

LIFELONG LEARNING: THE NEW EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The paper examines life-long strategies in international and national scope and opportunities to adopt their priorities in regional strategies for improving level and access to lifelong learning in the Republic of Bulgaria. The issues are discussed from the point of view of lifelong learning's advantages that could be used for providing training in less favored regions considering capacity building for achievement of sustainable development. The study provides evidence that lifelong learning development would have a specific contribution to the strategic goals of increase in educational level and employment rates, promotion of research and development, reducing poverty and uneven development of urban and rural areas through a self-directed learning process providing solutions of the most topical problems concerning low economic development, lack of managerial and marketing skills, and thus contributing to more general points of improvement of living conditions, food and social security, etc.

Keywords: lifelong learning, learning outcomes, competence-based training.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's economy the economic growth, development and progress of an economy are subject to investment in people, to the increased role of education and lifelong learning and improving educational and employment policies. The importance of lifelong learning on the labor market is underlined in the increase of work efficiency because „by participating in lifelong learning individuals adapt more easily to changes in the labour market and better face strong competition from the global economy” and these advantages on individual level are supported by the advantages on organization and even national level „by the fact that well prepared people are always a long-term investment of society, becoming the support of economic growth and development” (Lonela, 2012a)

Addressing strategic goals in the beginning of the new millennium the educational level is one of the most prominent fields of discussion both as a target and as a factor in future development. The establishment of educational standards aiming at enhancing creativity and innovation is a feature of new development goals respecting cultural differences and applying new technology development. Targeted changes in educational systems are to provide quality, efficiency, mobility, recognition, and competence. There are six outlined

dimensions that are determined by quality education: inclusiveness; effectiveness; health, safety and productive school environment; gender equality; participation and active participation of all stakeholders in the life and work of the school environment; respecting the rights of children and multiculturalism (Jovanova-Mitkovska, Hristovska, 2011b).

2. LIFELONG LEARNING: THE NEW EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Lifelong learning („education from cradle to grave”) is a holistic approach having as main targets “generalizing the pre-school education both in quantity and quality, constituting a real learning basis in compulsory education, facilitating progression from school to business life, encouraging adults to learn, renewing the resources of the system and establishing consistency between the parts of the system” (Demirel, 2009a). Lifelong learning comprises all phases of learning, from pre-school to post-retirement, and covers the whole spectrum of formal, non-formal and informal learning which means that learning is a diverse process adapted to the individuals and occurring at all times in all places providing not only individual needs “in order to foster the continuous development and improvement of the knowledge and skills needed for employment and personal fulfillment” but also community ones. Lifelong learning is defined as “lifelong, lifewide, voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons” enhancing social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, competitiveness and employability. Life-long learning as „deliberate, focused learning throughout a person’s lifetime” is connected to student-centered learning approaches.

Taking the basic differences between educational perspective of the 20th century and the concept of the lifelong learning in the 21st century, the changing function of educational institutions and the interaction between schools and lifelong learning is displayed underlining that „schools in the twenty-first century should be restructured in a unity of system which allows for equal opportunities for all students without exception, which is production-based, suitable for the existing vocational standards, which allows horizontal/vertical transfers in all periods of education, and finally which teaches the ways and methods for obtaining knowledge with an approach of lifelong learning for all”. What is important for learners are learning how to learn and the ability to organize and direct their own learning skills. The differences between the concept of 20th century education and the concept of 21st century lifelong learning (Table 1) are stated by Longworth (2003).

Table 1. Differences between 20th century education and 21st century lifelong learning

Indicators	20th century education	21st century lifelong learning
Objectives	Education sets narrow academic objectives and targets and works to achieve these in the present.	The concept of lifelong learning not only works to achieve present targets but also to impart future long term values and attitudes to learning. For this purpose; it is necessary that curriculums deal with life skills more and the link between school and life and the community between industry and society have to be widener.
Relationship with industry	There is rudimentary short term business plan usually around academic matters and little effort is made to keep every stakeholder informed and on-side.	There is a full written organizational strategy which is available to all. This strategy plan develops the school into lifelong learning and covers the all aspects of the school’s activity. In this aspect in order to bring change in education concept, it is necessary to develop longer term school business plan and make it available to all. It is also

