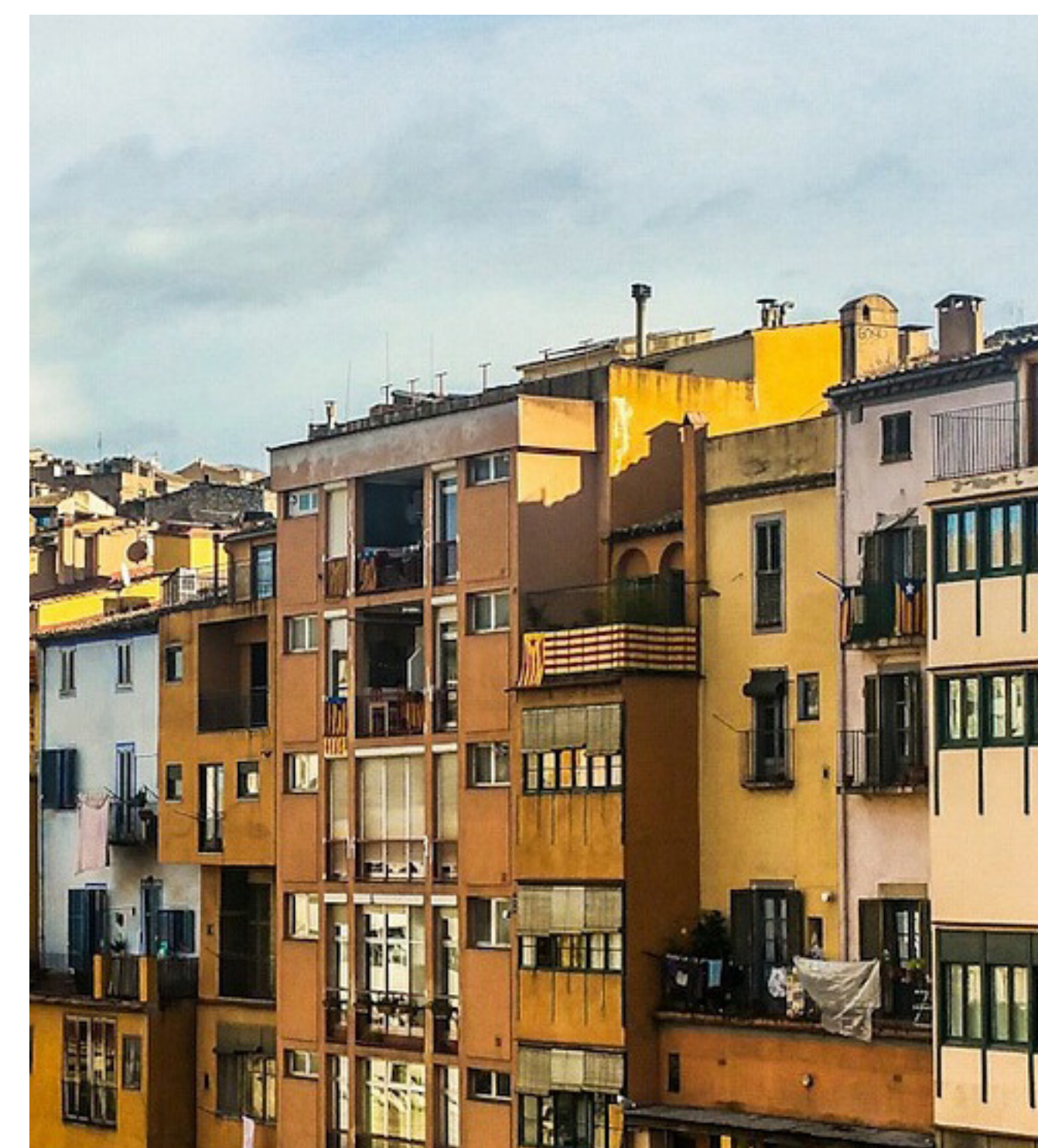




**National Training for
Education Stakeholders**

**Key competences
for the Future of
Europe**

REPORT



Co-funded by
the European Union

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In its third edition, the Lifelong Learning Lab (LLLab) is the Lifelong Learning Platform's initiative to bring together stakeholders in education and training from EU and national/regional level to share good practices on enhancing cooperation in the sector. Participants to the LLLab counted policymakers from EU, national, regional and local level, educators and teachers, learners, education and training institutions (schools, universities, VET centres) and civil society organisations. The LLLab occurred over two days, connecting European issues with national issues, supporting EU citizens' capacity to engage in policymaking, breaking silos within education and training institutions, and building blocks for the development of national lifelong learning platforms.

The first two editions of the LLLab took place in [Lisbon, Portugal](#), and [Nice, France](#), matching this training with the country holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU. In 2023, the LLLab's third edition was organised in Girona, anticipating the Spanish Presidency to the Council of the EU and was hosted by the Municipality and University of Girona.



DAY 1

EUROPEAN AGENDA AND DECISION- MAKING PROCESSES IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Before exploring links between the EU and the national context, participants were welcomed at the premises of the **Girona Municipal Employment Office for a Study Visit**. Participants explored the 4-pillar work of this public authority: counselling, training, market research and management. **The Office's mission is ensuring that disadvantaged adults are supported to return to the labour market.**

Participants understood the initial orientation facilities provided by the Office's job counselling services which include an **accompaniment scheme** as well as **short training capsules**, taking place in trimestrial bursts of 2-3 hours (Smobilitza't). Adjacent services include a **job point for technical assistance** on finding employment, the **Dinamicat initiative for boosting linguistic skills, and high school job counselling.**

On the training pillar, participants understood the complexity of digital training provided. An **Employment Transition Plan is developed for NEETs while a Neighbourhood Work Programme** is targeting the two most

disadvantaged neighbourhoods of Girona to assist with employment necessities. The aim of more targeted approaches is to boost the competences of women in relation to VET, to assist with the community engagement of Ukrainian refugees and to connect different services in a one-stop-shop for users in the neighbourhood. More information on the outcomes of the Study Visit can be found [here](#).



THE LAUNCH OF THE LLLAB 2023

Giuseppina Tucci, President of the Lifelong Learning Platform, launched the two-days training underlining the way it will connect the EU and Spanish agendas for lifelong learning, facilitating exchanges of practices, networking and building new partnerships at EU and Spanish levels.

Dr. Josep Calbó, Vice-Rector for Strategic Projects and Internationalisation, University of Girona, underlined the University's work on broadening the scope of their learning activities through a lifelong learning approach and welcoming a wider variety of learners. In this way, breaking down their walls and ensuring deeper connections with the local/regional community. To further exemplify the ways in which the University of Girona is the perfect host for the LLLab given its deeper connections, he presented the [following material](#) on the University.

Stefan Olsson, Deputy Director-General at European Commission's DG EMPL, provided a [video address](#), sharing the work around the [European Year of Skills](#) and the importance of skills for European competitiveness and the digital and green transitions, as highlighted in the Skills Agenda.

For the Commission, any new narrative around skills must make all actors change the way they look at skills to help Member States reach the ambitious targets set in the [Porto Social Summit \(i.e. 60% adults engaged in lifelong learning\)](#). Another important area of focus are partnerships and funding to make lifelong learning through upskilling a reality.





INTRODUCTION TO STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVEMENT IN THE EUROPEAN EDUCATION AREA MIDTERM REVIEW

Across the first day, large scale EU initiatives were connected to the context in Spain, beginning with **Dora Husz, Head of Sector European Education Area strategy and governance, Equality and inclusion (DG EAC)** discussing the [European Education Area \(EEA\)](#). The vision for the EEA was endorsed in 2017, with the [Communication](#) published in 2020. The EEA's building blocks include **6 priority areas covering 40 EU level EEA actions**. Participants shared their knowledge on the topic and [here](#) are the priorities proposed by the civil society for the EEA based on its mid-term review. Among initiatives adopted recently, **blended learning, higher education cooperation, micro-credentials, learning for the green transition and pathways to school success** were mentioned. Among the initiatives to be adopted, **digital education, learning mobility, quality assurance and recognition, European degree and the legal status for alliances of HEIs** were mentioned. Other actions highlighted were Jean Monnet, Centre of vocational excellence, Education for Climate Coalition, Teacher Academies.

