



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

## EAEA MEDIA RELEASE

### ADULT EDUCATION IS MORE THAN JUST A TOOL FOR THE LABOUR MARKET

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The European Commission's decision to move adult learning from [DG Education and Culture](#) to [DG Employment](#) must not compromise the Commission's commitment to lifelong learning, demands [the European Association for the Education of Adults \(EAEA\)](#).

"Adult learning is certainly a great way to acquire new skills or upgrade skills for the workplace," says **Gina Ebner**, EAEA Secretary General. "However, adult education has a much broader scope that goes beyond the labour market: it covers personal development, learning for seniors, civic learning and active citizenship, cultural and artistic expression and much more."

EAEA is concerned that the move will narrow the understanding of lifelong learning, fragment learning opportunities and compromise access to learning offers.

The lifelong learning approach has been at the centre of the European Commission's policies of the last 15 years. The first objective in the [Education and Training 2020](#) strategy is "making lifelong learning a reality". This means a comprehensive understanding of learning to cover formal, non-formal and informal learning but also a close cooperation between all sectors of education and training.

EAEA asks the Commissioners for Education and for Employment and Skills to make sure that the links between skills, employment, education, culture and citizenship are maintained. EAEA calls on both Commissioners to uphold and further implement the lifelong learning strategy.

"It is crucial to give citizens in Europe the opportunity to participate in all forms of learning as learners receive a wide range of benefits such as more self-confidence, better health, better social networks and more societal engagement," Gina Ebner says.

EAEA thus calls on Commissioner-designate **Marianne Thyssen** to ensure that this wider scope of adult education will be preserved in DG Employment and continue to form a vital part of adult education strategies, such as [the European Agenda for Adult Learning](#).

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