

# Classification of learning activities (CLA)

MANUAL

2016 edition





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learning activities (CLA)  
MANUAL** | **2016 edition**

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# Foreword

Since the treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam included education and training<sup>1</sup> as part of action at Community level, lifelong learning has been a key element of the education and training policy in Europe. Thus, the conclusions of the Lisbon summit (2000) mention lifelong learning as a way of ensuring a successful transition towards a knowledge society. Moreover, the EU Council resolution of 27 June 2002 on lifelong learning stresses that 'education and training are an indispensable means for promoting social cohesion, active citizenship, personal and professional fulfilment, adaptability and employability' and that lifelong learning must cover learning from the pre-school age to that of post-retirement. The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation on education and training ('ET 2020') address strategic objectives, one of them being lifelong learning. Within this context, a European benchmark on adult participation in lifelong learning has been set: by 2020, an average of at least 15 % of adults should participate in lifelong learning.

The concept of lifelong learning (LLL) is not simply a summing up of traditional education programmes and modern learning opportunities. While traditional educational institutions have been (and still are) primarily concerned with transmitting knowledge, modern learning opportunities and the LLL approach emphasise the development of individual capabilities and each person's capacity to learn. LLL implies a paradigm shift from the dominance of traditional education institutions to a diverse field of traditional and modern learning opportunities that are more process- and outcome-oriented, as well as of a modular structure. At the same time, responsibility for education and learning is shifting from the public (state) to non-governmental organisations and to individuals themselves.

Because lifelong learning is a political priority, there is a growing need for statistics in this area. This is complex because learning activities cover many fields. According to the European Union's definition, education and lifelong learning include the entire spectrum of formal and non-formal education and training as well as informal learning. Lifelong learning must be understood as all learning activities undertaken throughout a person's lifetime with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences.

The work carried out by the task force on lifelong learning, set up by Eurostat with a view to proposing ways of measuring lifelong learning, resulted in several recommendations, including the development of a classification system for lifelong learning activities. This work resulted in a first version of the classification of learning activities (the CLA, released in 2006<sup>2</sup>), but this has never been updated. The 2015 version of the CLA includes updates needed to align the classification with the main international classification on education and training statistics: the international standard

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<sup>1</sup> The expression 'education and training' is preferred when referring to formal and non-formal education and training, as a reminder that training is included in education. Sometimes the word 'education' is used on its own by convention in the document but still refers to both education and training.

<sup>2</sup> Available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/KS-BF-06-002>.

classification of education (ISCED) 2011.

Classification and nomenclature are the basic tools for structuring statistical information in well-defined categories that exclude one another. These classifications are a prerequisite for data collection and they play an important part in the quality of statistics, as they make it possible to set common harmonised definitions, which helps avoid mismatches.

A classification is primarily meant to ensure the comparability of data and to help avoid any ambiguity in the process of attributing a category to a learning activity. Other existing classifications only cover part of all learning activities, especially of formal and non-formal education and training activities. The ISCED 2011 classification covering education programmes and resulting qualifications by levels and fields focuses on formal education, though it has been refined after the ISCED 1997 version to improve the definitions of formal and non-formal education. There is also a classification covering other aspects of education and formal and non-formal learning: the classification of training provisions (Brandsma and Kornelius) of the Leonardo da Vinci project. However, neither classification covers informal learning nor provides substantial criteria to classify non-formal education and training. A classification that includes these different aspects of education and learning is therefore necessary.

On the other hand, there is practically no methodological information on informal learning at international level. Some useful reflection on concepts that could underpin a classification of learning activities has taken place as part of the project on compiling a harmonised list of learning activities carried out at the request of CEDEFOP in 2001-2002 (Dieter Gnahs, Alexandra Ioannidou, Klaus Pehl, Sabine Seidel). The results of this project were an important input into the classification of learning activities.



# Introduction

## The need for a CLA: the first version of the classification

Policy makers' need for statistical information on individuals' participation in lifelong learning meant that appropriate statistical tools to measure this data were needed. A classification of learning activities (CLA) is one of the tools required for the statistical measurement of key lifelong learning issues.

As part of the CLA project launched by Eurostat in December 2002, a survey on the needs of potential users of the classification was conducted. The survey's main general conclusions can be summarised as follows:

- there is a need to develop an operational definition of 'learning activity' at EU level;
- there is no operational definition of learning activities identified even at national level;
- a classification of learning activities at country level is non-existent;
- there is a lack of conceptual work in the field of non-formal education and informal learning;
- all learning activities must be taken into account, whether formal or informal, taught or non-taught;
- there is a need to develop and detail the ISCED fields of education and training, especially for subjects like personal development and working life.

Moreover, the UN expert group on international economic and social classifications formulated the following recommendation (New York, 8-10 December 2003):

*'The expert group recommended that the classification and reporting of non-traditional educational and/or recreational and lifelong learning activities should be addressed and solved. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), Eurostat and ILO should be involved in this task.'*

Both the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the International Labour Organisation have been involved in the CLA project since its beginning, participating in the task group on classifications, which acted as the steering group for the project in 2002-2003, in the framework of the Eurostat task force on the adult education survey.

## Purpose of the CLA

The CLA aims to cover all types of learning opportunities and education/learning pathways. It aims to be universal in nature and applicable in all countries, irrespective of their development level or education and learning system.

It is designed to serve as a tool for compiling and presenting comparable statistics and indicators on learning activities, both within individual countries and across countries. It covers all intentional and organised learning activities for all age groups.

The CLA should be applied to statistical surveys that collect quantitative information on different aspects of individuals' participation in learning. It was designed to cover and serve the scope of the European Union's adult education survey (AES). However, it can also be used for other EU household surveys (e.g. LFS,<sup>3</sup> TUS,<sup>4</sup> etc.) and specific business surveys (e.g. CVTS<sup>5</sup>).

The CLA supports the collection, compilation and presentation of data:

- on individuals (through household surveys such as the survey on adult education, which focuses on lifelong learning) and training providers;
- on the participation of individuals in learning systems and other aspects of learning, such as the time dedicated to learning, money invested in it, etc.

The CLA provides criteria for the classification of all learning activities: formal and non-formal education and training as well as informal learning. In doing so, it builds on key methodological reference documents (see the bibliography at the end of this document).

## Purpose of this manual

The CLA manual provides a set of definitions and criteria to ensure international comparability of statistics on learning activities. It aims to clarify the fundamental concepts underlying statistical information on learning activities.

An analysis of reference documents carried out during the preparation of the first version of the classification showed that there were no definitions of 'learning activities' at national level in Europe, or at international level either. It was clear that there could be no classification without such definitions. This manual is therefore an opportunity to bridge the gap and propose a theoretical scope for what is missing in other sources.

The manual has three main components:

- concepts and definitions;
- classifications;
- operational guidelines.

General concepts and definitions are presented in chapter 1. The following concepts and definitions are included: lifelong learning, learning activities versus non-learning activities, formal education and

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<sup>3</sup> Labour force survey.

<sup>4</sup> Time use survey.

<sup>5</sup> Continuing vocational training survey.

training, non-formal education and training, and informal learning. The chapter provides the criteria that distinguish these three broad categories from each other.

Chapter 2 presents the classification of learning activities, and chapter 3 presents the broad categories, classes and sub-classes, and includes explanatory notes.

Operational guidelines based on the results of the CLA and testing of the manual carried out while the first version of the classification was being prepared are provided throughout the text in the form of questions and answers.

Several cases that illustrate the classification system are included in Annex 1.

## The CLA and the adult education survey

The first version of the CLA released in 2006 was mostly used by countries collecting data for the 2011 adult education survey (AES). The CLA proved to be very useful and consistent in most cases, but there were still additional implementation rules added during the 2011 AES. Further clarification was therefore considered useful before the 2016 survey would be conducted (it is due between July 2016 and March 2017), especially since there was also a new version of the ISCED classification released in 2011.

This manual provides the updates necessary to improve the collection of data on participation in learning activities, whether for the AES or any other social survey (such as the LFS and its variables related to education and training).



# 1

## General concepts and definitions

### 1.1. Lifelong learning

**Lifelong learning (LLL)** is defined as encompassing ‘*all learning activities undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences, within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective*’.<sup>6</sup>

Lifelong learning includes all learning activities:<sup>7</sup>

- that are purposeful, that is activities which aim to improve behaviour, information, knowledge, understanding, attitude, values or skills;
- that are ongoing, which means that they are not incidental or random but have ‘the elements of duration and continuity’,<sup>8</sup> are organised, and in principle don’t have a minimum duration;
- independent of whether they are formal or not; this includes different types of learning, such as apprenticeships, second-chance schools, on-the-job or off-the-job education and training, self-learning, etc.;
- independent of their source of funding, whether that’s the private sector, the public sector or the individual;
- independent of their mode of delivery, whether traditional (classroom) or modern (using information and communication technologies).

This concept of lifelong learning concerns the entire population, independent of age and labour market status. It includes all kinds of activities ranging from early childhood education to leisure education for retired people. It should not be limited to work-related outcomes.