A key area for the EEA's achievement is the governance and co-creation process. Participants were informed on formal and informal cooperation structures set up, such as the Education Committee and meetings of ministers, the High Level Group on education and training, its Coordination Board and the Directors-General formations. On the technical side, the Commission established working and expert groups on topics such as digital learning, equality and values and learning for sustainability, well-being, investment. Civil society organisations are further included through community outreach like the Education Summits and Forums, targeted and open consultations and communities of practice (Digital Education Hub, EPALE).

To achieve the EEA's goals, EU funds complement national investment and include: Recovery and Resilience Facility, Erasmus+, Cohesion policy funds and the Technical Support Instrument ([read here more details](#)). Dora presented also the **European Commission's 2021 expert group on quality investment to identify policies boosting education outcomes and inclusiveness, and improving spending efficiency**¹. In 2022, a Learning Lab on Investing in Quality Education and Training was launched.

It supports policymakers with knowledge, tools, methods and resources to make public spending on education and training cost-effective and informed by evidence from local/regional/national contexts. Evidence is built through monitoring of EU targets such as those on ECEC, early leavers from learning (ESL), VET graduates exposed to work-based learning, adults in learning, achievement of 15-year-olds in reading, maths and science, among others. **The Commission developed a new indicator for equity in education, combining low achievement in reading, maths and science with learners' socio-economic status.**

Dora concluded with the EEA mid-term review, presenting its progress and insisting on the positive upward convergence on EU targets such as ESL, ECEC and tertiary attainment but warning about equity and teacher shortages. **The review is planned this year around the themes of equity, teachers, citizenship education and mutual recognition.** The results will feed the 2025 EEA evaluation report. **The public consultation is open until 15/09/2023.**

¹ Final Report of the Expert Group, [here](#).



KEYNOTE: EDUCATION FOR CHANGE

Kelsey Beltz, Managing Director of the Good Lobby, addressed the audience to share the work of her organisation in connection to civil society organisations and their efforts to advocate towards the EU institutions. The aim of the Good Lobby is to democratise lobbying to make political systems more equal by learning how to be an advocate through mutual learning and skills sharing across different groups.

They work with NGOs, activities, progressive business and philanthropies, offering training, pro bono assistance and alliances of various nature. [Kelsey's presentation](#) touched upon the importance of engaging in the policy process.

It's a legitimiser: it is not only allowed but encouraged and there are many avenues of participation which many times remain underused. It's a mobiliser: for this the lobbying must go beyond slacktivism and commodified participation. It's an equaliser: to counter the undue influence of the few. It makes you humbler: one learns about policy processes and understands trade-offs. Ultimately, it's good for democracy: societies inhabited by assertive citizens can become more transparent and accountable. Education is important to demystify the Brussels Bubble and the EU policy processes, to provide tools to actively engage with policymakers and to build connections and overcome polarisation.



EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN POLICY MAKERS AND CSOS

The EU Skills Agenda: practices of cooperation between policy makers, education stakeholders and civil society

The panel was composed of **Elisa Gómez Alemán (Policy Officer, Labour Market, Education, Health and Social Services, DG Reform)**, **Theodor Grassos (Secretary General, European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training)** and **Daya Buyle (Flemish Education Council, Council for Lifelong Learning)**. Elisa Gómez Alemán started by explaining how the [Technical Support Instrument](#) aids Member States to prepare, design and implement reforms. This support is demand-driven and tailor-made to the needs of the Member State requesting it. It addresses reforms at national and regional levels through the provision of expertise, not direct financial support. This can be done directly through the European Commission or through other partners such as international organisations (OECD, World Bank, etc), Member States experts and private sector experts. The annual cycle for TSI can be found [here](#).

