LLLGLOSSARY
REVIEW OF LIFELONG LEARNING TERMINOLOGY

LIFELONG
LEARNING
PLATFORM
EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION

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LLLGLOSSARY REVIEW OF LIFELONG LEARNING TERMINOLOGY

FOREWORD

Dear reader,

The following document consists of the key terms relating to education and training in a lifelong learning context. The aim of the document is to provide a common understanding of various terms that are often used interchangeably in the literature and some definitions that vary depending on the sources concerned and/or context of the learning environment. More specifically, the content encompasses some of the terms relating to non-formal and informal learning as well as recognition, skills, competences and learning outcomes. These terms are used differently by different education and training providers and with the emergence of the lifelong learning concept some terms can be often misused. The document gathers sources from institutions such as CEDEFOP, UNESCO, UNESCO UIL, Council of Europe, Eurydice, as well as civil society. It also draws upon education research literature.

The content and structure of the publication was based on rounds of consultations with experts from LLLP members, CEDEFOP, UNESCO, DG EMPL, ASEM-LLL Hub and EESC. The Review of Lifelong Learning Terminology is a living document that will be developed continuously and will be enriched with further tools and updates in coming years.

METHODOLOGY

This document draws on the results of a 3-year long process including a variety of activities such as desk research, survey implementation and several rounds of consultations. These activities are explained in more depth below.

Action Plan and advisory board: In 2019 LLLP came together with Cedefop, UNESCO, and the European Commission to establish the action plan with the key activities to be implemented. The advisory board which steered the work on the Review was formed with representatives from the aforementioned international and EU organisations.

Desk research: The Review of Lifelong Learning Terminology encompasses key terms relating to lifelong learning from a civil society perspective, including those terms that are used interchangeably. Throughout the whole development process, desk research was conducted to ensure different sources were reviewed which included European literature coming from civil society and official institutions as well as international literature. The sources came from LLLP membership and wider civil society organisations' grey literature as well as different glossaries and other publications from institutions such as UNESCO, Cedefop, Council of Europe and Eurydice among others.

Survey: LLLP, supported by the advisory board, prepared a survey to collect inputs from different stakeholders around Europe and beyond on the different terminology used in the education and training field. Responses to the survey were collected throughout 2020. The main results were presented to the advisory board before integration into the main document.

Rounds of consultations: Throughout 2021, consultation meetings were held with experts and LLLP membership to validate the findings from the survey and the desk research as well as to further enrich the content with additional perspectives from various education and training sectors and expertise backgrounds. The consultations with experts included the contributions from ASEM-LLL, a network for university cooperation in Lifelong Learning Research between Asia and Europe. The consultations with members included feedback on the various "contested"/"controversial" terms as well as on the scope of the Review and the usefulness of the document for their membership.

Finalisation and next steps: The document was finalised in early 2022, with final reviews conducted by the advisory board before publishing. It was agreed that the Review will remain a living document with further updates planned for the upcoming years as well as additional accompanying tools to be developed.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE REVIEW OF TERMINOLOGY

Given the aim of the document to contextualise terms and highlight its use by civil society from different sectors and types of education and training in Europe, the document presents each term alphabetically with two distinct sections. First the definition of the term by official governance or academic international institutions. Second, the notes section where the term is further explained, contextualised and enriched by showing the nuances and uses of the terms at civil society or practitioner level as well as the discussions around many terms which are in constant evolution or currently contested depending on the perspective of the users of the terms.

In addition, given the current context of global environmental changes and digital transformation as well as the challenges faced by democratic societies in Europe and beyond, key terms surrounding these topics are shown together in different clusters. These clusters include but are not limited to: education for sustainability, digital education and citizenship education. In other instances, terms such as 'educator' are shown together with the different terms under their umbrella (e.g. teacher, trainer) to facilitate connections being made between some closely related terms. Something similar was done for the competence cluster which includes knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

A

access (to education and training)

Definition
Conditions, circumstances or requirements (such as qualifications, education level, competences or work experience) governing admittance and participation of a person in learning (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
The conditions and circumstances such as socioeconomic status of a learner greatly impact the possibilities of the individual's access to education and training. It is noted that students from the bottom socioeconomic quintile are more likely to suffer from education poverty (and early school leaving) than students from the top socioeconomic quintile (World Bank, 2018, p. 18), here.

Taking into consideration the lifelong learning approach, accessibility of education and training systems encompasses participation in all sectors and forms of learning and types of learners along the lifelong learning path. The first principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights underlines that: '*Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successful transitions in the labour market*' (European Commission, 2017). However the term is more commonly used referring to (formal) educational institutions or programmes (UNESCO, 2019c). In some cases the term is narrowly referred to as having the right to access specific qualifications at a particular education level within the education system in which the qualification was obtained (i.e. a first cycle degree usually wwwprovides access to second cycle studies) (University of Deusto, 2003).

active citizenship

See: citizenship education

adult education / adult learning

Definition
- *Adult learning and education*: The entire body of learning processes, formal, non-formal and informal, whereby those regarded as adults by the society in which they live, develop

and enrich their capabilities for living and working, both in their own interests and those of their communities, organisations and societies (UNESCO - UIL, 2016).

- *Adult education and training/adult learning*: Formal, non-formal or informal learning – of a general or vocational nature – undertaken after initial education and training (Cedefop, forthcoming). possibilities of the individual's access to education and training. It is noted that students from the bottom socioeconomic quintile are more likely to suffer from education poverty (and early school leaving) than students from the top socioeconomic quintile (World Bank, 2018, p. 18), here.

At different levels and across different continents, separate definitions for adult education and adult learning are also found, some of which are presented below:

adult education

Definition

As a practice is about engaging adults in systematic and sustained self–educating activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values (Merriam & Brockett, 2007), here.
It can mean any form of learning adults engage in beyond traditional schooling, encompassing basic literacy to personal fulfilment as a lifelong learner (Peterson, 2018), here.

adult learning

Definition

The entire range of formal, non-formal and informal learning activities which are undertaken by adults after a break since leaving initial education and training, and which results in the acquisition of new knowledge and skills (Brooks & Burton, 2008, p. 5), here.

Notes

In relation to education and training, at EU level, adult learning statistics include the population aged 25-64 (Eurostat, 2021), here. Young people are defined as being between 15 and 29 years old. For some indicators, data is available by age group and for others by individual age (Eurostat, n.d.), here. However, the age range differs in the EU depending on the member state.

Cedefop, forthcoming, highlight that adults get involved to acquire general education in topics of particular interest (e. g. in open universities); acquire core skills not acquired earlier during initial education or training, such as literacy, numeracy (compensatory learning) and thus to gain access to qualifications not obtained, for various reasons, during initial education and training (second-chance education); improve or update knowledge and/or skills (upskilling); acquire new skills for a career move (retraining/reskilling); ensure social integration (e.g. language courses for migrants).

In the same line, UNESCO underlines that this education specifically targets individuals who are regarded as adults by the society to which they belong to *'improve their technical or professional qualifications, further develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge with the purpose to complete*

a level of formal education, or to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies in a new field or to refresh or update their knowledge in a particular field'. This also includes what may be referred to as 'continuing education', 'recurrent education' or 'second chance education' (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012).

Issues stemming from the use of these terms include their practical application which might differ from the commonly used definitions of International Organisations and International and National Government agencies. It is also common to see definitions conflating education and learning, making them equivalents. There is also the issue of different organisations/agencies using definitions that fit best with their own policies and methodologies. For example, the definition on adult learning by Brooks & Burton focuses on learning activities which are undertaken by adults after a break. UNESCO (adult learning and education), in turn, specifies that ALE includes all those who engage in adult learning and education, even if they have not reached the legal age of maturity.

Andragogy is another term that is commonly associated with the instruction of adults. The foundation of the term is based upon the assumption that adults and children learn differently (Finn, 2011, p. 36).

Related term(s): continuing education

continuing education

Definition

Any formal or non-formal learning (general, specialised or vocational) undertaken after initial education and training – or after entry into working life which aims to improve or update knowledge, know-how, skills or competences (upskilling); acquire new skills for a career move (retraining/ reskilling); and ensure personal or professional development (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

It can include any kind of education, both formal and non-formal as well as general or specialised; covering all levels: secondary, post-secondary non-tertiary, higher/tertiary (Cedefop, 2014, p. 2014). This education or training is crucial for employability of individuals, irrespective of age and level of qualification. Cedefop's forthcoming publication underlines that continuing education and training is part of lifelong learning and covers a broad range of skills, including non-job-specific, transversal skills applicable in daily life; is delivered by a diversity of providers within and outside formal education and training, in the private and public sector; and promotes horizontal permeability (access of initial VET graduates to continuing VET) and vertical permeability (access of upper-secondary VET graduates to higher education).

A more specific definition can also be found pertaining to VET: continuing vocational education and training (CVET). CVET, following the aforementioned definition, is defined as vocational education or training carried out after initial education and training – or after entry into working life. CVET can be

carried out at secondary, post-secondary or tertiary level, in vocational education (full-time school-based or alternance training) or in apprenticeship.

Related term(s) adult learning, adult education, continuing vocational education and training (CVET)

further education

Definition

Educational programmes that are aimed at people who have finished compulsory education. The level of these programmes is below that of a university degree (European Parliament, 2022), here.

Notes

This term is closely related to continuing education and training, the latter being more widely used in the adult education/adult learning sector.

apprenticeships

Definition

Systematic, long-term training with alternating periods at the workplace and in an education or training institution (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

There are numerous international definitions of 'apprenticeship' and different national understandings of this term. A 2018 Cedefop study showed that the apprenticeship schemes share the following **common features**: compulsory learning and/or working in a company, in combination or not with learning at an education and training provider, and the contractual link between the learner and the company - with the apprentice being paid or otherwise compensated for the work-based component (Cedefop, 2018, forthcoming). Cedefop also notes that an apprenticeship generally leads to qualifications at level 3 and 4 of the European Qualifications Framework (at level 5 in some countries). The understanding of the term also varies across languages, for example in French, the term 'apprentissage' relates to both apprenticeship and the process of learning. In Germany, the dual system (duale Ausbildung) is an example of apprenticeship.

artificial intelligence

Abbreviated as AI

Definition

A set of sciences, theories and techniques whose purpose is to reproduce by a machine the cognitive abilities of a human being (Council of Europe, n.d.-c), here. The connection between AI and education involves three areas: learning with AI (e.g. the use of AI-powered tools in classrooms), learning about AI (its technologies and techniques) and preparing for AI (e.g. enabling all citizens to better understand the potential impact of AI on human lives) (UNESCO, 2019a), here.

Notes

One of the main aims of AI has been to be able to entrust a machine with complex tasks which are normally delegated to a human. However, the Council of Europe also highlights that there is contestation in regards to distinction between «strong» AI (who are able to contextualise very different specialised problems completely independently) and «weak» or «moderate» AI (who perform extremely well in their field of training). There are experts who consider that «strong» AI would require further advances in regards to basic research. These advances would mean that AI is able to model the world as a whole and not just improvements in the performance of existing systems. **Artificial intelligence and data usage in education and training** are included in one of the priorities in the EU's Digital education action plan (2021-2027) (European Commission, 2020b).

assessment (of learning outcomes)

Definition

- Process of appraising knowledge, know-how, information, values, attitudes, skills and/or competences – acquired in formal, non-formal or informal settings – against relevant standards (learning outcomes, validation) (Cedefop, forthcoming).
- The wide variety of methods or tools (written, oral and practical tests/examinations, projects and portfolios) that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of students during or at the end of an education programme or a defined part of that programme (Glossary of Education Reform, 2015), here.

Notes

A distinction made between assessment and evaluation is whether an individual or an education and training system/method is undergoing appraisal, respectively. A common problem with this concept is the different interpretations according to language. Accordingly, achieving mutual understanding between countries when exchanging practices and making decisions at supranational levels is often difficult. Specifically there is a debate between the formal and non-formal educational field if the sole aim of designing learning processes is towards assessing concrete learning outcomes or creating learning spaces/journeys. Same goes for the bodies/institutions being competent for assessment. This topic was explored as part of the Lifelong Learning Platform's Annual Theme in 2021: Rethinking Assessments (Lifelong Learning Platform, 2021).

Cedefop also highlights that assessment is typically followed by certification and that, in the literature, 'assessment' generally refers to appraisal of individuals whereas 'evaluation' is more frequently used to describe appraisal of education and training methods or providers (Cedefop, 2011, p. 13, forthcoming).

Related term(s): evaluation, recognition

attitude

See: competence
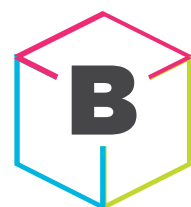
basic skills

Definition
- The skills needed to live in contemporary society, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and mathematics (Cedefop, 2014, p. 143), here.
- Refer to literacy, mathematics, science and technology; these skills are included in the key competences (European Commission, 2022a), here.
- The fundamental knowledge (i.e. declarative and procedural) as well as operational aspects of knowledge needed for learning, work and life (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.

Notes
The UNESCO International Bureau of Education notes that, within the curriculum, there are three ways in which literacy and numeracy are normally considered. These are: f**oundational, essential or basic skills**. UNESCO also underlines that the term can include a range of skills that individuals need to live successfully in contemporary society (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013).
In their publications, Cedefop has removed this entry, to avoid confusion with terms such as **core skills and competences and key skills and competences**, the latter following the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning Council Recommendation launched in 2018. For more information on these related terms see the entry on key competences.

bildung (German)

Definition
- Combination of the education and knowledge necessary to thrive in your society, and the moral and emotional maturity to both be a team player and have personal autonomy. Bildung is also knowing your roots and being able to imagine the future (*European Bildung Network, n.d.*), here.
- The whole range of education from setting educational objectives in general towards its particular operation in different school subjects (Sjöström et al., 2017), here.

Notes
Bildung is a complex educational concept that emerged in Germany in the mid-eighteenth century. Especially in Germany and Scandinavia, conceptions of Bildung became the **general philosophical framework to guide both formal and informal education**. In more recent years, the concept of Bildung has slowly begun to be used in the international science and environmental education literature (Sjöström et al., 2017).

From the **civil society point of view**, Bildung is often considered as a term that **encompasses the processes of education and learning and describes an open experiential learning process**, which in European contexts has been recently discussed under the term of holistic lifelong learning. Bildung as such is a continuous process over time and usually not connected to assessment or subject to validation. There are many definitions of Bildung existing coming from recent initiatives and projects. The Bildung project, for example, uses the following definition: "*Bildung is an individual maturing process connecting education, upbringing, knowledge, culture, and personal responsibilities towards humans and our globe*". In addition, the project aims to create a definition that integrates linguistic specific terms by asking partners to define what Bildung is (BILDUNG project, 2021).

blended learning

See: digital education

certificate

Definition
- Official document, issued by an awarding body, which records the knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences of a person following assessment against a predefined standard (Cedefop, forthcoming).
- (*In the context of Erasmus+*) A document which is issued to any person who has completed a learning activity in the field of education, training and youth, where applicable. It certifies the attendance and, where applicable, the learning outcomes of the participant in the activity (European Commission, 2022a), here.

Notes
Cedefop also considers the terms diploma and title under their definition.

certification

Definition
Process of issuing a certificate, diploma or title formally attesting that a set of learning outcomes (knowledge, know-how, values, attitudes, skills and/or competences) acquired by a person have been assessed by a competent body against a predefined standard (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
Certification may validate the outcomes of learning acquired in formal, non-formal or informal settings (Cedefop, 2009b, forthcoming).

citizenship education

Definition
- In broad terms an education from early childhood towards becoming clear-thinking, informed and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society (UNESCO, 1998), here.
- Engagement of citizens in the economic, social, cultural and political fields. (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
An important remark on citizenship education is that it is not explicitly bound to a specific field of education, but encompasses formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities. The Council of Europe's definition of Education for Democratic Citizenship comprises a whole set of training/ teaching, acting, informing practices geared towards the development of competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes/values) which enable citizens to act, promote, support democracy, human rights and diversity.

There has been some criticism of the Confintea VII process where the term citizenship education is considered to have been watered down in relation to the dimensions of democracy and rule of law and provided instead, on the international level, a rather blurry concept for action.

Other relevant terms related to citizenship education include but are not limited to the following:

active citizenship

Definition
- Encompasses a wide span of participatory activities such as political action, participatory democracy and civil society and community support, adding to it the value-based approach, i.e. democratic values, mutual respect and human rights (Joint Research Centre, 2009, p. 10), here.
- Engagement of citizens in the economic, social, cultural and political fields (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
In the EU legal context, it is defined by the "*acquisition and exercise of rights for civic and political participation. As such, it includes citizenship and residence, membership in (political) organisations, voting, running for office, volunteering or participation in political protest*" (European Commission, 2021b). At the civil society level, the term can be understood as people getting involved in their communities and democratic life at all levels (from local to national and global). In this sense, "*an active citizen promotes the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes developing a combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to work to make a difference in the society*" (EucA, n.d.).

There is an ongoing argument on whether active citizenship as a concept rooted in social capital theory already feeds into democratic action, participation and political learning. Active citizenship in the youth field is further developing into the concept of critical youth citizenship (Ohana, 2019). See also the Lifelong Learning Platform's position paper on active citizenship.

Some EU education and training civil society organisations consider that **education is key to foster democratic and civic participation at local, national, European and global level**. Learning to become an active citizen is about knowledge and attitudes, which requires the use of methodologies that involve learners actively in their own learning. They should be encouraged at all levels and in all sectors of education. Curriculum should be competence-based, aiming to equip learners with democratic attitudes and social, civic and intercultural competences, as key competences for life (Lifelong Learning Platform, n.d.-a).

At EU level, education is seen as a potential driver for developing critical awareness and encouraging active civic engagement. The NESET network highlights that "*promoting common values at all stages of education, making it more inclusive, and encouraging a European dimension in teaching, are seen as core measures for strengthening social cohesion and fighting xenophobia, divisive nationalism and the spread of disinformation*". However, it has been indicated that there is a problematic nature in relation to both the notion of active citizenship (which is very context dependent) and of common European values (vagueness often used to achieve political balance) (NESET network, n.d.).

citizenship competence

Definition

Ability to act as a responsible citizen and to fully participate in civic and social life, based on understanding of social, economic, legal and political concepts and structures, as well as global developments and sustainability (Council of the European Union, 2018a), here.

Notes

Citizenship competence is one of the eight key competences for lifelong learning set out by the Council of the European Union in 2018.

democratic citizenship

Definition

Includes all aspects of life in a democratic society (Council of Europe, 2022b), here.

Notes

The term is related to a vast range of topics such as sustainable development, participation of people with disabilities in society, gender mainstreaming, prevention of terrorism and many other areas, and not limited to the citizen's legal status and to the voting right this status implies (Council of Europe, 2022b).

Some civil society organisations working in this area consider that democratic citizenship is exercised in the triangle of democracy as a form of governance, as a form of society and as a form of living. Thus includes the quality condition of the state and its institutions (eg. political institutions, rule of law, voting/representation of citizens' will), the quality condition of civil society actors and institutions in a democratic society (eg. press freedom, freedom of association, etc), the quality of individual and (specifically vulnerable) groups exercise of rights (eg. freedom of opinion, freedom from harm, protection from discrimination, etc). For the latter two, the dimensions of protecting rights and freedoms as well those of access, participation and co-governance are a core condition. For democratic citizenship, the quality and pluralism of education and youth work provisions has a decisive and crucial role (Hladschik et al., 2021).

The Council of Europe's Reference framework on Competencies for Democratic Culture provides a sound and elaborated concept to reflect accordingly on learning provisions, conditions and processes. For the CoE, **education for democratic citizenship** is "*education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law*" (Council of Europe, 2016).

global citizenship education

Definition
- An education that supports peoples' search for knowledge about the realities of their world, and engages them in critical global democratic citizenship towards greater justice, sustainability, equity and human rights for all (Global Education Congress, 2002), here.
- An education that aims to empower learners of all ages to assume active roles, both locally and globally, in building more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure societies (UNESCO, 2018b), here.

Notes

UNESCO's report on GCE topics and learning objectives refers to a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity. It emphasises political, economic, social and cultural interdependence and interconnectedness between the local, the national and the global (UNESCO, 2015a).

The concept of global citizenship is situated in a specific culture, era and/or geopolitical context; partial and liable to be seen differently by others; contingent, as its understanding and use depend on the context; provisional because its use can and does change (Andreotti, 2006). UNESCO's report on GCE: taking it local acknowledges that many countries and societies have national, local and traditional concepts that promote ideas that echo those at the core of GCED. In this report concepts from all corners of the world such as the African Ubuntu and Latin American Sumak Kawsay and Buen vivir are discussed (UNESCO, 2018a). In the European context, the North-South Centre of the CoE, the Anna Lindh Foundation and UNESCO UIL are among those paving paths towards a clearer application of GCE. Similarly, Bridge47, mobilises civil society from all around the world to do their part in creating a more fair, peaceful and equitable world with the help of Global Citizenship Education.

climate change education

See: education for sustainability

community education

Definition

- A process of personal and community transformation, empowerment, challenge, social change and collective responsiveness. It is community-led, reflecting and valuing the lived experiences of individuals and their community. Through its ethos and holistic approach community education builds the capacity of groups to engage in developing a teaching and learning process that is creative, participative and needs-based. It is grounded on principles of justice, equality and inclusiveness. It differs from general adult education provision due to its political and radical focus (Bailey et al., 2011), here.
- Refers to adult education and learning, generally outside the formal education sector, which aims to enhance learning, empower people and contribute to society. It promotes personalised learning and flexibility within the learning group. Participants are involved as equal partners in identifying needs, designing and implementing programmes, and adapting them on an ongoing basis (Citizens Information Board, 2022), here.

community- based learning

Abbreviated as CBL

Definition

- Learning that incorporates the community and immediate environment into the teaching approach. It can be done in many different ways, but the overall goal is to integrate the community into academic learning (Working Scholars, 2022a), here.
- A wide variety of instructional methods and programs that educators use to connect what is being taught in schools to their surrounding communities, including local institutions, history, literature, cultural heritage, and natural environments (Great Schools Partnership, 2013), here.
- Learning that strengthens bonds across generations, promotes agency and self-reliance, and fosters social cohesion, thus encouraging active citizenship and a sense of ownership of a community's future (UNESCO - UIL, 2017), here.

competence

Definition

- A proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. They are described in terms of responsibility and autonomy. (European Commission, 2022b), here.
- Demonstrated ability to use knowledge, know-how, experience, and – job-related, personal, social and/or methodological – skills, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development (Cedefop, forthcoming).
- A set of knowledge, skills and attitudes (Council of the European Union, 2018a), here.

Notes

In these definitions, they are considered broader than skills. In the European Skills/Competences and Occupations (ESCO) systematisation, there is a distinction between *skill/competence concepts and knowledge* concepts, but there is not always a strict distinction between skills and competences.

Various competence frameworks describe competences as a set or interplay of Values, Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge (VASK). There is a tendency to relate competence learning to the development of individual capacities, while other approaches argue that competences are revealed in social contexts. In Europe, there is a multiversum of competences and competence frames developed, which are closely linked to each other and require cross-fertilisation: Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture model, European Training Strategy competence models, Digital Competences Framework, LifeComp: The European framework for the personal, social and learning to learn key competence, the European sustainability competence framework (GreenComp) and the revised Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, among others. There is a strong recommendation to understand competence models not as the rule book, but rather apply them as a telephone book.

Competence is not limited to cognitive elements (involving the use of theory, concepts or tacit knowledge); it also encompasses functional aspects – including technical skills – as well as interpersonal attributes (e.g. social or organisational skills) and ethical values (Cedefop, 2011, forthcoming).

Related term(s): Key competences

As it is explained in the definitions and notes, competences encompass other key terms which are explored more in depth below:

attitude

Definition

- A learned tendency or readiness to evaluate things or react to some ideas, persons or situations in certain ways, either consciously or unconsciously (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.
- The overall mind-set which an individual adopts towards an object (e.g. a person, a group, an institution, an issue, a behaviour, a symbol, etc.) and typically consists of four components: a belief or opinion about the object, an emotion or feeling towards the object, an evaluation (either positive or negative) of the object, and a tendency to behave in a particular way towards that object (Council of Europe, 2016), here.

Notes

In the European Framework of Key Competences and UNESCO this term is underpinned by values, thoughts and beliefs and has an influence on behaviour (Council of the European Union, 2018b, p. 7; UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013). The OECD approach addresses 'values' as a

separate category from attitudes (OECD, 2018).

knowledge

Definition
- Outcome of assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices related to a field of study or work (Cedefop, 2014), here.
- The body of concepts and factual information (data), including their interrelated structures and patterns, concerning the natural and social environment as well as our understanding of the world, people and society, gained through learning and/or experience (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.
- Facts and figures, concepts, ideas and theories which are already established and support the understanding of a certain area or subject (Council of the European Union, 2018b), here.

Notes
UNESCO differentiates between declarative knowledge which points to 'knowing what' (e.g. factual knowledge) and procedural knowledge which points to 'knowing how', e.g. knowledge of specific functions and procedures to perform a complex process, task or activity. According to Cedefop, it is possible to differentiate between forms of knowledge which represent different ways of learning about the world. Different attempts have been made to collate such lists, the following categories seem to be frequently represented: i) objective (natural/scientific) knowledge, judged on the basis of certainty; ii) subjective (literary/aesthetic) knowledge, judged on the basis of authenticity; iii) moral (human/normative) knowledge, judged on the basis of collective acceptance (right/wrong); iv) religious/divine knowledge, judged by reference to a divine authority (Cedefop, 2014).

Cedefop also highlights that knowledge encompasses tacit and explicit knowledge. "***Tacit knowledge** is knowledge learners possess which influences cognitive processing. However, they may not necessarily express it or be aware of it. **Explicit knowledge** is knowledge a learner is conscious of, including tacit knowledge that converts into an explicit form by becoming an 'object of thought'"* (Cedefop, 2014).

skill

Definition
- Ability to perform tasks and solve problems (Cedefop, 2014), here.
- Ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems (European Commission, 2022b), here.

Notes
According to ESCOpedia, skills can be described as **cognitive** (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or **practical** (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments) (European Commission, 2022b).

Tuning Educational Structures in Europe Glossary refers to skills as a learned capacity to achieve predetermined results often with the minimum outlay of time, energy, or both and distinguishes general/generic and subject specific skills (University of Deusto, 2003). International Standard Classification of Occupations divides skills into the two following dimensions: skill level, referring to a function of the complexity and range of the tasks and duties involved; and skills specialisation, which is defined by the field of knowledge required including: the tools and machinery used, the materials worked on or with, as well as the kinds of goods and services produced (ILO, 2004).

values

Definition
- Culturally defined principles and core beliefs shared by individuals and groups that guide and motivate attitudes, choices and behaviour, and serve as broad guidelines for social life (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.
- A general belief that an individual holds about the desirable goals that should be striven for in life; values transcend specific actions and contexts, have a normative prescriptive quality about what ought to be done or thought in different situations, and may be used to guide individuals' attitudes, judgments and actions (Council of Europe, 2016), here.
- They are about what matters to us. They are central to our personal identity; they frame the beliefs which form our worldview, and they motivate us to action (OECD, 2018), here.

Notes
The OECD underlines that *"values define the qualities and behaviour to which we aspire or admire in others"*. Similarly, "*they define the goals, norms and structures that we believe create a society that promotes human flourishing*". It is highlighted that some values impose ethical or moral obligations while others are about aesthetics, or ideas of civilised behaviour such as good manners (which may exert an equally strong pressure to conform). In this understanding, values are underpinned by implicit theories of well-being and social capital; this includes why a particular preference serves one's best interests, or why certain values are desirable for social capital (OECD, 2018, p. 36).

As it is mentioned in the section on attitudes, UNESCO and the EU consider that values underpin attitudes whereas the OECD works with separate definitions for attitudes and values.

continuing education and training

See: adult education/adult learning

(continuous) professional development

Abbreviated as CPD

Definition
- Intentionally developing the knowledge, skills and personal knowledge needed to perform professional responsibilities (EIMF, 2015), here.
- The learning activities professionals engage in to develop and enhance their abilities (CPD UK, 2020), here.
- Any action of education and training undertaken by a person after entering working life, to update his/her skills and qualifications – or acquire new ones –, improve his/her performance and progress in career (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
This term is also known as Continuing Professional Education (CPE). CPD obligations are common to most professions. CPD is usually defined by professional bodies "*as a structured approach to learning to help ensure competence to practice, taking in knowledge, skills and practical experience. CPD will generally involve a learning activity that helps maintain, develop or increase knowledge and the professional performance standards of the participant*" (EIMF, 2015). CPD is not passive and reactive, it makes learning conscious and proactive in order to strengthen personal skills for application in the workplace. In addition, there are a variety of different methodologies involved, such as workshops, conferences, and e-learning or online courses (FutureLearn, 2021), here.

Eurydice's report on Teachers in Europe highlights that the recent Communication on achieving the European Education Area by 2025 and the Council's conclusions on 'European teachers and trainers for the future' emphasises the teachers' and trainers' need for continuous opportunities for professional development. Engaging in CPD can help achieve the goals of good quality teaching and learning by further developing and updating the competences of teachers and trainers, to ensure their expertise and encourage their autonomy and engagement (Eurydice & EACEA, 2021).

Cedefop defines **professional development as implicitly continuing**, since it is carried out after initial education and training. In their upcoming publication, they underline that the term encompasses job-related skills and generic skills (team or time management, negotiation skills, conflict management, communication, etc.); may take the form of self-directed learning, formal training, certifications, consultation, conferences, coaching or mentoring, communities of practice and technical assistance (Cedefop, forthcoming).

credit system

Definition
Instrument which enables accumulation of learning outcomes gained in formal, non-formal and/or informal settings, and ease their transfer from one setting to another for validation (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
At the EU level, different credit systems have been developed. One of the most known is the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The ECTS is a tool of the European Higher Education Area for making studies and courses more transparent. It helps students to move between countries and to have their academic qualifications and study periods abroad recognised (European Commission, n.d.-a). More information about this tool can be found in the Annex. Another system developed was the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET). This system uses flexible and individualised learning pathways, including transnational mobility (Cedefop, 2009a).

Cedefop notes that a credit system can be designed by describing: an education or training programme and attaching points (credits) to its components (modules, courses, placements, dissertation work, etc.); or a qualification using units of learning outcomes and attaching credit points to every unit (Cedefop, forthcoming).

curriculum

Definition
- Design, planning and sequencing of teaching and learning processes. It includes a statement of purpose, contents, activities and learning practices, as well as the modalities for assessing learners' achievements (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, n.d.), here.
- Inventory of activities related to the design, organisation and planning of an education or training action, including definition of learning objectives, content of programmes, methods (including assessment of learners and evaluation of programmes) and material, as well as arrangements for training teachers and trainers (Cedefop, forthcoming).
- Lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course or program (Great Schools Partnership, 2013), here.

