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## LIFELONG LEARNING AS A BASIS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

*Formal education is the way not only to understand the changes in society, but also to initiate them. In order to be able to face upcoming changes, people who have finished formal education must not stop there. The acquisition of new knowledge and skills through lifelong learning process is the key to adapting to the new circumstances. Lifelong learning process can be completely informal, such as simple conversation and sharing experiences with colleagues, but also strictly formal, which is characteristic of schools and universities. This paper specifically points out the importance of lifelong learning for acquiring new and useful knowledge in order to achieve success in the business world that is constantly changing, to strengthen the economy and raise the standard of living.*

**Keywords:** *lifelong learning, human capital, knowledge, sustainable development, knowledge-based growth.*

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## НАВЧАННЯ ВПРОДОВЖ УСЬОГО ЖИТТЯ ЯК ОСНОВА СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ В СУСПІЛЬСТВІ ЗНАНЬ

*У статті вказано на важливість навчання протягом життя, придбання нових і корисних знань для того, щоб досягти успіху в діловому світі, який постійно змінюється, для зміцнення економіки і підвищення рівня життя. Формальна освіта - це спосіб не лише зрозуміти зміни в суспільстві, але й ініціювати їх. Для протистояння змінам люди, які офіційно закінчили освіту, не повинні зупинятися на досягнутому. Придбання нових знань і навиків у процесі постійного навчання — ключ до адаптації до цих нових обставин. Безперервний процес навчання може бути абсолютно неформальним, наприклад, проста розмова і обмін досвідом з колегами або суто формальним, що характерно для шкіл і університетів.*

**Ключові слова:** *безперервна освіта, людський капітал, знання, стійкий розвиток, зростання, засноване на знаннях.*

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## ОБУЧЕНИЕ НА ПРОТЯЖЕНИИ ВСЕЙ ЖИЗНИ КАК ОСНОВА УСТОЙЧИВОГО РАЗВИТИЯ В ОБЩЕСТВЕ ЗНАНИЙ

*В статье указано на важность обучения в течение жизни, приобретения новых и полезных знаний для того, чтобы добиться успеха в деловом мире, который постоянно меняется, для укрепления экономики и повышения уровня жизни. Формальное образование — это способ не только понять изменения в обществе, но и инициировать их. Для противостояния изменениям люди, которые закончили формальное образование, не должны останавливаться на достигнутом. Приобретение новых знаний и навыков в процессе постоянного обучения — ключ к адаптации к этим новым обстоятельствам. Непрерывный процесс обучения может быть совершенно неофициальным, например, простой разговор и обмен опытом с коллегами или строго формальным, что характерно для школ и университетов.*

**Ключевые слова:** *непрерывное образование, человеческий капитал, знания, устойчивое развитие, рост, основанный на знаниях.*

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**Introduction.** This paper analyzes the growing importance of lifelong learning (LLL) as a basis for sustainable growth and competitive advantage of all European countries. Namely, due to the challenges of knowledge society and demographic trends, education and training are becoming more integrated into the context of life-long learning, while the role of education in creating a competitive and dynamic European knowledge-based economy is becoming increasingly important. This requires an integrated approach to education at all levels. As the European Union sees Serbia and all Western Balkan countries as its members states in the near future, life-long learning programmes are very important and necessary for increasing the efficiency of national economies in these countries, and have great potential to facilitate the inclusion of other EU programs in all relevant segments.

**1. Materials and methods of research.** The subject of this research is such education system that gives every individual, regardless age, the opportunity to continuously improve his/her knowledge and skills. For the purposes of this paper, the methods of theoretical and empirical research are used. Theoretical research is based on the study of relevant literature dealing with current issues of continuous education for knowledge society and Internet information sources.