Elisa highlighted the potential areas of support linked to [education and training](#) such as **national/regional skill strategies, action plan and roadmaps; skills recognition, validation procedures and quality of adult learning curricula; skills forecasting systems; job matching tools; individual learning accounts and developing micro-credentials ecosystems; VET and apprenticeship reforms; digital learning content and core curricula modules; cooperation among research institutions, public administrations and business communities.** [Flagship technical support projects](#), which are projects proactively proposed by DG REFORM, **focus in 2024 on fostering skills development systems better adapted to the labour market.** More information on Spanish reforms through the TSI can be found [here](#).

Theodor Grassos, Secretary General of EVBB, shared the expertise of his organisation in relation to the to the implementation of the EU Skills Agenda gained through practices of cooperation among policy makers, education stakeholders and civil society. **One of the main focus areas for EVBB is the implementation of the [Pact for Skills](#), a flagship action of the Skills Agenda.** The initiative was launched in 2020 to bring together public and private organisations to upskill and reskill people of working age, so that they can thrive in the labour market and society. As of 2023, 18 industrial fields are covered and the Pact counts with over 1500 signatories. The Large Scale Partnerships (LSP) must put forth concrete actions and are grounded in 4 principles: **i) promoting a culture of lifelong learning for all, ii) building strong skills partnerships, iii) monitoring skills supply/demand and anticipating skills needs and iv) working against discrimination and for gender equality and equal opportunities.** The LSP acts as a guidance, networking and knowledge hub for its constituents. In addition, funding opportunities and skills resources are collected in a one-stop-shop (i.e. Erasmus+ Blueprints). The Pact for Skills extended its opportunities also to the regional level: these regional LSPs brought skills collaboration to the local context. More information on the Pact for Skills and other cooperation examples such as regional skills partnerships can be found [here](#).

Daya Buyle, Flemish Education Council (VLOR), shared with the audience the work conducted by the Flemish government in the aftermath of results from EU wide monitoring, which put them below best performing countries. Another concern and area of focus for Flanders is the observed lack of motivation and willingness to learn in the general population.

This situation led them to develop an [Action plan: Setting sail for a learning Flanders](#), a mobilising framework that brings together different already existing initiatives and hopes to **provide a structural mission and vision to lifelong learning initiatives as well as financial sustainability.** In Flanders, the government works around lifelong learning focused on the labour market. **Nevertheless, as an advisory body to the government, VLOR would also like to see also the idea of lifelong going further than adult education.** Another aspect to be ingrained is the **life-wide dimension of learning.** Adding these dimensions is key to fostering motivation in learners as evidence shows how important early age experiences are and how bad experiences in schools demotivate learners. In addition, there are also concerns regarding the digitalisation of learning, which often is not adequately accompanied by inclusive policies, generating concerns for the effects on disadvantaged groups. Daya warned against the creation of new barriers for migrants and refugees such as removing the support for language learning.



LIFELONG LEARNING LABS: THE EU AGENDA IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The day continued with labs - workshops - which looked at different topics related to education and training at EU level. These included: key competences for lifelong learning; making all skills visible; regional cooperation in lifelong learning; building a lifelong learning area.

The labs were the space where participants discussed challenges faced in the field and co-created solutions. The Lifelong Learning Platform decided to adopt the Appreciative Inquiry methodology, a positive approach which encourages debates around what we know are the practices that work and how we can envision those being replicated and scaled up. [Here](#) you can find some material regarding this technique. After a rich 60-minute discussion in the labs, participants gathered back together in plenary to share the outcomes of their group discussions.

