



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

# ADULT LEARNING AND THE GREEN TRANSITION

- Preparing the ground for  
EAEA's annual theme 2023 -



Concept paper  
prepared by  
*EAEA Working Group  
on Sustainability*



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The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) is the voice of non-formal adult education in Europe. EAEA is a European NGO with 120 member organisations in 43 countries and represents more than 60 million learners Europe-wide. EAEA promotes adult learning and access to and participation in non-formal adult education for all; particularly for groups that are currently underrepresented.

## ABOUT US

The **EAEA Sustainability Working Group** was established in 2021 at the request of a number of EAEA members whose work focuses on sustainability, green transition, greening ALE, and other related areas.

The working group organised a successful webinar entitled "No Greening without ALE!" in the framework of UNEP's Stockholm+50 conference in June 2022. EAEA members active in the working group meet regularly and share information on sustainability and green transition to promote capacity building and raise awareness of the role of ALE in combating climate change and contributing to just green change.



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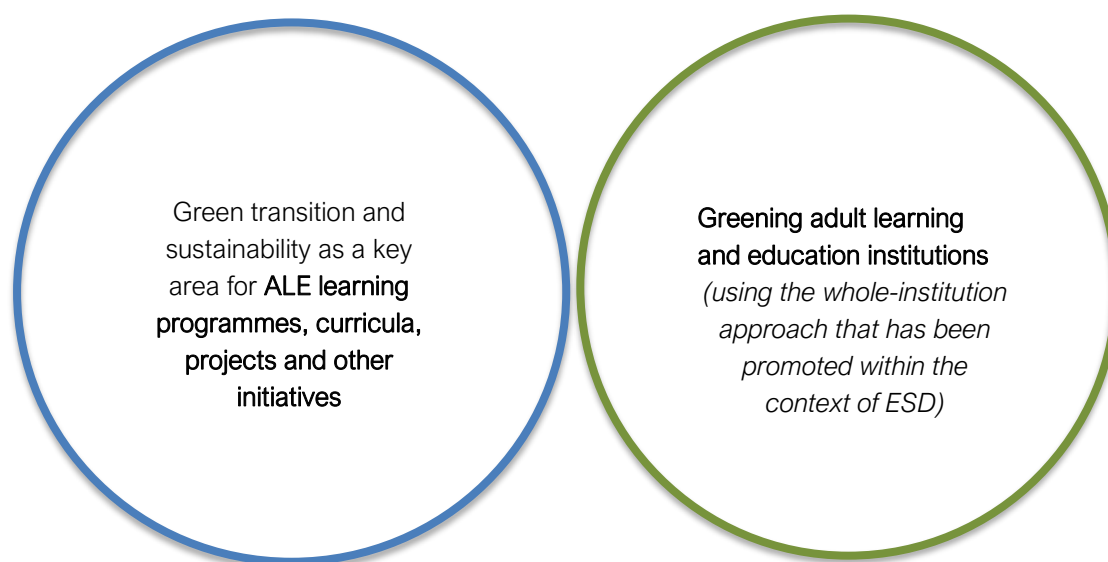
# ALE AND THE GREEN TRANSITION

- preparing the ground for EAEA's thematic focus 2023

EAEA's membership and working group on sustainability was very productive in 2022.

Firstly, it very successfully planned and conducted a **webinar on “No Greening without Adult Learning and Education”** in June 2022 in the framework of UNEP's Stockholm+50 conference. Speakers included MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen from Finland, Katarina Popovic, Secretary-General of the International Council for Adult Education, Nevenka Bogataj, researcher at the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, Fergal Finnegan, Assistant Professor at Maynooth University, Shirley Walters, Professor at University of Western Cape South-Africa, and Tarja Halonen, former President of Finland. The learners' voice was included as well with a contribution of a Sami climate activist and adult learner, and a contribution from Colombia.

Secondly, the discussions in the working group also led to the drafting of the **concept paper for EAEA's 2023 annual theme on Green Transition**. Several questions on sustainability were included in EAEA's annual country reports survey, where EAEA members have the opportunity to report on new developments in their countries. The needs of EAEA members in terms of sustainability and green transition were pivotal for the concept for 2023. Based on the answers to the country reports survey, the working group identified two main areas of work around the topic of green transition and ALE:



This concept paper aims to **set out the ideas for EAEA's annual theme for 2023 and to get all members on the same page**, especially the EAEA members who have joined in recent years and have not yet had the opportunity to go deeper into the discussion on sustainability with us. This paper is, therefore, by the members for the members and will inform EAEA's work on advocacy, policy, capacity building, stakeholder engagement and projects in the coming months.

