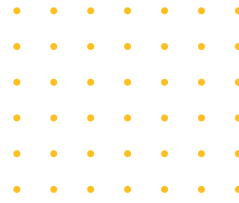


# REPORT

## LEARNING OUTCOMES IN ADULT EDUCATION



# INTRODUCTION

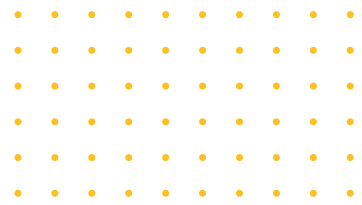


**Defining learning outcomes of adult education is a crucial aspect of the learning process. It allows to focus on adults' achievements and the benefits resulting from their participation in education.**

This report will concentrate on understanding and defining these outcomes, which are of significant importance for both the participants themselves and society at large.

Nearly every educational project in non-formal education, regardless of its form, demonstrates the potential to bring benefits to multiple stakeholders. These benefits are noticeable at various levels, beginning with individual participants, extending to training providers, and eventually impacting entire societies. Successful examples of educational projects provide clear evidence that learning and skills development in adult life are meaningful and yield results.

Indeed, adults, irrespective of their educational background or experience, can derive immense benefits from accessing non-formal education. Through this avenue, they expand their knowledge, develop skills, gain new career perspectives, and introduce positive changes in their personal lives. However, to ensure the effectiveness of this form of education and better appreciate its impact, it's essential to define the learning outcomes.



## **In today's adult learning, there is an increasing need to determine and measure learners' achievements.**

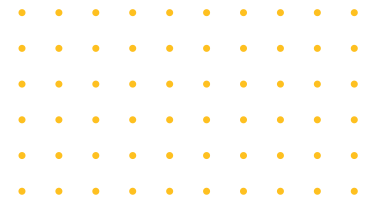
In this context, the concept of "learning outcomes" plays a crucial role. Learning outcomes represent clear statement about the desired effects of the learning process, expressed in words that unambiguously define how they can be measured. Therefore, learning outcomes form the basis for measuring and reporting participants' achievements. They have the potential to improve training design and the quality of the learning process. The formulation and use of learning outcomes shift the focus towards effective teaching and learning. This leads to greater transparency for all participants and stakeholders involved in education. Learning outcomes can serve as a general principle for organizing teaching and learning practices and encourage a shift towards learner-oriented processes. They open up possibilities for diverse assessment practices, allowing the adaptation of training programs to new contexts created by rapid technological advancements, labor market demands, and the evolving personal development needs of adults.

Defining the learning outcomes of adults is a crucial step that assists educators and organizations in planning the educational process correctly and evaluating the holistic impact of their activities. It's also valuable to gather consistent data on learning effects to better understand the benefits brought about by non-formal education. This knowledge can aid in adjusting educational programs to participants' needs and demonstrate the value of such learning.

However, it's important to emphasize that the type of learning outcomes that can be defined will depend on specific educational goals, program content, and the form of education. Every educational project is unique and yields diverse effects that are worth planning, exploring,



and documenting. Ultimately, defining these outcomes helps us better understand what knowledge, skills, and competencies are being developed and how non-formal education contributes to the development of individuals and society as a whole.



## The concept of educational achievements in adult education

The concept of educational achievements in adult education is not entirely new, but its widespread acceptance and formalization have become more noticeable in recent decades, particularly with the advent of competency-based education and an increased emphasis on accountability and assessment in educational systems worldwide.

**There are certain key milestones, such as:**



### **Competency-Based Education (CBE):**

CBE emerged in the late 20th century to better align educational goals with the needs of the job market and society. It is achievement-focused and has been widely embraced in adult education.

### **Accreditation and Quality Assurance:**

with increasing pressure on educational institutions to demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of their programs, the focus has shifted towards measurable educational achievements. This trend has been particularly noticeable since the end of the 20th century.



### **Lifelong Learning:**

the concept popularized towards the end of the 20th century, emphasizes the importance of continuous skill development and adaptation. Here, learning achievements are often geared towards real-world application and skills useful in various contexts, not just within formal educational institutions.

### **Globalization and Standardization:**

international frameworks, such as the Bologna Process in Europe, which began in 1999, aimed to standardize qualifications and educational achievements across countries. These efforts also impact adult education, especially concerning qualification recognition and skill portability.

### **21st Century Skills:**

with the onset of the 21st century, there has been an increasing understanding that skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability are essential. Educational achievements began to incorporate these "soft skills" alongside traditional "hard skills."

### **Technology and Online Learning:**

the rise of online educational platforms has facilitated tracking and measuring educational achievements, making it easier to utilize them in adult education.

### **Government and Policy:**


various governments have introduced policies promoting adult learning, often linked to economic development goals. These policies frequently focus on measurable achievements both for ensuring accountability and assessing the effectiveness of various educational interventions.

### **OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC):**

initiatives like PIAAC have contributed to a global discussion on skills and competencies, aiming for a greater focus on measurable achievements in adult education.

### **Adult Learning Theories:**

theorists such as Malcolm Knowles, who popularized the concept of andragogy, have also influenced the focus on educational achievements, emphasizing the self-directed and goal-oriented nature of adult learning.





## The concept of educational achievements or learning outcomes in adult education forms the foundation for understanding how the effects of learning influence individuals and society as a whole.

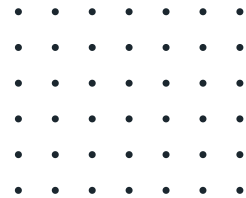
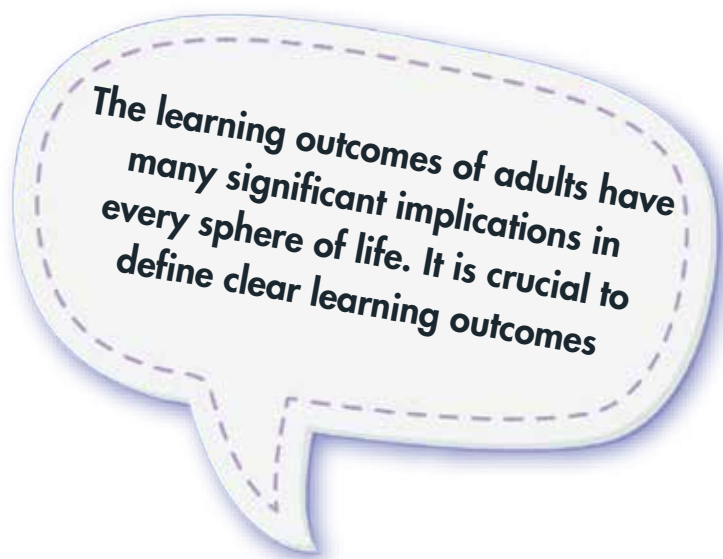


It not only reflects how adults learn and develop competencies in an increasingly competitive and changing world but also sets the path for improving educational systems.

It's essential to emphasize that the contemporary approach to the concept of educational achievements in adult education encompasses not only traditional forms of learning but also informal and non-formal paths of adult learning.

As adult education becomes more diversified and accessible, it's important to consider various forms of learning in the context of educational achievements. Clearly, there is a recognized need to adapt the concept of educational achievements to contemporary challenges, such as globalization, technological progress, and evolving labor market needs. This implies that the learning outcomes of adults must consider their ability to adapt to changing conditions and develop skills not only in a professional context but also on a personal level.

A competency-based approach reflects this necessity, focusing on skills that are crucial for the lives and work of adults. Simultaneously, the emphasis on accountability and assessment aids in ensuring that learning outcomes are measurable and aligned with agreed standards, consequently contributing to the enhancement of the quality of adult education.

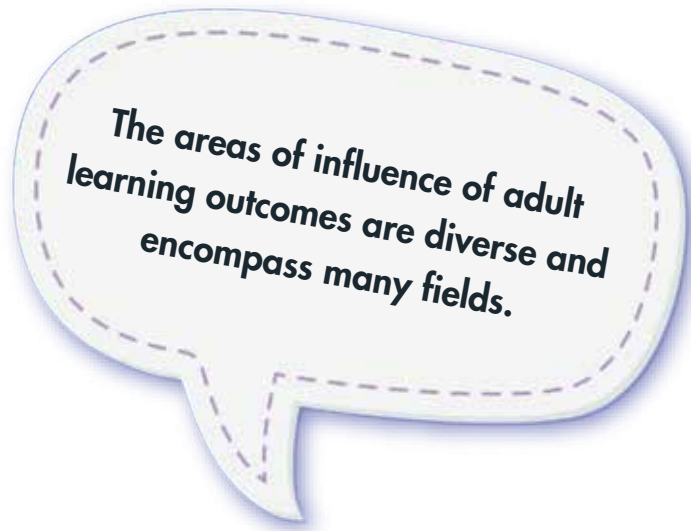
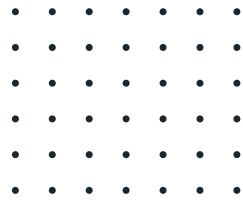


Broadening knowledge and skills opens new career opportunities for learners, helping them pursue their aspirations and life goals. Therefore, adult learning outcomes have individual significance, influencing the quality of life, well-being, and satisfaction with achievements.

Furthermore, adult learning outcomes hold broad social implications. Educating adults has the potential to create more competent, aware, and engaged citizens. Non-formal education can influence public health improvement, social integration, and ensure equal opportunities to all. Individuals who learn in adulthood often become more open to diversity and more aware of social challenges, translating into benefits for the entire society.

Finally, adult learning outcomes have significant economic implications. Access to non-formal education helps participants enhance their skills, impacting their attractiveness in the labour market. Workers with relevant skills are more competitive and can contribute to the country's economic growth. Simultaneously, developing adult competencies counters issues such as unemployment or social exclusion, which have a favorable impact on societal stability.





## KEY AREAS OF IMPACT OF ADULT LEARNING

| AREA   | IMPACT  |
|--|---|
| <b>Personal and professional development</b> | Adult education provides an opportunity to develop skills that are key to personal and professional life. Learning in adulthood can lead to the acquisition of new skills and competences that are essential in the rapidly changing world of work. This enables adults to better adapt to change, solve problems and make informed decisions. This can lead to promotions, higher wages, and a better quality of life. |
| <b>Competitiveness on the labour market</b>  | In a rapidly changing work environment, continuous learning and updating of skills are essential to remain competitive. Adults who continue their education are more attractive to employers and are more likely to be promoted.  |
| <b>Social integration</b>                    | Adult education often focuses not only on vocational skills, but also on social and civic skills. Those who continue their education into adulthood are more likely to be involved in social and political life, resulting in a healthier and more active society.  |



## KEY AREAS OF IMPACT OF ADULT LEARNING



| AREA                                     | IMPACT   |
|--|--|
| <b>Quality of life</b>                   | The skills acquired through learning in adulthood can make a significant difference to quality of life, including health, well-being and an overall sense of fulfilment.   |
| <b>Adaptation to change</b>              | We live in a time of dynamic technological, social and economic change. Adult education helps people adapt to these changes by developing new skills and acquiring new knowledge.  |
| <b>Economic development</b>              | Increased levels of education in the adult population can contribute to an overall increase in productivity, which has a positive impact on economic development.  |
| <b>Mitigating inequalities</b>           | Access to adult education can help to alleviate social and economic inequalities by offering people from different backgrounds the chance to develop their skills and improve their lives.   |
| <b>Maintenance of mental capacity</b>    | Research suggests that continuous learning can have a positive impact on mental capacity in old age, which is important in the context of an ageing population.  |
| <b>Mental health</b>                     | Learning can also be a form of therapy and a way to cope with stress, which translates into overall mental wellbeing. There is evidence that lifelong learning benefits mental health, increases self-esteem and can even delay symptoms of ageing.  |
| <b>Self-realisation and satisfaction</b> | Achieving educational and academic goals can be a source of great satisfaction and a sense of fulfilment. Learning in adulthood is also an opportunity to satisfy one's curiosity, develop passions and discover new interests, all of which have a significant impact on quality of life. |

# Learning outcomes in adult education

The idea of focusing on what adult learners should know or be able to do upon completing their learning has been around for some time. However, it has gained significant prominence over the past few decades due to various social, economic, and technological factors.

