



5P Competences is a European partnership that develops a competence framework for sustainable development tailored to the needs of adult education. The project brings together education & training providers, non-governmental organisations and municipalities from 5 European countries.

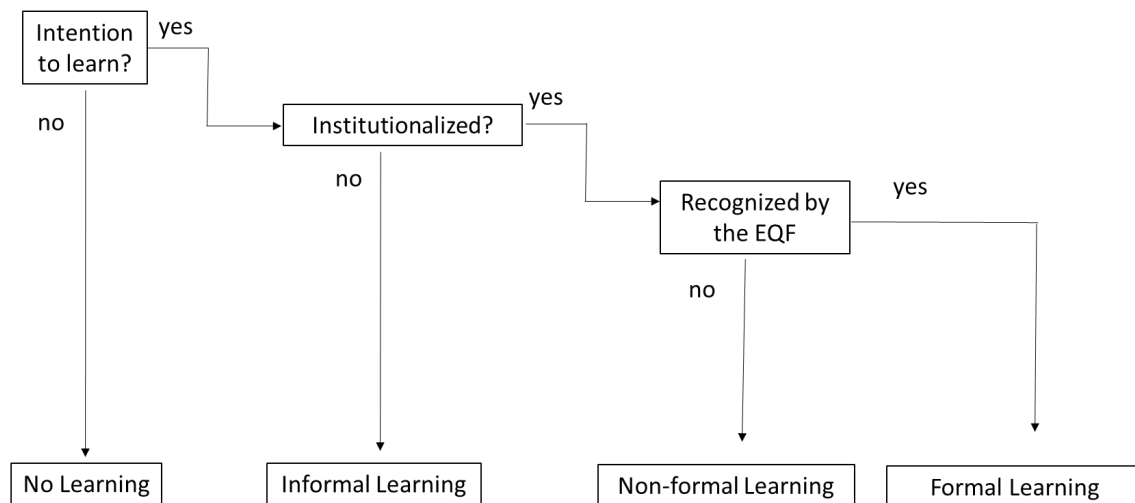


Education for sustainable development (ESD) in different types of learning

The focus of the 5P Competences project is on lifelong learning, that is every learning that is not formal learning. It does not mean that formal learning wouldn't be important. However, putting a focus on lifelong learning means that ESD is seen as an action that is integrated in our every-day life and not primarily happening in institutions.

Programs such as 'Learning Regions' or 'Learning in Place' show that lifelong learning is intrinsically bound up with both local and regional development (Kuper & Kaufmann, 2010).

The statistical office of the EU (EUROSTAT) defines lifelong learning as activities encompassing all learning activities undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences, within personal, civic, social or employment-related perspectives. Therefore the intention or aim to learn is the critical point that distinguishes these activities from non-learning activities, such as cultural or sporting activities. Based on this understanding we can differ between formal learning, non-formal learning and informal learning. The following overview based on Bilger et al. (2013) and Eurostat (2016) illustrates the differences between those concepts.



One of the consequences of this focus is that the deduction of concrete learning goals from more abstract learning goals is less relevant than it is in formal learning (at schools), since learning goals can also be derived from real life situations in an inductive way. In this understanding formal learning, non-formal learning and informal learning are not standing in contrast to each other, but complement each other. This understanding is derived from the four pillars of learning as published by Delors (1996). These four pillars are primarily happening in different institutions and have different tasks and goals as shown in the following table:

Pillar	Institution (focus)	Tasks / goals (examples)
Learning to know	Schools / Universities	Formal learning
Learning to do	Work place	Qualification, skills, competences
Learning to live together	Publicness	Understanding other persons and cultures
Learning to be	Private sphere	Self-efficacy, solidarity, aesthetics

Adapted to ESD this means that formal learning, non-formal learning and informal learning should not be thought as separated learning activities but as interconnected activities. The intention of 5P Competences is to put this interrelationship into the focus of a competence framework.

References:

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