## 1 Introduction

Sustainability has risen from a marginal topic to a central issue for Europe and other regions of the world, as numerous studies and calculations, including those of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), draw dramatic scenarios for the development of the climate, biodiversity, forests, etc. This is beginning to have an increasing impact on the economic and social life, making the urgency of the issue clearer.

Adult learning and education (ALE) is a fertile ground, not only for the provision of skills, knowledge and competencies for sustainable development, but also to empower social transformation as a whole. With the emergence of the Fridays for Future movement and many other groups around the globe, sustainability has become a 'hot topic'. The current European Commission has launched the 'European Green Deal', driving Europe's green transition, and aiming to strongly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, decouple economic growth from resource use, and include everyone and every place in this development. Increasingly, actions on the green transition and sustainability are also included in the European Union's education programmes and funding instruments, especially Erasmus+.

Sustainability has long been a central theme for EAEA, and now is the time to give it the stage it deserves.

## 2 EAEA's work on sustainability and green transition

In 2018, EAEA published a background paper on [Adult Education and Sustainability](#). In 2021, EAEA took a closer look at [Greening Adult Education and Sustainability](#) including a call to action for adult and community learning centres to become active in sustainability action. Over the years, EAEA has also produced a number of statements looking at specific aspects of sustainability and policies or political initiatives in this area. Moreover, sustainability is one of the pillars of EAEA's Manifesto for Adult Learning in the 21st Century.

In the last **country reports survey from 2022**, more than 80% of EAEA's members said that sustainability and greening ALE is a key work area in their organisations, with more than 60% saying that they have either already started to implement strategies to promote sustainability at the operational level or are currently developing such a strategy. While some members are still in the earlier stages of reflecting on how to work more on sustainability and green transition, others are quite advanced, for instance KVS from Finland that developed a certificate on sustainability and indicators for change management in this area. Members also mentioned that they participate in peer learning activities to learn from other organisations. VÖV from Austria said that they started a partnership with Birdlife Austria that advocates for the protection of nature.

More than 80% are promoting sustainability through their learning programmes and curricula or are currently working on a strategy to promote sustainability learning. However, almost 60% also said that they believe that there is still more potential for the further implementation of sustainability and the SDGs in the ALE sector and that the implementation varies significantly

within the sector. They also mentioned missing links to decision-makers as well as limited civil society space and capacities for joint actions that bring together the key stakeholders.

### 3 ALE and the multiple crises

The past three years have been years of (sad) superlatives in many respects. Recent events include a pandemic that Europe has not had in this form since the Spanish flu, as well as floods and extreme heat waves in large parts of Europe. Finally, we are also facing a war on Europe's soil that not only costs countless lives and brought the danger of a nuclear accident back into consciousness, but has also driven up energy prices, which have already been increasing since the Covid 19 pandemic, fuelling inflation.

People who belong to the post-war generations or who have made their home in Europe since the Second World War have come to know a new Europe: a Europe of uncertainty. Crises take place in seemingly unrelated areas, yet on closer inspection they are interwoven and, moreover, global. The Covid 19 pandemic has disrupted global supply chains and has led, among other things, to wildly fluctuating and often rising food prices, with the war in Ukraine, one of the world's leading grain producers, exacerbating these increases. The heat waves and drought of recent years have increased the dependence of many countries on food imports (European Environment Agency 2022).

Reports, studies and practical evidence make it clear that climate change and environmental degradation pose severe threats on livelihoods of farmers, subsistence economy, communities, and indirectly on all citizens. Greenhouse gas emissions need to be urgently reduced. Many of the major causes of climate change also increase the risk of pandemics such as Covid-19. Habitat loss, which occurs mainly through deforestation, forces people and animals to migrate and live in tighter spaces in larger urban centres. Industrial agriculture and livestock farming is also a source of spreading infections from animals to humans. Air pollution, especially in urban centres, leads to greater risks of contracting respiratory diseases, cardiovascular diseases, etc.<sup>1</sup>

More sustainability seems to be the clear answer here. A stronger focus on local and regional production could make European economies less dependent on global crises. Less air pollution would promote public health and prevent diseases and excess mortality. More sustainable livestock farming and agriculture and less polluting industry could help fight the root causes of droughts and floods.

