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**LIFELONG
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BUILDING TOGETHER THE FUTURE OF LEARNING

**LIFELONG
LEARNING**
WEEK 2024

**21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES
FOR THE EDUCATOR PROFESSION:
A CALL FOR SYSTEM CHANGE**
— **REPORT** —



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Words from the Host



Reaching its 14th edition, the Lifelong Learning Week is a landmark event of collaboration between education and training stakeholders and decision-makers at EU, national and regional level. I am delighted to host the LLLWeek this year, early in my European Parliament mandate, considering the long road ahead in addressing the 21st century challenges of the educator profession!

The educator profession faces mounting challenges across Europe, and addressing these requires strong, targeted actions

at the European level. **As society and technology evolve, the demands on educators have intensified, making it essential for the European Union to support this vital profession by improving working conditions, providing professional development opportunities, and ensuring sustainable support for educators across all member states.**

One of the foremost challenges is the need for attractive working conditions and career advancement pathways to make the educator profession more appealing and sustainable in the long term. Educators are increasingly expected to address diverse and complex learner needs, including social inclusion, the integration of children with special needs, and the management of multicultural and multilingual settings. Additionally, the shift toward digital learning tools demands ongoing training, so educators can fully leverage these resources while maintaining high educational standards. Such pressures are faced across all learning environments, with early childhood education professionals, teachers, trainers, adult educators, work-based trainers, youth workers in education and training, higher education teaching staff all experiencing the societal changes. A successful European Education Area requires strong professionals in all sectors.

To meet these needs, Europe must establish clear standards and quality benchmarks for education and training. Such standards can provide guidance to member states, ensuring a high level of educational quality and equity for all learners across the EU. At the same time, EU-wide funding programs are needed to support educator training and professional development, enabling teachers to adapt to new challenges and develop their skills effectively.

Financial support is also essential for programs that foster social inclusion and diversity in educational settings. Investments in such programs strengthen equality and social cohesion, offering long-term benefits for European society as a whole. Through increased funding, the EU can ensure that educational institutions have the necessary resources to support all students and provide inclusive, high-quality education.

Civil society organisations play a critical role in this process. These organisations act as a bridge between policymakers and the realities on the ground, providing valuable insights into the specific needs and challenges educators face. By actively collaborating with the European Parliament and other institutions, civil society organisations can help advocate for the profession, ensuring that educators' voices are heard in the decision-making process. Through partnerships with such organisations, the EU can strengthen support for the educator profession, ultimately enhancing education and training across Europe.

European Lifelong Learning Stakeholders' Forum

18 November | LLLP

The president of the Lifelong Learning Platform kicked off the EU Lifelong Learning Stakeholder Forum highlighting the 24 events taking place during the 14th edition of the LLLWeek and centering the focus of the event on reflections around the future of the Erasmus+ programme in terms of potential changes, its budget and the inclusion dimension.

Acting Director for Youth, Education and Erasmus+ (DG EAC) Michael Teutsch shared insights from the mid-term evaluation of the programme as well as glimpses into the inclusivity of the programme. Mr. Teutsch noted the interconnections between the European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Education Area through the objective of access to high quality inclusive education and training; with education being recognised as a key enabler for success by most political groups. It was also shared that the latest [Council Recommendation on learning mobility](#) took into consideration the work around an inclusion target which has to be developed in the future together with Member States taking into account national contexts and the realities of different sectors. In addition, it was highlighted that the Mission Letters of Commissioner Minzatu and Micallef referred to inclusion as a key priority and that the commitment to improve inclusion in Erasmus+ was present in both their hearings.

Mr. Teutsch shared with participants a picture of the Erasmus+ programme 2021 - 2027 up to this point. It was underlined that in terms of inclusion, a higher rate of people with fewer opportunities have taken part and indicators have been developed. The range of learners considered is based on a broad definition and it has gone from 10% to 15% from 2021 to 2023. The Erasmus+ programme aims to be inclusive by design: for example it has launched short term mobilities, increased support for non-formal education (areas which are easier to access for civil society organisations), developed inclusion strategies at national level (with national agencies) and strengthened the support structure which allows for more exchange among Member States. Mr. Teutsch also noted that some Member States have funding lines that complement Erasmus+ mobility funds. However, it was also stressed that financial concerns are a part of the issues faced by disadvantaged learners and additional support is needed on top of financial measures. In this regards Erasmus+ has to be proactive and go towards the hard-to-reach groups.

Regarding the processes happening at the moment in relation to the mid-term evaluation, participants learned that workshops had been organised with participation of civil society, national reports from Member States have been collected and are being compiled at the moment and results should be published next Spring.



The Stakeholder Forum continued with presentations of findings coming from civil society in relation to Erasmus+ and other funding programmes by the Lifelong Learning Platform and the European Youth Forum.