**A shared language between the world of work and adult education is a key element for the effective functioning of today's society and labour market.**

It's a language that enables the smooth flow of information and communication between various areas of an individual's life - from the workplace to formal and informal educational settings. There are several reasons why it's worthwhile to examine this issue and understand its significance.

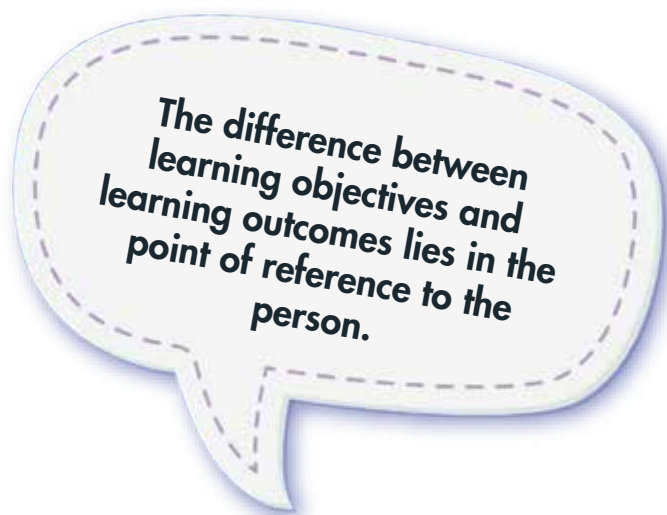


**A shared language is essential in the process of translating skills and competencies acquired in one context to another.**

By using a shared language, the transferability of skills is emphasized. This means that skills gained in one area can be transferred and applied in others. This, in turn, fosters individuals' mobility in the labour market and opens up opportunities for professional development. **A shared language plays a crucial role in the processes of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), where skills acquired outside formal educational institutions are recognized and potentially transformed into qualifications.**

In the context of the current labour market characterized by rapid changes, adult learning has become the norm. A shared language assists in driving this process by identifying

already possessed skills and developmental needs. For employers, a shared language facilitates understanding employees' competencies and identifying areas requiring development, contributing to effective personnel management.



The fundamental difference between (instructional) objectives and learning outcomes lies in the fact that instructional objectives relate to teaching from the educators' perspective, whereas learning outcomes concern what the participant will be able to do because of learning, thus serving as evidence sources in a learner-centered approach.

- **Objectives in teaching** are general statements that reflect the overall intentions and desired outcomes of an institution, program, or training. These important statements remain distinctly separate from learning outcomes. Objectives serve an essential function in indicating and promoting core values and general directions that guide the process of teaching. They reflect the vision, main intentions, and overall desired results.
- **Instructional objectives** relate to educators' intentions towards participants, such as what will be conveyed to participants during a training or program. It's important to note that instructional objectives reflect what educators do.
- **Learning outcomes** are statements about what a participant will be able to do or demonstrate after completing a specific sequence of learning (training, program). Learning outcomes mainly concern the achievements of participants and are less about educators' intentions. Learning outcomes inform participants about what they will learn and what they will be capable of after completing the training.

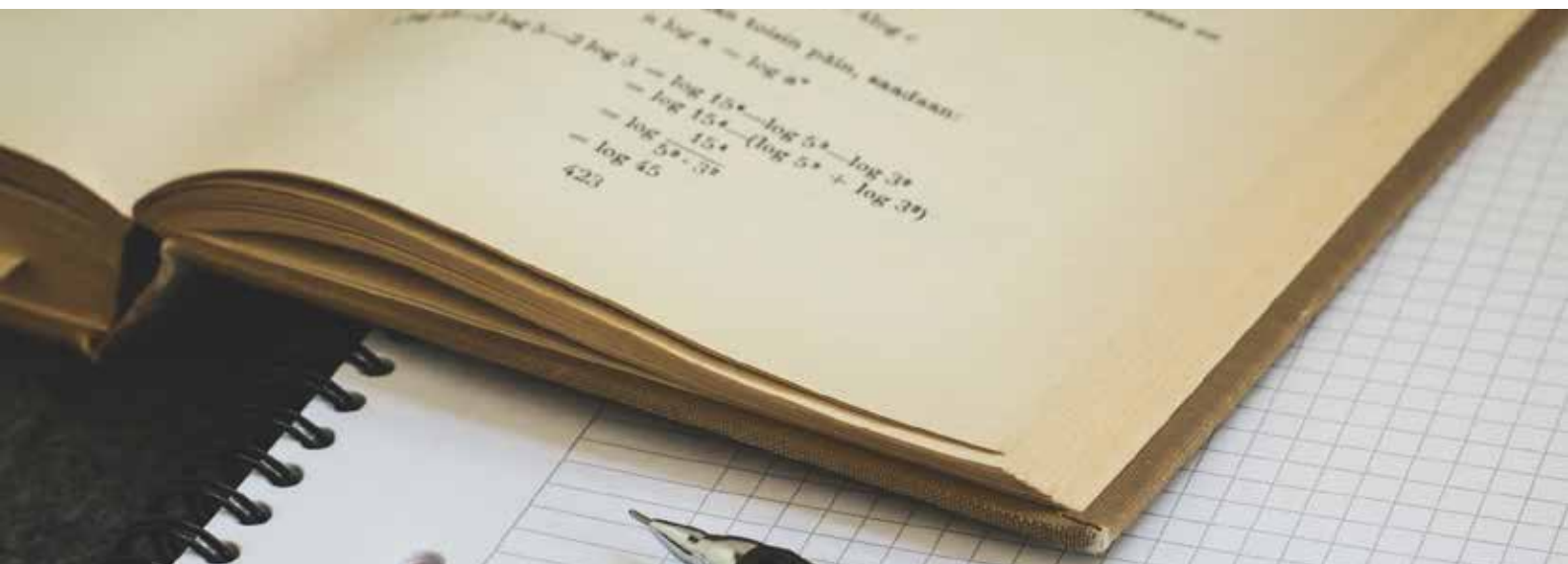
Adult learning outcomes are a key element of the educational process that requires particular attention and care. The first crucial step is ensuring clarity and coherence in educational objectives. Valuable objectives must be clearly defined so that all participants in the process have a full understanding of what to expect upon completing the course. This allows both learners and educators to have a clear reference point. Subsequently, the focus should be on learning outcomes. They determine what participants should be able to achieve or understand after finishing the training. Concentrating on outcomes helps participants better understand why the material is significant and what specific skills or knowledge they will acquire. The next step involves considering the number of learning outcomes. The optimal quantity of learning outcomes should be carefully balanced.



Too many outcomes might lead to confusion, whereas too few may not provide sufficient information about what can be learned. The number of learning outcomes should be tailored to the individual needs of participants and the training objectives. Learning outcomes should be measurable and subject to assessment. This allows for a precise determination of whether participants have achieved the intended objectives. Introducing appropriate assessment tools and criteria is essential in this process.

Learning outcomes should not be treated as a static element but should evolve in line with changing learning objectives, technology, individual and societal needs. Updating learning outcomes and adapting them to new conditions are crucial to ensure their relevance and effectiveness. It's also important to emphasize the significance of collaboration and consultation with other educators and experts in the field of adult education. Working together can contribute to refining learning objectives and teaching methods, thereby resulting in more effective learning outcomes. Ultimately, learning outcomes should bring value to participants. They should assist individuals in achieving personal and professional goals and enhance their satisfaction with learning. For participants, learning outcomes are a key indicator of success.

In constructing adult learning outcomes, precise determination of objectives, focusing on measurable outcomes, collaboration, and continual evolution in response to changing individual and societal needs and technologies play a crucial role. It's a process that requires commitment from both educators and learners. It's worth emphasizing that learning outcomes are not an end in themselves but a tool for achieving success in learning, professional, and personal life. Therefore, their construction and development are fundamental to an effective process of adult learning. With the dynamic development of society and technology, the process of building learning outcomes becomes an ongoing journey. However, it's a journey that has the potential to bring immense benefits, both to learners and society. Ultimately, carefully designed and implemented learning outcomes form the foundation of a successful adult learning process, opening doors to new opportunities and achieving higher goals.



# Learning Outcomes – European Approach

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP, 2021) defines learning outcomes as "statements of what a participant knows, understands, and is able to do after completing the learning process."

These outcomes are typically categorized into three main areas: knowledge, skills, and competences. In the context of adult education, this structure for understanding learning outcomes remains important, although the specifics may vary depending on the program, training, or educational project.



| KNOWLEDGE   | SKILLS  | COMPETENCES   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Knowledge refers to the theoretical knowledge, facts, and information that learners acquire. This can include the ability to remember, understand and use information in a specific context.</p> | <p>Skills refer to practical abilities and skills to perform specific tasks or activities. Skills can include the practical aspects of an occupation or practical abilities that can be applied in everyday life.</p> | <p>Competencies are broad abilities and skills that enable participants to adapt to different situations, solve problems, make decisions, and interact with others. Competencies include both knowledge and skills, as well as personal qualities such as the ability to work in teams, communication, and critical thinking.</p> |



Although the details may vary according to context, an understanding of these three main categories of learning outcomes is important in assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of adult learning processes. Valuable educational attainment includes both the acquisition of knowledge and the development of practical skills and competences, enabling participants to cope better with various aspects of life.



*CEDEFOP stresses the importance of clear definition and assessment of learning outcomes to ensure the effectiveness of vocational education and training, including adult education.*



Educational attainment in adult education is particularly important for a number of reasons, such as skill development, increased attractiveness in the labor market, social integration and personal development. CEDEFOP stresses the importance of clearly defining and assessing educational achievement to ensure the effectiveness of vocational education and training, including adult education. Educational attainment is a key way to link education and the labor market, making skills and qualifications more transparent. In the context of adult learning, learning outcomes refer to specific knowledge, skills, abilities or attitudes that adults are expected to acquire or demonstrate as a result of participating in an educational program or experience. Learning outcomes are usually formulated in clear and measurable terms and act as a guide for the design, delivery and evaluation of adult education initiatives.



## Here are some other definitions related to learning outcomes in the context of adult education:

### **Learning Outcome:**

a concise and observable statement that describes what can be expected that a learner will know, understand, or be able to do upon completing an educational action or program. Learning outcomes focus on the desired learning results.

### **Skills:**

Skills refer to individuals' innate or acquired abilities to perform specific tasks or actions. They encompass the ability or talent required to effectively apply knowledge and abilities.

### **Attitudes:**

Attitudes represent beliefs, values, or predispositions that individuals develop through educational experiences. They influence behavior, emotions, and how individuals perceive and react to different situations. Attitudes may include traits such as openness, adaptability, resilience, empathy, or commitment to lifelong learning.



## Measurability:

Learning outcomes should be formulated in a way that allows for their assessment or evaluation. They should be measurable, meaning they can be observed, demonstrated, or assessed using specific criteria or indicators. Measurability enables educators to assess whether participants have achieved the desired results.



**Learning outcomes in adult education are important for various stakeholders at both individual and socio-economic levels, among others:**

- **For Adult Learners**

**Personal and Professional Development:** Learning in adulthood enables the acquisition of new skills, which in turn can lead to promotions, higher salaries, and a better quality of life. **Self-actualisation and Mental Health:** Education can increase self-esteem and self-realisation, which has a positive impact on mental health.

