



Key competences for all: a lifelong learning approach

27 November - 1 December 2023

Report



MONDAY 27.11	TUESDAY 28.11	WEDNESDAY 29.11	THURSDAY 30.11	FRIDAY 1.12
LLLP & EUROPEAN COMMISSION European Lifelong Learning Stakeholders' Forum LLLAwards Ceremony & Reception	EAEA & EARLALL Regional capacity for Adult Learning & Education SOLIDAR & DIESIS NETWORK Validation of Competences acquired in the civil society sector DARE Lowering the democracy & participation gap - with key competences? EUCA From Study Success to Students' Success OBESSU, FREREF & IIHL Making schools more democratic through citizenship education LLLP & COVY PARTNERS Alliance for Youth Vote Enabling active European citizens for the European Elections 2024	LLL Interest Group LLLP & EAEA European Education Area at a crossroads: key competences & the upcoming EU elections ECSWE Between Key Competences & Potentialities: How to empower a child's unique potential in schools? EFVET & EVTA Securing Cyber Futures: Empowering Skills for Tomorrow ESU Student centred-learning for transversal competencies EAEA Developing Critical Thinking to Counteract Disinformation across Europe SIRIUS NETWORK Lifelong Learning & Skills - Creating a Resilient Future for Migrant students in Education OBESSU, FREREF & IIHL Citizenship competences in the European Year of Skills EARLALL Skills to Co-creating social sustainability with youth VOLONTEUROPE Green employment or green washing?	EUROPEAN COMMISSION European Education Summit WOSM UAct: Scouts in humanitarian response for Ukraine EURASHE Skills Community of Practice: Good practices in Applied Higher Education for all ESN Erasmus Careers: helping students with the design of their learning cycles	EASPD Fostering Inclusion of children with disabilities EFIL Fostering skills of teachers for internationalisation of school education ATEE Methods & resources for professional development of teacher educators SIRIUS NETWORK Supporting the learning needs of migrant teachers across Europe

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The LLLWeek 2023 is organised by the LLLPlatform and its members



In the framework of the European Year of Skills



With the support of the Lifelong Learning Interest Group of the European Parliament



With the support of the Greens, S&D, Renew Europe, EPP and ECR in the European Parliament



And with the financial support of the European Union



WORDS FROM THE HOST



MEP Dragoș Pișlaru

"Investing in skills is the ultimate approach to achieve a competitive economy for the benefit of all.

The European Pact for Skills must be enlarged, in order to reach more people at regional and local level. Local and regional partnerships between business sector, academic sector, local and regional authorities, civil society organisations are essential not only to harness talents in our region, but to ensure that industry ambitions match the potential of our workforce.

Local Pact for Skills could bring together local businesses, local authorities' employment services, training providers and people searching for employment and would address the regional dimension challenge of finding workers with the right skills.

We need better and adapted programs for

skilling, upskilling and reskilling. Economic and social objectives can no longer be treated separately and operating in silos has already shown its limits. The investments in skills needs to go hand in hand with the social investment in people. We need to give more room for private investment and in particular to social impact investment. The strategic investment in child and youth should become the new norm with equal importance as brick and mortar investment. Investment in next generation policies are essential in ensuring that children and young are equipped with the needed skills for life and the future labour markets.

The European Year of Skills is the momentum to become more ambitious in our actions!"

Dragos Pișlaru is a Romanian economist and politician. As a member of the European Parliament, he is the acting chair of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee (EMPL). He is also an active member of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON) and the Tax Matters (FISC). He has joined the European Parliament in 2019 and now runs the REPER party which is affiliated to the European political family Renew Europe.

He is a graduate of the Faculty of International Economic Relations within the Academy of Economic Studies (ASE) in Bucharest with a Bachelor's Degree in International Economics. He attended postgraduate courses, obtaining a diploma of 'In-depth Studies in European Integration' within the ASE. He holds a Master of Science in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science in the United Kingdom, and a Diploma of Entrepreneurship -Case Study Centered Learning at Harvard Business School. He obtained a PhD in economic sciences with a thesis held at the National Institute of Economic Research, within the Romanian Academy.

European lifelong learning stakeholders' forum



On 27 November, LLLP and the European Commission organised the European Lifelong Learning Stakeholders' Forum, a unique meeting to harvest civil society concerns on the mid-term review of the European Education Area. Curious to know more? [Read the dedicated report.](#)

Validation of competences acquired in the civil society sector

28 November 2023 | SOLIDAR Foundation and diesis network

This workshop focused on transversal skills and competences and on the role of CSOs as providers of these competences. Centred on validation and recognition, it addressed current challenges and opportunities.

MEP Alicia Homs Ginel, S&D Group, began by highlighting transversal skills and competences' role in personal and societal development. She contextualised this with the societal changes, notably the twin transitions. To build capacity, people require critical thinking, creativity, adaptability so that they can fight off disinformation, algorithmic mismanagement and contemporary challenges. Civil society organisations become key partners as they support traditional education systems to democratise access to competence development for all. Non-traditional routes to learning must be encouraged, while recognition and validation must be strengthened.

To set the ground, the research of the IMAGES (I Manage and Empower My Skills) and the baSE (Blueprint for advanced skills & trainings in the social economy) projects were presented. Giovanni Serra, Roma Tre University, discussed IMAGES' European Repertoire of Competences for Local Managers in the Third Sector. The sector accounts for 30 million employees and 70 million volunteers who do not have competences obtained on the job validated due to lacking a common EU framework and divergent legislative architectures in

Member States. Six competence areas (knowledge-skills-attitudes) were built to facilitate competence recognition, which project results showed it improved for target groups. Florence Lanzi, University of Liège, presented baSE's aims for an European strategy to address skills mismatch and needs for digital and green skills for social economy. A competence framework and an occupational profile were created to identify training needs and gaps, which were split into four general areas: green transition, digitalisation, inclusion and day-to-day management. Based on contextual reports in project partner countries, training offer inventory, literature review and focus groups, a survey was implemented in 10 countries, identifying the top three training priorities and needs.

«Non-traditional routes to learning must be encouraged»

Francesco Losappio, Policy Officer DG EMPL, reflected on the convergence between projects as those above and ESCO's role to help learners to understand skill gaps, show previously acquired competences and engage in mobility based on a shared language. ESCO draws from all projects and research on the topic, and, most recently, DG EMPL is aiming to

better contextualise skills within ESCO for different sectors, making competences granular enough to account for diversity. Based on CEDEFOP and EURES findings, Mr Losappio acknowledged the increased importance of transversal competences. Tatjana Babrauskiene, EESC, highlighted the difficulty of recognising and validating transversal competences. Current challenges revolve around **employers focusing more on technical skills due to the ease in measuring and acknowledging them, but transversal competences, and specifically attitudes, are what make us human.** To this end, civil society can link people with such competences. The EU's excessive focus on competitiveness neglects active participation in communities. She commended the European Year of Skills, underlining that it remains narrow by not reflecting transversal competences.

