity to stop the process, attend these short-term training units and resume the process after these have been completed. These actions also provide capitalized credits, that summed up provide one or more qualifications through the National Qualifications Catalogue.

In 2008 this system was also extended to the Recognition of Professional Competencies (RVCCPro), regulated by the National Qualifications Catalogue, which in turn defines the key competences for various professional areas.

According to Araújo and Coutinho, the European Commission had a key role in creating the National Qualifications Catalogue, which is based on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for lifelong learning that *“created a common frame of reference for qualifications in European terms to ensure the transparency of qualifications.”* This not only aims to increase readiness for initiatives

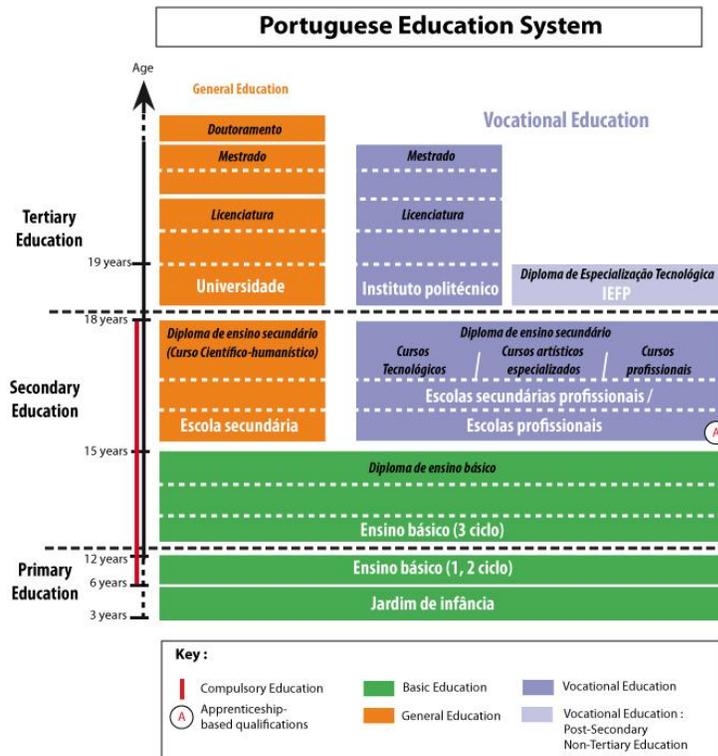
related to Lifelong Learning, but also the mobility of citizens, i.e., through EQF Member States have developed National Qualifications Frameworks according to the European and national reality.

The New Opportunities Initiative, in addition to the RVCC processes, with respect to the adult population, also offers access to courses in Adult Education and Training (AET) whose aim is to qualify the adult population: educational/professional certification. Regarding school certification, this is based on the framework of key competences for both the Basic and Secondary levels, and regarding professional certification that is based on the National Qualifications Catalogue.

Considering the above possibilities, the New Opportunities Initiative has several options available, which depend on the candidate's profile. First RVCC processes that recognize skills acquired throughout life, in various contexts, for obtaining a school and/or professional certification; second, long-term training courses, AET courses and finally modular training through short-term training units.

The Portuguese Educational System

The Education and Training System in Portugal is structured in accordance to the Founding Law (Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo – LBSE) for the Educational System (Law n.º. 46/86, of the 14th of October, with some articles being subsequently amended by Laws n.º. 115/97, of the 19th of September, and n.º. 49/2005, of the 30th of August) and the Decree Law n.º. 396/2007 that legislates the National Qualifications System. The founding law organizes education into preschool education, school education (subdivided into basic education, secondary education and higher education) and extra-school education. Decree Law n.º. 396/2007 sets up the National Qualifications System and defines the regulatory framework for education and training at the basic, secondary and post-secondary levels for both young people and adults.



The Ministry of Education (basic and secondary education) and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education (higher education) are jointly responsible for the entire Portuguese Education System, in addition to being supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity in providing pre-school education.

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

Pre-school education for children between the ages of three and five is still optional. It is provided by kindergartens, which are run by a variety of State organisations, charitable institutions, private schools and cooperatives, unions and other organisations. Law n.º. 85/2009, of the 27th of August, stipulates that preschool education should be available to all children from the age of 5 onwards.

Basic Education

Basic education is compulsory, unified and free and lasts for nine years, targeting children and young people between the ages of 6 and 15. It is comprised of three consecutive cycles: the 1st cycle (four year programme) provides general education and implies only one teacher (sometimes supported by another in specialised areas); the 2nd cycle (two year programme) and the 3rd cycle (three year

programme), in which there is one teacher per subject or a teacher whose educational field is multidisciplinary.

It corresponds to the initial version of the Founding Law (Law n.º 46/86, of the 14th of October) that establishes the requirement for basic training for all citizens, and which was reaffirmed by the subsequent alterations introduced by Law n.º 49/2005, of the 30th of August. The most recent changes were introduced by Law n.º 85/2009, of the 29th of August, which stipulates that compulsory schooling is now applicable to all youths until they reach the age of 18, or until the student has completed a course equivalent to the secondary level of education.

Options for Young People

In addition to the general paths, the basic education system also offers a specialized art path (set up by Order n.º 691/2009, of the 25th of June) and education and training for young people (set up by Joint Decree n.º 453/2004, of the 27th of July) designed to fight against early school drop-outs or to reintegrate young people who dropped-out before completing their compulsory education.

Table 1 indicates the training paths available for young people who intend to complete the 2nd and 3rd cycles of basic education, all of which lead to academic and professional certification.

Table 1 – Training Paths (type 1 to type 4)

Training paths	Minimum conditions of access	Minimum Duration (hours)	School and Professional certification
Type 1*	Less than the 6 th grade, having failed once or twice during schooling	1872/1125 (Path with the duration of one or two years depending on the conditions of access)	6 th Grade of schooling (2 nd cycle of basic education) Level 1 qualification
Type 2*	Having completed the 6 th or 7 th Grades or having attended the 8 th Grade without success	2109 (Path with the duration of one year)	9 th Grade of schooling (3 rd cycle of basic education) Level 2 qualification
Type 3*	Having completed the 8 th Grade or having attended the 9 th Grade without success	1200 (Path with the duration of one year)	9 th Grade of schooling (3 rd cycle of basic education) Level 2 qualification
Type 4	9 th Grade certificate or having attended the secondary level of education, without completing it	1230 (Path with the duration of one year)	Recognition of school competences Level 2 qualification

* Young people under the age of 15 can also have access to these paths according to authorization of the Regional Director of Education.