- **For Employers**

**Higher Productivity:** An educated workforce is more productive and willing to innovate. **Flexibility and Adaptation:** An evolved workforce is more adaptable to change and can respond more effectively to new challenges.

- **For Politicians and Decision Makers**

**Economic Growth:** Education and skills are key factors for competitiveness in the global economy.

**Civil Society:** Adult education can contribute to social and political activism, resulting in a healthier and more active society.



- **For the Education System**

**Accessibility and Inclusion:** A focus on learning outcomes in adult education can help to identify and eliminate educational barriers.

**Quality of Education:** A focus on learning outcomes can lead to improved curricula and teaching methods.

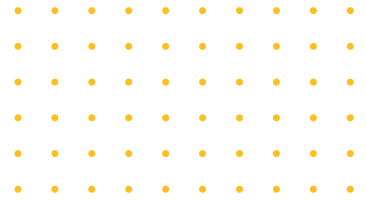
- **For Families**

**Intergenerational Education:** Adult learners find it easier to support their own children's education, which has a positive impact on the educational development of younger generations.

**Health and Wellbeing:** Education has a positive impact on lifestyles, health and wellbeing, which has a positive impact on the family as a whole.

Moreover, adult education holds significance for social inclusion. Through learning, adults can actively participate in social and economic life. Engagement in education increases the chances of finding employment, improves health, and encourages involvement in social activities, thereby influencing community and regional development. Adult learning outcomes also impact the economic competitiveness of a region. They provide modern skills and competencies crucial in a dynamic, knowledge-based society. This, in turn, attracts investors, creates job opportunities, and supports innovation. Achievements in adult education affect the entire education sector. They help tailor educational offerings to the evolving needs of society and the job market. Innovations in educational programs and learning methodologies can lead to improved quality of education at all levels.

Given these diverse benefits, the outcomes of adult learning in education are significant for a wide range of stakeholders and are an important subject for society. Therefore, investing in adult education and monitoring its outcomes is crucial for the sustainable development of society.



**Good practice in defining learning outcomes**

**PAY ATTENTION**



# In adult education, learning outcomes are essential for assessing the progress and achievement of learners.

There are several good practices for defining, measuring, and describing learning outcomes, as well as important aspects to consider:

1. **Clearly define learning outcomes:** Start by clearly defining the learning outcomes you aim to achieve. Learning outcomes should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). Clearly articulate what learners should know, understand, and be able to do upon completion of the educational experience.

## 2. Use methods to define learning outcomes:


- Needs Analysis is a way of determining learning outcomes that starts with analyzing the needs of participants. This can be done through surveys, interviews, or observations.
- Developing Standards: Create clear standards, which are detailed descriptions of expected learning outcomes that will guide the educational process.
- Defining Competencies: Identify the specific competencies and skills that should be developed in the educational process.
- Consideration of the Current Context: It is important to adjust the learning outcomes to the current social, cultural, and professional needs and challenges of adults.

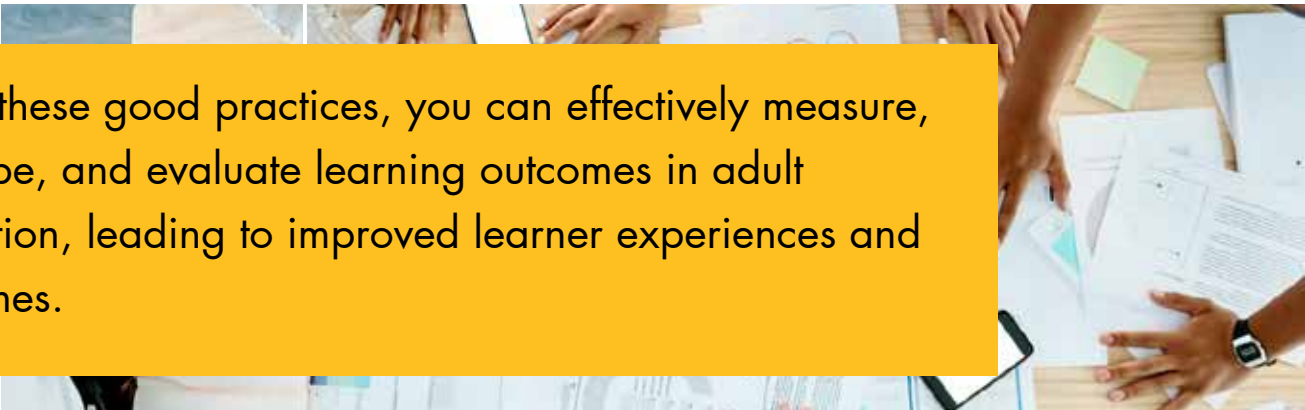
3. **Use a variety of assessment methods:** Use a variety of assessment methods so that learning outcomes are measured effectively. These can include written examinations, practical demonstrations, presentations, projects, portfolios, self-assessments, and peer assessments. Using a variety of assessment methods allows for a comprehensive assessment of learners' knowledge, skills, and competences.



4. **Set assessments with learning outcomes:** Ensure that the assessments used are directly related to the defined learning outcomes. Each assessment should measure the intended knowledge, skills or attitudes. By linking the assessments to the learning outcomes, you can accurately assess whether the desired outcomes have been achieved.
5. **Establish clear assessment criteria:** Define clear and transparent assessment criteria that specify expectations for each learning outcome. These criteria should include specific indicators or reference points for successful achievement. Clear assessment criteria facilitate evaluation and a precise description of learners' outcomes.
6. **Involve learners in self-assessment:** Encourage learners to actively participate in the assessment process by engaging them in self-assessment. Provide learners with the opportunity to reflect on their progress, evaluate their own performance in the context of learning outcomes, and identify areas for improvement. Self-assessment promotes learners' autonomy and their engagement in the learning process.
7. **Provide timely and constructive feedback:** Timely and constructive feedback is crucial for learners to understand their progress and areas for development. Provide feedback that is specific, applicable, and focused on learning outcomes. This feedback should highlight strengths and areas for improvement, guiding learners toward achieving the desired results.
8. **Continuously monitor and adjust:** Regularly monitor and review the assessment process to ensure its effectiveness in measuring learning outcomes. Collect and analyze data on learners' achievements, identify trends or patterns, and make necessary adjustments to improve assessment methods and criteria.
9. **Consider contextual factors:** Take into account the diverse needs, backgrounds, and prior experiences of adult learners. Consider cultural, social, and professional contexts in which learning outcomes are achieved. Adjust assessment methods and indicators to be inclusive and reflect the unique circumstances of learners.



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10. **Communicate learning outcomes and indicators:** Clearly communicate learning outcomes and associated indicators to learners, trainers, and stakeholders. Ensure that all involved parties understand the expectations and how progress will be measured. Transparent communication fosters a shared understanding of goals and facilitates effective assessment.
  11. **Consider bloom's taxonomy:** Bloom's taxonomy categorizes learning objectives into different levels of complexity (Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, Create). It can help you design learning objectives that encompass various skills, ranging from basic knowledge to more advanced problem-solving.
  12. **Approach it SMARTly:** SMART frameworks (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) can aid in formulating learning objectives. Each learning objective should be specific and clear, measurable through a form of assessment, achievable for the participant, relevant in each context, and attainable within specified time frames.
  13. **Consider the three learning domains:** Learning objectives should encompass the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (attitudes and values) domains of learning. Such an approach ensures the development of well-rounded skills.
  14. **Remember feedback:** Learning outcomes and their verification serve not only for assessment but also for refining the educational process. It's valuable to utilize feedback from participants and regularly analyze results to adjust programs and teaching methods. Defining learning outcomes and effective verification help ensure that adult education is directed towards specific goals and contributes to individual development. This also allows for continuous improvement of educational processes to better adapt to the changing needs of the target group.




Using these good practices, you can effectively measure, describe, and evaluate learning outcomes in adult education, leading to improved learner experiences and outcomes.

# The role of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in Adult Education

In recent years, we have witnessed dynamic changes and clear trends transforming the realm of non-formal adult education. This rapidly evolving sphere of education, encompassing diverse forms of learning beyond traditional educational paths, is attracting increasing attention from scholars, practitioners, and educational institutions. Research and analyses conducted in this domain enable a better understanding of the significance of non-formal adult education and its impact on individuals and society.



One of the key trends is the growing recognition of non-formal adult education as a significant tool for personal and professional development. More and more adults are utilizing various learning opportunities outside traditional educational institutions, such as online courses, workshops, short-term courses, and training programs. This enables them to gain new knowledge and skills, develop their potential, and achieve their professional and personal goals. Reports and studies from 2021 suggest an increasing participation in informal education. The importance of self-learning and non-formal educational paths has become more visible, partially due to the flexibility and accessibility they offer.



Another significant change is globalization and access to educational resources from diverse sources and cultures. Through the internet and information technology, participants can easily access educational materials and expert knowledge from around the world. This transforms the way we think about adult education, allowing for educational programs to be adapted to diverse participants' needs and expectations.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly accelerated the adoption of technology in education, affecting non-formal education as well. Online courses, webinars, and other forms of remote learning have become increasingly popular.

Despite the increase in accessibility, there are still barriers, such as costs, lack of time, or access to appropriate resources, which hinder the participation in non-formal education for some social groups.

An extremely important aspect is the growing role of lifelong learning. As economic conditions, technology, and the job market change, the necessity of continuous learning becomes evident. Non-formal adult education enables flexibility and adaptation to these changes, providing participants with the tools for survival and success in today's world.

The conclusions drawn from these changes and trends are clear. Non-formal adult education plays a significant role in the personal, professional, and social development of participants. Its importance is continuously growing, necessitating the continuous adjustment of educational strategies and policies to meet the needs and expectations of participants and contribute to the creation of a more comprehensive and developed society.

It's important to note that these observations may vary depending on the region, country, or even local community. For the most accurate and up-to-date data, please consulting the latest publications and reports in this area.


The CEDEFOP, plays a crucial role in researching and promoting vocational education and training in Europe. However, the activities of this institution are not limited solely to younger education participants; CEDEFOP devotes considerable attention to adult education as well. In today's dynamic and ever-changing professional environment, CEDEFOP emphasizes the crucial importance of lifelong learning, informal, and non-formal learning in the context of adult education.



According to CEDEFOP, the outcomes of adult learning can be categorized into several significant categories. Firstly, there are personal outcomes, which include boosting self-confidence, developing social skills, and enhancing the mental well-being of adult learners. Secondly, vocational learning outcomes are incredibly important, as adult education can lead to the development of skills necessary in the competitive labour market, increasing professional mobility, and improving employment prospects. Thirdly, it's worth noting that there are social learning outcomes as well, involving increased civic engagement, greater levels of social integration, and reduced risks of social exclusion. CEDEFOP also emphasizes the necessity of specifying and measuring the outcomes of adult learning, allowing for their effective verification and assessment. In this context, tools such as Europass or the validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL) become extremely valuable. For educators and policymakers, CEDEFOP provides various training and andragogical methodologies tailored to the individual needs of adult learners, including the recognition of prior learning and work experience.

CEDEFOP typically utilizes data collected from studies such as the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) or Eurostat surveys to generate its statistics and analyses. These studies often show that access to informal learning can be uneven and dependent on various factors such as age, education level, employment status, and so forth.

In today's global society, adult education plays an increasingly crucial role in providing individuals with opportunities to develop their skills, adapt to changing work conditions, and actively engage in social life.



In this dynamic process, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) plays a significant role in delivering policy recommendations and analyses that help countries develop effective educational strategies for adult learners.