Notes
In different contexts, the term can either have a narrow focus on schools or a broader focus on curriculum as a process. Depending on how broadly the term is defined or employed, it typically refers to the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn. This would include i) **the learning standards or learning objectives** they are expected to meet; ii) **the units and lessons** that teachers teach; iii) **the assignments, projects and materials** given to students; and iv) **the tests, assessments, and other methods** used to evaluate student learning. In the case of an individual teacher's curriculum, this would include the specific learning standards, lessons, assignments, and materials used to organise and teach a particular course (Great Schools Partnership, 2013). Cedefop links the term curriculum to the design, organisation and planning of learning activities and highlights the difference with the term programme which refers to the implementation of these activities (Cedefop, forthcoming).

UNESCO underlines that "t*o improve education quality special efforts are needed to align the intended curriculum (the official guidance), the implemented curriculum (what teachers and learners actually do), and the attained curriculum (what students actually learn)*" (UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning, 2021).

democratic citizenship

See: citizenship education

digital competence

See: digital education

digital education

Definition

Comprises two main aspects: 1) the **development of digital competences** relevant to learners and education and training staff, and 2) the **pedagogical use of digital technologies** to support, improve and transform learning and teaching (European Commission, 2020a; Eurydice et al., 2019), here and here.

Notes

The 2020 Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP) Staff working document specifies further the pedagogical use in terms of **teaching, learning and assessment**, and explicitly including face-to-face or blended practices as well as remote education in the scope of the definition.

Within the umbrella of digital education several related terms have been identified. Various researchers and organisations (Racheva, 2017; Van Beek, 2011) have attempted to differentiate the different terms including but not limited to virtual learning, blended learning, distance learning, online learning. Below some of these terms have been looked at more in depth:

blended learning

Definition

- Structured opportunities to learn which use more than one teaching or training method, inside or outside the classroom, through which at least part of the content is delivered online (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.
- Pedagogical approach mixing face-to-face and online learning, with some element of learner control over time, place, path, and pace (Lifelong Learning Platform, 2019), here.
- Instructional model which combines supervised, presential learning (school or work-based learning) and online or distance learning (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

The UNESCO definition includes "*different learning or instructional methods (lecture, discussion, guided practice, reading, games, case study, simulation), different delivery methods (face-to-face or computer mediated), different scheduling (synchronous or asynchronous) and different levels of guidance (individual, instructor or expert led, or group/social learning)*". More frequently, the term refers to a combination of face-to-face teaching and technologies: it involves changing the more traditional methods of schooling and organisation by making the most of the new technologies (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013).

An example of blended learning is the flipped classroom model, in which students view lecture material prior to class, then spend class time engaging in exercises under the supervision of the teacher (European Commission, 2020a, p. 94). This term is close to, but not synonymous with hybrid learning, which refers to an educational model in which an education or training action is followed simultaneously by participants in either face-to-face or online learning (J. Singh et al., 2021). Cedefop's forthcoming publication also highlights that blended learning 2.0 incorporates emerging web technologies such as mobile learning, gamification, and social media.

Related term(s): hybrid learning, online learning, technology-enhanced learning, virtual learning

digital competence

Definition

Ability to make confident, critical and responsible use of, and engagement with, digital technologies for learning, at work, and for participation in society (Cedefop, forthcoming; European Commission, 2022a), here.

Notes

According to the EU digital competence framework, they comprise five areas: 1) digital literacy, 2) digital communication and collaboration (including media literacy) 3) content creation (including programming), 4) safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cybersecurity) and 5) problem solving (and critical thinking) (European Commission, 2022a; Joint Research Centre,

2016a). Digital competence is one of the eight key competences for lifelong learning set out in 2018 (Council of the European Union, 2018a).

Related term(s): information and communication technologies skills, key competences

digital learning

Definition

- Pertains to, among others, the ability to articulate and search for data online, analyse them and critically evaluate as well as to manage, organise and store data and information (Joint Research Centre, 2016a), here.
- Ability to access, manage, understand, integrate, communicate, evaluate and create information safely and appropriately through digital technologies for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship. It includes competences that are variously referred to as computer literacy, ICT literacy, information literacy and media literacy (Nancy Law et al., 2018), here.
- Ability to use information and communication technologies to find, critically assess, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills (American Library Association, 2011; Cedefop, forthcoming), here.

Notes

In the EU key competence framework, digital literacy is a part of digital competence, as information and data literacy. Similar as Education for Democratic Citizenship asks for developing capacities of a literacy of the political; there is also the challenge to develop means for a digital transformation competence i.e. a literacy of the digital which integrates learning for digitalisation (co-determining the digital transformation in society), learning about digitalisation (social, cultural, economic and environmental impact of digitalisation on societies) and learning through digitalisation (digital learning) (Martínez & Pirker, 2020).

According to the American Library Association, digital literacy has three dimensions: operational (skills and competences that enable to read and write in diverse digital media), cultural (developing a repertoire of digital literacy practises in specific social and cultural contexts) and critical (awareness that meaning-making resources are selective and operate as a means of social control) (American Library Association, 2011). This understanding of the different dimensions has been taken up by Cedefop in their upcoming publication on education and training terminology.

UNESCO-UIS has been working with the Hong Kong University's Centre for Information Technology in Education to develop a global framework to measure digital literacy. The UNESCO-UIS information paper (2018) highlights that the reasons for countries to adopt and develop frameworks vary from enhancing the digital literacy of public officials, to bridge the digital divide, bolster its ICT industry and build young citizens' employment capacity. It is also underlined that the definitions for digital literacy also differ with some views focusing on the term as a new literacy comprising multiple dimensions and represented in new, multimodal social practices. In this instance, the term is understood as an

emergent literacy from other literacies and, as such, is greater than the sum of the other literacies (among which information literacy, media literacy, Internet literacy, and computer or ICT literacy). There is a general agreement that competence in digital literacy requires the person to have the necessary knowledge and skills, however, there are different views when it comes to attitudes (Nancy Law et al., 2018).

e-learning

Definition

- Strategies and didactical methods of learning in which the main elements include the use of ICT technologies (European Commission, 2022c), here.
- Learning supported by information and communication technologies (ICT) (Cedefop, 2014), here.
- All forms of electronically supported teaching and learning, especially the web-based and computer based acquisition of, and engagement with, knowledge and skills (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.
- Instructional model based on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to acquire knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences through the Internet. In most cases, it refers to a course or program delivered online (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

It must be noted that it is not limited to digital literacy, e-learning can encompass different formats and hybrid methods, and that it can support both distance and face-to-face education and training. It may encompass multiple formats and hybrid methods: using software, internet, online learning or any other electronic or interactive media such as chat or videoconferencing (Cedefop, 2014).

UNESCO highlights that e-learning may take place in or out of the classroom. It is frequently an essential component of distant education and may involve virtual learning environments (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013). Although the phrases 'e-learning' and 'distance learning' are often used interchangeably, they are often considered as two separate entities. On one hand, e-learning is designed to create an online communication between the teacher and the student, while distance learning is more about the distance between the student and the teacher, and how technology bridges that gap (Berg, 2018).

Related term(s): digital education, online learning, blended learning

information and communication technology skills
Abbreviated as ICT skills

Definition

The use of information and communication technologies as mediating devices supporting student learning that can include elements of assessment, tutoring, and instruction. It involves a wide set of applications and processes, such as web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms

and learning environments, and digital collaboration (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.

Notes

Referring to an OECD report on ICT skills and employment, the following classification is offered in the Glossary, based on the level of proficiency and/or work setting: **professional ICT skills** (ability to use advanced ICT tools, and/or to develop, repair and create such tools); **applied ICT skills** (ability to use simple ICT tools in general workplace settings (in non-IT jobs); **basic ICT skills or 'ICT literacy'** (ability to use ICT for basic tasks and as a tool for learning) (OECD, 2002). In 2016, OECD as part of the work on Skills for a Digital World reviewed its classification into **ICT generic skills**, required to use ICT technologies, devices and software to communicate and collaborate, access and retrieve information, as well as process and publish data; **ICT specialist skills**, required by ICT professionals to develop, operate and maintain ICT systems and for whom ICT constitutes the main part of their job; and **ICT complementary skills**, required to efficiently carry out the work within the new, technology-rich environments shaped by ICTs (OECD, 2016).

Related term(s): digital skills, digital literacy

technology-enhanced learning

Definition

The use of information and communication technologies as mediating devices supporting student learning that can include elements of assessment, tutoring, and instruction. It involves a wide set of applications and processes, such as web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms and learning environments, and digital collaboration (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.

Notes

UNESCO highlights that technology-enhanced learning "includes the delivery of content through a wide range of electronic media (e.g. internet, intranet/extranet, audio- and videotape, satellite broadcast, interactive television, etc.) and access to resources that inform learners of new ideas, which they can then reflect upon and integrate into their existing knowledge". As part of this process, computers can be used to promote collaborative learning approaches in which learners are motivated to negotiate shared meaning and to work in teams (instead of competitively) towards a common goal (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013).

Social media and social software applications (e.g. blogs and wikis) provide new opportunities for communicating, accessing knowledge, creating content and collaborating online. The suitable use of technologies, when embedded into curriculum design, would allow for supporting the development of innovative teaching practices as well as enhancing and enriching learning experiences (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013).

Related term(s): e-learning, digital learning, digital education

online learning/education

Definition

• Learning that involves an internet connection and can include virtual interactions such as, webinar, online lecture, virtual meeting etc. and uses online tools for learning (Kunwar et al., 2020), here.
• Instructional model in which education and training takes place over the Internet (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

Online learning is considered to include many distinct and overlapping terms, such as e-learning, online learning, virtual learning, blended learning, etc. The ambiguity of such terms has been a matter of wide discussion. Nowadays, online education or learning, which takes place at a distance via the internet, is considered by some as an umbrella term to refer to any type of online course for learning rather than in a traditional classroom" (Kunwar et al., 2020). The concept of online learning being associated with technology is a key part of the definition. As such it is defined as learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices with internet access. In both cases, students can be anywhere, removed in space, to learn and interact with instructors and other students (V. Singh & Thurman, 2019).
In the same line, Cedefop's upcoming publication underlines that online learning can be synchronous (instructor-led) or asynchronous (self-directed or open / self-paced). It is also noted that this type of learning requires: **innovation and adaptation** (new pedagogical strategies and tools for teaching and learning, efficient monitoring of learners' engagement and assessment); **high-quality learning content**, user-friendly tools and secure platforms; **adequate infrastructure**, connectivity and digital equipment; and **effective digital capacity planning and development** (Cedefop, forthcoming).

virtual learning

Definition

• Distance learning conducted in a virtual learning environment with electronic study content designed for self-paced (asynchronous) or live web-conferencing (synchronous) online teaching and tutoring (Racheva, 2017), here.
• Instructional model based on the use of shared resources (educational software, online platforms), both outside and inside learning organisations (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

The Mackinac Center notes that virtual learning can present itself in different formats such as: **computer-based** (Instruction is not provided by a teacher; instead, instruction is provided by software installed on a local computer or server), **internet-based** (similar to computer-based instruction, but in this case, the software that provides the instruction is delivered through the Web and stored on a remote server), **remote teacher online** (instruction is provided by a teacher, but that teacher is not

physically present with the student but interacts with the student via the Internet), **blended learning** (combines traditional face-to-face instruction, directed by a teacher, with computer-based, Internet-based or remote teacher online instruction), **facilitated virtual learning** (computer-based, Internet-based or remote teacher online instruction that is supplemented by a human "facilitator") (Cedefop, forthcoming; Van Beek, 2011).

digital literacy

See: digital education

digitalisation (of education and training)

Definition
In general, it refers to the adoption or increase in use of digital or computer technology (by an organisation, an industry, or a country) and therefore describes more generally the way digitisation (conversion of information or data from analogue to digital format) is affecting the economy and society (OECD, 2017), here. In **education and training**, the process of transforming systems towards digital learning (access, content, pedagogical methods, infrastructures and technologies, management, monitoring and assessment of learners) (Cedefop, forthcoming; European Commission, 2020b), here.

Notes
The developments brought about by digitalisation demand innovation and adaptation through - among other requirements: new pedagogical strategies and tools for teaching and learning, efficient monitoring of learners' engagement and assessment; high-quality learning content, user-friendly tools and secure platforms which respect privacy and ethical standards; adequate infrastructure, connectivity and digital equipment and effective digital capacity planning and development (Cedefop, forthcoming).

The DEAP - Staff Working Document underlines that "*the digitalisation of education and training is increasingly generating data that has the potential to be used to improve educational performance, personalise learning, reduce dropouts and increase the efficiency of teaching and learning provision*" (European Commission, 2020a, p. 22). However, the use of predictive or learning analytics in Europe has a lot of potential but also risks. At this stage, at EU level, many countries have not yet established guidelines governing the ethical use of data in research or education: a lack of common vision and strategy can be observed from the side of education and training providers. On the other hand, the EdTech sector is currently offering a number of products and tools that make use of data-driven solutions without always ensuring that data use and protection, ethics and privacy are respected. There is a need to reflect on how to ensure that the choices and decisions of educational institutions and policy makers have a positive impact on the future of education and training (European

Commission, 2020a).

In the higher education context, the White Paper "Bologna Digital 2020" uses the following definition: "*Digitalisation of higher education is a transformative process that substantially influences all activities of higher education institutions. It permeates all processes, places, formats and objectives of teaching, learning, researching and working in higher education. This digital transformation includes the development of new infrastructures and the increasing use of digital media and technologies for teaching and learning, research, support services, administration and communication, but also the need of students and staff to develop new (digital) skills for their current and future workplaces*" (Rampelt et al., 2019, p. 8).

early leaving (from education and training)

Definition
Disengagement from initial education or training during or after compulsory school without obtaining a qualification sufficient to progress in education or training or career (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
Early leaver from education and training refers to a person aged 18 to 24 who has completed at most lower secondary education and is not involved in further education or training in the four weeks preceding the Labour force survey (LFS) (Cedefop, forthcoming; Eurostat, 2019), here. Eurostat explains that the indicator 'early leavers from education and training' is expressed as a percentage of the people aged 18 to 24 with such criteria out of the total population aged 18 to 24. This indicator is monitored by the European Commission and developments are published every year in the Education and Training Monitor. The European Commission considers that ELET hinders productivity and competitiveness and is an "obstacle to economic growth and employment". Furthermore, being early leavers makes young people vulnerable to unemployment, poverty and social exclusion due to the lack of skills and qualifications acquired (Lifelong Learning Platform, 2020, p. 15).

The Lifelong Learning Platform, in the ET2020 Shadow Report 2020 found that the most useful actions that could be taken at European level to address early leaving, the majority of respondents opted for: encouraging cross border exchange of innovating teaching and learning practices (75%), followed by

promoting European networks of organisations (41%) and enabling a space for discussion between national policymakers for policy reform (35%) (Lifelong Learning Platform, 2020, p. 6).

education

Definition
- Processes by which societies deliberately transmit their accumulated information, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values, skills, competencies and behaviours across generations. It involves communication designed to bring about learning (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012), here.
- Any act or experience that has a formative effect on an individual's mind, character, or physical ability (Eurostat, 2019), here.

Notes
Eurostat's broader definition can be considered more in line with the lifelong learning approach.

Related term(s): learning

education for sustainability

Abbreviated EfS

Definition
- Content, learning methods, and outcomes that help students develop a knowledge base about the environment, the economy, and society. EfS helps students learn knowledge, skills, perspectives, and values that guide and motivate them to seek sustainable livelihoods, participate in a democratic society, and live in a sustainable manner (McMillan & Higgs, 2003).
- Develops the knowledge, skills, values and worldviews necessary for people to act in ways that contribute to more sustainable patterns of living. It enables individuals and communities to reflect on ways of interpreting and engaging with the world. EfS is futures-oriented, focusing on protecting environments and creating a more ecologically and socially just world through informed action (ACARA, 2015).