However, although sustainability is much more firmly anchored in the consciousness of many people today - also at the political level - than it was a few years ago, it meets with resistance. The 2022 energy crisis not only exposed Europe's heavy dependence on fossil energy sources from a few countries, but it also showed one thing: how quickly technologies that were previously considered obsolete, such as nuclear energy, are politically and financially promoted again as 'green energy' in order to secure energy production and, thus, to secure economic growth. The high energy prices have certainly also favoured sentiments among the population

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<sup>1</sup> For more information regarding the connection between climate change and diseases, see the website of the Center for Climate, Health, and the global Environment of the Harvard School of Public Health

that renewable energies are not ‘powerful’ or advanced enough and that the green transition in particular is to blame for the high prices. Instead of going one step forward, it seems that we are going two steps backward.

There is a strong correlation between sustainability issues and political participation: better informed citizens, but, above all, citizens engaged in political and economic processes who implement it not only at the personal level, but also engage in collective climate action.

**This is where education, and more specifically ALE, comes into play.**

ALE, however, is in crisis itself: the Covid-19 pandemic hit ALE organisations hard and led to a decrease in learning programmes as ALE centres had to close their doors due to the restrictions. This led to a reduction of educators and other ALE staff that is continuing even after the end of the Covid-19 measures. In addition, the energy crisis is now also increasingly affecting ALE, as learning centres in many regions of Europe are struggling to pay their energy bills and again have to reduce their learning offers or increase learner fees. This, in turn, has a negative impact on the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups of learners. Finally, the increasing privatisation and commodification of education puts quality ALE provision under pressure.

The current crises are highly jeopardising the potential of ALE as a key provider of learning about sustainability. *“Adult education is crucial not only to support individual learners but also key for social cohesion and to build resilience among communities. Resilience needed in any crisis.”* (EAEA background report “Let’s get our hands dirty”)

ALE plays a central role in raising awareness of action for sustainability at the individual level as it provides a low threshold access to information and peer learning on sustainability and climate change. It empowers learners to become ‘change agents’. However, it is just as important to empower adults to actively advocate for a just green transition. ALE promotes social cohesion and community building at the local level, bringing together generations, and creating inclusion across cultural and social boundaries. The Marrakech Framework for Action of the UNESCO, adopted in June 2022, recognises the pivotal role of ALE for sustainability, by empowering adults to *“adapt their consumption patterns and lifestyles, and engage actively in democratic debates and initiatives to protect and preserve the environment.”*

EAEA's 2022 annual focus on transformative learning addressed how empowerment and emancipation through ALE can take place at the individual and community level. In many cases, this actually relies on tried and tested approaches: the promotion of ‘critical consciousness’ in the sense of Paulo Freire and (other) discursive and dialogical ways of learning. *“To avoid falling into a trap of behavioural indoctrination or social engineering, such education and learning needs to be constituted as open, co-engaged and more radically transgressive processes of reflexive change.”* (Macintyre et al. 2018)

Seeing ALE not only as a means to but as sustainability itself enables us to see the inherent opportunity of partnership, dialogue and transformation (Schreiber-Barsch/Mauch 2019). ALE



can empower learners to deal with uncertainties, form strategies and mechanisms to deal with risks – necessary to envision a just and fair future for all.

## 4 Key policies and initiatives on ALE and sustainability/green transition

### 4.1 Sustainable Development Goals (UN)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out an ambitious plan - called Agenda 2030 - to achieve a better and more sustainable future for “people, planet and prosperity”. Education, including lifelong learning, is a transversal objective to achieve the 17 SDGs; however, the SDGs also include a separate goal on education: SDG 4.

Several targets within SDG 4 address the role of adult learning, in particular target 4.4 that aims to “By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”, 4.5 that aims to “By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations”; 4.6 that aims to “By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy”; and 4.7 that aims to “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.”

