Non Formal Education & Learning: An Overview

Executive Summary

Dr. Louise Heeran Flynn

A Report Commissioned by Foróige,

The National Youth Development Organisation

June 2018

This document is an Executive Summary based on the accompanying report entitled 'Non Formal Education & Learning: An Overview', commissioned by Foróige. The report provides a detailed review of the field of Non Formal Education and Learning.

Note regarding terminology used: *'Non Formal Education' is the term that was first coined, though more recent literature uses the term 'Non Formal Learning'. Whilst theorists often blur the two words, the innocuous word choice belies a significant philosophical discussion on the nature of education and learning. As such, both terms will be used below, with 'Non Formal Education and Learning' being used predominantly in the report.*

1 Typology of Learning

It is considered that there are three types of purposeful learning i.e. formal, non formal and informal (European Commission, 2001). Given the difficulties that have emerged for theorists in their attempts to define the concepts over the years, theorists have put forth various criteria which can be used to define the concepts such as whether the learning is organised, whether it has learning objectives and whether the learning is intentional. The duration of the learning and whether it leads to a qualification can also be included (see Werquin, 2007). Though the definitions are still open to contest, the terms are *generally* defined as follows:

> **Formal Learning:** Learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment (such as in an education or training institution or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to certification.
>
> **Informal Learning:** Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective. Informal learning outcomes may be validated and certified. Informal learning is also referred to as experiential or incidental/random learning.
>
> **Non Formal Learning:** Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support), but which contain an important learning element. Non formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically does not lead to certification.
>
> (CEDEFOP, 2014)

2 The Learning Continuum

Most educators see the three types of learning as existing along a continuum, with indistinct, rather than sharply defined borders. To begin with, it was considered that the continuum only featured formal education and informal education at either end. It was not until the 1960s that 'non formal education' was introduced, when it was considered to be situated somewhere in between, depending on national and local needs (see Figure 1).

Formal Learning	Non Formal Learning	Informal Learning

Figure 1 Image of Learning Continuum

Colley et al.'s (2002) work revealed that formal and informal dimensions are present in almost all learning situations. It may also be assumed that an element of formal and informal learning is inherently present in most non formal learning situations. La-Belle (1982) identified the three types of education as coexisting simultaneously within the system, at times, harmoniously and at others, in conflict. The modes vary in the degree of emphasis on formality. He concludes that all individuals, at all times, are engaged in one or more modes of learning experiences, and they can move over and back along the continuum as they move through various learning activities. There are significant elements of formal learning in informal situations, and elements of informality in formal situations; the two are inextricably interrelated (Romi and Schmida, 2009) (see Figure 2).
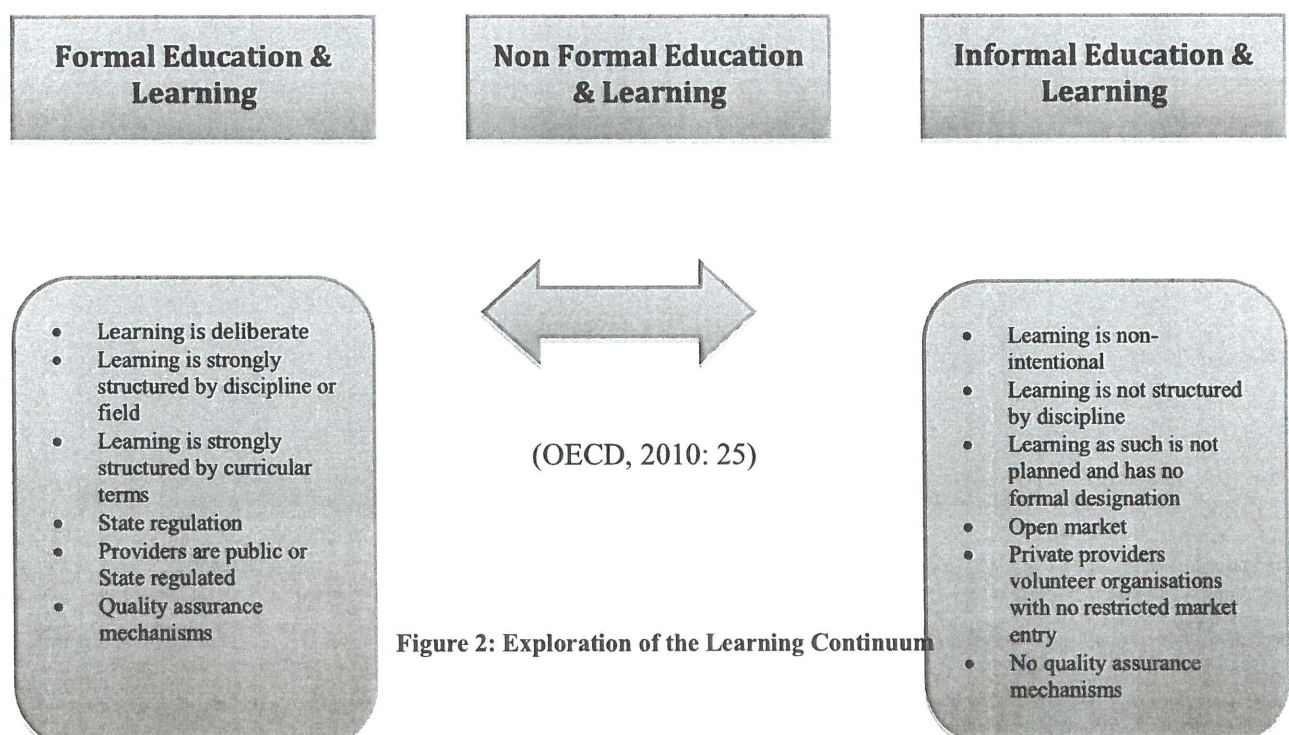
Formal Education & Learning	**Non Formal Education & Learning**	**Informal Education & Learning**
• Learning is deliberate • Learning is strongly structured by discipline or field • Learning is strongly structured by curricular terms • State regulation • Providers are public or State regulated • Quality assurance mechanisms	(OECD, 2010: 25)	• Learning is non-intentional • Learning is not structured by discipline • Learning as such is not planned and has no formal designation • Open market • Private providers volunteer organisations with no restricted market entry • No quality assurance mechanisms

