

Chapter 18

The Adoption of an International Education Policy Agenda at National Level: Conceptual and Governance Issues

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Introduction

Since the mid-1990s, there have been a raising number of policy documents, journal articles, and books dealing with the concept of lifelong learning from different perspectives. OECD's publication *Lifelong Learning for All* (1996), UNESCO's Report *Learning – The Treasure Within* (1996), and Commission's *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (2000) are major policy documents that launched a worldwide debate on lifelong learning. When researchers study lifelong learning, they often point to the education policy dimension, or to historical, social, and economical aspects (cf. Istance et al. 2002; Field 2006; Hake 2008). However, matters concerning the worldwide dissemination of lifelong learning and the influence of supra- and international organizations on the governance of lifelong learning have not been sufficiently examined.

Questions regarding the impact of international organizations on educational policy making in general and on the governance of lifelong learning in particular are of paramount importance. In the long run of modern states' history, education and education policy have been run under the control of the nation-state and were a core element of its sovereignty and autonomy. The analytical perspective on issues concerning political steering and governance of education systems was for a long time state centered and normative. Even if this is still true to a varying extent in many countries, recently there is a shift in the examination of issues concerning educational governance.

With an international comparative study at the University of Tuebingen, Germany, we sought to answer questions regarding educational governance and the impact of

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the EU and OECD in this field taking as a case the concept of lifelong learning.¹ The project goals were to reconstruct the concept of lifelong learning with respect to its political and empirical aspects and to examine its implementation at a national level. The research questions were triggered by three striking developments: (a) the global spread of the concept of lifelong learning in the education policy (cf. Jakobi 2009), (b) the emergence of a “transnational educational space” (Lawn and Lingard 2002) beyond the nation-state, and (c) the appearance of new steering mechanisms and instruments in education based on a new management philosophy: the output-oriented steering (cf. Ioannidou 2007).

The study explored issues of educational governance and pursued questions concerning the adoption of an international education policy agenda at a national level taking as a case the concept of lifelong learning. To do so the following questions have been addressed: What are the characteristics of the post-national educational space? Who are the key actors in this field? What are their action orientations? What kind of resources do they use? What is the impact of their actions? What are the implications for the nation-state?

In order to explore these phenomena, three EU countries were selected Germany, Finland, and Greece, one supranational organization, the European Union, and one international, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

In the pages that follow, first I will outline the new analytical perspective of educational governance and define the terms as used in this chapter. Then I will present the theoretical framework and the empirical research design of the study. Building on that, I will highlight selected empirical findings of the study regarding (a) the adoption of the concept of lifelong learning at national level and (b) governance lifelong learning. Emphasis is given on the identification of influential actors in the European area of lifelong learning, their resources and modes of interaction as well as on the presentation of the impacts of their actions. In conclusion some reflecting remarks on the adoption patterns of an international education policy agenda at national level are provided.

A New Analytical Perspective: Educational Governance

Analytical perspectives on issues concerning regulation and control of education systems were from the very beginning and for a long time state centered. There was much faith both in the capacity of the nation-state to manage, regulate, guide, and control functional systems such as the economic or the educational system as well as in the feasibility of the functional systems to be efficiently managed, regulated,

¹The international comparative project was funded by the Hans-Böckler-Foundation and the University of Tübingen (Germany). The project was based on the theoretical approaches of path-dependent development and actor-centered institutionalism both emanating from political science. The methods applied were document analysis, expert interviews, and comparative analysis of educational monitoring and reporting systems.

guided, and controlled by the nation-state.² However, during the late 1960s and particularly in the 1970s, many sociologists and political scientists argued vigorously against these propositions drawing on a number of empirical policy analyses and on the growing influence of systems theory (Mayntz 1997, 2004). Policy making was seen as increasingly involving, partially cooperative, partially conflictive exchanges and interactions between the state and a range of private public and voluntary organizations. The term “governance”³ was proposed in the political sciences to replace the traditional term “controlling” (Mayntz 1997, p. 278). The latter, it was argued, no longer reflected the patterns that emerged as a result of mutual interactions and interdependencies among actors from various levels, of which the state was only one.