Notes
EfS is also referred to as sustainability education or education for environmental sustainability. Sterling goes further than sustainability education proposing to also reflect on sustainable education. The difference being that **sustainable education** is about ethos, philosophy, assumptions and culture. It focuses on the questions, 'what is education?' and 'what is the purpose of education?'. Whereas **sustainability education** is about policy and practice. This term pays attention to the question, 'How should we do this?'. In other words, an educational system or institution demonstrating a culture of

sustainable education would be the platform upon which sustainability education policy and practice would thrive. 'Sustainability education' is not 'yet another' educational topic but indicates both the need and possibility of a shift of educational culture and practice as a whole, appropriate to our times (Sterling, 2022).

Education for sustainability and sustainability education have been commonly used by institutions, organisations and academics from the USA (e.g. U.S. Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development) and Australia (e.g. Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority). The latter has been used by the European Commission in the last few years. Even though it focuses on environmental sustainability, the work of the Commission has included all pillars of sustainability including economic and social. In 2022, the Commission has released a Council Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development together with a competence framework (GreenComp).

The Lifelong Learning Platform released a position paper in 2020: Lifelong Learning for Sustainable Societies. The paper showcases the results from the consultation with experts and members and covers a wide range of recommendations such as: policy coherence and alignment to make sustainability a priority which is mainstreamed across Europe and the world; provide long-term support and training for educators; promote a green mindset in skills, education and training programmes, beyond the labour market; as well as promote cooperation between different learning sectors and generations of learners (Lifelong Learning Platform, 2020).

This term can also be considered an umbrella term containing the various initiatives, programmes and other trends that have taken place in the last 5 decades and which have produced different terms in the field of education and training. This umbrella encompasses terms related to climate change, the environment and sustainability as an overarching theme. These terms include but are not limited to:

climate change education
Abbreviated as CCE.

Definition
Education that aims to raise awareness about climate change, its causes as well as its consequences among communities and individuals, especially young people, and to equip them with the skills, values and bring about changes in attitudes and behaviours needed to anticipate and adapt to disruptions and find solutions to mitigate the impact of global warming (UNESCO, 2015b, 2019b), here and here.

Notes
CCE is also referred to as climate education (CE) and it is rooted in Education for sustainable development (ESD). As with ESD, this term is widely used by UNESCO in all its initiatives in this area over other terms such as environmental education or education for sustainability.

environmental education

Abbreviated as EE

Definition

- Process that allows individuals to explore environmental issues, engage in problem solving, and take action to improve the environment. As a result, individuals develop a deeper understanding of environmental issues and have the skills to make informed and responsible decisions (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2021), here.
- Process that helps individuals, communities, and organisations learn more about the environment, and develop skills and understanding about how to address global challenges. It has the power to transform lives and society. It informs and inspires. It influences attitudes. It motivates action (North American Association for Environmental Education, 2015), here.

Notes

Environmental education does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action. Instead, it teaches how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking and it enhances students' own problem-solving and decision-making skills (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2021). EE is a key tool in expanding the constituency for the environmental movement and creating healthier and more civically-engaged communities (North American Association for Environmental Education, 2015).

education for sustainable development

Abbreviated as ESD

Definition

Education that empowers learners with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity. It is a lifelong learning process and is an integral part of quality education (UNESCO, 2016c).

Notes

ESD can be considered an umbrella for many forms of education that already exist, and new ones that remain to be created (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022). ESD is the term most used internationally and by the United Nations (i.e. UNESCO website dedicated to ESD). It is an education that empowers people of all genders, ages, present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity.

ESD promotes efforts to rethink educational programmes and systems (both methods and contents) that currently support unsustainable societies. It is a holistic and transformational education which addresses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment. It achieves its purpose by transforming society (UNESCO, 2016b, 2016c). ESD affects all components of education: legislation, policy, finance, curriculum, instruction, learning, assessment, etc. (UNESCO, 2016b, UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022). ESD is recognized as an integral element of Sustainable Development Goal

(SDG) 4 on quality education and a key enabler of all other SDGs.

UNESCO has developed in the last decade the ESD for 2030 initiative. The ESD 2030 Roadmap addresses five priority action areas: advancing policy, transforming learning environments, building the capacities of educators, empowering and mobilising youth and taking action in communities (UNESCO, 2020).

green skills

Definition

- Abilities needed to live in, develop and support a society which aims to reduce the negative impact of human activity on the environment (Cedefop, 2014, p. 130), here.
- Fundamental skills to the transition to a low-carbon economy, which can be general such as sustainable agriculture, soil protection, energy use and waste reduction, or more technical such as knowledge on renewable energy (European Commission, 2022a), here.

Notes

Cedefop's forthcoming publication adds on the 2014 definition focusing on **skills for the green economy** as knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes needed to live, work and act in economies and societies seeking to reduce the impact of human activity on the environment. Cedefop highlights that green skills can be further sub-categorised in i) **transversal skills** linked to sustainable thinking and acting, relevant to all economic sectors and occupations; ii) **specific skills** required to adapt or implement standards, processes and services to protect ecosystems and biodiversity, and to reduce energy, materials and water consumption; and iii) **highly specialised skills** required to develop and implement green technologies such as renewable energies, sewage treatment or recycling. Cedefop underlines that skills for the green economy are also referred to as skills for green jobs and skills for the green transition (Cedefop, forthcoming).

In the VET sector, they are usually referred to as the technical skills (or competences) needed in the workforce to develop and support sustainable social, economic and environmental outcomes in business, industry and the community. Green skills appears to be the preferred term over green competences at European and global level (Cedefop, 2014; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022)

Related term(s): environmental skills

education for sustainable development

See: education for sustainability

education (and training) system

Definition
- Activities whose primary purpose is the provision of education in educational institutions, as well as the people, institutions, resources and processes – arranged together in accordance with established policies – to support the provision of education in educational institutions at all levels of the system. At the national level, the education system is usually coordinated by one or several ministries of education (UNESCO, 2016a), here.
- Set of interrelated institutions and structures (governments, social partners, – public and private – education and training providers, lifelong guidance bodies), policies and provisions (laws and regulations, standards, objectives, operating modes, curricula and programmes, methods and approaches), activities (initial and continuing education and training actions, lifelong guidance) and resources (human, educational, material and financial) required by a society to develop, improve and keep up to date the knowledge, skills and competences of its population (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
In some cases, this term is also referred to as the **Education Sector or Education and Training system**. Eurydice's website contains the pages of the 40 national units based in the 37 countries participating in the Erasmus+ programme (27 Member States, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of North Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey). The information on the national structures of education systems can either be browsed by national unit or by chapter. National units are responsible for the drafting of their education system descriptions and the content of all 14 chapters (Eurydice, 2022).

learning system

Definition
A learning system is essentially a collection of artefacts that are 'brought together', in an appropriate way, in order to create an environment that will facilitate various types of learning process. Learning systems can take a variety of different forms - for example, a book, a mobile form, a computer, an online forum, a school and a university. Most learning systems will provide various types of learning resources and descriptions of procedures for using these to achieve particular learning outcomes. They will also embed various strategies for assessing the levels and quality of the achievement of their users (Barker, 2010), here.

educator

Definition
All those who professionally guide and support learners in their learning process: teachers and instructors in formal vocational education and training, as well as trainers, coaches, and other professionals in non-formal settings and coaches supporting learning in the workplace (European Training Foundation, forthcoming).

Notes
From a lifelong learning perspective, an educator can be understood as a person providing education, no matter the context, sector or environment. It can be formal, non-formal or informal education. The term **teacher educator** refers to an instructor preparing preservice teachers for their professional role as a teacher and reflective practitioner (IGI Global, n.d.).

Below can be found several related terms which provide the different uses and specialisations of this umbrella term.

facilitator

Definition
(learning -) Person who promotes acquisition of knowledge and skills by establishing a favourable learning environment, including anyone exercising a teaching, training, supervision or lifelong guidance function. The facilitator helps the learner develop knowledge and skills by providing guidelines, feedback and advice throughout the learning process (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
A teacher operating under non-traditional concepts of teaching may be called a facilitator of learning. A facilitator of learning, therefore, is a teacher who does not operate under the traditional concept of teaching, but rather is meant to guide and assist students in learning for themselves - picking apart ideas, forming their own thoughts about them, and owning material through self-exploration and dialogue (Working Scholars, 2022b).

teacher

Definition
A person whose function is to impart knowledge, know-how or skills to learners in an education or training institution (Cedefop, 2014), here.

Notes
Cedefop underlines that a teacher may fulfil several tasks such as organising and carrying out training programmes/courses and transmitting knowledge, whether generic or specific, theoretical or practical. A teacher in a vocationally-oriented institution may be referred to as a 'trainer' (Cedefop, 2014).

teacher

Definition

Anyone who fulfils one or more activities linked to the (theoretical or practical) training function, either in an institution for education or training, or at the workplace (Cedefop, 2014), here.

Notes

Cedefop explains that two categories of trainer can be distinguished: i) professional trainers (training specialists whose job may coincide with that of the teacher in a vocational training establishment and ii) part-time or occasional trainers (professionals in various fields who take on, in their normal duties, part-time training activity, either in-company or externally. Trainers may carry out various tasks such as: design training activities; organise and implement these activities; provide the actual training (i.e. transfer knowledge, know-how and skills); help apprentices develop their skills by providing advice, instructions and comments throughout the apprenticeship (Cedefop, 2014, p. 178).

e-learning

See: digital education

entrepreneurship (competence)

Definition

Capacity to act upon opportunities and ideas, and to transform them into values for others. Entrepreneurship competence is founded upon creativity, critical thinking and problem solving, innovation and risk-taking, perseverance and the ability to work collaboratively in order to plan, manage and achieve projects of cultural, social or financial value (Joint Research Centre, 2016b, 2018), here and here.

Notes

Entrepreneurship is understood as a transversal key competence applicable by individuals and groups, including existing organisations, across all spheres of life: from nurturing personal development, to actively participating in society, to (re)entering the job market as an employee or as a self-employed person, and also to starting up ventures (cultural, social or commercial). It is focused on value creation, regardless of the type of value or context (public, private, third sectors or a combination) (Joint Research Centre, 2016b). Entrepreneurship competence is one of the eight key competences for lifelong learning set out by the Council of the European Union in 2018 (Council of the European Union, 2018a).

Related term(s): Entrepreneurship education

entrepreneurship education

Definition

- Concerns learners developing the skills and mind-set to be able to turn creative ideas into entrepreneurial action (Eurydice, 2016), here.
- Collection of formalised teachings that informs, trains, and educates anyone interested in participating in socioeconomic development through a project to promote entrepreneurship awareness, business creation, or small business development (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022), here.

Notes

Taking into account the previous term, it can also be understood as the process of equipping (or developing/enhancing) learners with entrepreneurship competences. The aim is to support learners' personal development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employability and is relevant across the lifelong learning process, in all disciplines of learning and to all forms of education and training (formal, non-formal and informal) which contribute to an entrepreneurial spirit or behaviour, with or without a commercial objective (Eurydice, 2016).

Related term(s): Entrepreneurship (competence)

environmental education

See: education for sustainability

equality (in education and training)

Definition

- Treating everyone in a way that guarantees access to the same educational opportunities, based on the value that all human beings are equal in fundamental potential and self-worth (EASNIE, n.d.), here.
- Absence of discrimination concerning the access to resources and actions to all learners, regardless of individuals' origin, background or specific needs (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

Findings of the PIONNERED project show that equal education systems would enhance the educational attainment levels of individuals belonging to disadvantaged backgrounds. However, the findings also indicate that factors such as social background, gender, disability, or immigration history still impact achievement at different education stages. This term is close to, but not synonymous with "equity", which refers to the fair treatment of all learners through provision of resources and actions adapted to individual learner needs, to ensure equal opportunities (Latta, 2019).

Related term(s): equity (in education and training), social inclusion (in education and training)

equity (in education and training)

Definition

- Looks beyond access into treatment - curriculum design, teaching approaches, outcomes - broadly speaking, the benefits of having access to education for different (types, needs of) learners (EASNIE, n.d.), here.
- Fair treatment of all learners through provision of resources and actions adapted to individual learner needs, to ensure equal opportunities (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

Equity in educational systems in Europe is viewed as the extent to which individuals can take advantage of education and training, in terms of opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes. Cedefop highlights that in an equitable education system, goals and expectations are the same for all learners, but the supports needed to achieve those goals are adapted to the learners' needs (Cedefop, forthcoming). Equitable systems ensure that the outcomes of education and training are independent of socio-economic background and other factors that lead to educational disadvantage. Equity underpins the provision of personalised resources needed for all individuals to reach common goals (Latta, 2019, p. 7).

The Eurydice report finds that top-level authorities in nearly all European education systems define or refer to a range of concepts relating to equity in education in their official documents. Such terms used include fairness, equal opportunities, equality/inequality, disadvantage, non-discrimination, vulnerable groups, at risk groups and early school leaving. Regardless of the terms used in top-level policy documents, the vast majority of European education and training systems have at least one major policy initiative in place focused on promoting equity in education or on supporting disadvantaged students (Eurydice, 2020, p. 14).

Related term(s): equality (in education and training), social inclusion (in education and training)

evaluation (of education and training)

Definition

- Judgement on the value of an intervention, training programme or policy with reference to criteria and standards (such as its relevance or efficiency). More frequently used to describe appraisal of education and training methods or providers (Cedefop, 2014, p. 130, forthcoming), here.
- Systematic process aimed at judging the effectiveness of any teaching and learning programme (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.

Notes

In contrast to 'assessment', which usually refers to appraisal of individuals. It is worth noting that in some languages both evaluation and assessment are translated into one word i.e. evaluación in Spanish. In relation to teaching and academic studies in a subject or department and the related degree programmes, evaluation refers to comprising all those activities which aim at assessing quality and fitness for purpose and of purpose (University of Deusto, 2003).

Similarly to assessment, in evaluation we can also distinguish on one hand the **formative evaluation** which refers to a process of appraising "*ways of improving and enhancing the implementation and management of interventions. Formative evaluations are primarily conducted for the benefit of those managing the intervention with the intention of improving their work or related future initiatives*". On the other hand, **summative evaluation** refers to a "systematic investigation to determine the worth or merit of a programme, measure or policy using relevant social research methods and criteria, standards and indicators" (Cedefop, forthcoming; Descy & Tessaring, 2005, p. 9).

excellence (in education and training)

Definition

Outstanding performance and quality standards of different aspects of an education ecosystem (be it teaching, research, student experience or management) (ENQA, 2014), here.

Notes

The term is usually associated with higher education. ENQA's 2013 report provides an overview in the context of higher education. The Erasmus+ 2021-2027 Glossary provides a set of characteristics linked to excellence in VET, to be promoted to the new initiative Centres of Vocational Excellence.
The concept of 'excellence' varies, as it also relates to 'eminence' but it is also linked to quality assurance and quality control, to benchmarking of educational institutions or educational systems, to gaining efficiency in education and in learning (EUNEC, 2012, p. 3).

experiential learning

Definition

Process that develops knowledge, skills and attitudes based on consciously thinking about an experience. Thus, it involves direct and active personal experience combined with reflection and feedback (UNESCO, 2010), here.