Figure 2: Exploration of the Learning Continuum

Therefore, according to Edwards (2005), it is clear that a neatly bound concept of learning context is no longer able to embrace the difference and diversity of modern society. In fact, what is under discussion and what is required, is an expansion of the term 'education', which is still widely related to formal education. This brings the concept of lifelong learning in to the discussion. In modern day society, beyond the temporal, or vertical dimension of 'lifelong' learning, learning also includes the horizontal notion of 'lifewide', together with lifedeep learning (see Figure 3).
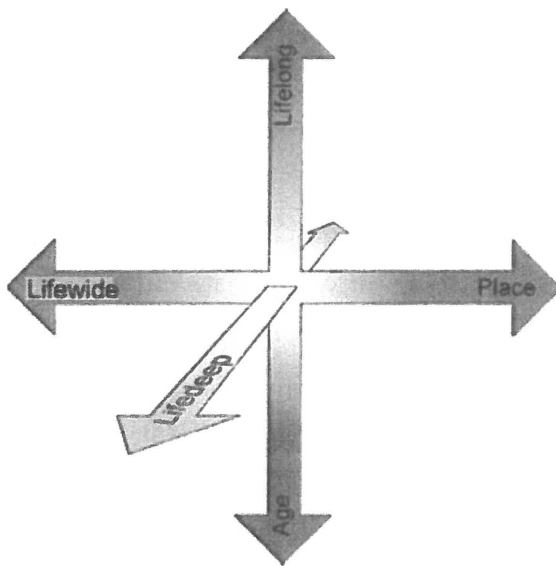

Figure 3: Lifelong, Lifewide and Lifedeep Learning (Kjisik, 2011: 8)

Lifelong learning implies a continuing process of learning throughout our lifespan; *lifewide* learning implies the existence of multiple, but simultaneous learning spaces and *lifedeep* learning is concerned with the essence of human development, including spiritual and religious experiences (Banks et al., 2007). These views are related to the broad aspects of the non formal education as it encompasses the entirety of an individual's experience hence, the connection to lifelong, lifewide and lifedeep learning.

3 A Changing World

A changing world requires a responsive education system to meet its society's needs. Since the start of this century, it is considered that the world is experiencing change

on a scale comparable with that of the Industrial Revolution (European Commission, 2000). Digital technology is transforming every aspect of people's lives, whilst biotechnology is changing life itself. Trade, travel and communication on a world scale are expanding people's cultural horizons and are changing the ways in which economies compete with each other. The nature of work and the required competences are changing, where change has become a core concept in today's working life. Lifetime employment becomes an exception; the majority of employees will, voluntarily or not, change job and career several times in their work lifespan (Merkač Skok, 2005). Labour market change, reflecting evolutions in technologies, markets and organisations, requires that skills and competences can be transferred and be 'reprocessed' within a new working environment. Employees who leave or lose their job must be able to transfer knowledge and experience to a new enterprise, sector or even a new country (Colardyn and Bjornavold, 2004). 18 years ago the European Commission (2000), spoke about how such changes are all are part and parcel of the overall transition to a knowledge society i.e. a society whose economic basis is the creation and exchange of immaterial goods and services. In this kind of social world, up-to-date information, knowledge and skills are at a premium (European Commission, 2001).

This means that education has to be rethought when youth cultures, the technological level of society or modes of production change and they tend to change constantly (Kiilakoski, 2015). Therefore, there is a need to build an education system which is responsive to the current needs of young people. However, research continues to show that the formal education system is not serving the needs of society. Youth unemployment figures in Europe are stark. Eurostat (2018) estimates that 17.481 million men and women in the EU-28, of whom 13.824 million were in the euro area (EA-19), were unemployed in March 2018. In Ireland, in January 2018 the seasonally adjusted unemployment figures were n=83,600 for males and n=60,100 for females (Eurostat, 2018). Statistics continue to display that many learners are struggling with our education system in its present guise:

- Two in ten students in OECD countries did not attain the basic level in reading (PISA, 2015)

- Disadvantaged students are 2.8 times more likely than advantaged students not to attain a basic proficiency in Science (PISA, 2015)
- On average across OECD countries, immigrant students perform lower in science, reading and maths than non-immigrant students with the same socio-economic status and language of instruction (PISA, 2015)
- By the end of first year, students are found to enjoy school less and to be less motivated about their school-work than previously (Galton et al., 2000; Harland et al., 2002).
- Over a quarter of 13-year-olds described themselves as only liking a school 'a bit', while 8 per cent said they did not 'like it very much' and 3 per cent 'hated' school (Growing Up in Ireland, 2017)
- Around a tenth of young people have more prolonged absences, in the order of 10 days per year (Growing Up in Ireland, 2017)
- The latest EU figures show that in 2016 11% of all 18-24 year olds in the EU-28 member states were classified as Early School Leavers. The Irish equivalent rate was 6% in the same period (CSO, 2017).