The definition of LLL is consistent with ISCED, since ISCED defines learning as ‘*individual acquisition or modification of information, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values, skills, competencies or behaviours through experience, practice, study or instruction*’.<sup>9</sup> However, the LLL definition is based on the process of learning, while the ISCED definition is based on the intended outcome.

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<sup>6</sup> This is the definition included in the Commission’s communication ‘Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality’, 2001. The European employment strategy defines LLL as: ‘all purposeful learning activities, whether formal or informal, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences’.

<sup>7</sup> Report of the Eurostat task force on measuring lifelong learning (Working paper 3/2001/E/№4).

<sup>8</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 16, page 7.

<sup>9</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 14, page 7.

## 1.2. Learning activities versus non-learning activities

**Learning activities** are defined as '*any activities of an individual organised with the intention to improve his/her knowledge, skills and competences*'.

The two fundamental criteria that distinguish learning activities from non-learning activities are as follows:

- the learning activity must be intentional (as opposed to random learning), so the act has a predetermined purpose;
- the learning activity is organised in some way, including by the learner him-/herself; it typically involves the transfer of information in a broader sense (messages, ideas, knowledge, strategies).

**Intentional learning** is defined as '*a deliberate search for knowledge, skills, competences or attitudes of lasting value*'.<sup>10</sup> The *intention* of learning must be formulated before the activity starts, either by the learner or by another individual.

It is the *intention* to learn that distinguishes learning activities from non-learning activities. Of course, some activities whose main purpose is not learning may also lead to learning. For example, when entering a sports competition one might improve one's own performance although there might not be a formulated intention to do so. This case is considered a non-learning activity because, although learning may happen, it is a **by-product** of the activity.

In other words, a non-learning activity can produce the same type of outcomes as a learning activity. Random learning can happen as a *by-product* of a non-learning activity, as an 'improvement in behaviour, information, knowledge, understanding, attitude, values or skills' or 'work, societal and personal outcomes'.

The border between learning activities and non-learning activities is sometimes difficult to identify. Culture, sports and religion include activities which may or may not be considered learning activities, depending on whether there is an intention to learn; these should be addressed with particular care. This is particularly the case in less organised activities like self-learning. In more organised activities designed for learning the desire or effort of the participant to learn would not change the nature of the activity to make it a 'non-learning activity'. Examples of borderline cases are presented in Annex 1.

### What is the difference between information and learning?

The distinction is basically between learning and non-learning activities. For informal learning, knowledge is made available and it is up to the individual to use it to learn or not; it is always the intention to learn that counts. The decision is up to the individual accessing the information.

<sup>10</sup> Definition based on the EU definition of LA and HALLA. The term 'deliberate' is proposed instead of the term 'voluntary' used in the HALLA. The word 'voluntary' means acting on one's own free will, not due to an obligation. The word 'deliberate' is close to the meaning of 'intentional' i.e. done on or with purpose. The word deliberate is also in line with ISCED's phrasing: '*deliberate activities involving some form of communication intended to bring about learning*' (see ISCED 2011, paragraph 12, page 7).

## Should an activity have a minimum duration to be considered a learning activity?

At the conceptual level, a minimum duration is not necessary. At the implementation level, the respondent in a household survey would implicitly use a minimum. Imposing a common minimum of for example four hours would not improve comparability since the respondent's indication of the duration is not considered precise enough for informal learning.

**Organised learning** is defined as '*planned in a pattern or sequence with explicit or implicit aims. It involves a providing agency (person(s) or body) that facilitates the learning environment, and a method of instruction through which communication is organised. Instruction typically involves a teacher or a trainer who is engaged in communicating and guiding knowledge and skills with a view to bringing about learning. The medium of instruction can also be indirect, e.g. through radio, television, computer software, film, recordings, internet or other communication technologies*'.<sup>11</sup>

From this definition we can see that the concept of 'organised' is a characteristic of any learning activity, since the decision to organise an activity in order to learn a subject is a key criterion for considering that there is intention to learn. Some activities might have a high degree of organisation (e.g. attending school). Other activities that are considered to be learning activities may have a very low level of organisation, e.g. self-learning a new piece of software, by using a manual. From this perspective, every purposeful action has a certain level of organisation.

The definition of *organised* refers to a decision being made on different aspects related to learning (content, structuring knowledge, methods, timing, purpose, environment, etc.) which are pre-determined before starting the activity. This can refer either to the role of an institution or body that structures, funds and/or conducts the learning process, or to the process of planning learning in terms of setting the content, the methods, or the timing.<sup>12</sup>

### 1.3. Single learning activities (SLAs)

Learning activities are made up of one or more single learning activities. The single learning activity is therefore the basic theoretical building block of the CLA, with which all learning activities can be captured and described.

A **single learning activity** is defined as being '*characterised by unity of method and subject*'.

This means that each time there is a change in the method of learning or subject of learning there is a different single learning activity. Figure 1 illustrates this (subjects in rows, methods in columns).

The **subject** (or field) is **what** the individual learns. The ISCED fields of education and training 2013 (ISCED-F 2013)<sup>13</sup> is the classification to be used for the content of educational programmes.

The **method** is the **organisational frame** used to learn or to teach (i.e. acquire or transmit ideas, information, knowledge, skills and competences). This can take the form of (educational) programmes, courses, events, or other more or less organised forms.

The method, i.e. organisational frame, coincides closest with the everyday understanding of the method used for learning at different levels (e.g. classroom instruction, private tuition, self-learning). Within each SLA, different learning media and tools may be used. A change in media or tools does

<sup>11</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 15, page 7.

<sup>12</sup> HALLA, page 12.

<sup>13</sup> ISCED 2011, Annex IV and the ISCED fields of education and training 2013 (ISCED-F 2013, manual to accompany the ISCED 2011).

not mean a change of SLA. This means that, for example, even if classroom instruction includes oral presentations, using books in the classroom and using the internet in the classroom, the activity should still be considered as one SLA.

**Figure 1:** Single learning activities

|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| S7 |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
| S6 |     |     | SLA |     | SLA |     |    |
| S5 | SLA |     |     |     |     |     |    |
| S4 |     |     | SLA | SLA | SLA |     |    |
| S3 |     | SLA | SLA | SLA |     | SLA |    |
| S2 |     |     | SLA |     |     |     |    |
| S1 |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
|    | M1  | M2  | M3  | M4  | M5  | M6  | M7 |

## 1.4. Learning map and aggregation of single learning activities

Figure 1 above shows a grid with all the learning activities a person completed; this is their '**learning map**'. It includes different kinds of methods used by the person to learn all kinds of subjects, and shows them graphically.

**Figure 2:** A course is basically a grouping of SLAs by subject

|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| S7 |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
| S6 |     |     | SLA |     | SLA |     |    |
| S5 | SLA |     |     |     |     |     |    |
| S4 |     |     | SLA | SLA | SLA |     |    |
| S3 |     | SLA | SLA | SLA |     | SLA |    |
| S2 |     |     | SLA |     |     |     |    |
| S1 |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
|    | M1  | M2  | M3  | M4  | M5  | M6  | M7 |

In practice, single learning activities don't always stay separate from each other, several can be grouped together. A series of SLAs towards learning a specific subject (field of study) is called a



**course.** A course is defined as ‘a unit of instruction comprising a sequence of educational activities in a particular field or range of related fields of education’.<sup>14</sup> Figure 2, where the different methods used to learn subject S3 are framed in blue, illustrates this.

There is another type of SLA grouping: when there are several SLAs organised as a set, with each using a different method to learn a different subject. This is called a **programme**. A programme is defined ‘as a coherent set or sequence of educational activities or communication designed and organised to achieve pre-determined learning objectives or accomplish a specific set of educational tasks over a sustained period’.<sup>15</sup> A programme would typically include several courses and individual SLAs i.e. where a specific method is used to learn a specific subject that is not part of the programme or any of the courses in it. Figure 3 shows a programme framed in red.

**Figure 3:** A programme can be a grouping of courses and SLAs

|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| S7 |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
| S6 |     |     | SLA |     | SLA |     |    |
| S5 | SLA |     |     |     |     |     |    |
| S4 |     |     | SLA | SLA | SLA |     |    |
| S3 |     | SLA | SLA | SLA |     | SLA |    |
| S2 |     |     | SLA |     |     |     |    |
| S1 |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
|    | M1  | M2  | M3  | M4  | M5  | M6  | M7 |

**Note:** The terms ‘programme’ and ‘course’, used above to facilitate the understanding of the concepts of single learning activities and learning maps, may have different meanings in everyday language in different institutional and national contexts. They may even correspond to ‘the use of one method (e.g. classroom instruction) to learn one subject (history)’ which according to the description above is a SLA. Therefore, use of the term ‘programme’ or ‘course’ in the description of an activity should not automatically be interpreted as corresponding to the above theoretical definitions.