Notes

This term can be characterised from two aspects: the first aspect refers to the process of learning from experience; the second one centres on the context of the experiential learning. This learning is designed to engage students in direct experiences tied to real-world problems and situations, while the instructor facilitates rather than direct student progress (Dernova, 2015). UNESCO

refers to experiential learning in their definition of informal learning: learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022). Experiential learning opportunities exist in a variety of course —and non-course— based forms. These include but are not limited to community service, service-learning, undergraduate research, study abroad/away, as well as culminating experiences (e.g. internships, student teaching, and capstone projects) (Kent State University, n.d.).

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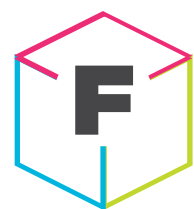
facilitator

See: educator

flexible learning pathways

Definition
Possibility for learners to move within and across education, training and employment, allowing them to adapt their learning pathway as they go along, to suit their interests and abilities (Cedefop, 2017), here.

Notes
The European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU) refers to flexible lifelong learning pathways in relation to the introduction of the European Degrees which are regarded as a 21st Century competence passport extending lifelong learning through micro-credentials (ECIU, 2021).

Concerning second-chance education, flexibility may also relate to the attendance requirements. For example, "*young people returning for a second chance opportunity may have complex personal circumstances which might impact on their attendance. Avoiding sanctions for non-attendance and working with the young person to try to address the issues which are causing their absence are more likely to be effective in a second chance environment*". In these cases "*a requirement to attend eight hours a day, five days a week, might not be realistic. Alternative, achievable, part-time attendance patterns might help to retain learners and ensure their completion of a programme*" (Cedefop, 2017).

Cedefop has also developed the concept of **education and training pathway** which is defined as a set of related education and/or training programmes provided by schools, training centres, higher

education institutions or other education and training providers, which eases the progression of individuals within or between activity sectors (Cedefop, forthcoming).

formal education/learning

Definition
- Education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organisations and recognised private bodies, and – in their totality – constitute the formal education system of a country (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012), here.
- Structured education system that runs from primary (and in some countries from nursery) school to university, and includes specialised programmes for vocational, technical and professional training (Council of Europe, 2022a), here.
- Learning which takes place in an organised and structured environment, specifically dedicated to learning, and typically leads to the award of a qualification, usually in the form of a certificate or a diploma; it includes systems of general education, initial vocational training and higher education (Council of the European Union, 2012), here.
- Learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment (such as in an education or training institution or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources) (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
As seen above both formal education and formal learning have in common the idea of structured and institutionalised environments or systems. Cedefop also highlights that it is intentional from the learner's point of view (Cedefop, forthcoming). Following the Council of Europe definition, "*formal education often comprises an assessment of the learners' acquired learning or competences and is based on a programme or curriculum which can be more or less closed to adaptation to individual needs and preferences. Formal education usually leads to recognition and certification*" (Council of Europe, 2022a).

Related term(s): education, informal education, non-formal education/learning

G

global citizenship education

See: citizenship education

green skills

See: education for sustainability

guidance

Definition

- Range of activities designed to help individuals to make educational, vocational or personal decisions and to carry them out before and after they enter the labour market. Guidance and counselling activities can be provided at schools, training and job centres, workplace, community and in other settings (Cedefop, 2014, p. 130), here.
- A continuous process that enables citizens at any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which those capacities and competences are learned and/or used (Council of the European Union, 2008, p. 2).

Notes

According to Cedefop, guidance and counselling may include among others: i) counselling (personal or career development, educational guidance); ii) assessment (psychological or competence/performance-related); iii) information on learning and labour market opportunities and career management; iv) consultation with peers, relatives or educators; v) vocational preparation (pinpointing skills/competences and experience for job-seeking); vi) referrals (to learning and career specialists) (Cedefop, 2014, p. 130).

In 2008, the Council of Europe adopted a Resolution on improving the role of lifelong guidance in lifelong learning strategies, acknowledging the centrality of guidance for education and training policies as well as its leading role in supporting employment growth and successful careers for individuals (Lifelong Learning Platform, n.d.). Examples of guidance activities include information and advice giving, counselling, competence assessment, mentoring, advocacy, teaching decision-making and career management skills (Council of the European Union, 2008).

Cedefop has developed the concept of **lifelong guidance** which is defined as: continuous process that enables a person at any age and at any stage of life to identify his/her capacities, competences and interests, to make well-informed educational, training and occupational decisions, and to manage his/her life path in learning, work and other settings in which those capacities and competences are learned and/or used (Cedefop, forthcoming).
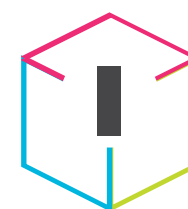
information and communication technology skills

See: digital education

inclusive education (and training)

Definition

- Process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion from education and from within education (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2008), here.
- Learning which ensures equal access and successful participation of all citizens – including those from disadvantaged groups – to promote their social and occupational inclusion (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

Cedefop underlines that an inclusive education and training system requires appropriate structures and activities: learning opportunities (compensatory learning, special needs education, second-chance education), incentives and human/financial resources, support (lifelong guidance, personalised learning) (Cedefop, forthcoming). The term is also at the core of the European Education Area, the EU Anti-racism Action Plan and the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Lifelong Learning Platform adopted in 2017 a position paper on inclusive education in order to modernise the education system.

informal learning

Definition

- Forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate, but are not institutionalised. It is consequently less organised and less structured than either formal or non-formal education. Like formal and non-formal education, informal learning can be distinguished from incidental or random learning (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012), here.
- Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. it is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective (Cedefop, 2014, p. 130, forthcoming), here.

Notes

In the ISCED report it is considered less organised and less structured than either formal or non-formal education and occurring in environments such as the family, workplace, local community and daily life, and in a self-directed, family-directed or socially-directed manner (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012). Cedefop's definition is in line with ISCED in terms of possible learning environments and a less structured learning framework, but where the two definitions are not congruent is **the level of intentionality**. According to ISCED informal learning can be distinguished from incidental or random learning, just like formal and non-formal education; whereas for Cedefop, informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective and it can be referred to as experiential or incidental/random learning. Moreover, CEDEFOP underlines that informal learning outcomes may be validated and certified.

The Council of Europe uses informal education as synonym to informal learning. In their explanation, informal education refers to a "*lifelong learning process, whereby each individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in his or her own environment and from daily experience*". Therefore learning in this way is often unplanned and unstructured (Council of Europe, n.d.-a).

Related term(s): formal education/learning, non-formal education/learning

intergenerational learning

Definition
A mutual learning relationship and interaction between the young and the old (Simándi, 2018), here.

Notes
The Lifelong Learning Platform considers intergenerational learning a crucial asset in building inclusive communities and a 'culture of caring' and calls for more initiatives and projects with mixed age groups between educational institutions and local communities, such as opening up schools and higher education institutions to non-traditional publics. In the workplace initiatives that help young and old people transfer their skills can improve their working conditions and performance. Good practices in intergenerational learning should be better shared across the EU through an increased cooperation between Member States (Lifelong Learning Platform, n.d.-c).

Simándi (2018) explains that there are the three basic principles of intergenerational learning: "**learning together (communicative learning), interdisciplinary learning, and learning from each other (dialogic learning)**. *Two dimensions of interdisciplinary learning can be observed – the chronological and the connecting dimension. The first one is related to passing cultural and social norms, while the second one is related to understanding those living in different social situations*" (Simándi, 2018, p. 65). It is also highlighted that "*intergenerational learning can promote the creation of relationships between generations, can widen, enrich social networks, can have a positive influence on the quality of life, can support the exchange of cultural experience, can preserve traditions and*

values, etc" (Simándi, 2018, p. 69).

key competences

Definition
Competences which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion, sustainable lifestyle, successful life in peaceful societies, health-conscious life management and active citizenship. They are developed in a lifelong learning perspective, from early childhood throughout adult life, and through formal, non-formal and informal learning in all contexts, including family, school, workplace, neighbourhood and other communities (Council of the European Union, 2018a), here.

Notes
The common European reference framework for key competences is the 2018 Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, which identifies **8 key competences** considered as needed for personal fulfilment, a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, employability, active citizenship and social inclusion. These are: Literacy, Multilingualism, Numerical, scientific and engineering skills, Digital and technology-based competences, Interpersonal skills, and the ability to adopt new competences, Active citizenship, Entrepreneurship, Cultural awareness and expression.

Cedefop, in their upcoming terminology publication, has delved into the definition of **core skills and competences**. This term is defined as: Ability to understand, speak, read and write language(s), to work with numbers and measures and use digital devices and applications. Cedefop clarifies that this term is close to, but not synonymous with key competences and that in the literature they are also referred to as basic skills. It is underlined that these skills and competences represent the foundation for interacting with others and for developing and learning as a person. These skills and competences can also be found under the **transversal skills and competences** cluster in ESCO (see more in transversal skills and competences entry). Cedefop notes that core skills and competences can also be subcategorised in three clusters: i) mastering languages; ii) working with numbers and measures; and working with digital devices and applications.

knowledge

See: competence

knowledge society/knowledge-based society

Definition

Society whose processes and practices are based on production, distribution and use of knowledge (Cedefop, 2014, in European Commission, 2001), here.

Notes

In academia, a knowledge-based society can refer to "*the type of society that is needed to compete and succeed in the changing economic and political dynamics of the modern world. It refers to societies that are well educated, and who therefore rely on the knowledge of their citizens to drive the innovation, entrepreneurship and dynamism of that society's economy*" (Djoub, 2017).

learner

Definition

Someone who is learning about a particular subject or how to do something (Collins English Dictionary, 2022), here.

Notes

The use of the term learner as a synonym for student has grown in popularity among educators in recent years. While the precise origins of this usage are likely impossible to determine, the Glossary of Education Reform indicates that the decision to use learner in place of student may be due

to a couple of factors: 1. The term underscores and reinforces the goal of the educator-student relationship (which is learning) rather than the respective roles played by either students or teachers and 2. The term updates the concept of a student by distancing the term from the characteristics and connotations traditionally associated with the word student: someone who learns in schools, sits in classrooms, they are taught by teachers and passively receive knowledge, etc (Great Schools Partnership, 2013).

student

Definition

One who attends a school (Merriam-Webster, 2022), here.

Notes

AACSB International notes that moving from student to learner trend in academia has one basic rationale for the change: students study and learners learn. As it can be seen from the definition of student versus the one from learner before, student locates the subject specifically in a school whereas the learner's definition is more focused on the learning part. This entails that education (or learning) providers should develop knowledge, skills, abilities, and intellectual and behavioural capabilities in their learners to prepare them for success throughout their life endeavours. In this sense it calls for developing a lifelong learning mindset, which stresses intellectual curiosity beyond formal educational structures (Bagranoff, 2020).

learning

Definition

- Individual acquisition or modification of information, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values, skills, competencies or behaviours through experience, practice, study or instruction (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012), here.
- Process by which a person assimilates information, ideas and values and thus acquires knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences (Cedefop, 2014, p. 155, forthcoming), here.

Notes

Learning occurs through personal reflection, reconstruction and social interaction. It may take place in formal, non-formal or informal settings (Cedefop, 2014, p. 155, forthcoming). The Council of Europe distinguishes three types of learning: i) Educational systems exist to promote **formal learning**. This learning follows a syllabus and is intentional since learning is the goal of all the activities in which learners engage. ii) **Non-formal learning** takes place outside formal learning environments but within some kind of organisational framework. It emerges from the learner's conscious decision to master a particular activity, skill or area of knowledge and is therefore the result of an intentional effort. iii) **Informal learning** takes place outside schools and colleges and emerges from the learner's involvement in activities which are not undertaken with a specific learning purpose in mind (Council

of Europe, n.d.-b).

learning mobility

Definition

Moving physically to a country other than the country of residence, possibly combined with a period of virtual participation, in order to undertake study, training or non-formal or informal learning (European Commission, 2022a), here.

Notes

As it is explained in the Erasmus+ Glossary of common terms, a learning mobility "*may take the form of traineeships, apprenticeships, youth exchanges, teaching or participation in a professional development activity, and may include preparatory activities, such as training in the host language, as well as sending, receiving and follow-up activities*" (European Commission, 2022a).

More in general, **mobility** is understood as an ability of an individual to move and adapt to a new occupational or educational environment. Cedefop underlines that mobility can be geographical or functional. For example, this mobility can encompass either a move to a new post in a company or to a new occupation; or it can refer to a move between employment and education. Another characteristic of mobility is its power to enable individuals to acquire new skills and thus increase their employability (Cedefop, 2014, p. 178). Mobility in this context can imply moving for the purposes of learning and acquiring new competencies (learning mobility - as in the example of student - and to a lesser extent - staff mobility under Erasmus+) or for work-related purposes ('functional' mobility).

Relevant related terms include but are not limited to the following:

learning agreement

Definition

- Agreement between the sending and receiving organisation and the participating individuals, defining the aims and content of the mobility period in order to ensure its relevance and quality. It can also be used as a basis for recognition of the period abroad by the receiving organisation (European Commission, 2022a), here.
- (*In Erasmus+*) Formalised agreement of the three parties involved in mobility – the pupil or student, the sending organisation and the receiving organisation (institution or enterprise) – defining the aims and content of the mobility period in order to ensure its relevance and quality. The agreement is intended to give the pupil or student the confirmation that the credits s/he successfully achieves during the mobility period will be recognised (Cedefop, forthcoming).

virtual learning mobility

Definition

Set of activities supported by Information and Communication Technologies, including e-learning, that realise or facilitate international, collaborative experiences in a context of teaching, training or learning (European Commission, 2022a), here.

Notes

A relatively new term, it has come to the forefront of the education and training discussions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

learning outcome

Definition

- Statement regarding what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and responsibility and autonomy (Council of the European Union, 2017), here.
- Knowledge, know-how, information, values, attitudes, skills and/or competences a person has acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process, either formal, non-formal or informal (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

In the Council Recommendation on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (2017) it is explained that **knowledge** refers to "*the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the context of the EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual*". **Skills** refers to "*the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the EQF, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)*". Finally, **responsibility and autonomy** refers to "*the ability of the learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility*".

UNESCO underlines that **expected learning outcomes** define the totality of information, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values, skills, competencies, or behaviours a learner should master upon the successful completion of the curriculum. For UNESCO, **curriculum** is understood as a description of what, why, how, and how well students should learn in a systematic and intentional way.

Voices from civil society consider that depending on the scope of the learning concept, learning outcomes can be described and assessed differently by those having the pedagogical responsibility for a process, and those defining them from a learners perspective. While in formal processes this relates often to validation of competences, or assessment leading to certification; in non-formal learning processes the findings about the learning outcomes are widely with the learners themselves. In this case, learning outcomes are not necessarily subject to certification. Rather the process follows dialogue principles between learners and educators (one example is the YouthPass - process).

learning system

See: education system

lifelong learning

Definition

- Learning in all its forms, whether formal, non-formal or informal, taking place at all stages in life and resulting in an improvement or update in knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes or participation in society from a personal, civic, cultural, social or employment-related perspective, including the provision of counselling and guidance services (European Commission, 2022a), here.
- Any learning activity undertaken throughout life in a formal, non-formal or informal setting, which results in improving knowledge, know-how, skills, competences and/or qualifications for personal, social and/or professional reasons (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

As it is stated in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide, lifelong learning "*includes early childhood education and care, general education, vocational education and training, higher education, adult education, youth work and other learning settings outside formal education and training and it typically promotes cross-sectoral cooperation and flexible learning pathways*" (European Commission, 2022a). Moreover, it also includes lifewide learning, understood to span across all learning settings and life activities.

The 2001 Communication Making a lifelong learning area a reality highlights the centrality of the learner - of any age - within any educational and learning environment (formal, non-formal, informal), for goals beyond employability (such as personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social inclusion) and with consideration to equal opportunities, as well as to their relevance and quality (European Commission, 2001).