Technological advances are also taking effect. 65% of children starting school today will end up working in jobs that do not even exist yet (ISTE, 2018). By 2020, more than a third of the core skill sets required for most jobs will include skills that are not considered crucial today (ISTE, 2018). It is not possible to prepare learners for specific careers or a specific future, when we do not know what those careers or that future might be. Therefore, the key to developing job-ready and future-proofed learners is to orient learners towards learning:

> *The most important skill is a meta-skill: the ability to adapt to changes. As the rate of technological innovation intensifies, the workforce of the future will need to adapt to new technology and new markets. The people who can adapt the best (and fastest) will win.* (Pu, 2018)

4 Formal Education

It is clear that the formal education system needs to respond in a timely manner:

> *This call for a shift in education might find some response in a culture where many features are changing. Education has become more complicated. There are more players than before. The field has widened from local to global. The rules are in a state of flux* (Kiilakoski, 2012)

Though held in high esteem, research and statistical evidence indicate that the formal

system is not able to cater for societal needs in a timely manner. Similar battlecries have been heard before about the shortcomings of the formal education system. In the late 1960s, Coombs (1968: 4) questioned formal education during the World Education Crisis and spoke about the '...disparity...between education systems and their environments is the essence of the worldwide crisis' (Coombs, 1968: 4). Coombs and Ahmed (1974) considered at the time that 'it is doubtful that formal education as presently conceived could satisfy many of the most crucial developmental needs' and pointed to non formal education as a solution: 'The [World] Bank has long felt that an important part of the solution might lie in the improvement and expansion of non formal education' (1974: v).

More recently at a European level too, the literature indicates a dissatisfaction with the formal education system as it points to non formal education as the solution. The Council of Europe's Recommendation Rec (2003) 8 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the promotion and recognition of non formal education/learning for young people reaffirms its belief in the importance of non formal learning and lifelong learning. It reaffirms that non formal education/learning nowadays constitutes a fundamental dimension of the lifelong learning process. It outlines that it considers that '...lifelong learning has an important role to play in reducing social inequality and social exclusion, and in promoting active participation in democratic life; and that non-formal education/learning *can contribute to secure all the knowledge and capacities which young people need to succeed in contemporary societies'*.

5 Non Formal Education & Learning

5.1 The Origins of Non Formal Education & Learning

The original term 'non formal education' emerged in 1968 (Coombs, 1968). It arose in the context of the widespread feeling that education was failing, not just in developing countries but also in Western societies too. In 1967 at an international conference in Williamsburg, U.S., there was concern about the growing 'World Educational Crisis' stemming from unsuitable curricula which meant that educational growth and economic growth were not necessarily in step, and that jobs did not emerge directly as a result of educational inputs. The conclusion at the conference

was that formal educational systems had adapted too slowly to the socio-economic changes around them. It was recognised that formal educational systems alone could respond to the challenges of modern society. A few years later, in 1974, a study on behalf of the World Bank emerged (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974). At that time, Coombs and Ahmed (1974) defined non formal education as 'any organised, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, adults as well as children' (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974: 8). As can be seen, the original term was 'non formal education' was coined. However, more recent discussions over the nature of education and learning have meant that the term 'non formal learning' is now more broadly used.

5.2 Non Formal Education & Learning in Practice

On the learning continuum, between formal and informal learning, there is a space that may be filled with a third dimension of learning based on conscious intention, voluntary participation, personal interests and needs. This is non formal learning which takes the form of various activities such as youth associations, scouting, sports clubs (Brzezin´ska-Hubert, 2013).

It is considered that non formal education is not simply an educational method; rather it is a multifaceted approach to learning. It is a participatory, experiential, self-directed, learner-centred approach to learning and education, with an emphasis on real life situations (Council of Europe, 2000). Non formal learning is not as much an educational method as a *disposition* to learning, which emphasises learning as a critically reflective process 'in a social reality which recognises tensions and conflicts' (Directorate of Youth and Sport, 2001), aiming at social change. It anchors learning in real life situations. It speaks to an emancipatory social and educational agenda (Council of Europe, 2000). The resurgence of interest in non formal education is seen to come on the cusp of a resurgence of interest in lifelong learning, driven by economic concerns in the first instance secondly, by liberation politics (Council of Europe, 2000). The literature considers non formal education and learning to be participatory, relevant to learners; self-directed; holistic; context-based learning; inclusive; a place where learners are seen as active co-constructors of knowledge.

Hillman (2013: 156-7) outlines the following in relation to non formal learning:

- non formal learning should begin where the young person is, in terms of both venue and mindset. Learning that is led by the young person is much more likely to meet their needs and lead to successful progression;
- non formal learning is much more powerful when combined with a space or a process for the learner to reflect on its impact;
- the range of non formal learning opportunities should be as broad and as flexible as possible. In general terms, the less it feels like school, the better;
- the views, attitudes and motivations of the learner should be respected at all times. This includes allowing people to disengage from time to time.

(from Hillman, 2013: 156-7)

Having conducted significant literature reviews on the definitions, the Council of Europe (2000), outline the following common *elements* of non formal education found in existing definitions.

> **Common Elements in Existing Definitions of Non Formal Education & Learning**
> - purposive learning
> - diverse contexts
> - different and lighter organisation of provision and delivery
> - alternative/complementary teaching and learning styles
> - less developed recognition of outcomes and quality
>
> (Council of Europe, 2000: 24)

The Council of Europe (2000) identified the following as the *principles* which describe the specific character of non formal education:

> **Principles of Non Formal Education**
>
> **Non Formal Education & Learning:**
>
> - has a voluntary nature
> - is accessible to everyone
> - is an organised learning process with educational objectives
> - is very diverse in its form and nature
> - is about learning life skills and preparing for active citizenship
> - involves both individual and group learning with a collective approach
> - is based on experience and action and starts from the needs of the participants

The Council of Europe (2000) identified the following as some of the key *characteristics* of non formal learning:

Essential Characteristics of Non Formal Education & Learning

- balanced co-existence and interaction between cognitive, affective and practical dimensions of learning
- linking individual and social learning, partnership-oriented
- solidary and symmetrical teaching/learning relations
- participatory and learner-centred
- holistic and process-oriented
- close to real life concerns, experiential and oriented to learning
- by doing, using intercultural exchanges and encounters as learning devices
- voluntary and (ideally) open-access
- aims above all to convey and practice the values and skills of democratic life

(Council of Europe, 2000: 51; see also Chisholm et al., 2005, 2006 ; Chisholm, 2007)

This list highlights that the common core of non formal learning is less defined by content, and much more by framing conditions, (the contextualisation), of learning processes pursued for a wide variety of purposes. It is these framing conditions that pre-structure the pedagogies and practical methods of non formal learning; subject based curricula is of much less concern (Council of Europe, 2000) thus, outlining that non formal education and learning is highly responsive to the learner and his/her environment. The methods used in non formal learning derive from the list below:

Non Formal Teaching/Training and Learning Methods

- **communication-based methods:** interaction, dialogue, mediation
- **activity-based methods:** experience, practice, experimentation
- **socially-focussed methods:** partnership, teamwork, networking
- **self-directed methods:** creativity, discovery, responsibility

(Council of Europe, 2000: 51; see also Chisholm et al., 2005, 2006; Chisholm, 2007)

The methods used for non formal learning can be particularly useful for certain tasks or working with certain target groups, when such methods can be used effectively to

provide a supportive space for excluded voices to be heard.

6 Youth Work

6.1 Defining Youth Work

Non formal education finds its tangible articulation through youth work. The term 'youth work' is used to describe a diverse range of activities, topics and measures provided by a range of individuals in assorted fields and settings (European Commission, 2014). Non formal education is the vehicle through which Youth Work carries out its work:

> *Youth work promotes young people's personal and social development, helping them learn about themselves, others and society, through non formal educational activities which combine enjoyment, challenge and learning. By working from the interests of young people, and supporting and broadening young people's learning experiences in a range of contexts and through diverse practices, youth work seeks to affirm identity and enhance personal and social development. Its methods are embedded in personal relationships and experiential learning and takes place in a range of contexts and locations including open access youth clubs, street work or a setting within the school. (Merton, et al., 2004)*

Youth work as a distinctive educational discipline, has a key role to play in helping promote young people's personal and social development, thus bringing about broader benefits to society and to the economy (European Commission, 2014). At the heart of youth work, there are three core features that define it as youth work distinct from other policy fields:

- a focus on young people
- personal development
- voluntary participation

(European Commission, 2014)

Not all countries have a formal definition of youth work and amongst those that do, there is a variety of definitions. Based on a review of national definitions and experts' views, the following characteristics are frequently cited when describing youth work:
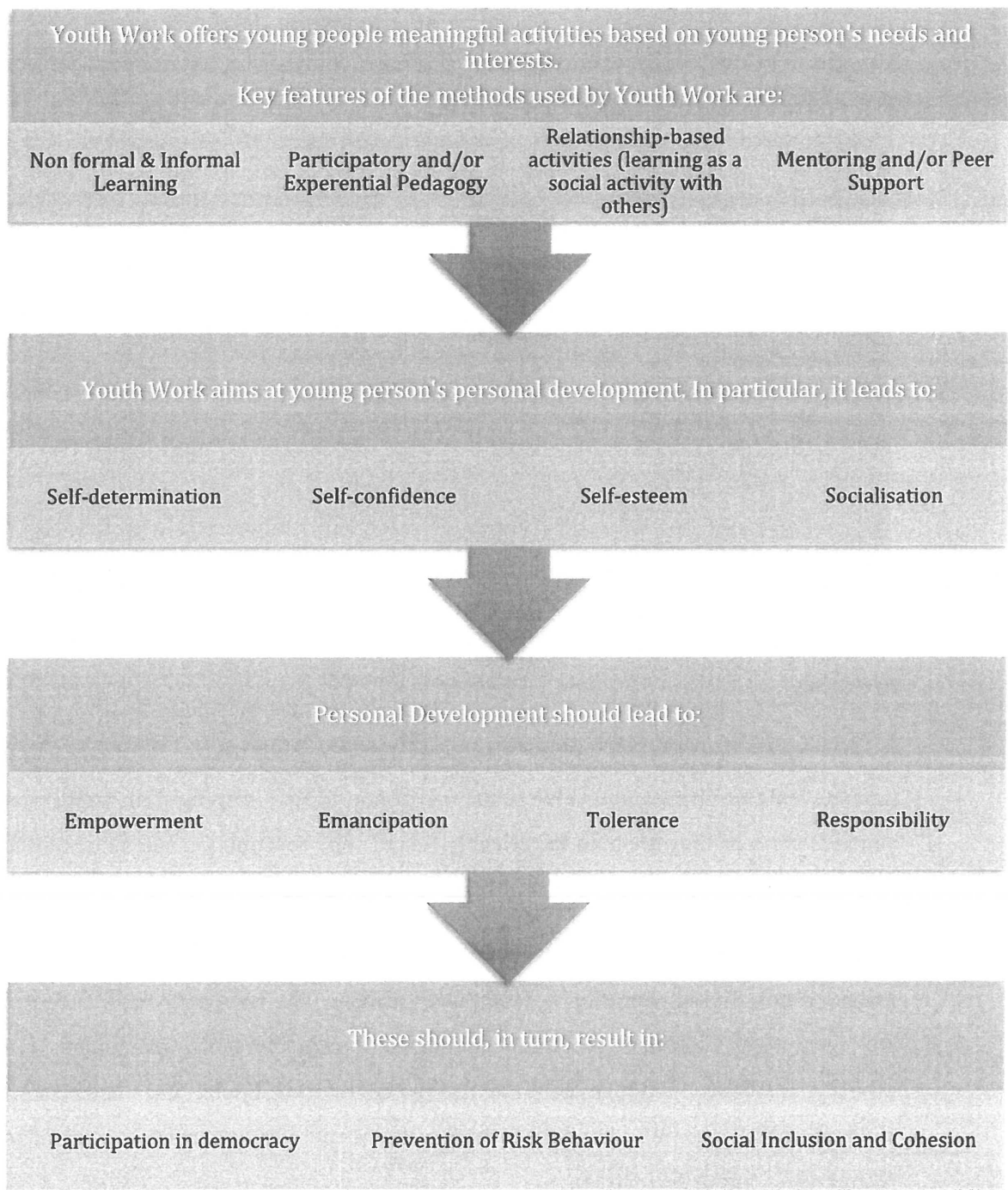
Youth Work offers young people meaningful activities based on young person's needs and interests. Key features of the methods used by Youth Work are:			
Non formal & Informal Learning	Participatory and/or Experiental Pedagogy	Relationship-based activities (learning as a social activity with others)	Mentoring and/or Peer Support