Pauline Boivin, Policy and Project Manager LLLP, explained that in the absence of knowledge and attitudes, skills make education resemble a pendulum, gravitating towards immediate needs only. With the TRANSVAL-EU project, LLLP mapped 35 EU policies, identifying superficial references to transversal competences, **terminological confusion** and prioritisation of skills over competences. Since all learners need access to such competences, the competence frameworks become an aid to educators, trainers and practitioners to support the most disadvantaged learners. Nevertheless, more tools are needed to translate the complex competences frameworks for practitioners and for that, examples like ETF's Scaffold card game can be beneficial. However, such examples need specific funding at EU level and more peer learning activities on transversal competences.



Nature & Power: an educational simulation of democracy

28 November 2023 | EUNET

How can democracy, cross-border cooperation, economic development and environmental protection be reconciled?

 Sabine Rohmann and Richard Stock (EUNET) gave a general presentation of an educational simulation aimed at **developing democratic competences** as well as for the modalities of its implementation. The project started in 2015 and is meant to help young people build democratic competences, using the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), which include values, attitudes, aptitudes and knowledge, highlighting critical-thinking and respect for diversity. It is meant to be the base for the pedagogical development of schools and the continuous training cycle.

The simulation involves various stakeholders like the press, young people, expert teams, etc. It includes ten expert groups, two press groups, local departments, town councils, environmental protection experts, farmers' cooperatives, among others. After identifying stakeholders, role studies and meetings are held to develop shared strategies, followed by individual evaluations, press conferences, and a collective final assessment.

The project aligns with the Natura 2000 initiative, incorporating elements of sustainable development, participatory democracy, and cross-border cooperation. A practical example is the construction of a road between two villages across a border, considering both environmental conservation and democratic processes. The initial phase involves research, gathering resources, and conducting fieldwork. In line with Natura 2000's environmental protection goals, if natural spaces can't be preserved, compensatory measures like reforestation are required.

During the Q&A session participants discussed the relevance of intercultural and interlinguistic projects, particularly in VET, as well as empowering learners. Even though direct participation is easier at the local level, examples of similar processes at European level should be possible (e.g. railway projects also involve cross-border collaboration and participatory democracy). The simulation helps participants **understand complex processes and the role of civil society in decision-making.** Funding for the project was provided by Interreg, and participating schools secured additional funding through partnerships. Funding for the project was provided by Interreg, and participating schools secured additional funding through partnerships.



Regional capacity for Adult Learning and Education

28 November 2023 | EARLALL & EAEA

The workshop was focused on the regional dimension of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) and the tools and strategies which make ALE initiatives possible at this level.

In this line, the event kicked off with a keynote speech by Anne Rudisuhli, a member of the Committee of the Regions representing the Bouches-du-Rhône Departmental Council. Ms Rushuli was a rapporteur on the Opinion linked to Mentoring as a powerful and meaningful tool for the Europe of Tomorrow. She underlined the **transformative power of learning vis-a-vis societal challenges** and the recognition of mentoring as a key instrument in combating inequalities, fostering individual and professional development, and nurturing social inclusion, solidarity, and tolerance.

The opinion includes key proposals such as defining a common European quality label, regional and local authorities should allocate further funds to mentoring and inclusion programs, including the increase of the ESF+ budget. In addition, the opinion highlights mentoring as a powerful tool for lifelong learning as it goes beyond formal education and fills in gaps of guidance that other tools cannot. Ms Rudishli shared the French national experience through Le Collectif Mentorat, an organisation formed in 2019 comprising 73 organisations which develop mentoring programs. Another example shared during the event was Duo for a Job by Elisabeth Verniers, Advocacy

Manager. Duo for a Job is a mentoring organisation based in Brussels matching Duo pairs from young people of foreign origin who have difficulties in the labour market and experienced people over 50 whose competences are not sufficiently valued.

The second part of the event included the presentation of key lessons from the REGALE project and a roundtable around the tools and strategies for cooperation and success in ALE. Francesca Torlone, professor at the University of Florence, underlined that the key lessons included widening the target of adult learning to include low-skilled adults and reducing the 'learning-exclusion equilibrium'. In addition, Ms Torlone pointed to the variety of best practices in ALE that the project identified. The key lessons can be further explored in [this publication](#) and the best practices have been mapped out in [this report](#).

The final section of the conference brought together public authorities, CSOs and Education providers and was moderated by Ms Naomi Philips (Deputy Chief Executive Learning and Work Institute, UK). The discussion was filled with best practice examples from each panellist on how they



foster conditions, tools and strategies for adult learning and education in their territories. For example, in the case of Baden Württemberg, Andrea Bernert-Bürkle shared with participants how vhs Baden Württemberg (the Adult Education Association in the region) proposed work-based learning as well as a mentoring program; allowing the regional system to better address demographic challenges and changes. As for the European context, Mr Miguel Fernandez Diaz (Adult Skills Policies, European Commission) presented how the Commission provides support to actors involved in upskilling initiatives. This work is done mainly through the Pact for Skills (as part of the Skills Agenda) which has reached over 1,500 members and 20 large-scale skills partnerships (sectoral partnerships of EU dimension).

Ms Naomi Philips (Deputy Chief Executive Learning and Work Institute, UK) in her conclusions and insights from the panellists highlighted the important role for policy and legal frameworks to adapt at the regional level to facilitate Adult

Learning and Education. In addition, she suggested that learning providers need to show open-mindedness and flexibility. She also underscored the **potential of ALE in strengthening the resilience in communities, through encouraging a lifelong learning perspective and adaptable solutions**. The conference was closed by Charlotte Ede (Communications and Projects Officer at EARLALL) putting forward the foundational importance of cooperation, particularly among stakeholders at the local and regional level for lifelong learning to grow and continue.





Lowering the democracy and participation gap with key competences?

28 November 2023 | DARE Network

This workshop reflected on the role of key competences for combating radicalisation, extremism, the climate crisis, and for shaping the digital transition and the civic space.

Daria Arlavi, Policy Officer DG EAC, acknowledged the importance that the key competences approach had on aiding Member States in redefining their work on learning outcomes. The appetite for competence frameworks is clear, and the European Commission is making efforts to **simplify, connect and avoid duplication** to aid practitioners' adaptation. Regarding civic competences, Ms Arlavi drew an alarm signal as they have been declining, as captured by the latest edition of the International Survey on Civic Competences. This can be connected with insufficient educational discussions on voting, constitutional structures, and political rules across Member States.

Evgeniya Khoroltseva, DARE Network, insisted on the important role that civil society organisations play in bridging gaps regarding the uptake of competence frameworks. The reason for this is that a whole-community approach ensures practising civic competences beyond formal education. Georg Pirker, DARE Network, insisted on the complexity of terms, various frameworks and the cross-cutting nature of citizenship education. He contended that practitioners need a handbook on using competence frameworks, as their

operationalisation is much more needed than any academic discussion on them. Citizenship education must better reveal to learners how they can be civically activated to protect their rights in the workplace or their civic space. Elisa Gambardella, SOLIDAR Foundation and LLLP, agreed on **bridging policy and practitioner levels** when it came to competence frameworks. Terminological coherence was deemed crucial by her to better promote policies on competences and ensure the Member States are advancing at the same speed. She reflected on the decline in involvement in associations (trade unions, civil society, political parties, collectives) and civic education was frequently performed through such participation.