The term “governance” has been widely disseminated and stimulated scientific discussions in a range of academic disciplines. In the last years it has been extensively used in political sciences, in political economy, in sociology, and also in different connotations, analytical or normative (e.g., “good governance”) (cf. Benz 2004). The term has been recently introduced in the educational sciences as well. Questions concerning the coordination and management of mutual interdependencies of various actors of the education system have been examined under the generic term “educational governance” (cf. Altrichter et al. 2007). The new term clearly recognizes the dynamics that arose from the emergence of policy actors at various levels (local, regional, national, transnational) and emphasizes a variety of patterns of interaction (networks, coalitions, majority rule, negotiations) among them. These policy actors operate as a nonhierarchical, multilevel governance system with no clear sovereign authority, but still with capacity of policy shaping (cf. Mayntz and Scharpf 1995).

The emergence of “new arenas of education governance” (Martens et al. 2007) makes it evident that new concepts are necessary for the analysis of the governance capacity and governance practices of the main actors involved in education policy beyond the nation-state.

Adopting an International Education Policy Agenda at National Level: Theoretical Reflections

It seems undisputed nowadays that the primary driving forces behind current policy reforms in national education systems are actually external to the national systems themselves: global labor markets, modernization and transformation processes,

²The current economic crisis dramatically confirms the dynamics and mutual interdependencies of various actors and the immanent difficulties of sufficient management and control of the economic system by the political system.

³The origin of the term governance comes from Greek (“*kybernein*”) and it initially meant the steering of ships. The Latin term “*gubernare*” was used both for steering of ships and governing a state.

regional integration processes – primarily within Europe – demographic trends and changing working patterns, common societal problems, and the “diffusion of world cultural principles” (Meyer and Ramirez 2003). Moreover, despite the fact that official European discourse insists that education will remain a national policy domain, a gradual strengthening movement toward supranational policy formation in Europe has become visible. The ambitious policy objectives of the Lisbon Strategy of “making the European Union the most competitive and knowledge-based economy in the world” as well as the “Europa 2020 Strategy” place education in the center of policy interest and lead to a post-national, transnational educational space.

This is a new policy arena that brings forth a host of actors from different levels who influence policy formation at the international as well as at the national level. The transnational educational space shows characteristics of a multilayered system with horizontal and vertical policy linkages, with network-like structures from state and non-state actors, and with interaction patterns that are based more on coalitions, negotiations, and mutual adjustment rather than on hierarchical regulation. New and emerging policy actors such as international and supranational bodies like the OECD, UNESCO, or the EU along with local authorities and organizations of the civil society and the market interact with old and established ones (nation-states) concerning the mandate, the capacity, and the governance of education. As Dale states, the mandate of education refers to “what is desirable for the education system to achieve; its capacity – what is considered feasible for it to achieve; and its governance – how those objectives are realized” (2003, p. 102).

The aforementioned developments have given rise to a range of complex issues relating to the future of nation-states, their relation to international and supranational bodies, and their capacity to control and govern their own policy destinies and set their own agendas.

The concept of lifelong learning exceeds the narrow national and geographical boundaries and has become a global norm. EU and OECD as supra- and international organizations play an important role both at the level of widely spreading the message globally as well as at the policy formulation at national level. In addition, the spatial characteristics of the transnational educational space indicate a multi-layer structure with a variety of actors from different levels (supranational, national, and regional) who may endorse or reject the adoption or implementation of lifelong learning. In a multilayer structure, the various actors come into different constellations and create interdependent relationships with each other demanding high coordination in order to enforce decisions.

The theoretical framework of the study presented is built on the approaches of path-dependence and actor-centered institutionalism, both emanating from political sciences. With reference to Scharpf (2006, p. 17), the adoption of the concept of lifelong learning and its implementation in Greece, Germany, and Finland can be considered as “the product of interactions between intentionally acting actors – individual, collective or corporate.”

The identification of key actors, their action orientations, their material and immaterial resources, and their interaction are crucial in this theoretical context. Both the EU and the OECD are, according to Scharpf, complex actors who

purposefully and strategically act to achieve their goals. Their ability in strategic action depends firstly on the convergence or divergence of the action orientations between their members and secondly upon the institutional conditions that make an internal conflict resolution more difficult or easier (*ibid.*, p. 108). According to the approach of actor-centered institutionalism, the institutional context within the EU and OECD favors political decisions taking place in the mode of negotiation or by majority decision rather than being determined by unilateral action or by hierarchical decisions.