Youth Work aims at young person's personal development. In particular, it leads to:			
Self-determination	Self-confidence	Self-esteem	Socialisation

Personal Development should lead to:			
Empowerment	Emancipation	Tolerance	Responsibility

These should, in turn, result in:		
Participation in democracy	Prevention of Risk Behaviour	Social Inclusion and Cohesion

Figure 4: Key Features of Youth Work according to Formal Frameworks (European Commission, 2014: 5)

The key feature of youth work is the focus on young people as a distinct population, with needs and aspirations different to those of children or adults (European Commission, 2014).

A model developed by Howard Williamson (2017) outlines five features of successful youth work that make up a holistic approach:

- Youth workers' **relationships** and close contact with young people;
- **Sustainability and partnerships** with other actors (e.g. formal education, social work);
- Enabling young people **to experience life, to make mistakes and to participate** with their peers in leisure time activities;
- 'Standing on their feet': **allowing young people to drive their own learning and development and to have autonomy;**
- **Commitment** from young people, youth workers and the community.

(Williamson, 2017)

6.2 The Contribution and Value of Youth Work and Non Formal Education & Learning

As non formal learning its tangibly articulated through youth work, it is impossible to separate the contribution and value of the use of non formal learning from youth work and vice versa as they are both inextricably linked. The contribution and value of both will be discussed presented in Table 1 below.

The literature shows a range of attributes and characteristics to which youth work and its use of non formal education is found to contribute. The vocabulary and categories are not always consistent but the following skills are frequently mentioned: self-efficacy, resilience, communication skills and confidence. Social and inter-personal skills are also frequently mentioned, though not always using consistent vocabulary (European Commission, 2014).

Whilst the evidence base on the value of youth work and non formal learning is lacking, an extensive literature review concludes that youth work and non formal education and learning practice contributes positively to personal, societal and economic outcomes. The engagement of young people in youth work enables them to:

- Develop certain skills and competences;
- Strengthen their network and their social capital;
- Change certain behaviours;

16

- Build positive relationships

(European Commission, 2014)

Beyond the individual level outcomes, youth work is:

- An important component of our social fabric offering a space for contact, exchange and engagement among youth, but also between generations; and
- Of value in its own right. Most youth work activities are designed to offer learning experiences that can be both enriching and fun and offer activities that are shared with others. This has a social value and should be recognised as such.

(European Commission, 2014).

Studies that look at the cost and benefits of youth work find that the benefits outweigh the costs of youth work programmes (Indecon, 2012). It is also important to note that the emphasis should not only be on outcomes, but youth work processes and activities should be valued as significant value can come from youth work's processes also.

Following an extensive review of national and international literature in the area of youth work and the use of non formal learning, Table 1 below gives a brief overview of the significant contribution and value of youth work across individual, societal and economic domains, through its use of non formal learning.

Competence/Skill/Benefit	Sources
Education and Training - **Improves non-cognitive skills by helping young people to develop emotional and social skills such as persistence, motivation and interpersonal skills** - **Helps achieve better academic outcomes and has a positive influence on academic achievement and attainment of qualifications** - **Alternative pathways for Early School Leavers** - **Provides educational/career guidance** - **Better opportunities for further development**	European Youth Strategy, 2009; European Commission, 2014; Covay and Carbonaro, 2010; Department for Children, Schools and Families Publications, 2010; Carneiro et al., 2007; Broh, 2002; Nevala et al., 2011; European Commission Country report for Germany 2014; Hughes and Gration, 2009
Employment and Entrepreneurship - **Develops transversal skills and competences demanded on labour market, improving employability** - **Opportunity to practice skills in real settings** - **Supports orientation of young people** - **Can help matching young people and jobs**	European Youth Strategy, 2009; European Commission, 2014; Souto et al., 2012
Health and Well-being: - **Access to information and trusted advice** - **Changes in attitudes and dangerous or risk behaviours** - **Raises self-awareness** - **Improved well-being**	European Youth Strategy, 2009; European Commission, 2014; McLaren, 2002
Participation:	European Youth Strategy,