As stated in the 2011 ISCED, within an education programme educational activities may be ‘grouped into subcomponents variously described in national contexts as ‘courses’, ‘modules’, ‘units’ and/or ‘subjects’. In ISCED, a ‘course’ is equivalent in meaning to a ‘module’, ‘unit’ and/or ‘subject’.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> ISCED 2011, glossary. Another definition is the one presented in the HALLA (page 36): ‘A series of lectures or lessons in a particular subject typically leading to certification or at least to a confirmation of participation’ (source: based on the New Oxford Dictionary, 1998).

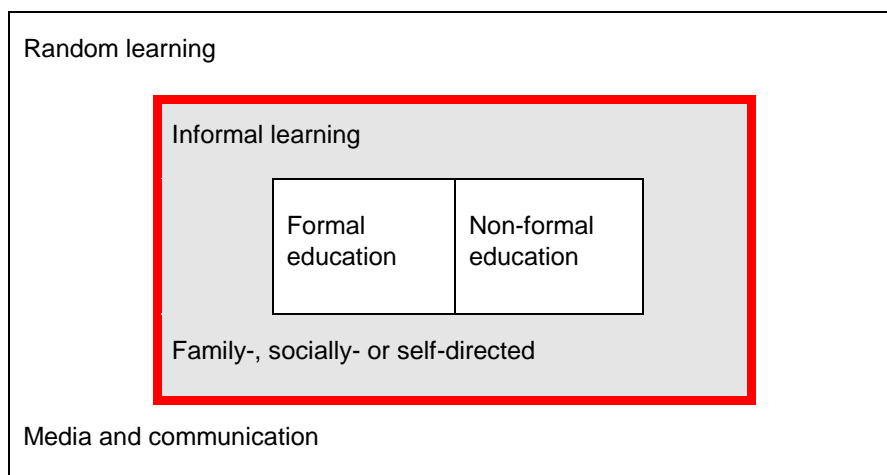
<sup>15</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 11, page 7.

<sup>16</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 18, page 7.

## 1.5. Scope of education and learning and categories of learning activities

Education and learning can be classified into four broad categories: formal education<sup>17</sup> (FED), non-formal education<sup>18</sup> (NFE), informal learning (INF), and random/incidental learning. This conceptual structure is presented in Figure 4<sup>19</sup>.

**Figure 4:** Scope of education and learning



Based on the definitions of learning activities used for the CLA, random learning is excluded from statistical observation because it is not intentional. The scope of the CLA is shown by the thick red line in Figure 4.

The classification proposed in the CLA is based on three broad categories: formal education and training (FED), non-formal education and training (NFE), and informal learning (INF). It should be possible to classify all learning activities into one of these three broad categories. The **conceptual definitions** of these three categories are as follows:

**Formal education**<sup>20</sup> is defined as ‘*education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organisations and recognised private bodies, and — in their totality — constitute the formal education system of a country. Formal education programmes are thus recognised as such by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities, e.g. any other institution in cooperation with the national or sub-national education authorities. Formal education consists mostly of initial education [...]. Vocational education, special needs education and some parts of adult education are often recognised as being part of the formal education system. Qualifications from formal education are by definition recognised and, therefore, are within the scope of ISCED. Institutionalised education occurs when an organisation provides structured educational arrangements, such as student-teacher relationships and/or interactions, that are specially designed for education and learning*’. There is a clear hierarchy of qualifications granted by ISCED levels up to post-secondary non-tertiary education

<sup>17</sup> ‘Education’ meaning by convention ‘education and training’.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Education’ meaning by convention ‘education and training’.

<sup>19</sup> UNESCO, 1996: Manual for statistics on non-formal education.

<sup>20</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 36, page 11.

programmes (level 4). For tertiary education (levels 5 to 8), the pathways can be more complex (for details see ISCED 2011<sup>21</sup>).

**Non-formal education**<sup>22</sup> is defined as '*education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned by an education provider. The defining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an addition, alternative and/or complement to formal education within the process of lifelong learning of individuals. It is often provided in order to guarantee the right of access to education for all. It caters to people of all ages but does not necessarily apply a continuous pathway structure; it may be short in duration and/or low-intensity; and it is typically provided in the form of short courses, workshops or seminars. Non-formal education mostly leads to qualifications that are not recognised as formal or equivalent to formal qualifications by the relevant national or sub-national education authorities or to no qualifications at all. Nevertheless, formal, recognised qualifications may be obtained through exclusive participation in specific non-formal education programmes; this often happens when the non-formal programme completes the competencies obtained in another context*'.

ISCED 2011 provides further explanations of non-formal education and training in its Annex V.

**Informal learning** is defined as '*intentional, but it is less organised and less structured ... and may include for example learning events (activities) that occur in the family, in the workplace, and in the daily life of every person, on a self-directed, family-directed or socially-directed basis*'.<sup>23</sup>

## When do sports activities become 'leisure' and stop being 'learning'?

In order to focus on learning activities and exclude the activities which are merely physical fitness programmes, we only include activities which focus on rules, techniques and skills, and which are competitive (professional or amateur).

Therefore, sports activities which are not formally organised and which do not involve a trainer/teacher/coach are not considered to be training/learning activities, but rather physical fitness programmes. They are not included in non-formal learning.

Courses for coaches/trainers and/or umpires/referees/judges that lead to a qualification/certificate which enables participants to carry out these roles can be considered non-formal learning.

The following section includes the operational criteria to use in order to classify learning activities into the three categories corresponding to the conceptual definitions. Note that the term 'education' is used to mean 'education and training'.

<sup>21</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 206, page 46.

<sup>22</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 39, page 11.

<sup>23</sup> As defined in the report of the Eurostat TF/MLLL (paragraph 32, page 12). This definition is in line with ISCED 2011, paragraph 43, page 12.

## 1.6. Operational criteria for distinguishing broad categories of learning activities

While preparing a set of recommendations to follow when classifying learning activities, the task force on measuring lifelong learning provided a list of criteria that can be used to distinguish the different types of education and learning activities.

The 2006 version of the CLA did not include these criteria; they were added (with minor changes) after discussions on the implementation of the 2011 AES and the new ISCED 2011. An additional criterion was also added to align the concept of formal education to the one used in the ISCED.

The full list of criteria is as follows (see section 1.6.2 for further details):

|     | Criterion   | Formal | Non-formal | Informal |
|-----|---|--------|------------|----------|
| (a) | Intention to learn  | X      | X          | X        |
| (b) | Organisation  | X      | X          |          |
| (c) | Institutional framework and location  | X      | X          |          |
| (d) | Hierarchy level-grade structure ('ladder')  | X      |            |          |
| (e) | Admission requirements  | X      |            |          |
| (f) | Registration requirements   | X      | (X)        |          |
| (g) | Teaching/learning methods (predetermined/not flexible)                                    | X      | X          | (X)      |
| (h) | Duration of at least one semester (minimum of 30 ECTS <sup>24</sup> )                     | X      |            |          |
| (i) | Recognition of the programme by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities | X      |            |          |

### 1.6.1. Informal learning versus formal and non-formal education and training

There is one fundamental criterion that distinguishes informal learning from education and training (formal and non-formal). This is whether the learning activity is institutionalised or not.

**Institutionalised** learning activities occur when there is *'an organisation [which] provides structured educational arrangements, such as student-teacher relationships and/or interactions, that are specially designed for education and learning'*.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> For further details on the European credit transfer and accumulation system, see [http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/ects\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/ects_en.htm).

<sup>25</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 36, page 11.

Learning activities are institutionalised when they are organised by an agency or body which is responsible for setting at least the:

- teaching/learning method (predetermined);
- learning schedule;
- admission requirements;
- location in which the learning/teaching will take place.

Informal learning activities are **not institutionalised**.

They are less structured and can take place almost anywhere: within the family, with friends, at work or at facilities made available by education and training providers.

### What if the employer has a learning centre where employees can borrow ‘teach yourself’ materials (in electronic format or hard copy) and use them either there or take them home?

A learning centre is knowledge infrastructure for learning and not an institutionalised learning activity. This means that ‘knowledge’ is institutionalised (as it would be for any type of learning centre made available by the state, the municipality or an association) but not the learning activity – this is self-learning and thus informal.

### Is a teacher who gives private lessons an ‘institution’, so that most private lessons qualify as ‘non-formal education’?

A private tutor should be considered an institution. As far as the learner is concerned, the tutor is an external body that decides and implements the content and teaching methods. Private lessons can even be considered ‘formal education’ if the national education system recognises home-schooling and the programme is recognised as formal by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.

### Training received during military service may include courses. How should these be treated?

Under the CLA, these courses should be classified as non-formal training.

## 1.6.2. Formal versus non-formal education and training

There were several conflicts in the definitions of the concept of formal education and training between the 2006 version of the CLA and other reference documents on education statistics, including the ISCED 2011 and the operational manual for the UOE<sup>26</sup> data collection on enrolments/entrants.

<sup>26</sup> Joint UNESCO-OECD-Eurostat (UOE) administrative data collection on formal education systems.