UNESCO's report Embracing a culture of Lifelong Learning (2020) sets 10 key aspects needed to create such a culture and provide enabling environments for learners of all groups. Among the recommendations, we can highlight: recognize lifelong learning as a human right, recognize the holistic character of lifelong learning, place vulnerable groups at the core of the lifelong learning policy agenda, ensure greater and equitable access to learning technology and recognize and promote the collective dimension of learning (UNESCO - UIL, 2020).

literacy

Definition

- Ability to identify, understand, express, create, and interpret concepts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written forms, using visual, sound/audio and digital materials across disciplines and contexts. It implies the ability to communicate and connect effectively with others, in an appropriate and creative way (Council of the European Union, 2018a), here.
- Involves a continuum of learning and proficiency levels which allows citizens to engage in lifelong learning and participate fully in community, workplace and wider society. It includes the ability to read and write, to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials, as well as the ability to solve problems in an increasingly technological and information-rich environment. Literacy is an essential means of building people's knowledge, skills and competencies to cope with the evolving challenges and complexities of life, culture, economy and society (UNESCO - UIL, 2016), here.

Notes

An alignment can be observed between the understanding of literacy at EU and UNESCO level. There are organisations that consider three types of literacy: **baseline, functional and multiple**, differentiated by the level of reading and writing ability and the context in which they are used, ultimately defining the level of learners' ability to 'participate in society' (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2017). The literacy competence is one of the eight key competences for lifelong learning set out by the Council of the European Union in 2018.

In a position paper from 2004, the plurality of literacy was explored as it can refer to the many ways in which literacy is employed and with which it is associated in a community or society and throughout an individual's lifespan. The acquisition and application of literacy is shaped by culture, history, language, religion and socio-economic conditions. In this regard, the plural notion of literacy allows it to go beyond a generic set of technical skills and look at the social dimensions of acquiring and applying literacy. This includes identifying the constraints on its acquisition and application which lie not simply in the individual, but also in relations and patterns of communication structured by society (UNESCO, 2004).

Related term(s): numeracy

low-skilled

Definition

(- *adults*) Adults with low educational levels, namely those whose highest qualification is at lower secondary level (ISCED 0-2), which means they have not completed high-school or equivalent, or adults with low cognitive skill levels, namely those who score at proficiency level 1 or below in the literacy and/or numeracy dimension of the OECD survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) (OECD, 2019), here.

Notes

The OECD (2019) explains that "*these are adults who can at most complete very simple reading tasks, such as reading brief texts on familiar topics, and mathematical tasks, such as one-step or simple processes involving counting, sorting, basic arithmetic operations and understanding simple percentages*" (OECD, 2019, p. 4).

Cedefop refers to the different dimensions which comprise the overall skills and competences of adults. This conceptualisation of low skills looks at three skills dimensions: (a) **educational attainment level**; (b) **computer and digital skills**; (c) **cognitive skills**: literacy and numeracy. It also includes adults with medium and high education levels but who work in elementary occupations, as a proxy for people in potential risk of skill obsolescence and skill loss (Cedefop, 2020, p. 19).

From the non-formal sector point of view, this term can be considered as a description of **the other** from the perspective of a person/group believing, in an unreflected way, to have high skills. This situation can lead to perpetuating social, economical and political discrimination of individuals and groups not being properly understood by academic discourses, based on datasets producing circular closures based on the assumption about those to be described with the data. Digital transformation aside, reproducing existing patterns of exclusion and discrimination adds a new layer of hope, since the ability to be digitaly of low literacy is not necessarily connected to academic performance.

Cedefop has also defined the concept of **low-qualified person** (in the European Union) as a person whose level of education or training attainment is lower than upper secondary (EQF levels 3 or 4). It is underlined that the standard level below which a person is considered as low-skilled depends on different factors such as the general level of education in a society, or the level of qualifications within an occupation. Cedefop notes that the actual level of qualification of a person includes non-formal learning outcomes acquired through continuing training, retraining, upskilling, work experience, or personal development (Cedefop, forthcoming).

media literacy

Definition
Skills, knowledge and understanding that allow citizens to use media effectively and safely. In order to enable citizens to access information and to use, critically assess and create media content responsibly and safely, citizens need to possess advanced media literacy skills (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2018), here.

Notes
The EU Directive from 2018 indicates that media literacy should not be limited to learning about tools and technologies, but should aim to equip citizens with critical thinking skills. These skills are required for, among others: exercise judgement, analyse complex realities and recognise the difference between opinion and fact (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2018, p. 9).

Related term(s): digital literacy

mentoring

Definition
- A relationship between a less experienced individual and a more experienced individual known as a mentor through which the mentor facilitates and supports learning. It can involve a one-on-one relationship or a network of multiple mentors. The network can contain peers, 'step-ahead' peers, or supervisors (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.
- Any support provided to a young person or novice (someone joining a new learning community or organisation) by an experienced person who acts as a role model, guide, tutor, coach or confidante.

Notes
In **lifelong guidance**, mentoring covers various activities: 1) education and training (to help persons take educational, vocational decisions and carry them out before and after they enter the labour market); 2) lifelong guidance (to assist persons to explore, pursue and attain their career goals); 3) personal development (to help persons manage their life paths) (Cedefop, forthcoming, based on Bolton, 1980).

UNESCO notes that "*psychosocial mentoring involves mentor roles such as counsellor or friend, and career-related mentoring involves mentor roles such as coach or sponsor. Each structure of mentoring may be better suited to support particular mentoring functions or desired outcomes. For example, the structure of peer mentoring may advance psychosocial functions, while supervisory mentoring may advance career functions*" (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013).

micro-credentials

Definition

- Recognised proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has achieved following a short learning experience, according to transparent standards and requirements and upon assessment. They are owned by the learner, are shareable, portable and may be combined into larger credentials or qualifications (European Commission, 2022a), here.
- Record of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a small volume of learning, and that have been assessed against transparent and clearly defined standards (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes

The European Commission released in December 2021 a Proposal for a Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability. The Proposal highlights that micro-credentials enable the targeted, flexible acquisition and recognition of knowledge, skills and competences to meet new and emerging needs in society and the labour market. It is noted that micro-credentials do not replace traditional qualifications but instead can complement traditional qualifications and serve as a lifelong learning opportunity to all. Due to their flexibility, micro-credentials can be designed and delivered by a variety of providers in many different learning settings (formal, non-formal and informal) (European Commission, 2021a, p. 1-2). The proposal was adopted in June 2022 (see more here).

According to Cedefop, learning, education and training leading to micro-credentials are designed to provide the learner with specific knowledge, skills and competences that respond to societal, personal, cultural or labour market needs. Micro-credentials are owned by the learner; they provide visibility and value to the outcomes of small tailored learning experiences, hence facilitating their certification. Micro-credentials can be shared and are portable. They may be standalone or combined into larger credentials. They can be underpinned by quality assurance following agreed standards in the relevant sector or area of activity (Cedefop, forthcoming). The Lifelong Learning Platform released in 2022 a reaction to the Commission's proposal highlighting the synergies between individual learning accounts and micro-credentials as key to supporting the broadening of learning opportunities.

The Commission underlined that the lack of a common definition and standards to describe and recognise them causes concerns about their value, quality, recognition, transparency and portability

between sectors and countries. This in turn limits the trust, understanding, wider acceptance and uptake potential. An important aspect of micro-credentials is the potential to support inclusion and facilitate access to education and training and career opportunities for a wider range of learners (including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups as well as to address challenges within education and training systems and labour markets (including gender and other discriminatory stereotypes) (European Commission, 2021a, p. 2).

The Erasmus+ Programme Guide states that the proof of the micro-credential is contained in a certified document that lists the name of the holder, the achieved learning outcomes, the assessment method, the awarding body and, where applicable, the qualifications framework level and the credits gained (European Commission, 2022a). It is noted by researchers that various different terms are used interchangeably to describe 'micro-credentials'. "*The main synonyms used in the literature are alternative credentials, digital badges, microcertifications, web badges, open badges, mini degrees, and nano degrees, among many others. Research in the area of alternative credentials usually covers two main aspects: learning activities that lead to a credential, and the credential itself. The term 'microcredential' is often used to describe both aspects. For example, both a short learning course and a certification are called a micro-credential*" (Orr et al., 2020, p. 38).

The European Union defined the mandatory elements to describe a micro-credential: 1) identification of the learner; 2) title of the micro-credential; 3) country/region of the issuer; 4) awarding body; 5) date of issuing; 6) learning outcomes 7) notional workload needed to achieve the learning outcomes; 8) EQF level (and cycle) of the learning experience, if applicable; 9) type of assessment; 10) form of participation in the learning activity; 11) type of quality assurance used to underpin the micro-credential (Cedefop, forthcoming, based on European Commission, 2021).

micro-learning

Definition

Involves studying bite-sized modules in small bursts to maximise learner engagement, promote a better understanding of course materials, and boost information retention (EU Business School, 2021), here.

Notes

Micro-learning is a relatively new approach to skills-based education. eLearning Industry (2018) finds that while there is no official microlearning definition, brevity is common to all microlearning-based training. This encompasses small learning units or short-term learning activities. This type of learning delivers short bursts of content for learners to study at their convenience. Content can take many forms, from text to full-blown interactive multimedia, but should always be short. The content examples include text (phrases, short paragraphs), images (photos, illustrations), videos (of the short variety), audio (short snippets of speech or music), tests and quizzes, games (e.g. simple single-screen challenges) (Andriotis, 2018). UNESCO highlights that micro-learning exemplifies the recent

adaptation of modular education. Micro-learning platforms make a library of short, modularized learning content accessible. UNESCO explains that potentially, such learning results could be certified (micro-certification) (UNESCO - UIL, 2020).

Researchers have identified key benefits of using micro-learning which include (1) better retention of concepts, (2) better engagement for learners, (3) improving learners' motivation, (4) engaging in collaborative learning and (5) improving learning ability and performance. From the work-based learning perspective, microlearning has been considered as one of the key topics in the area of talent development. Researchers consider that policymakers, educators, researchers and participators have the joint responsibility to explore ways of promoting, designing and using micro-learning to help people to learn in the right direction through valid knowledge in an ethical way (Leong et al., 2020).

non-formal education/learning

Abbreviated as NFE or NFL.

Definition
- *(non-formal education)* Like formal education (but unlike informal, incidental or random learning), an education that is institutionalised, intentional, planned and guided. The defining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an addition, alternative and/or complement to formal education within the process of lifelong learning of individuals (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012), here.
- *(non-formal education)* Refers to planned, structured programmes and processes of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational curriculum (Council of Europe, n.d.-a), here.
- *(non-formal learning)* Learning embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view (Cedefop, 2014, p. 183, forthcoming), here.
- *(non-formal learning)* Learning which takes place through planned activities (in terms of learning objectives, learning time) where some form of learning support is present (e.g. student-teacher

relationships); it may cover programmes to impart work skills, adult literacy and basic education for early school leavers; very common cases of non-formal learning include in-company training, through which companies update and improve the skills of their workers such as ICT skills, structured on-line learning (e.g. by making use of open educational resources), and courses organised by civil society organisations for their members, their target group or the general public (Council of the European Union, 2012), here.

Notes

As it can be seen from the different definitions, non-formal education or learning are used widely by different institutions and organisations. According to UNESCO, NFE is frequently provided in order to guarantee the right of access to education for all. Among its main characteristics one can find: i) It caters to people of all ages but does not necessarily apply a continuous pathway structure; ii) it may be short in duration and/or low-intensity; and iii) it is typically provided in the form of short courses, workshops or seminars. UNESCO further highlights that "non-formal education mostly leads to qualifications that are not recognised as formal or equivalent to formal qualifications by the relevant national or sub-national education authorities or to no qualifications at all" (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012, p. 11).

Non-formal learning as a methodology is often reduced to its addition to formal learning. As a system/structure, non-formal learning is understood by civil society providers as a field of its own right and logic, with inherent standards, quality discourse and policies. NFL is learning in a planned process, accompanied by pedagogue/educator/facilitator. Non-formal learning in its structural dimension does not intentionally lead to certification (following an approach of Bildung). As underlined by Cedefop, outcomes of non-formal learning may be validated and may lead to certification. NFL is sometimes described as semi-structured learning (Cedefop, forthcoming).

However, in the adult and youth learning field there are a variety of discourses regarding validation and assessment, which are very much based on the opinion about the dimension of usability: In adult education and youth learning settings the application of NFL leading to recognition (i.e. job related training, VET, further education and training settings) can be a logical step in a lifelong learning journey - specifically if it is understood as intended skill development. Nevertheless in both fields - specifically the youth field, but also adult education refer structurally to the free mandate of the learner and their voluntary commitment to the learning.

The Council of Europe underlines that the characteristics of non-formal learning as part of youth work are as follows: 1. Voluntary, holistic and process-oriented; 2. Accessible for everyone (ideally); 3. Organised process with educational goals; 4. Participative and learner-centred; 5. Based on experience and action, and the needs of the learners; 6. Provides life skills and prepares learners for their role as active citizens and 7. Includes both individual learning and learning in groups (Council of Europe, 2022a).

Related term(s): formal education, informal learning

not in education, employment, or training

Abbreviated as NEET.

Definition
- Acronym for 'not in employment, education or training', used to refer to the situation of many young persons – typically aged between 15 and 24 – in Europe and beyond (Eurofound, 2013), here.
- Individuals aged 15 to 24 who are unemployed or inactive and who are not involved in any education or training action (Cedefop, forthcoming, based on Eurostat, 2020).

Notes
The definition of NEET agreed by the European Commission includes young people aged 15–24 years who are unemployed or inactive, as per the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition, and who are not attending any education or training courses. "*This acronym first emerged in the UK in the late 1980s, reflecting an alternative way of categorising young people following changes in unemployment benefit policies. Since then, interest in the NEET group has grown at EU policy level, and NEET-equivalent definitions have been created in almost all Member States*". The main aims for using the NEET concept are: first to broaden understanding of the vulnerable status of young people and second to better monitor their problematic access to the labour market (Eurofound, 2013).

numeracy

Definition
- Ability to add, subtract, multiply and divide. More broadly, it means the knowledge and skills required to effectively manage and respond to mathematical demands posed by diverse situations, involving objects, pictures, numbers, symbols, formulas, diagrams, maps, graphs, tables and text. Encompassing the ability to order and sort, count, estimate, compute, measure, and follow a model, it involves responding to information about mathematical ideas that may be represented in a range of ways (UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning, 2006), here.
- Ability to access, use, interpret and communicate mathematical information and ideas, in order to engage in and manage the mathematical demands of a range of situations in adult life (OECD, 2020), here.

Notes
As in the case of literacy, three types of numeracy can be distinguished: ***baseline, functional and multiple***. They are differentiated by the level of computational complexity and the context in which they are used in order to define the level of competence and ability to participate in society (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2017).
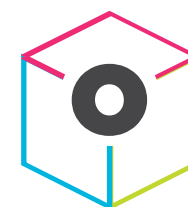
open education

Definition
- Educational movement founded on openness, with connections to other educational movements such as critical pedagogy, and with an educational stance which favours widening participation and inclusiveness in society (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2020), here.
- A way of carrying out education that often involves digital technologies, whose aim is to widen access and participation to all learners and which enables different access routes and ways of teaching and learning, building and sharing knowledge (Joint Research Centre, 2016c), here.
- Instructional model which gives the learner a degree of flexibility in choice of topics, place, pace and/or method (Cedefop, 2008).

Notes
Cedefop refers to **open learning** as an instructional model which gives the learner a degree of flexibility in choice of topics, place, pace and/or method (Cedefop, 2014, p. 189). Although often used within digital education spheres this education is not necessarily offered through online and distance education.