- Greater participation and involvement in democratic processes - Raises awareness - Develops critical thinking - Empowers young people - Opportunity for self-expression	2009; European Commission, 2014; Eurofound, 2012; McFarland et al., 2006; Catterall, et al. 2012
Voluntary activities: - Frequently volunteer-led - Fosters solidarity - Engagement in earlier years is correlated with voluntary engagement later on in life	European Youth Strategy, 2009; European Commission, 2014
Social Inclusion: - Offers socialisation and safe environment - Prevents exclusion - Targets specific at risk groups - Combats negative perception of specific groups among general public	European Youth Strategy, 2009; European Commission, 2014; Silver, 2007
Creativity and Culture: - Increases cultural participation - Provides space for expression and creativity - Promotes intercultural understanding, health, well-being - Broad personal development impact	European Youth Strategy, 2009; European Commission, 2014; Newman et al., 2010; Catterall, et al., 2012
Youth and the World: - Develops a skill set and attitudes such as persistence, self-reliance, adaptability, collaboration, self-reliance, global awareness, cross-cultural communication - Raises awareness of human rights, development, global themes - Provides education for sustainable development	European Commission, 2014
Accessibility/Relevance	Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe, (AEGEE), 2018
Integrating disadvantaged young people	Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe, (AEGEE), 2018
Decision-making skills/Working with Groups	Russell, 2001; Boyd, 2001
Learn ability to clarify their interests and values	Russell, 2001
- Responsive to community concerns and needs - Encourages young people to become involved in activities	Walker and Dunham, 1996; Carver, 1996; 1998
Development of Knowledge and Skills	Enfield, 2001
Sequentially Builds Skill Sets	Russell, 2001
Confidence	Russell, 2001
- Development of personal relationships - Interpersonal skills - Learn from role models	Walker, 1998
Foster positive Youth Development	Russell, 2001
- Self-esteem - Improved Academic Attainment and Aspirations - Lower rates of anti-social behaviour	Holland and Andre, 1987
Civic Engagement	Glanville, 1999
- Leadership Skills - Peer Popularity	Boyd, 2001; Kleon and Rinehart, 1998
- Academic attainment - Peer competence - Self Confidence	Russell, Elder, and Conger, 2000
- Long-term academic success - Motivation of 'at risk' or marginalised youth - Positive educational trajectories - Lower rates of involvement in risk behaviour	Mahoney and Cairns, 1997; Eccles and Barber, 1999
- Protective factors - Resilience	Resnick et al., 1997; Russell, 1994; 1998;

	Werner and Smith, 1992
- Higher grades - More positive self perception - Successful relationships - Healthy Youth Development	Russell and Elder, 1997; Mekos, Elder, and Conger, 2000
Better family relationships	Enfield, 2000; Smith, Hill, Matranga and Good, 1995
- Life skills - Resilience	Miller and Bowen, 1993
- Working with groups - Decision making - Leadership	Boyd, Herring, and Briers, 1992
- Increased academic - Achievement - Conflict resolution skills - Development of collaboration skills - Increased confidence and self-esteem - Come to view themselves as a valued member of community	Murdock, Lee, and Paterson, 2000; Jorgensen, 2000; Ponzio and Fisher, 1998; Ponzio, Junge, Smith, Manglallan, and Peterson, 2000.
- Psychological development - gain empathy, self-esteem, sense of self, self-worth, pride, confidence, and creativity - Social development - learn the value of community service and citizenship, including how communities function and how things get done at the community level - Intellectual development - leadership, teamwork, cooperation, problem-solving, organisational skills, public speaking, oral and written communication, and environmental awareness	Taylor-Powell, Hutchins and Reed, 1997
Economic, environmental, social, and civic benefits to communities - cleaner communities - development of a sense of connection and cohesion, both among youth and between youth and adults in the community - development of responsible citizens and a shift among residents to viewing youth as assets	Taylor-Powell, Hutchins, and Reed, 1997
Parental Effects	Junge, Johns, George, Conklin-Ginop and Valdez, 2000
- Developing Skills for a Changing World - Promotes Entrepreneurial Learning	Reicherts, 2015; Novosadova, 2015; Arnkil, 2015
Investment in their own learning	Ratto-Nielsen, 2015
- Control over own life - Change Agents	Novosadova, 2015; Dickson et al., 2013
Learning different approaches, perceptions and ways of doing things	Reicherts, 2015
- Democratic citizenship - Active and Inclusive participation - Civic education	Reicherts, 2015
- Strengthens their networks - Changes their behaviour - Builds positive relationships	Reicherts, 2015
Transversal skills creativity innovation, initiative, entrepreneurship	Reicherts, 2015
Become active players in their own lives and societies	Reicherts, 2015
Peer learning and cooperation	Reicherts, 2015
Empowered to influence rather than be influenced	Benedicto, 2015
Self-worth	Järvensivu, 2010
Independence	Lejeune, 2015
Make choices about the future	Lejeune, 2015
Competences valuable in society and in the labour market	Lejeune, 2015
Transversal skills - social confidence, self-esteem relationships with peers and adults, teamworking, motivation, autonomy, decision-	Lejeune, 2015

making planning and project management	
- Language learning - Intercultural Competence - Sense of European citizenship	Penington and Wildermuth, 2005; Jamieson, 2005
- Student Voice heard - Technology skills can be developed - Learning about democracy	Siurala and Turkia, 2012; Reicherts, 2015
- Social inclusion - Alternative Routes to learning; motivate to learn/return to learning	NYA, 2008
Employment skills	Lejeune, 2015
- Solidarity - Participation - Democracy - Mobilises capacities	World Bank, 2007
- Sense of belonging - Social and Political Cohension	Bureau of European Policy Advisers, 2007
Understanding of society and local communities	Novosadova, 2015
Alternative pathways to education	Novosadova, 2015
Fosters reflection	Novosadova, 2015; Raelin, 2000; Commission of European Communities, 2000
- Fosters participation - Fosters belonging - Personal Development - Improves employability chances - Increased opportunities for development and growth	European Commission, 2015
- Reduces social inequality and social exclusion - Promotes active participation democratic life - Contributes to secure all the knowledge and capacities which young people need to succeed in contemporary societies	Council of Europe, 2003
Empowerment	Council of Europe, 2005
Promotes intercultural dialogue; combats racism and intolerance	Council of Europe, 2008
- Relevant - Economic and Social Impact - Key Competences for labour market - Social Responsibility - Developing readiness for lifelong learning - Improving employment prospects - Provides added value for society, the economy and young people themselves	Council of the European Union, 2006
- Promotes competitiveness - Fulfillment of the needs of the labour market - Social cohesion equality - Participation and involvement of citizens	Council of European Union, 2009
- Personal and Social development - Aids formal education - Improves attendance and behaviour - Helps young people learn about themselves, others and society - Builds relationships - Bridges gaps with formal education - Aids transitions to post primary school - Motivation - Relationships, enhances personal support, and improves home and community links - Promotes engagement and achievement in school settings - Promotes achievement - Confidence	NYA and Fabian Society, 2008; NYA, 2013; Blanden et al. 2006; Roberts, 2009; All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility, 2018; European Commission, 2014; National Youth Agency Commission, 2013