In this action-theoretical context, institutional structures, culture-specific diversification, and path-dependent development patterns might be underestimated. The notion of path dependence, despite different uses in diverse disciplines, is linked to the idea that “history matters” in the interpretation of phenomena (*cf.* Bassanini and Dosi 1999). According to the theorem of path dependence, the reception and implementation of a global educational policy concept such as lifelong learning at a national level can be enforced or prohibited according to historical paths or institutional organizational forms and the cultural traditions or conventions of a country. National path dependencies exist in every country. Empirical findings to education policy borrowing and to internationalization of education point out that there exists “an antagonistic tension between, the transnational diffusion of modern models and rules and the self-evolutive continuation or even revival of culture-specific semantic traditions” (Schriewer and Martinez 2004, pp. 36–37, *cf.* also Mayer 2001).

A Comparative Research Design

As a consequence of the assumptions and reflections discussed in the previous section, a comparative research design was chosen including a combination of methods. In order to explore the intentions, interests, and interactions of major stakeholders, expert interviews were conducted with key stakeholders from the educational policy administration and the educational research.

Eighteen experts were interviewed in individual structured interviews. The interviewed experts belong to the functional elites of their organizations. Some of them are in an advisory or executive position in the administration of national ministries of education in the areas of adult education and lifelong learning, or they work in the education directorates of the EU and the OECD. Others are educational researchers at universities or other research institutions with long experience in the field of monitoring and reporting on education.

The data analysis was based on the evaluation strategy of Meuser and Nagel (2005) who proposed an interpretive model for structured expert interviews (*ibid.*, p. 81). The expert interviews were fully transcribed and qualitatively analyzed using computer-aided data analysis (*cf.* Kuckartz 2005).

Complementary, in terms of contextualization and validation of the experts’ views, education policy documents such as programmatic texts, memoranda, guidelines, communications, recommendations, reports, conference papers, and legal acts

between 1996 and 2008 were analyzed in order to manifest the political discourse, to reveal culture-specific semantic traditions, and to identify path-dependent development patterns.

Finally, a comparative analysis of educational monitoring instruments was used in order to analyze the empirical approach to the concept of lifelong learning. The examination focused on how the theoretical concept of lifelong learning has been translated into empirical research. In order to do so, definitions, concepts, and tools of measuring lifelong learning, European and national surveys, and studies were compared. In addition, background documents, e.g., conceptual and strategy papers used to measure lifelong learning, methodological texts, as well as pilot tests were analyzed.

For investigating the adoption of the lifelong learning agenda at national level in the European area, three European countries have been identified as suitable cases for the comparative research design: Germany, Finland, and Greece. EU and OECD have been selected as a supranational and an international organization with major influence and agenda-setting capacity in the field of lifelong learning.

The selection of the countries was based on the principle of maximal variation on the basis of selected structural features (including the structure of the education and training sector and the type of governance in education) and on the basis of quantitative indicators (including participation in continuing education and lifelong learning). Finland, Greece, and Germany have differently organized education and training systems that are historically rooted and have a great heterogeneity in the structuring of the education sector. Their training systems have different legal requirements and funding arrangements that result from their particular course of history and special characteristics. In addition, the actual importance of lifelong learning in the selected countries varies greatly, as the use of quantitative indicators shows.

However, all three countries belong to the European geographical and cultural territory, and they are members of the EU and the OECD; thus, they lay under the direct influence of these organizations. Through their membership in the European multilayer system, they accept a common policy framework which enables specific developments at national level. Their membership in the OECD also promotes convergent developments in these countries, although the degrees of freedom are greater in this case.

Highlights of the Study⁴

Lifelong Learning and Its Adoption Within National Education Policy Agenda

Regarding the concept of lifelong learning and its adoption within national education policy, the findings of the study confirm that lifelong learning has become the new “master narrative” in all three countries under examination.

⁴For more information, see Ioannidou (2010).

Lifelong learning has been considered as an important part of the EU Lisbon Strategy according to which the European Union should become by 2010, the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economic area in the world, as well as a more cohesive and inclusive society. Acquiring and continuously updating and upgrading skills and competences are considered a prerequisite for the personal development of all citizens and for participation in all aspects of society in the three countries.