The LLLP Director presented the findings from the Erasmus+ Implementation Study 2021-2023 which is based on a survey targeting EU networks who were/are/can be beneficiaries of Erasmus+ with the purpose of analysing their experience with the current Erasmus+ programme period. The target group was selected to gather through them a diverse range of experiences coming from the local, regional, national and European levels and tap into their expertise dealing with EU level institutions and programmes. LLLP aims to support decision makers by presenting them with an evaluation from the experience of beneficiary representatives - on what is working well, what could be improved and what is missing in the current programme, and thereby provide recommendations that can be useful for the implementation of the second half of this programming period and reflections on the programme's future. The main recommendations resulting from the study included:

- Increasing the Erasmus+ budget, maintaining flexibility so that organisations can address the effects of inflation as well as maintaining the lump sums for different strands.
- Simplifying application procedures and improving programme portals: addressing with remaining administrative constraints and simplification of procedures would support the inclusion objectives of the Erasmus+.

- Clearer (user friendly) guidelines, more training for National Agencies implementing Erasmus+ guidelines and better monitoring of its implementation.
- Reinforcing existing priorities of the programme is a key demand of civil society; this entails a stronger focus on inclusion than on employability.

The European Youth Forum's President shared with the audience the findings from their YFJ Report on EU Youth Programmes reflecting on how Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) enable youth civic space. YFJ conducted an analysis of the grants awarded based on Erasmus+ and ESC and they looked into the extent to which grants from these programmes are awarded to youth and youth related organisations. For YFJ it was important to identify the ability of these programmes to support young people in civil society, the technical barriers faced by youth civil society when applying for grants and how they can enable youth civil society to engage with young people. Some of their main recommendations included:

- Widening the scope of how grant budgets can be used to include costs related to increasing the accessibility for project participants as well as establishing an EU Volunteer Status.
- Clearly define youth organisations within the framework of the programmes and prioritise youth civil society as well as ensuring that experts assessing Erasmus+ youth and ESC grants know the sector better.

- Establishing operating grants at decentralised level, implementing eligibility criteria for the operating grants in the field of youth at centralised level that ensure they are targeted exclusively to youth organisations as well as establishing regranting schemes managed by international organisations.

- Establishing a more prominent Youth Chapter of Erasmus+, reducing the overall administrative threshold of grants (simpler procedures for lower budgets) and improving the ICT systems of both programmes.





During the open agenda, participants were able to choose the topics in relation to Erasmus+ and inclusion. The topics discussed through a world cafe method were: youth, funding, learning mobility and disability. At the end of the discussions each group shared their main reflections with the plenary.

On the topic of **youth**, participants reflected on the definition of youth under the programme, considering that young people under the age of 16, and especially those in the early childhood education and care sector are insufficiently supported by the programme. They also considered the need to further simplify the project and provide a proportional administrative and financial burden to the capacity of youth-led organisations and grassroots organisations. The discussion also revolved on increasing the participation of youth stakeholders in the decision-making of the programme, at EU level by having representation during the Erasmus+ Committee discussions while at national level there was the consideration of building similar Erasmus+ Committee counterparts which would then reunite the national and regional stakeholders. Final, there was a reflection on the need for better eligibility criteria or better implementation of current criteria to ensure that grassroots organisations.



On the topic of **funding**, participants discussed the accessibility of the funding and capacity building as some organisations, especially smaller grassroots organisations and newcomers, cannot always find ways to write new projects. Participants also noted that it is important to have inclusion measures for individual participation in mobility actions, especially for people with fewer opportunities (i.e. people coming from rural areas, persons with disabilities special needs, etc), not only to enable them



to access the opportunities offered by the programme, but to ensure their full participation and social inclusion during and after the activities. Given the differences in the priorities of national agencies as well as in the evaluations of project proposals, participants underlined the need for increased coherence not only to streamline NAs and EACEA processes but also to provide evaluators with common guidelines and training. Among other topics, participants reflected on the need for overall increase of budget for the Programme to benefit all sectors as well as for capacity-building opportunities for third countries.

On the topic of **disability**, participants were keen on seeing more communication efforts from the programme in this regard, it was considered that funding opportunities are not visible enough and not well known. Participants pinpointed the importance of keeping updated data bases with relevant good practices and reflecting on how successful projects can be translated to other contexts. The databases can also contain sections showing maps of accessible institutions and venues to ensure events are inclusive by design. Participants agreed that there is a need for more budget in general for the programme as well as specifically to address the needs of people with disabilities.