Participants provided resources for **simplifying key competences**, such as the ETF Scaffold card deck, the LICEAL project or the findings of the TRANSVAL-EU project. They agreed that competence frameworks remain a tool that should be broad enough to embolden participation and multiply opportunities for learning rather than constrict practitioners. To this end, **guidelines on implementation of frameworks** might be more beneficial.



Making schools more democratic through citizenship education

28 November 2023 | FREREF, OBESSU, IIHL

The first of two workshops dedicated to the CITIZED project presented practical tools to make citizenship education a reality in classrooms and beyond.

The event started with Claudio Dondi and Irene Baldi (International Institute of Humanitarian Law - IHL) explaining the project's aim: to fill in existing implementation gaps of existing citizenship education policies, based on teachers' capacity building and empowerment and the **schools' commitment to the education aim of learning to live together**. The aim of the first phase of the project was to explore the current state of CE in Europe by analysing different European national policies on CE, to uncover what the challenges to CE are, and lay the foundations for the next phases of the project. The key results of the analysis were explained according to the: context; content; organisation; assessment; trainings.

Nikolai Weber (Vienna Forum for Democracy and Human Rights - Vienna Forum) presented the Teachers' Competence Framework for CE, inspired by the Council of Europe's RFCDC butterfly. The understanding is that, to improve CE, it is not more knowledge that is needed, but the method of how we are teaching it, hence the focus on the need for more transversal skills.

Catherine Carré-Karlinger (Vienna Forum) proceeded to explain the project's Whole

school approach toolkit: it addresses teachers, educators, teacher trainers, and the whole school community to undertake a systemic approach to CE, highlighting the importance of CE, the overall principles of implementing CE in schools, good practices, and a collection of supporting tools.

Anna Weinrich (Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions - OBESSU) argued about the key role students play in CE. Indeed, to advocate for CE in schools, we cannot forget about the classroom experts: the students; and have the students be viewed as and view themselves as actors, and not as recipients. OBESSU's Empowering Students Participation in Campaigning (EPIC) project precisely tackles the empowerment of the youth to participate in society and engage in active decision-making processes.

Catherine Blaya and Jimmy Stef (Université Côte d'Azur) explained the CITIZED project's Teacher's Training: an online training course for teachers, trainers, teachers' trainers, for CE. The training focuses on four topics - school climate and cyberbullying; gender equality; diversity and inclusion; freedom of expression - and is tailored according to the needs of the teachers in teaching CE.



From Study Success to Students' Success

28 November 2023 | EucA

What does being a successful student mean? How learner-centred are our higher education systems? How can we foster an environment that is conducive of positive change for students?

Alessandro Panza, MEP and host of the event, praised the LLLWeek as very important for youth, students, workers, and for the inclusion and development of the concept of citizenship related to learning.

But learning doesn't only happen in the classroom, said Mirela Mazalu, Director of EucA. The entire learning experience takes place on the campus. **Students live transformative experiences at universities but this is being determined by the extent to which students are engaged in purposeful activities.** This is a very good indicator of learning. EucA conducted research on the way that institutions provide services to students. Besides academia, the student affairs offices can provide other types of support around well being, extracurricular activities, internships, career counselling.

University students brought their own experiences in universities and support services from the institutions. They praised the value of deep inter-relationships of students and commitment to academic excellence is fundamental for students' success. They also reported about how he benefited from the proximity to the business world and entrepreneurs that he could learn from.

Horia Onita, President, European Students' Union said that student affairs are not yet sufficiently coherent on how to approach the services they provide. It's very local-based. Lack of community is one of the main reasons for students' drop-out. Student-centred learning is about students' environment (well-being, guidance, filling primary needs and role of non-formal activities...) and also agency. Education is a micro-democracy environment where one can build future-proof competences: it cannot be one monolithic journey, hence the role of students affairs.

Vincenzo Salvatore, President, Conferenza Collegi Universitari di Merito (CCUM) said that CCUM are peculiar residence halls, they help students to reach the highest grades. They provide additional subjects to their traditional curriculum eg soft skills and on values.

The event ended with an Award Ceremony for the winners of the EQT Award Ceremony, an EucA Success Story! and how they created a game tool (a quiz) to engage young people in EU elections. Indeed EucA also promotes active citizenship. Students should be aware that they are also European citizens.



COYV Alliance for Youth Vote

28 November 2023 | LLLP and OBESSU

A networking reception centred on the Alliance for Youth Vote ahead of the European Elections ended the second day of the LLLWeek

The event was kicked-off by Marta Concepción Mederos, Vice-President of the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLLp). She highlighted the importance of developing common actions such as awareness raising and advocacy campaigns, meetings with MEPs and political parties and meetings of the Alliance where we can both join forces and at the same time support each other's initiatives to generate a bigger impact across the EU.

LLLp Project and Policy Coordinator Veronica Arduino explained the rationale to form an Alliance of youth and civil society organisations. The motivation stems from the desire to counteract the **general decline of voter turnout in recent decades:** a decline which is sharper amongst young people and that generates problems of legitimacy for both national and supranational democratic

«youth and civil society organisations will be able to have a bigger impact by working together in common actions but also helping already existing initiatives reach a wider audience»

Among the main reasons to join the Alliance, Veronica underlined:

Joining forces: youth and civil society organisations will be able to have a bigger impact by working together in common actions but also helping already existing initiatives reach a wider audience.

Networking and exchanging: for youth and civil society organisations to get in contact with others and exchange good practices on educational and communication actions around democratic processes.

Action Plan towards 2024: Prepare in partnership a joint action plan that can reach out to as many first time voters as possible for European Parliament elections in 2024.

systems. Through this Alliance, civil society organisations seek to increase the impact on vote turnout but not of all on the awareness that elections matter.

It was shared that a variety of organisations have already shown interest and joined the Alliance including: the Centre for European Volunteering, Inter Alia, European Vocational Training Association, Generation Climate Europe, gagarErasmus, Culture Action Europe and the European Federation of Intercultural Learning, among others. These organisations have already started implementing different actions which will



continue in 2024 such as media literacy & critical thinking training sessions, capacity-building for CSOs and awareness raising & advocacy campaigns.

The coordination of the Alliance will be carried out by the Lifelong Learning Platform and will kick off with an online meeting in January followed by an in person meeting in February. [You can save the date for the 12 & 13 February and register your interest in joining the Alliance here.](#)

The event was focused on giving shape to the “Alliance for Youth Vote”, an initiative of the COYV project partners (Co-Operation Youth Vote - Enabling future active

European citizens) funded by the Erasmus+ programme.



Between Key Competences and Potentialities: How to empower a child’s unique potential in schools?

29 November 2023 | ECSWE

This workshop explored new perspectives when it comes to the importance of holistic education, personalised assessment and a whole-school approach towards unravelling a child’s unique potential.

The event opened with the claim of wanting to shift the focus from tasks and performance to human potentialities. Dora Simunovic and Georg Juergens (ECSWE) opened the debate introducing the speakers and promoting a vision that places children and their unique individual potential at the centre of modern pedagogies.



