

Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy 2021-2027: State of play and way forward

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**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE
SPORT AND YOUTH**



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR
THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS



CARDET

Vision

- ▶ **The successful implementation of the Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy (CY LLLS) will assist citizens in pursuing their educational and training needs and goal in all educational settings (formal, non-formal and informal) throughout their life and will guarantee them possibilities for personal development and fulfilment, well-being and successful work and family life.**

Expectations of the new CY LLLS 2021-2027

- ▶ Face challenges, such as the **low participation of adults** in lifelong learning and the **quite high percentage of unemployment among young people**.
- ▶ Enhance the efforts of **upskilling and reskilling of low qualified and low-skilled adults**.
- ▶ Benefit other groups such as **early school leavers, NEETS and migrants/refugees**.
- ▶ Enrich knowledge, skills and competences.
- ▶ **Better respond to the challenges related to the promotion of lifelong learning and adult education at the Republic of Cyprus.**

Lifelong learning and validation of learning outcomes (1/2)

The importance of validation has been strongly emphasised within the development of lifelong learning policies and gradually is becoming a key aspect of lifelong learning policies.

Lifelong learning requires that learning outcomes from different settings and contexts to be linked together. In this turn, learning, skills and competences acquired outside formal education and training gain more visibility and appreciation, making the vision of lifelong learning more achievable.

Mostly since 2001 and onwards European policies emphasis the importance of lifelong learning throughout one's life and across the life span (in formal, non-formal and informal settings). This gives crucial importance to valuing learning that occurs outside formal educational settings as a necessary strategy for educational policies.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning gives **opportunities for second chances**, improves access to education and enhances **motivation to learn**.

Lifelong learning and validation of learning outcomes (2/2)

Comprehensive validation systems make lifelong learning strategies to move from theory to practice.

Some principles concerning quality of validation could constitute important aspects of lifelong learning e.g. motivation, credibility, coherence, transparency, trust. These constitute a good basis for a lifelong learning strategy and a mechanism for validating non-formal and informal learning.

In many sectors (e.g. youth) the recognition of non-formal education and learning is considered as a prerequisite for making lifelong learning a reality.

Responsible authority for the development, implementation and monitoring of the CY LLLS

In 2019 the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the new Lifelong Learning Strategy has been transferred from the Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development to the **Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth (MoECSY)**.

The process is currently monitored and supervised by the **European and International Affairs, Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office (EIA/ LLLAE Office)**.

The work carried out by the MoECSY is facilitated by experts from the **European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)** and **CARDET** following a successful application submitted by the MoECSY to the Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) of the European Commission.

Existing legal framework

The policies and actions carried out within the Lifelong Learning Strategy 2021-2027 is monitored by two committees, namely the **National and the Technical Lifelong Learning Committees**, following a relevant decision by the Council of Ministers (no.89.482, dated 27/5/2020).

Representatives from various stakeholders, including among others, the Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development, the Ministry of Employment, Welfare and Social Insurance and relevant departments, the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus, the Cyprus Productivity Centre, the Foundation for the Management of Lifelong Learning Programmes, the Youth Board of Cyprus and social partners participate in the two committees.

Phases of development of the CY LLLS

- **2020 - Inception phase**
Kick-off meeting of the National and Technical committees, to discuss the potential context, purpose, outcomes and objectives of the CY LLLS, activities, the priorities and policy aims of the Strategy (July 2020)
- **2020-2021 Diagnosis/Analysis phase**
A desk research and a field research, including European best practices and stakeholder interviews were carried out from September 2020 until February 2021 in order to produce an overall state of play report on lifelong learning provision in Cyprus.

The findings of the analysis report were presented to the relevant stakeholders in an online workshop (February 2021)
- **Development phase (May 2021 - today)**
The first draft of the CY LLLS has been developed.

METHODS

Desk research (EU framework, local context, global research)

▶ EU framework (policies, key priorities, flagship initiatives, numerical data)



- ✓ European Education Area 2025
- ✓ Upskilling Pathways
- ✓ European Agenda for Adult Learning
- ✓ Digital Action Plan 2021-2027
- ✓ Recovery and Resilience Facility
- ✓ EU Youth Strategy
- ✓ VET policies
- ✓ Green Deal
- ✓ Erasmus+ programme and its priorities

METHODS

Desk research (EU framework, local context, global research)

▶ National/
Local context



- ✓ Role of the Youth Board of Cyprus in the facilitation of young people - National Youth Strategy
- ✓ Establishment of the Deputy Ministry for Research, Innovation and Digital Policy
- ✓ National Industrial Strategy, which follows the current EU trends to promote digital and green transition
- ✓ Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan

METHODS

Field Research - Key policies and initiatives

- 35 interviews with key stakeholders
- Strategic Visioning Workshop, Consultation and discussions with stakeholders
- Online Study Visits



Interviews with key stakeholders

Opportunities

- ▶ Agreement among social partners and stakeholders on the importance of lifelong learning
- ▶ The majority of stakeholders and social partners expressed their willingness to **engage** further in the governance of lifelong learning
- ▶ Education is highly valued in Cyprus
- ▶ High percentages of early childhood education (95,3% - EU average 94,8)
- ▶ School dropout is relatively low compared to other European countries (9,2% -EU average 10,2%)
- ▶ High levels of tertiary education attainment (58,8% - EU average 40,3%)
- ▶ Investment in education is fairly high, compared to other EU countries (5,2% - EU average 4,6%)
- ▶ Improvement of attractiveness of VET and apprenticeship through systematic efforts (e.g. through the development of Post-Secondary Institutes of Vocational Education and Training - PSIVET)
- ▶ HRDA and the promotion of VET
- ▶ Emphasis on the professional development and training of teachers
- ▶ Role of the Youth Board of Cyprus in the facilitation of young people
- ▶ Establishment of the Deputy Ministry for Research, Innovation and Digital Policy
- ▶ New National Industrial Strategy 2019-2030, which follows the current EU trends to promote digital and green transition

challenges

Lifelong learning policy and governance are fragmented

National agencies, stakeholders and social partners do not have the appropriate *coordination and cooperation*

There are not many synergies and partnerships for lifelong learning among businesses, universities, the public sector, adult education providers, CSOs etc.

Low levels of participation in lifelong learning, especially by those who need it most - Barriers to participation

Lack of systematic diagnosis of adults needs and incentives that meet the needs of adults and opportunities for outreach activities

Skill shortages in certain sectors (e.g. Digital skills)

Ongoing educational reform efforts need to include the skills for lifelong learning.

Upskilling and reskilling should be aligned to labour market needs (Digital and green)

Mechanisms for the validation and certification of informal learning should be in place

Barriers to participation

- The cost of education/training

- The conflict between education/training schedules and work obligations

- The lack of time due to family obligations

- Inadequate information for available learning opportunities, especially for those at risk of marginalization the need of awareness campaigns, while there are some which pointed out the need to further develop outreach activities

- Limited counselling and guidance

- Certain groups (the unemployed and self-employed) are excluded from specific programmes

- Limited diagnosis of adult learning needs

Challenges for Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy 2014-2020

- ▶ Limited *key performance indicators*.
- ▶ Limited *monitoring and reporting procedures* regarding the implementation of the Strategy.
- ▶ Further *collaboration with all stakeholders* including higher education, private sector and civil's society organizations.
- ▶ *Covid-19 challenges*
- ▶ *E-learning and digital transformation*





**Strategic Visioning Workshop, Consultation
and discussions with stakeholders**

Strategic Visioning Workshop and Consultation with stakeholders

► The online workshop facilitated consultation with the relevant stakeholders on

- ✓ the finding of the research report
- ✓ the challenges to be addressed by the CY LLLS 2021-2027
- ✓ the policy priority areas
- ✓ the cooperation of the involved stakeholders
- ✓ the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the LLLS
- ✓ the next steps





Online Study Visits

On line Study Visits (Estonia, Slovakia, Austria)

Validation is considered an essential instrument for learning mobility and an incentive for participation in lifelong learning

The importance of a **legislation** framework for lifelong learning

Systematic public **consultation** among stakeholders and a tradition of collaboration

Monitoring procedures

Digital skills for adults

Cultivation of **basic skills** to those low-skilled adults

High levels of participation in lifelong learning are related to the **accessible guidance** opportunities

Outreach activities have a long tradition and are an important part of the strategies

To combat **unemployment** there are mechanisms to evaluate **future labour** market needs