On the topic of **mobility**, participants emphasised the importance of access to quality information, including by addressing language barriers. The programme needs to improve the quality of information offered to learners and support them to access it. Regarding the financial aspect, discussions from the higher education sector were shared including on the timing of the distribution of grants and rethinking how grants are given considering the differences realities across and within member states (i.e.

high, medium and low income do not offer enough flexibility to adapt to different contexts). There was worry among participants that the request for more budget and higher grants would result in a narrative that sees only a lower number of learners going on mobility if they receive a higher grant; a dichotomy that is not helpful to boost the reach of mobility opportunities to more and more learners. Other reflections included the difficulties of navigating the different understandings of inclusion/ disadvantaged learners, inclusion and mental health of learners by their host institutions during the mobility period, the nature of Erasmus+ (to be an inclusive programme versus be a programme to address inclusion) as well as the demands on schools engaging in mobilities (and the support they can get from expert non-profit organisations).

The LLLP Deputy Director engaged in a discussion with members of the LLLP Steering Committee to bring back into the plenary room the ideas discussed during the World Café in the four different topics: Objectives/Priorities, Budget, Governance and Structure.

Regarding **Objectives/Priorities**, the four current priorities respond to the main challenges in European education. It was not clear whether new priorities should be added, but the emphasis fell on not making them too demanding for beneficiaries. Topics such as lifelong learning, intergenerational learning, well-being, and mental health were suggested as new priorities, but the question remained whether they should be added. For example, lifelong learning was considered to be better addressed through calls for proposals rather than being made an official priority.

Regarding the **Budget**, there was a discussion around the difficulties in achieving a five-fold increase and how this would impact other strands of budgets. Nevertheless, civil society is committed to the need to meaningfully discuss significant budgetary increases.

Concerning **Governance**, better consultation and more transparency were required by participants, as they wanted to be seen as partners who could help.

On the **Structure**, participants discussed how the programme is managed at the national level, mentioning that sometimes it is difficult to understand the target, and beneficiaries struggle to identify which action to apply for. Concerns were raised about how to create bridges with other programs and include them in a way that allows some priorities to be merged.

The conversation continued with areas highlighted most commonly across participants. Regarding Objectives/Priorities, participants agreed that the four priorities of the programme should be conceptualised better, and the objectives of the programme should be operationalised more effectively. There was more focus on green than on digital priorities. On democratic participation, discussions revealed that it should go beyond participation in elections, and the same approach should apply to inclusion and all the priorities. On the Budget, the discussion revolved around how the new budget should be distributed across sectors and how it can be better balanced, ensuring that organizations do not feel one sector receives more than another. Moreover, it was crucial to ensure funding for organisations making Erasmus+ the successful programme that it is, and not only for individuals. Though learning mobility remains crucial to be funded, the existing grants for organisations should also be strengthened. When it comes to Governance, the agreement was founded around the need for quality, regular, structured consultations with

stakeholders with a clear, transparent and timely timetable on the programme design, especially referring to the participation of stakeholders in the Erasmus+ Committees. Touching upon Structure, it was mentioned that the current administrative burden of the programme needs to be reduced, with the level of data provision for the reporting required being too demanding on the beneficiaries. and evaluation processes should be clearer.

The discussion with the Steering Committee on the World Cafe concluded with a series of wishes that participants made on the programme. All participants wished for clearer definitions and a better understanding of the priorities of the program, as well as how to translate these into concrete proposals. They wished to continue having sustainability and continuity of funding to ensure the sustainability of organizations and all the actions. Similarly, they wished for more coherence and clarity on the evaluation process and to be treated as equitable partners in the programme.



Elisa began the **opening ceremony of the 14th edition of the LLLWeek** and the networking reception by expressing her gratitude to the participants for their contributions and commitment to the discussions. Next, a video message from **MEP Sabrina Repp (S&D), the host of the LLLP Stakeholders' forum and the member of the CULT Committee**, was shown.

MEP Sabrina Repp, started the video message mentioning that Education is much more than passing on knowledge, it should help people of all ages to build skills for the future. Repp added that cooperation between schools and non-formal education is essential to create valuable spaces where social, cultural and civic skills can grow. Thereafter, MEP Sabrina Repp, stated that Erasmus Plus offer education support for teachers and young people opportunities for exchange, mutual understanding and cultural learning, which are key to promote European identity and fight extremism and the shift of the right. Attention was then shifted to the challenges, especially to the budget negotiations for 2025. Repp noted that it's crucial to protect and strengthen programmes like Erasmus Plus and voluntary services from cuts proposed by the Council, given that these programmes should allow more people to experience international connections and feel a united Europe no matter their background.

On account of this, Repp asked for a bold increase of the Erasmus Plus budget, mentioning that in the CULT committee they called for a €70 million increase for Erasmus Plus next year. Finally, in relation to the Multiannual Financial Framework, Repp stated that they are advocating for a doubling of the Erasmus Plus budget to €56 billion to ensure sustainable support for non-formal education and better alignment of voluntary with schools

commitments.