LAB 1: KEY COMPETENCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Participants were introduced to [SOLIDAR's ECO-IN project](#) and LLLP's [INSCOOL II project](#). Each project reflected on how the competences of learners can be developed once inclusion is ensured. ECO-IN focuses on the development of an algorithm that would aid schools to self-assess their inclusion status, providing an understanding on how they can improve in this content. INSCOOL II is a continuation of the INSCOOL project and looks directly at how the teaching staff in schools can be supported to develop needed competences to ensure an inclusive learning space. Participants considered broadening the understanding of inclusive education and ensuring that a wide range of competences are developed to boost societal participation.

They insisted on **consistency, communication and cooperation as the cornerstones for enabling key competences development in inclusive and safe educational environments.**

The cooperation discussed referred to the local, regional, national and European level, including all stakeholders and insisting on the policymakers' commitment to inclusion. Communication referred to constant flows of exchanges between all stakeholders in a way that good practices could be shared and lessons learned could be upscaled. Through consistency, participants referred specifically to ensuring adequate funding for the development of key competences, to mainstreaming policies from the EU level that would connect all learning environments and to incentivising participation in learning.

LAB 2: MAKING ALL SKILLS VISIBLE: VALIDATION AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

[TRANSVAL-EU](#) proposed to experiment innovative approaches for the validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL) of transversal skills in five pilot countries. It was explained that project partners took stock of EU policies, frameworks as well as various reports and studies that identified key challenges at EU and national levels.

The main focus of the project was to tackle challenges by professionalising validation and guidance practitioners, bridging the various sectors and stakeholders of education and employment and monitoring and evaluating the experimentation's outcomes and impact on practitioners and socio-economically disadvantaged adults.



LIFELONG LEARNING LABS: THE EU AGENDA IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Another practice shared during this Lab was the [RECONOCE](#) project, an online, non-formal accreditation system of voluntary action. It was founded in 2014 to **assemble a national network of organisations that foster recognition of skills and abilities obtained through voluntary works**. A Study on the youth voluntary works and employment in Spain was developed, identifying youth voluntary profiles and main skills acquired during volunteering as well as understanding the working situation of voluntary youth.

LAB 3: REGIONAL AND LOCAL COOPERATION IN LIFELONG LEARNING

The [Transversalis project](#) is a transborder project that developed common teaching modules, mobility opportunities, accreditation and validation of competencies across regions in Spain, France and Andorra. It brought together 9 Universities and 30 research centres, developing dual and double degrees with the aim to support territorial cohesion - all partners worked on making transferable their curricula and development of competences.

The [Comorelp project](#) focuses on fostering collaboration among European regions to increase the capacity of regional authorities and stakeholders for the monitoring of regional lifelong learning policies. The participants highlighted that early success of initiatives attracts other actors, making the sharing of **experiences** essential. However, the multi-stakeholder and multi-regional nature of such projects pose a great challenge of coordination; also given the capacity constraints of regional authorities to sustain projects, as illustrated by a project with the [Roma community](#) in Catalunya.

Experience from the Transversalis project suggests the **creation of clusters** between different types of learning providers and other stakeholders and the need for more flexibility at regional level so that actors are able to experiment both at policy and practice level.

LAB 4: BUILDING A LIFELONG LEARNING AREA

During this lab the idea of diversity and inclusion as key to building a lifelong learning area was discussed. The [lbox project](#) calls organisations from different learning environments to question their own inclusion. One of the main takeaways was that when it comes to educational institutions, it is important that inclusion is embedded and its mission bound; inclusion needs to be defined and be intersectional. Another key aspect is the need-based approach: measures must be at the same time universal but also targeted and personalised.

However, inclusion measures cannot be successful without strong leadership. **Some of the enabling factors included internal factors such as having champions or ambassadors, developing incentives, leadership support.** Among the external factors mentioned were: **flexible regulatory frameworks, better funding and resources and the country, region or city political climate.**



DAY 2

ACHIEVING THE SPANISH LIFELONG LEARNING AGENDA

Keynote Feasibility study on lifelong learning strategies and platforms: Towards a lifelong learning platform in Spain?