		necessary to create proactive information strategies to bring all stakeholders on-side.
In-service training of teachers	Some teachers go on educational courses according to their needs or desires and there are occasional seminars in schools only for teachers.	Every person in the school has a continuous improvement plan for academic and personal skill embedded into the management system and as a part they are related to the school development plan. For this purpose; it is necessary that not only students but also teachers and admin staff develop written continuous improvement plans for academic and personal development of pupils and it should be extended these to parents and community.
Role of the teacher	Teachers are the only human resource for curriculum delivery and other resources are supplied from local government and school events.	It is objected to add human resource by tapping into skills, talents and knowledge of governors, parents and everyone in the community by exploring funding. In order to do this, besides the human and other resources in the community it is necessary to use innovative strategies to involve the community in school development.
Curriculum	The curriculums are based on discrete subjects and they are assessed on memorizations of facts with fail pass philosophy.	The curriculum is based on skills and knowledge, the enhancement of self- esteem and the acceptance of lifelong values. In this aspect the examinations are done as stocktaking part of the personal learning process. In order to change this concept, personal skills development has to be incorporated into the curriculum. Besides, the Notion of failure should be taken out of the system and replaced with the strategies for improving personal self-esteem.
Support services	The teachers are overworked and sparse support service is given to identify and solve individual learning and social problems.	Guidance, support and counseling systems are available for all learners and their families. The social problems are identified rapidly and there are rapid solutions for learning and social problems. In order to eliminate this

		<p>difference, it is necessary to introduce individual learning guidance systems for all pupils frequently and the resources like mentors should be used in the school and community. The families should be involved the system and rapid response system should be initiated.</p>
Evaluation	<p>The curriculum and schools are based on examination success. The social curriculum dealt with an ad hoc basis. There are some special and community programs.</p>	<p>It looks outward to the world and it learns by contributing to the community in which it exists. A strong social curriculum is created to promote a sense of tolerance and understanding of different races, creeds and cultures. In order to enhance the tolerance and understanding in and out of school, an active social curriculum should be introduced. Internet Networks should be used in projects to link pupils to other pupils throughout the world.</p>
Instruction methods and techniques	<p>Teacher has a role of passer of information through didactic teaching methods using chalk, talk and paper exercises.</p>	<p>The teacher has a role of developer of learning skills using motivational power of the individualized active learning programmes like ICT, multimedia and Networks. With the aim of achieving this system the teachers should be trained in the many uses of technology as learning tools. ICT should be heavily invested thorough innovative programs with industry.</p>
Relationship with parents	<p>The parents are invited to school to discuss the child's progress once a term and there are occasional public information meetings.</p>	<p>It is objected to involve the family in to the life of the school through increased homeschool cooperation and to develop their awareness about active participation in school events. So they play an active role in the life of school. For this purpose a family participation guide outlining all the things parents can do for the school should be written. To establish a contact with the parents an e-mail line can be opened.</p>
School activities	<p>There is only one show or play once a year and the actives out of school are led by only</p>	<p>It is possible to enhance the confidence, creativity and the cultural vision of staff, parents,</p>

	enthusiastic teachers. Sometimes there are Annual School Fair and Presentation Days.	children and community through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. For this reason, an impressive program of school societies, out of school activities, cultures, events should be established and involve the community where is appropriate.
Vision of school	In some countries it is concentrated mainly on high academic achievers in order to enhance attractiveness to parents through position in league tables.	It is concentrated on academic and personal success of all pupils as a means of enhancing the school's reputation and satisfying society's needs. Besides the public is invited to share it. For this reason the school should be marketed strongly. It is important to emphasize the positive learning opportunities for all children, staff and the community at large. The school should create its own league table of all round achievement.

Lifelong learning means „continuous development and improvement of the knowledge and skills needed for employment and personal fulfillment through formal and informal learning opportunities” based on the four pillars of education for the future (Table 2) encouraging “creativity, initiative and responsiveness in people thereby enabling them to show adaptability in postindustrial society through enhancing skills to: manage uncertainty; communicate across and within cultures, sub-cultures, families and communities; negotiate conflicts. The emphasis is on learning to learn and the ability to keep learning for a lifetime” (Chitiba, 2012b).

Main challenges for lifelong learning process are: inducement of informal learning opportunities; stimulation of self-motivated learning; acceptance of self-funded learning; stimulation of universal participation to the learning process. In lifelong learning the learner is at the core of the learning process (Table 3).