Following this, the **Director General of DG EAC, Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen**, highlighted that the European Commission would be establishing a civil society platform aimed at supporting civil dialogue and reinforcing the protection of civil society for their vital work. She discussed key political initiatives on the horizon and future collaboration, emphasizing a renewed focus on skills and education, as well as the political guidelines of Ursula von der Leyen and the mission letters for the members of the future college of commissioners.

She presented some details on a recent proposal to create a Union of Skills, which would encompass investment, lifelong learning (LLL), skills retention, recognition, and vocational education and training (VET). She noted that the European Commission Executive-Vice President responsible for education and skills, Roxana Minzatu, had strongly supported these goals during her confirmation hearing in the European Parliament. The vision for this Union is to instill a Lifelong Learning culture in every region, with the goal of creating a true European Education Area (EEA) that promotes quality, equity, and inclusion. The new mandate of the European Commission foresees also the next phase in building the EEA. To achieve these objectives, the Director-General stressed the importance of the Erasmus+ programme and the need to defend its funding, starting already during its ongoing mid-term evaluation.

Linking with LLLPlatform's Annual Theme, the Director-General recalled the importance of revalorising the teaching profession, particularly in light of teacher shortages, personal and professional changes, and the difficulties faced

by institutions in attracting and retaining talent. She stated that new opportunities for teachers will be provided, and the Commission will develop an EU Teacher Agenda to improve their working conditions. In addition, European School Alliances will be established to foster cross-border cooperation between schools. At the same time, the European Commission

will develop an Action Plan on basic skills and a Strategic Plan for STEM competences. In conclusion, the Director-General highlighted the importance of collaboration with civil society in ensuring the success of these initiatives. Her intervention was followed by a networking reception with all participants



Agora: Building inclusive education and training systems

19 November | LLLP & SOLIDAR Foundation

LLLp had the pleasure to co-host with the SOLIDAR Foundation an event on inclusion and how staff in educational and training providers, NGOs, CSOs and decision and policy-makers can come together to build (more) inclusive education and training systems! The event, integrated during the LLWeek, emerged from the [Inclusion BOX \(iBOX\) project](#) - a two-year project with LLLP members: Learning for Well-being Foundation, CÉMEA France, ALL Digital and eucen.

The Inclusion BOX (iBOX) project is reaching the end and all the capacity-building activities were organised in the different formats: online synchronously, in-person training and self-paced materials. These moments, along the development of the key guiding documents with practical guidelines and best practices on inclusion in the education and training systems, taught LLLP and the partners a great deal of lessons for future initiatives.

Learning for Well-being Foundation presented its approach on access and participation, CÉMEA France the need to consider diversity in every step and ALL Digital discussed the use of digital tools to promote inclusion. eucen introduced the [Inclusion and Diversity Charter](#) to participants, referring to the three main steps defined to create more inclusive organisations, workplaces and learning environments.

The [SOLIDAR Foundation](#) presented the new Position Paper on Inclusive Education to the participants, *Intersecting Pathways: Inclusive Education for Active Citizenship*, officially launched today. The paper explores the topic of inclusive education as a fundamental part of a democratic society and includes case studies as valuable examples, illustrating successful implementations of inclusive education strategies.

The paper argues for 6 key recommendations: 1) Learners must be put at the centre, 2) A whole community approach, 3) Diverse teaching and training bodies, 4) Diversity as an asset to society, 5) Inclusive education must be recognised in all types of education and 5) Inclusive education as a political priority.

Marcos Ros Sempere, Member of the European Parliament from the Socialists & Democrats, Annalisa Cannoni from the European Commission, Jessica Fiorelli, researcher from the Hasselt University and Loredana Dicsi, representing the European Disability Forum gathered to discuss inclusion, intersectionality and the role of education in promoting diversity and active citizenship.

MEP Marcos Ros reinforced the need to continue to the work on promoting inclusion and its key links to regional development and Annalisa



Cannoni, working at the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, presented the Pathways to School Success initiative which promotes better educational outcomes and well-being at school.

Loredana Dicsi strengthened key messages: implementation should follow policy and resources are important to ensure these inclusive policies are implemented. People with disabilities should be included in the conversation and given a voice. Jessica Fiorelli presented the main results from her research on inclusion within science and technology organisations brought the point of view of inclusion in organisations and the workplace.

The event had two moments for discussion and to hear your thoughts on the three key areas: access and participation in learning processes, strategies for diversity and inclusion, and digital inclusion related to digital transition and blended work methods. Designed within the framework of the iBox capacity-building programme, participants joined three interactive LABS.

Participants explored how dynamic access and meaningful participation can transform learning, moving beyond attendance to influence and empowerment, engaged in an interactive moment on understanding different perspectives or took the digitally excluded challenge to discover all of us can be digitally excluded in different moments or settings.