The second day started with a [Keynote Address](#) delivered by **LLL**P's **Project and Policy Manager, Pauline Boivin**, who spearheads the work on national lifelong learning strategies. She focused on the **role of lifelong learning in developing specific competences needed to provide greater policies for a stronger democracy**. Looking only at competences for the labour market, the European Year of Skills missed the broader purpose of lifelong learning for preparing active citizens.

To exemplify this, Pauline discussed the [World Economic Forum's ranking of systemic risks for 2023](#). **While all risks must be approached with robust policies, research from OECD shows that few people feel that they participate in developing policies**. Moreover, those most disadvantaged have a lower trust in government and fall into populism's traps, while the youth trusts their government less across all countries compared to older generations. In face of such systemic risks, democracy needs a revamp beyond mere voting every five years.

Lifelong learning and cooperation are the responses to ensuring democracy's renewal and tackling complex global risks. To achieve this, Pauline suggested **a need for key competences for policymakers and lifelong learning professionals, the development of policy labs and the creation of regional and national lifelong learning platforms**. Starting with the first solution, she presented the European Commission's [Joint Research Centre's \(JRC\) Competence Framework for Policymakers](#). Published in 2022, it has seven clusters of competences, with one focused specifically on engaging stakeholders and citizens while another on ensuring collaboration. Competences under these clusters include capacity to conduct stakeholder consultation, with skills, knowledge,

attitudes and degree of mastery being spelled out. The development of competences can be self-assessed using the JRC's [Smart4Policy tool](#).

Once collaborative and engagement competences are developed, Pauline considered implementing **Policy Labs, as co-creation participatory exercises for developing innovative European policy-making**. Policymakers would be joined by end-users of policies as well, namely the learners, educators, civil society. Such an initiative was piloted with [LLLP's \[COMORELP project\]\(#\), where a double-diamond approach was used to develop policy labs. **This meant a four-stage process, starting with identifying a challenge, defining solutions for it, developing ideas on their implementation and finally designing a policy-prototype**. The nature of Labs requires at least 3-months of implementation to collect data, interpret results and build trust. Similar to policymakers, **lifelong learning professionals must develop key competences**, and for that Pauline proposed a model of 8 categories of competences for evidence-informed policies.](#)

The competences mentioned above must be practiced through regional and national lifelong learning platforms. As a concept, this was explored in an initial LLLP study in [2011](#), followed up by a second Feasibility Study in [2016](#), which will be complemented by one in 2024. **A lifelong learning platform is a regional or national network of education stakeholders, with an institutionalised structure that shares one voice on policy**. The goal is improving education at national, regional and local level through a culture of cooperation that ensures co-design, co-implementation, co-monitoring and co-evaluation of lifelong learning policies.

The previous LLLP study identified a lack of

awareness on lifelong learning's meaning. Moreover, reports on lack of resources, lack of trust, excessive focus on formal education, lack of communication, complex bureaucracy and diverging political agendas were factored in as barriers to develop national lifelong learning platforms. LLLP will assess over 2023-2024 the potential for collaborative policymaking in lifelong learning in Finland, Spain, Poland, Hungary and Slovenia.



EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN POLICY MAKERS AND CSOS

The Spanish agenda in education and training: the role of education stakeholders and civil society

The speakers included **Asunción Manzanares Moya - Deputy General Secretary of Vocational Training of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training of the Spanish Government** and **Caridad Alarcón Sánchez, Board Member of the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions.**

The Deputy General Secretary began by showing the work of the Spanish government in **increasing the population's level of education and improving learners' guidance to identify, choose and/or redirect academic, training and career alternatives.** Moreover, they are working around **accreditation of skills acquired through work experience, non formal and informal training and increasing the participation of the adult population in training and improve the training model and provision: flexible, modular, cumulative and accreditable.**

The Spanish Government aims to reform key areas to strengthen the country's economic and social structure for which the modernisation of the education system, vocational training and university system is key. The most recent educational policy measures taken by the Spanish government (including the [new Organic Law](#) from 2020) refer to **integration of key competences for lifelong learning in the curriculum, improvement of the basic education and vocational training offers.** In addition, a key reform was **having non-formal education acknowledged as part of lifelong learning** as well as the development of validation of competences. Reforms are rooted on key foundations such as the guarantee of children's rights, gender equality, guarantee of success in education, education for sustainable development, global citizenship, development of digital skills and a competence-based curriculum.