OECD has made a significant contribution to the dialogue on adult learning, lifelong learning, and learning outcomes. OECD advocates the importance of learning outcomes in adult education for several reasons:

- **Lack of Skills vs Lifelong Learning:** The OECD recognises that a rapidly changing economic environment and evolving labour market needs require adults to continually update their skills and competencies. The OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) measures the key cognitive and vocational skills needed by individuals to participate in society and for the development of economies.
- **Focus on Learning Outcomes:** The OECD stresses that adult learning programmes should focus on learning outcomes - that is, what participants know or are able to do at the end of the programme - and not just on participation or completion. Learning outcomes are a way of recognising skills and competences acquired through informal and non-formal learning.
- **Recognising Prior Learning:** The OECD supports Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as an important way of validating the skills and knowledge that adults have acquired outside formal education and training. This can be particularly relevant for adults with low formal qualifications.
- **Inclusion and Equality:** The OECD highlights that adult learning can be an important tool to promote social inclusion and reduce inequalities. By focusing on learning outcomes, adult education can help ensure that everyone - regardless of their background or situation - has the skills they need to succeed.




*The OECD emphasises the need to promote the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning, which can contribute to the recognition and use of competences acquired outside traditional educational pathways.*



The OECD points to the need for a learner-centred approach that takes into account the individual needs and circumstances of adult learners. A key objective is to improve the quality of adult learning programmes, as well as the use of learning outcomes and quality assurance mechanisms. It is also worth noting that the OECD emphasises the need to promote the recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning, which can contribute to the recognition and use of competences acquired outside traditional educational pathways. Furthermore, developing effective guidance and support services for adult learners is another important element of the OECD recommendations.

At the same time, the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), an OECD-led survey, provides an invaluable tool in understanding and comparing the level of adult skills and competences internationally. Focusing on three main areas: reading, mathematical and problem-solving skills in a technology-enhanced environment, PIAAC provides extensive data and analysis to better understand the state of adult education in different countries.,

### **Main observations and conclusions from the PIAAC studies:**

- **Differences in competencies between countries:** Research shows a significant diversification in the level of skills among adults, which may arise from differences in educational systems, cultural contexts, or access to educational resources. These differences remain an important area of research and policy efforts aimed at eliminating disparities between countries.
  - **Social inequalities:** Analyses often demonstrate substantial differences in competencies depending on the level of education, age, ethnic origin, and gender. This means that not everyone has equal opportunities to develop their skills. Supporting individuals in socially excluded groups thus becomes a significant goal of educational policy.
  - **Connection with the job market:** Individuals with higher competency levels typically enjoy higher employment rates and earnings. Adult education plays a pivotal role in preparing participants for the job market and their competitiveness within it. Improving skills leads to better employment prospects.
  - **Changes with age:** Observations indicate that many countries experience a decline in skills with age, consistent with the theory of "skill depreciation" as individuals age. Hence, adult education is significant both for older individuals wishing to maintain their competencies and for younger ones aiming to develop them.
- 

- **Application of skills in everyday life:** Educational research also examines how adults use acquired skills in their daily lives, including their adaptation to new technologies. Understanding the practical use of skills is crucial for tailoring educational programs to the actual needs of participants.
- **Social benefits:** Higher skill levels are generally associated with increased civic engagement, such as voting in elections or volunteering. Individuals with developed skills are more likely to participate in social activities and engage in actions for the public good.
- **Untapped potential:** In some countries, a significant percentage of adults have untapped educational potential, indicating that many people are not developing their skills to their fullest. Therefore, educational policy should aim to identify and support those who remain outside traditional educational paths.

*PIAAC is a continuous and updated survey, so for the latest data, it is worth visiting the official website of the survey or the websites of the institutions that analyse it.*



# Good practices for measuring learning outcomes in adult education

In Europe, there are many practices regarding the assessment of adult learning outcomes, which are largely shaped by European Union (EU) policy and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP).

## Recognition of Experiential Learning (RPL)

Many European countries have systems allowing for the recognition of skills and knowledge acquired outside formal education and training, such as through work experience or self-learning. This can involve validating informal and non-formal learning, which are important principles of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), also known as the validation of non-formal and informal learning, is a process where skills and knowledge acquired outside formal education and training are identified, documented, assessed, and acknowledged. This encompasses skills gained through work experience, volunteering, online learning, self-education, or interests such as hobbies.

### The key elements of RPL typically include four stages:

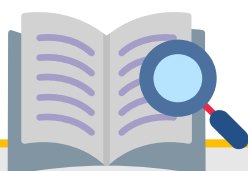
- **IDENTIFICATION:** Identification involves a person reflecting on their personal and professional experiences to express the skills and knowledge they have acquired.
- **DOCUMENTATION:** Documentation is the process of providing evidence of these skills and knowledge. This may include references from employers, work examples or certificates of recognition from colleagues.
- **ASSESSMENT:** Assessment is the process of evaluating a person's skills and knowledge against a set of standards or learning outcomes, often linked to qualification requirements.
- **CERTIFICATION:** Certification is the formal recognition of the skills and knowledge that an individual has demonstrated through the RPL process.

In terms of best practice, different countries in Europe take different approaches to RPL, but there are some common features of effective RPL systems:

- **Clear and Transparent Processes:** The RPL process should be easy to understand and navigate, providing clear information about what is involved, the assessment criteria, and potential outcomes.

- **Ensuring Quality:** Mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that the RPL process is fair, credible, and valid.
- **Guidance and Support:** Individuals undergoing the RPL process should have access to guidance and support, both at the start of the process and throughout its duration.
- **Alignment with Qualifications Frameworks:** The RPL process should be aligned with national (or European) qualifications frameworks, enabling RPL outcomes to lead to recognized qualifications.

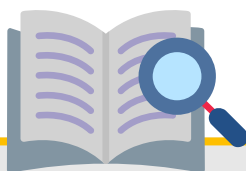
**For instance, in France, the "Validation des Acquis de l'Experience" (VAE) system is a well-established RPL system that allows individuals to obtain all, or part of a qualification based on their professional experience.**



The actions of VAE can be seen through the story of a woman named Isabelle, who is featured on the official French government's VAE website. Isabelle worked for several years as a specialist educator in a social and medical-social institution, even though she didn't have a formal degree in that field. She began her career as a secretary and gradually progressed in her position, learning everything she needed to know on the job. Isabelle decided to seek formal recognition for her skills and knowledge, so she started the VAE process. She received support in preparing her VAE dossier, which contained detailed evidence of her professional activities and what she had learned.

The dossier was then assessed by a committee of professionals in the field, who conducted additional interviews with Isabelle to further evaluate her competencies. After reviewing the dossier and speaking with Isabelle, the committee awarded her a diploma in social work, officially recognizing her skills and knowledge. Thanks to this, Isabelle was able to continue working in her position as a specialized educator, but with higher recognition and an improved salary. This is just one example, but the VAE system in France has helped many individuals gain recognition for their learning.

Similarly in the Netherlands, the "Erkenning van Verworven Competenties" (EVC) system enables the recognition of competences acquired through informal and non-formal learning. This system allows adults to have their competences recognized from informal and non-formal learning, and then transformed into certificates and qualifications that are acknowledged in the labor market and formal education.



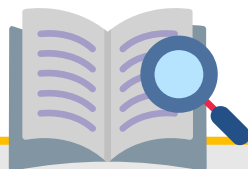
### **Main features of the EVC system in the Netherlands:**

Competence Diagnosing Process: An adult initiates the EVC process by approaching an appropriate institution or organization, which conducts an assessment of their competences. During this process, experts evaluate the candidate's competences based on portfolios, interviews, practical tasks, or tests.

- **Referral to Appropriate Educational Programs:** Upon completion of the competence diagnosing process, the adult receives feedback on their skill level and recommendations for potential development paths. If specific competences are lacking, the individual is directed towards suitable training or educational programs.
- **Certification and Recognition of Competences:** If the adult possesses sufficient competences, they can proceed with the certification process. Within this process, their skills are evaluated to determine if they meet specific standards. Upon successful certification of competences, relevant certificates or credentials are awarded.
- **Recognition in the Labor Market and Education:** Certificates and credentials obtained through the EVC system are recognized in the labor market and formal education. Adults can leverage their acquired qualifications to find employment, advance professionally, or pursue higher-level studies.

This EVC system in the Netherlands plays a pivotal role in ensuring that competences gained outside formal educational paths are equally valuable and recognized. It allows adults to continue developing their skills and careers regardless of their age and prior educational experience. This stands as an excellent example of a practice that contributes to increased access to adult education and promotes their overall, including professional, development.

However, despite several good practices across Europe, it's important to note that Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is not yet a universal right in all European countries, and its application might vary among different sectors and qualifications. The European Guidelines on Validating Non-formal and Informal Learning, developed by Cedefop, constitute a comprehensive guide regarding the development and implementation of RPL systems.



**Another example of RPL in action is Maria's story.** Let's imagine a person named Maria, who worked for many years in the construction industry. Maria began her career as a laborer but gradually took on more responsibilities and eventually became a project manager, even though she never had formal project management training. Everything she learned was through her work experience. Maria decides to acquire a degree in project management to formalize her knowledge and potentially open up more professional opportunities. However, she worries about the time and costs of returning to school, especially concerning subjects she already knows. This is where RPL comes into play. Maria contacts a local university offering project management studies and explains her situation. The university has an RPL program, so they ask Maria to document her work experience and any informal or self-directed learning she has done related to project management. Maria prepares a portfolio containing a detailed CV, employer references, project reports she has written, and other evidence of her skills and knowledge. She also writes a personal narrative explaining what she has learned from her work experience and how it relates to the courses in the project management program. The university assesses Maria's portfolio and determines that her work experience and informal learning are equivalent to several courses in the program. As a result, Maria receives ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) points for these courses, enabling her to start the program with an advanced standing. This means she can complete her studies faster and more affordably than if she had to start from scratch.

That's a hypothetical example, but many European countries have similar processes for recognizing and validating informal and self-directed learning. RPL is a powerful tool that can help people gain recognition for their skills and knowledge, regardless of where and how they acquired them.



# Adult Education and Training (AET)

The EU promotes adult education and training (AET) as a significant component of lifelong learning. Countries may have different forms of AET with varying learning outcomes, such as vocational training programs, higher education, or general personal development courses. Adult Education and Training (AET) encompass diverse programs aimed at assisting adults in improving their skills, pursuing personal interests, and expanding their knowledge.

## Some example learning objectives of AET are:

- **Vocational Training Programs:** Vocational training programs or Vocational Education and Training (VET) offer specific technical skills associated with particular professions. For instance, a training program in hydraulics or welding equips adult learners with specific skills necessary to succeed in these professions. Learning objectives might involve the ability to apply acquired technical skills in real-life scenarios.
- **Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills Programs:** These programs aim to enhance basic reading and writing skills in adults. Learning objectives might include increasing reading, writing, and text comprehension abilities.
- **Language Learning Courses:** Geared towards adults who wish to learn a new language or improve their language skills. Learning objectives would focus on enhancing language abilities like speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension.
- **Professional Development Courses:** These courses can assist adults in acquiring new skills or knowledge within a professional context. For instance, a project management or internet marketing course. Learning objectives typically revolve around the ability to apply new skills or knowledge in the workplace.



- **Higher Education for Adults:** Many adults return to higher education later in life to gain new knowledge, update their skills, or change careers. This may involve pursuing studies in a specific field. Learning objectives depend on the specific path but may include acquiring in-depth knowledge in a specific field and the ability to apply that knowledge in a professional context.
- **Non-formal Adult Education:** This can encompass various activities such as community workshops or online learning. Learning objectives will vary depending on the specific activity.

It is worth noting that learning objectives in AET can be both tangible (e.g. obtaining a qualification, acquiring a specific skill) and intangible (e.g. increasing self-confidence, personal development). Furthermore, these objectives should ideally be defined in terms of what the learner knows, understands and is able to do at the end of the learning process, in line with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).



