Adoption


The Document has been elaborated in response to challenges, which on one hand have to do with:

- Bulgaria’s need to overcome the consequences of the extended debt financial crisis in Europe and worldwide
- preserving the national identity and cultural diversity in the course of implementing the cohesion policies.

This Strategy outlines the content, forms, environment, and interactions among all players in the lifelong learning process, that is:

- **learners** – all persons within the country, who are engaged in learning in the area of education, formal and non-formal learning or informal learning;
- **training providers** – the institutions carrying out training, (whether private or government kindergartens, schools, universities, training centres, culture institutions, etc.), which meet society’s needs and the labour market’s requirements;
- **employers, trade organizations, labour unions, civil society organizations**, and others are those, which set forth and meet the above requirements, which deal with the needs for education and training; the regions, municipalities, and local communities have an important part to play in the process of asserting their position as „learning regions”;
- **government bodies - ministries and agencies** – set out the national policies in the area of education and training, as well as the relevant tools and measures required to ensure the efficiency of demand and supply of LLL.

The National Strategy for Lifelong Learning sets out the strategic framework of the government’s policy in education and training during the 2014-2020 period. The main aim is to contribute to the attainment the European goal for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

This Strategy’s context takes into account the:

- new goals and the new scope of learning
- learner groups
- providers
- learning/teaching methods
- initiatives for demand and supply of learning
- supporting measures
- transparency and comparability
quality assurance.

The document covers all forms of education, training, and learning – formal, non-formal, and informal – which one undergoes throughout life, and also provides recommendations for the following years. These recommendations serve as basis in the preparation of annual plans, based on which progress in the implementation of LLL in Bulgaria would be traced.

Vision

As of 2020, Bulgaria should foster conditions for full creative and professional success of the individual person, and where the access to various and quality forms of lifelong learning has become a reality for all its citizens.

Below are some of the strategic objectives and progress indicators:

- Increase the share of the children covered by pre-school education: from 87.8% in 2012 to 90% in 2020;
- Reduce the share of early leavers aged 18-24: from 12.5% in 2012 to less than 11% in 2020;
- Reduce the share of 15-year olds with poor academic achievements in:
  - reading – from 39.4% in 2012 to 30% in 2020;
  - mathematics – from 43.8% in 2012 to 35% in 2020;
  - natural sciences – from 36.9% in 2012 to 30.0% in 2020;
- Increase the share of professional degree attainment in Informatics, Technical Equipment, Manufacturing and Processing, and Architecture and Construction to at least 60% in 2020;
- Increase the share of higher education completion among ages 30-34: from 26.9% in 2012 to 36% in 2020;
- Increase the employment rates of the population aged 20-64: from 63% in 2012 to 76% in 2020;
- Increase the participation of people aged 25-64 in education and training: from 1.5% in 2012 to more than 5% in 2020;
- Reduce the share of illiterate persons:
  - Ages 15-19: from 2.0% in 2011 to 1.5% in 2020;
  - Ages 20-29: from 2.3% in 2011 to 1.5% in 2020.

Increasing the quality of education

The main challenge is to organize the education and training and align them towards attainment of the key competences by all learners. To achieve this objective and turn into a fundament of the educational process more focus should be placed on the acquisition of basic skills such as:

- Achieving functional literacy in the mother tongue
- Achieving literacy in the area of mathematics and natural sciences
- Achieving technological and digital literacy
- Achieving foreign language communication skills.

Coordination, monitoring, reporting and funding

Implementation of the National Strategy for Lifelong Learning is based on the following implementation entities and instruments:

National Lifelong Learning Council at the Council of Ministers as a strategic group to coordinate implementation. The National Lifelong Learning Council carries out coordination and consultation
among the central government bodies, local government bodies, trade unions on a national level, and employer organizations on a national level for implementation of the national lifelong learning policy. It is presided by the Minister of Education and Science.

**Action Plans for Implementation of the Strategy**

Multi-tier level of coordination and monitoring of the process is done through the National Lifelong Learning Platform 2020. It is an electronic tool for coordinating and reporting the implementation of the National LLL Strategy. The platform provides transparency of the fulfilment of the commitments undertaken by the various government institutions, social partners and non-governmental organizations, as well as provides an opportunity to monitor process and revised any of the measures when non-implementation is threatened.

Implementing the National Strategy for Lifelong Learning for the period 2014-2020 is based on the actions plans adopted by the Council of Ministers, the fixed operational objectives and main stages, which are subject to annual monitoring for purposes of timely detection of difficulties relating to the implementation and taking into account any changes in the challenges.

An annual report is sent to the Council of Ministers covering:

a) the implementation’s status;
b) any problems found;
c) newly arisen needs to adapt or expand in terms of the objectives and measures;
d) cooperation among various participants as part of the governance approach.

Full texts of the National qualification framework, action plans and Report on the implementation in 2014 of the National Strategy for Lifelong Learning 2014-2020 are available in Bulgarian [2] for the following texts:

- National qualification framework