The *Memorandum* recognizes lifelong learning as an essential policy for the development of citizenship, social cohesion, and employment (p. 6). The following definition was adopted as a working definition for subsequent discussion and action in the Member States: Lifelong learning encompasses all purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competence (ibid., p. 3).

The findings of the document analysis as well as of the experts' interviews point out that at the level of political rhetoric the national debate is almost entirely determined by the rhetoric of the EU and the OECD. In the political rhetoric in all three countries, lifelong learning is considered as a vehicle for the promotion of both active citizenship and employability. Nevertheless, the findings illustrate how different is the notion of lifelong learning in Germany, Finland, and Greece even though the political rhetoric is identical. The connotations of the term "lifelong learning," the driving forces for promoting this idea, and the priorities given in each country seem to be different.

In Germany, the idea of lifelong learning is mainly linked to employability and is considered as a vehicle for maintaining the competitiveness of the German economy with an emphasis on continuing professional education and training and on promoting diverse forms of learning, validation, and certification. In Finland, whose educational system is characterized by excellent permeability between the different levels of education and an integrated system of validation and certification of informal learning, the contribution of lifelong learning both to maintain social cohesion and remain competitive is highlighted. In Greece, due to the lack of a widespread tradition in adult education and lack of structures and mechanisms for validation and certification of informal learning, the connotation of lifelong learning indicates a strong link to institutionalized adult education.

The findings clearly point out that the concept of lifelong learning seems to become an educational norm and part of the educational narrative in all three countries. A concept that was initially developed at the international level and formulated by international organizations (Council of Europe, UNESCO, OECD, EU) gradually became part of the educational discourse at national level. Its inclusion in the official discourse in Greece, Germany, and Finland initially took place on a declarative level by the national authorities before it was broken down, depending on the type of governance in education (centralized for Greece, regionally in Germany, local to Finland) to the regional and local level. Nevertheless, there is empirical evidence that the adoption and implementation of lifelong learning in the three countries is significantly path dependent, i.e., it is infiltrated by national traditions and culture-specific patterns of meaning.

The way educational policy and administration in Greece, Germany, and Finland adapt and interpret the concept of lifelong learning seems to depend on a number of factors: the actual importance of education and lifelong learning in every country, the social climate that may promote learning outside the formal educational system, the degree of institutionalization of adult education in the respective countries, and the national educational and culture-specific semantic traditions in each country.

Governance Lifelong Learning

Regarding the governance of lifelong learning, the empirical findings confirm the emergence of a transnational educational space in which powerful actors interact with each other on a variety of settings, i.e., public, private, and nongovernmental, and at various levels, i.e., local, regional, national, and supranational.

These findings tend to be in line with the *Memorandum's* appeal to systematically integrate social partners in the development and implementation process, in conjunction with public-private initiatives, and to actively involve local and regional bodies and civil society organizations (pp. 9–10).

The comparative examination of the experts' interviews shows both similarities and differences in the perceptions of experts regarding the influence of the EU and OECD on national education policy. Almost unanimously, the experts confirm the impact of both organizations. However, they are far apart in their assessments of the degree of influence. First, there are some country-specific differences: The interviewed Greek experts confirm a major influence of the European Union on the national education policy. The same is also true for the interviewed Finnish experts who consider a high impact of the EU on the national education policy. They both assign to the Commission its ability for policy formation due to the supranational power of the EU and its financial mechanisms. On the contrary, the German experts expressed skepticism in this regard. This might be explained through the federal structure of Germany. For education policy, the federal states ("Länder") are responsible; it is the "heart" of their policy and an issue that can cause tension among the federal and regional level.

With respect to the impact of the OECD on a national level, country-specific differences appear. In Finland the OECD enjoys the greatest recognition. For the Finnish experts, the impact of the OECD on national education policy is as powerful as the one of the EU. For Greece, the OECD plays an important role, but compared to the influence of the EU, it can be considered as modest. The German respondents seem to be divided regarding their assessment of the OECD's influence. While the representatives of educational administration at federal and state level affirm reluctantly the question of the influence of the OECD on national education policy, at the same time, however, they make this effect relative with reference to the "opportune moment" and the "coincidence" of national priorities and international recommendations. On the contrary, for the experts from the

German educational research, the influence of the organization, since the publication of the PISA results, is undisputed.