Source: National Agency for Qualifications

Options for Adults

Adults have various options available in order to obtain their basic education, namely: adult education classes, by completing a course through the adult education and training programme (AET); the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC) procedure; or through certified training modules (flexible qualification pathways).

The system also offers a literacy programme – a training programme in basic competences (Order n.º 1100/2010, of the 22nd of October) – which is aimed at people aged 18 or over who did not attend the 1st cycle of basic education (or an equivalent) or who did attend but did not show that they acquired the basic competences in reading, writing, mathematics or the use of information and communication technology. The acquisition of these basic competences make it possible for adults to enter the qualification pathways available (namely, adult education and training courses or processes that recognize, validate and certify basic level competences) which will allow them to acquire further competences and the appropriate certification, as well as encourage autonomy, self-learning and cooperative work.

- ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING COURSES

Adult education and training courses created by Joint Order n.º 453/2004 of the 27th of July are presently regulated by Order n.º 230/2006, of the 7th of March and provide the main route through which adults can acquire education and training qualifications by following education and training pathways.

These courses are aimed at adults, aged 18 or over, who have low levels of educational or professional qualifications. They not only offer academic equivalency to the 1st, 2nd or 3rd cycles of basic education, but also offer professional certification. Depending on the training pathway selected, these courses may lead to academic certification, professional certification or double certification (academic and professional). This education and training system also works in conjunction with RVCC procedures, meaning that adults have the opportunity, through selective training, to obtain competences that they do not have and are required for a specific qualification, in addition to allowing adults to continue their studies by attending a similar type of course at the secondary level.

- SYSTEM FOR THE RECOGNITION, VALIDATION AND CERTIFICATION OF COMPETENCES

The National System for the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (regulated by Order n.º 370/2008, of the 21st of May) implements a process of recognition of educational and professional competences.

The aims of this system is to improve the certification levels of adults over the age of 18 who have not completed the basic or secondary levels of education, and operates within the lifelong learning system. The system allows knowledge and competences acquired through life experiences, in formal or informal learning contexts, to be recognised, validated and certified. Certification via this pathway has equal stature to any other method of obtaining the same certification and allows the holder to continue their studies.

Adults aged 18 or over who have not completed the 4th, 6th or 9th years of schooling are entitled access to basic levels of education.

Once the RVCC education process is complete, a basic level certificate is issued (certificate of qualifications corresponding to the 1st, 2nd or 3rd cycle of basic education plus a basic education diploma).

The student is awarded either a level 1 (2nd cycle of basic education), a level 2 (3rd cycle of basic education) or a level 4 (secondary education) qualification from the National Qualifications Framework.

Adults aged 18 or over who are not qualified in their professional areas may also choose a process for the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Professional Competences.

This system allows experience-based professional knowledge and competences, acquired in various contexts, to be recognised, validated and certified. The certification obtained through this system not only increases personal, social and professional worth but also opens pathways to the next levels.

Like the RVCC education process, the RVCC professional process was managed by the New Opportunities Centres, but presently these are managed by the Centres for Qualification and Vocational Training. These processes are based on the RVCC referential of Professional Competencies that correspond to level 2 or level 4 NQF, as listed in the National Qualifications Catalogue.

- MODULAR TRAINING – FLEXIBLE QUALIFICATIONS PATHWAYS

Modular training (regulated by Order n.º 230/2008, of the 7th of March), integrated into the Lifelong Learning Programmes of the working population, was created with the objective of allowing adults (aged 18 or over) to acquire skills in a flexible manner, in order to help them obtain further educational qualifications and professional certification, thus allowing them to (re)enter, or progress, within the labour market.

In the case of basic education, modular training is developed and run by Short Training Units (STU) and is integrated in the level 2 NQF training pathways.

Modular training courses may be accumulated to obtain one or more qualifications through the National Qualifications Catalogue, which allows a variety of training pathways to be created. Since these are adaptable to a range of training modalities, target-groups, methodologies, training contents and validation methods, the curricular organisation of modular training, for each course unit, is adjusted to the relevant training references in the National Qualifications Catalogue. Thus, each unit may correspond to a basic training unit, a technology training unit or both.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

This comprises three years of education (10th, 11th and 12th grades). It is geared towards anyone who intends to continue studying or wants to join the labour market. It includes science and humanities and specialised artistic, technological or vocational training courses, and is provided by secondary schools and vocational schools.

OPTIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Secondary education offers a wide range of education and training possibilities for young people: science and humanities courses, a number of special courses for the arts and those with double certification format, such as: vocational courses, other special courses for the arts, apprenticeship courses and education and training courses. These double certification courses not only develop competences at the secondary education level but also develop professional competences that will allow young people to enter the labour market and exercise a profession.

- SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES COURSES

The science and humanities courses (regulated by Order n.º 1322/2007, of the 4th of October) are designed to prepare students for higher education studies. There are four types of courses: Sciences and Technologies, Socioeconomic Sciences, Languages and Humanities and Visual Arts.

The conclusion of a course at the secondary level depends on the approval in all the subjects, and in the case of the science and humanities courses it is also compulsory to take national exams (article 10th of the Order n.º 259/2006, of the 14th of March). Besides the Portuguese National Exam, common to all Science and Humanities Courses, the student has to take three more specific national exams, which depend on the curricula of each course.

Upon completion of a Sciences and Humanities Course, the student can continue his/her studies in higher education, and a level 3 National Qualifications Framework qualification is awarded.

- SPECIALISED SECONDARY EDUCATION COURSE FOR THE ARTS

The specialised secondary education courses for the arts cover the areas of the visual and audiovisual arts, dance and music and are designed to provide specialised training in these fields and is regulated by Decree-Law n.º 74/2004 of the 26th of March. Students who opt for this field have two options: either continue their educational career (Music/Dance which also require taking national exams) or go into the labour market or further studies (Visual(Audiovisual Arts – set up by Order n.º 550-D/2004, of the 21st of May and subsequently amended by Order n.º 781/2006 of the 9th of August and Decree-Law n.º 4/2008 of the 7th of January).

Completion of a Specialised Course for the Arts in Music or Dance entitles the student to a secondary education diploma and awards the student with a level 3 National Qualifications Framework qualification. Completion of a Special Course for the Arts in the Visual or Audiovisual Arts entitles the student to a secondary education diploma and awards the student with a level 4 National Qualifications Framework qualification.

- VOCATIONAL (PROFESSIONAL) COURSES

Vocational courses regulated by Decree-Law n.º 4/98 of the 8th of January establishes the conditions for the organization and operation of schools and vocational courses in the scope of non-tertiary education, in addition to Order n.º 797/2006 of the 10th of August which amends Order n.º 550-D/2004, of the 21st of May, and establishes the conditions for the creation, organization and curricula management, in addition to evaluation and assessment. This system provides double certification and is designed to either prepare students to enter the labour market or to continue their studies in non-higher post-secondary courses or in higher education courses. These courses have the duration of three years, and correspond to the 10th, 11th and 12th grades and are organised through modules.

The conclusion of a vocational course allows students to either enrol in Specialized Technological Courses or in higher education.

Successful completion of a vocational course entitles the student to a secondary education diploma and awards the student with a level 4 National Qualifications Framework qualification.

- APPRENTICESHIP COURSES

Apprenticeship Courses (regulated by Order n°. 1497/2008, of the 19th of December) are initial vocational training sandwich courses (balance of theoretical and practical training taking place in both the training institution and a company). These courses are aimed at young people under the age of 25 who have successfully completed the 3rd cycle of basic education or who have attended, but not completed, a secondary level course. The courses are specifically designed to help young people enter the labour market, although they also allow further studies in higher education.

Apprenticeship courses provide double certification and a level 4 National Qualifications Framework qualification.

- EDUCATION AND TRAINING COURSES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (ETC)

The education and training courses, which also exist at the level of basic education, are designed for young people, aged 15 or over, who are at risk of dropping out of school or who have already dropped out of the school system before completing the 12th grade. They are also aimed at young people wishing to obtain a professional qualification which allows them to enter the labour market.

There are 4 training pathways (type 5 to type 7) open to young people wishing to obtain the secondary education level. These pathways lead to double certification (educational and professional).

Table 4 – Training paths (type 5 to type 7)

Training paths	Minimum conditions of access	Minimum Duration (hours)	School and professional certification
Complementary Training Course	Certificate of courses type 2 or 3 or level two qualification or certificate of the 9th grade intending to continue studies	1020 (Path with the duration of one year)	Recognition of school competences
Type 5	Having completed the 10 th grade of the secondary level of education, or having attended the 11 th grade without success, or certificate of course type 4, or level 2 of qualification plus the certificate of complementary training course	2276 (Path with the duration of two years)	12 th grade of schooling Level 4 qualification
Type 6	Having completed the 11 th grade of the secondary level of education or attended the 12 th grade without success	1380 ((Path with the duration of one year)	12 th grade of schooling Level 4 qualification
Type 7	Certificate of the 12 th grade of a science and humanities course of the secondary level of education	1155 ((Path with the duration of one year)	Level 4 qualification

Source: National Agency for Qualifications

The conclusion of an education and training course for young people Type 5, 6 or 7 allows them to continue their studies in a Specialized Technological Course or through higher education.

Completion of a secondary-level education and training course entitles the student to a level 4 National Qualifications Framework qualification.

OPTIONS FOR ADULTS

Adults may complete their secondary education via the adult education programme, an adult education and training course (AET), the recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC), modular training (flexible training pathways) or through a number of other ways.

- ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING COURSES

Adult education and training courses are offered to adults wishing to improve their qualifications. As with basic education, these courses may be taken in the form of certified education pathways, when the adult in question has a suitable profile and background experience, or via double certification pathways.

There are a number of learning pathways, with various entry conditions, for adults who want to obtain their education certification. Entry depends on the adult's prior formal education. According to the *Referencing of the Portuguese Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications*

Framework – Draft Final report 36 these adults, and those obtaining double certification, may follow a Specialized Technological Course (level 5 of the National Qualifications Framework) or continue on to higher education.

Adults who complete the secondary level through adult education and training courses are awarded a level 3 National Qualifications Framework qualification. Those who complete their secondary level through adult education and training courses (education and vocational training track) are awarded a level 4 National Qualifications Framework qualification.

- SYSTEM FOR THE RECOGNITION, VALIDATION AND CERTIFICATION OF COMPETENCES

As described above for the basic education level, the recognition, validation and certification of competences process may lead to certification of educational competences (Educational RVCC) or of professional competences (Professional RVCC).

Adults over the age of 18 may apply for educational RVCC at the secondary level, provided they have at least three years professional experience. On completion of the educational RVCC process – which is based on the Adult Education and Training Key Competences Reference System (secondary level) – and in accordance with the competences held, adults are awarded partial certification, corresponding to a number of secondary-level educational competences, or full certification, corresponding to a level 3 National Qualifications Framework qualification.

The professional RVCC process is based on the referencing of the Professional RVCC to the level 4 qualifications contained in the National Qualifications Catalogue. On completion of the professional RVCC process, and in accordance with the competences held, adults are awarded partial certification, corresponding to a number of the competences required for the professional certification in question, or full certification, corresponding to a level 4 National Qualifications Framework qualification, where they have already completed their secondary education.

All adults completing a secondary-level RVCC process may continue on to higher education by taking special exams, in higher education establishments, under the higher education access regulation for people aged over 23 years (Decree-Law n^o. 64/2006, of the 21st of March), or by taking the secondary level national exams.

- MODULAR TRAINING – FLEXIBLE QUALIFICATIONS PATHWAYS

As mentioned above, modular training was set up to enable adults aged 18 or over who do not hold sufficient qualifications to enter or progress in the labour market, to acquire competences. Priority is given to those adults who have not completed their basic or secondary education.

In the case of secondary education, modular training courses made up of Short Training Units (STU) integrated with secondary-level training pathways from the National Qualifications Catalogue are only open to those adults who have completed at least the 3rd cycle of basic education.

On completion of a modular training qualifications pathway based on STU integrated with a secondary level NQC qualifications pathway, a level 4 National Qualifications Framework qualification is awarded and it is possible to carry on studies in higher education.

- OTHER WAYS OF COMPLETING SECONDARY-LEVEL EDUCATION

There are number of other ways of completing secondary-level education. The secondary-level completion programme is aimed at adults who attended, but did not complete, courses which are no longer in existence (up to six subjects per year to be completed) (regulated by Decree-Law n^o. 357/2007, of the 29th of October).