Martyn Rawson and Kath Bransby (online) elaborated on key competences from the Steiner Waldorf perspective and how the development of those can be nurtured in formal educational settings, including a framework for an inclusive curriculum. The started off by giving an overview of what potentialities mean. **«The question should not be: what does a human being need to know and be able to do for the existing social order?, but rather: What capacities are latent in this human being, and what lies within that can be developed?»**. Potentialities are the different modes by which the Self engages with the world. Building curricula as mechanisms means that they focus on potentialities rather than individual subjects or, worse, content itself. A curriculum should, instead, provides learning opportunities to develop potentialities across the subjects.

Dominic Richardson, Learning for Well-Being Institute, illustrated «What makes me? Core Capacities for Living and Learning» initiative, lead by UNICEF Innocenti. A few points worth highlighting:

- Some capacities have unique attributes: Listening, Inquiring, Observing, Sensory awareness
- Core capacities are not inherently positive or negative: Reflecting (Rumination); Embodying; Sensing (Intuition)
- Adults and children (need to) use core capacities differently: Listening and Inquiring
- Enabling environments matters for children: Over stimulation, space, observation, safety
- Personal and social attributes can matter: gender, trauma, age, parental poverty, education.

Maria Podlasek-Ziegler, from the European Commission, closed the panel discussion and illustrated the work of the EU on Key competences for lifelong learners, describing their importance for children.





Developing Critical Thinking to Counteract Disinformation

29 November 2023 | EAEA

The proliferation of disinformation poses a significant challenge, making it essential for individuals to possess critical thinking skills - and to practice them!

The event aimed to explore shortages, disparities and skill gaps in the cybersecurity sector. According to Matthews Jose, Research Engineer at the University of Lorraine, there is a **growing challenge in defending against cyber threats due to lack of skills in the labour market**, as observed by the last [Fortinet Global](#), [ISC](#) and [ISACA](#) reports.

Challenges include rapid technological advances, insufficient formal cybersecurity education, high demand for experienced workers, budget limitations, and a significant gender and diversity gap in the workforce. To combat these issues, solutions proposed include investing in cybersecurity education and training and facilitating certifications. Mentorships and apprenticeship programs are also welcomed, as well as **collaborating with academics and business**. Lastly, it would be vital to explore the role of automation and AI, as it is predicted that 40% network based services will be automated by 2030. In this context, the [Rewire project](#) promotes skills development in the EU's industrial cybersecurity ecosystem. It aims to create a European Cybersecurity Blueprint (mapping of profiles and needed skills), develop the [European Cybersecurity Skills Framework](#), provide training programs, and establish

an Observatory for cybersecurity. The [Job Ads Analyzer](#), a key tool in this project, will help map online courses and emerging job opportunities and is expected to launch in 2024.

Another key element in the development of the sector is the promotion of diversity and inclusion. As stated by Saskia Brugman, Operational Coordinator, [Women4Cyber Foundation](#), **currently only 25% of the younger workforce in cybersecurity are women**, a number that decreases in older generations. The skills gap cannot be bridged without tapping into half of the available workforce, as diverse teams tend to yield better results. The lack of women in the sector can be explained by how cybersecurity is not presented as a career path during the school years, lack of awareness, stereotypes of the cybersecurity field, limited representation at leadership levels, unconscious bias in hiring and promotion, work-life balance challenges and an unwelcoming work environment. This is why Women4Cyber raises awareness, particularly in the human resources sector, through **mentorship programmes** and webinars, as well as the [Entrepreneurship Award](#) and the [CyberAgent project](#).

Other actors, such as [Technobel](#), a skills centre in Wallonia, focus on educational engineering: Hervé Docq, Director of Technobel explained how the centre is working on soft skills like active learning, trust, respect, communication, collaboration, conflict resolution, from a learners centred approach. Collaboration with industry is also key, and in this regard, [My Technobel](#) brings together projects and news of jobseekers in training at the centre and showcases the skills developed by students.

Following this emphasis on skills, Norman Röhner, Policy Officer at All Digital, highlighted **cybersecurity literacy** for all, which include protecting devices, personal data and privacy, health and the environment, taking into account that cybersecurity cannot be understood in a vacuum: all systems are interconnected. In this regard,



[MyDigiSkills](#) helps users understand their digital competences (according to JCR's DigComp), particularly information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety and problem solving.

Participants discussed how to reach end users, for which service providers are responsible, but without forgetting that a whole-of-government approach, incorporating cybersecurity in training, lifelong learning and promotion of individual learning accounts, is key. For this reason, collaboration with public authorities, VET and higher education providers and schools is vital to raise awareness of the situation of the sector to the general public, but also to policy makers.





Creating a Resilient Future for Migrant students in Education

29 November 2023 | SIRIUS Network

This event showcased the importance of integrating migrant students in education through peer-learning activities, through the KIDS4ALL project.

Following Mialy Dermish's (SIRIUS Network) introduction, Janice Darmanin (Institute for Education in Malta) presented its policy brief, addressed to policy makers and stakeholders, which aims to underline the importance and possibilities that peer learning offers. Sara Sow Linares (SIRIUS Network) guided the open discussion on peer learning, its importance, and the policy recommendations presented throughout.

The KIDS4ALL project facilitates integration of migrant students in educational contexts. The aim is to introduce peer learning in the classroom, to strengthen transcultural and interdisciplinary skills and provide a sense of belonging and, hence, have children from different backgrounds work together. Indeed, peer learning offers important skills, including: adaptability; resilience; decision-making; problem-solving.

Mialy Dermish presented the project's 3-phase learning passage which starts with the formation of buddy couples. The second learning passage is the theoretical phase, which centers around the acquisition of traditional learning material; the third passage is, instead, preparing the students on the skills needed to work with one another and mutually explain concepts. The last

phase is the implementation phase, where students learn to learn by engaging with one another and presenting to each other the concepts. It is futile to focus on academics alone, but key to focus on transversal skills, to get a holistic approach to learning which allows each child to showcase their competences, develop cultural intelligence, and own their learning.

The project's policy brief tackles how **lifelong learning competencies strengthen the development of all children**, including migrant children; provide a link between lifelong learning and the European Year of Skills; and provides recommendations on how the school community can integrate lifelong learning competences and peer-learning in the classroom. The recommendations that emerged are that **schools need to develop strategies relevant to peer-learning** to better integrate all students; to develop a legislative framework; to involve more stakeholders together and design an evaluation mechanism; to support educators and volunteers who work with children.



LLL Interest Group - EU Education Area at a crossroad: key competences and the EU elections

29 November 2023 | LLLP and EAEA

Aligned with the upcoming EU elections, a midterm review of the European Education Area takes stock of what the future has in store for learning in Europe.

The final 2023 meeting of the European Parliament's Interest Group on Lifelong Learning focused on EU elections' impact on the Interest Group's work and it was topically held in the Parliament's Info Hub, the official 2024 EU Elections Hub. A series of EU projects on voting participation were presented: What Europe Does for Me?, Together-EU and the Youth Hub. The first accounts for EU policies impacting citizens' life in different regions, the second is a reminder for EU elections participation and the latter connects EU initiatives for youth.

An overview from Cristina Galache Matabuena, Policy Officer DG EAC, on the EEA mid-term review process was provided. The pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the twin transitions hampered the enhancement of inclusion in education and training, of citizenship education, of digital education, of making mobility a reality and of teachers' role. The European Education Summit concludes the mid-term review, and launches the interim policy evaluation, which continues in early 2024 with an **Open Public Consultation on the EEA**. Besides this interim evaluation process, the Commission will continue the work on the remaining EEA initiatives foreseen for 2024: **a Communication on Joint European**

Degrees and two Proposals for Council Recommendations on quality assurance and sustainable academic careers.

MEP Victor Negrescu, S&D Group, mentioned the 60 million EUR increase for Erasmus+ 2024 budget. He recalled the funding resources for education and training, beyond Erasmus+: the European structural funds, the National Recovery and Resilience Funds (NRRPs). He explained that 10% of NRRPs' budget is dedicated to education and training, but the quality of investment is doubtful. **Though all NRRPs invest in skills, there is little coherence when looking at which targets, achievements or milestones Member States set.** MEP Negrescu insisted on involving all stakeholders in assessing and monitoring targets on learning, referring to the **European Semester Country Reports and the need for each report to contain a section on EEA's implementation.** More resources and better connections between the different calls for tenders and financial objectives of EU programmes are needed. MEP Negrescu recalled that for Europe to be a global leader people require competences. A **European Action Plan for Education** will be needed to rally up action in this direction.

Elisa Gambardella, President LLLP,

reflected on the outcomes of the European Lifelong Learning Stakeholders Forum. She explained civil society's plea to be viewed as a key partner, and the way in which stakeholders broke silos to work cross-sectorally. The European Commission must mirror such approaches and ensure that the next mandate foresees a **Vice-President for Lifelong Learning** that oversees different learning strategies and communicates a holistic vision of lifelong learning. **Stakeholders reflected on the EEA's underachievement in equity, on civil society's exclusion from EEA's governance structure, and the lack of data for lifelong learning policymaking.** The data is, frequently, available from stakeholders, who also account for monitoring qualitatively the learning process, but Member States are less inclined to collaborate with them. She insisted that civil society can democratise learning, uniting formal, informal and non-formal learning environments, supporting meeting EEA targets. Marta Concepcion

Mederos, WOSM, contributed with a perspective on **uniting informal, non-formal and formal learning environments** in constant synergies, considering that guidelines on such collaboration are scarce. The messages from civil society account for the fact that focusing on competences for labour markets not only misses out further competences required by stakeholders for societal participation.

Participants considered together the importance of happiness and motivation for learners' wellbeing and capacity to develop further competences. The meeting was adjourned with a video message from MEP Michaela Šojdrová, who reiterated the great work done in the current mandate on the EEA but called attention to the need to **engage stakeholders consistently in the monitoring and evaluation of the EEA as well as in the upcoming cycle of the EEA.**



Repositioning Citizenship Education in the European Year of Skills

29 November 2023 | FREREF, OBESSU, IHL

The second workshop focusing on the CITIZED project addressed political challenges to the prioritisation of citizenship education

The event was a policy debate on the five key challenges identified in the CITIZENSHIP Education (CITIZED) project: an Erasmus+ project aimed at finding a better way to implement citizenship education (CE) in Europe. The introductory words were given by MEP Hannes Heide and MEP Massimiliano Smeriglio on the importance of CE in education and on how **cross-curricular approaches and professional development opportunities are needed for teachers**, in a joint effort from all Member States. The discussion centered around the five key challenges to CE identified in the project, and on the overall recommendations presented to bring about quality CE in schools. The challenges identified are:

1. Limited attention given to CE into the agenda of schools, ministries of education;
2. Good purpose is easy, good implementation is not;
3. Reference frameworks and bottom-up initiatives;
4. Teachers' education and professional development;
5. Assessing learning outcomes of citizenship education

Essentially, to bring about CE in schools, the CITIZED project proposes a cross-curricular

approach **involving different stakeholders;** coordination among different actors; the whole school's take on responsibility and not that of a single teacher; focus on critical thinking as opposed to assessment only. The panel discussion followed with interesting insights and comments on such challenges to and recommendations for CE.

Shams Asadi (Human Rights Commissioner and head of the Human Rights Office of the City of Vienna) highlighted how participation is among the four pillars of the UDHR's pillars of human rights, and how discussing and critically thinking on the issues we are faced with nowadays is key for student development.

Mikael Leyi (SOLIDAR) commented on the need to broaden CE, to involve students in decision-making processes and make it a practical matter. **Although the government and politicians present a common sentiment on the need for global CE, when it comes to allocating funds for it and budgeting, CE often does not lie within the budgeting priorities.**

Bernd Gebauer (Hessian Ministry of Education) commented on how bringing CE in schools is not only about implementing



it, but about how schools promote an international debate on what constitutes CE. Also, as mentioned in the CITIZED project's policy recommendations, providing teacher training that involves the whole school, not only teachers, is often avoided and quite difficult, though needed.

Joyce Grech (Ministry of Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation) mentioned how what is controversial to today's parents may not be controversial to today's students. Therefore, students should be listened to and their interests taken into consideration when shaping CE.

Walter Scavello (Liceo Cassini) commented on the need for teacher professional development opportunities and career development, as a teacher himself. He also highlighted the need for students to be involved in bottom-up approach projects, to foster self-assessment for students, and involve caregivers and families overall in school activities.

Marta Concepción Mederos (World Organisation of the Scout Movement) emphasised how **citizenship education cannot happen without the community**; how students should be involved in decision-making processes; education should be seen as transformatory; and CE should be taught in parallel to mental, physical, environmental, social well-being. Marta closed the event by expressing a need to re-launch participation in schools, and that, despite the educational community's efforts, schools still have a long way to go to implement effective CE.



Student centred-learning for transversal competencies

29 November 2023 | ESU

How can already existing policy developments and paradigms, especially student-centred learning, be expanded? How can they be used with learning outcomes and adapted for emerging trends?

MEP Dragos Pişlaru, Renew Europe Group, highlighted the European Year of Skills (EYS) and the importance of ensuring its robust legacy. He recalled the various EU targets on skilled Europeans and called for meaningful action for their achievement, in conjunction with the assessment of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) implementation,

foreseen for 2024. **Education and training systems cannot resemble conveyor belts**, outputting skilled workers. To achieve goals on twin transitions, more investment is needed into skills and human capital. Learning paths must be individualised, since each learner's background has a quintessential impact on their journey. The



entire learning ecosystem must be on board to bridge education with societal needs and break silos to ensure that investment in skills truly aids learners' development as full people. He recalled the Micro-Credentials and Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs), and how such initiatives create adaptable pathways that serve NEETs. He insisted that universities can be a hub for people to come in and out of learning. Funding needs to be increased, but the methods and approaches to learning must also change.

Horia Onita, President of the European Students' Union (ESU), outlined a need for a **whole-approach to policies based on learning outcomes**. Assessment must be adapted to align with what learners aim to achieve. Nevertheless, learners require transversal competences, counselling and an ecosystem that supports participation. In the absence of support mechanisms, given the skills promoted, the excessive fragmentation, the lack of recognition and stackability, policies cannot deliver a true student-centred approach - SCL. The paradox of choices renders SCL impracticable without adequate guidance. Further missing pieces for SCL are the fact that only a third of Member States progressed on the implementation of the Council Recommendation on the Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning, digitalisation inhibiting SCL if the EdTech sector is unregulated, and transversal skills absent from curricula.

Kinga Szuly, Head of Sector, Higher Education Policy, DG EAC, outlined how learners participation is improved with the European Strategy for Universities and the European Universities Initiative, which account for 50 alliances from 35 countries. **The student-centred approach is central to any application to join the European Universities Initiative**, as each

higher education institution must provide flexible pathways. She reassured that the EU will work on a joint European Degree to boost flexibility, and clarified that this needs strong quality assurance mechanisms and high quality staff. Klara Engels-Perenyi, Policy Officer, DG EMPL, explained that the EYS was about all competences, even if highlighting specific skills. She pointed towards the challenge of convincing national governments to increase investment in skills. Without consistent support, it is difficult to build the culture of lifelong learning which initiatives like Micro-Credentials and ILAs promote.

Brikena Xhomaqi, Director LLLP, reflected on the fact that **the entire education and training system is not developing the learning to learn competences and does not socialise active learners**. Educators cannot be the only holders of knowledge, as learning environments should be a place for co-creation and not just knowledge transmission. Any effort for a SCL approach depends on changing methods of teaching and learning. This is connected to the need for a smarter way to fund education and training and a better connection between all available funding at EU level, since many beneficiaries are uncertain about how to connect ESF+, E+, structural funds and similar sources. SCL demands a systemic change.

Participants echoed the bureaucracy in higher education institutions preventing them from developing SCL.



Skills to co-creating social sustainability with youth

29 November 2023 | EARLALL

This workshop addressed the challenges of involving NEETs (those that are not in employment, education or training) in our education systems to avoid that they become early-leavers.

Jonas Abrahamsson and Therese Ydrén, Project Coordinator and Project Manager at Västra Götaland Region (Sweden) presented NEETs For NEETs (N4N), a project which aims at empowering young adults to develop skills, by co-creating and designing training sessions with and by NEETs themselves. On the basis of this model, partners and NEETs created local pilot trainings to share knowledge, experiences, development strategies and motivation with other young people, including Train the Trainer workshops, where the youth educated project coordinators and staff working with NEETs from their own perspective.

Training Workshops were the first experience for the young beneficiaries to develop confidence, language and presentation skills as well as to train new staff and other NEETs, developing decision-making and problem-solving skills, since they moderated, managed the agenda, organised activities, sessions, etc. As a result, 6 ReACT tools for empowerment were developed, 107 NEETs and 51 staff members were trained, and 4 new training concepts were created. The project's biggest impact is the two-way street of learning - both the trainers and the trainees are learning from each other, as

well as the international exchanges within the project. The conference, emphasising co-creation as a key aspect of the project, offered a platform for young participants to share their personal journeys. Young participants shared their stories of resilience and emphasised the importance of involving young people, especially NEETs, in planning and managing activities that concern them.

Lastly, partners shared their experience with working with NEETs, and shared that they became more aware of their needs, including accessibility to resources and existing barriers. Raza Jawad, Labor Market Administrator at Borås Stadearning, highlighted outcomes for staff such as continuous evaluation and critical assessments, **deconstructing responsibilities and power structures, identifying areas needed of support but without taking ownership from youth and need of co-creation processes.**

«It is important to involve young people, especially NEETs, in planning and managing activities that concern them.»



Green employment or green washing?

29 November 2023 | VOLONTEUROPE

Inspiring practices and a networking reception concluded the third day of the LLLWeek!

Tina Mavrich (European Association for the Education of Adults) gave a presentation on EAEA's growing commitment to sustainability and on the projects on sustainability that EAEA is currying working on, namely:

- SMALEI (Sustainability Matrix for Adult Learning Institutions) project: aimed at raising the awareness of adult learning and education (ALE) providers about the environmental and climate change challenges, to take action towards sustainable growth.
- Tale: (Transformatory Adult Learning Education): uses transformative learning approaches to further the green transition, in collaboration between ALE institutions and communities.
- Engage4BIO project: works on five European hubs to strengthen circular, sustainable bioeconomy and sustainable regional development, all the while engaging citizens through awareness raising and education on sustainable production, consumption and lifestyles.

Furkan Sorkuncuk (Volonteurope), introduced Volonteurope's 'Greener Future' project. Essentially, the project has three objectives: 1. To identify, assess, create opportunities on different European

sustainable initiatives; 2. To enhance collaboration between the youth and other relevant stakeholders and European organisations; 3. To implement training modules on sustainable and social initiatives for the youth.

Joop Hazenberg, author of the book 'The Climate Action Guide', gave a presentation on his book, whilst presenting facts and explanations as to the increase of CO2 emissions since the Second World War, and on recommendations each one of us can do to tackle climate change. Essentially, Joop Hazenberg's book explains, in a simple manner, what climate change is and what we, as consumers, can do to go about it. Essentially, after the Second World War, CO2 emissions went up; once that happened, humanity benefitted from a climate where we could invest in agriculture, which, very quickly, drastically increased the amount of CO2 emissions. To become Net0 by 2050, as stated in the COP21, the emissions need to go down rapidly. Though this is not realistic, this is what needs to be done. Joop Hazenberg ended his presentation by giving us the 10 recommendations mentioned in his book, which each one of us can do to be more climate-friendly.



UAct: Scouts in humanitarian response for Ukraine

30 November 2023 | WOSM

The workshop discussed a partnership with UNICEF that was launched in the early days of the war in Ukraine and that aims to provide humanitarian support to Ukrainian children and families.

Marta Concepción Mederos, LLLP Steering Committee member and WOSM External Representative, started with a brief presentation of UAct, a project that aims to provide humanitarian support to Ukrainian children and families affected, helping ensure that Ukrainian families have access to basic necessities, such as food, water, shelter, clothes and protection, as well as transport; mental health, labour, legal and language support. The importance of training volunteers in humanitarian aid was a key aspect of this endeavour, as shown in featured videos where volunteers and staff from various National Scouts organisations shared their firsthand experiences in the project.

The session engaged participants in a discussion about the essential skills and competences developed by Scouts in their roles as first responders and facilitators of integration. These skills encompassed communication, teamwork, and practical skills such as legal and counselling expertise, along with an awareness of wellbeing, self-care and empathy. Discussions revolved around organisational aspects, including grant management, project duration, promotional strategies, conducting emergency meetings, organising collective

urgent responses, logistics, and the partnership dynamics with UNICEF. The dialogue was followed by a role-play activity on connecting stakeholders to create a whole community initiative, where participants with different roles discussed how to link with each other to achieve individual and shared objectives.

Lilla Györffy, WOSM External Representative, presented UAct 360, an interactive website part of Scout's learning zone, which reunites resources for partnerships, educational approaches, project management and communications, showcasing a Communications Plan Outline, Work Plan Template, best practices on education, volunteering, training and partnerships, advocacy strategies for humanitarian action or how to adapt existing youth programs. To provide resources to all levels of scouting, there is a special attention to language and its adaptation to different countries and audiences. Participants shared insights on which resources from UAct 360 they found most beneficial in their professional and personal lives.



Fostering skills of teachers for the internationalisation of school education

1 December 2023 | EFIL

The workshop looked at how individual pupil mobility (IPM) boosts schools' internationalisation and benefits everyone. Training models were presented.

Elisa Briga, Secretary General EFIL, presented a training model for teachers on IPM. The understanding of internationalisation was clarified as “intentional and transformative process of including international, intercultural and global dimensions in all aspects of school life”. **IPM’s specificity is that it lasts 2-10 months, it is individual, it is included in school programmes and it implies host families.** Learning outcomes are linked to intercultural competences, personal growth, language proficiency. There is a lack of oversight on the Council Recommendation on the Automatic Recognition of Learning Periods Abroad’s implementation. EFIL research showed that only Italy and Austria recognise this process, with other countries requiring learners to repeat the programme year or parts of the achieved learning. **Teachers are the ones assessing learning outcomes in this context, an additional burden on existent pressures and workload.** To respond to this need, EFIL is piloting a training model for teachers on assessing IPM learning outcomes in Flanders, Estonia and Poland. Ms Briga suggested that while mobilities are increasing, they mostly are short-term (1-2 months) since institutions lack support measures. The Erasmus+ programme can set longer-term mobilities as priorities,

facilitating civil society’s support for mobility logistics and better explaining IPM’s role in internationalisation. The current Proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning mobility does much of this but its implementation will remain crucial as well as the revision of tools supporting it such as Europass and the Council Recommendation on Automatic Recognition of Learning Periods Abroad.

Marta Kowalczyk-Waledziak, University of Bialystok and ATEE, presented the practicalities of this project - Empowering Teachers for Automatic Recognition (ETAR) - and its two-day training, and pre-test and post-test impact evaluation surveys. Teachers’ perceptions visibly changed, hailing the success of the training, but a worrying finding is that only a third of teachers following this course agreed that they had robust knowledge on IPM or felt sufficiently skilled for supporting long-term IPM pre-test, which shows a significant gap that hinders schools’ internationalisation. Experiences from the countries in which the training was piloted showed that there are other challenges to IPM such as teacher shortages, lack of prioritisation of internationalisation or of IPM at school level, a low number of accredited Erasmus+

institutions engaging in IPM.

Jens Vermeersch, Internationalisation Policy Coordinator, GO! Network, explained that GO! Network organises education on behalf of the Flemish government, and explained that much was still needed to ensure that IPM becomes a reality in Flanders. He reflected on the fact that **many state officials across Europe are unaware that IPM can be delivered as part of Erasmus+ mobility.** As schools have autonomy over this, the lack of support is what makes it difficult to implement IPM. GO! Network directly targeted Erasmus+ accredited education and training institutions to provide them with guidance on IPM. Mr Vermeersch placed hope on the new Proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning mobility to address a mindset shift that allows national governments to legislate enabling conditions for mobilities.

Participants exemplified their work,

explaining **the lack of resources which forces schools to use short-term mobility so that more pupils can benefit from it. Participants discussed the host families model which worries parents when sending children on mobility.** AFS, EFIL and YFU perform comprehensive actions to reassure parents of the rigorous selection process for host families and the constant contact with them. Representatives from the European Commission discussed considerations on harmonising mobility policies across Member States, as some prefer learning agreements while others work with less bureaucratic measures. Automatic recognition has different impacts on learning communities depending on national, regional and local contexts. Participants agreed that many organisations applying for EU mobility programmes do not do it from a strategic internationalisation perspective, but rather simply go through the motions of organising mobility.





Methods and resources for professional development of teacher educators

1 December 2023 | ATEE

This workshop outlined the elements that determine the competency profile of the professional figure of teacher educators (TE) to support the educational system in our era full of great changes and challenges.

Michiel Heijnen, ATEE President, introduced ATEE and its Research and Development Communities (RDC) which connect teacher educators around various topics for information sharing, access to financial resources and joint work opportunities. Dr. Angela Maria Sugliano, Co-Chair of the ATEE Research & Development Community Professional Development of Teacher Educators, explained that the RDC defines teacher educators, identifies their needs, tools and guidelines to support teacher educators, prepares teachers for 21st century learners, enhances teacher educators' visibility, and secures funding for them. Dr. Onur Ergunay explained the **complex path of becoming a teacher educator**, which includes formal certification, professional development, experience in practice and a role in publishing research and performing networking. The RDC identified the need for more school-based teacher educator training, similar to Dutch and British models. **Teacher educators require lifelong learning to be up-to-date with curricular development, instruction and training, mentoring, research and assessment, advocacy on teacher education and professional development.** Considering the diverse teacher educator profiles, the RDC moves away from a theory-based approach

and focuses on a practice-based one. Dr. Sugliano explained the outcomes of a needs assessment exploratory interview with RDC members. An essential finding was that AI education and literacy is worrying most of them. Using the example of this need, Dr. Sugliano presented how the RDC acts as a repository of methods and resources for the professional development of teacher educators. Resources on AI are specifically presented, including the European Commission developed Ethical Guidelines on Using AI for Educators, or DigCompEdu.

MEP Brando Benifei concluded the meeting with a video message. As Rapporteur for the AI Act, he recalled the legislation including elements about AI in teaching and learning, ensuring that it is adequately tested to avoid discrimination, algorithmic bias and any negative impact on health and cybersecurity. He explained that **while AI can improve learning and generate content, there needs to be transparency** on how it works, copyrights must be protected while sensitive areas, including places of learning, must have clear standards for AI usage. The legislation would transfer responsibilities on developers, not operators when it comes to AI risks and misuse.



Skills Community of Practice

1 December 2023 | EURASHE

The Skills CoP showcased initiatives and projects contributing to skills development in Europe and on how to embed transversal competences in formal, non-formal and informal learning environments.

Eurashe's new strategy for 2023-2025 includes several priorities: skills for the present and future, quality & innovative professional higher education, challenge-based applied research, local and regional impact, and Europeanisation and internationalisation. The Eurashe CoP includes a core group and wider group. It was launched in February 2023. Among the deliverables it aims to achieve are the collection of good practices, guidelines for professional higher education institutions to develop a skills strategy, a position paper on bridging the skills with concrete EU initiatives.

This introduction was followed by a round of presentations of good practices on skills. It started with Ruth Moran & Michael Hannon, Atlantic Technological University Sligo from Ireland who presented how their programmes align with industrial needs. They offer a graduate education programme on communication for researchers, creativity and entrepreneurship, data analysis, personal development for researchers, research management, and research methods. Students and staff can take those modules at different levels. They also have an Advance centre which delivers microcredentials. On apprenticeship: they

have a strategy as numbers of apprentices are growing, thus the number of programmes is also growing. They are developing a national quality assurance framework for apprenticeship.