When comparing the instruments of governance regarding lifelong learning of both organizations, the EU and OECD, the interviewed experts recognize both similarities and distinct differences. The EU is classified as a supranational authority,⁵ whose decisions and regulations are almost binding to the member states. This organizational structure allows promoting and enforcing certain decisions using EU law. The OECD, however, as an international organization,⁶ cannot affect the sovereignty of its member states or bring out binding decisions for its members. The experts agree that the EU mainly works with funding mechanisms and where the treaties allow it, with legislation that is with “hard” instruments (money, power). Since the introduction of the open method of coordination in education in 2000, the European Commission is also working increasingly with processes such as peer review or monitoring and evaluation. At that time (2000) the *Memorandum* claims lack of appropriate targets and meaningful benchmarks in relation to lifelong learning and highlights the importance of indicators that reflect “the full meaning of lifelong learning” for a coherent policy development (p. 20).

The OECD, in turn, works mainly with recommendations, evaluations, large-scale studies, and peer reviews, in other words, using rather “soft” instruments which are based more on knowledge and expertise.

When asking for key actors in the field of lifelong learning, the verdict of the interviewed experts is astonishingly uniform. EU and OECD are unanimously identified by the experts as influential collective actors. The identified key actors are facilitated by institutional resources. According to Scharpf (2006) material resources and institutional rules belong to institutional resources. The institutional resources include both tangible means such as money, technology, and privileged access to information as well as institutional rules – that means rules by which relations among the actors are regulated, such as collective decision-making process or prohibitions. It is evident that not all actors have equal access to resources. The steering media of money, power, and knowledge are unevenly distributed, creating dependencies and interdependencies between the actors (cf. Ioannidou 2007).

The OECD, for example, using its surveys, international comparative reports, and evaluations, can spread good practice or use “the name and shame” strategy (e.g., PISA). The European Commission emphatically asks for regular education monitoring and reporting from its member states in the framework of the open

⁵Supranational organizations such as the European Union (EU) have due to their constituting treaties legal power to shape national policy in some fields (e.g., economics, labor market). The EU has no legislative competencies in the education field, as stated in the Treaties of Maastricht (Article 126 & 127) and of Amsterdam (Article 149 & 150), but it can strongly influence national education policy through policy formation in other fields.

⁶International organizations such as the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) or the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are influential actors even if, due to their intergovernmental structure, they have no regulative capacities upon their member states. Their power derives from their agenda-setting capacity and their existence as policy-making arenas.

method of coordination or even through legislation (e.g., EU-Adult Education Survey). Furthermore, by means of their publications, the EU and the OECD circulate concepts, norms, and models and generate normative pressure upon their members.

In addition to the collective actors, policy officers at European and national level as well as consultants, experts, and researchers are identified as individual actors who can influence with their decisions the adoption and implementation of lifelong learning. The findings show very clearly that, besides the institutional resources, their influence derives mostly from their personal characteristics. It turns out that experience, knowledge, communication skills, and openness constitute the intellectual resources which are at the disposal of the relevant actors in varying degrees. Furthermore, the findings indicate that they form a kind of closed elite circle who work together and decisively influence the discourse about lifelong learning.

These experts show convergences in their cognitive, normative, and evaluative orientations that result from their specific role within an institutional context. For example, they all consider systematic and evidence-based knowledge as essential for rational decision making. These shared values and common standards facilitate the decision-making process and increase the capacity for strategic action in nonhierarchical contexts.

The findings also support the assumption that the institutional context enables decisions that take place through negotiations rather than by majority rules or unilateral actions or hierarchical order. Thus, it favors the work in networks and working groups, since decisions there take place on the basis of negotiations. In the EU context, the coordination of action usually takes place in the form of negotiations or as a majority decision. For example, the adopted indicators and benchmarks for lifelong learning are the product of continuing negotiations between Member States and Commission. Nevertheless, unilateral actions cannot be excluded because of the bureaucratic and hierarchical organizational structure of the EU. In the OECD context, due to its constitution, decisions derive from negotiations, sometimes even as a majority decision, but never in the form of hierarchical order.