These conflicts resulted in the following two discrepancies:

- the reference to the national framework of qualifications (NFQ) as defining formal education in the 2006 CLA is absent from the ISCED;
- the reference to minimum duration criteria for programmes to qualify as formal education in the UOE is absent from the 2006 CLA.

This made it difficult to correctly set the boundaries between the two forms of education and training in the 2006 version of the CLA.

In order to further align the CLA with ISCED 2011, **the direct reference to the NFQ is removed from the criteria for classifying a learning activity as formal**, and the **recognition of the programme (as formal) by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities**<sup>27</sup> is added instead (see modified decision-making flow chart in section 1.7).

Accordingly, the criteria for classifying formal education and training are:

- intention to learn;
- organisation;
- institutional framework and location;
- hierarchy level-grade structure ('ladder');
- admission requirements;
- registration requirements;
- teaching/learning methods (predetermined/not flexible);
- duration of at least one semester (minimum of 30 ECTS);
- recognition of the programme by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.

Several of these criteria require further explanation, in particular:

**(d) Hierarchy level-grade structure:** *'The notion of 'levels' of education is represented by an ordered set, grouping education programmes in relation to gradations of learning experiences, as well as the knowledge, skills and competencies which each programme is designed to impart. The ISCED level reflects the degree of complexity and specialisation of the content of an education programme, from foundational to complex.'*<sup>28</sup> According to the ISCED definition, formal education can be seen as a complex ladder of education where recognised completion of one level gives access to another higher level of complexity.

**(e) Admission requirements:** These are defined as *'the requirement or set of requirements, which have to be fulfilled to have access to learning'*. Formal education is typically (and almost always) subject to various admission requirements, mostly based on prior educational attainment, but also age. In non-formal education, admission requirements don't always exist, but non-compulsory prerequisites might be recommended.

**(f) Registration requirements:** These are defined as *'the requirement or set of requirements which have to be fulfilled to record formally the enrolment to learning'*. Formal education is typically subject to registration. There are no registration requirements for non-formal education.<sup>29</sup>

**(h) Duration of at least one semester (minimum of 30 ECTS):** *'Programmes of shorter duration*

<sup>27</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 36, page 11.

<sup>28</sup> ISCED 2011, paragraph 47, page 13.

<sup>29</sup> UNESCO Manual for statistics on non-formal education, page 4.

than one semester, full time equivalent duration as defined nationally<sup>30</sup> should be excluded from formal education and training. The programmes which fulfil all the eight other criteria but are shorter than one semester should be considered as non-formal.

**(i) Recognition of the programme by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities:**

A programme is only formal if the **programme** itself is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities, irrespective of whether it leads to a qualification recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.

On the other hand, **non-formal education** refers to institutionalised learning activities for which the **programme** is **not** recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. It includes structured programmes that are not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities, usually because the provider is not recognised as being part of the country's regular education system<sup>31</sup> (e.g. professional organisations, private commercial companies, non-governmental organisations).

If a non-formal programme leads (either automatically or via a validation procedure) to a qualification that the relevant national education or equivalent authorities recognise as equivalent to a formal qualification, this does not necessarily imply that the programme itself should be considered as formal.

In order to classify a learning activity organised by a foreign educational institution or delivered as 'distance learning' by an institution based outside the reporting country (for a household survey this would be the country of residence of the respondent/individual), it is important to look at the nature of the programme itself. The activity should be considered as formal if the programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. Otherwise the programme is non-formal education.

## What about formal training where the provider is an employer?

If the employer provides the training as part of a programme recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities then the activity is 'formal training'.

If the person takes part in the training after receiving his/her qualification in order to be a recognised professional (e.g. a law graduate practising to become a lawyer or a medicine graduate practising to become a pathologist) then the activity is considered work and not learning.

If the person obtains work experience which s/he can later on decide to have validated as a qualification that is recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities, then the activity is considered as work and not learning. This is because the programme is separate from the recognition process, which may be undertaken on a voluntary basis.

<sup>30</sup> UOE manual (July 2012), page 5 on the 'Coverage of the data collection'.

<sup>31</sup> See ISCED 2011, paragraph 37, page 11: 'Formal education typically takes place in educational institutions that are designed to provide full-time education for students in a system designed as a continuous educational pathway'.

**If a person obtains a qualification recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities by sitting an examination after studying on his/her own, should this self-study be considered as formal education?**

A programme is only formal if the programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. This implies that the programme is meant to be followed through an institution (i.e. it should be institutionalised).

Self-study on the other hand is by definition not institutionalised. Even if a person studying on their own is allowed to register for a final examination so that they can obtain a qualification recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities the learning activity is still considered as informal as it is separate from the examination, and the examination is not compulsory.

**Watching a ‘language course’ programme on TV is informal learning. What if (case A) it is possible to register beforehand and to interact with the teacher while following the course on TV, and at the end to sit an examination which leads to a qualification recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities?**

**Or what if (case B) the person attending the programme can at its end sit an examination to get a degree corresponding to the knowledge acquired through the programme?**

In case A, the TV is used as any other means of distance learning (internet, correspondence, etc.). If the programme on TV is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities, then the activity should be considered as formal. Otherwise, it is non-formal.

In case B, the learning activity is not institutionalised and therefore it should be considered as informal.



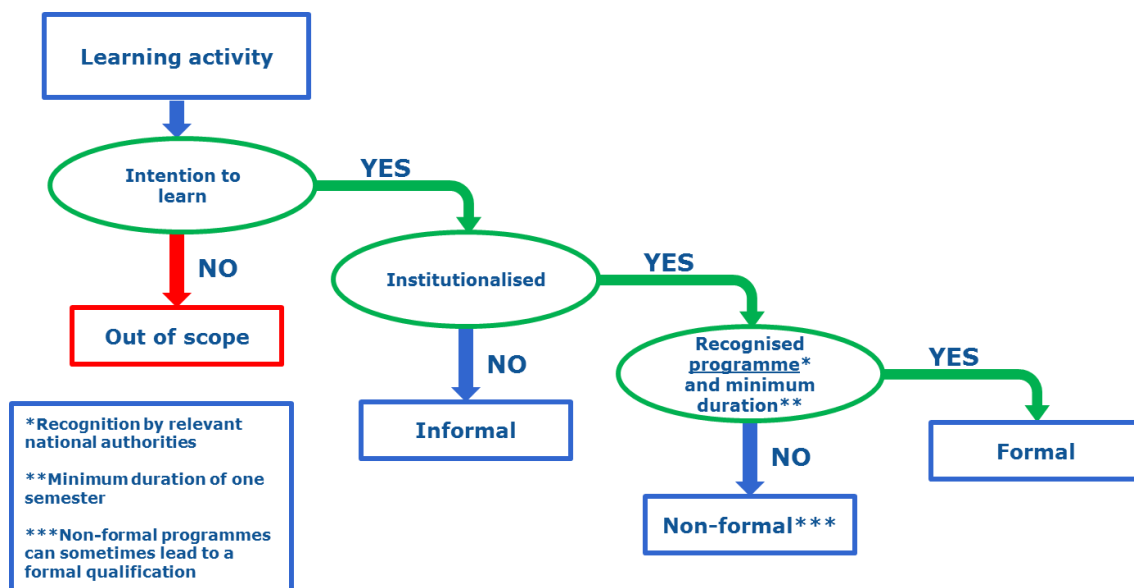
If somebody participates in a course (which can be a distance learning course) that gives them credits which they can use for example to complete a modular programme and obtain a qualification recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities, are they participating in formal education?

Participating in and completing a module which is part of a programme recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities is indeed formal education, unless the programme's duration is shorter than one semester.

## 1.7. Summary decision-making flow chart

The process of classifying learning activities based on broad categories is summarised in the decision-making flowchart below.

Figure 5: Classification of learning activities based on the three broad categories



## Note 1: link between the CLA and the national framework of qualifications

The national framework of qualifications (NFQ) is defined as ‘the single, nationally and internationally accepted entity, through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way and which define the relationship between all education and training awards’. The NFQ could take the form of a regulatory document which stipulates the qualifications and their relative positions in a hierarchy of learning achievements as well as the bodies that provide or deliver these qualifications (awarding bodies).

The NFQ covers both education and training and is independent of the pathway leading to the award of the qualifications included in it. The national awarding bodies typically include public bodies with the authority to define and/or recognise the value of a qualification, which positions it in the NFQ. They are not limited to ministries of education, although ministries are expected to play a major role.

In the 2006 version of the CLA, the concept of NFQ was used as a way of indicating whether an activity qualified as formal. An institutionalised learning activity (i.e. education in the broader sense) was considered formal if its completion led to a learning achievement (a qualification or award) that could be positioned within a national framework of qualifications (NFQ).

## Note 2: link between the CLA and the European qualifications framework

The European qualifications framework (EQF) is a tool that supports the communication of and comparison between qualifications systems in Europe. Its eight common European reference levels are described in terms of learning outcomes: knowledge, skills and competences. This makes it possible for national qualifications systems and qualifications to correspond to EQF levels. Learners, graduates, education providers and employers can use these levels to understand and compare qualifications awarded in different countries and by different education and training systems. The EQF was formally adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in April 2008.

