



EAEA EVENTS IN COPENHAGEN 26-27 JUNE

FLASH REPORT



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS



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EAEA IN COPENHAGEN

EVENTS AT A GLANCE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly elects a new President and Executive Board! Four new members join EAEA.
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GRUNDTVIG AWARD

Two excellent projects awarded the EAEA Grundtvig Award for embracing life skills
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ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Life skills and new trends in participation discussed during the event attended by 130 participants
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EAEA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Morning has broken!

We were welcomed in Copenhagen and in Vartov by Joachim Juel Vædele from Grundtvigsforum, who briefly described Vartov, its activities and its connection to Grundtvig.

Joachim also introduced us to the Danish tradition of sing-along (impressively, with two songs: in English and in Danish!).



New EAEA President and Board elected

The General Assembly elected a new President and Executive Board for a two-year term. The election results were announced by Caterina Casanovas (ACEFIR) from the Arbitration Committee. Uwe Gartenschlaeger was elected President; 11 Board members were also elected (see the full list on the next page).

We have asked Uwe about his expectations for his presidency of EAEA – have a look at the **video!**





Pictured, from left to right:

Alex Stevenson, Learning and Work Institute, UK

Karin Tudal, La Ligue de l'enseignement, France

Dina Soeiro, APCEP - Associação Portuguesa para a Cultura e Educação Permanente, Portugal

Klaudius Šilhár, AIVD, Slovakia

Benjamin Hendriksen, AONTAS, Ireland

Gro Svennebye, The Norwegian Association for Adult Learning (NAAL), Norway

Uwe Gartenschlaeger, DVV International, Germany (**President**)

Monica Widman Lundmark, ABF, Sweden

Galina Veramejchyk, IPA, Belarus

Bernhard Grämiger, Swiss Federation of Adult Learning (SVEB), Switzerland

Lauri Tuomi, The Finnish Lifelong Learning Foundation (KVS), Finland

Not pictured (couldn't attend):

George A. Koulaouzides, Hellenic Adult Education Association, Greece

"I LOOK FORWARD TO BEING A PRESIDENT OF A VIBRANT ASSOCIATION WITH A LOT OF ACTIVE MEMBERS FROM ALL REGIONS OF EUROPE"

- UWE GARTENSCHLAEGER



A big thank you to the outgoing President and Board members!

During a festive dinner we had an occasion to thank the outgoing Board members: Susana Oliveira, Kent Johansson, Maja Maksimovic, Esther Hirsch, Liz Waters, Joyce Black, Mariana Matache and Pirkko Ruuskanen-Parrukoski.



A special thank you goes to **Per Paludan Hansen**, who dedicated 12 years of work to EAEA, first as Board member and then as President. Thank you Per - it was always a pleasure to work with you!



What future for adult education on the global level?

"We embraced lifelong learning and included it in SDGs, but we lost adult education!", said Katarina Popovic, Secretary General of the International Council of Adult Education, bringing global policy perspectives into the discussion.

Looking at the UN as an advocacy space, the weaknesses of SDGs – but also why they are needed – Katarina put adult education initiatives into a larger picture.

Consult Katarina's presentation [here](#).

What future for adult education on the EU agenda?

What has been going on with Upskilling Pathways, and what's in store for adult education after 2020? Anna Nikowska, Policy Officer at the VET, Apprenticeship and Adult Learning Unit of DG EMPL (European Commission), walked us through the ongoing initiatives and their possible follow-up.

Consult Anna's presentation [here](#).



PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

Future of adult learning at the EU level, moderated by Gerhard Bisovsky, VOEV

- How should adult learning be best emphasized to show its importance? Learning = transformation, learning as a social movement?

- We need to link what we do at the European level to the national level
- More advocacy is needed at different levels; we should not forget about the regional and local level in our efforts

Future of adult learning at the global level, moderated by Katarina Popovic and Ricarda Motschilnig, ICAE

- EAEA members are already very active in global advocacy; working on civil society reports, participating in events, collecting data and writing reports with and for UN

representations and agencies – this is appreciated.

– Still, we have to keep doing our homework as the spaces for civil society spaces are shrinking! We need to continue working with our governments, preparing spotlight reports and build long-term connections with various stakeholders.

– Evidence for the benefits and outcomes of adult learning and education can often not be measured with indicators; we need different kinds of data and the inclusion of qualitative data.