Specific adjustments made at different stages of the learning process can be found [here](#).

The Deputy General Secretary gave an overview of how educational legislation is developed in Spain. It starts from internal work within the ministries, working groups and public hearings and consultations throughout the process. Then prior public hearings and consultations on presented proposals/drafts are held. Once an initial text is available there are meetings with autonomous communities and bilateral meetings between Ministry officials and stakeholders as well as experts. During the process of reform of the Education Law and the [VET Law of 2022](#), different stakeholders were consulted at different stages and in different formats (including a citizen participation mailbox and webinars on specific topics).

Some of the stakeholders included school councils, VET councils, universities, parents, employers and teachers. The Ministry has the support of public bodies and public-private partnerships, such as, the Observatory for School Coexistence ([Observatorio para la convivencia escolar](#)) and the Alliance for Vocational Training ([Alianza para la Formación Profesional](#)). The Observatory is a collegiate body serving as an **instrument for the educational community and society to learn about, analyse and evaluate coexistence in schools**, including though analysis of conflicts and the proposal of measures for violence prevention. The Alliance for Vocational Training is an initiative that aims to **consolidate the process of modernization of Vocational Training.**

A concrete initiative in relation to bridging the National to Regional and Local Cooperation

is Mentor Classrooms ([Aulas Mentor](#)). A programme that puts in the hands of the municipalities the **ability to provide distance learning, non-formal training and career guidance** - bringing these opportunities to less populated areas. The STEAM Alliance for female talent ([Alianza STEAM por el talento femenino](#)) is an initiative of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training that was born with the aim of promoting STEAM vocations in girls and young people and reducing the gender gap. It accounts for over 100 companies and entities.

The Deputy General Secretary closed with the Spanish Government's work on investment in education and training. It was highlighted that the structural reforms have been supported by the Resilience and Recovery Plan, covering education and knowledge, lifelong learning and skills development. This latter has 3 main components: a national digital skills plan, a strategic plan for the promotion of vocational training and the modernisation and digitalisation of the education system, including early childhood education from 0 to 3 years of age.



EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN POLICY MAKERS AND CSOS

The Spanish agenda in education and training: the role of education stakeholders and civil society

More details of the investments being carried out by the Spanish Government can be found [here](#).

Caridad Alarcón Sánchez, Board Member, OBESSU, shared the civil society perspective, considering the many existing avenues for engagement between students and policymakers (including decision makers in schools). The difficulty for learners is that the availability of such avenues does not translate into action without the existence of diverse networks and civil society in schools that **create a safe space**. Speaking up and confronting certain issues in the school environment can be daunting for young learners if they were not **socialised to engage and be part of decisions** as of primary school. Simple participation into choices linked to school trip destinations can greatly empower learners.

She described how student associations contribute to creating safe spaces, using the example of [CANAE \(the Spanish Confederation of Student Associations\)](#). CANAE prepared 100 proposals for education for the 2015 Spanish national elections. Many remained topical even now. CANAE's main claims were the **unification of education legislation under a single organic law, to simplify reform processes, the increase of student numbers on decision-making bodies as well as the speeding up of scholarship allocation and the insurance that funding in education will remain public**. Caridad insisted that the goal in the Spanish education agenda should be giving voice to those who cannot speak, to support early school leavers, those that never got the chance to be student activists and those most disadvantaged in society by creating space for them in policymaking.