In the afternoon, participants also engaged in a worldcafé as an opportunity to discuss with other participants about policy support towards an inclusive education and training sector (translating policies into practices), online resources for accessible and inclusive learning environments and the current training needs (and inspiring practices) for educators and education and training sector managers.



ViP - NExT: Shaping the Future of the European Education Area

19 November | EVTA

The 2024 Annual Policy Forum, organized in collaboration with the Lifelong Learning Platform, gathered policymakers, educators, and industry leaders to discuss the future of the European Education Area (EEA) and the role of vocational excellence post-2025. The event, held in a hybrid format, featured keynote speeches from Giorgio Sbrissa, President of EVTA, and Gyula Cserey, Head of Unit for Strategy and Investments at DG EAC, focusing on the achievements of the EEA and its future direction. A panel discussion moderated by Ruben Abarca Gomez included insights from key experts on vocational education trends, qualifications, and cross-border cooperation. The forum concluded with a reflection on the Manifesto for a Political Roadmap that Reinvents VET, showcasing the collective efforts to drive innovation and inclusivity in European vocational education.

Rethinking AI Integration in Teacher Education

19 November | ATEE

The policy workshop explored key policy recommendations and institutional strategies for integrating generative AI in teacher education, focusing on enhancing teacher educators' readiness and competencies for AI-driven instructional environments



Neutrality - an ever demand task for educators? Uncover anti-pluralist strategies

19 November | DARE Network

Our teachers are under pressure to deliver, with full neutrality. But is this a realistic endeavour? Would it not be harmful, instead? The event hit the core of teaching and learning in our democracies, by bringing on the table questions of freedom of teaching as well as the democratic role that our educators play.

In this panel discussion, experts shared experiences, and claimed that neutrality is an attempt to silence down education and educators. Researchers shared findings that point at traps and advise against the overimposed criterion of neutrality to guide - and let alone judge - the quality of work of teachers and educators, in all learning environments.



Time Capsule: Education 2040

19 November | OEBSSU

During the 14th edition of the LLL week, OBESSU presented the "School Student Demands on Education 2040" paper, which is the result of the Time Capsule project, a one-year Work Plan, funded by the European Youth Foundation, aiming at creating spaces for school students to discuss what education should look like in the future.

After a brief presentation of the project by Nathan Weber, member of the OBESSU Board, a panel composed of Ulrike Pisiotis, Policy Officer in the schools unit of DG EAC, Taru Granholm, Communications and Advocacy Specialist at Youth For Understanding, and Panagiotis Chatzimichail, OBESSU Head of External Affairs, discussed students' demands in a panel focusing mostly on the themes of international mobility, digital education, and students' mental health. The event was also a great chance to integrate students' demands with those of teachers and advocate for them with education stakeholders.

Navigating Solutions on Teachers' shortages in education

19 November | GO! (Flemish Community Education) and VLEVA (Liaison Agency Flanders-Europe)

On the 19th of November, the workshop "Teacher shortages in the EU: A shared challenge and good practices" was organised by GO! (Flemish Community Education) and VLEVA (Liaison Agency Flanders-Europe) with the support of the BXL Education Network, an informal Brussels-based network dedicated to education.

Teacher shortages are a widespread challenge throughout Europe. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has identified this as a critical issue. In her [mission letter to the Executive Vice-President for People, Skills, and Preparedness](#), she emphasized the need for an Action Plan on Basic Skills, a STEM Education Strategic Plan, and an EU Teachers Agenda to enhance working conditions, training, and career opportunities for educators.

A [recent study](#) presented to the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) also highlights the shortage of teachers as one of the EU's major structural challenges.

The event began with a keynote speech by Susanne Conze, Head of Unit at DG EAC, European Commission, who provided an overview of the initiatives the European Commission can undertake to address the issue.

Her presentation set the stage for four inspiring good practices from Belgium, Germany, Czechia, and Denmark.

The day concluded with a dynamic roundtable discussion that synthesized the insights and contributions of all participants. These discussions were rooted in the event's presentations, focusing on two main objectives: exploring the transferability of the highlighted good practices to other regions and identifying additional solutions, ranging from large-scale strategies to smaller, localized initiatives.



Applied Higher Education and VET: Challenges and opportunities in cooperation

19 November | EURASHE

On 19 November, the European Association for the Applied Sciences in Higher Education (EURASHE) organised a workshop titled "Applied Higher Education and VET: Challenges and opportunities in cooperation", exploring the intersection of Applied Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training (VET). Based on the findings of the [Applied Innovation and Research in VET \(AIRinVET\) project](#), the session highlighted key insights into the current state of cooperation between Applied HE and VET, while presenting the most recent project findings. Participants had the opportunity to discuss the AIRinVET project's framework and roadmap, reflecting on the ecosystems in their respective countries, and sharing best practices with one another. A short networking session further fostered collaboration between those who were present at the meeting, contributing to long-term partnerships and a deeper understanding of how applied research can benefit VET institutions. The workshop also brought the AIRinVET project closer to participants, expanding its reach beyond the mere project consortium.

