

# **RETHINKING LIFELONG LEARNING AND WORKPLACE LEARNING BETWEEN POLICIES AND PRACTICE: THE EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE**



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# SHIFT FROM PRODUCTION SOCIETY TO KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

- Increases in knowledge lead to improved productivity and/or quality
- Learning and development as a sustainable way of obtaining a competitive advantage
- Job security is no longer guaranteed



# PILLARS OF LLL POLICIES IN EUROPE: INITIAL REACTION TO KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY (1970S)

- Council of Europe. (1978). *Permanent Education. Final report*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Faure, E. (1972). *Learning to be*. Paris-London: Unesco-Harrap.
- Kallen, D. & Bergtsson, J. (1973) *Recurrent Education: a strategy for lifelong learning*. Paris: OECD.



# PILLARS OF LLL POLICIES IN EUROPE: KEY DOCUMENTS (1990S)

- Delors, J. (1996). *Learning: the Treasure Within*. Paris, OECD.
- OECD. (1996). *Lifelong learning for all*. Paris: OECD.
- European Commission (1996). *White Paper on education and training : teaching and learning - towards the learning society*. Luxembourg: European Communities.



# MEMORANDUM ON LIFELONG LEARNING (2000)

- New basic skills for all
- More investment in human resources
- Innovation in teaching and learning
- Valuing learning
- Rethinking guidance and counselling
- Bringing learning closer to home



# MEMORANDUM ON LIFELONG LEARNING AND SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS

- Memorandum on Lifelong Learning: Commission Staff Working Paper (October 2000)
- Education and Training 2010
  - Open method of coordination
  - Exchange of experience and good practice, joint policy development, benchmarking and measurement of progress



# AFTER MEMORANDUM ON LLL: CRITICAL REFLECTION ON THE FIRST DECADE - I

- “Putting lifelong learning at the front of the stage is a wise decision. Make it carry the whole burden of Europeans’ employability is chimeric.”
- “Key competences are not only technical expectations.”
- “motivation — an aspect of lifelong learning that has been neglected during the past years.”
- “New horizons should be reached, considering a holistic vision of the learner and broader objectives for lifelong learning.”
- EUCIS-LLL (2012). *Twelve years after: a call for a renewed Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*. Brussels: EUCIS-LLL.



# AFTER MEMORANDUM ON LLL: CRITICAL REFLECTION ON THE FIRST DECADE - II

- “For the majority of Europeans, lifelong learning (LLL) is not a reality. ... recent data on the number of adults aged 25-64 participating in LLL show a slight downwards trend. The current level of 9.1% (2010) is far below the ET 2020 benchmark of 15% to be reached by 2020.”
- European Commission. (2012). *‘Education and Training in a smart, sustainable and inclusive Europe’ : 2012 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)* .





## AFTER MEMORANDUM ON LLL: CRITICAL REFLECTION ON THE 1ST DECADE - III

- “European education and training systems continue to fall short in providing the right skills for employability, and are not working adequately with business or employers to bring the learning experience closer to the reality of the working environment. These skill mismatches are a growing concern for European industry's competitiveness.”
- European Commission. (2012). *Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes.*



# THE PRESENT DAY AND CURRENT PROGRAMME

## DOCUMENTS:

# EUROPE 2020 & EDUCATION AND TRAINING 2020

- Europe 2020
- 10-year-strategy proposed by the European Commission on 3 March 2010 for advancement of the economy of the European Union
- It aims at "smart, sustainable, inclusive growth" with greater coordination of national and European policy
- It follows the Lisbon Strategy for the 2000–2010 period



# EDUCATION & TRAINING 2020 (2009) STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- Through the strategic framework for education and training, EU countries have identified four common objectives to address these challenges by 2020:
- **Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality**
- **Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training**
- **Promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship**
- **Enhancing creativity and innovation including entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training**



# WORKPLACE LEARNING (DEFINITION)

- “Workplace learning refers to the acquisition of new knowledge and skills that are of importance in order to be able to function in the work environment.”
- Raemdonck, I., Gijbels, D. and van Groen, W., 2014, p. 189



# EFFECTS ON WORKPLACE LEARNING (PART ONE)

- Education and Training 2020 and subsequent documents feature explicit work with WPL rather marginally.
- “LLL is a continuous process that can last throughout a person’s entire life, from quality early-childhood education to post-working age. Moreover, learning takes place also outside formal learning contexts, in particular at the workplace.” (*2012 Joint Report*)
- Paradoxically, workplace learning in explicit terms is more and more often related to new challenges (ageing society; innovations, etc.) rather than education and training.



# EFFECTS ON WORKPLACE LEARNING (PART TWO)

- The systems of validation and recognition of informal and non-formal learning (EQF on the European level and NQF on national levels) open space for the application of workplace learning results for the qualification of individuals.
- Workplace learning complies with the idea of “flexible study opportunities and pathways in lifelong learning”.



# CONCLUSIONS

- The policies of lifelong learning make the framework of support to learning in practice.
- They focus on the results or circumstances of learning:
  - Validation of learning
  - Financing
  - Specification of time and space for learning
  - Forms of education and training
- Current systems of support are directed at these circumstances of learning.
- The crux of the matter, i.e. the processes of learning, are not subject to intense reflection.



## FOR DISCUSSION

- To what extent can functional systems of support to learning be adjusted without reflecting on the **processes of learning**?
- Do social and educational sciences contribute sufficiently to the cultivation of political discussions on the development of and need for (workplace) learning?
- To what extent does the political assignment of lifelong learning coincide with the needs of individuals, organizations and society?

