



Step up the cooperation with the European Parliament through a Lifelong Learning Intergroup in 2024-2029

After the EU Elections, LLLP wishes to bring its cooperation with the elected members of the European Parliament to a new level.

For many people in Europe the upcoming European elections on 6-9 June 2024 don't seem to be very important as they're rather concerned with the political situation in their own country. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the rise in the cost of living over the last years or the current international crises, there is often a feeling of helplessness, the sensation that single human beings can't do anything and that we have no influence as ordinary citizens. Yet, that is not true.

In the upcoming elections we decide on the future composition of the European Parliament which is the body amongst all EU institutions that is most directly connected to the citizens. We elect members from our respective countries and this will also influence the composition of the future European Commission, whose candidates for the position of different Commissioners will have to go through a hearing at the Parliament before being appointed. One more reason why you should #UseYourVote.

The helplessness and feeling of disconnect can also be alleviated by considering **how civil society engages with the future MEPs and Commissioners.**

The Lifelong Learning Platform unites more than 40 EU networks in the field of education from different sectors - formal, non-formal and informal learning - and advocates particularly for a holistic approach to education and the inclusion of all stakeholders. The LLLPlatform cooperates broadly with the European institutions and in particular with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) on topics such as a lifelong learning approach to education and training, learning entitlements, learning mobility, the physical and mental well-being of students and teachers, adequate funding of education and the recognition and validation of skills to name just some of our common endeavours. To strengthen this cooperation, it is LLLP's intention to establish an

Intergroup with MEPs working on lifelong learning, which will have a more formal connotation than the current Interest Group.

Interest Groups are volunteer-led cross-party platforms formed by MEPs who share a common interest in a particular topic or sector. Such alliances play a crucial role in facilitating dialogue and cooperation between MEPs and external stakeholders on specific policy areas and issues of common interest. Interest Groups are informal structures within the European Parliament, but they can play an important role in shaping the legislative agenda and influencing decision-making processes. MEPs involved in Interest Groups may use their collective voice and expertise to contribute to parliamentary debates, committee discussions, and other relevant activities.

Why an Intergroup on the future of education and learning? Intergroups are a forum for informal exchanges of views on specific issues across different political groups, and for contact between Members and civil society. Each is composed of Members from at least three different political groups, and are usually run by seconded staff within the European Parliament. **Intergroups are not official Parliament bodies, but are recognised by Parliament. They are established by agreement between the chairs of the political groups at the beginning of each legislative term.** These last few points mark a substantial difference between Intergroups and Interest Groups. Currently, 27 Intergroups operate within the hat of the European Parliament.

The Lifelong Learning Platform and the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) have been jointly running the Interest Group on Lifelong Learning for 10 years now. Much has changed since its establishment, but lifelong learning - as a topic

and as an attitude - has gained momentum in the European policy agenda. Milestone initiatives such as the European Pillar of Social Rights and its 20 principles or the European Year of Skills have all been pointing in the same direction: we need a more structured action to embed lifelong learning into the daily life of European citizens. Being able to count on the formalised support of Members of the European Parliament would be a formidable boost to this endeavour. **An Intergroup on Lifelong Learning would certainly help to ensure that new European legislation on education and training is considered under the aspect of personal and professional growth** over the lifespan and not only for the labour market.

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