A key related term is **open educational resources (OER)** or digitised materials offered freely and openly for educators, students and self-learners to use and reuse for teaching, learning and research. As explained in the Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, this term encompasses learning content, software tools to develop, use and distribute content, as well as implementation resources (e.g. open licences). "OER also refers to accumulated digital assets that can be adjusted and which provide benefits without restricting the possibilities for others to enjoy them" (Council of the European Union, 2012, p. 5). Open educational practices seek to fully use the potential inherent in OER to support learning and to help students both contribute to knowledge and construct their own learning pathways (Educause, 2018). The European Commission has a framework for open education called OpenEdu.

Related term(s): flexible learning, blended learning, digital education, online learning, open educational resources (OER), phygital learning, virtual learning

P

peer learning

Definition

- A reciprocal learning activity, which is mutually beneficial and involves the sharing of knowledge, ideas and experience between the participants. Peer learning practices enable to interact with other participants, their peers, and participate in activities where they can learn from each other and meet educational, professional and/or personal development goals (European Commission, 2022a), here.
- Instructional model, based on cooperation, that improves the value of learner-learner interaction and results in various learning outcomes for all participants (Cedefop, forthcoming, based on National University of Singapore).

Notes

This definition is aligned with UNESCO's definition of peer learning, stating that it is a process based on exchange of knowledge and information between learners who may also act as mentors. This term is also referred to as peer education (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013).

Peer learning asks those to accompany the processes who are in the same cohort of age/experience/ scope of life to be a trusted and honest broker for educational processes, since less hierarchies and inclines of power, reputation, etc apply. Examples for peer learning e.g. Grundtvig learning circles or youth trainers in youth groups, youth initiatives in European Solidarity Corps, or ambassador principles.

popular education

Definition

A model of pedagogy proposed by Paulo Freire to help disadvantaged subjects liberate themselves from their oppressors by analysing the conditions of their oppression, and by developing their own initiative to take transformatory action (González, 2011), here.

Notes

Regarding its nature and purpose, popular education continues to grow and evolve through practice, although not without difficulty. Adult education organisations underline that popular education is considered a **pedagogy of the oppressed** that aims to create awareness not only of the world

we live in, but also of the one we want it to be. Another important aspect of this education is its **methodological counter-proposal** to the banking concept of education as well as an approach which **promotes student involvement** in the construction of knowledge through practice. Moreover, it is considered an **alternative communicative approach to inclusion and dialogue**; and a proposal to nurture the hope and the ethical commitment that imbues liberating action with life. Adult education organisations consider that Freire's fundamental ideas retain their validity, however, changing conditions make it necessary for educators to adapt the methods according to well-founded theoretical considerations (González, 2011).

R

recognition

Definition

- *(of learning outcomes):* Two-fold definition 1) **formal recognition**: process of granting official status, by an accredited body, to knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences of a person through: award of qualifications (certificates, diploma or titles); validation of non-formal and informal learning; or grant of equivalence, credit units or waivers and 2) **social recognition**: acknowledgement of the value of knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences of a person by economic and social stakeholders (Cedefop, forthcoming, based on the Council of the European Union, 2017).
- *(of prior learning)* The validation of learning outcomes, whether from formal education or non-formal or informal learning, acquired before requesting validation (Council of the European Union, 2012), here.

Notes

In formal education, this refers to the awarding of formal qualifications and diplomas or equivalence (e.g. through ECTS in higher education), in non-formal and informal learning through validation. The discourse in the non-formal learning field targets more the recognition of the benefits of learning and asks for social and political recognition.

This term is close to, but not synonymous with **(mutual) recognition of qualifications**: the process of official acknowledgment by one or more countries or organisations of the similarity of value of qualifications (certificates, diplomas or titles) awarded in (or by) one or more other countries or organisations, including the associated rights and duties. Mutual recognition can be bilateral (between two countries or organisations) or multilateral (within the European Union or between

companies belonging to the same sector) (Cedefop, 2014, forthcoming).

Related term(s): certification, validation, learning outcomes, European Qualifications Framework

reskilling

Definition
- Process of learning new skills so you can do a different job, or of training people to do a different job (Cambridge University Press, 2022), here.
- Training enabling individuals to acquire new skills giving access either to a new occupation or to new professional activities (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Notes
Reskilling (also called **retraining**) is imperative for a more productive and inclusive future of work given that it helps individuals to increase their employability and therefore their social inclusion. From an employer perspective, a skilled workforce makes it simpler to develop and introduce new technologies and work organisation practices, leading to a boost in productivity and growth in the economy as a whole (OECD, 2019, p. 3).

Cedefop highlights that this term is close to, but not synonymous with upskilling and it has been noted that the terms reskilling and upskilling are often used interchangeably (Cedefop, forthcoming). The objective of the training marks the difference between the two terms: whereas upskilling aims to teach employees new skills to optimise their performance; reskilling (also known as professional recycling) sets out to train employees to adapt to a different post within the company. In other words, upskilling is said to create more specialised workers and the reskilling more versatile ones (IBERDROLA, 2022). In addition, the term "new skilling" refers to continuous learning for an adaptable workforce. A new skilling mindset allows for both the workforce and the company to remain agile by ensuring learning initiatives match with future business objectives and are tailored to the learner's needs (Cornerstone, 2020). Another term that is widely used is cross-skilling (also known as cross-training) is the process of developing new skills that apply across different functions (Panopto, 2021).

Related term(s): upskilling, upskilling pathways

skills

See: competence

social inclusion

Definition
- *(In the youth context)* The process of individual's self-realisation within a society, acceptance and recognition of one's potential by social institutions, integration (through study, employment, volunteer work or other forms of participation) in the web of social relations in a community (Council of Europe, 2022d), here.
- Process that aims to ensure citizens' access to the opportunities, infrastructures and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society. This term also refers to the result of this process (Cedefop, forthcoming; Eurofound, 2022).

Notes
The fundamental pillars of social integration are considered to be access to education, health care, housing and employment (Cedefop, forthcoming; Eurofound, 2022). Education is a significant tool to advance social inclusion, employability and tolerant societies. "*A strong economic case can also be made for improving education; improved skills help workers adapt to rapidly changing labour markets, leading to better employment prospects, economic growth, and alleviating poverty*" (NESET II, 2016, p. 4).

Broadly, social inclusion in the EU context is tackled through the European Pillar of Social Rights (European Commission, 2017). The Pillar has education, training and life-long learning as one of the 20 principles. The Pillar reinforces that "*everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successful transitions in the labour market*" (European Commission, 2017).

Related term(s): equality (in education and training), equity (in education and training)

soft skills

Definition

- A set of intangible personal qualities, traits, attributes, habits and attitudes that can be used in many different types of jobs (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2013), here.
- Non-job specific skills that are related to individual ability to operate effectively in the workplace (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022), here.

Notes

It was noted that this term is not broadly used in the EU agenda. In this context, the terms which have preference are key competences or core skills and competences.

The SkillsMatch project identified 36 key soft skills that are needed for a successful participation in the society and obtaining a good job, dividing them into four different categories: self-image and vision of the world; context and performance related; social interaction and methodological, intuitive and lateral thinking (SkillsMatch, 2019).

These skills can also be referred to as non-cognitive skills: they are also defined as capacities, similar to cognitive or physical ability. These capacities in turn affect productivity and thus the energy or time necessary to achieve tasks (O'Connor & Bartolini, 2022, p. 18). In addition, it is noted that educators tend to focus on non-cognitive skills that are directly related to academic success, such as academic behaviours (e.g. going to class and participating), academic perseverance (e.g. grit and self-discipline), academic mindsets (e.g. feeling a sense of belonging within an academic community and believing that ability and competence can grow with effort), learning strategies (e.g. metacognitive strategies and goal-setting), and social skills (e.g. interpersonal skills and cooperation) (Bjorklund-Young, 2016, p. 1).

Related term(s): transversal skills and competences, key competences, core skills and competence

## special needs education

Definition

An education designed to facilitate learning by individuals who, for a wide variety of reasons, require additional support and adaptive pedagogical methods in order to participate and meet learning objectives in an education programme (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012).

Notes

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education defines Special Educational Needs (SEN) as a construct that countries usually define within their legislation. These definitions are then used to identify, assess and make provision for learners with different needs –including recognised disabilities– in differents ways (Watkins et al., 2014).

In line with a human rights approach, it is important to highlight that additional needs arise not as a result of an individual's impairments but rather because of a discrepancy between what is provided by the education system and what the learner needs to support their learning (Rouse, 2008). Another term that is more nuanced and that is increasingly used is 'additional needs'.
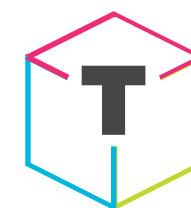
teacher

See: educator

technology-enhanced learning

See: digital education

traineeship

Definition

Time spent in an enterprise or organisation in another country, with a view to acquiring specific competences that are needed by the labour market, gaining work experience and acquiring more understanding of the economic and social culture of that country (European Commission, 2022a), here.

trainer

See: educator

training

Definition

- Process of acquiring skills or types of behaviour necessary to carry out a particular job or activity (European Parliament, 2022), here.
- (In Vocational Education and Training) Acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies as a

result of the teaching of vocational or practical skills and knowledge that relate to specific useful competencies (UNESCO-UNEVOC, n.d.), here.

- Education designed to achieve particular learning objectives, especially in vocational education. The definition of education in ISCED includes training (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012), here.

transversal skills and competences

Definition
- Skills, competences or qualities and attributes that are considered not specifically related to a particular job, task, academic discipline or area of knowledge and that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings (for example, organisational or communication skills) (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022), here.
- Learned and proven abilities which are commonly seen as necessary or valuable for effective action in virtually any kind of work, learning or life activity. They are 'transversal' because they are not exclusively related to any particular context (job, occupation, academic discipline, civic or community engagement, occupational sector, group of occupational sectors, etc.) (European Commission, 2022d; Noack, 2021), here.

Notes
Depending on the countries and sectors, transversal skills and competences can be referred to as soft skills or transferable skills. However, although this term is close to transferable skills and competences, they are not synonymous since they refer to skills usually related to a particular job – that can be used in a new occupational or educational environment (RPIC-VIP, 2011). There is not yet an agreement (i.e. ESCO) on whether the preferred term should be skills or competences.

The ESCO Working Group on a terminology for transversal skills and competences identified six main categories of transversal skills and competences: i) core skills and competences; ii) thinking skills and competences; iii) self-management skills and competences; iv) social and communication skills and competences; v) physical and manual skills and competences; vi) life skills and competences (European Commission & Cedefop, 2021).

Cedefop underlines that transversal skills and competences are not exclusively related to any particular context (job, occupation, academic discipline, civic or community engagement, occupational sector, group of occupational sectors, etc.). These skills and competences are also referred to by alternative terms such as "basic", "soft", "non-cognitive", "socio-emotional" or "core" skills and/or competences. However, these alternative terms frequently address a more limited set of skills and competences (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Related term(s): soft skills, transferable skills and competences, basic skills, soft skills, core skills and competences.

ubuntu (Swahili)

Definition
Philosophy based on the idea that all humanity is connected. The thinking originates in southern Africa but forms part of many African belief systems and serves as a foundation for education. With Ubuntu, the relationship between a person and her/his community is interdependent and mutually beneficial (Oviawe, 2016), here.

university lifelong learning

Abbrievated as ULLL

Definition
The provision by higher education institutions of learning opportunities, services and research for: the personal and professional development of a wide range of individuals - lifelong and lifewide; and the social, cultural and economic development of communities and the region. It is at university level and research-based; it focuses primarily on the needs of the learners; and it is often developed and/or provided in collaboration with stakeholders and external actors (eucen, n.d.), here.

Notes
ULLL involves research based on open access principles that benefits the wider society.

upskilling

Definition
Short-term targeted training typically provided following initial education or training, and aimed at supplementing, improving or updating knowledge, skills and/or competences acquired during previous training (Cedefop, 2014), here.

Notes
Upskilling occurs when workers both improve upon existing skills and deepen their abilities and impact within their area of expertise. By expanding their knowledge, employees boost their position for additional responsibilities towards higher-level roles on their particular career path (Cornerstone,

2020). The terms up-skilling and reskilling are often used interchangeably; however, Cedefop underlines that, although the term is close to it, it is not synonymous with: retraining/reskilling (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Related term(s): reskilling

validation (of learning outcomes)

Definition
(*of non-formal and informal learning)* Process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes (acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting) measured against a relevant standard and consists of the following four distinct phases: 1. Identification through dialogue of particular experiences of an individual; 2. documentation to make visible the individual's experiences; 3. a formal assessment of these experiences; and 4. Certification of the results of the assessment which may lead to a partial or full qualification (Council of the European Union, 2012), here.

Notes
Validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL) is the term used and spread by the European Institutions to EU member States as a common language. In some Member States, what is most known are the concepts of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or the Validation of Prior Learning (VPL). Though the terms are very close, they are not necessarily used in the same contexts. RPL is often used in higher education, VPL is a term perhaps more used at international level (e.g. VPL Biennale).

Cedefop also takes into account four phases of the validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes: i) identification, ii) documentation, iii) assessment and iv) certification of learning outcomes. It is highlighted that validation makes knowledge and skills of a person visible and enhances their value. Cedefop also notes that validation relates to various terms and acronyms, including: assessment of prior experiential learning (APEL); accreditation of prior experiential learning; assessment of prior learning (APL); recognition of non-formal and informal learning (RNFIL). All these terms encompass related notions of similar processes, related to making visible and providing value to the knowledge and skills that individuals have (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Related term(s): recognition

virtual learning mobility

See: learning mobility

volunteering

Definition
• Activity undertaken by a volunteer - defined as a person who carries out activities benefiting society, by free will - and which is not for profit and does not replace paid staff. Volunteering can take place through a volunteering provider or by an individual's own initiative (European Youth Forum, 2012), here.
• All forms of voluntary activity, whether formal or informal, in which participants (volunteers) act under their own free will, according to their own choices and motivations and do not seek financial gain (Network Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships, 2013), here.

Notes
Apart from the English word 'volunteering', other languages use different terms for voluntary activities with different connotations. As an example, the Germans speak of **ehrenamtliches** engagement: this describes for instance volunteering as the chairperson of the local sports club or being a member of the city council. Another common German term is **bürgerschaftliches** engagement (civic engagement) which highlights the idea of volunteers as active citizens but refers at the same time to all kinds of voluntary activities. Likewise, in French, two different terms are known: **bénévolat** and **volontariat**. In France, volontariat refers to voluntary services; bénévolat describes individual voluntary activities for the benefit of the society (and not for family and friends) (Sittermann, 2011).

Civil society organisations recognise that **volunteering plays an indispensable and capital role in lifelong learning**. There, volunteers are parents, learners or educators of all ages willing to improve education and training systems. **Volunteering is an expression of active citizenship** that enriches democracy and contributes to develop solidarity and social cohesion, a value which is not only in great need in the current economic and social climate, but also one upon which the European Union has been built (Lifelong Learning Platform, n.d.-d).

Volunteering enables volunteers to develop skills and competencies for personal, social and civic development that one could not have gained in traditional or professional systems. However, today **these competences are seldom recognised by formal education, companies or institutions**. Volunteers need to be supported if they express the wish to have the knowledge and skills acquired through volunteering periods recognised and validated. In this sense, educational providers have a specific role to play in terms of guidance and training (Lifelong Learning Platform, n.d.-d).

wellbeing (in education and training)

Definition

Experience of health and happiness. It includes mental and physical health, physical and emotional safety, and a feeling of belonging, sense of purpose, achievement and success (Council of Europe, 2022c), here.