**2. Historical background of the lifelong learning concept.** The term "lifelong education" was popularized by Yeaxlee (1929), as well as Faure et al. (1972) as learning to be: the world of education today and tomorrow. The concept also was promoted in 1996 by Jacques Delors basing on 4 pillars: learning to do; learning to be; learning to know; learning to live together. Learning to be is the hallmark of Peter Vail (1989) — Learning as a way of being; West, R. (1998) — Learning for life; Watson, L. (2003) — LLL in Australia; Smith, C. and Ferrier, F. (2002) — Lifelong learning and many others. The international institutions are also dealing with this concept, for example, UNESCO, OECD, World Bank, European Commission (EU) etc. (eNotes, 2012).

In July 2004 the European Union adopted a proposal for a new generation of the EU education and training programmes for the period 2007-2013 referring to learning in all periods of life: age 0-5 years (providing foundation for future learning habits and resourcefulness, learning at this stage affects the development of all other learning abilities later in life); learning in the 6-24 age group (primary takes place in educational institutions of the primary, secondary and tertiary levels); the 25-60 age group (individuals can learn informally during their work); learning in the 60+age group (people may seek new knowledge for their own sake, and it may be further enhanced by offering their new knowledge in service to their local community). The proposed EU programme of the European Union therefore was named "Lifelong Learning Programme" — LLP, designed to succeed and deepen the second phase of the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes. This next-generation programme is intended to be a program that will cover all other programs and activities related to education and training (Tempus, 2012).

Integrative approach to lifelong learning programme includes joint activities and procedures that apply to all major types and levels of education and training in European countries. LLL programme consists of sub-programmes, namely: the Comenius programme for all levels of school education from pre-school to secondary schools, the Erasmus programme for all educational activities at higher education level, which exists

since 1987 and is one of the best known EU initiatives in education; Leonardo da Vinci programme, which applies to all aspects of vocational education and training and Grundtvig programme, intended for adult education and lifelong learning (Tempus, 2012). LLL programme also includes the Transversal programme, where the 4 key activities are incorporated in all sub-programmes as follows:

- development of education policies;
- specific courses for learning foreign languages;
- activities in the field of information technologies (ICT);
- activities to disseminate and exploit the results of multilateral projects.

Jean Monnet is also part of the LLL Programme, it is a project that offers financial support for the courses in the field of the EU law, economics, political studies and the EU integration studies.

**3. Characteristics of lifelong learning.** Lifelong learning has become essential for all people. It is necessary to develop one's knowledge and skills throughout life, not just for personal satisfaction, but also for developing sufficient skills to achieve success in the constantly changing business environment. The methods we use to access information and services are constantly changing. It is necessary to develop new skills to master a completely new digital world, not only through the adoption of technical skills, but also through better understanding of the opportunities, challenges and clear ethical requirements imposed by new technologies.

Key competencies for lifelong learning are (Babic, V. et al., 2010):

- Communication in a mother tongue;
- Communication in foreign languages;
- Competences in mathematics, science and technology;
- Competence in information and communication technologies,
- Learning to learn;
- Social and civic competences;
- Initiative and entrepreneurial spirit;
- Cultural awareness and expression.

**Table 1. Characteristics of Traditional and Lifelong Learning Models**

Traditional learning	Lifelong learning
Teacher is the source of knowledge	Educators are guides to sources of knowledge
Learners receive knowledge from teacher	Educators serve as facilitators for the student's acquisition of knowledge
Learners work by themselves	People learn by doing, or Action Learning
Tests are given to prevent progress until students have completely mastered a set of skills and to ration access to further learning	People learn in groups and from each other
All learners do the same thing	Assessment is used to guide learning strategies and to identify pathways for future learning.
Teachers receive initial training plus ad hoc in-service training.	Educators develop individualized learning plans
"Good" learners are identified and permitted to continue later education	Educators are lifelong learners. Initial training and ongoing professional development are linked
	People have access to learning opportunities over a lifetime.
	Learning is put into practice.
	Learners reflect upon learning and analyze their personal development

Source: WB, 2003.

The first significant feature of the LLL concept is that this concept integrates both formal and non-formal types of education and training. The second common feature of LLL is the importance of self-motivated learning. The third feature is self-funded learning, the responsibility of individuals to finance their own continuing education and training with minimal support from government. Universal participation in education and training — "lifelong learning for all" is the fourth distinctive feature (Watson, 2003).