### 4.2 Marrakech Framework for Action (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning)

The [Marrakech Framework for Action](#), adopted by the UNESCO Member States in June 2022, recognises the role of ALE in implementing the Agenda 2030 and the efforts made in this regard: *“We recognize that lifelong learning is critical to all 17 goals and that, as a core dimension of lifelong learning, ALE is key to their achievement. We especially reaffirm our commitment to SDG 4, through which Member States have committed to ‘ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’.”* The Marrakech Framework for Action also refers to other key documents addressing sustainability in education, in particular the [Berlin Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development](#) that was adopted in May 2021, and the report from the International Commission on the Futures of Education on [‘Re-imagining our futures together: A new social contract for education’](#).

### 4.3 Transforming Education (UNESCO)

The Transforming Education process of the UNESCO has mainly been a response to the crisis in education caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Structured into five thematic action tracks, the process aims to promote the 2030 Agenda and its education-related goals and targets, specifically SDG 4: ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. [Action track 2 on ‘Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable](#)

[development](#)' focuses on transforming education for human and planetary well-being and sustainable development and proposes, among others, a stronger promotion of education for sustainable development, including environmental and climate change education.

#### 4.4 Greening Education Partnership (UNESCO)

As a result of the Transforming Education Summit and other previous processes on education for climate action and learning for sustainability, UNESCO launched a [new Greening Education Partnership](#) in 2022. This partnership aims to deliver strong, coordinated and comprehensive action that will prepare every learner to acquire the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to tackle climate change and to promote sustainable development. As this initiative was launched very recently, interested organisations can join it for future joint actions.

#### 4.5 Declaration on Global Education 2050 (Council of Europe)

The Declaration on Global Education 2050 considers global education as a container term for a number of education and learning areas, including education for sustainable development, global citizenship education, sustainability learning and many more. Adopted by the member states of the Council of Europe in November 2022, it is an expression of intent to promote global education for all age groups. Especially looking at sustainability and green skills, the declaration can be an advocacy tool and a reinforcement of other policies, strategies and initiatives at the UN and EU levels.

#### 4.6 European Green Deal (EU)

Seeking to become the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050, the [European Green Deal](#) was proclaimed as a major milestone of Europe's sustainability ambition. The Green Deal is fundamentally a competitive growth strategy that aims to reduce carbon emissions by 50% in 2030. Although there is no specific area that targets education, most of the actions include "activating education and training" as a key driver to achieve their respective goals. Furthermore, funding instruments for education and training, especially Erasmus+, increasingly refer to the objectives of the Green Deal, aiming to mainstream sustainability and the green transition in learning programmes and exchange of good practices.

*"There is a need to enable a profound change in people's behaviour and skills, starting in the education systems and institutions as catalysts. Actions should be geared towards changing behaviour, boosting skills for the green economy, fostering new sustainable education and training infrastructure and renovating existing buildings, thereby creating conducive environments for this change." (Green Deal)*

#### 4.7 European Semester - Sustainable Growth Strategy (EU)

The **Sustainable Growth Strategy** is part of the European Commission's autumn package of the European Semester. The strategy for 2022 states that *"The role of education, training and skills as key determinants of social inclusion and economic growth must be reinforced, taking into account the challenges and opportunities of the twin transitions. [...] Lifelong learning should be*

*fostered to address existing and emerging skills mismatches, in particular those related to the twin transitions, by significantly increasing adults' participation in upskilling and reskilling."*

As called for by President von der Leyen in her Political Guidelines, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will continue to be integrated into the European Semester. The 2023 country reports will assess the progress and challenges for each Member State on SDG implementation. The reports will include a detailed annex for each country which, based also on Eurostat monitoring, will link SDG implementation with the four dimensions of competitive sustainability.

#### 4.8 Key Competences Framework (EU)

Key competences, as defined in the [European Reference Framework of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning](#), aim to help learners of all ages acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are important for personal and community development. They highlight sustainability as a key component of learning and urge for the mainstreaming of the SDGs across educational offers, *"including by fostering the acquisition of knowledge about limiting the multifaceted nature of climate change and using natural resources in a sustainable way."* (Council of the European Union 2018: 5) Moreover, sustainability is a central part of citizenship competence in the framework: *"Skills for citizenship competence relate to the ability to engage effectively with others in common or public interest, including the sustainable development of society."* (ibid: 11)

#### 4.9 GreenComp (EU)

[GreenComp](#) is a reference framework for sustainability competences. It provides a common ground to learners and guidance to educators, advancing a consensual definition of what sustainability as a competence entails. It responds to the growing need for people to improve and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to live, work and act in a sustainable manner, and it is designed to support education and training programmes for lifelong learning. It is written for all learners, irrespective of their age and their education level and in any learning setting – formal, non-formal and informal.