# European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a common European reference point designed to facilitate the legibility and understanding of qualifications in different countries and systems. It covers qualifications ranging from those acquired at the completion of compulsory education to the highest levels of academic, vocational, and training education. The EQF is a tool that aids in communicating and comparing qualification systems across Europe. It provides a common reference framework that connects the qualification systems of countries, acting as a translation tool that facilitates the legibility and understanding of qualifications across various European countries and systems. The EQF focuses on learning outcomes – what a learner knows, understands, and is able to do upon completing the learning process.

Below are the eight levels of the EQF, each described in terms of learning objectives: knowledge, skills, and competences. This allows each national qualification system, national qualification frameworks (NQFs), and qualifications in Europe to reference the EQF levels. Learners, graduates, providers, and employers can use these levels to understand and compare qualifications awarded in different countries and through different education and training systems.

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| EQF Level 1 | Basic general knowledge, basic skills required for performing simple tasks, work, or study under direct supervision within a structured context.   |
| EQF Level 2 | Basic factual knowledge in a field of work or study, basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information for performing tasks and solving routine problems using simple rules and tools.   |
| EQF Level 3 | Knowledge of facts, principles, processes, and general concepts in a field of work or study, a broad range of cognitive and practical skills required for executing tasks and solving problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials, and information. |

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| EQF Level 4 | Theoretical and theoretical knowledge in a broad context in a field of work or study, a wide range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in the field of work or study.  |
| EQF Level 5 | Extensive, specialized, factual, and theoretical knowledge in a field of work or study, along with an understanding of the boundaries of this knowledge, a broad range of cognitive and practical skills required for developing creative solutions to abstract problems.  |
| EQF Level 6 | Advanced knowledge in a field of work or study, encompassing a critical understanding of theories and principles, advanced skills demonstrating mastery and innovation, necessary for solving complex and unforeseeable problems in a specialized field of work or study.  |
| EQF Level 7 | Highly specialized knowledge, part of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, forming the basis of original thinking and/or research, specialized problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation to develop new knowledge and procedures, integrating knowledge from various fields.                                |
| EQF Level 8 | Knowledge at the most advanced frontier in a field of work or study and at the boundary between disciplines, the most advanced and specialized skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, necessary for solving critical problems in research and/or innovation, and for extending and redefining existing knowledge or professional practice. |



# Life-long learning



The concept of lifelong learning is a key element of the social and economic development strategy in Europe. It represents one of the European Union's fundamental policies, promoting learning from early childhood to advanced age. It encompasses various aspects of an individual life and promotes the idea of continuous skill and knowledge development. Through this approach, every person has the opportunity for continuous growth, regardless of age or social status, contributing to a more competitive and sustainable society.

- Lifelong learning assumes that knowledge and skills can be acquired from diverse sources, including formal, informal, and non-formal education. The outcomes of learning are not limited to traditional educational frameworks.
- Holistic development - the outcomes of learning encompass the development of various areas, such as vocational skills, social, cultural, and civic competencies. It's not only about acquiring knowledge but also about developing key competencies.
- Lifelong learning emphasizes an individual approach to learning. This means that the outcomes of learning are tailored to the individual needs and goals of the learner.
- The outcomes of learning should contribute to improving the quality of life and competitiveness in the job market.
- In the context of lifelong learning, outcomes are closely linked to access to educational support and the ability to participate in training and courses, including internationally.
- This concept promotes sustainable development, meaning that the outcomes of learning should also consider aspects related to environmental protection, social engagement, and ethical behavior.
- In the context of lifelong learning, the outcomes of learning should be measurable and verifiable. This means that the achievements and progress of the learner are assessed and documented.
- Continuation of Learning: This concept promotes the idea of continuous learning, which means that the outcomes of learning are not just about achieving specific competencies at a moment but also about the ability to adapt and develop skills throughout life.
- The concept of lifelong learning assumes that the outcomes of learning should be available to everyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnic background, or social status.

Learning outcomes should contribute to a better quality of life and competitiveness in the labour market.



In summary, the concept of lifelong learning assumes that learning outcomes are comprehensive, diverse, personalised and oriented towards the development of society and individuals. It encompasses both the traditional aspects of education and those arising from diverse life and social experiences.



# Training for the requalification of adults

Training for reskilling is a crucial aspect of adult education, especially in the face of dynamic changes in the job market caused by technological advancements and other factors.



Across Europe, there is an increasing need to adapt the skills of adults to new professional requirements, thus fostering the development of upskilling training and initiatives aimed at reskilling:

- Understanding changes in the labour market: Technological advancements, automation, and the increasing demand for digital skills are transforming or eliminating many traditional job roles. Adult workers need to adapt their competencies to remain competitive in the job market.
- Reskilling is a vital initiative that allows adults to change their career direction by acquiring new skills. Reskilling programs aid individuals in coping with job loss or the necessity for a change in profession.
- Digital competencies: In the age of digitization, possessing digital skills has become crucial. Through reskilling training, adults learn to use digital tools, technologies, and computer programs.
- Financial support: In some European countries, there are financial support programs assisting adults in financing their reskilling training, helping to overcome financial barriers.

- Collaboration with employers is crucial to identify the most sought-after skills in the job market and tailor training programs to those needs.
- Lifelong learning: The concept of lifelong learning is fundamental to these programs. It's important to emphasize that learning doesn't end with formal education and that every adult can develop their skills throughout their life.

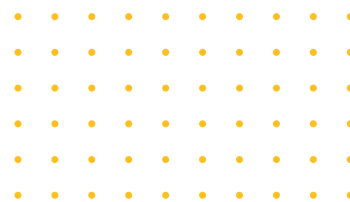


**Training for the requalification of adults is important in creating a flexible and adaptive society that can effectively address the challenges of a changing job market.**

It's an investment in the future for both individual participants and the entire society. That's why more educational initiatives in Europe are focusing on providing adult access to these programs and on skill development.



# European Skills Agenda



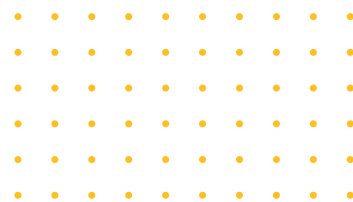
The 2020-launched European Skills Agenda sets quantitative objectives by 2025 to enhance the qualifications of adults in line with changing labor market requirements.

## The main goals of the European Skills Agenda include:

- **Improving the quality of adult education:** The Agenda aims to enhance the quality of educational and training programs for adults. By focusing on more concentrated and updated educational content, it aims to tailor the offering to meet the needs of the job market.
- **Promoting access to adult education:** Ensuring lifelong learning accessibility for all adults is one of the key points. Efforts concentrate on removing barriers to education access, regardless of age, educational level, or socio-economic status.
- **Developing digital skills:** With the growing importance of digital proficiency, the Agenda advocates for developing digital skills among adults. The goal is to enable every adult to access and use information technologies.
- **Increasing the mobility of adult learners:** By promoting mobility programs, the Agenda encourages adults to participate in educational programs abroad, contributing to broadening horizons and gaining international experience.
- **Preparing for future work:** In response to the rapidly changing job market, the Agenda focuses on preparing adults to skillfully respond to new challenges. This involves developing soft skills such as adaptability, creativity, and entrepreneurship.
- **Partnering with stakeholders:** Implementing the European Skills Agenda requires collaboration with various partners, including educational institutions, businesses, NGOs, and the public sector.



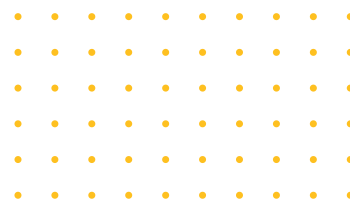
The aim of these assumptions is to raise the level of adult skills in the European Union, contributing to increased competitiveness in the job market, sustainable development, and greater social participation. Through the European Skills Agenda, lifelong learning becomes more accessible, effective, and tailored to the needs of contemporary society.



All the indicated practices are implemented at the national level, and there may be differences between various European countries depending on their specific educational policies, systems, and needs.



# Tools and support systems for adult learning



As society becomes increasingly more globalized and knowledge-based, adults must adapt to changing demands in the job market, technological innovations, and new social challenges. In this context, tools and support systems for the education and learning of adults become incredibly important factors, enabling individuals to develop competencies, enhance skills, and achieve their educational goals.

Different countries in Europe possess various tools and support systems for adult education and learning, including, among others:

1. **National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF):** Many European countries have established NQFs, which serve as frameworks for classifying and comparing qualifications. NQFs help ensure coherence and transparency of qualifications across different educational sectors and facilitate recognition of prior learning.
2. **Credit Systems:** Credit systems such as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) are widely used in European countries. They allow for the recognition and transfer of credits between different educational institutions and systems, promoting mobility and flexibility in learning pathways.
3. **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):** RPL enables individuals to assess and acknowledge their prior learning and experiences. It helps adults gain formal recognition for knowledge and skills acquired through work, non-formal education, or life experiences, facilitating access to further education or employment.
4. **Vocational Education and Training (VET):** Many countries have developed robust VET systems that combine classroom learning with practical training. VET programs equip individuals with specific vocational skills and qualifications, preparing them for specific industries or professions.
5. **Lifelong Learning Strategies:** European countries emphasize the importance of lifelong learning and have developed national strategies to promote it. These strategies often include support measures for adult learning, skill enhancement, and requalification, encouraging individuals to engage in continuous lifelong learning.



6. **Online Learning Platforms:** Digital tools and online learning platforms have gained significant importance in recent years. Countries are investing in developing resources for online learning, virtual classrooms, and distance learning programs to provide flexible and accessible learning opportunities.

7. **Counseling and Psychological Support Services:** Many countries offer counseling and psychological support services to assist individuals in making informed decisions regarding their education and career paths. These services provide information, advice, and support regarding educational opportunities, training programs, and career prospects.

8. **Quality Assurance Mechanisms:** Countries have implemented quality assurance mechanisms to guarantee the quality and relevance of educational programs and qualifications. These mechanisms may include external assessments, accreditation bodies, and quality standards that maintain the integrity of education and training systems.



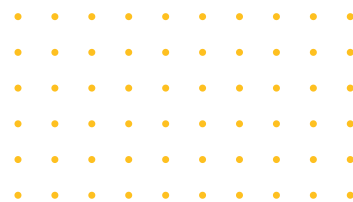


It's important to note that while there are similarities in the tools and systems used in European countries, each country may have its unique approaches and variations based on its educational context and priorities.

*There are similarities in the tools and systems used in European countries, but each country may have its unique approaches and variations based on its own educational context and priorities.*



# Good practices in defining learning outcomes for adults and methods of their verification



## Good practices from the Scandinavian countries

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) constitutes a significant element of contemporary educational practices, aiming to acknowledge and appreciate skills and knowledge acquired outside formal learning paths. One intriguing aspect of RPL is how it is implemented and developed across various countries worldwide. It's worth examining the Scandinavian countries - Denmark, Sweden, and Finland - which have emerged as examples of excellent RPL practices. These nations have rich traditions in adult education and professional development, and significantly invest in the recognition and validation of skills acquired beyond traditional educational institutions.

All these countries demonstrate an understanding of the role of adult education in the context of continuous professional and personal development. However, each of them has developed unique approaches that cater to local needs and cultures. What's common among these countries is their commitment to promoting lifelong learning and recognizing and valuing learning beyond traditional educational pathways. The best practices in adult education in Finland, Denmark, and Sweden serve as inspiring examples for other countries striving to enhance their educational systems. They prove that adult education can be effective, accessible, and flexible, contributing to social and economic development. It's worth emphasizing that the success of these practices is based on societal engagement, public-private partnerships, and continuous improvement of educational programs



# DENMARK

Denmark is often recognized for its "education for all" approach, which encompasses a comprehensive adult education system. Adults in Denmark have access to a wide range of educational opportunities, ranging from formal study programs to informal activities within community settings. The country also emphasizes lifelong learning, introducing numerous policies supporting adults in continuing education at all stages of life.



