

Report from Panel Discussion 1

The first panel discussion of the 9th General Assembly focused on the role of parliaments in ensuring lifelong learning

It was clear that governments around the world recognize the vital role that Scouting plays in supporting the lifelong education of young people.

DR. DISAKUL KASEMSAWAS

Deputy Secretary General
National Scout Organization of Thailand

Thailand's government recognizes that Scouting is part of a learner's life. It promotes the development of virtues and life skills. It builds good citizens for society. Governments need Scouting organizations as partners in order to ensure the non-formal education of young people.

HON. MR. TUANG UNTACHAI

Chairperson of the NLA Committee on Education and Sports
Thailand

Thailand's Education Fund Project aims to instil values, morals, and ethics in teenagers, helping them to become generous citizens. The program encourages higher education. It educates youth to respect their country and their faith. It creates knowledge and understanding of democracy as well.

MR. OLIVIER MATHIEU

Chief Executive
Scouts and Guides of France

Today, only 11% of the working age citizens in the EU participate in lifelong learning. Since 2000, member states have been cooperating in a number of ways to address this. The Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training contains common objectives from early childhood education, to school and vocational education and higher education and adult learning. The EU has set a common benchmark to engage 15% of the population in lifelong learning activities. There is also a commissioner that provides evidence and policy guidance, and is developing a tool that has the potential to become a database on what works in education and training.

We are in a fast moving society. In order to keep up, lifelong learning requires some emphasis on training of adults. The 2016 European “Upskilling Pathways” initiative is a chance for adults who need to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills to find out what knowledge and skills they possess, and have them recognized. It also aims to get people back into learning with a tailor-made package that focuses on the skills they need most. It assists adults in progressing towards a new qualification.

The EU has already made good progress on reducing early school leaving and tertiary educational attainment.

In 2004, France formalized a law to support lifelong professional training. There is now mandatory participation of companies in funding continuous training opportunities for their employees.

France also has a citizen volunteering credit for young people, an excellent example of partnership between parliament and non formal education organizations like Scouting.

Last year, France also passed a law that supports leave for employees who volunteer. Non-formally acquired skills are also now being recognized- students involved in non-profits organizations can transform learned skills into post secondary education credits.

OTHER PERSPECTIVES

There is a need for broader validation of non-formal and informal learning, with a focus on non-tertiary education skills.

Governments need to formally commit a portion of their budgets to supporting the development of non-formal education opportunities.

Parliaments can play a critical role in ensuring that Scouting receives the support necessary to advance informal and non-formal education in our societies.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Kent
Executive Member
World Scout Parliamentary Union

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