European Quality Award in Validation of Learning Outcomes from Volunteering 2024

19 November | CEV

On 19 November 2024 CEV hosted the Event "Showcasing Quality in Validation of Learning Outcomes through Volunteering & eQval Ceremony Awards", which gathered 114 participants (44 female, 70 male) in Brussels.

The event was part of the eQval Erasmus+ project - European Quality Standards in Validation of Learning Outcomes from Volunteering and was held in the framework of the CEV Autumn Volunteering Congress and the LLL Week 2024.

The event was opened by Gabriella Civico, CEV Director, who welcomed the participants. Speakers included Andrea Lapegna, Deputy Director of LLLP, who discussed the 2022 European Year of Skills and its legacy. Maida Pieper, Programme Technician at Plataforma del Voluntariado de España, introduced the eQval project and the award. Koen Nomden, DG EMPL at the European Commission, shared valuable insights on the EU Commission's work in the field of validation of learning and presented

Empowering Youth for a Water-Smart Future: Experiential Learning and Policy Innovation

19 November | Volonteuropa

On 19 November 2024, Volonteuropa hosted an engaging and interactive session, “Empowering Youth for a Water-Smart Future: Experiential Learning and Policy Innovation,” at Mundo Trone as part of Lifelong Learning Week 2024.

Guided by the principles of the Declaration for an EU Blue Deal and inspired by the words of surfer Kelly Slater, “For a surfer, it’s never-ending. There’s always some wave you want to surf”, the session immersed the participants in a shared exploration of water resilience, sustainability, and the power of collective action.

The event opened with an energising welcome, setting the flow for the evening by emphasising the vital role youth and communities play in shaping a water-smart Europe. Instead of traditional speakers, the session empowered every attendee to act as a contributor and co-creator. The participants were introduced as “water advocates” and encouraged to share insights and experiences that would shape the discussions.

The highlight of the session was an immersive experiential activity designed to deepen connections to water. Attendees reflected on their emotional and personal relationships with water, exploring how these connections inspire action toward a sustainable future. This set the stage for an interactive roundtable discussion, featuring contributions from FLOW Project alumni. Together, the participants explored

pathways for advancing water resilience, the challenges faced in aligning local initiatives with broader EU policies, and the opportunities presented by the EU Blue Deal.

The session concluded with a call to action, focusing on the European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI) for Water-Smart and Resilient Europe. The participants were invited to ride the waves of change by supporting the ECI and contributing to the movement for sustainable water governance in Europe. Drinks and networking rounded out the evening, offering a space for attendees to connect, reflect, and build lasting partnerships.

This session was more than just a discussion: it was a celebration of shared discovery and collaboration. Through experiential learning and collective engagement, we not only strengthened our connection to water but also laid the groundwork for a future where every voice contributes to a water-smart, resilient Europe. The waves created in this session will ripple far beyond the room, and the Lifelong Learning Week 2024, driving meaningful change for years to come.

Fostering civic engagement at a young age - introducing service-learning in primary schools

20 November | CEV

On 20 November 2024 CEV hosted the Community of Practice event “Fostering civic engagement at a young age - introducing service-learning in primary schools”, which gathered 27 participants (5 male, 22 female) in Brussels, Belgium. The event was part of CEV’s “Service Learning in Primary Schools” (SLIPS) project and was held in the framework of the CEV Autumn Volunteering Congress and the LLL Week 2024.

The event was opened by Tenna Soerensen Jochumsen, Project Officer at CEV and coordinator of the SLIPS project, who welcomed the participants. It included a presentation to the project, focusing on its aims and objectives, partner countries and the outputs that will be created for primary school teachers. In line with its Community of Practice format, the presentation was followed by a round of Q&A, welcoming practitioners in the audience to share their own experiences, ask questions, reflect and give their input to the topic of service-learning and with particular focus on its significance for the primary education level. In continuation, it encouraged the participants to further discuss examples and best practices of service-learning in their countries and across Europe, taking advantage of the intercultural dimension of the event. In total, the event created an environment to get enhanced knowledge and skills about Service-Learning in Primary Schools, also showing how service-learning can contribute to

educators’ wellbeing and facilitate relations with formal and non-formal learning and community stakeholders.

At the end of the event, CEV invited the participants - coming from both formal and non-formal education backgrounds - to take part in future activities of the “Service Learning in Primary Schools” (SLIPS) project including its upcoming follow up online Community of Practice sessions, which will continue the conversations and reflections related to the topic. Participants were encouraged to keep updated on the project website: www.slips-eu.com.

St@ndbyMe: Education and support for older adults in the 21st century's digital Society

19 November | CollectiveUP

The event, organized by CollectiveUP with support from St@ndbyMe partners (Linköping University, Tree Agency, Hellenic Adult Education Association, Frankfurter Verband, and APSS), took place on November 20, 2024, from 09:00 to 16:00 at BeCentral, Brussels. It brought together 13 onsite participants and 8 online participants for a day of presentations and collaborative discussions.

The agenda included presentations on key project topics, such as the Best Practices Guide, findings from focus groups, and a MOOC on digital inclusion, followed by an afternoon session exploring systems change. Notable discussions revolved around regional challenges and solutions for digital inclusion, emphasizing the human rights perspective of digitalization for older adults.

The event served as a platform to exchange ideas and deepen understanding of the critical intersections between digital inclusion and human rights.

How to Boost Community Engagement in the EU

20 November | University of Turin and HECSOs partners

The event "How to Boost Community Engagement in the EU," organized by Caritas Europa on November 20, 2024, gathered around 60 participants, including 19 international attendees from outside Belgium. The primary focus was on enhancing community engagement and social innovation through the HECSOs project, which stands for Higher Education and Civil Society Organizations together for Community Engagement. This initiative is led by the University of Turin and involves partners from various EU countries, including Italy, Cyprus, Austria, Greece, Spain, and Romania.

Throughout the event, participants engaged in discussions around the significance of community engagement as a dynamic process that fosters social cohesion, democratic participation, and sustainable development. Key presentations included an overview of the HECSOs project, which aims to bring together educational institutions and civil society organizations to work collaboratively on community issues.

Additionally, participants learned about the Summer School program on Community Engagement, which offers a blend of in-person and online learning opportunities, and aims to equip individuals with practical skills in community engagement.

European policy recommendations were also discussed, emphasizing the importance of participatory democracy and the need for inclusive governance that empowers citizens. Presentations from various stakeholders, including MEP Benedetta Scuderi and Irene Bonvissuto from DG CLIMA, highlighted the role of EU institutions in promoting citizen participation and fostering cross-sector partnerships to address challenges like climate change.

The event concluded stressing the importance of translating insights into actionable plans for future collaboration to advance education and training in the community engagement sector. Overall, the event served as a platform for sharing knowledge, building connections, and exploring innovative strategies to enhance community engagement across Europe.

QoC Session: Empowering Teachers for Wellbeing: Unlocking Creativity, Autonomy, and Resilience

20 November | ECSWE, L4WB-F, Alliance for Childhood

This policy event focused on the critical need to prioritise wellbeing in schools, bringing together policymakers, educators, practitioners, and civil society for a productive dialogue. As teacher stress, burnout, and workload challenges grow, so does the urgency to improve the teaching profession's attractiveness and create healthy working conditions that allow educators to thrive.

The event presented the European Commission's guidelines on supporting well-being in schools, zooming in on the elements most relevant to enhancing teacher wellbeing and illustrating these with good practice examples.

Key topics included:

- Granting teachers more autonomy and agency to increase self-efficacy and job satisfaction.
- Reducing workload pressures by focusing on a healthy teaching economy
- Encouraging creativity and innovative approaches to teaching that benefit both teachers and students.
- Practical solutions for teacher training and recruitment and retention through a focus on purpose, professional growth and sustainable work conditions.
- Practices to support teacher and teacher training such as EMDR protocol for prevention, intervention and post invention.

Digitalisation in education - challenges for teachers, parents and guardians, presenting some possible solutions

20 November | EPA & ECSWE

The possibility of constantly being online offers many opportunities and has become the new normal for many people especially youngsters. But this permanent offer also holds a number of risks and can have very negative effects on someone's mental health and well-being but also on the physical health. During the event the challenges that teachers, parents and guardians are faced with were discussed, but also a few solutions of what can be done in schools so children get the needed knowledge and understanding of the way digital tools work.

Cyberbullying and online addiction among their pupils/students are very relevant challenges for teachers in the 21st century. As they don't only affect pupils in the school context but also beyond especially at home, the cooperation between parents and guardians (or other family members or carers) and the teachers as well as other school staff is very important.

Participants discussed the materials that have been developed, gave their feedback and also discussed additional measures that they found important to include.