Denmark has integrated the concepts of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) into its national qualification system, facilitating the recognition of adult skills and qualifications both at the national level and across Europe. Similar to other EU countries, Denmark aligns its National Qualifications Framework (NQF) with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) to ensure transparency and alignment of qualifications obtained in the country.

**The key principles of the Danish system for recognizing learning outside formal frameworks include:**

- **Individual Competence Assessment (RPL):** Individual competence assessment (Realkompetencevurdering - RPL) stands as the primary tool for recognizing learning outside formal frameworks in Denmark. An individual can request RPL at an adult education center or a vocational school. The assessment may lead to full or partial recognition of a formal qualification if the person is found to possess skills and knowledge equivalent to that qualification.
- **Individual Learning Plan (ILP):** Following RPL, an individual receives an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), outlining educational actions required to attain a full qualification if they don't already possess the necessary competencies.
- **Flexibility in Qualification Attainment:** If RPL shows that an individual has already acquired some of the required competencies, they only need to complete the remaining components. This allows individuals to acquire necessary qualifications for career development or change more quickly and effectively.
- **Recognition in the Job Market and Further Education:** Qualifications obtained through RPL are fully recognized in the job market and can be used as prerequisites for further education and training.
- **Counseling and Support:** Denmark places significant emphasis on counseling and support during the RPL process. This ensures that individuals understand their rights and opportunities and receive the assistance they need to make the most of their prior experiences.

**This approach aims to improve access to education and qualifications, especially for adults and individuals with professional experience, and to make the education and training system more flexible and efficient.**

Denmark has an extensive structure called the Danish Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (DKF), encompassing all officially recognized types of education and qualifications, from primary school to doctoral degrees. This structure consists of eight reference levels based on learning outcomes, reflecting the EQF structure. In the context of adult education, Denmark has a well-developed system for adult education and continuous training, covering several types of education and training linked to the Danish Qualifications Framework (DKF) and consequently to the EQF:

- **Adult Vocational Training Programs (AMU):** These programs are designed for both unskilled and skilled workers. They encompass a wide range of sectors and are typically short-term, lasting from a few days to a few weeks. The qualifications awarded under these programs span levels 2 to 4 in DKF and EQF.
- **General Adult Education (AVU):** Equivalent to high school for adults. The program covers various subjects and grants a completion certificate equivalent to level 2-3 in DKF and EQF.
- **Single-Subject Courses at High School Level (HF-Enkeltfag):** These are single-subject courses equivalent to high school level. Completing these subjects can be combined to obtain a High School Preparatory Completion Certificate (HF) equivalent to level 4 in DKF and EQF.
- **Adult Vocational Training and Continuing Education (VEU):** Aimed at adults who already have vocational education and want to enhance or requalify their skills. The qualification level depends on the specific program but can range from levels 5 to 7 in DKF and EQF.
- **Professional Academy Programs (AP) and Bachelor Programs for Adults:** These are higher education programs for adults, often designed for part-time study. AP programs are at level 5, and bachelor programs are at level 6 in DKF and EQF.

In Denmark, adults can recognize their informal and non-formal learning, potentially earning ECTS points towards formal qualifications. This Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process aligns with the DKF and EQF, ensuring that skills and competencies acquired outside formal education can be appropriately recognized and understood. It's important to note that this alignment with the EQF not only helps Danish citizens understand the level and significance of their qualifications but also supports professional mobility in Europe, making Danish qualifications more comprehensible for employers and educational institutions in other European countries.



Learning outcomes in Denmark, similar to other European countries, align with the qualification structure defined in the Danish Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (DKF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). These outcomes are determined based on the knowledge, skills, and competencies a learner acquires and can demonstrate upon completing the learning process. Here is a general breakdown of these elements:

- **Knowledge:** Encompasses a set of facts, principles, theories, and practices related to a specific field of work or study. Within the context of EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or fact-based.
- **Skills:** Refers to the ability to apply knowledge and practical know-how to perform tasks and solve problems. In EQF, skills are described as either cognitive (related to logical, intuitive, and creative thinking) or practical (requiring manual dexterity and the application of methods, materials, tools, and instruments).
- **Competences:** Certify the ability to utilize knowledge, skills, and personal, social, or methodological abilities in various professional, scientific, and personal development situations. Within EQF, competences are described in the context of responsibility and autonomy.

**The Danish Qualifications Framework (DKF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)** comprise eight levels of qualifications, each level defined by a set of learning outcomes. The higher the level, the more advanced the required knowledge, skills, and competences. Furthermore, in the Danish system, significant emphasis is placed on validating learning outside formal educational pathways. This means that adults have the opportunity to have their skills, knowledge, and competences recognized, even if they were not acquired through traditional formal education. Overall, the concept of learning outcomes plays a pivotal role in the Danish education and training system, ensuring transparency, quality, and flexibility in recognizing qualifications both at the national and European levels.



# FINLAND

Finland has a comprehensive system for recognizing learning outside formal frameworks, which is integrated within the national qualification system. It's called the "Competence-based Qualifications" system and is designed to allow adults to showcase their skills and formally recognize them, regardless of their sources and where they were acquired. In Finland, prior educational experiences or learning - whether formal or informal - can be acknowledged and validated. Before starting a vocational learning program, participants undergo an individual learning plan, assessing their prior educational experiences. This assessment may lead to a reduction in learning time if the participant can demonstrate having acquired certain competencies elsewhere.



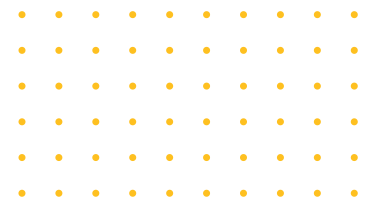
Competence-based qualifications are obtained by demonstrating professional skills in practical tasks during competency assessments.

These assessments are developed in collaboration with employers and employees' representatives to ensure their relevance to professional life. These tests can be conducted regardless of how the skills and knowledge were acquired, whether through work experience, personal interests, or any form of informal or non-formal learning.

After obtaining competence-based qualifications, participants can utilize them for employment or as a basis for further education. These qualifications are part of the Finnish National Qualifications Framework (FiNQF) and are also referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), ensuring their recognition throughout Europe.

In this way, the Finnish system acknowledges that learning takes place in various contexts in an individual's life and provides a structured way of validating and recognizing these competencies.

# Good Practice



Title: Valamis learning platform

Description:



Valamis is a company specializing in the development and management of employee competencies and e-learning solutions. Its history dates back to 2003 when the company was founded in Finland. Since then, the company has expanded and become an international leader in corporate education. Valamis delivers advanced educational tools and platforms, helping organizations effectively manage training processes and employee development. Through innovative e-learning approaches, Valamis contributes to enhancing employees' professional skills worldwide. Their primary goal is to provide advanced educational tools and platforms that assist companies in effectively organizing training processes and supporting employee development.

Valamis' Learning Management System (LMS) is an advanced educational tool designed to facilitate organizations in managing training processes and employee development. Valamis allows educational content to be customized to individual organizational needs and goals. This means that training can be perfectly tailored to the specifics of a particular company, thereby increasing its effectiveness. The platform enables the creation of personalized development paths, considering the competencies and career objectives of individual employees. This ensures that participants receive content that is relevant to them. Valamis easily integrates with other tools, such as HR or CRM systems, facilitating training and employee data management. Furthermore, participants have access to Valamis on



various mobile devices, enhancing course accessibility and enabling learning anytime, anywhere. The platform generates detailed reports on participants' results and progress, enabling the monitoring of training effectiveness. Additionally, it allows online communication and collaboration among participants, promoting interactive learning and knowledge exchange.

Valamis stands out primarily due to its excellent educational material management capabilities. Platform users can create, deliver, and monitor diverse educational resources, such as online courses, presentations, textual materials, or video recordings. All these resources are easily accessible to training participants. Moreover, Valamis offers training process personalization, allowing for customization based on individual needs. Advanced data analysis algorithms enable the delivery of content perfectly tailored to the skills and goals of each user, making training processes more efficient and effective.

Regardless of whether you're using a computer or a mobile device, Valamis is available and user-friendly on different platforms. This is essential as it provides flexibility in accessing educational content and training, irrespective of place and time. Additionally, it's worth noting that the Valamis platform includes built-in tools for creating various educational materials such as tests, quizzes, and assessments. These tools enable the creation of interactive training materials that can be tailored to specific needs.

### **Summary:**

Valamis is a comprehensive tool that plays a pivotal role in enhancing educational processes and employee development. Its advanced features, availability across various devices, integration with other systems, and data analysis make it a valuable asset for organizations seeking to effectively manage knowledge and training. Building learning communities and the ability to personalize training processes are additional strengths that translate into more advanced and effective teaching methods. Valamis is becoming an increasingly significant component in educational development strategies across various industry sectors.

Source: <https://www.valamis.com/>

# Good Practice

Title: Helsinki Finnish Adult Education Centre

Description:



The Helsinki Finnish Adult Education Centre in Finland provides adult education tailored to various participants' needs.

## The institution stands out for several key features:

- **Wide range of courses:** The Helsinki Finnish Adult Education Centre offers diverse courses encompassing foreign languages, culture, arts, science, technology, health, professions, and digital skill development. This allows participants to choose courses according to their interests and needs.
- **Openness and flexibility:** Courses are accessible to participants regardless of age and educational level. The organization frequently offers evening and weekend courses, facilitating learning for working individuals or those with daytime commitments.
- **Access to various levels:** Courses are available at different proficiency levels, enabling participation for both beginners and more advanced participants.
- **Traditional and online courses:** The institution offers both traditional face-to-face classes and remote courses, allowing participants to choose their preferred method of learning.
- **Advisory support:** The institution provides advisory support to participants in choosing courses and setting educational goals.
- **Effectiveness assessment:** Systematic analysis of outcomes, teaching evaluations, and feedback from participants allow for tailoring educational programs to participants' needs.

**Benefits:**

- Open access to a variety of courses and flexibility in organizing classes encourage lifelong learning.
- Finland's high-quality education system promotes critical thinking and creativity, contributing to the development of competent individuals.
- The education system is available to all citizens, ensuring equal opportunities and the possibility of lifelong learning.

**Summary:**

The Helsinki Finnish Adult Education Centre in Finland provides comprehensive and accessible adult education. It adapts to participants' needs by offering course diversity and flexibility in organizing classes. Systematic assessment of educational program effectiveness and advisory support for participants contribute to achieving excellent educational outcomes. Finland serves as an example of commitment to developing citizens' competencies throughout their lives.

# SWEDEN

The Swedish government shows exceptional determination in promoting adult education and lifelong learning. This is supported by the Swedish National Agency for Education, which plays a key role in providing guidelines and support for various areas of adult education. These areas include municipal adult education, special adult education, and Swedish language learning for immigrants.

Municipal adult education is a significant part of the education system in Sweden, and the Swedish National Agency for Education provides guidance and support to municipalities for effectively providing adult education in their areas. This includes educational programs and various forms of skill development support.

Special adult education is another area where the Swedish government invests resources and attention. The Swedish National Agency for Education directs efforts to provide adequate education for adults with diverse educational needs. This may include programs tailored to people with disabilities or other groups that require a personalized approach to learning.

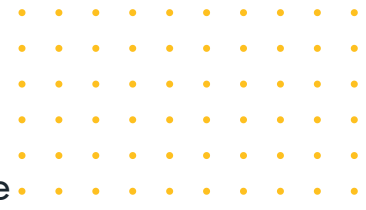
Learning Swedish for immigrants is a key element of social integration. In Sweden, as a country with an open migration policy, there is a strong commitment to providing opportunities for immigrants to learn the Swedish language. The government and the Swedish National Agency for Education provide support and programs that help immigrants learn the language and integrate into the local community.