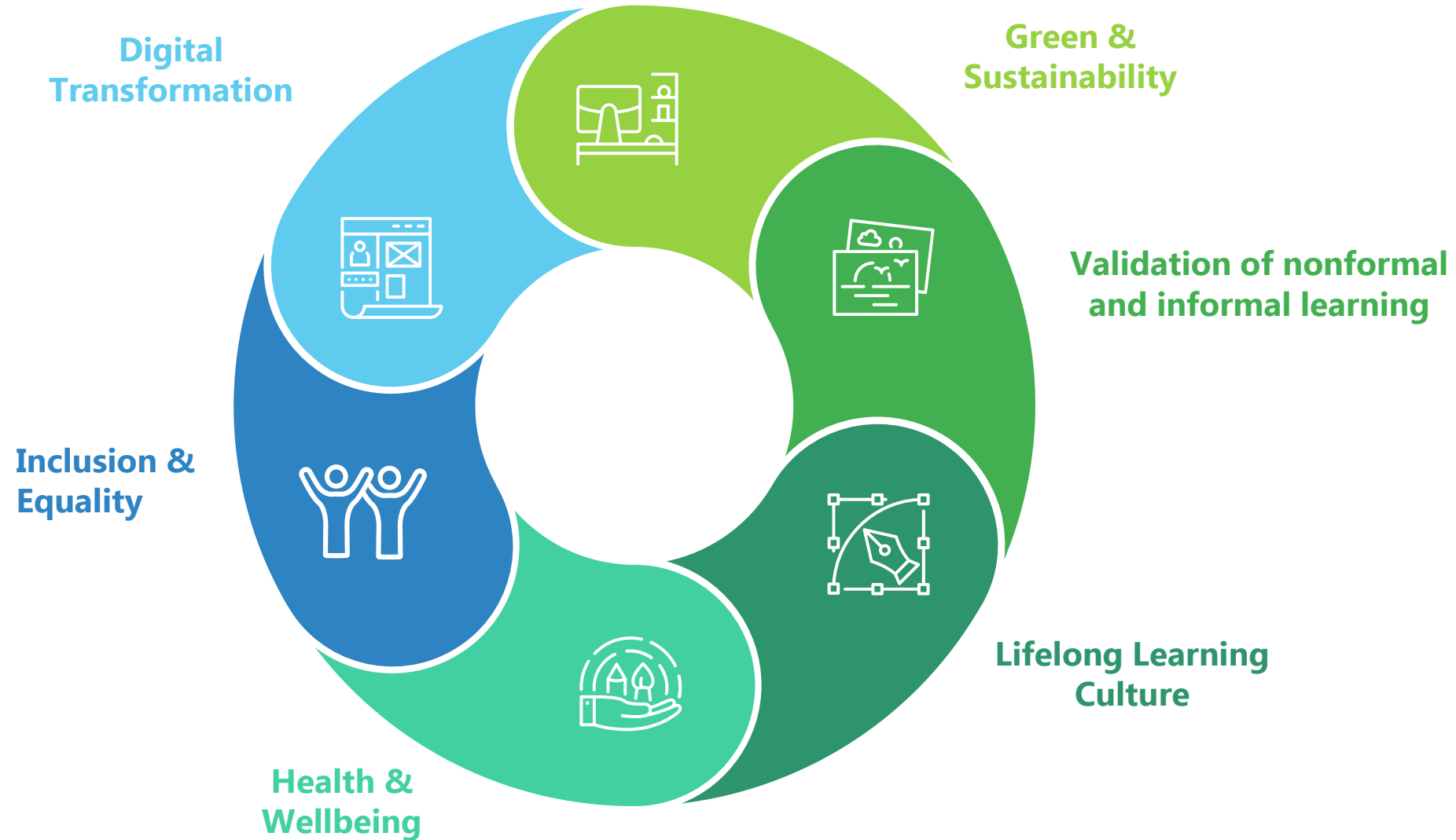
Incentives to meet adult needs

Emphasis on **vulnerable** social groups - older adults, low-skilled, unemployed, young people, migrants

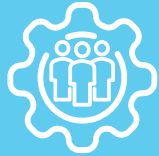
CSOs - link between governments and society

Lifelong learning is not only related to employability but to education, inclusion, well-being, tolerance etc.

Strategic Pillars & Values



5 Key Priorities



**Governance &
Institutional
Framework**



**Monitoring &
Evaluation**



**Reduce Youth
Unemployment**



**Increase Adult
Participation**



**Teachers,
Trainers & Adult
Educators**

1. Governance and Institutional Framework

Key priority 1: Governance and Institutional Framework	
1.1 Establishment of legal framework and policy	
1	Comprehensive legislative and policy framework for lifelong learning
2	Supporting mechanisms for updating with complementary policy activities
1.2 Development of the institutional framework	
3	Official assignment of the strategy governance to a single authority (including its legitimacy to allocate funds and responsibilities)
4	Collaborations with involved stakeholders
5	Lifelong Learning system operations organogram (including roles and responsibilities)
1.3 Budgeting and financial management	
6	Analytical annual budget report and spending on LLL as a % of GDP and total education spending
7	Financial control report on the process of effective management