DISCUSSION

Participants considered channels for collaboration and engagement between civil society and stakeholders. Warnings were made on the fact that close collaboration cannot be taken for granted as it remains dependent on the public authorities' willingness. The Deputy General Secretary underlined that channels exist and intensify when reforms are incoming, even if not restricted to ongoing policy processes. She exemplified how the new Education Law will help to move towards more collaboration. In terms of direct support to learners, it was highlighted that although scholarships are part of the system, the needs are always higher than the resources. In general, the budget needs to be released taking into consideration other economic constraints as well, even if the commitment remains to put the learner at the centre.



LIFELONG LEARNING LABS: CIVIL SOCIETY COOPERATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

The second day followed the same model in terms of the implementation of labs - workshops - though they were focused now on the national level, as opposed to the European level. After a rich 60-minute discussion, participants gathered back in plenary to share the outcomes.

LAB 1: KEY COMPETENCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Participants explored core and innate competences that all young learners have, reflecting on how they are insufficiently honed and fostered. There are few examples of prioritising developing competences such as active listening, such as identifying patterns from an early age onwards so that the learner's development can be put on the right track. The conversation on competences expanded with the [CLIKC](#) project, which gathered partners from Spain, Italy, Malta, Belgium, Austria, including LLLP member [EVTA](#), to explore how transversal competences can aid learners join the labour market. It showed that modularised and targeted learning opportunities tailor the job-finding process to adults' needs.

Lab participants explored success factors for such initiatives, **discussing needs-assessment practices and recognition of prior learning as a starting point.** However, any policy initiative must have a **clear rationale, allocated time and resources, as well as space for agency for all involved stakeholders if it is to be successful.** Participants discussed how to create a safe learning space, **promote empowering and transformational learning methodologies, tailor micro-learning and adaptive learning** while ensuring that **peer-learning and hands-on activities** remain a key in the learning journey.

LAB 2: MAKING ALL SKILLS VISIBLE: VALIDATION AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Participants in the second lab explored an inspiring tool presented by [Barcelona Activa](#) which allows learners to identify their soft skills and tailor 1-to-1 coaching to their needs. Other inspiring practices came from two projects of [OBESSU](#), the [InclusiVET](#) and [E-Teams](#). The former explores the development of transversal skills while the latter looks at skill guidance and validation through gamification. [EFIL](#) presented their work on [recognition of learning periods abroad](#) in this context. Participants considered the **learner-centred approach, the development of trust, the setting of minimal standards for soft skills development and links between non-formal and formal learning** as key factors for mainstreaming the good examples discussed.



LIFELONG LEARNING LABS: CIVIL SOCIETY COOPERATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

LAB 3: REGIONAL AND LOCAL COOPERATION IN LIFELONG LEARNING

In the third lab, participants learned about the implementation of the [UNESCO Learning City](#) label in Pécs, Hungary but also in other cities of Catalunya, such as Girona. A Learning City includes a dimension of lifelong learning, sharing its knowledge in a regional context. The main aim is to connect all stakeholders (public authorities, civil society, learners, companies, etc) to share the knowledge on the most essential policies for the well-being of the city. **The multi-stakeholder engagement creates ownership and civic engagement, while also making it difficult for public authorities to back out of such partnerships considering that they are not the sole partner in such approaches.**

LAB 4: BUILDING A LIFELONG LEARNING AREA

In this lab, local practices addressing the needs of vulnerable people of all ages through offering training programmes and empowering people with different methodologies were addressed. Such as the [Foundation Gentis](#) who aim to improve the employability and both emotional and social skill development” The University of Barcelona representative reflected on how universities can open up to lifelong learning and work with the community (i.e. care sector, language competences, peer learning). **Important aspect to consider included implementing activities through co-creation with a community based approach.** There is a need to make programmes available for more people and for public funding to make them successful and sustainable in time.



FROM GIRONA TO EUROPE

Giuseppina Tucci closed the LLLab discussing the need to mainstream lifelong learning, promoting the vision that LLLP has been advocating for almost 20 years. A true change can only be achieved with meaningful participation from the civil society. Giuseppina insisted that any participation from civil society requires adequate funding for it and a consistent push to make sure that political changes do not weaken the lifelong learning system or policy co-creation.





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