



Promote, support and ensure accessibility of lifelong learning

The rapid technological advances are affecting the demand for labour, knowledge, and skills of the labour force in a dynamic way. The current and future labour market is characterised by greater labour mobility, continuous upskilling and reskilling to increase the matching between the demanded and supplied skills. In this context, lifelong learning is considered one of various key solutions. Lifelong learning focuses on fostering a pro-active attitude towards learning and personal development with the aim of ensuring that individuals are vital, flexible, and sustainably employable on the labour market.

Promote a culture of lifelong learning

To foster a culture of lifelong learning, it is advisable to embed it in the formal education system, targeting students from a young age. The education system should aim to enhance students' autonomy, cultivate enjoyment from acquiring new knowledge and skills, introduce pedagogies in which continuous personal development is central and provide diverse learning styles. The latter includes active and project-based learning, combining learning in a classroom and in a work setting, providing a wide range of vocational education programmes to meet the needs and career goals of all students.¹ To promote learning at a later stage in life might be more challenging if workers do not get engaged in any form of education/training and do not feel concerned about their job security. Among the factors that could alter their attitude towards lifelong learning are listed an awareness of importance and benefits of lifelong learning, attractiveness of education/training, especially when education builds on previous experience, and facilitated access to education/training. The latter implies affordable costs and flexible modes of training.

Ensure provision of a wide range of education/training courses in various, flexible formats

The education/training courses should be in line with the needs of current/potential students and their employers. Thus, the education/training institutions should provide a wide range of learning opportunities, using various teaching methods, ensuring flexibility in terms of duration of a course, pace, schedules, and mode of learning (e.g., distance, hybrid or onsite learning). In addition, some studies highlight importance of separation of the learning experience from outcome assessment.

¹ OECD. (2014). Lifelong learning for all: Policy lessons. OECD. Retrieved 2022, from [https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DEELSA/ED/CERI/CD\(2000\)12/PART1&docLanguage=En](https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DEELSA/ED/CERI/CD(2000)12/PART1&docLanguage=En)



Ensure provision of infrastructure for lifelong learning

Providing access to lifelong learning requires a complex system and infrastructure built by different stakeholders, as it should facilitate identification of a suitable education/training course, provider and effectively support the process of learning. Both governments and the private sector must provide good learning facilities to promote continuous personal development of all in such a way that education infrastructure is not driven solely by profit: in case of a communal value, economically unprofitable education/training courses should be sustained by the government.² A primary way of accessing lifelong learning is through open-access online learning platforms. The development and promotion of learning platforms that are characterised by flexibility, adaptability, scalability, and affordability of education are needed.

Provide funding to support lifelong learning

To support individuals that are willing to engage in lifelong learning activities or to stimulate employers to invest in competences of their employees it is essential to ensure affordability of lifelong learning. The governments should assess the scale and target groups of financial support/incentives. A possible solution is to provide a free, open access for all to an education platform, funded by the government.³ However, some trainings might only be provided by private education/training providers. Thus, cost reducing measures, such as vouchers (full coverage of training costs) and financial contributions (partial coverage of training costs) should be considered. In case of a targeted financial support, it is essential to ensure inclusiveness of lifelong learning. Hence, support to vulnerable groups should be prioritised.

Ensure certification/recognition of non-formal and informal learning

Currently, validation, certification, accreditation of some learning activities is lacking.⁴ The value of non-formal and informal learning should be recognized by the employers to incentivize individuals to continuously invest in acquisition of knowledge and skills. To this end, it is recommended that specific attention is paid to the identification and integration of non-formal and informal learning into regional/national/international qualifications frameworks. This will ensure that learning outcomes are valorised.

² UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. (2020). Embracing a culture of lifelong learning: Contribution to the Futures of Education Initiative. Unesdoc.unesco.org. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374112>

³ ibid

⁴ Recognition of skills and qualifications acquired through non-formal and informal learning – the practical input of Organised Civil Society. European Economic and Social Committee. (2015). Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/recognition-skills-and-qualifications-acquired-through-non-formal-and-informal-learning-practical-input-organised-civil>



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Consider the following PILLARS and external resources to promote, support and ensure accessibility of lifelong learning:

Title	Author	Description
<u>Join UIL's Capacity-Building Opportunities For Lifelong Learning Policy-Making</u>	UNESCO, 2022	The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), in collaboration with Shanghai Open University (SOU), calls for applications by UNESCO Member States for its capacity-building courses on lifelong learning policy-making. Country teams – involving policy-makers and leading researchers – are asked to signal their interest no later than 31 July 2022 for the next course, starting in November 2022, and further courses in 2023.
<u>Lifelong Learning For All Policy Directions</u>	OECD, 2001	Five years after OECD Education Ministers embraced "lifelong learning for all," the OECD details its response to this directive, addressing the concept's definition, distinct policy directions, and practical implementation strategies. Section 2 delineates the essential aspects of the OECD's perspective on lifelong learning strategies, distinguishing them from other approaches. Section 3 provides a glimpse into how countries interpret and put these strategies into practice, with the chapter exploring five pivotal areas underscored in lifelong learning strategies and showcasing country-specific examples. The chapter culminates in concluding remarks summarizing key insights.
<u>Lifelong Learning Platform</u>	Lifelong Learning Platform	The Lifelong Learning Platform unites 42 European organizations involved in education, training, and youth initiatives across Europe and beyond. This coalition encompasses over 50,000 educational institutions and associations spanning formal, non-formal, and informal learning sectors, impacting millions of beneficiaries through their members' outreach efforts.
<u>European University Association (EUA): Lifelong Learning</u>	EUA	The website provides multiple reports, new articles, and publications all related to lifelong learning.
<u>Who's Building the Infrastructure for Lifelong Learning?</u>	Lynda Gratton, 2017	The article discusses why lifelong learning is important, the different stakeholders in this, the importance of online infrastructures to provide lifelong learning, and how corporations and governments both have a roll in this.
<u>Co-financing Lifelong Learning</u>	OECD, 2014	This publication pinpoints key economic obstacles hindering increased investment in lifelong learning, offers financial approaches to tackle these barriers, and evaluates recent practices involving different co-financing models. It encompasses detailed reports, country by country, spotlighting innovative co-financing structures implemented in lifelong learning initiatives.



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<p><u>Speed and Direction of Changes of Skills Demand, within Occupations, across European Countries</u></p>	<p>Emilio Colombo, Anna Giabelli, Fabio Mercurio, Mario Mezzanzanica and Francesco Trentini, 2022 (PILLARS REPORT)</p>	<p>This report investigates how occupations in various European regions evolved in skill composition using AI techniques like word embeddings and machine learning. It assesses changes in skill sets based on online job ads across countries, focusing on occupation-specific shifts. The study analyzes skill demand in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and the UK from 2019 to 2021, examining the relevance of existing skills and the emergence of new skills, employing both traditional econometric methods and innovative AI approaches.</p>
<p><u>Recognising Non-Formal and Informal Learning</u></p>	<p>OECD, 2010</p>	<p>While formal learning occurs within structured settings, acknowledging the value of informal and non-formal learning has become a priority for policymakers in OECD nations, recognizing its role in enhancing human capital. Integrating these forms of learning into a cohesive lifelong learning framework can significantly contribute to societal advancement, necessitating improvements in practices to validate the knowledge and skills acquired outside traditional education. This OECD report, derived from a review across 22 countries, delves into the benefits of acknowledging non-formal and informal learning, evaluates current policies and practices, and provides recommendations for establishing recognition processes for these learning systems.</p>