Table 2. The four pillars of education in the future (Chitiba, 2012b).

Learning to know:	mastering learning tools rather than acquisition of structured knowledge
Learning to do:	equipping people for the types of work needed now and in the future including innovation and adaptation of learning to future work environments
Learning to live together, and with others:	peacefully resolving conflict, discovering other people and their cultures, fostering community capability, individual competence and capacity, economic resilience, and social inclusion
Learning to be:	education contributing to a personal development: mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic appreciation and spirituality

Table 3. Life-long learners at the core of the learning process. According to Knapper and Cropley (2000) (Coşkun, Demirel, 2010a)

Life-long learners
plan their own learning
assess their own learning
are active rather than passive learners
learn in both formal and informal settings
learn from their peers, teachers, mentors etc.
integrate knowledge from different subject areas when required
use different learning strategies for different situations

Lifelong learning „not only includes acquiring each kind of knowledge, skill, and quality but also updating them” (Baris and Tosun, 2011b). Links between educational system, lifelong learning and academic research are „real and desirable” and transdisciplinary niches create „an enriched research environment” and could provide real solutions in educational process and foster lifelong learning (Canter and Brumar, 2011c). The most important reasons to apply lifelong learning are in the necessity gained skills to meet contemporary challenges and making easier access to education, as well as provision of flexibility.

Among the many challenges for lifelong learning in contemporary societies along with the most general ones as financial, demographic, technological, social, environmental and democratic, the following could be mentioned: „better bridging among levels and learning settings; considering the need to maintain skills throughout life; considering financial issues to bring the discourse more decisively into policy discussion, and exploring the social dimension of learning” (Laal and Laal, 2012c).

The relationship between lifelong learning and interactive technology is underlined in the notion that technology-based learning is a hot topic nowadays and lead to development of new educational technology addressing lifelong learning in terms of “acquiring and updating all kinds of abilities, interests, knowledge and qualifications from the pre-school years to postretirement” (Laal, 2011d). Linking lifelong learning to e-portfolio (in terms of digital records of curriculum vitae, personal development and new acquisitions) will be much more crucial in near future (Baris and Tosun, 2011b) putting the following fields of relationship between both concepts: new technology, information society, new methods of learning and teaching.

Lifelong learning’s advantages are considered in regard to adults’ training opportunities and social inclusion contributing to the adaptation processes and quality of life. Discussing the most important impacts of lifelong learning on quality of life (Escuder-Mollon, 2012e) the following should have special attention: positive thinking, learning, memory and concentration, interpersonal relations, personal development (achievement and status in education, cognitive, social and practical personal competence, and performance - success, achievement, productivity), and self-determination (independence, desires, expectations, choices, preferences). It is important to set in the proper way the training in respect to learning content, leaning environment, pedagogical approaches, etc. assuring active learning.

Table 4. Lifelong learning in different age periods (Laal, 2011d)

Age 0-5 years	Learning provides a foundation for future learning habits and talents The age period with the highest amount of informal learning
Age 6-24 years	Learning primarily takes place in educational institutions - from primary and secondary to tertiary levels. Family life, social organizations, religious institutions, and mass media have a role in

	learning during this time.
Age 25-60 years	<p>Learning informally through the use of instructional media, mostly from occupations, work-places, colleagues, touring, mass media, information technologies, environment and nature.</p> <p>Learning from experiences and problem solving.</p> <p>Need of continuous development of intellect, capability and integrity.</p>
Age 60+ years	<p>Learning from activities suitable to age e.g. art, music, sports for the elderly, handicrafts and social work.</p> <p>Voluntary work in community organizations, clubs and associations</p>

In comparison to traditional learning, e-learning provides certain advantages as “reduced time for getting in touch with the source of learning, flexibility of learning schedule which lacks the classic on campus classes, less costs for the participant due to the fact that the study does not involve travelling, accommodation” (Pamfilie et al., 2012f). E-learning could be an effective and efficient alternative for continuous learning if virtual platforms have proper design and content according to cognitive and cultural characteristics of target learners (Pamfilie et al., 2012f). Thus, e-learning could provide the needed flexibility and accessibility for population in mountain regions if relevant basic knowledge and skills, as well as wish, are available, especially considering different people of different ages and understandings.