– The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) of the implementation of the SDGs by member states are not conceptualized as an accountability mechanism among states. Rather, the aim is to strengthen accountability to citizens and facilitate the sharing of experience, including successes, challenges and lessons learned.

Use of the EAEA Manifesto, moderated by Galina Veramejchyk, Education without borders

– Manifesto as a simple and clear document valuing non-formal adult education

– Both versions of the Manifesto are regularly used by members: in meetings, events, campaigns, online

– Some countries might need an adapted version, e.g. Nordics, where non-formal AE is already strong

– Ideas on how it could further be used: more focus on storytelling, audiovisual materials (short videos)

Outreach and access as EAEA theme in 2020, moderated by Niamh O'Reilly, AONTAS

– Flexibility as a key component of outreach and access

– We keep focusing on motivation to learn, what about the relevance of learning provided?

– Crucial role of communication

– EAEA role: use the existing resources, but also collect more research evidence and case studies to raise awareness of the importance of outreach and access

Senior Staff Training, moderated by Bernhard Graminger, SVEB

– First concept developed – stay tuned!

Project planning and sharing, moderated by Mariana Matache, Euro Adult Education Association

– New ideas: a platform of tools to support staff and members of NGO's,

– The target group of returning workers (after maternity leave) and rural communities

– The idea of establishing educational community centres in villages and inviting interesting NGOs to run them

– Fostering of intergenerational learning.

"We used it, we're using it, we will use it!"

— GALINA VERAMEJCHYK,
SPEAKING ABOUT THE EAEA
MANIFESTO

EAEA GRUNDTVIG AWARD CEREMONY

Best projects on life skills awarded

The award ceremony, held by the Sankt Jørgen's lake, was opened by a concert of the Laetitia Musica Chamber Choir.

The awards - a book about Grundtvig and a picture made by students of an ecological production school in Copenhagen - were handed over by the outgoing EAEA President Per Paludan Hansen and the incoming President Uwe Gartenschlaeger.



“This award shows significance given by the EAEA to acquiring life skills in adult education and, more important, in informal and non-formal environments.

— OLENA KORZHYKOVA FROM
DOMSPAIN

National category: The Street University

Coordinator: UNIEDA, in partnership with Upter and UPBeduca Biella (Italy)

The project targets functionally illiterate people who, although they know how to read and write, are not able to contextualize a piece of news. It aims at bringing learning out of classrooms, organising free training meetings in bookstores, libraries, bars and squares. Neighbourhood



associations reach out and try to involve all the people who have not had educational opportunities.

The jury was impressed by the scale of the project, and it's innovative approach to bring learning into public spaces and within reach for everyone.

European category: Open IT up
Coordinator: DomSpain

The project seeks to reinforce adult educators' competences and provide them with tools to empower adult learners to start their own business. Open IT Up targets vulnerable groups of adults and equips learners with basic skills, such as literacy and digital skills as well as knowledge of entrepreneurship. The project has developed an e-learning language course in several languages on the topic "Start Your Own Business".

There were several points which made Open IT Up a winner: The project targeted both adult learners and educators and provided learning and working materials for both of them. The digital tools produced in many languages ensure a wide dissemination for the results.

EAEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Life skills and participation in adult learning

A life skills approach can provide meaningful learning opportunities for adults, with curricula that are designed together with learners and correspond to their needs. During the Annual Conference, we looked at how this could work - or already works! - in practice.

We were welcomed at the entrance to Vartov by Kim Jezus who played the harmonica - check out our [video](#)!



LIFE SKILLS AND LEARNING SOCIETIES IN NORDIC COUNTRIES

The Nordic countries are frequently the front-runners in studies on participation in adult learning. Why is so? In her presentation, Lene Andersen, co-author of "**The Nordic Secret**", recounted the story of "bildung", the key role of art and aesthetics, and emphasized why bildung needs to be reclaimed now more than ever.

Lene also presented a "bildung rosetta" (see [here](#)), putting it also in the context of life skills.

A special offer on "The Nordic Secret" for EAEA conference participants is available [here](#).

Lene and her colleague Mette Hvid Brockmann also invite you to join the **European Bildung Day**.

"How can we encourage a holistic approach to learning? Jobs might not be the key - but fun might be!" - Lene Andersen



WHAT'S NEW IN PARTICIPATION?

