

**NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR LIFELONG LEARNING FOR THE PERIOD 2008–2013**

Council of Ministers, 2008. Available at

[http://www.erisee.org/downloads/2013/2/b/LLL\\_Strategy\\_2008-2013\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.erisee.org/downloads/2013/2/b/LLL_Strategy_2008-2013_ENG.pdf)

**Rationale of the strategy**

Bulgaria's accession to the European Union demands changes in education and training in order to synchronize levels of knowledge and key competencies. Lifelong learning is important not only to individuals, in that it gives them the opportunity to realize their potential, but also to employers, who stand to profit from individuals' skills and knowledge. The National Strategy for Lifelong Learning provides guidelines for ensuring that Bulgarian citizens can actively participate in a new global knowledge-based economy. The strategy aims to unify the efforts of all institutions and citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria with regard to creating the necessary conditions for and realizing the process of lifelong learning.

**Concept of lifelong learning**

The definition of lifelong learning used in the strategy refers to the European Union's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. It involves a process of constant intentional acquisition of knowledge and skills. It presupposes opportunities for learning at any age in a variety of contexts – not only through traditional educational and training institutions, but also in the workplace, at home or during leisure time. Lifelong learning is a way of thinking; each one of us should be open to new ideas, decisions, skills, aptitudes and attitudes. Lifelong learning focuses on learners and their needs for personal and professional development.

**Main challenges**

- Bulgaria's under-developed lifelong learning system
- Unresolved problems in the regulatory framework with regard to providing access to adult education and training as well as recognizing outcomes of non-formal and informal learning
- Lack of systematic information about the different training courses and entry requirements
- Insufficient coordination between participants in adult education and training on a national and regional level
- Insufficiently stimulating learning environment due to lack of infrastructure and/or negative public attitudes towards the continuing upgrading of knowledge and skills
- Unequal geographical and economic distribution of educational and training institutions
- Financial problems and time constraints

**Main targets and measures**

The strategy refers to all sectors of the education system. It considers formal, informal and non-formal learning, and includes all opportunities provided by traditional and distance learning. The promotion of lifelong learning pursues the following objectives:

- Developing an effective lifelong learning system that fulfils different learners' requirements, creates varied opportunities for formal, non-formal and informal learning, and meets labour market needs
- Updating the regulatory framework in order to implement the lifelong learning concept and encourage inclusion of different social groups in lifelong learning activities
- Developing lifelong learning quality assurance systems

- Developing validation and certification mechanisms for the results of formal, non-formal and informal learning
- Implementing a credit transfer and accumulation system that enables learners to obtain qualifications and personalizes their individual and professional development
- Motivating learners and creating a learning culture by providing counselling and guidance on lifelong learning at schools, universities and workplaces
- Promoting research and improving ways of collecting statistical data about lifelong learning
- Creating a financing system which balances responsibility between state, employers and learners
- Establishing mechanisms of interaction and exchange among all participants in lifelong learning

### Particular feature of the strategy

The strategy describes the roles of the participants in the process of lifelong learning as follows:

- **Learners** refers to all Bulgarian citizens who participate in lifelong learning
- **Education and training institutions** are the institutions providing formal and non-formal education and training that meets the needs of individuals and the community
- **State authorities** define national policy in the field of education and training as well as tools and measures that ensure the effectiveness of lifelong learning
- **Employers and employers' organizations, trade unions and school boards of trustees** define the expected results, actively support the lifelong learning processes, suggest new methods of cooperation and participate in shaping the policy and future priorities for lifelong learning
- **District administrations, municipalities and local communities** participate in designing lifelong learning policies on regional and local levels and directly oversee the processes of development of lifelong learning in the context of establishing their position as 'learning regions'
- **Non-governmental and scientific organizations** support the process of lifelong learning by conducting research and analyses, organizing information and promoting activities for lifelong learning

*Relevant documents that the strategy refers to:*

- [Descriptors defining levels in the European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#)
- [Bulgaria: Labour Code](#)
- [Bulgaria: Employment Promotion Act](#)
- [Public Education Act](#)
- [Vocational Education and Training Act](#)
- Bulgaria. National Assembly. 1995. [Higher Education Act](#)
- [Skilled Crafts Act](#)
- [Level of Education, General Education Minimum and Curriculum Act](#)
- Bulgaria. Ministry of Education. 2004. [National Strategy for Continuing Vocational Training 2005-2010](#)
- Bulgaria. 2007. [Updated Employment Strategy 2008-2015](#)
- Bulgaria. Ministry of Education and Science. 2006(?). [School and Pre-school Education Development National Programme 2006-2015](#)
- Bulgaria. Ministry of Education and Science. 2004. [Strategy for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minority Groups](#)
- Bulgaria. 2005. [National Plan for Regional Development 2005-2015](#)

*Stakeholders involved in the development of the strategy:*

- [Council of Ministers](#)

*Further readings and web links:*

- Ministry of Education and Science
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
- [National Statistical Institute](#)
- [National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency](#)  
[National Agency for Vocational Education and Training](#)