

## LLLP reaction to the Key Competences framework for Lifelong Learning review

*Brussels, April 2017*

The European Framework for Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, adopted in 2006 by the European Parliament and the Council Recommendation, **set out eight key competences**, each being a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes. In the last decade the framework has influenced national policy reforms in education and training in developing a more competence-based teaching and learning across Member States. The reforms have been introduced mostly in the school education sector, and to only limited extent for the recognition of the non-formal and informal learning (e.g. the Youthpass certificate).

Ten years later, the European Commission launched the review process of the Framework, as part of the New Skills Agenda for Europe initiative. The **Lifelong Learning Platform acknowledges the importance of the common framework of crucial competences for life across Member States**, presenting a step forward to a holistic approach to education and training. Overall, the Platform stresses the need for further synergies and a better **alignment with other existing frameworks** and research, such as from the **OECD, Council of Europe and the ICCS study**.

Societal challenges have multiplied and diversified in Europe and beyond since the Framework first emerged. There is a clear need to **reflect the current and future political, social, economic, ecological and technological development**. Therefore, the Platform welcomes the review of the Key Competences Framework, in order to adjust respective tools and processes to better support the development of the key competences for all. The Platform firmly believes that their common link **is, and shall be, the empowerment of the individual learners** and their ability to make relevant and /informed choices in an ever-fast changing, unpredictable and globalised environment of the 21st century! Nevertheless, while focusing on learners, we should not forget that **investing in the competences of teachers and educators is equally investing in the whole future generations!**

In the last decade, more and more has been made known about co- and socially-shared regulation of learning. Inclusion of **self-regulation<sup>1</sup> skills in the competence framework is vital! These empower learners in multiple life domains and support their** academic achievement, motivation, wellbeing and engagement in lifelong learning. The **research on teaching self-regulation skills and their positive effect on people's lives is abundant** and making use of it will support policy makers, education providers, employers, and learners across Europe to nurture development of strong self- and co-regulated citizens<sup>2</sup>. **"Soft skills" or "transversal skills"** such as communication skills,

<sup>1</sup> Self-regulation is studied mainly in the field of formal education where self-regulated learners are defined as follows: Self-regulated learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and -+ constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment (Pintrich, 2000, p. 453).

<sup>2</sup> Pintrich, P. R. (2000). The role of goal orientation in self-regulated learning. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.),

negotiation and conflict management, leadership, team management, creativity, project management and the ability to enhance personal well-being are becoming progressively an imperative. These contribute to raising the quality of life and reinforcing the specific or “job” competences. That is why they are increasingly appreciated by employers, too.

In particular, the LLLPlatform would suggest more **emphasis on personal development**, a clearer **definition of the intercultural competence** and a more **comprehensive definition of the social and civic competences**, reflecting the diversity of human beings and their values. Furthermore, a reformulation of **digital skills is necessary**, as they do not imply merely knowing how to use technology at school but rather to develop critical thinking and media literacy in an age-appropriate way. It is imperative to address the **global dimension** of the set of competences. While putting strong focus on Europe, the current framework does not appropriately recognise the interdependence between **local, national, European and global realities**. The role of key competences in achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals<sup>3</sup> could be better reflected**. Therefore, the definitions require flexibility when addressing the different socio-cultural and economic contexts of the society we live in. Finally, there should be a better **link between all the competences** and how they correlate within the Framework.

Revising the definitions themselves will not be sufficient. It is equally important to look into **how the key competences are assessed**. Namely, as standardised tests measure a narrow range of traditional competences at best, and give incentives to merely teach for the test, they are not suited for exploiting the full potential of the framework. Therefore, a variety of different assessment methods, and in particular formative assessment, should be further explored and used. **We strongly encourage to shift the balance towards assessment that allows an increasing flexibility, creativity and innovation!**

Last but not least, while we acknowledge the necessity of the review, it is **crucial to prepare for its full implementation at national level**, not only in the formal education sector, but also in the non-formal and informal learning environments. The Platform strongly recommends to the European Commission to **provide further support to Member States in the implementation process**. This requires additional efforts in making learning visible by investing in validation methods and tools, for instance.

Finally, the Lifelong Learning Platform encourages all stakeholders to contribute to [the public consultation](#), open until 19 May, to make sure citizens’ voice is heard and increase the relevance of policy making!



**Contact:**

Alen Maletić, Policy and Research Officer

[policy@llplatform.eu](mailto:policy@llplatform.eu)

+32 289 32 515

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Handbook of Self-Regulation (pp. 451– 502). San Diego: Academic Press.

<sup>3</sup> SDGs United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 “Education 2030”[1], in particular Target 4.7[2]

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[1] <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>

[2] By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.

The [Lifelong Learning Platform](#) (LLL-P) is an umbrella organisation that gathers 40 European networks active in the field of education and training, coming from all EU Member States and beyond. Currently these organisations represent more than 50 000 educational institutions covering all sectors of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

Established in 2005, LLL-P promotes a vision of lifelong learning based on equity, social cohesion, active citizenship and personal development. The platform works as a space for knowledge exchange between its member networks and uses their expertise to discuss and feed in EU policy-making, making sure that European citizens have their voice heard. In that sense LLL-P contributes to a better understanding and dialogue between the grassroots level and European institutions.