As far-reaching impact of the influence of EU and OECD is the establishment of a particular research paradigm. Both the EU and the OECD enforce the quantitative paradigm with studies and comparative reports based on quantitative indicators. This research paradigm is increasingly shaping evidence-based policy not only at an international but also at a national level (cf. Landesinstitut 2008). In alliance with this research paradigm, a new form of knowledge and a new management philosophy in education seem to have prevailed. The findings suggest that a shift from the input- to output-oriented management takes place all over Europe. The output, the result of the learning effort, moves into the foreground, while input and process aspects that had traditionally served as reference levels gradually lose their significance. This shift requires the generation of relevant knowledge to enable evaluation so that the new form of knowledge and the new management philosophy assist and strengthen one another: The evidence-based policy requires knowledge that is quantifiable and explicit and can be translated in the logic of the educational planners.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on conceptual and governance issues with regard to the adoption of lifelong learning as an international education policy agenda at national level. The analysis highlighted the emergence of a post-national, transnational educational space that enables and accelerates the dissemination of global educational ideas, such as the concept of lifelong learning at national level. Furthermore, it became evident that national path dependencies and culture-specific semantic traditions decisively influence the reception and implementation of these concepts in the respective country-specific reality.

More particularly, regarding the adoption of the concept of lifelong learning in Greece, Germany, and Finland, the findings point out that there are country-specific reinterpretations of the concept and confirm the results of international comparative educational research. Concepts such as lifelong learning, knowledge, economy, and learning society are discursive and ideological products which create within a given historical and sociocultural context their own importance (cf. Robertson 2008; Robertson and Dale 2009).

Hence, the detected differences in Germany, Greece, and Finland are more gradual than they are principal. In all three countries, the influence of the EU and the OECD is well recognized, as well as the impact of their initiatives regarding lifelong learning. All three countries use the definition of lifelong learning as proposed in the *Memorandum*, adopt lifelong learning in national legislation, and promote its implementation. Moreover, their educational administration increasingly adopts new management tools and output-oriented models of governance as proposed by the EU and OECD.

Regarding the governance of lifelong learning, the empirical findings support the emergence of a transnational educational space in which influential actors interact with each other on a variety of settings. The emergence of a transnational educational space undermines the long-term development of purely national education policies and weakens the role of the nation-state in shaping educational policy. Supranational and intergovernmental bodies like the EU and the OECD emerge as major centers of influence in shaping educational policies. These organizations promote new educational tools and practices of governance. The shift to empirical models of educational governance (evidence-based policy) and the shift in focus from input- to output-driven models promote the dominance of specific educational governance instruments based on knowledge and mutual learning such as monitoring and evaluation on the assumption that indicators and comparative reports support autonomy and accountability.

The attention that was paid already with the *Memorandum*, and particularly in recent years, to the construction and further development of indicators leads to increasingly elaborated and composed indicators in this field. Since 2000, impressive progress has been done by the European Commission in cooperation with the OECD in the field of indicators development and benchmarks setting in relation to lifelong learning. The European Lifelong Learning Index (ELLI) is the next step for

country-level assessment of lifelong learning in the EU Member States.⁷ In this context, indicators play an important role as appropriate and effective tools for evidence-based policy. However, the assumption that informed decisions are good decisions suggests also that the quality of decisions rises together with the accumulation of statistical data and information (cf. Keiner 2005). However, the example of the PISA reception in Germany reveals that educational planners interpret the findings from the PISA study according to their interests and mainly use them for the stabilization and legitimacy of their political decision making (cf. Tillmann et al. 2008).

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⁷The conceptual framework for the ELLI-Index (cf. Hoskins et al. 2010) is loosely based on the UNESCO's International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (Delors et al 1996) and the four major dimensions of learning identified: (a) Learning to Know (includes acquisition of knowledge and mastery of learning tools such as concentration, memory, and analysis), (b) Learning to Do (concerns occupational, hands-on, and practical skills), (c) Learning to Live Together (concerns learning that strengthens cooperation and social cohesion), and (d) Learning to Be (includes the fulfillment of a person, as an individual/member of a family/citizen). The ELLI-Index combines 36 variables of lifelong learning that reflect a wide range of learning activities, including participation rates in formal education and training, literacy skills (PISA), employees participating in CVT courses, labor market policies expenditure, and community engagement through cultural activities, among others.

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