



European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning EUCIS-LLL Some key definitions...

What is lifelong learning?

Today, the concept of “lifelong learning” (LLL) is widely used but its meaning differs according to whom is using it. According to EUCIS-LLL, lifelong learning covers education and training across all ages and in all areas of life be it formal, non-formal or informal. It shall enable citizen’s emancipation and full participation in society in its civic, social and economic dimensions. Its objective should not only be described in terms of employability or economic growth but also as a framework for personal development.

What do we mean by...

Formal education:

intentional, organized and structured - leading to recognised diplomas and qualifications. It is usually provided in schools, colleges, universities and other formal educational institutions that normally constitute a continuous ‘ladder’ of full-time education for children and young people.

Non-formal education:

usually organised and can have learning objectives. It takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training and does not typically lead to formalised certificates. It concerns persons of all ages. It may be provided in the workplace and through the activities of civil society organisations and groups (youth organisations, popular education movements, unions, etc.).

Informal learning:

is never organised nor institutionalised (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). From the learners’ standpoint, it is never intentional. Often it is referred to as learning by experience or just as experience. It results from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure.