

Lifelong Learners in Professional Higher Education

Contribution to the EARLI SIG 14 conference 2012: Learning in transition

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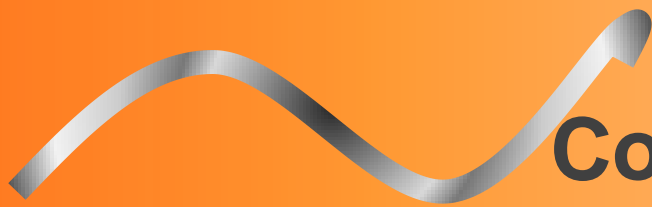
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Context: FLLLEX project

FLLLEX: *The Impact of LifeLong Learning Strategies on Profession-oriented Higher Education in Europe*

EU-funded 2-year project, 24 partners from 10 countries

The project aims to:

- Provide a report on national LifeLong Learning policies
- Provide a self-assessment tool on LifeLong Learning for HEI's
- Exchange good practices on LifeLong Learning in professional higher education
- Provide policy advice to the European Commission on the structure of LifeLong Learning post 2013 and to involve the LLL policy makers in the project partner countries



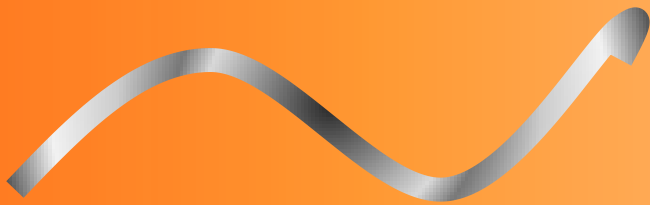
Purpose of this study

1. Outline expectations, needs and barriers of learners in professional HE to engage in LLL
2. Compare expectations, needs and barriers of learners in 8 different EU-countries
3. To provide support for the development of a Self-assessment tool (FLLLEX-Radar) for HEI's on their readiness for lifelong learning
4. Further validate the typology of lifelong learners (Hefler and Markowitsch, 2010)



Survey Method

- Web-based questionnaire
- Target group:
 - students in professional oriented HEI
 - Concurrently in employment ('self-defined LLL')
 - Project partner institutions: BE, FI, FR, IR, LT, NL, TR, UK
 - Aimed size: 400 – 500 students per country (N = ??)
- Main topics:
 - Demographics
 - Kind of studies
 - Kind of employment
 - Motives and barriers for combining work and studies



Method: time flow

Time flow of the survey Lifelong Learners

	2010										2011			
	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02	03	04ff	
Developing questionnaire (in English)	X													
Data collection		X	X	X										
Data collection - extension					X	X	X	X						
Translation of questionnaire									X					
Data collection - extension										X	X	X		
Data analysis and report												X	X	

Source: 3s Survey Students



Response: country of residence

	n	%
Finland	555	36%
Ireland	279	18%
Turkey	185	12%
Lithuania	171	11%
Belgium	149	10%
Scotland	69	5%
Netherlands	55	4%
France	30	2%
Other Country	32	2%
Total N	1.525	100%



Motives to study

	Total	Finland	Ireland	Turkey
To advance prospects for personal growth	62%	68%	70%	45%
To gain knowledge and skills in a special field of interest	55%	59%	49%	40%
To increase chances of finding a job	51%	69%	34%	34%
To receive an academic title	39%	38%	45%	37%
To advance skills essential for the job	38%	28%	51%	48%
To increase motivation	29%	25%	38%	26%
To gain knowledge and skills for everyday life	26%	27%	27%	18%
To meet people	20%	23%	16%	14%
To gain a promotion	13%	7%	25%	16%
To become self-employed	11%	9%	6%	15%
To avoid job loss	9%	4%	15%	15%
Other(s)	6%	9%	2%	1%
n	1.525	555	279	185

Problems which result from current study

	Total	Finland	Ireland	Turkey
Reduction of free time	61%	61%	75%	42%
Stress	53%	59%	50%	51%
Financial problems	36%	49%	27%	28%
Less time to meet the job demands	21%	19%	23%	25%
Less time for learning	19%	20%	17%	16%
Excessive demands	16%	16%	25%	12%
Lack of career-development possibilities	11%	12%	7%	11%
Family problems	10%	8%	11%	6%
Problems with the arrival and departure to/from the educational centre	10%	10%	5%	10%
Problems to organise childcare	7%	8%	11%	3%
Threat of finding other employer	6%	6%	3%	4%
Problems with fellow students	4%	5%	1%	6%
Problems with colleagues at work	3%	1%	1%	9%
Other(s)	5%	7%	2%	1%
n	1.525	555	279	185



Wished support from politics & public authorities

	Total	Finland	Ireland	Turkey
More allowance for employed students	54%	68%	50%	35%
Tax relief for higher education	54%	54%	71%	31%
Support especially designed for employed students	44%	57%	41%	25%
Information about the job market	28%	21%	34%	25%
Publication of analysis regarding education and job market (e.g. analyses of needs)	19%	15%	23%	18%
Government-arranged childcare especially for employed students	16%	16%	15%	18%
Other(s)	3%	4%	1%	1%
n	1.525	555	279	185

Source: 3s Survey Students, 05/2010 - 03/2011.



Wished support from HE institution

	Total	Finland	Ireland	Turkey
Flexibility when job-related requirements increase	40%	49%	41%	32%
Timetable adaptation to employed students	40%	52%	37%	28%
Improvement of the recognition of prior learnings (or experience)	36%	37%	44%	30%
More possibilities for distance learning	35%	46%	32%	23%
Upgrade of the quality of teaching	34%	49%	16%	26%
More internet possibilities at the high education centre	18%	15%	22%	19%
Modularisation of the study	17%	9%	21%	17%
Media coverage about possible studies	15%	13%	20%	10%
Other(s)	3%	3%	2%	1%
n	1.525	555	279	185

Source: 3s Survey Students, 05/2010 - 03/2011.



Provided and preferred employer support


	Total		Finland		Ireland		Turkey	
	p	i	p	i	p	i	p	i
Flexible working hours	58%	78%	67%	80%	58%	76%	58%	86%
Use of company-internal resources (e.g. internet, etc.)	46%	65%	37%	62%	63%	70%	70%	80%
Possibility to lower the weekly working hours	36%	68%	49%	73%	17%	50%	36%	76%
Educational leave	36%	66%	25%	56%	49%	71%	66%	86%
Exemption for exam preparation	35%	66%	29%	58%	42%	72%	58%	83%
Financial aid	26%	58%	8%	42%	51%	74%	41%	80%
Possibility to learn during working hours	25%	60%	21%	49%	24%	68%	47%	86%
Integrating higher education into the career plan	22%	63%	11%	52%	34%	76%	42%	90%
Information about company-internal support	20%	60%	9%	53%	36%	70%	38%	78%
Information about higher education	19%	40%	7%	26%	35%	63%	52%	74%
Information about government support	10%	52%	3%	39%	14%	67%	32%	73%
Childcare	4%	25%	0,2%	16%	2%	24%	20%	66%
Other support	10%	19%	9%	19%	12%	14%	23%	50%
n*	399 – 1.103		201 - 434		50 - 218		18 - 104	



Analysis: typology


- Typology of adult learners in formal education by Hefler/Markowitsch (2010)
- based on three core pillars:
 - the direction of movement within a life course
 - the relationship between the content of the chosen course of study and tasks performed in their actual work in employment
 - the position of the programme within the established hierarchy of qualifications

Focus	Main Type	Sub-types	Description	Relation Contents/ Tasks	Start of programme: before/after joining career
Education	Completing	Finishing	Working while studying without particular connection of work and education	Insignificant	Before
		Entering	Being hired in late phases by an employer in need of graduates	Strong, clearly visible relation	Before
	Returning	Returning	Returning to education and overruling a temporary transition to work	Insignificant	After
	Transforming	Trans-forming	General transformation using education as a basis	No relation	After
Work	Re-inforcing	Progressing	Progressing in the current field by at least one step on the educational ladder	Strong, clearly visible relation	After (exceptional: before)
		Adapting	Making one step in the current field, in parallel to an existing one not relevant in the field	Strong, clearly visible relation	After
		Specialising	Completing one programme as a specialisation	Strong, clearly visible relation	After
		Peaking	Completing a formal programme designed for experienced professionals in the field	Strong, clearly visible relation	After
	Compensating	Compen-sating	Compensating the restriction of an existing pathway	Insignificant	After



Patterns of participation with focus on education

- **Completing:**
 - *Finishing:* working while completing formal education
 - *Entering:* being hired in late phases by an employer in need of graduates
- **Returning:** returning to education and revising a temporary transition from learning to work
- **Transforming:** transformation of the existing career pathway and/or individual development



Patterns of participation with focus on work

- **Reinforcing:** reinforcing an existing career pathway
 - progressing in the current field (one step ahead)
 - adapting to the current field (in relation to qualifications)
 - specialising: completing a program as specialization
 - peaking: completing a program for professionals (e.g. ISCED 6)
- **Compensating:** compensation for shortcomings of an existing career pathway



Types of learners in this survey

	Frequency	Percentage
Completing	137	12%
Returning	100	9%
Transforming	353	31%
<i>Reinforcing</i>	<i>177</i>	<i>15%</i>
Compensating	388	34%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1155</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: 3s Survey Learners, 05/2010 - 03/2011.

Types of learners in the different countries

	Total	Compl.	Ret.	Transf.	Reinf.	Comps.
Belgium	10%	10%	8%	32%	11%	39%
Finland	40%	12%	13%	39%	7%	29%
France	2%	14%	19%	33%	19%	14%
Ireland	18%	3%	4%	27%	23%	42%
Lithuania	10%	30%	3%	21%	8%	38%
Netherlands	4%	2%	7%	36%	24%	31%
Scotland	4%	6%	8%	25%	25%	35%
Turkey	10%	16%	5%	15%	32%	32%
Other country	2%	15%	10%	20%	35%	20%
Total (1.147)	100%	12%	9%	31%	15%	34%

Source: 3s Survey Learners, 05/2010 - 03/2011.

Types of learners & wished support from HEIs

	Compl.	Ret.	Transf.	Reinf.	Comps.
Flexibility when job-related requirements increase	46%	56%	50%	51%	57%
Timetable adaptation to employed students	50%	51%	51%	47%	56%
Improvement of the recognition of prior learning (or experience)	44%	34%	40%	56%	52%
More possibilities for distance learning	46%	38%	48%	41%	48%
Upgrade of the quality of teaching	57%	59%	45%	33%	43%
More internet possibilities at the high education centre	24%	13%	21%	27%	27%
Modularisation of the study	23%	16%	17%	30%	26%
Media coverage about possible studies	18%	15%	18%	22%	24%
Other(s)	2%	8%	5%	1%	2%
n	109	85	319	153	344

Source: 3s Survey Learners, 05/2010 - 03/2011.



Relevance for Higher Education Institutions

- There tend to be differences between the identified types of Lifelong Learners and their motives and needs, which can be taken into account by HEI's, e.g. by focusing their strategy on particular types of Lifelong Learners and catering to their needs.



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