



**COMPASS – LLL**  
**Collaboration On Modern(ising) Policies and Systematic**  
**Strategies on LLL**

Executive Summary

## Executive Summary

Since January 2010, COMPASS (Collaboration On Modern(ising) Policies and Systematic Strategies on LLL) has developed a strong network of national experts dealing with University LLL. The consortium of this one year project consisted of 12 partners from different European Member States and has been coordinated by EUCEN (European University Continuing Education Network) and supported through the Lifelong Learning Program of the European Commission<sup>1</sup>.

The key objectives of COMPASS were to analyse the European state of play concerning University LLL strategy implementation processes at national, regional and institutional level while promoting the wider and deeper implementation of the “European Universities’ Charter on Lifelong Learning”. This Charter, drafted and published by the European Universities Association (EUA) was adopted by European universities as a basis for further development and implementation of European LLL-strategies and presented to the ministers responsible for Higher Education (HE) in November 2008, in Bordeaux. COMPASS aimed at contributing to the process of making Lifelong Learning (LLL) a reality by bridging the widening gap between the policy making process of LLL at EU level and the actions by various stakeholders. The shared experiences and transfer of best practices with national stakeholders, universities and other providers of LLL undertaken within its scope can be considered as an important starting point in this new direction. This approach also permits to continue the promotion, development and implementation of systematic LLL-strategies on a national and regional level.

More than two years after the Charter has been presented, the huge diversity of LLL activities at the level of HE, as indicated by previous project results like BeFlex and BeFlex+, remains valid while only few governments and institutions seem to have made significant progress implementing comprehensive LLL-strategies. In fact, only a minority of universities has been fully engaged in the process of integrating LLL into its institutional mission and strategies. Thus, the paradigm shift to genuine LLL universities<sup>2</sup> as part of an overarching knowledge system for LLL seems yet to remain a high ranked issue on the policy agenda rather than a visible transformational change process of the higher education institutions.

COMPASS aimed at tackling these main challenges in four steps with a consortium of national ULLL – networks and/or universities representing national networks.

1. Starting from the 10 commitments for HE institutions and governments included in the European Universities Charter on LLL, two surveys (one questionnaire for the EUCEN members and their network; one survey for the analysis of the national state of play) were realised and addressed the national institutions and governmental representatives. Furthermore, policy makers and providers at the European, national and regional level were consulted.
2. Based on the different sources provided by the survey, recommendations for the implementation of national and institutional LLL policy and practice were developed.
3. These findings were subsequently analysed and discussed with the projects partners, their Ministries of Education and representatives of other educational services (e.g. Adult Education and VET association). Hence, by involving various stakeholders and national networks, a platform for both exchange of best practice and wider

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<sup>1</sup> Call EACEA/07/09; Transversal programme KA 1: Policy Cooperation and Innovation

<sup>2</sup> In general, University Lifelong Learning can be said to describe one specifically defined and limited area or activity out of many within the university, whereas Lifelong Learning University embodies a completely integrated LLL concept within the whole university structure and mission. Thus LLLU is considered as a fundamental principle and concept defining a complete university.

dissemination and valorisation of the general and national recommendation plans was provided.

On the basis of the results reached by the COMPASS project, two final dissemination brochures were created:

- Report on LLL-Policy Implementation – Trends & Recommendations of the COMPASS Project, including transversal commentaries and general recommendations for further improvement of LLL-strategies
- National Reports, including transversal commentaries and the respective National Reports about the state of play of LLL policies recommendations

Both papers aim at promoting the development of comprehensive and coherent ULLL-strategies, addressing as well the institutional, as the national and European level while taking into account the European background of the EU 2020 Strategy<sup>3</sup>, the Council conclusion of education and training ("ET 2020")<sup>4</sup> and the Leuven Communiqué<sup>5</sup>.

The results of COMPASS present a bridge between different national experiences on how to face the challenge of incorporating and of reinforcing LLL-strategies and trends of LLL. The project succeeded in creating an evidence base for in-depth knowledge about the state of play and the difficulties and challenges in implementing ULLL-strategies. It provides a platform of exchange and sharing best practices and nourishes the discussion on regional, national and EU level for future work plans and recommendations towards a European Lifelong learning Area.

## The Partnerships

The project was led by EUCEN, the European Association for University Lifelong Learning, with more than 210 members from over 40 countries. The consortium was built in respect to diverse learning cultures, traditions and systems regarding education and training at the HE level. A total of twelve partners from ten different countries (Belgium, France, UK, Germany, Spain, Slovenia, Portugal, Finland, Austria and Switzerland) were engaged with this project. Apart from universities of these countries, all with close links to their respective ULLL-network, in two cases it was possible to involve the national ULLL-networks themselves as part of the consortium (e.g. the Conférence des Directeurs de Service Universitaire de Formation Continue (FR) and the DGWF (German Association for University Continuing and Distance Education) (DE) were part of the consortium.

For more information, please consult <http://www.compass.eucen.eu/>.

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<sup>3</sup> Commission of the European Union (2010), Communication from the Commission, Europe 2020, A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, Brussels: 3.3.2010. COM(2010) 2020 final  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF>

<sup>4</sup> European Council (2009), Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020'), Brussels: (2009/C 119/02)  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:119:0002:0010:EN:PDF>

<sup>5</sup> Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué (2009), The Bologna Process 2020 - The European Higher Education Area in the new decade. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for HE, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 09  
[http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/conference/documents/leuven\\_louvain-la-neuve\\_communique%C3%A9\\_april\\_2009.pdf](http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/conference/documents/leuven_louvain-la-neuve_communique%C3%A9_april_2009.pdf)