"There are a lot of people interested in informal learning - we need to reach out to them," said **Anna Nikowska** from the European Commission, summarizing the latest results of the Adult Education Survey and the Labour Force Survey.

Ania also looked at the growing role of workplaces in providing learning, and at the correlation between participation rates and guidance.

Consult Ania's presentation [here](#).



SO WHAT IS A LIFE SKILLS APPROACH?

"More flexible, creative and innovative ways to learn basic skills are needed," said Alex Stevenson, who presented the Life Skills for Europe project and the Citizens' Curriculum initiative of Learning and Work Institute that inspired the project.

First asking the participants about key facts about basic skills in their countries (did you know that in Belarus, only 10% of the retired people know how to access their pension

A citizens' curriculum is learning which is locally-led, developed with the active participation of learners, and interlinks life skills such as literacy and numeracy with health, digital and civic capabilities."

— ALEX STEVENSON,
LEARNING AND WORK
INSTITUTE, UK



“We are not using a fixed curriculum and putting the learner into it, but building a curriculum based on the needs of the learner. We are turning the traditional model upside down.

— GINA EBNER, EAEA

digitally?), Alex went on to present the key concepts behind the Citizens' Curriculum and the findings from its pilot.

During the implementation of the pilot, course content was negotiated with learners; practitioners designed the programme together with learners, to develop literacy and language skills which helped address issues the learners had identified.

The learner-centred approach benefited practitioners and learners alike: while practitioners became more confident, learnt to contextualize their approaches to teaching and improved their morale, learners successfully increased their civic and social engagement and have more positive attitudes to learning.

Taking the Citizens' Curriculum as a starting point, Life Skills for Europe project developed a framework with a common understanding of life skills, with different progression aspects.

"The framework is not comprehensive or exhaustive – it would be impossible," underlined Alex. It is, however, a simple yet powerful tool to facilitate life skills curriculum development.

"Life skills are an extension of basic skills. Someone who is well educated might still lack life skills. We are not using a fixed curriculum and putting the learner into it, but building a curriculum based on the needs of the learner, commented Gina Ebner, Secretary-General of EAEA.

Consult the presentation of Alex [here](#).

More information about the LSE project is available under [this link](#).



ADAPTING THE CONCEPT

"Critical thinking and action are at the core of life skills in Denmark," said **Stine Hohwusch Christensen**, presenting "the flower of life competences" that was developed by the Danish Adult Education Association.

Stine went on to underline the importance of flexible approaches and learning environments, giving the example of a course for which the participants paid with... coffee and cake.

Another inspiring story was that of a course on needlework for Danish and refugee women, which went beyond handicraft and brought in topics like healthcare, showing how different life skills are interlinked.

See Stine's presentation [here](#).



ADVOCATING LIFE SKILLS

Why - and how - should we advocate the benefits of a life skills approach to policymakers? In her presentation, Trine Bendix Knudsen showed the example of DAEA's campaign, which brought forward powerful learner stories.

"I WENT TO A DANCE COURSE, AND I LEARNED HOW TO STAND ON MY TWO FEET" - LEARNER STORY FROM DAEA'S ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN

How can such a fun-oriented approach to learning be explained to funders?, wondered the participants. "Fun and joy are closely linked to motivation. That way you can explain the importance of fun to the funders," explained Trine.

Trine's presentation is available [here](#).



And what did you think about life skills?

Small-group discussions looked at the concept of life skills, its use in different contexts, challenges and benefits

"Maybe we are already implementing the life skills approach in one way or another - perhaps it's an old wine in a new bottle? Yet although we are proud of our diversity, there are some areas where we need a common approach - life skills could be it"

— KATARINA POPOVIC, ICAE





CONCLUSIONS

The event was closed by EAEA President Uwe Gartenschlaeger, who thanked the Danish Folk High School Association and EPALÉ Denmark for contributing to the costs to the events, and especially the **Danish Adult Education Association**, who supported EAEA in organising the events in every step of the way.

"Life skills could give us a frame to explain more easily what we are doing in adult education. If we can keep working on this and combine it with the inspiring concept of bildung, maybe we could achieve more visibility at the European and global level."

— UWE GARTENSCHLAEGER,
EAEA PRESIDENT

We hope to see you next year!

But before that, we'd like to hear from you! What did you think about the events in Copenhagen? Tell us **here!**