Lifelong learning considers the demand for and the supply of learning opportunities as part of „a connected system covering the whole lifecycle” offering a systematic view and emphasizing “the centrality of the learner” and the need for initiatives that „cater for the diversity of learner needs”, thus representing the shift of attention from the supply of learning to the demand side (Chitiba, 2012b). It is focused on the motivation to learn “and draws attention to self-paced and self-directed learning and it stresses the multiple objectives of education policy, which include economic, social or cultural outcomes; personal development, and citizenship” (Chitiba, 2012b). In the context of lifelong learning, the importance of career education has new dimensions bearing in mind that social integration is an active and lifelong process outlining the major purpose of education as preparation for life, thus changing the vision of educational content and imposing the need of considerations in the field of career planning. Barriers to lifelong learning could be economic, personal, social, foundational, technological, access, and motivational inextricably linked to one another (Table 5) (Laal, 2011e).

Table 5. Barriers to lifelong learning

Structural barriers	lack of appropriate education or training opportunities, constraints of the benefit system
Physical and material barriers	costs of learning (direct - fees, and indirect - transport, books, equipment, childcare), lack of time, lack of information, geographical
Attitudinal barriers	negative attitudes to learning, lack of confidence or lack of motivation

The elements needed to develop lifelong learning in a society are identified as follows: Partnership working; Insight into the demand for learning in the knowledge-based society; Adequate resourcing; Facilitating access to learning opportunities; Creating a learning culture and striving for excellence (Laal, 2011d).

Eight key teachers’ competencies necessary for lifelong learning are outlined and explained: cognitive skills, self-esteem, problem solving, and application of modern ICT, information, mathematical and language literacy, and ability of empirical research (Ionela, 2012a).

Lifelong learning is expected to “deliver competence development and labor market-related qualifications within and outside enterprises as part of human resource development to sustain economic growth” and “to contribute to the maintenance of democratic values and institutions, and to societal and personal development, as well as reducing development gaps between rural and urban areas” (Stanef et al., 2012f). Adaptation of lifelong learning approaches in national educational systems has important implications recognizing education in all forms. The relevant frameworks (legislative, governance, financial, institutional, learning, informational, qualifications and regulatory) should be created in national policy development in order to engage different communities in learning, as well as collateral policies in related areas as „employment, welfare, rural development and poverty reduction and monitoring and evaluation of policy impact across many ministries and agencies in order to reduce development gaps between rural and urban areas” (Stanef et al., 2012f). Among the main challenges before the humanity in the 21st century are educational and capacity building problems interlinked to globalization processes and information society development imposing the permanent existence of an educational environment and learning skills in times when information is rendered along with the general resources of well-being and sustainable development of future generations? Thus, it is not any more important to know all but to have skills to obtain information and deal with it. That is a big challenge to society and educational systems shifting to assurance of continuity in learning and building learning capacities, i.e. accenting abilities of self-learning.

Discussing „emergencies in lifelong learning”, it is stated that early dropout of formal education endangering economic and social security could find possible solutions in „continuing education, reflections and practices on local, national, regional and global scale” supported by the flagship initiatives of Europe 2020 Strategy within employment, social affairs and inclusion field (Bostan, 2014a).

A study of efforts by 15 countries to develop lifelong learning through reform of qualifications systems reveals 9 broad policy responses that other countries can draw on to develop and refine their policies on lifelong learning (Table 6) (Gelin, 2004 cited by Bidokht, 2011). The concept could be put into practice through new policies and strategies implementing flexible frameworks, innovative pedagogical approaches, new forms of assessments and institutional collaboration (Chitiba, 2012b).

Table 6. Policy responses to develop and define lifelong learning policies.

1.	Increased flexibility and responsiveness
2.	Motivating young people to learn
3.	Linking education and work
4.	Facilitating open access to qualifications
5.	Diversifying assessment processes
6.	Making qualifications progressive
7.	Making the qualifications system transparent
8.	Reviewing funding and increasing efficiency
9.	Better managing the qualifications system

Considering that in the Europe 2020 strategy three priorities are underlined: „Smart growth - developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation, Sustainable growth - promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy and Inclusive growth - fostering a high employment economy delivering economic, social and territorial cohesion”, it is concluded that sustainable development depends on affordable permanent education (Oprean et al., 2011f).