These secondary-level completion programmes are implemented either through the taking of exams or by following modular training courses referenced to the training offer described in the National Qualifications Catalogue.

a) Exams

The completion and certification of courses which are largely designed to prepare students for further study and courses leading to professional qualification is achieved through the taking of exams in subjects which are similar to the subjects not completed in the student's original course of study. The completion and general certification (without course specification) of secondary-level education is achieved by the taking of exams in selected subjects, but without these necessarily matching subjects on the student's original course of study.

Certification of courses primarily designed for further study and of general courses is at level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework, while certification of courses leading to professional qualifications is at level 4 of the National Qualifications Framework.

b) Training modules

Completion and certification by means of the successful completion of short training units referenced to the training system integrated with the secondary-level qualifications pathway contained in the National Qualification Catalogue leads to a level 3 National Qualifications Framework qualification.

Certification acquired through secondary-level completion mechanisms allows students to continue on to post-secondary or higher education.

NON-TERTIARY POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Specialized Technological Courses (STC) set up by the Decree-Law n.º 88/2006, of the 23rd of May, are specialised training pathways that focus on various technological areas and are designed to prepare students for entry into the labour market, to re-qualify professionally or to continue studies in higher education. These courses last for about a year and a half (between 1200 and 1500 of contact hours) and are run by both higher education establishments and non-higher education establishments.

Successful completion of a course in a technological specialisation leads to a Diploma in Technological Specialisation (DTS). This diploma allows students to apply for higher education courses via the special entry track, regulated by subparagraph b) of paragraph 2 of article 3 of the Decree-Law n.º 393-B/99, of the 2nd of October, and the training that they have already undertaken is accredited to whichever higher education course they enter.

Completion of a course in a technological specialisation entitles the student to a level 5 National Qualifications Framework qualification.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education in Portugal involves Universities and Polytechnic Institutes, in which graduate qualifications are equivalent to three cycles, namely: Undergraduate degree (1st cycle), Masters (2nd cycle) and Doctorates (3rd cycle). Undergraduate courses last for three years on average, and Masters from one to two years.

Admission to higher education institutions is regulated by the national entrance exam organised by the Directorate-General for Higher Education (*Direcção Geral do Ensino Superior*), and depends on the number of vacancies. After the publication of Decree-Law n.º 74/2006 of the 24th of March, the legal framework for higher education degrees and diplomas were approved in accordance with the Bologna Process, thereby creating greater flexibility through the adoption of alternative training routes in addition to the promotion of equal opportunities by facilitating and enabling flexibility in the access to higher education by adults over 23 years of age or above within the Lifelong Learning perspective.

In order for EU nationals to be accepted, they must present an academic qualification equivalent to grade 12 (compulsory education in Portugal).

The Portuguese National Qualifications Framework

The establishment of the National Qualifications System (NQS) in Portugal was designed to achieve a number of objectives, which are in tune with the objectives to be expected of any national qualifications system. A number of these objectives are, however, worth mentioning:

- To strengthen the integration between the general and the professional education and training offer, enshrining the principle of double certification in all cases.
- To build certification mechanisms into the system for school and professional competences acquired in informal and non-formal ways. Improving legibility, transparency and comparability of qualifications.
- Facilitating the qualification of lifelong learning, promoting flexibility of the offer by organizing it into short modular units that can be independently certificated and credited.
- To build up the oversight and quality control mechanisms for the education and training pathways in the National Qualifications System.
- To promote the relevance, certification and recognition of the education and training offer, including improved response to the needs of industry.
- To promote the relevance, certification and recognition of the education and training offer, including improved response to the needs of industry.

Descriptors of the qualification levels of the NQF

NQF is divided into 8 levels of qualification characterized in terms of three domains for the definition of learning outcomes:

Descriptors of the levels of the National Qualifications Framework *according to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council on the 23rd of April, 2008, on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (OJ n.º C 111, of May 6th, 2008).*

Qualification Level	Learning Outcomes		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
Level 1	Basic general knowledge.	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks.	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context.

Level 2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study.	Basic cognitive skills and practices necessary for the implementation of adequate information to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using rules and tools.	Work or study under supervision with some autonomy.
Level 3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study.	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information.	Take responsibility for completing tasks in the area of study or work. Adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems.
Level 4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of study or work.	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study.	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or contexts, usually predictable, but likely to change. Supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility.
Level 5	Comprehensive, specialized, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems.	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study subject to unpredictable changes; Review and develop performance for others.
Level 6	Advanced knowledge of a particular area of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles.	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialized area.	Manage activities or complex technical or professional projects, assuming responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable contexts of work or study. Take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups.
Level 7	Highly specialized knowledge, some of which are at the forefront of knowledge in a particular field of work or study, as the basis of capacity of reflection or research.	Specialized problem-solving required in research and innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and integrate knowledge from different fields.	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable work and require new strategic approaches. Take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and for reviewing the strategic performance of teams.
Level 8	Knowledge of a field of work or study and interface between fields.	Skills and more advanced and specialized techniques including the capacity of synthesis and evaluation necessary to solve critical problems in research or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice.	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment with development of new ideas or processes.

Source: Decree n°782/2009, of the 23rd of July

Structure of the National Qualifications Framework

NQF covers basic, secondary and higher education, vocational training and the recognition, validation and certification of competences process, obtained either through non-formal or informal experiences.

Qualification Levels	Qualifications
Level 1	2nd cycle of basic education
Level 2	3rd cycle of basic education obtained in basic education or via double certification paths
Level 3	Secondary education with a view to pursuing higher level studies
Level 4	Secondary education obtained via double certification paths or secondary education with a view to pursuing higher level studies plus on-the-job training – minimum six months
Level 5	Post-secondary non-higher level qualification with credits to pursue higher level studies
Level 6	University degree
Level 7	Master's degree
Level 8	Doctoral degree

Source: Decree n°782/2009, of the 23rd of July

Conclusions

1. The available strategies recognize the importance of Key Competences, but do not refer explicitly to the Key Competences within Legislation.
2. In Portugal the term “competences” means the application of knowledge, skills and attitudes, they are viewed as essential competences in which the skills and attitudes must allow one to use knowledge in various situations, both familiar and unexpected.
3. Adoption of an eight-level framework that offers descriptors that cover both the professional and the educational fields, and the recognition of informal and non formal learning, but does not specifically refer to the Learn to Learn Competence.
4. Creation and implementation of the National Qualifications Catalogue which implies learning outcomes adjusted to the descriptors of the NQF levels;
5. The ability to learn is necessary in each level in order to be able to adapt to the changing environment, in addition to being able to move from level to level.