The EQF aims to facilitate the mobility of students and workers within the EU in order to encourage the development of a mobile and flexible European workforce and to support lifelong learning. It enables learners, learning providers and employers to compare qualifications between different national systems. This helps increase mobility in the labour market within and between countries because it makes it easy to determine a person’s level of qualification and mobility improves the balance between demand and supply of knowledge and skills.

Although the EQF can be a useful tool for describing learning programmes, its scope is mostly labour-market oriented and it is therefore not considered to be completely relevant for collecting statistical data on participation in education and training. To avoid adding extra complexity, there is deliberately no link established between the CLA and the EQF.

# 2

## Classification of learning activities (CLA)

### 2.1. Content and structure of the CLA

The CLA is a taxonomic coding system for learning activities. Learning activities can encompass one or more single learning activities (SLAs).

### 2.2. Primary statistical unit used in the CLA

Each learning activity can be classified as only one of the three broad categories of learning (formal education, non-formal education or informal learning). This is done based on the operational criteria explained in previous sections of this manual.

#### \* **Formal education**

The primary statistical unit for formal education is the educational **programme** as defined by ISCED. The **central or main** SLA of formal education is 'taught learning' (face-to-face or distance).

#### \* **Non-formal education**

The primary statistical unit for non-formal education are institutionalised learning arrangements for learning one or more subjects. These arrangements can take the form of courses, non-formal education programmes or any arrangements where the **central or main** SLA is institutionalised and taught (face-to-face or distance).

#### \* **Informal learning**

The primary statistical unit for informal learning is the **method used for one subject**.

## What happens if the activity reported is in fact several different activities?

Although the CLA is built around the basic building block of the 'single learning activity' which is characterised by unity of method and subject, the level of detail at which information will be collected and analysed depends on the purpose of the survey that is going to use the CLA.

For this purpose, we can say that there is an implicit hierarchy of categories. 'Formal' is higher than 'non-formal' which is higher than 'informal'. Activities of a lower level carried out as part of an activity of a higher level can be considered part of the higher level activity: for example using self-study, additional tutoring or internet resources as part of homework for a formal education programme can be considered as part of the formal activity if we are not interested in the details of the methods used by the student to take part in the formal activity.

On the other hand, if an activity at a higher level is organised in the framework of a longer activity of a lower level then it should be considered as a separate activity.

# 3

## Broad categories, classes and sub-classes

### 3.1. Summary table

The proposed categories, classes and sub-classes for the classification of learning activities are summarised in the following table. Explanatory notes are presented in section 3.2.

| <b>Codes</b> | <b>Broad categories / classes / sub-classes</b>                         |
|--------------|---|
| <b>1.</b>    | <b>Formal education</b>   |
| <b>2.</b>    | <b>Non-formal education</b>   |
| 2.1.         | Non-formal programmes   |
| 2.2.         | Courses   |
| 2.2.1.       | <i>Courses conducted via classroom instruction (including lectures)</i> |
| 2.2.2.       | <i>Combined theoretical-practical courses (including workshops)</i>     |
| 2.2.3.       | <i>Courses conducted through open and distance education</i>            |
| 2.2.4.       | <i>Private tuition (private lessons)</i>                                |
| 2.3.         | Guided-on-the-job training  |
| 2.4.         | Other not specified elsewhere   |
| <b>3.</b>    | <b>Informal learning</b>  |
| 3.1.         | Taught learning   |
| 3.1.1.       | <i>Coaching / informal tuition</i>                                      |
| 3.1.2.       | <i>Guided visits</i>  |
| 3.2.         | Non-taught learning   |
| 3.2.1.       | <i>Self-learning</i>  |
| 3.2.2.       | <i>Learning-group</i>   |
| 3.2.3.       | <i>Practice</i>   |
| 3.2.4.       | <i>Non-guided visits</i>  |

## 3.2. Explanatory notes to the CLA

### 1. Formal education

Formal education refers to institutionalised learning activities, which are made up of structured hierarchical programmes with the following specificities: chronological succession of levels and grades, admission requirements, formal registration and recognition by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.

The explanatory notes for the detailed classes of formal education are the same as those for the ISCED 2011 levels of education. Readers should therefore refer to the ISCED 2011 publication for any further information on the content of this broad category, its classes and sub-classes.

### 2. Non-formal education

Non-formal education refers to institutionalised learning activities which are made up of structured hierarchical programmes not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.

#### 2.1. Non-formal programmes

If the content of a programme looks similar/equivalent to that of a formal education programme, the ISCED 2011 criteria should be used to decide whether the learning activity should be considered as formal or non-formal: the programme is non-formal if it is not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.

#### 2.2. Courses

Courses are typically subject-oriented. They are taught by one or more people specialised in a specific field or fields. They may take place in one or more settings/environments, as listed below.

##### 2.2.1. *Courses conducted via classroom instruction (including lectures)*

This subcategory includes learning organised for a group of people in a classroom. It is built around a teacher/tutor/instructor passing on knowledge with the intention of providing instructions and educating. It may or may not include discussion on a given subject.

Includes:

Job-related courses undertaken either during or outside of working hours, either in the workplace or at an external location, either paid or unpaid by the employer. These sessions have the character of a course, and are conducted through classroom instruction. They may be provided during conferences or congresses. They may have names like 'tutorial', 'seminar' or even 'workshop' and are included if there is an educational objective, which distinguishes them from information sessions. They don't involve practical training. If they did, they would be classified under 2.2.2.

##### 2.2.2. *Combined theoretical-practical courses (including workshops)*

This subcategory covers all courses that combine classroom instruction (theoretical) with practice in real or simulated situations. It includes vocational apprenticeships, except those covered by formal education (e.g. 'dual system' programmes or 'alternance' which combine formal schooling and work-/company-based training). Combined theoretical-practical courses also include learning activities that combine some classroom instruction with guided-on-the-job training and practice.

Includes:

Sessions that combine theoretical instruction with hands-on training, given during conferences or congresses, with names such as 'workshop', 'seminar', 'tutorial', or other.

##### 2.2.3. *Courses conducted through open and distance education*

This subcategory covers courses which are similar to face-to-face courses, i.e. they may have elements such as a curriculum, registration, tutoring and even tests, but take place via postal correspondence or electronic media, linking the instructor/teacher/tutor with students who are not in the same place.

This type of course involves interaction between the instructor and the student, albeit delayed rather than simultaneous.

#### 2.2.4. *Private tuition (private lessons)*

This is a 'planned series of (supplementary) learning experiences offered by experts or others who act as experts, selected to deepen knowledge or skills, to learn more intensively, usually undertaken by only one or very few learners'. Typically, the tutor (a physical person) is also the education 'provider' with education as their 'core activity'.

### What is the difference between a private lesson that is institutionalised (category 2.2.4) and a private lesson that is not institutionalised (category 3.1.1)?

The difference lies in the role of the provider/tutor and their relation to the learner. If the provider/tutor delivers private lessons as their main activity and offers a professional teacher-to-student relationship in this context, then the activity falls under 2.2.4. If the provider/tutor is helping the learner in the framework of a social relationship, then the activity falls under 3.1.1.

#### 2.3. Guided-on-the-job training

This type of training is characterised by planned periods of training, instruction or practical experience, using normal tools of work, either at the immediate place of work or in a work-situation,<sup>32</sup> with the presence of a tutor.<sup>33</sup> It is usually organised by the employer to make it easier for (new) staff, including transferred, re-hired and seasonal/temporary staff, to adapt to their (new) jobs. It may include general training about the company (organisation, operating procedures, etc.) as well as specific job-related instructions (safety and health hazards, working practices).

In general, the following characteristics will help determine whether the learning activity is guided-on-the-job training, or not. Guided-on-the-job training:

- is work-based (takes place at the workplace);
- consists of planned periods of training;
- takes place with the presence of a tutor or instructor;
- is organised (or initiated) by the employer;
- is an individual-based and practical activity.

Excludes:

- all **apprenticeships** under formal education and combined theoretical-practical courses under non-formal education (see sub-class 2.2.2);
- job-related **courses** undertaken during or outside of working hours, either in or outside the workplace, either paid or unpaid by the employer (see class 2.2).

<sup>32</sup> This corresponds to the 'planned periods of training, instruction or practical experience' category.

<sup>33</sup> The tutor/instructor might not be physically present, e.g. they can give their instructions remotely (e.g. by phone or through a web-based device).

#### 2.4. Other not specified elsewhere

This sub-category includes non-formal education activities which cannot be classified as one of the other broad categories. These may be activities very specific to a country or activities that are new on the market.

### 3. Informal learning

Informal learning activities are not institutionalised. They include a less structured set of single learning activities. They can take place almost anywhere: within the family, with friends, at work, etc.