Erasmus+ 60 - Future perspectives for Third-Age Education and Mobility

21 November | European University Foundation

On the 21st of November the final conference for the Erasmus60+ project took place. This project sought to engage people aged 60 or above through international learning opportunities or mobility and intergenerational learning. In this conference we looked back at the findings and outputs produced as part of the project including a series of online learning courses for seniors, a toolkit and desk research on intergenerational learning and the main outcomes of our hackathon session. We also presented the upcoming policy recommendations and held panels on the place of seniors in international higher education and on the future of third age education and mobility. During these sessions attendees actively participated asking questions to presenters and panelists thus contributing to fruitful discussion on different issues and topics surrounding third age learning.



Bridging the cybersecurity skills gap: the REWIRE project's legacy and future pathways

21 November | EVTA & EfVET

The increasing frequency and sophistication of cybersecurity threats across Europe, coupled with a shortage of skilled professionals, has made closing the cybersecurity skills gap an urgent priority. The shift to remote work since the COVID-19 pandemic has further complicated this landscape, underscoring the critical need for effective solutions. In response to this challenge, the Cybersecurity Skills Alliance - New Vision for Europe-REWIRE project was launched to bridge the gap between the rapidly evolving needs of the cybersecurity industry and the training provided by educational institutions.

The REWIRE Final Conference, showcased the project's outcomes and provided a platform for discussing ongoing challenges in cybersecurity skills. Stakeholders, including European policymakers, industry associations, educational providers, and non-profits, came together to explore these challenges, identify opportunities and propose solutions for cybersecurity education and workforce development. The conference also raised awareness, facilitated dialogue, and fostered collaboration among stakeholders to advance cybersecurity workforce development and enhance societal resilience against emerging threats.

The international dimension of secondary schools: the potential for teachers

21 November | EFIL, OBESSU, EEE-YFU, ATEE

The event looked at internationalisation of secondary schools through learning mobility as a tool for attracting teachers to the profession, in light of the Europe on the Move, and the experience of some EU initiatives and funded projects (eg. teacher mobility, training teachers to support learning mobility of pupils). Speakers addressed the issue of workload of teachers in the context of the internationalisation of their school, and presented opportunities for shared management and support by civil society organisations (CSOs) in this effort.

The event covered the following themes:

- Teaching key competences - looking at how teachers can successfully use learning mobility as a tool to develop a wide range of key competences of pupils.
- Relation of teachers with other stakeholders - looking at how CSOs can support teachers in the international projects and therefore contribute both to quality learning mobility, to the wellbeing of teachers and their professional development through cooperation with external partners.
- Distributed leadership - looking at how international projects can be a task of shared management between teachers



Design Thinking for Inclusive Education: Connecting Families and Educators

22 November | COFACE Families Europe & EAEA

Participants explored Design Thinking methods to create actionable ideas for more inclusive education policies.

Beybin Elvin Tunc, Senior Education Programme Coordinator at COFACE Families Europe, and Greta Pelucco, Policy and Research Coordinator at the EAEA, led participants through a family-based case, which revealed how the skills and experiences of family members could be better served through more inclusive policies in education. They shortly presented the joint statement on [Making Education Accessible and Inclusive for Families, Parents and Family Carers: The Need for a 'Family Test' in EU Education and Training Policies](#) but delved deeper into the phases of Design Thinking through various activities for each of the steps.

The results of the workshop emphasized the importance of collaboratively developing enhanced inclusion knowledge for educators, establishing information points to answer the issues that families face and the need for a personalised approach and support. Ideas also revolved around raising awareness at the community level and providing relevant research behind proposed solutions, while also allowing for a certain level of flexibility. Participants left the workshop with a new empathy-based approach to policymaking.

Research Meets Practice The Third International Handbook of Lifelong Learning

22 November | LLLP, eucen, PIMA, ASEM-LLL Hub

We are living at a time when the future for humanity, and many other living things, looks uncertain and bleak. We need to change in so many ways if our planet and the life it sustains is to continue as we know it. As Barnett points out, 'if learning [has] a purpose then surely it must be to learn how to live on this tiny planet.' This has always been the case but there is an urgency like never before as we recognise the depth and scale of change needed to create a future that is more sustainable than the one we are currently heading for. If this is the overarching imperative for humanity's lifelong learning and future survival, what concepts of lifelong learning do we need to enable us to learn to live in ways that will help sustain the planet and its life supporting systems?

Policies play a critical role in turning the vision of lifelong learning into a reality for everyone. However, even the most well-crafted policies have their limitations. An overly optimistic view of what lifelong learning policies can achieve necessitates a careful, critical examination. Are the intended goals being met? Are potential negative effects being mitigated? Who truly benefits from these policies, and who might be disadvantaged by them?





LIFELONG LEARNING PLATFORM

EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION

The Lifelong Learning Platform is an umbrella that gathers 43 European organisations active in the field of education, training and youth. Currently these networks represent more than 60 000 educational institutions and associations covering all sectors of formal, non-formal and informal learning. Their members reach out to several millions of beneficiaries.



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