Sources of information

Alonso, Luísa et al. 2002. Referencial de Competências-Chave – Educação e Formação de Adultos. Lisboa: Agência Nacional de Educação e Formação de Adultos.

Nugent, Neill. The Government and Politics of the European Union. Palgrave, Macmillan, 7th Edition.

Digital Sources:

Antunes, Fátima, 2004, Globalização, Europeização e Especificidade Educativa Portuguesa: A Estruturação Global de uma Inovação Nacional, Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais, 70; available at: <http://www.ces.fe.uc.pt/publicacoes/rccs/artigos/70/RCCS70-Fatima%20Antunes-101-125.pdf>

Araújo, Cidália e Clara Pereira Coutinho. A Iniciativa Novas Oportunidades e o Combate à Info-exclusão da População Adulta, Braga, Universidade do Minho, Departamento de Currículo e Tecnologia Educativa; available at:

http://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/bitstream/1822/9353/1/comunica%C3%A7%C3%A3o_%20Cc.pdf

Comissão Europeia. 2008. *Como Funciona a União Europeia-Guia das Instituições da União Europeia*, Luxemburgo, Serviço das Publicações Oficiais da Comunidade Europeia; available at http://ec.europa.eu/publications/booklets/eu_glance/68/pt.pdf

A Estratégia de Lisboa e o Plano Tecnológico, Évora, SI@P, 17 de Outubro de 2008, available at http://siap.oni.pt/apresentacoes/plano_tecnologico.pdf

Gabinete Coordenador Nacional da Estratégia de Lisboa e do Plano Tecnológico, Presidência do Conselho de Ministros, 2008, Estratégia de Lisboa: Novo Ciclo 2008 – 2010 – Consolidar as Reformas, Gabinete Coordenador Nacional da Estratégia de Lisboa e do Plano Tecnológico, Gazeta Artes Gráficas; available at http://www.estrategiadelisboa.pt/Document/PNR_2008-2010.pdf

Comissão das Comunidades Europeias. 2000. Memorando sobre Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida; available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/policy/memo_pt.pdf

Radaelli, Claudio M., *Europeanisation: Solution or Problem?* European Integration online Papers (EIoP) Vol. 8. 2004. N.º 16; available at <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2004-016a.htm>

Valente, Ana Cláudia, et. al. 2009. Caderno Temático 3: Estudos de Casos de Centros Novas Oportunidades, Agência Nacional para a Qualificação, I.P., 1ª edição, DDB Lisboa – Publicidade, Lda.

SWEDEN

Compiled and edited by Charlotta Kihlbert, Sweden (Stitelsen Litorina folkhogskola I Karlskrona)

Introduction

In the main document of EU regarding Key Competences, one of them is “Learning to Learn,” but how far has this work reached in every day work at schools and universities? How are different educational organizers dealing with the student’s awareness of its learning process and needs? And in what grade are national laws and strategies adapted to incorporate the key competences? All Swedish laws can be found in *Svensk författningssamling, SFS*. At the national website www.skolverket.se the Swedish school system, syllabus and directions are explained. Information about higher education can be found in the Higher Education Act (1992:1434) at www.uk-ambetet.se. The information is well organized and continuously updated.

Contemporary challenges sometimes require a fast change of life style for the individual. Technological, economic and social challenges in society sometimes mean unemployment. These changes forces adults to go back to school and education providers faces new challenges when there is a need for courses that are fast and easy and do not interfere too much with everyday life. The work to develop new strategies and laws is an ongoing process and hopefully this project will contribute to emphasizing on the L2L competence at both at an individual and national level.

Legislation

a) **Law on Secondary Education** SFS 2011:1108, SFS 2010:800

The goal of the municipal adult education is that adults should be supported and encouraged in their learning. They should be given opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in order to strengthen its position in working and social life and to promote their personal development. The starting point of education should be the individual's needs and circumstances. Those who received the least education should be prioritized. Municipalities should provide municipal adult education.⁴

The training shall be provided at the basic level and secondary level.

Education at the basic level designed to give adults the skills they need to participate in social and working life. It also aims to enable further study. Education at secondary level aimed at giving adults skills at a level equivalent to that education in secondary schools should provide.

For each course, there shall be a curriculum for the training at the basic level. For each topic, there should be a topic plan when it comes to education at secondary level.

b) **Law on VET** SFS 2009:128, SFS 2001:1131

The provisions of this law is aimed at the Polytechnic - to ensure that postsecondary vocational training that meets the needs of working life comes into being, - to ensure that state support for

postsecondary vocational training distributed effectively - ensuring that postsecondary vocational training quality, and - within narrow occupations meet needs of postsecondary vocational training that is intended to lead to gainful employment for the students, or to a new level in their profession. Education in Higher Vocational Education may be provided by state universities and colleges, municipalities, counties and individual natural or legal persons. The education provider may arrange for the training in collaboration with others.

An education in the polytechnic will essentially build on the knowledge that pupils in national programs in upper secondary school or the equivalent. Act (2009:1040) .

The training shall:

- 1st be based on knowledge generated partly in the production of goods and services, both in science and designed to a high quality and professional relevance is reached,
- 2nd provide such theoretical, practical and experiential knowledge required to work independently and in teams to perform advanced tasks in the workplace,
- 3rd characterized by both strong work related activities as theoretical basis,
- 4th developed and conducted in cooperation between industry and training providers, and
- 5th help to break the tradition of gendered education and career choices.

c) **Law on education for special training for adults with developmental disabilities**
SFS 2010:800, chapter 21

The goal of the specific training for adults is that adults with developmental disabilities should be supported and encouraged in their learning. They should be given opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in order to strengthen its position in working and social life and to promote their personal development. The starting point of education should be the individual's needs and circumstances.

Those who received the least education should be prioritized.

d) **Law on education in Swedish for Immigrants** SFS 2011:1108, SFS 2010:800, chapter 22.

The goal of education in Swedish for immigrants is that adult immigrants should be supported and encouraged in their learning. They should be given opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in order to strengthen its position in working and social life and to promote their personal development. The starting point of education should be the individual's needs and circumstances.