The Swedish Public Employment Service also plays a significant role in shaping adult education. This organization conducts programs that enable adults to retrain and upgrade their skills in response to changing labor market needs. These actions are essential in the face of technological and economic changes that impact the structure of professions and the skills demanded by employers.

As a result, the Swedish government's approach to adult learning and lifelong education reflects its commitment to developing the skills and knowledge of adults to meet the labor market needs, enhance social cohesion, and promote immigrant integration. This constitutes a significant element of social and economic development strategy in Sweden and serves as a model for other countries striving to promote lifelong learning.



## Good Practice



Title: Adult Education System in Sweden and the Role of Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan (SV)

Description:



The Swedish adult education system stands as a model example of state commitment to developing citizens' competencies throughout their lives. It's based on principles of openness, flexibility, and accessibility, emphasizing the understanding and meeting of adult learners' needs and aspirations. A central role in this system is played by Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan (SV), one of the largest study associations in Sweden, specializing in adult education.

Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan (SV) is a non-profit organization aiming to promote learning, personal development, and culture among adult Swedish citizens. SV offers various educational programs and courses encompassing fields such as foreign languages, literature, art, crafts, science, history, culture, and health, encouraging active participation among adults. The organization aims to minimize barriers, enabling participation by different age groups and educational levels. It is distinguished by the openness and accessibility of its programs.

SV primarily receives funding from state grants and collaborates with local institutions such as libraries, schools, and social organizations to expand the accessibility of its programs. An important aspect of its operation is democratic decision-making by members regarding programs and activities. Collaborating with other organizations, universities, and institutions is crucial in developing innovative educational and cultural programs tailored to the changing needs of society.



However, what sets SV apart is its innovative approach to adult education based on so-called "study circles." These are groups of people who collectively explore a selected topic or area of knowledge. Under this model, participants influence what and how they learn, leading to a more interactive and engaging form of education. It operates on the basis of voluntariness and time flexibility, enabling adults to continue learning according to their own needs and preferences.

Each SV study circle must meet certain guidelines and requirements, such as having at least three participants, a clearly defined learning topic, and fulfilling formal requirements such as the number of study hours. Circle leaders have access to the educational platform Learnify, which facilitates organizing online educational sessions and sharing educational materials.

### **Benefits of the practice:**

- **Flexibility and accessibility:** The Swedish adult education system emphasizes accessibility and flexibility, allowing adults to participate in educational programs tailored to their individual needs and schedules.
- **Openness to diversity:** Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan actively promotes the participation of various age groups and educational levels, contributing to broadening access to education.
- **Participatory approach:** The "study circles" model gives participants the opportunity to actively engage and influence the learning process, increasing engagement and interactivity.
- **Collaboration and democracy:** The organization operates on democratic principles, and collaboration with other institutions enriches its educational programs.
- **Innovation:** The utilization of the Learnify platform allows for the development of modern teaching methods, both in online and traditional modes.

### **Summary:**

In summary, the Swedish adult education system, with the central role of Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan (SV), is a good example of a flexible and open approach to adult education, encouraging continuous development and social participation. The "study circles" model and the use of the educational platform are innovative solutions conducive to effective lifelong learning.

### **Sources:**

<https://viunga.se/om-vi-unga/studieforbundet-vuxenskolan/>

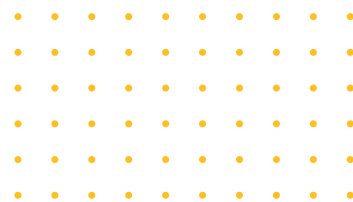
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# Good practices in other European countries



Good practices in other European countries constitute a valuable source of inspiration and learning for actions aimed at building the outcomes of adult education. Throughout the continent, many examples of innovative and effective approaches to promoting lifelong learning can be found. Analyzing these practices allows for gaining new perspectives and understanding how different countries tackle the challenges related to adult education and learning outcomes. In the following part of this study, we will examine some of these inspiring solutions and learn about the benefits they bring to society and individual learners.



# NORTH MACEDONIA

## Good Practice

Title: Adult Education Program "Skills in Implementing and Developing Employees" in Macedonia

Description:



According to Macedonian law concerning adult education, the Adult Education Center is the institution responsible for the official verification of non-formal education programs. Adult education programs are developed based on the real needs of employers, that is, the demands of the labor market.

Observing trends in the labor market, particularly the characteristics and expectations of Generation Z, and collaborating with companies of various sizes in different industries nationwide, Samerimpeks Impulsi identified the need for specialists in onboarding, introductory training, and employee development. Based on this need, a team of experts developed a special adult education program: "SKILLS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYEES."

The main objective of the program is to acquire specific knowledge, skills, and competencies that can be applied in any company and in human resources management departments, organizational development, and personnel development.

The program was designed to respond to the increasing needs of organizations regarding specialized positions that directly impact the development of human resources. It consists of four interrelated and logically linked modules covering both theoretical and practical components. Both elements are required for the participant to obtain certification.

### **Implications of Program Implementation:**

The program had an overall positive impact on the participating companies. Firstly, the program was tailored to the specific needs and queries of each company, focusing on positions identified as most critical during mentoring sessions.

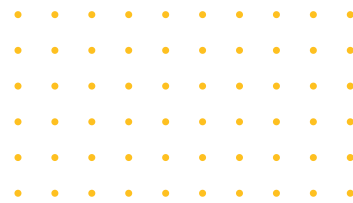
The concept of mentoring and coaching is still quite new in the Macedonian context, especially among medium-sized firms. Most anticipated that trainers/consultants would provide ready-made documents and professional advice, while the program focused on developing internal capabilities, enabling companies to independently continue similar actions. Trainers and consultants had to work extra hard to change this expectation of readily available products.

Companies appearing advanced in this area are primarily in the IT sector, dealing with challenges in recruitment and retaining employees. Usually, they have developed documentation but lack the skills for proper implementation and mentoring of new employees. The most significant challenge is handling Generation Z and intergenerational differences.

Companies lacking a dedicated HR person in their team struggled with allocating time for developing internal documentation and ensuring sustainability of program activities after its completion. Organizing meetings and sessions was often difficult in many cases, especially when communicating with the main participants, the management of the companies. Implementing any program activities depends on the involvement of the management. During the project, it was anticipated that most participants did not perceive the connection between the company's vision, mission, and values, and the job descriptions and mentoring programs for new and existing employees. This turned out to be one of the most crucial and surprising aspects during the project.

The value of the program was mainly evident for the participants, although the certificates were not as significant for the companies. For the management, the acquired skills were most important and valuable. In some companies, owners began to recognize the role of the HR department and its impact on company results. This was a significant achievement. Based on the above information, it can be concluded that the program had a significant positive impact on the participating companies. Many of the training, mentoring, and coaching activities were received as a new approach to developing internal company capabilities rather than just offering consultant support. This ensures a balanced and continuous human resource management practice and an overall higher impact, serving as motivation to continue the mission of supporting business development through employee competence development.

# Good Practice



Title: Qualification Program for Employees at UNIPLAST in Macedonia

Practice:



The company UNIPLAST located in the city of Struga on the shores of Lake Ohrid in Macedonia is a manufacturer of glass-fiber-reinforced plastic (GRP) products. The company commenced its operations in 1986, specializing in the production and development of GRP products, primarily exported to the automotive industry.

## Issue:

Due to the unique nature of the company's activities, there was no formal professional qualification for the position of Polyester Laminator. Existing education in the field of chemistry at the vocational education level provided a good theoretical basis but lacked practical skills related to working with plastics.

## Solution:

The company decided to implement an internal qualification program for laminating employees. An experienced team of managers and laminators developed a program that was registered with the Adult Education Center according to Macedonian law. The key element of the program was defining its goals and learning outcomes. The program aimed to provide knowledge and skills for producing glass-reinforced polyester (GRP) products for various applications, such as boats, tanks, planters, manholes, slides, and many others. Learning outcomes were clearly defined, allowing both participants and educators to track learning progress.



The program lasted for three months, during which participants rotated between different production operations. An internal committee assessed who qualified for specific operations and were immediately employed.

Additionally, the program was registered with the Employment Agency, which provided financial support for the participants. This enabled the training of a group of 68 people, committing to employing at least 50% of them upon completion. The company was highly committed to the success of the participants, resulting in additional payments to internal trainers for each employee who remained productive in the company for at least 6 months.

### **Outcomes:**

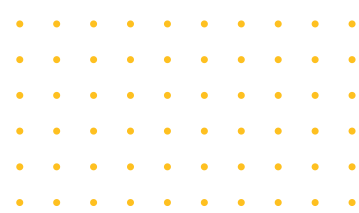
As a result of the UNIPLAST qualification program, the company gained skilled employees tailored to the specific requirements of production. The program also facilitated the internal transmission of the company's culture, focusing on unity, mutual support, customer service, and teamwork. With clearly defined program goals and learning outcomes, the company achieved satisfactory results in both employee development and strengthened its market position.

### **Conclusion:**

UNIPLAST's good practice serves as an example of an effective adult learning program, where clearly defined program goals and learning outcomes contributed to the success of both the participants and the company. This program serves as a model on how to counter the lack of qualifications in the job market through internal training and the development of industry-specific skills.



# Good practices beyond Europe



## AUSTRALIA

Title: Industry Network Training and Assessment Resources (INTAR)

Description:



In 2014, the Industry Network Training and Assessment Resources (INTAR) was established to provide training providers, manufacturers, and other interested parties with tools to contribute funds to a shared pool to support the development of high-quality training resources. The company was founded by David McElvenny, the general manager of Workspace Training, a registered training organization, and Jim Vaughan, the director of Vaughan Consulting Software Solutions, specializing in programming and application development.

The Industry Network Training and Assessment Resources (INTAR) specializes in developing educational resources for the higher education sector, focusing on adult education. Within its operations, INTAR covers various education areas, providing materials and support for different participant groups. In the field of adult education, INTAR's practice stands out through the ongoing improvement and supplementation of subscription-based materials. The creation of new materials is co-funded by engaged subscribers and is based on regular dialogue with clients and industry experts.

INTAR is a company that distinguishes itself by providing educational materials tailored to diverse participant needs. Its offerings encompass both paid subscriptions, directed at institutions such as universities or industry associations, and free resources available to a wider community, realized through projects. This approach engages both commercial clients and individual participants, providing access to valuable materials according to their financial capacities and substantive needs.

The company maintains regular contact with industry experts, contributing to the creation of current and relevant educational materials. Collaboration with practitioners from a specific field ensures that materials align with real job market requirements and current trends. Consequently, participants gain knowledge and skills that are invaluable in their respective sectors. The company ensures that educational materials are always updated and reflect the latest changes in the field, which is particularly crucial in a dynamic environment.



INTAR provides participants with specially prepared guides and exercise books for unlimited download, under the condition that they are for educational use only. This enables effective knowledge assimilation while empowering participants with tools for efficient learning. Subscribers also have access to participation in validation groups, evaluating the effectiveness of the applied tools and assessment strategies.

INTAR ensures diverse sources of educational materials, including the option for remote learning. This allows participants to choose a learning method that best fits their lifestyle and preferences. With access to online content and self-paced learning options in convenient times and locations, education becomes more accessible and flexible.

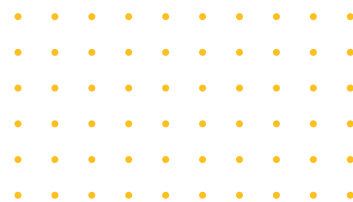
**Summary:**

In summary, INTAR's effective strategy in the realm of adult education involves delivering diverse and tailored educational materials, support from educators and industry experts, and creating opportunities for participant development in multiple aspects. This approach translates to higher quality adult education, positively influencing their career paths and personal growth.