ABCD - The Alliance of Boundary Crossing for Deep Tech project presented the ABCD project (Western Balkan universities). They built a platform on deep tech and entrepreneurship. Involving students as co-partners, they designed and developed a training on **design thinking** and a startup support programme. They also conduct research on industry partnership for each institution and a repository. Next was a presentation about STr-EATs from Yulia Krijthe, Hotelschool The Hague. STr-EATs is a students-run food truck which has a strong societal mission. They raise funding for charity, for instance. What skills students develop is collaboration, creativity. They affirm that the hospitality sector can be a catalyst for positive change, quality education, responsible consumption and production, and sustainable cities and communities.

The project TRANSVAL-EU was presented by Sylvie Bonichon, Expert in higher education, recognition (especially RPL and VNIFL),

mobility, and lifelong learning & Pauline Boivin, Lifelong Learning Platform, LLLP. Pauline provides a general presentation of the project which was about the **integration of transversal competences into validation and guidance**. Sylvie gave some insights on the results. Everything was based on existing EU tools (competence frameworks and former EU projects on transversal skills. The project used ESCO's definition of transversal skills and competences (TSCs). 12 TSCs were selected for the project. Next step was to identify the different levels for each TSC, and the different levels of EQF. Sylvie Bonichon presented the training programme developed in transval-Eu which can be used by any validation and guidance professionals.

Lorna Walsh from the Technological University of the Shannon Midlands Midwest (Ireland) presented how they embedded

transversal competences in informal, non formal and informal learning environments.

The final practice was the Meridies Consortium presented by Marta Rodrigues from EURASHE, a project run by different higher education institutions from south Portugal. Meridies is a project in circular technologies and sustainability, digitalisation, renewable energies & decarbonisation. The consortium offers a wide range of microcredentials. Many questions were raised during the Q&As about how to include transversal skills and competences into professional higher education. Does it require a change of pedagogies? Surely, traditional lectures have limits for their integration. Another issue is also about how students can show employers that they have those skills? A solution was brought that an increasing use of portfolio can demonstrate evidence of such skills acquisition.



Supporting the learning needs of migrant teachers across Europe

1 December 2023 | SIRIUS

This event focused on the idea that we somehow do not seem to believe that individuals who are different from us are capable of teaching.

Mialy Dermish (SIRIUS Network) introduced three case studies from Austria, Germany, and Ireland, were introduced. The underlying question throughout the event was: **“Who gets to be a teacher, who gets to remain a teacher, and who will never be a teacher?”** Michelle Proyer (Universität Wien) Introduced the Austrian case study. Here, a migrant teacher with a lot of experience was faced with the language challenge. For the Austrian system, the teacher’s English levels were not considered adequate enough, and she also was required to learn German, first. The issue here is that the teacher ended up in a context that was not according to her prime knowledge, because of the **language barrier**.

Henrike Terhart (Ruhr-Universität Bochum) introduced the German case study. Here, the obstacle for the migrant teacher was, yet again, the language barrier. The general discourse is that in Germany there is a strong focus on the German language proficiency of migrant teachers as a marker for social integration. Therefore, though there is an interest by part of the teachers to enter the system, the barriers to enter it are quite high.

Rory Mc Daid (Marino Institute of Education)

introduced the Irish case study. Though there are individual, local, and global responses, there is not a conversation about how teachers within the union can be mobile to have their qualifications recognised; to stay in the system, be promoted; find an appropriate career path.

Arja Krauchenberg (European Parents’ Association) raised some important points during the open discussion. The first one is that there is a **teacher shortage in Europe** and that we, as a society, therefore, cannot afford not to hire teachers (migrant teachers) because of language barriers. To qualify migrant teachers rather quickly, language acquisition can run in parallel to their careers. We cannot afford as a society to lose these people along the way, especially if they are qualified for these jobs: we should give teachers the basic skills, put them into the profession, and offer them guidance and help.

«We, as a society, cannot afford not to hire teachers»



Erasmus Careers: helping students with the design of their learning cycles

1 December 2023 | ESN

This roundtable touched upon how competences developed during Erasmus+ mobility opportunities could be better reflected across later stages in learners' lives.

Participants highlighted the issue of **recognition and validation of competences as crucial in this debate**. MEP Albuquerque recognised the volume of competences acquired through mobility, which range from those easy to certify such as the language ones but also to those transversal competences which go beyond curricula and might not be adequately monitored and recognised. He regretted the existing narrative that, in general, sidesteps transversal competences, referring to the European Commission's approach for the European Year of Skills. It narrowly focused on skills for the labour market even at the time when the private sector realised that fixing only labour shortages is not a long-term approach. Any challenges linked to the labour market cannot be disentangled from Europe's precarious democratic situation. MEP Albuquerque insisted that people are, first and foremost, citizens. This extends beyond a passive capacity of voting and involves an active participation to bring about change. He explained that any learning process should require learners to be aware of their surroundings, and employ critical thinking.

Sara Tagliabracci, responsible for ESN's research on the skills gained by learners

during mobility, explained the difficulties in defining the wider range of skills acquired during Erasmus+ mobility considering the unique experiences that each learner has. However, she insisted on focusing more broadly, on competences. A key element developed during mobility is **learners' attitudes**, which is one of the three components of competences, together with knowledge and skills.

MEP Albuquerque agreed with the listed challenges and engaged in a conversation with participants on how to ensure a legacy of the European Year of Skills that promotes ESN's work on this topic while continuing beyond the upcoming EU elections. He suggested participants engage with the European Political Parties, their manifestos and with the incoming European Commission's Work Programme to ensure that skills and validation remain high on the agenda. Many initiatives at national level on this topic can also be better connected, using the European Year of Skills as an impetus to validate and recognise competences that Europeans gained across different workplaces, in different learning environments, to ensure that all have the flexibility to navigate the transformative 21st century challenges.



Fostering inclusion of children with disabilities

1 December 2023 | EASPD

This workshop showcased best practices to foster the Inclusion of Children with Intellectual Disabilities in Early Childhood Education and Care.

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings, like nurseries and kindergartens, need to work together with parents, children and communities to create an inclusive early education and care environment for children with intellectual disabilities. However, they lack the tools and knowledge for establishing and maintaining such collaborative practices. The EMBRACE project is seeking to provide tools to foster inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities and therefore the quality of early childhood education and care. EMBRACE will provide capacity building opportunities and educational resources for both core (educational) staff and ECEC assistants and leaders.

The introduction of Christophe Lefebvre, member of the EESC, highlighted the role of civil society organisation and grassroots initiatives in the sector, underlining the importance of bringing together different actors - including the final beneficiaries of the social services. James Crowe, President of EASPD, praised as well the social workers in the sector, and brought to the floor personal stories to make his case: it is only by giving the tools for inclusive

practices that a culture of understanding and solidarity can bloom. Thomas Bignal, Secretary-general of EASPD, continued on the same lines. He stressed that inclusion is a matter of education, and how we look at diversity and values in the classroom - reason why it is important to foster this culture since early childhood.

The panel discussion brought together project partners and policy-makers, with the goal to inform decision-making with the best practices from practitioners. An evidence-based approach was praised as necessary.



LIFELONG LEARNING PLATFORM

EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION

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