**4. New strategy for European education and training.** Education for sustainable development (ESD) in a lifelong learning perspective has a significant place in the "Europe 2020" strategy. Educational institutions, local communities, businesses and other key stakeholders are important promoters of the LLL concept at all the levels, therefore, ESD which seeks to develop individuals, societies and contribute to professional development, especially in the areas where there is little experience or the evidence base is weak, is becoming an essential component of national development strategies.

Strategic objectives of a new strategic framework "Education and Training 2020" (ET 2020) are:

- making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training (ET 2020, 2009).

A set of principles and methods was established in order to achieve the aforementioned objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, whose primary goal is to establish knowledge-based, sustainable and inclusive growth and provide more rapid emergence from the crisis.

**5. Lifelong learning in Serbia.** Contemporary national economies have been experiencing major changes in the process of adapting to the rules imposed by knowledge-based economy. Ability to create, improve and efficiently use knowledge is the tool for achieving economic growth and strengthen competitiveness, as well as the leading driver of social development, especially in the countries undergoing transition or facing problems caused by the new market economy. Clear requirements are set for both underdeveloped and developing countries regarding the transformation to a modern society based on new values, principles and foundations, primarily knowledge-based.

Serbia as a candidate for the EU membership participates in the following education and training programmes: Tempus, Erasmus Mundus, Jean Monnet, Lifelong Learning Programme (Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig and Transversal sub-programmes) and since 2007 it is entitled to access the IPA funds. Thus, Serbia is given an opportunity to take part in all EU projects at all levels of education, which is a significant reward (Government of the RS, 2012).

Companies in Serbia are facing increased risks in terms of achieving their goals due to the process of changes at all levels of economic and social life, as a result of the scientific-technological revolution. Recent studies show that, in such rapidly changing environment, the companies that have more qualified human resources are in a better position. These companies are able to quickly address the changes in the out-

side world and thus minimize business risks (Volk, 1977:35). Lifelong learning as an important model in training and education of employees, in its various forms (teaching methods, methods of organizing lectures and duration of classes) represents the comprehensive input of innovation (i.e., acquisition of new knowledge) in different sectors of a company (production, finance, marketing etc.). Analysis of factors affecting the continuing education is, in fact, related to the willingness to implement changes, to carry out the restructuring of a company and direct it towards the path of growth and development, both in the management team, and among other employees.

In order to establish the lifelong learning as a systematic tool of the innovation strategy (the acquisition of new knowledge, methods etc.) in the process of growth and development of some company, it is necessary to implement efficient management in this area.

In order to achieve successful lifelong learning, and to implement it as an innovation in the workplace, we should take into account the following factors (Stiefel, 1977):

- To what extent will the participant in the lifelong learning after the completion of a certain course or training receive assistance in order fully convert the acquired knowledge to innovation;

- One of the basic requirements to implement the results of lifelong learning as a successful innovation is that an individual is freed from a part of ongoing workload in order to be able to commit to innovation;

- One of the important assumptions for the knowledge potential acquired through lifelong education to be turned into innovation, largely depends on the extent to which the participant in a lifelong learning programme is given freedom to experiment and is not afraid of sanctions for the consequences of his/her experimentation.

**Conclusion.** Lifelong learning is the continuous building of skills and knowledge throughout the life of an individual. The education system must constantly be changed, because knowledge is constantly being updated and innovated, and therefore the teaching process itself is increasingly becoming the learning process. In this way, learning encompasses an individual's whole life, but also includes the whole of society due to its educational, social and economic components. The importance of lifelong learning is primarily related to the need to respond to the expansion of educational needs, rapidly changing and expanding working environment and new job requirements, increase of knowledge and cutting-edge technology, development of information society, economic restructuring, organizational reforms and changes of the current characteristics of job position, as well as to find more effective ways of learning and knowledge transfer. It can be said that lifelong education, as an intensive development of human resources, has become a necessary condition for increasing the efficiency of modern society.

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