The training aims to provide adult immigrants with basic knowledge of Swedish. The program also aims to provide adult immigrants who lack basic reading and writing skills, the ability to acquire such skills. Reading and writing skills may take place in a student's native language or any other language that the student mastered.

Strategies

Strategy on Secondary Education Komvux

Municipalities all over Sweden should provide adult education. The training shall be provided at the basic level and secondary level. The goal of the municipal adult education is that adults should be supported and encouraged in their learning.

They should be given opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in order to strengthen its position in working and social life and to promote their personal development. The starting point of education should be the individual's needs and circumstances. Those who received the least education should be prioritized.

In July 2012, the new Education Act (2010:800) and the Ordinance on Adult Education (2011:1108) became applicable for Komvux, Särvox and SFI, as well as certain equivalent educational courses. At the same time, the new curriculum for adult education and training became applicable for Komvux, Särvox, SFI and equivalent educational courses.

The objectives and strategy for municipal adult education and training were formulated in a 2001 Government Bill entitled Adult Learning and the Future Development of Adult Education (Govt Bill 2000/01: 72).

Komvux, Särvox and SFI are to be based on the needs and requirements of the individual. Support for adult learning may take the form of teaching, supervision, study guidance and assessments of goal attainment and knowledge, skills and competence gained. Each student is also to receive an individual study plan, based on the abilities and life situation of the individual.

Accessibility and flexibility as regards time and location must be a major feature of the adult education and training system. Activities are to be characterized by consideration of the knowledge, skills and competence acquired by the adult in other contexts, such in working and social life. Validation will thus be an important point of departure when designing educational activities. Komvux should be designed in close cooperation with representatives of the employers and representatives of other policy areas.

Folk High Schools

In Sweden you can find 150 Folk High Schools and all of them give Secondary Education. One can get eligibility for higher education and vocational education training in different areas. Folk High Schools are state funded but privately run or run by the county council. Most of them are boarding schools for adults which creates a warm and motivating atmosphere. Folk High Schools are more flexible than Komvux in the sense that they do not need to follow a syllabus. Teachers at Folk High Schools have a great understanding of the learn to learn competence and difficulties that can occur in the life of an adult.

Folk High Schools are a form of study for adults, with a minimum age of 18 for the general courses. The general courses normally give preference to applicants with limited previous schooling. Each Folk High School decides independently of what courses they organize and what profile they have at their school. Schools offer different types of courses, with a variety of specializations and disciplines:

- General Course (qualifying) which is an alternative to secondary school or adult education at various levels
- Profile Courses
- Vocational training
- Distance learning
- Short courses , especially summer courses

The conversation and the students' active participation in the group are characteristic of the Folk High school as school type. They work with more or less cohesive study groups, studying often interdisciplinary project basis and assuming the student's needs, prior knowledge and experience. It provides great opportunities for students to influence the direction and content of the studies. Study visits, group work and field trips are common in Folk High Schools.

Folk High Schools are not bound to centrally determined curricula. By arrangement with the Higher education Council the General Course authorize higher studies.

To ensure the quality of post-secondary vocational education programs alongside higher education programs, the concept of higher vocational education programs are developed on the basis of local and regional initiatives and are thus also significant for regional development. The programs often last for two years, but there may also be shorter and longer programs. A program lasting at least one year can lead to a higher vocational education qualification and a program lasting at least two years to an advanced higher vocational education qualification. The programmed are directed at those who have completed upper secondary school as well as those who have a vocational background. Like higher education studies and municipal adult education, higher vocational education studies qualify for entitlement to student aid for the entire study period.

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education was created The Agency decides on whether an educational program may constitute higher vocational education. In connection with this, several forms of post-secondary education were replaced by higher vocational education. Higher vocational education programs are to be characterized by a strong link to working life, a theoretical basis and responsiveness to labour market needs.

The programs are primarily characterized by their close cooperation with representatives of working life, who participate directly in devising the training programs and finance the workplace-based training program. Programs may be organised by universities or other higher education institutions, municipalities, county councils or private education providers. Funding is in the form of state grants

or special funds, which are granted on the basis of a successful application. The entire program or parts of it may also be organised in the form of contract education.

a) Strategy on Education for special training for adults with developmental disabilities

Särvux, which is a distinct form of school, is also part of the school system. It consists of Särvux at basic level and at upper secondary school level. This form of school is intended for adults with learning disabilities or acquired brain damage. On 1 January 2007, the right to Särvux at basic level entered into force for adults who do not have the skills, knowledge and competence that education and training at compulsory special school is intended to provide and who are capable of benefiting from this education.

Särvux is intended to supplement student's skills, knowledge and competence, building on the previous education, experience and abilities of each individual. Särvux courses can therefore provide skills, knowledge and competence in individual subjects and skills equivalent to those acquired at compulsory and upper level.

Municipalities are obliged to offer SFI to adult immigrants who lack basic knowledge of the Swedish language. Courses should normally be available within three months of the individual's registration as a resident of a municipality. Depending on his or her educational background and prior knowledge, the student is placed in one of three study programs with varying degrees of intensity and pace. Regardless of the study program begun by a student, he or she is entitled to continue studies until completion of the highest course.

b) Strategy on Swedish for Immigrants

SFI forms part of the school system and aims to provide basic knowledge of the Swedish language. SFI also aims to provide adult immigrants who cannot read or write the opportunity to acquire these skills. The individual is to be given the opportunity to develop his or her ability to communicate orally and in writing in Swedish in everyday, social and working life situations. SFI is also intended as preparation for further study.

c) Strategy on Higher education

In Sweden, overall responsibility for higher education and research rests with the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) and the government. They decide on the regulations that are applied in the higher-education area. They also determine objectives, guidelines and the allocation of resources for the area.

The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for issues relating to schools, higher education institutions (HEIs), research, adult education, popular education and student aid.

All higher education is offered by public-sector higher education institutions or by independent education providers that have been granted degree-awarding powers by the government. Third-cycle courses and programs are offered by universities and university colleges that have been granted entitlement to award third-cycle qualifications. The decision to grant entitlement to award a third-

cycle qualification is made by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education according to new regulations that apply from 2010 onwards.

There are 14 public-sector universities and 21 public-sector university colleges. There are also three private universities and 10 private colleges.

Today, the goal of the government is that 50% go on to higher education after a high school diploma.