Notes

In the broadest sense, wellbeing can be described as the quality of a person's life and realising one's own unique potential, in relation to one's inner feelings and self, others and the environment. Within this definition of wellbeing, there are two major approaches to consider: one which relates to our subjective experience of feeling well, experiencing pleasure, positive emotions and personal fulfilment; and the other concerning the external conditions which enable us to reach our full potential and flourish (Lifelong Learning Platform, 2021; OECD, 2016; OECD, 2017). The 'How's Life' framework for measuring well-being developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) puts forward 11 dimensions of wellbeing (OECD, 2015).

The Council of Europe underlines that "*there is a direct link between well-being and academic achievement and vice versa, i.e. well-being is a crucial prerequisite for achievement and achievement is essential for well-being*" (Council of Europe, 2022c). In the Palgrave Handbook of Positive Education, teacher wellbeing is defined as an individual sense of personal professional fulfilment, satisfaction, purposefulness and happiness. This wellbeing is constructed in a collaborative process with both colleagues and students (Kern & Wehmeyer, 2021, p. 722).

According to UNESCO, "***a good quality education is the foundation of health and well-being***. *For people to lead healthy and productive lives, they need knowledge to prevent sickness and disease. For children and adolescents to learn, they need to be well nourished and healthy*" (UNESCO, 2013). The Lifelong Learning Platform has touched upon the topic of wellbeing in connection with assessments as part of the 2021 Annual Theme: Rethinking assessments (Lifelong Learning Platform, 2021).

workplace/work-based learning

Abbreviated as WBL

Definition

- Educational approach for secondary and postsecondary students that provide opportunities to achieve employment- related competencies in the workplace, actually it provides students with knowledge and skills that help them connect school experiences to real-life work activities (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022), here.
- Process by which a person acquires knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences carrying out – and reflecting on – tasks, either: at the workplace – also known as workplace learning or in-company training (e.g. through internships/traineeships, apprenticeship, alternance training or company visits, job shadowing, etc.); or in a simulated work environment (e.g. in workshops or laboratories in vocational education and training institutions, inter-company/social partner training centres) (Cedefop, forthcoming; (European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, 2014; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012).

Notes

According to Cedefop, the aim of work-based learning is to achieve specific learning objectives through practical instruction and participation in work activities under the guidance of experienced workers or trainers (Cedefop, forthcoming).

Definitions of WBL vary, but according to a 2013 ETF report on Work-based Learning, they share two main features: learning in a work context and learning through practice. Furthermore, the distinction is made between **learning for work** (e.g. during a work placement/apprenticeship) and **learning at work** (e.g. in-house company training) (European Training Foundation, 2013).

Findings from the Integrating Entrepreneurship and Work Experience into Higher Education (WEXHE) project show that there is a great disparity in WBL implementation among EU countries which relates to educational cultures, a concentration in certain disciplinary areas such as business and engineering, and a lack of quality assurance (Perusso & Wagenaar, 2021).
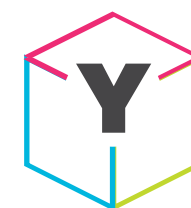
youth work

Definition

Broad term covering a wide variety of activities of a social, cultural, educational, environmental and/or political nature by, with and for young people, in groups or individually. Youth work is delivered

by paid and volunteer youth workers and is based on non-formal and informal learning processes focused on young people and on voluntary participation. Youth work is quintessentially a social practice, working with young people and the societies in which they live, facilitating young people's active participation and inclusion in their communities and in decision making (Council of Europe, 2022f), here.

Notes

The Council of Europe noted that there are disparities among European countries when it comes to the definition of youth work. In some countries 'youth work' is relatively well-defined, however, in other countries (mainly in southern European countries), the term is less known and there is no identifiable comprehensive concept of this term. Nevertheless, a distinct but diverse field of social and educational practices is observed in most countries, shaping a so-called 'third socialisation environment', next to family and school (Council of Europe, 2022e). The UK National Youth Agency considers youth work a distinct educational process adapted across a variety of settings to support a young person's personal, social and educational development (National Youth Agency, n.d.).

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ANNEX 1 - LIST OF ACRONYMS

Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CoE	Council of Europe
CVET	Continuing vocational education and training
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EE	Environmental education
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESCO	European Skills/Competences and Occupations systematisation
ESD	Education for sustainable development
ETF	European Training Foundation
ICT	Information and communication technology
ISCED	International standard classification of education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
NEET	not in education, employment, or training
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESCO IBE	UNESCO International Bureau of Education
UNESCO UIL	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
VET	Vocational education and training
VNFIL	Validation of non-formal and informal learning
VPL	Validation of prior learning

ANNEX 2 - LIST OF INSTRUMENTS/TOOLS

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

Abbreviated as ECTS

Definition
Tool of the European Higher Education Area for making studies and courses more transparent. It helps students to move between countries and to have their academic qualifications and study periods abroad recognised (European Commission, n.d.-a), here

Notes
Differences between national higher education systems can lead to problems concerning the recognition of qualifications and mobility periods abroad. This issue is addressed in part by enhancing the comprehension of the learning outcomes and workload of programmes of study. ECTS also makes it possible to blend different learning styles, such as university and work-based learning, within the same programme of study or through lifelong learning (European Commission, n.d.-a).

European Qualification Framework

Abbreviated as EQF

Definition
- Learning outcomes-based classification system for all types of qualifications, which aims to help in comparing national qualifications systems, frameworks and their levels to make qualifications more understandable and portable across different countries and systems in Europe (European Commission, n.d.-b), here.
- Reference tool for the description and comparison of qualifications developed at national, international or sectoral level (Cedefop, 2014), here.

Notes
The purpose of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF) is to improve the transparency, comparability and portability of qualifications (Cedefop, 2009c). Two European Qualifications Frameworks exist. One focuses only on Higher Education and was initiated as part of the Bologna Process, the other focuses on the whole span of education and was initiated by the European Commission. The first framework is named a Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, abbreviated as QF − EHEA. The second extends across all areas including that of higher education and is called European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, abbreviated as EQF - LLL (University of Deusto, 2003). The EQF is structurally compatible with the QF-EHEA, but as mentioned previously covers all levels of education,

and has different descriptors (EACEA, 2020).

Related term(s): National Qualification Framework (NQF)

Europass

Definition
An online platform that provides individuals and organisations with web-based tools and information on learning opportunities, qualifications frameworks and qualifications, guidance, skills intelligence, self-assessment tools and documentation of skills and qualifications, and connectivity with learning and employment opportunities (European Commission, 2022a), here.

Notes
Europass is an action of the European Skills Agenda. It also offers tools and software to support digitally-signed credentials, as announced in the Digital Education Action Plan. The platform interconnects with national data sources for learning opportunities and national qualifications databases or registers (European Commission, 2022a). Europass promotes an adequate appreciation of learning outcomes acquired in formal, non-formal or informal settings (Cedefop, 2014).

Individual Learning Account

Definition
Educational funding account, usually set up as part of a broader lifelong learning scheme, by means of which an individual can accumulate funds or other types of training entitlements from the state, employers, personal funds and/or loans for education and training (IATE, 2021), here.

Notes
At the European Union level, individual learning accounts are understood as personal accounts in which training entitlements can be accumulated and spent on quality-assured training, guidance or validation services. They are one way of providing individuals with training entitlements. Related schemes that provide individuals with training entitlements without involving personal accounts also exist. This includes training voucher schemes (often for specific target groups and run by Public Employment Services), and individual learning or personal development budgets, which are sometimes also provided by companies for their employees or negotiated by social partners in the context of collective bargaining agreements (European Commission, 2021c).

The Lifelong Learning Platform released a reaction to the Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Individual Learning Accounts published in 2021. The reactions highlights among many key aspects the importance of individuals (learners) having full ownership over their accounts, as well as having a differentiated approach to the ILAs, where everyone should benefit from an entitlement to learn, but with targeted support needed for those individuals who are underrepresented in learning and who usually are in need of upskilling and reskilling. The reaction also underlines the need for the portability and transferability of ILAs across Member States which has a strong potential to encourage further learning mobility for all,

therefore, ensuring a European dimension (Lifelong Learning Platform, 2022). The proposal was adopted in June 2022 (see more here).

International standard classification of education

Abbreviated as ISCED.

Definition

The reference international classification for organising education programmes and related qualifications by levels and fields. It is an instrument for compiling internationally comparable education statistics (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012), here.

The different levels can be found below:

ISCED Level 0 - Early childhood education: Programmes designed with a holistic approach to support children's early cognitive, physical, social and emotional education development and introduce young children to organised instruction outside of the family context. Programmes at ISCED level 0 are also known as early childhood education and development, pre-school, reception, pre-primary or pre-school or educación inicial. (Cedefop, 2014).

ISCED Level 1 - Primary education: Programmes designed to provide learners with fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics (i.e. literacy and numeracy), and to establish a sound foundation for learning and understanding core areas of knowledge, personal and social development, preparing for lower secondary education. Programmes at ISCED level 1 are also referred to as elementary education or basic education (stage 1/lower grades if an education system has one programme that spans ISCED levels 1 and 2). (Cedefop, 2014).

ISCED level 2 - Lower secondary education: Programmes designed to build upon the learning outcomes from iSced level 1. Usually, the educational aim is to lay the foundation for lifelong learning and human development on which education systems may systematically expand further educational opportunities. Some education systems may already offer vocational education programmes at iSced level 2 to provide individuals with skills relevant to employment. Programmes at iSced level 2 can also be referred to as secondary school (stage one/lower grades if there is nationally one programme that spans iSced levels 2 and 3), junior secondary school, middle school or junior high school. (Cedefop, 2014).

ISCED level 3 - Upper secondary education: Programmes designed to complete secondary education in preparation for tertiary education, or to provide skills relevant to employment, or both. Programmes at ISCED level 3 are also known as secondary school (stage two/upper grades), senior secondary school or (senior) high school. (Cedefop, 2014).

ISCED level 4 - Post-secondary non-tertiary education: Programmes designed to provide individuals who completed ISCED level 3 with non-tertiary qualifications that they require for progression to tertiary education or for employment when their ISCED level 3 qualification does not grant such access. Programmes at ISCED level 4 are also referred to as technician diploma, primary professional education, préparation aux carrières

administratives. (Cedefop, 2014).

ISCED level 5 - Short-cycle tertiary education: Programmes designed to provide participants with professional knowledge, skills and competences. Typically, they are practically based, occupationally specific and prepare students to enter the labour market. However, programmes may also provide a pathway to other tertiary education programmes. Programmes at ISCED level 5 are also referred to as master craftsman programme, (higher) technical education, community college education, technician or advanced/higher vocational training, associate degree or bac + 2 programmes. (Cedefop, 2014).

ISCED level 6 - Bachelor's or equivalent level: Programmes designed to provide participants with intermediate academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competences, leading to a first degree or equivalent qualification. Programmes at this level are typically theoretically based but may include practical components and are informed by state of the art research and/or best professional practice. Programmes at ISCED level 6 can be also known as Bachelor's programme, licence or first university cycle. (Cedefop, 2014).

ISCED level 7 - Master or equivalent level: Programmes designed to provide advanced academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competences, leading to a second degree or equivalent qualification. Programmes at this level may have a substantial research component, but do not yet lead to the award of a doctoral qualification. Programmes at ISCED level 7 are referred to also as master's programmes or magister. (Cedefop, 2014).

ISCED level 8 - Doctoral or equivalent: Programmes designed primarily to lead to an advanced research qualification. Programmes at this ISCED level are devoted to advanced study and original research and typically offered only by research-oriented tertiary educational institutions such as universities. Doctoral programmes exist in both academic and professional fields. These programmes are also commonly referred to as Phd, dPhil, d.lit, d.Sc, ll.d, doctorate or similar terms. (Cedefop, 2014).

National Qualification Framework

Definition

An instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society (Council of the European Union, 2012), here.

Notes

Cedefop highlights that the NQFs classification reflects the content and profile of qualifications. The learning outcomes approach also ensures that education and training subsystems are open to one another. Therefore allowing people to move more easily between education and training institutions and sectors. It is considered that the main catalyst for the development of comprehensive national qualification frameworks in Europe has been the European qualifications framework (EQF). Nevertheless, the development of NQFs in Europe also reflects the Bologna process and the agreement to implement qualifications frameworks in the European higher education area (QF-EHEA). Cedefop reports that all countries implementing the EQF are participating

in this process (Cedefop, 2015).

To learn more about NQFs, Cedefop provides an online tool with detailed and interactive information on national qualifications frameworks.

Sustainable Development Goals

Abbreviated as SDGs

Definition
They are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity (United Nations Development Programme, 2015), here.

Notes
They are also known as the Global Goals. These 17 Goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, while including new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice, among other priorities. The goals are interconnected – often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another. Since the adoption of the Agenda 2030, the Lifelong Learning Platform has shown its commitment to achieving the goals by entering the SDG Watch Europe network.

LIFELONG LEARNING PLATFORM

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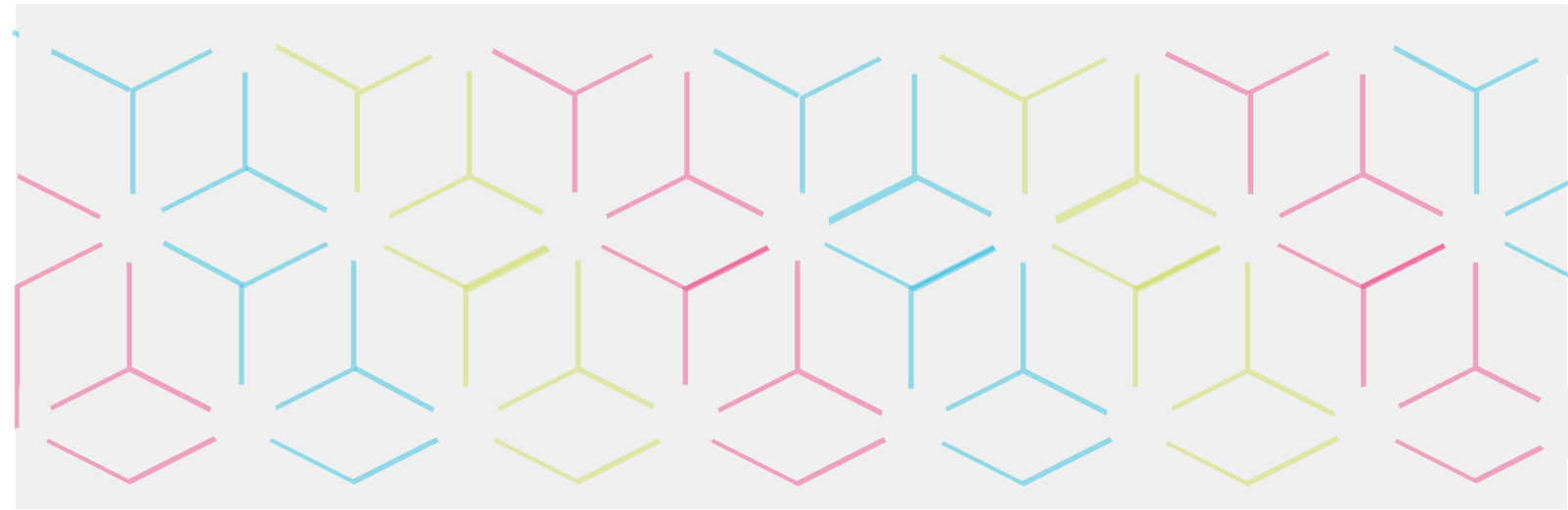
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