#### 3.1. Taught learning

##### 3.1.1. *Coaching / informal tuition*

This includes a very wide range of learning experiences that are:

- organised but not institutionalised;
- offered by experts or others who act as experts;
- selected to deepen knowledge or skills or learn more intensively;
- undertaken by one or very few learners.

It also includes activities designed to assist and support individuals in other processes of learning.

This means all taught learning, both face-to-face and distance. Coaching and informal tuition may involve monetary compensation.

Includes:

- face-to-face instruction from a colleague on how to use a new tool at work;
- lessons provided by members of the household or other individuals, such as relatives, acquaintances or neighbours;
- tuition/lessons given by a relative, acquaintance or neighbour who is also an expert on or teacher of the subject concerned.

##### 3.1.2. *Guided visits*

This includes a very wide range of organised events designed to pass on information within a predetermined limited period of time in a specific location. The location is the principal element of presenting the subject matter that the learner intends to learn about, and the key way in which the provider passes on information. The key criterion for deciding whether such an activity is a learning activity or not is whether there is a pre-determined learning objective prior to the visit. This intention to learn may also be reflected in the choice of type of guide (tourist guide or educational support/scientific personnel of the site visited).

Includes:

- visiting cultural heritage sites (e.g. museums, exhibitions, historical and sacred sites and buildings);
- visiting scientific and natural sites (e.g. space centres, nature parks, botanical and zoological gardens);
- visiting private and public businesses or organisations (e.g. a farm, a nuclear power plant, the EU institutions, trade fairs and exhibitions).

#### 3.2. Non-taught learning

##### 3.2.1. *Self-learning*

Self-learning (self-study) is carried out by an individual on their own. It involves the use of one or more of the learning media presented in the classification of learning media, which may be combined with certain learning tools (see examples in Annex I). Self-learning can take place in private (e.g. at



home or in the car), in public (e.g. on a train, aeroplane, at cafe), and in job-related settings/environments.

Includes:

- studying a subject using printed material (books, etc.);
- listening to a foreign language CD or MP3s in the car;
- watching a documentary on TV;
- systematically observing animals in the countryside;
- using teaching material from the internet;
- practising or doing homework.

#### 3.2.2. *Learning-group*

This includes participation in all kinds of informal groups (with like-minded people, friends, colleagues, students, etc.), where there is no instruction. It can take place in private (e.g. at home), in public (e.g. in a community hall or hotel), and in job-related settings/environments.

The learners may communicate face-to-face or remotely. Distance group discussion channels include postal correspondence and electronic means e.g. internet chats, email or video conferencing.

This category includes 'learning circles' which are defined as '*groups of employees who come together on a regular basis with the primary aim to learn about the requirements of the work organisation, work-procedures and workplace (it is a form of individual learning within groups)*' and 'quality circles' which are defined as '*working groups with the aim to discuss about problems and search for problem-solving in the production and on the workplace where participants have to be integrated in the planning and controlling procedures of the enterprise (a moderator coordinates quality circles)*'.

#### 3.2.3. *Practice*

Practice typically involves the implementation or repetition of knowledge, methods, rules or instructions related to a subject, with the intention of improving personal performance in a specific area. It can be done in any setting/environment conducive to practising the subject matter. This can be in private (e.g. at home), in public (e.g. in the street), and in job-related settings/environments. It includes doing homework for formal or non-formal programmes.

#### 3.2.4. *Non-guided visits*

This includes any visit undertaken with the predetermined purpose to learn, without the intervention of a guide. Tools like printed visitors' guides, brochures or pre-recorded audio guides may be used for this type of learning.

# 4

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[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/III/III\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/III/III_en.html)

<http://forum.europa.eu.mt/Public/irc/dsis/edtcslibrary7Wpublic>

[www.cedefop.europa.eu](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu)

[www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)

[www.uis.unesco.org](http://www.uis.unesco.org)

[www.ilo.org/stat](http://www.ilo.org/stat)

[www.un.org/Depts/unsd/](http://www.un.org/Depts/unsd/)

[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

## Annex 1 – Cases description

| No | Case description  | Classified as |
|----|---|---------------|
| 1  | Peter, aged 17, is learning French cuisine in an education college. The programme lasts 3 years, and theoretical matters are taught in the classroom, complemented with practice. To be admitted to this programme, he had to have completed secondary school. Every year he must sit for an examination that gives access to the next year. The programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. At the end, the organisation gives a qualification in French cuisine with the title of "French cuisine Chef".                                  | FED           |
| 2  | Peter, aged 30, is learning French cuisine in a large company. The programme lasts 3 years, and theoretical matters are taught in the classroom, complemented with practice. To be admitted to this programme, he had to have completed secondary school. Every year he must sit for an examination that gives access to the next year. The programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. At the end, the organisation gives a qualification in French cuisine with the title of "French cuisine Chef".                                       | FED           |
| 3  | Peter, aged 30, is learning French cuisine in an unofficial religious organisation e.g. the Moonies. The programme lasts 3 years, and theoretical matters are taught in the classroom, complemented with practice. To be admitted to this programme, he had to have completed secondary school. Every year he must sit for an examination that gives access to the next year. The programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. At the end, the organisation gives a qualification in French cuisine with the title of "French cuisine Chef". | FED           |
| 4  | Peter is learning French cuisine in an education college. The programme lasts 3 years, and theoretical matters are taught in the classroom, complemented with practice. To be admitted to this programme, he had to have completed secondary school. Every year he must sit for an examination that gives access to the next year. The programme is not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. However, at the end, the organisation gives a qualification recognised by the labour market.   | NFE           |
| 5  | Peter is learning French cuisine in a large company. The programme lasts 3 years, and theoretical matters are taught in the classroom, complemented with practice. To be admitted to this programme, he had to have completed secondary school. Every year he must sit for an examination that gives access to the next year. The qualification is not recognised by the labour market and the programme is not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.  | NFE           |

| No   | Case description  | Classified as |
|------|---|---------------|
| 6    | Peter is learning French cuisine with an unofficial association that organises 1 weekend workshop with theoretical matters taught in a classroom, complemented with practice. Everybody can register to attend the workshop. After the completion of the workshop the organisation gives a certificate proving the participation and completion of the workshop. The programme is not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.  | NFE           |
| 7    | Peter is learning French cuisine in a large company that organises 1 weekend workshop with theoretical matters taught in a classroom, complemented with practice. Everybody can register to attend the workshop. After the completion of the workshop the company gives a certificate proving the participation and completion of the workshop. The programme is not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.   | NFE           |
| 7bis | Peter is learning French cuisine in a large company that organises a series of workshops with theoretical matters taught in a classroom, complemented with practice. To be admitted to this series of workshops, he had to have completed lower secondary school. After the completion of the workshops the company gives a certificate proving the participation and completion of the programme. The attendance of the workshop lasts for one semester and the programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.  | FED           |
| 8    | Peter is learning French cuisine with a group of friends. One of them is a "Chef of French Cuisine" and, as such, gives them guidance on theoretical and practice matters. The group will get together once a week, during 2 months. Each one bought some books and/or some video material to keep after the end of the learning.   | INF           |
| 9    | Peter is learning French cuisine with a group of friends who have called themselves the French Cuisine Association, and award themselves certificates. One of them is a "Chef of French Cuisine" and, as such, gives them guidance on theoretical and practice matters. The group will get together once a week, during 2 months. Each one bought some books and/or some video material to keep after the end of the learning.  | INF           |
| 10   | Peter is learning French cuisine with a group of friends who have called themselves the French Cuisine Association, and award themselves certificates. One of them is a "Chef of French Cuisine" and, as such, gives them guidance on theoretical and practice matters. The group will get together once a week, during 2 months. Each one bought some books and/or some video material to keep after the end of the learning. At the end of 2 months they take an examination for a qualification recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. | INF           |

| No | Case description  | Classified as |
|----|---|---------------|
| 11 | Peter (qualified at ISCED 2) working in a commercial bank as an employee decides to improve his skills on pottery. He chooses to take an evening course, during 1 year with a cultural organisation named "Youth and cultural training". He attends 2 hours classes, twice a week for practising and developing his creativity. At the end of the year he will be able to participate in specific exhibitions although the course does not give any qualification recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.                                    | NFE           |
| 12 | Peter (qualified at ISCED 3) working in a commercial bank as an employee decides to improve his skills on pottery. He chooses to take an evening course during 1 year with a cultural organisation named "Youth and cultural training". He attends 2 hours classes, twice a week for practising and developing his creativity. The evening course constitutes a programme that is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities and its duration is considered as one semester. At the end of the year he receives an ISCED 2 qualification, and becomes a professional potter.             | FED           |
| 13 | Peter (qualified at ISCED 3) working in a commercial bank as an employee decides to improve his skills on pottery. He chooses to take an evening course, during 1 year with a cultural organisation named "Youth and cultural Training". He attends 2 hours classes, twice a week for practising and developing his creativity. The evening course constitutes a programme that is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities and its duration is considered as one semester. At the end of the year he receives an ISCED 2 qualification. He continues his work in the commercial bank. | FED           |
| 14 | Peter (qualified at ISCED 3) working in a commercial bank as an employee decides to improve his skills on pottery. He chooses to take an evening course, during 1 year with a cultural organisation named "Youth and cultural Training". He attends 2 hours classes, twice a week for practising and developing his creativity. The programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities and its duration is considered as one semester. At the end he receives an ISCED 4 qualification.   | FED           |
| 15 | Peter retired for 5 years has a science and technology hobby. He decides to improve his knowledge in the field of "Climate Changes". He follows a distance learning course in the Internet that organises 4 training meetings a year of the group. This course lasts for 2 years and gives a qualification recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. He does not return to work.   | NFE           |
| 16 | Peter works as a technician in a biology laboratory, decides to train to become a financial consultant. He finds 1 distance learning course run by an "Open University" lasting for 2 years. The course is organised in modules. These are part of a programme that is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities and valued according to a system of credits that the individual is able to transfer to another university to complete a diploma of financial engineering and do a Ph.D. in the same field.   | FED           |

