

INFORMAL LEARNING

In brief

Understanding “learning by doing” which takes place outside the formal educational curriculum. The occasions in which informal learning develops fall within the different contexts of an individual’s daily life: work, family, free time, etc.

What is it?

As indicated in the definition given by the Commission of the European Community (2001), informal learning falls outside of educational courses and initiatives and formal, structured training (times, methods, discussions) and occurs, often unintentionally, during professional experiences or with the family, or is linked to hobbies and passions (cinema, travelling, art, books, etc) in which the individual engages every day.

Informal learning emphasises the possibility that a person can develop knowledge and skills in the various areas of interaction and in the various communities, professional or otherwise, in which they participate during their life.

What is it for?

- encouraging continuous learning, through the synergy of formal and informal learning
- appreciating the experiences of daily life, including those at work, as opportunities for individual and organisational development and growth
- developing awareness of the many possibilities in which a person can learn
- providing ideas for expanding the occasions for learning outside of formal, structured courses and contexts