- Understanding of Relationships - Health and Well-being - Soft skills - Holistic education - Central hub for community - Reengagment - Educational achievement, social mobility, employment and the economy, the wellbeing of children and the achievement of a 'good' society - Develop human capital - Strengthen networks - Strengthen social capital - Change behaviours including risk behaviours - Build positive relationships - Add to the social fabric - Intrinsic value	
- Character building - Personal Development - Critical social education - Radical social change	Hurley and Treacy, 1993
- The 4 Cs - competence, confidence, character, connection and caring - Conscious and critical engagement	Dickson et al., 2013 Roth and Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Lerner et al., 2005; Lerner et al., 2004; Muller et al., 1964; Giesecke, 1975; Krafeld, 1992; 1996; Spatscheck, 2009
- Strengthens their network and their social capital - Change certain behaviours - Life changing experience	Coburn, 2011
- Self-efficacy - Motivation and inspiration - Autonomy and self-determination - Social-confidence - Interpersonal skills	Bamfield, 2008 (Literature review)
- Promotes bonding - Fosters resilience - Promotes social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and moral competence - Fosters self-determination - Foster spirituality - Fosters self-efficacy - Foster clear and positive identity - Fosters belief in the future - Provides recognition for positive behaviour and opportunities for pro-social involvement - Fosters pro-social norms (healthy standards for behaviour)	Catalano et al., 2002
- Task persistence - Independence - Following instructions - Working well within groups - Dealing with authority figures - Fitting in with peers	Covay and Carbonaro, 2010
- Social skills: communication skills, influencing skills and other inter-personal skills, such as rapport, tact and empathy. - Self-regulation: affective capacity – moods, feeling and emotions; self-efficacy – belief in one's ability to organise and carry out the actions required to achieve personal goals; locus	Department for schools, children and families, 2010 (Literature review)

of control – the extent to which one believes s/he has control over the achievement of these goals; motivation; aspiration; application; and persistence	
- Relationship with others: pro-social skills, leadership, and decision-making skills - Sense of self: self-esteem, confidence, and self-efficacy	Dickson et al., 2013 (Literature review)
- Communication skills - Computer skills - Confidence/self-esteem - Conflict resolution - Decision making - Goal setting - Leadership skills - Money management skills - Performance skills (e.g. music) - Planning/organizing - Problem solving - Public speaking skills - Social/ interpersonal skills - Task orientation	Harvard Family Research Project, 2003 (Literature review)
Life skills: leadership, communication, confidence, self-esteem, and sociability	Indecon, 2012 (Literature review)
- Communication - Team Work - Flexibility - Self-confidence - Intercultural Skills - Positive bonding - Preventing anti-social behaviour	Souto et al., 2012; Catalano et al., 2002; Coburn, 2011
Positive influence on behaviour; Reducing problematic behaviour	Catalano et al., 2002
- Fosters contact; fosters relationships, friendship - Fosters respect, belonging, help, participation, and commitment - Fun	European Commission, 2014
Cost effective – benefits outweigh the costs of programmes	Indecon, 2012
- Teaches to be more democratic and to respect human rights - necessary supplement to formal education - chance to take on responsibilities - Develops their curiosity and enthusiasm - Learn to work together - Practise democratic decision-making and negotiation - Promotes active democratic citizenship - Decision making and negotiating - Participation - Personal development - obtain such qualities as commitment, involvement, responsibility, solidarity, democratic awareness, motivation, initiative, emancipation and empowerment, creativity, respect, tolerance, intercultural awareness, criticism, intellectual independence and self-confidence - Fosters commitment to neighbours, encourages participation in, and development of local democratic forms of organization improving the quality of life in the local area - well-being - integration in the society	Dumitrescu, 1999
- Large range of soft skills - interpersonal, team, organisational and conflict management, intercultural awareness, leadership, planning, organising, co-ordination and practical problem solving skills, teamwork, self-confidence, discipline and	AEGEE, 2011