#### 4.10 Council Recommendation on learning for environmental sustainability (EU)

The Council Recommendation emphasises the importance of learning at all ages and in all forms for promoting sustainability and a green transition: *"Learning for the green transition and sustainable development supports learners of all ages in acquiring the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to live more sustainably, in changing patterns of consumption and production, in embracing healthier lifestyles and in contributing – both individually and collectively – to a more sustainable economy and society. It also contributes to building the skills and competences increasingly needed in the labour market. It promotes understanding of the interconnected global challenges we face, including the climate crisis, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss, all of which have environmental, social, economic and cultural dimensions."* (Council of the European Union 2022: 3)

The recommendation also mentions the different angles to sustainable development and the green transition, i.e. organisational development and learning programme/curriculum development. It encourages education providers and institutions, including ALE organisations, to participate in eco-label initiatives, and promotes the creation of *“small and tailored learning courses on the green transition and sustainable development, that can lead, among others, to micro-credentials, in order to deepen, broaden and update professional competences.”* (Council of the European Union 2022: 17)

#### 4.11 New Skills Agenda for Europe

The European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, published in July 2020, emphasizes the importance of up and reskilling to support the green transition. Action 6 aims at defining the taxonomy of skills needed for the green and digital transition and seeks to support the twin transition. Action 8 focuses on Skills for Life which include, in definitions used by EAEA, green and sustainability skills and competences.

#### 4.12 New European Agenda for Adult Learning

The [New European Agenda for Adult Learning](#) (NEAAL) calls for increased participation in ALE, aiming to promote “all the necessary knowledge, skills and competences to create an inclusive, sustainable, socially just and more resilient Europe.” (Council of the European Union 2021: 2) It also recognises the key role of ALE for promoting sustainable life-styles and communities, and, in its priority 5 on the green and digital transitions, calls for the development of new approaches to sustainability learning within ALE, “including by addressing environmental attitudes, developing suitable mindsets, raising awareness and considering taking specific steps to develop training.” (ibid: 23)

#### 4.13 EU Year of Skills 2023

One of the objectives of the EU Year of Skills 2023 is also to promote skills for the green transition. However, the [Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council on a European Year of Skills 2023](#) focuses on green skills in the context of labour market relevant skills and to filling staff vacancies and “matching companies’ needs”. Participation in ALE is also presented in the light of labour market relevance. This omits many aspects of learning for the green transition that adults need for their daily lives.

### 5 Risks and challenges

#### 5.1 Holding governments and decision makers accountable

As also mentioned in our background paper of 2021, the SDGs, but also initiatives at EU level in education are ‘soft law’. Even when member states of the UN, UNESCO, the Council of Europe or the European Union sign declarations, frameworks for action, resolutions, recommendations and the like, this has mainly a symbolic effect as a declaration of intent. Although there is a platform for peer reviews at UN level, e.g. through the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), and similar instruments exist at EU level, states and their governments cannot be legally obliged to

implement them. In addition, targets are often formulated rather vaguely, e.g. ‘substantially’ increasing the participation of adults in ALE, instead of quantifying targets.

## **5.2 Green skills as a tool for the labour market and industry**

When talking about ‘green competences’ or ‘green skills’ at the policy level, a strong connection is mostly made with competences that benefit the labour market and industry, and, to a lesser extent, with competences for personal development, omitting the role of community learning for the green transition. On the other hand, the benefits of ‘green skills’ for the labour market are evident and, in some contexts, can increase the motivation of adults for participating in ALE. Quality learning offers in ALE can address both ‘objectives’ of learning: for individual and professional development, and for the development of communities and society.