| No | Case description  | Classified as |
|----|---|---------------|
| 17 | Peter (qualified at ISCED 4) works as a technician in a biology laboratory, decides to train to become a financial consultant. He finds 1 distance learning course run by the "Open University" lasting for 2 years. The course is organised in modules. These are part of a programme that is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities and valued according to a system of credits that the individual is able to transfer to another university to complete a diploma of financial engineering and do a Ph.D. in the same field. | FED           |
| 18 | Peter (with no qualifications) works in a factory of textiles as a worker. He decides to learn about English civilisation during the leisure time. He buys some software to develop his English language skills and choses a number of exhibitions and conferences about the theme. He identified a number of websites from where he downloads information that he studies 2 hours every evening.   | INF           |
| 19 | Peter (with no qualifications) works in a factory of textiles as a worker. He decides to learn about English civilisation during the leisure time. He buys some software to develop his English language skills and choses a number of exhibitions and conferences about the theme. He identified a number of websites from where he downloads information that he studies 2 hours every evening. He takes an exam and gains an ISCED 2 qualification.  | INF           |
| 20 | Peter (qualified at ISCED 3) works in a factory of textiles as a worker. He decides to learn about English civilisation during the leisure time. He buys some software to develop his English language skills and choses a number of exhibitions and conferences about the theme. He identified a number of websites from where he downloads information that he studies 2 hours every evening. He takes an exam and gains an ISCED 2 qualification.  | INF           |
| 21 | Peter, a non-skier, receives paid instruction from a registered ski-instructor who works for "Ski like a Penguin company". At the end he receives a recognised basic ski certificate (qualification not recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities).   | NFE           |
| 22 | Peter, a non-skier, receives paid instruction from a registered ski-instructor who works for "Ski like a Penguin company". At the end he doesn't receive any certificate.   | NFE           |
| 23 | Peter, a non-skier, receives paid instruction from an instructor who is working privately and declares earnings. At the end he doesn't receive any certificate.   | NFE           |
| 24 | Peter, a non-skier, receives paid instruction from a private instructor. But the instructor puts the money in a back pocket and doesn't declare it. At the end he doesn't receive any certificate.  | NFE           |



| No | Case description   | Classified as |
|----|--|---------------|
| 25 | Peter, a non-skier, receives unpaid instruction from a friend. At the end he can participate in examinations to receive a recognised basic ski certificate (qualification not recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities).  | INF           |
| 26 | Peter, a non-skier, pays to learn to ski from someone who is not registered as a ski instructor but is qualified as an instructor.   | NFE           |
| 27 | Peter, a non-skier, pays to learn to ski from someone who is not registered as a ski instructor but is a qualified skier.  | NFE           |
| 28 | Peter, a non-skier, is teaching himself to ski. At the end he participates in exams and receives a recognised basic ski certificate (qualification not recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities).                         | INF           |
| 29 | Peter works in a cake factory, and is moving to a new machine. His supervisor gives him 5 minutes/ 1 hour /4 hours/ 1 day training on how to use the new machine.  | NFE           |
| 30 | Peter reads a trade journal "Rat catching today" to keep up with developments in his profession daily/weekly/monthly/annually at home/at work.   | INF           |
| 31 | Peter, a hairdresser, attends a seminar on hairdressing at a university/professional organisation which lasts 1 hour/1 day to keep up with new developments in scissors technology.  | NFE           |
| 32 | Peter, a hairdresser, attends a seminar on hairdressing at a university/professional organisation which lasts 1 hour/1 day to keep up with new developments in scissors technology but gets drunk on the train, and sleeps through the seminar.  | NFE           |
| 33 | Peter, a hairdresser, attends a seminar on hairdressing at a university/professional organisation which lasts 1 hour/1 day to keep up with new developments in scissors technology but Peter is not very interested and is only attending because his boss could not go.                         | NFE           |
| 34 | Peter, a hairdresser, attends a seminar on hairdressing at a university/professional organisation which lasts 1 hour/1 day to keep up with new developments in scissors technology but found that he already knew everything about scissors and did not learn anything new from the seminar.     | NFE           |
| 35 | Peter teaches himself to juggle over a 1 month/1 year period.  | INF           |
| 36 | Peter teaches himself to juggle over a 1 month/1 year period and receives a certificate from the national juggling foundation.   | INF           |
| 37 | Peter teaches himself Russian using text books. He is then registered for an examination at a college, and receives a qualification recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities the level of which is equivalent to ISCED 2. | INF           |

| No | Case description   | Classified as |
|----|--|---------------|
| 38 | Peter wants to learn to type. He attends a course at work.   | NFE           |
| 39 | Peter wants to learn to type. He is given "typing tutor" software to use at work by his employer.  | INF           |
| 40 | Peter wants to learn to type. He uses "typing tutor" software at work, but doesn't tell his employer.  | INF           |
| 41 | Peter wants to learn to type. Peter's employer asks Klaus, a colleague hired as a qualified typing instructor to provide training to staff, to teach Peter.  | NFE           |
| 42 | Peter wants to learn to type. Peter's employer asks Klaus, an external qualified typing instructor hired for this purpose, to teach Peter.   | NFE           |
| 43 | Peter wants to learn to type. Peter asks Klaus, a colleague and a qualified typing instructor (without telling his employer) to give him private lessons at work which he pays for.  | NFE           |
| 44 | Peter wants to learn to type. Peter asks Klaus, a colleague and a qualified typing instructor (without telling his employer) to give him private lessons at work which he does not pay for.  | NFE           |
| 45 | Peter decides to learn Spanish at work during lunchtime breaks. He does this in his employer's training centre using "teach-yourself" material which was purchased by his employer.  | INF           |
| 46 | Peter decides to learn Spanish. He takes home from work (with permission) the "teach-yourself" material which was purchased by his employer and uses it to learn Spanish in the evening.   | INF           |
| 47 | Peter decides to learn Spanish at lunchtime, using "Manuel's guide to Spanish" on the Internet. Manuel built the language course as a hobby, and not for commercial gain.  | INF           |
| 48 | Peter is a diplomat and the foreign office has told him to teach himself Spanish before he becomes an ambassador in Peru. He does this from text books during work-time.   | INF           |
| 49 | In order to learn Spanish Peter is enrolled for a correspondence course lasting for one semester. Every week he receives the package with the lessons through textbooks and CDs. Every 2 weeks he is obliged to send back the exercises for a correction by a teacher. When the semester is over, he receives a certificate (not recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities) of finishing the particular level of the course. | NFE           |
| 50 | Peter is learning Spanish following a "TV language course".  | INF           |
| 51 | Peter attends a seminar of 2 days on IT technologies. 10 personalities gave lectures on the future of IT in the insurance business. No certificate was delivered after the seminar.  | NFE           |
| 52 | Peter attends a seminar of 2 days on IT technologies. 10 personalities gave lectures on the future of IT in the insurance business. An attendance certificate was delivered proving attendance of the seminar.   | NFE           |