In the European Union, lifelong learning became the central part of educational policies in the context of struggles for a knowledge-based society and the importance of developing more competitive lifelong learning strategies in national educational systems will be more and more essential for a successful governmental policy (Lazar, Lazar, 2012g). It is very important to think about educational policies “able to increase beneficial effects both for individuals and for societies, to solve and avoid from cultural, social and economic disadvantages and to give a significant contribution to cooperating and social cohesion and stability”

(Aleandri, Girotti, 2012h).

One of the four strategic objectives for the ET 2020 framework is making lifelong learning and mobility a reality and one of the major issues in putting it into practice is the educational system of each country which „is not yet prepared to develop lifelong learning competences” (Canter and Brumar, 2011c). Student-centered and competence-based approaches, as well as transdisciplinary research and integrated knowledge, are big challenges to Bulgarian educational system too.

National strategy for lifelong learning 2014-2020 of the Republic of Bulgaria sets out the strategic framework of the state policy in education and training during the next program period according to the global goals put on the European level for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth as a response to all emerging challenges in regards to the social inclusion and economic growth. It accepts the definition of lifelong learning, as used in the EC Memorandum on lifelong learning (2000): „all purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence”, and covers all forms of education, training and learning outlining content, forms, environment and interactions among all the parties: learners; training providers; employers, trade organizations, labor unions, civil society organizations; regions, municipalities and local communities; governmental bodies as ministries and agencies, etc. according to the new scope of learning in conditions of quality assurance, transparency and comparability. Lifelong learning is targeted as a guiding principle in the supply of education and training in the national context (Table 7 & 8).

Table 7. Principles in the implementation of the National strategy for lifelong learning 2014-2020.

Principle	Short description
Quality	transforming lifelong learning into a factor for the success and competitiveness of the citizenry, the institutions, and organizations by providing the conditions to achieve higher educational objectives
Equality and diversity	ensuring equal opportunities for all individual and collective stakeholders to exercise their rights and duties arising from their participation in various and multiple forms of lifelong learning, which take place in diverse socio-economic contexts
Decentralization	transfer of powers and resources from central government bodies and public institutions to the regional administrations, the municipalities, the setups of social partners, the non-governmental organizations, etc., and also to associations of training providers in order to ensure the access to lifelong learning activities for various target groups and specific participants
Cooperation	conduct of consultation processes at various levels, proactive dialogue and allocation of the rights, duties, and risks among all stakeholders in order to achieve the strategic objectives and priorities of the lifelong learning policy through implementation of the specific measures scheduled for the impact areas
Measurability	enhancement of the opportunities for monitoring and measuring the education objectives
Flexibility	preparedness of the stakeholders to respond, upon occurrence/ascertainment of unforeseen social and socio-economic processes, through expansion of the earmarked objectives and

	action
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Table 8. National strategy for lifelong learning 2014-2020 strategic priorities.

Priorities	Impact areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A step forward to a new educational approach and innovations in education and training; • Increasing the quality of education and training; • Ensuring the educational environment for equal access to lifelong learning and for active social inclusion and active citizen participation; • Promoting education and training aligned to the needs of the economy and changes on the labour market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the conditions for transition to a functioning system for lifelong learning. • Ensuring the conditions for expanding the scope and enhancing the quality of preschool education and training; • Applying a comprehensive approach to enhancing the educational achievements and reducing the share of early school leavers; • Enhancing the quality of school education and training towards attainment of the key competences, improving the learners' achievements and personality development; • Increasing the attractiveness and improving the quality of vocational education and training to ensure employment and competitiveness; • Modernizing the higher education; • Development of opportunities for non-formal and informal learning for personal and professional progress. New opportunities for good quality of life following the working career's end; • Coordinating the interaction among stakeholders in the implementation of the lifelong learning policy.

Lifelong learning is in the basis of the reforms on different levels because of its significance for assurance of quality of life and social security, the links to globalization and technological changes and economic opportunities (Terziev, Arabska, 2015a). Establishing the right educational policies based on preliminary needs' analyses and providing equal opportunities is part of effective strategies of overcoming unemployment and contributing to social cohesion and stability. The harmonization of European, national and local strategies is necessary for provision of efficiency, assurance of funding and resources and long-term effects.