## **5.3 Underfunding and fragmentation of the sector**

ALE is, in many parts of Europe, fragmented and structurally underfunded, which reflects the insufficient recognition of this field at the political level. The impact of non-formal ALE, which is organised from the bottom up, is often not measurable and, therefore, of little interest to data-driven investors. ALE can play a central role in the green transition and towards a more sustainable future; however, better financial and structural support for the sector is inevitable in order to reach that goal.

## **5.4 Green skills as a politically contested arena**

Last but not least, it must be mentioned as a challenge that the ‘green transition’ and sustainability are not politically unencumbered. There is political trench warfare around this issue, with people arguing that green transition leads to higher energy prices, is socially unsustainable, only serves to open up new economic sectors, etc. For the work in ALE, this means opening an undogmatic and unpatronising debate on this topic that includes the diverse voices and backgrounds of ALE providers and organisations in Europe to build capacity and support within the sector.

# **6 Good practices**

## **6.1 Earth citizen programme - YUVA, Turkey**

Coordinated by YUVA, a Turkish non-governmental ALE organisation (member of EAEA), around 500 adults per year have been trained in the Earth Citizen programme since 2013, approximately 60% of whom are female, and 40% male. Learners in the programme are empowered to be ‘earth citizens’ that are part of the local and global community and act together to tackle imminent issues concerning sustainability and global citizenship. Being an ‘earth citizen’, in this programme, means being ecologically literate. For the training, YUVA is employing a peer-to-peer approach: ‘earth citizens’ become trainers in their own communities, starting a ‘snow ball effect’ for sustainability learning.

## 6.2 Citizen's passport 2030 - Popular University of Jura, Switzerland

The 'citizen's passport 2030' gives its owners - participants in ALE - points to four categories of learning activities: environmental sustainability skills, listening and introspection skills, community-building and social inclusion skills, and physical and mental wellbeing skills. The four categories are, therefore, considering the wider skills needed for sustainability and a green transition. By taking part in ALE classes, people can collect these points and get 'stamps' in their passports. People can also collect points by reading selected books from the Bibliobus, a library bus that goes to villages and remote areas with limited access to public libraries. Once a year, the "best" learners who got the most stamps are awarded a prize.

## 6.3 SDG Advocate Training - Development Perspectives, Ireland

The SDG Advocate Training, organised by Development Perspectives (member of EAEA member AONTAS) on an annual basis, aims to engage participants in an 8-month Development Education learning journey that will challenge views, opinions, knowledge and awareness of the world we live in. It is designed to enable participants to deepen their understanding of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and to become advocates for sustainability and greening in their communities in Ireland.

The SDG Advocate Training is part of a broader strategic partnership programme called Saolta; the Irish word for "Worldly- Wise" [www.developmentperspectives.ie/saolta](http://www.developmentperspectives.ie/saolta). Development Perspectives is the lead partner in the consortium, which also includes AONTAS, Concern Worldwide, Irish Rural Link and the Adult and Community Education Department of Maynooth University.

## 6.4 Sustainable Attitude For Environment in Adult Education - Erasmus+ project

The project, funded under the Erasmus+ programme as a strategic partnership with partners from Slovakia, Latvia, Sweden, Lithuania, Estonia and the Netherlands (2019-1-LT01-KA204-060634), aims to develop and enhance competences for adult educators and staff to support adults in sustainability in the broadest sense of the challenges of environmental and climate change, focusing on less consumption, the zero waste movement, healthy lifestyles, the impact of physical activity on physical and mental health and quality of life, and active citizenship.

The project produced a handbook for adult educators with methods and tools for teaching about the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as materials for adult learners to raise their awareness of the ideas of sustainable development.

## 6.5 Bread House Cultural Centre - Bulgaria

The [Bread House Cultural Centre](#) is a member of the International Council for Cultural Centres (I3C) and uses a very innovative approach to sustainable development and community building: by baking (organic) sourdough bread with members of the community. Founded in 2009, I3C's Bread House in Gabrovo promotes local biodiversity, bio agriculture, and ecological lifestyle. The Bread House model has been recognised by Slow Food as one of the best models of ecological education in the world.

The vision of Bread House is to plant seeds around the world for community cultural centres bringing together art with food and sustainability learning as one of the most effective ways to bring communities together and to approach in a holistic manner the issue of community sustainable development. It is also closely connected with the [Bulgarian Centre for Sustainable Local Development and Ecopedagogy](#).