In strategies on Higher Education it does not say anything about the L2L competence.

d) Government program of current government

When Komvux was established in 1968 following the Government Bill concerning certain measures in the area of adult education, etc. (Govt Bill 1967:85, Standing Committee of Supply communication 1967:117, Riksdag Communication 1967:277), liberal adult education still dominated the educational opportunities for adults. Increased skills requirements in working life and formal eligibility requirements for admission to further education became crucial in the establishment of skills-enhancing adult education and training which was separated from liberal adult education. In the Bill, three main reasons for the establishment of municipal adult education and training are stated: reducing the growing educational inequality in society, creating opportunities for individuals to supplement their schooling and providing the labour market with a well-educated workforce.

Komvux at basic level is intended to provide adults with the knowledge, skills and competence they need to take part in society and working life. It is also intended to prepare adults for further study. Adults who lack the knowledge, skills and competence usually acquired in compulsory school, assuming that other conditions are met, have the legal right to education at basic level.

Komvux at upper secondary level is intended to provide adults with knowledge, skills and competence at a level corresponding to that of an upper secondary school education and training. During the selection process, precedence should be given to those qualified applicants who have short period previous formal education.

In all forms of education and training, the adult may obtain grades or certificates. If certain conditions are met, an upper secondary school qualification may be awarded within Komvux.

The aim of the current government is to increase the number of employable youths and encourage former drop-outs to finish compulsory school (grade 1-9) and the Swedish gymnasium (grade 10-12). A way to do that is to let drop-outs under the age of 25 try secondary education for 12 weeks without any preparations or obligations for the future. The courses are called Study-Motivating-Courses. When the course is finished, it is possible to continue to study at a Folk High School or at the Secondary School. This has proven to be quite successful. Most of these courses are given by the Swedish Folk High Schools. There is a major problem though, to make young people overcome restraints towards education and to make them attend regularly.

Today, the goal of the government is that 50% go on to higher education after a high school diploma.

e) **State strategy on Lifelong Learning**

The formal education system's role in life-long learning can be discussed from two points of view. Firstly, the childcare, primary and secondary education forms the foundation for lifelong learning. Being able to read, write and count is necessary, but lifelong learning is also dependent on the individual's desire, motivation and attitude to education and learning. Second, the formal system is an important task in striving for equitable recruitment and breaking the importance of social background. Adult education is a way to reduce existing gaps in knowledge and to break the trend of those fallen by the wayside of life-long learning.

One can see lifelong learning as a paradigm shift in Swedish education policy. The formal education system monopoly is released, the education system expands by recognizing learning outside the formal system, often in private directing, with a diversity principals; reform perhaps more far-reaching than the 1991 municipalization. Secondly, one can claim the opposite, that this is not something new; adult education, workplace education and civil society and civil associations have long existed. What is new is that learning environments are recognized as equivalent to the formal education system and that the various subsystems and learning environments are integrated and part of a whole.

Lifelong and life-wide learning needs coordination, infrastructure, collaboration and a coherent state strategy. But there is a limit to this rationalist planning thinking. Lifelong learning cannot be implemented from above, and lifelong learning can hardly be controlled. Such active control can get an opposite effect and discourage rather than favoring educational and learning environments that grew up without government intervention. The State responsibility and commitment is instead about creating conditions and incentives for individuals, businesses and public entities to invest in education and learning.

The starting point must be the individual and the realization that different individuals have different needs and that needs change over time. At one point in the individual's life cycle there must be an educational opportunity. In what form or with which the principal training or learning is conducted is of secondary importance. Education content and level cannot be based only on the individual's formal educational background, but must assume that learning takes place in many environments other than the formal education system.

“Learning activity that is undertaken throughout life and improves knowledge, skills and competencies within personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspectives. Thus the whole spectrum of learning, formal, non-formal and informal is included as are active citizenship, personal fulfilment, social inclusion and professional, vocational and employment related aspects.” (Report from The Role of National Qualifications Systems)

The L2L competencies are not mentioned by name but the intensions of the government and the Department of Education is clear. Throughout texts published on governmental web-sites one can acknowledge the idea of learn to learn.

National Qualifications Framework

Preschool - Preschool is an educational group for children from 1 year until the start of school. Children start in the nursery at different ages and participate in various long time. Early childhood education should also make it possible for parents to combine parenthood with work or studies.

Preschool - Preschool classes is voluntary. All children should be offered places in pre-school from the autumn semester of the year they turn 6 years and until they start primary school.

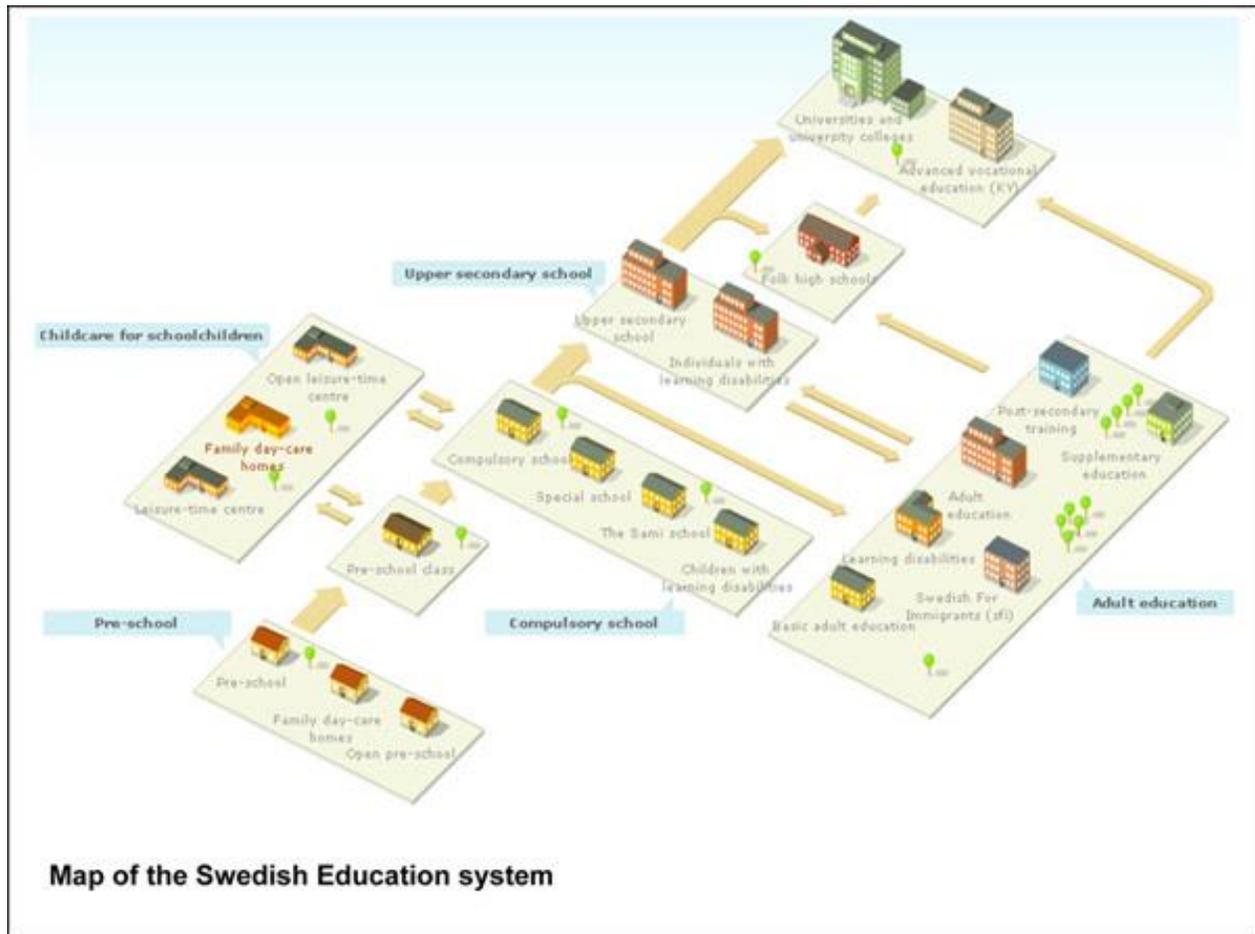
Schoolchild care - The municipalities are obliged to offer after-school or educational care to schoolchildren through 12 years if their parents are working or studying.