| No | Case description  | Classified as     |
|----|---|-------------------|
| 53 | Peter attends a seminar of 2 days on IT technologies. 5 workshops are organised on the future of IT in the insurance business. All participants are registered and have received before the workshop the material for the workshop they attend. At the end of the workshop participants who want certification of the knowledge acquired, receive a test and are given one hour to complete it. Those successful receive a certificate of successful completion of the subject of the workshop. The rest of the participants just receive attendance certificates. Pascal decides to participate in the test and receives the successful completion certificate but the qualification is not recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. | NFE               |
| 54 | Peter is visiting the history museum without taking any guide.  | NLA               |
| 55 | Peter is visiting the history museum and is following the guided-tour given by the museum guide into small groups of people.  | INF               |
| 56 | Peter is visiting the history museum and rents the pre-recorded audio guide.  | INF               |
| 57 | Peter is visiting the zoo to teach his children about reptiles. He is using the teaching material provided by the zoo.  | NLA<br>(teaching) |
| 58 | Peter is visiting the zoo to learn more about reptiles. He had visited the zoo before to get the "Zoo guide" and has studied at home the reptiles and has noted down the characteristics for which he would need to observe closely the reptiles in the zoo.  | INF               |
| 59 | Peter is visiting the zoo on a weekend for fun.   | NLA               |
| 60 | Peter is playing a football match with other people.  | NLA               |
| 61 | Peter is following a course on golf rules. The course also has some practice in order to learn the rules.   | NFE               |
| 62 | Peter has just started playing golf with a trainer, who is giving him elementary knowledge about the rules and practices of the game.   | NFE               |
| 63 | Peter plays golf with a trainer, in order to improve his performance.   | NLA               |
| 64 | Peter attends classes in a Buddhist temple to learn about Buddhism.   | NFE               |
| 65 | Peter is Muslim and is going to a mosque.   | NLA               |
| 66 | Peter is Christian and is visiting a mosque.  | NLA               |
| 67 | Peter is an atheist and is visiting a mosque as his hobby is comparing religious practices.   | INF               |
| 68 | Peter is practising meditation.   | NLA               |
| 69 | Peter is participating in a self-organised learning group of friends to improve computer skills in Excel. The group has also engaged for some time a professional tutor for more complicated subjects like Visual Basic programming.  | INF               |
| 70 | Peter belongs to a network of researchers working on numismatics of central Europe in the 1st century. The network does not have any legal status. The network members meet once a year in a "conference" organised by them in order to exchange knowledge and best practice in their specific domain. Peter participates in this conference.   | INF               |

| No | Case description   | Classified as |
|----|--|---------------|
| 71 | Peter is participating in a State-run "adult literacy programme" as he did not have the opportunity to learn to write and read while he was young. The programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities and is lasting for one semester. It gives a qualification at ISCED level 1.  | FED           |
| 72 | Peter is participating in a programme organised by the association "Fight illiteracy" aimed at giving adults the basic literacy and numeracy skills for their everyday life. No certificate is delivered at the end of the programme.  | NFE           |
| 73 | Peter is participating in training as part of his compulsory military service.   | NFE           |
| 74 | Peter has successfully completed the classroom instruction (theoretical training) for his driving licence. He is now taking driving lessons from a cousin with the aim to pass the hand-on driving test of the Ministry of Transport.  | INF           |
| 75 | Peter is currently studying to become a car engineer in a vocational training school (ISCED 4 programme). During his studies he has been searching on the internet for more information on his subject and he is now attending a conference on "evolution of transmission systems".  | FED           |
| 76 | Peter is a book publisher and is visiting the "Annual international book exhibition" in his city.  | NLA           |
| 77 | Peter is a book publisher and is attending the "31st International conference on typography techniques" organised as part of the "Annual international book exhibition" in his city. During this conference he is taking part in the workshop on creating the 3D maps.   | NFE           |
| 78 | Peter is doing his homework for the upper secondary programme recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities and lasting for one semester in which he is participating.   | FED           |
| 79 | Peter is participating in a training organised by Microsoft to receive a certificate in software engineering.  | NFE           |
| 80 | Peter has worked as a manager of cultural events for 10 years. He now has the opportunity to register in a national examination through which successful candidates receive a certificate which makes it possible for them to continue with advanced studies in management of cultural events at post-secondary level.   | NLA           |
| 81 | Peter has worked as a manager of cultural events for 10 years. He now has the opportunity to register in a national examination through which successful candidates receive a certificate which he is recognised by his national professional association but does not allow him to continue with more advanced studies (i.e. the qualification is not recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities). | NLA           |

| No    | Case description  | Classified as |
|-------|---|---------------|
| 82    | Peter is participating during his leisure time in a course on "Multivariate analysis" at the University for 5 weeks specifically designed for employed people. Upon successful completion of the course he receives credits, which in a later stage can be added to credits forming part of a degree in "Statistics".   | NFE           |
| 82bis | Peter is participating during his leisure time in a course on "Multivariate analysis" at the University for one semester specifically designed for employed people. Upon successful completion of the course he receives credits (at least 30), which in a later stage can be added to credits forming part of a degree in "Statistics".  | FED           |
| 83    | Peter is participating in a course on "Multivariate analysis" at the University for one semester. He does this during his working time (paid training leave) as his employer has offered him this possibility. Upon successful completion of the course he receives credits (at least 30), which in a later stage can be added to credits forming part of a degree in "Statistics".   | FED           |
| 84    | Peter is participating in courses in psychology provided by a municipal adult education institution during one semester. The programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. Upon successful completion of the courses he receives an upper secondary qualification in psychology.  | FED           |
| 85    | Peter was enrolled in a programme for medicine in a foreign university established physically in his country. The programme is not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities but the degree is recognised as equivalent to university education in his country (i.e. recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities).  | NFE           |
| 86    | Peter is enrolled in a programme for medicine in a foreign university established physically in his country of residence. The programme is not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities. The degree received is in principle recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities but Peter has to go through an equivalence examination specific for his country on the basis of bilateral (or multilateral) agreements between his country of residence and the country of origin of the university in order to be able to use it for further education or working as a doctor in his country of residence. | NFE           |
| 87    | Peter participates in a distance tertiary education programme on law offered by an institution outside his country. The programme is recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities in his country and is lasting for one semester.  | FED           |

| No    | Case description  | Classified as |
|-------|---|---------------|
| 88    | Peter participates in distance tertiary education programme on law offered by an institution outside his country of residence. The programme is not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities in his country. The degree received is in principle recognised as equivalent to a formal qualification by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities but Peter has to go through an equivalence examination specific for his country on the basis of bilateral (or multilateral) agreements between his country of residence and the country of origin of the university in order to be able to use it for further education or working as a lawyer in his country of residence. | NFE           |
| 89    | Peter is participating in specific 'labour market education' which has as main purpose to educate people in occupations lacking in the labour market. The certificate received is at the same level as upper secondary education but the programme is not recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities.  | NFE           |
| 90    | Peter has participated in a programme recognised by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities lasting for one semester and leading to a flight certificate recognised at the national level.  | FED           |
| 91    | Peter registered to a free e-learning course on 'security on the internet' provided by the training platform of the company he is working for. This course is designed by qualified teachers to take place online only, allowing for a follow-up on the progress through the contents and including several tests to check the learners' performances. It can be completed within 3 weeks and lasts for 20 hours. Upon successful completion, the company gives Peter a qualification recognised within the company only. The course includes a forum with a teacher/student interaction on which students can ask questions to qualified instructors.  | NFE           |
| 91bis | Peter registered to a free e-learning course on 'security on the internet' provided by the training platform of the company he is working for. This course is designed by qualified teachers to take place online only, allowing for a follow-up on the progress through the contents and including several tests to check the learners' performances. It can be completed within 3 weeks and lasts for 20 hours. Upon successful completion, the company gives Peter a qualification recognised within the company only. The course does not include a teacher/student interaction.  | INF           |
| 92    | Peter is preparing the yearly exam to access the body of secondary education teachers for university graduates. He is helped by a qualified tutor who guides him through the learning and helps him retrieving information from different sources so that he can also learn by himself.   | NFE           |
| 92bis | Peter is preparing the yearly exam to access the body of secondary education teachers for university graduates. He retrieves information from different sources so that he can learn everything by himself before taking the exam.  | INF           |
| 93    | Peter goes to a yoga class for 10 weeks, twice a week, organised by the city hall. This is part of the training activities provided to citizens for their well-being and follows a structured and established programme based on three different levels. The main intention for participants is to get to know the basis of the practice of yoga.   | NFE           |
| 94    | Tom has regularly been going to a yoga class twice a week for 2 years. The course is organized by the city hall. The main intention of the course is just   | NLA           |

| No | Case description  | Classified as |
|----|---|---------------|
|    | practice for confirmed people to keep healthy but with no intention to improve personal performance.  |               |
| 95 | Peter and Manuel are meeting on a weekly basis to do a language exchange in a bar after their workday. They first met through a network on the internet. Peter speaks English to Manuel and Manuel speaks Spanish to Peter. Each one explains to the other the difficulties and subtleties of their own language as they speak. | INF           |
| 96 | Peter is being helped by his sister to get to know how to use the new computer that he just bought. He particularly did not know how to use the new text software for the previous version he used to have is now obsolete compared to all the new features available.  | INF           |

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# Classification of learning activities

## MANUAL

This paper presents an update of the classification of learning activities (CLA). The first version of the classification was released in 2006.

The CLA covers all types of learning opportunities and education/learning pathways. It is intended to be applicable in all countries irrespective of the nature of their systems of education and training. Its aim is to harmonise statistics related to learning activities across countries.

In that extent CLA is to be applied to social statistics when it comes to collect qualitative information on different aspects of participation in education and training. The CLA has been initially designed to enhance the collection of the European Union adult education survey (AES) data. However, other EU household surveys (e.g. Labour force survey, Statistics on income and living conditions, etc.) as well as specific business surveys (e.g. Continuing vocational training survey) may resort to the CLA if it is deemed adequate for their needs.

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