## 6.6 International ESD Alliances – DVV International, Germany

Together with partners from a number of countries, the project entitled “International ESD Alliances” aims to promote sustainability learning on the one hand, and a whole-institution approach to making ALE more sustainable and ‘green’ on the other. By bringing together representatives of ALE centres, educators, allies, experts and global critical friends, the ESD Alliances walk the talk. Results from this ongoing project are expected in 2023 and 2024.

## 7 Recommendations

### FOR POLICYMAKERS:

#### 7.1 Giving adult learners a strong voice

- Addressing the green transition and green skills from a learner’s perspective is pivotal: learning needs to be relevant for individuals, communities and society and, therefore, has to start from the needs of the learners.
- Learners need to be included in all decision-making processes on curricula, but also processes of greening ALE. Innovative methods across Europe, including learners’ fora, learner councils etc. contribute to strengthening the voice of adult learners.

#### 7.2 Promoting policy coherence at all levels

- Policy coherence in all areas of education and training is a key component to ensure lifelong learning. ALE at the EU level, but often also at national and regional level, is spread across different departments, including education, labour, social affairs, sustainability, etc. Good and close cooperation between different departments and responsibilities at policy level is essential to promote policy coherence and to effectively implement policies.
- When working on policy coherence in and around the green transition, sustainability needs to be considered in all its dimensions, including the environmental, social and economic dimensions, requiring working across sectors.

#### 7.3 Providing financial and structural support to ALE providers and organisations

- ALE needs sustained financial support and public investment to fulfil its role as an important component of national and regional lifelong learning systems. This is especially true for implementing sustainability learning and green skills programmes in

ALE, but also for building the capacity of ALE organisations to 'green' their organisations in a 'whole-institution approach'.

- ALE also required structural support to create regional and national umbrellas in countries where they do not exist yet, in order to promote a higher participation in ALE, ensure a high quality of ALE, and to become strong partners in policy and decision-making processes.

## FOR ALE PROVIDERS AND ORGANISATIONS:

### 7.4 Building partnerships for ALE and the green transition

- Identifying key stakeholders and building networks needs to be given special consideration in the greening of ALE institutions and promotion of green skills through curricula and learning programmes. Stakeholders may include learners, providers, educators, civil society from various fields, policymakers, researchers,...
- Focusing on co-creation is key: ensuring that all key stakeholders can participate equally in the processes of developing initiatives, projects, etc. consolidates support and working towards common goals.
- Strong networks can jointly advocate at their respective political levels for better support and financing of green skills, sustainability learning and other related fields of learning provision.

### 7.5 Promoting (g)local approaches

- At the grassroots level, there are a variety of innovative initiatives and approaches to link greening and the green transition with learning and anchor them in it. Local communities play a central role in this. These initiatives and approaches should be systematised and analysed on their key elements.
- Learning from these initiatives and approaches can inspire ALE organisations across Europe and beyond and can contribute to the building of new networks.

### 7.6 Promoting transformative ALE for green and sustainable change

- Promoting a better understanding of the role of ALE for green and sustainable change needs to be at the centre of actions on the green transition.
- Transformative learning empowers individuals and communities to address issues, propose ideas for change and develop new solutions for shared problems.

### 7.7 Focusing on joint advocacy action

- Unity in diversity: as an ALE community, we need to focus on common goals and develop shared approaches. These common goals should also be translated into advocacy action at the respective levels of policy making. Speaking with one voice can strengthen all aspects of ALE provision, including political support of ALE for the green transition.



- Joint advocacy actions require multi-stakeholder approaches that bring in the voices of all organisations and stakeholders with a particular interest in promoting green skills, the green transition and sustainability.

## 8 EAEA's objectives for the thematic year on ALE and green transition

EAEA's activities will focus on 5 objectives:

1. Involvement of all members in EAEA's activities and discussions on the green transition
2. Building capacity for greening ALE and contributing to the EU objectives on the green transition
3. Collecting good practices on ALE and green transition in the Grundtvig Award call
4. Outreach to stakeholders and building new networks
5. Impacting policy at the EU, national and regional levels



## 9 Bibliography and further reading

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# QUESTIONS? CONTACT US.



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