Table 9. Development of lifelong learning

Lifelong learning encouragement prerequisite
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of non-formal and informal learning; • Encouragement of vocational training; • Development of trainers skills; • Creating culture of learning through increased learning opportunities, improving access and participation, stimulating learning demand; • Inclusion of a broader scope of learners in respect to age, occupation, educational and professional background, etc.; • Partnership approach - collaboration of all stakeholders in planning, implementation, funding, resources allocation, etc.;

- Communication and coordination;
- Developing mechanisms for quality assurance, evaluation and monitoring;
- Continuous improvement and renewal of policies and system.

There is a need of measuring whether current education and qualification system answers the needs of individuals and organizations, as well as how to apply best lifelong learning in order to assure improvements in qualifications and recognition. The outcomes should be measured as quality skills giving competitive advantages to learners and making them adaptable and mobile. However, all the interventions should be carefully analyzed before entering into force according to specific characteristics of some regions and their population in connection to the existing culture and understandings. The introduction of the culture of lifelong learning would not be an easy and fast process. Significant efforts in motivation activities should be put and it should embrace all the parties: state through regulatory requirements, policies, strategies and specific support; business - actively participating, determining needs and providing support; educational and training institutions – building capacities and assuring inclusion; potential learners - willing to change (Terziev, Arabska, 2015a).

Development of lifelong learning in less favored regions (as mountain) is viewed as an opportunity for capacity building activities and needs a specifically targeted lifelong learning application policy based on the broad participatory approach and using available resources and modern information and communication technology (Terziev, Arabska, 2015a). It should provide implications for solutions of the main problems connected to access, as well as teachers' skills of lifelong learning approaches, especially in curricula development based on enhancement of personal skills, and further evaluation and quality control mechanisms. Networking as a collaborative learning opportunity could provide the needed flexible framework of learning anytime at anyplace concerning individual needs and learning abilities. The creation of a new learning culture is the first necessary prerequisite in motivation activities and making learning more accessible in mountain regions in the country. The application of such a strategy will need support of the institutional system (educational and training institutions, state, non-governmental and business organizations) and relevant infrastructure on regional level. Development of partnerships should be substantiated by the identification of the needs (both of learners and the labor market) and relevant resources respecting cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversities (Terziev, Georgiev, 2018a-d; Terziev, Banabakova, Georgiev, 2018c-e; Terziev, Banabakova, Georgiev, 2018e-o; Dimitrova, Georgiev, 2017a-b; Terziev, Banabakova, Arabska, 2018p; Terziev, Arabska, Banabakova, Kovalyov, 2018q; Terziev, Arabska, Banabakova, Ignatova, Kovalyov, 2018r; Terziev, Arabska, Banabakova, 2018s; Terziev, 2016a; Terziev, 2017c; Terziev, Radev, Arabska, Dimitrovski, 2017d; Terziev, 2017e; Bogdanova, 2017f; Bogdanova, 2016b; Bogdanova, 2016c; Bogdanova, 2015b; Bogdanova, 2015c; Bogdanova, 2012i; Bogdanova, Parashkevova-Velikova, 2015d; Parashkevova-Velikova, Bogdanova, 2016d).

Table 10. Key issues and there linkages in lifelong learning development

European and national regulatory framework				
Strategic partnerships	Teaching	Learning	Administration and support systems	Monitoring and control system
Relationships	Roles of participants		Access	Quality assurance
Policies encouraging lifelong learning in disadvantaged regions				

Table 11. Mechanisms fostering lifelong learning

Communication and coordination	Recognition of skills	Employability	Quality assurance system
Pedagogical innovation	Qualifications framework	Flexibility in learning programs	

Learning pathways	Validation procedures	Needs' analyses	
Learning outcomes			
Participatory approaches			

3. CONCLUSION

Development of lifelong learning programs is important because of the opportunities they provide for assuring employment, higher quality of life and social inclusion, as well as for economic growth and community development as a whole. Lifelong learning policies are needed because permanent trainings lead to acquisition of valuable skills providing competitive advantages of individuals on the labor market in conditions of globalization of economic and social life, fast technological changes and increase in the importance of knowledge in economy.

Discussing concrete measures of support in lifelong learning in the country, some common aims could be identified concerning also the national education and qualification system: improving communication and cooperation between state, educational institutions, business organizations and society, adaptation of training to labor market demand and improving training programs on different levels and types, motivation for lifelong learning and career development. Educational measures should be connected to labor market measures, social and fiscal policies in order to increase employment, labor efficiency and motivation for self-improvement.

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