2. Monitoring and Evaluation

Key priority 2: Monitoring and evaluation	
2.1 Establish monitoring, quality assurance, and evaluation framework	
8	Official assignment of the strategy monitoring to a single authority
9	Digital system for data collection and monitoring
10	External evaluator contract
11	Annual monitoring reports with recommendations
2.2 Establish the key performance indicators and criteria	
12	Monitor and evaluation framework report (including indicators and data sources)

3. Reduction of Youth unemployment

Key priority 3: Reduction of youth unemployment		
3.1 Align education provision with labour market needs.		
13	Share of low achieving 15-year-olds in basic skills	< 15%
14	Share of early leavers from education and training (age 18-24)	< 9%
15	Tertiary educational attainment (age 30-34)	60%
16	Market analysis report with recommendations and guidelines for educational institutions	Yearly
17	Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and labour status (NEET rates) [15-34]+	< 10%
18	Employment rate of recent graduates by educational attainment (age 20-34 having left education 1-3 years before reference year) [ISCED 3-8]	80%
19	Number of synergies between employers and tertiary institutions and number of students participated	tbc
20	Number of guidance and counselling points, number of people served, and satisfaction level	tbc

3.2 Establish targeted measures for vulnerable groups			
21	Needs analysis report on vulnerable groups		Every 3 years
22	Number of programmes offered to vulnerable target groups and number of participants		tbc
23	Unemployment rates of young people not in education and training by sex, educational attainment level and years since completion of highest level of education [15-34] (from 1 to 3 years after completion of education) (ISCED 0-4)		< 10%
24	Youth unemployment (15-24 years old)		< 10%
3.3 Re-skilling the workforce			
25	No of programmes for the integration of the unemployed and inactive persons into employment		tbc
26	No of participants for the integration of the unemployed and inactive persons into employment		tbc
27	No of programmes for the lifelong learning of the employed		tbc
28	No of participants for the lifelong learning of the employed		tbc

4. Increase participation in LLL

Key priority 4: Increase the participation of adults in lifelong learning

4.1 Improve the quality of adult education provision

29	Comprehensive framework for adult learning with the system map	By 2022
30	Quality assurance criteria and standards for all programmes and trainers	tbc
31	Needs analysis report on adult education system	Yearly
32	Policy framework for the validation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning	By 2022

4.2 Establish incentives for participation and eliminate barriers, especially for the most vulnerable

33	Guide on upskilling and reskilling with guidelines and available programmes	By 2022
34	Percentage of adults with basic skills	tbc
35	Number of programmes on basic and digital skills for adults and number of adults participated	tbc
36	Percentage of individuals (16-74) with basic or above basic overall digital skills	70%
37	Financial resources allocated to cost-sharing schemes for employers	tbc
38	Funds organizations spend on lifelong learning for their staff	tbc
39	Number of distance learning programmes, number of participants, and satisfaction level	tbc

4.3 Improve outreach and awareness		
40	Communication and outreach plan	By 2022
41	Number of campaigns developed and number of people reached	Yearly
42	Centralized digital platform to inform about available programmes and number of visitors (per month/year)	By 2022
4.4 Develop and offer programs for non-job related learning.		
43	Number of non-job related programs, number of participants, and satisfaction level	tbc
44	Adult participation rate in education and training (last 12 months)	60%
45	Percentage of adults willing to participate in lifelong learning (formal and non-formal education)	70%

5. Teachers and Adult Educators

Key priority 5: Teachers and Adult Educators

5.1 Improve the quality of adult educators and support their professionalization

46	Framework on the professional status of adult educators (including training needs analysis, requirements, and quality criteria)	By 2022
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47	Compulsory training programme offered to adult educators with no educational background	By 2022
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5.2 Infuse lifelong learning across the curriculum and all stages of education.

48	Training programme for teachers on lifelong learning skills and number of teachers participated in every cycle	By 2022
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49	Lifelong learning skills level of learners	tbc
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50	Lifelong learning skills level of teachers	tbc
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Next steps

01

Consultation of the draft outline of the Strategy (with the members of the National and Technical Committees, the civil society, other relevant organisations)

02

Finalisation of the Lifelong Learning Strategy (until December 2021)

03

Finalization of the Action Plan (timeframes, procedures, responsibilities, KPIs and indicators, bodies to be involved)