# Recommendations for experts on creating training materials for educators.



## Strategies for Creating Materials for Adults

Developing effective learning outcomes for adult participants involves understanding their unique characteristics and tailoring educational experiences to suit them. Adult learners are typically self-directed, bring rich experiences, and often seek immediate, practical applications for their learning. Crafting training materials for educators is a complex and time-consuming process, but well-designed materials can effectively convey knowledge and skills, supporting the development of educators and their adult education participants. Valuable training materials assist in achieving the intended learning outcomes for adults.

### Elements of the strategy for achieving appropriate learning outcomes for adults.

| STRATEGY  | DESCRIPTION  |
|---|--|
| <b>Understanding learners needs</b>               | Before creating materials, it is important to conduct a needs analysis to understand the challenges faced by educators and the skills they want to acquire.  |
| <b>Adapt materials to diverse learning styles</b> | Incorporate visual, auditory, and kinesthetic teaching methods to reach the broadest range of educators.   |
| <b>Consider prior knowledge and experiences</b>   | Adults bring a wealth of prior knowledge and experience to the learning process. Recognize and leverage this when developing learning objectives. Validating prior learning can also be a significant aspect of adult education. |



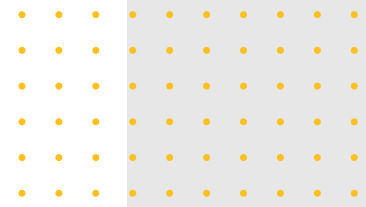
| STRATEGY   | DESCRIPTION  |
|--|--|
| <b>Incorporate practical applications</b>        | When possible, include practical, real-life applications in learning objectives. Adults learn best when they see the practical relevance of what they are learning.      |
| <b>Promote higher-level thinking skills</b>      | Adults are capable of complex cognitive processes such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Develop learning objectives related to these higher-order thinking skills |
| <b>Apply activating methods</b>                  | Materials should engage participants in active learning methods such as discussions, case analysis, or project work.   |
| <b>Build on experiences</b>                      | Educators already have some experience in teaching. Use this experience as a foundation for further development.   |
| <b>Provide sources and additional resources</b>  | Further reading tips, websites, videos, or online tools will assist educators in gaining a deeper understanding of the subject.  |
| <b>Ensure materials are interactive</b>          | Utilize educational technologies such as quizzes, games, simulations, or e-learning platforms to make learning more engaging.  |
| <b>Clearly define training objectives</b>        | Each module or chapter should have clearly defined objectives that inform participants of what they can expect.  |
| <b>Include assessment and reflection methods</b> | Incorporate tools and methods for self-assessment and reflection on what educators have learned from the materials.  |



| STRATEGY  | DESCRIPTION  |
|---|--|
| <b>Adapt materials to different levels of proficiency</b> | Not all educators are at the same level of knowledge and skills. Provide different levels of difficulty in the materials to meet the needs of both beginners and more advanced participants. |
| <b>Ensure the possibility of updates</b>                  | The world of education is rapidly changing. Training materials should be flexible and easily updatable as new research, tools, or methodologies emerge.                                      |
| <b>Inclusion and diversity</b>                            | Ensure that the materials are inclusive and reflect cultural, racial, gender, and other aspects of diversity.  |
| <b>Incorporate feedback</b>                               | After the training, gather feedback from educators about the materials and incorporate it into subsequent editions.  |



# Principles of Creating Materials for Adults



## **Create training materials aligned with the needs of the audience, i.e., adult individuals. Keep in mind the important principles:**

- Each training module should have a relevant title that reflects its content (preferably with a brief description) – this will assist the participant in the selection process and understanding the training topics.
- The duration of each module should not exceed 15-30 minutes. If there's too much to cover or explain, divide a topic into smaller segments.
- Every methodological aspect should be supported by an appropriate example.

The training program for educators should be flexible, tailored to the current needs of the participants, and based on established and current teaching methods. Creating effective training materials for educators requires consideration of the specifics of their work and the challenges they face. The mentioned recommendations will assist experts in creating materials that are valuable, engaging, and responsive to the real needs of educators.

Collaboration with participants and openness to feedback will allow for continuous improvement and adaptation of the program to the changing educational environment. It's important to understand that the process of creating training materials for educators should account for the evolving demand for new skills, technologies, and learning strategies. Collaboration with educators, both in the planning stage and during the training, is a key element of success. They are best aware of the challenges they face daily. Training materials for educators should be based on an understanding of the specifics of their work and should provide specific tools to help them effectively deal with various participant groups, adapt to changing educational standards, and utilize modern technologies in the teaching process.

Openness to feedback is crucial as it allows for continuous improvement of the training program. Educators should have the opportunity to share their suggestions, opinions, and experiences to tailor the program to real needs and challenges associated with working in education.

Preparing effective training materials for educators is a comprehensive process that requires constant adaptation to the changing needs of educators and openness to innovation. Educators are key players in the educational process, so investing in their development is not only important but also necessary for the success of the educational system.

## Methods of Defining Adult Learning Outcomes

Ways of defining adult learning outcomes and methods of their verification:



### Defining learning outcomes:

- **Specific objectives:** Clearly describe what participants will be able to do upon completion of the training. Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (using the SMART method).
- **Described competencies:** Determine the competencies that participants are to acquire—these could be knowledge, skills, or attitudes.
- **Bloom's Taxonomy levels:** Utilize Bloom's taxonomy to define the depth of acquired knowledge—from the level of memorizing information to its analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
- **Industry standards:** In many fields, there are established standards that define the level of knowledge and skills that should be achieved upon completing the training.

### Methods of verifying learning outcomes:

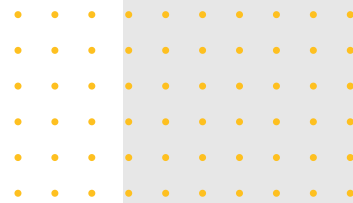
- **Tests and examinations:** Traditional assessment tools that measure the level of acquired knowledge.
- **Projects and assignments:** Participants can demonstrate acquired skills through specific tasks or projects.
- **Self-assessment:** Participants evaluate themselves by analyzing their progress and reflecting on their own learning process.



- **Observation:** Trainers observe participants during activities, noting progress and areas for improvement.
- **Discussions and reflections:** Conducting discussions or reflective sessions that allow participants to share experiences, achievements, and challenges.
- **Peer assessment:** Allowing participants to assess each other, which can be particularly valuable in the context of soft skills such as teamwork or communication.
- **Portfolio:** Participants can compile their work, projects, and achievements in a portfolio, which is then evaluated.
- **360-degree feedback:** In this approach, the participant is assessed by various individuals from their environment—colleagues, supervisors, subordinates, or even clients.
- **Case analysis:** Participants can analyze a specific case or situation in the context of the acquired knowledge and skills.
- **Simulations and educational games:** Allow participants to apply acquired knowledge in a practical way under controlled conditions.

**Defining learning outcomes and their verification are key elements of the educational process. They allow for the assessment of training effectiveness and the identification of areas that require further support or improvement. It's important that the verification methods are tailored to the specific group and the nature of the training.**

# Summary



The report focuses on learning outcomes which play central role in adult education. Given the dynamic social, economic, and technological changes, understanding and defining they become not just important but crucial. The aim of the report is to illustrate the impact of adult education on participants, training organizations, and the broader societal context.

Adult education, regardless of its form, has become a significant tool for supporting the development of individuals at various stages of their lives. The key objective of the report is to define and understand the learning outcomes in adult education, allowing for better alignment of training programs to the participants' needs. Simultaneously, the report highlights the global context in which adult education is vital not only for individuals but also for the society.

The "Learning Outcomes in Adult Education" report and expert meetings (design thinking workshop) emphasize the importance of adult education and its impact on individuals and society. It provides arguments for further development and support of educational programs for adults, and encourages further research and analysis of learning outcomes in this area.

## **Proposals for 4-module training for adult educators have been developed:**

**Module 1:** Interpersonal skills of the trainer/educator (focus on social skills, listening skills, resilience and adaptability).

**Module 2:** Methodology of adult learning and work with adult participants (distinction between learning outcomes and learning goals; correct use of these terms, selection of the language of adult education and the process of creating exercises, inclusion of practical activities in the program, elements of mentoring).

**Module 3:** Connecting the right validation method to learning outcomes (adapting validation methods to specific learning outcomes)



**Module 4:** Teaching adults (approach to understanding how adults learn, skills to become effective trainers of adults - trainer workshop)

The landscape of adult learning and adult education is rich and multifaceted. The educational sphere is evolving rapidly, with approaches tailored to specific target groups as well as needs to meet the challenges of digital transformation, migration and social integration. The use of micro- and nano-scale learning, gamification with activating scenarios and problem-solving quizzes, and the integration of virtual reality (VR) and experiential learning have the potential to revolutionize adult learning. Additionally, the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) and the rise of micro-certificates are opening up new opportunities for personalized and flexible learning paths. The future promises not only challenges but also exciting opportunities for growth and innovation in adult education and adult learning, which calls on us to continually adapt adult education programs and processes to meet the dynamic demands of our changing world.

Examining the learning outcomes of adults, the report illustrates their comprehensive impact on learners. Adult education facilitates the expansion of knowledge, skill development, acquiring new career perspectives, and introducing positive changes in personal life. It provides tools for self-realization, professional qualifications enhancement, and achieving personal goals. Simultaneously, through adult learning, it's possible to create more competent and engaged citizens, leading to benefits for the entire society.

In the context of training organizations, understanding the learning outcomes of adults is a significant element in enhancing the educational offerings. It assists in adapting educational programs to the current needs of participants, resulting in greater effectiveness of educational activities. The report encourages the collection of consistent data on these outcomes, enabling a better assessment of the quality of adult education and its alignment with societal needs.

Presently, in a dynamic and competitive environment, adult education plays a significant role in shaping competent citizens and contributes to the country's economic growth. Adults, through access to education, become more competitive in the job market, leading to an improved economic situation. Providing participants with not only professional but also social and life skills helps create more sustainable societies.





The "Learning Outcomes in Adult Education" report emphasizes that adult education is not merely about individual achievements but holds immense significance for society. Therefore, further development of educational programs for adults, research into the effects of learning, and analysis of education's impact on various aspects of individuals' lives and society remain priority issues in the field of education.

### The key conclusions from the report are:

- **The value of non-formal education** - research and successful educational project examples confirm that adults derive significant benefits from access to non-formal education. Learning and skill development in adult life yield results such as expanding knowledge, skill enhancement, gaining new career perspectives, and introducing positive changes in personal life.
- **The crucial role of learning outcomes** - the concept of "learning outcomes" plays a vital role in today's adult learning environment. These outcomes provide clear statements about the desired results of the learning process, allowing for their unambiguous measurement and evaluation. Introducing learning outcomes shifts the focus to effective teaching and learning, encouraging a shift toward participant-oriented andragogy.
- **Diversification of adult education** - contemporary adult education encompasses various forms of learning, both traditional and informal or unofficial. As adult education becomes more diversified and accessible, it's essential to consider different forms of learning in the context of educational achievements.
- **Impact on individuals** - adult learning outcomes positively impact the personal and professional development of participants. Expanding knowledge and skills open up new career opportunities, aiding in the realization of aspirations and life goals.

- **Impact on society** - educating adults can influence public health improvement, social integration, and equality of opportunities in society. Adult learners often become more open to diversity and more aware of societal challenges, leading to benefits for the entire society.
- **Impact on the economy** - access to non-formal education enhances participants' qualifications, affecting their attractiveness in the job market. Individuals with the right skills contribute to economic growth and counter phenomena such as unemployment or social exclusion.



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### Read more about the project at:

<https://projekty-evaco.pl/projekty-aktualne/efekty-uczenia-sie-w-edukacji-doroslych/>