responsibility - **Realise potential** - **Inclusive – uses all learning preferences**	
- **Communication in the mother tongue; Communication in foreign languages** - **Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology** - **Digital competence** - **Learning to learn** - **Social and civic competences** - **Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship** - **Cultural awareness and expression**	AEGEE, 2011
Positive change to society	AEGEE, 2011
- **Social inclusion** - **Conflict resolution** - **Capacity building, active citizenship, sustainable development**	AEGEE, 2011
- **Adds to efficiency of formal education** - **Flexible ways to get certification** - **Costing – cheaper than formal education system**	Popa, 2018
- **Solidarities, cohesion** - **Inclusion**	Council of Europe, 2000
Has the potential to address many of the issues that concern young people	Council of Europe, 2011
- **Inclusion** - **Participation**	Commission of the European Communities, 2000
- **Personal development** - **Increases employability** - **Active citizenship**	Youthpass, 2018
Self Directed Learning which is transformational	Frisenhahn et al., 2013; Cromley, 2000; Gibbons 2002; Knowles 1975; Hodkinson 2004; Caraferella 2000; Frisenhahn, et al., 2013; Cairns, 2013
Holistic learning	Heron 1999; Cairns, 2013; Frisenhahn, et al., 2013
Context-based learning	Lave and Wenger (1991) Smith 2003; 2009; Cairns, 2013
Learn power of dialogue and feedback	Cairns, 2013
- **Inclusion** - **Brings these young people at risk in contact with society, increases their sense of belonging and break down existing negative stereotypes and prejudices** - **Local opportunities for mobility** - **Cultural diversity**	Cairns, 2013
Knowledge and Skills - **Increased employability** - **Progression into learning and work** - **Increased IT skills** - **Ability to work in a team, listen, negotiate** - **Increased ability to stay safe** - **Increased economic well-being** - **Understanding equality and diversity** **Behaviour**	Hillman, 2013

- Increased stability/structure/routine - Enhanced ability to sustain healthy relationships - Reduced substance misuse - Less risky sexual behaviour - Better ability to make a positive contribution - Enhanced social skills **Identity** - Higher self-confidence - Higher self-esteem - Increased personal well-being - Greater independence - Increased ability to be healthy - Sense of achievement - Willingness to stretch/challenge oneself - Better ability to 'navigate' options - More 'enquiring mind' - Sense of ownership over living space	
- Responsive - Relevant	Ward et al., 1974 in Zaki Dib, 1988
Improve the efficiency of the labour market	Werquin, 2008
- Facilitation (guiding group processes) - Mediation (conflict management) - Creativity (problem solving/ability to adapt) - Goal/value/task oriented working and thinking - Communication skills (intercultural awareness) - Co-operation (teamwork/responsibility/tolerance) - Planning skills (evaluation skills/project management) Entrepreneurship - Shape an active and democratic citizen	Council of Europe, 2000
- Development as active citizens - Open-mindedness, tolerance or intercultural understanding - Personality development of young people - 'Learning-to-learn' competence	Berg at al., 2013; European Commission 2010; Friesenhahn, et al., 2013; IJAB et al., 2012; Wissing, 2013 Brzenzinska-Hubert, 2013; Geudens et al. 2015a, 2015b; Reicherts, 2015

7 The Relationship between Formal and Non Formal Education & Training

Non formal education and learning and formal education are complementary and together serve to provide the individual with a large amount of knowledge in many spheres of life. Non formal education and learning is not to be considered a panacea. Non formal education should not be regarded as a replacement for formal education, but rather as a mechanism through which the education not provided in the formal system can be attained. Non formal education is a spiral, iterative process; a process that gains its success by continuously building upon the abilities, capacities and experiences of the individual. Non formal education should therefore, be seen as an essential element in the development of the fully-rounded individual, and as one that is gathering more relevance the deeper we dive into a knowledge-based society. The

days of facts in isolation will no longer suffice in meeting the diverse needs of today's young people. Now more than ever, the needs and expectations faced by the education system present an enormous challenge to adequately meet the demand for different ways of providing education in different contexts and in different ways.

8 Recognition of Non Formal Education

Considerable moves have been made at a European level since the late 1990s to get recognition and validation for non formal learning. Whilst the idea that individuals learn everywhere and all the time throughout their lives is not new, the concept of recognition and validation of non formal and informal learning as a field of research and policy options is quite a relatively new development (Werquin, 2008). Since the late 1990s, a significant number of policy documents at a European level have advocated for the recognition of non formal education.

Whilst there may be agreement on the contribution of non formal learning and consensus in terms of the desire to gain recognition, there is little or no consensus about the value that should be given to this learning, about who should decide what is valued, and about the best ways to define the standards for the assessment of the outcomes of this learning (Werquin, 2008). While learning in the formal education and training system is a distinct feature of modern societies, non formal learning is far more difficult to detect (Björnavåld, 2001). This invisibility is perceived as a problem and thus, discussions are now focusing on *how* to make this learning visible. Once learning is made visible, the next question becomes how it will be assessed. The important issue is whether it is possible to develop methodologies able to capture the competences in question (Björnavåld, 2001). These issues have to be resolved before recognition and validation of the learning can occur.

Notwithstanding issues in terms of recognition and validation, it is considered that recognition of non formal learning would have significant benefits for the individual, society and the economy. Recognition of non formal and informal learning is often considered a possible solution for promoting lifelong learning, especially for the adult population (OECD, 2007a).

9 Conclusion

Far from being 'supplementary education' or 'extracurricular activities', having spent decades in the shadow of formal education, non formal education and learning has come out of the shadows. Aimed at all ages, stages of life and literacy levels, non formal education and learning challenges traditional concepts of education. (Romi and Schmida, 2009).

From its inception as a service aimed at poor rural populations, geographically deprived of formal education, non formal education has expanded to reach diverse audiences (Khôi, 1986). In doing so, it has lost its singular identification as a service for undeveloped countries, and now reaches out to a wide audience including at risk groups such as Early School Leavers, the disengaged, the marginalised and deprived segments of modern society (Thompson, 1995). In a time of rapid societal change, learners need to be afforded different ways and different contexts within which they can learn. An extensive literature review conducted for this report has highlighted the significant benefits and value that can be gained across individual, societal and economic domains, from the use of non formal education and learning. Non formal education and learning can be seen to complement the formal education system, with theorists advocating cross-fertilisation between the two types of learning (Kiilakoski, 2015), in order to ensure that learners gain a true holistic education and the best of both worlds.