Primary education - In Sweden, all children between 7 and 16 attend school. Start of the school is flexible so that the child can begin as 6, 7 or 8 years old.

Secondary - All young people in Sweden who have finished primary school is entitled to a three-year high school education. Upper secondary education provides basic knowledge for further study and for a professional future.

A student, who is lacking non-formal and informal learning or formal education but having relevant practical experience, can still be admitted to higher education. This means that the higher education institutions not only have to recognize the formal learning, but also the non-formal and informal learning, if the applicant so desires.

This is L2L competence in practice.



- Preschool, age 1-6
- Preschool class, age 6
- Leisure-time centers
- Other pedagogical activities
- Compulsory school, age 7-16
- Upper secondary school, age 16-19
- Adult education, age 20-
- Supplementary school
- Folk high schools (independent adult education colleges), age 18-
- Higher vocational education
- Universities and university colleges
-

Conclusions

Possibilities for Secondary Education in Sweden are good. Adults can choose between Komvux which is Secondary Education run by the municipality or to study at a Folk High School. The

varieties of courses are numerous. For those who prefer Vocational Training that is possible. The awareness of learn to learn competence is spread among teachers and from the authorities side it has become possible for adults to have their competencies and skills validated and used as a base for higher education. L2L competence is not mentioned in the documents even though it is used in practice. Especially Folk High Schools use the competence as a method to make the student aware of its capability to study and to strengthen and improve the student's self-esteem.

Nevertheless, the L2L competence as a key competence needs to be implemented in Swedish legislation and strategies. When one search for information about L2L competence at official Swedish websites it says "wrongly spelt" or "cannot be found". Nevertheless the idea of using the competence in the classroom is used, but primarily in Secondary Education and less in Higher Education. The competence to learn is mainly described as an ability to memorize facts and concepts, less to understand what has been learnt or how it has been learnt.

The economical factor has to be mentioned as well. Large study groups and less hours of organized teaching contribute to make it harder for those who are in need of teacher support. Studying by distance has become popular and for some students that is a success factor but for others, it is the contrary. Knowledge of L2L competence will contribute to an understanding of what kind of economical means education providers and institutions need. This project is important; not only in detecting and highlighting the L2L competence, but also in stressing how economical means could be used and distributed effectively.

Sources of information:

www.riksdagen.se

www.skolverket.se

www.folkbildning.se

www.uk-ambetet.se

www.uhr.se

The Role of National Qualifications Systems in Promoting Lifelong Learning. An OECD report from Thematic group 2.

Adult Education and Training. Fact sheet Ministry of Education and Research, September 2013

Det livslånga och livsvida lärandet. Mats Ekholm and Sverker Härd. Liber. ISBN 91-89313-79-8

National Qualifications Framework

Published by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education 2011

Reg.nr 12-5202-10

FINAL OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- In all countries available strategies recognize importance of Key Competences in general and L2L competence in particular.
- Legislation which should be the instrument of implementation of Strategies lacks systematic approach regarding Key Competences, regardless clear recommendations provided by EU documents that Key Competences should be developed in all education levels: secondary education, VET, higher education and adult education.
- National Qualifications Frameworks do not mention Key Competences and L2L competence, however, in all cases entire framework bases on the understanding that ability to learn is one of key competences for personal development. Ability to learn is necessary for moving through the levels of qualifications but also within the single level to be able to adapt to the changing environment.
- General programs (National Curriculum) of basic and secondary education recognize the importance of Key Competences and L2L Competence in particular as necessary for life in knowledge society.
- The awareness of learn to learn competence is spread among teachers and even if L2L competence is not mentioned in the documents it is used in practice, but primarily in Secondary Education and less in Higher Education.
- Teachers working in adult and continuing education as well as especially the teachers' related to vocational education and training come from very diverse backgrounds. They possess very different formal qualifications and professional experience from various fields. Only a part of them has actually undergone specific training in the subject of adult learning and teaching. There is, thus, no widely shared common understanding of Key Competencies in this professional group.
- Guidance and counseling becomes more and more important for developing L2L competence in the adult and continuing education.

Partners



Lithuania, Lietuvos suaugusiųjų švietimo asociacija

Leading partner



Estonia, Eesti Vabariidusliit



Germany, Stephansstift Zentrum fuer Erwachsenenbildung



Italy, ARACNE associazione di promozione sociale



Netherlands, Stichting Participatie in Diversiteit (PiD)



Portugal, EPRALIMA Escola Profissional do Alto Lima, C.I.P.R.L



Sweden, Stitelsen Litorina folkhogskola I Karlskrona