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DAEA's answer to the European Commission's Survey on Skills and Qualifications

The Danish Adult Education Association (DAEA) welcomes the initiative of the European Commission to promote a European Area for Skills and Qualifications and particularly the opportunity to comment on this survey through a public consultation.

DAEA is a Danish umbrella organisation representing 34 member organisations. They are all working with non-formal or in-formal adult learning activities on a countrywide basis in Denmark. DAEA recommends that a more strategic and comprehensive 'European Area of Learning' is necessary to face the challenges of Europe.

Non-formal adult learning provides life skills

Non-formal adult education enhances general and vocational knowledge and qualifications of each individual. It improves the ability and motivation to assume self-administration and responsibility, and it provides people with the necessary competences that enable the individual to take active part in society. In short: Non-formal adult education provides 'life skills'.

All kinds of learning are important

DAEA believes that all kinds of learning need to be supported and promoted – formal, non-formal as well as informal learning. These are complementary. We also believe that successful policies and initiatives can only be implemented successfully by bringing all stakeholders on board. The consultation mentions businesses, but social partners are also key players as are civil society organisations in order to reach the overall goals of education, social and employment policies which all together contribute to the European growth agenda.

Evaluation of learning processes

We find the questionnaire for giving feedback to the survey very challenging because of its clear focus on learning outputs which leaves very little space to focus on the learning process aspect which is a core issue in non-formal education. We therefore take the opportunity to choose the email option as an alternative to answer the questionnaire concerning this consultation.

DAEA would here like to draw the attention to the fact that the development of EQF is concentrating very much on the formal education system. Competences and skills that have been acquired in non-formal learning settings might therefore be undervalued.

Basic skills are crucial

In order to manage jobs and lives, key competences are crucial and should be part of any European strategy on education and training. The PIAAC results give evidence of the necessity to enhance the learning of basic skills. 20% of the adult population has low basic



skills – including literacy, numeracy and digital skills. It is urgent that Europe faces this issue by providing and funding learning opportunities for adults to master basic skills.

Learner-centered learning opportunities

Learning opportunities should be learner-centered (centered on their needs) and easily accessible for all – concerning location, schedule and the frequency of the course. Non-formal adult education has proved its efficiency when it comes to teaching basic skills to adults, especially to the ones that were not keen on following courses in a formal education system.

Recognition and validation

The efficiency and success of informal/non-formal learning by reaching people that have had bad experiences with the formal system lead us to underline the importance of recognizing the learning in non-formal settings in order to avoid creating new inequalities between ‘validated’ and the non-validated’ learning.

Guidance on learning opportunities for all

Guidance and counseling are crucial elements of a global lifelong learning strategy. They should be provided to everyone and a focus on guidance and counseling on learning opportunities, whether it has a professional or personal purpose, should be offered to everyone, including the elderly.

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