

## Why?

Adult learning and education (ALE) transforms people's lives. It makes Europe more just, healthier, greener, and fit for the future.

# Quality Adult Learning and Education for Everyone

## 10 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2024

1

### RECOGNISE THE ROLE OF ALE IN TRANSFORMING EUROPE AND FOSTERING DEMOCRACY

Recognise that the **digital transformation, the Green Deal, and the strengthening of democracy cannot become a reality without adult learning and education.**

Empower adult learning and education for a **strong involvement of the European public** in this transformation and in Europe as a whole. **Utilise the power of adult learning and education** to reach adults of all ages and backgrounds for constructing and strengthening the basis of European democracy.

2

### MAKE ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION A POLITICAL PRIORITY IN THE EU AND ACROSS ALL COUNTRIES

Promote adult learning and education for **active citizenship, peace, solidarity, basic skills development, sustainability, digital inclusion, employability, health and well-being.** Support liberal, popular, and community education and learning opportunities for all adults that are free of charge and accessible to everyone.

Appoint an **EU Commissioner or Vice-President for Lifelong Learning.**

Set up an **Inter-group on Lifelong Learning** in the next European Parliament.

3

### INVEST IN ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION TO MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

**Triplicate the budget for non-formal adult learning and education** in Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and in the European Social Fund+. Widen access to EU funding programmes for third countries.

Promote **structural, sustainable, and adequate funding for adult learning and education in all countries.** Establish a European benchmark for the funding of ALE in the Member States and promote the development of appropriate monitoring instruments.

4

### DO NOT TAX THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Revise the VAT Directive to **exempt non-formal adult learning and education from VAT.** Encourage Member States to explicitly exclude non-formal and non-commercial adult learning and education - provided by a great variety of different organisations, including civil society, informal study circles, etc. - from VAT liability. Adjust legislation across EU member states to reduce tax competition.

5

### PUT ADULT LEARNERS AT THE CENTRE

**Enable people of all ages and backgrounds to access adult learning and education** and empower in particular those who are at an educational disadvantage. Reach out to those furthest away from learning, and provide access to **career and learning guidance for all**. Enable everyone to get their skills - also those acquired through informal and non-formal learning - recognised and validated.

Empower adult learners to organise in learning cities and communities for more cohesion, inclusion, and solidarity. Empower adult learners and civil society organisations to **actively participate in decision-making processes** within their learning environments and eco-systems, but also policies and projects on adult learning and education.

6

### HELP ADULTS RECONCILE WORK, PARENTING AND CAREGIVING WITH LIFELONG LEARNING

Adopt an **EU Directive on the right to transnational Paid Educational Leave**. Improve systems of educational leave and scholarship programmes for adult learners so that all basic needs are financially covered and everyone can afford to learn.

Promote **childcare and caregiving schemes** that enable adults to engage in learning without having to worry about the well-being of their nearest and dearest.

7

### SUPPORT AND EMPOWER ADULT EDUCATORS

Improve **recognition, working conditions, and initial and further training opportunities** for adult educators through policy initiatives and strategies in the European Education Area. Encourage the adaptation of the working conditions of adult educators to those of other teaching staff in the public education sector.

8

### RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION IN EUROPE AND GLOBALLY

Promote an **annual EU-wide adult learning and education festival, communication campaigns, and events** to foster the participation of people of all ages and backgrounds in adult learning and education.

**Advocate for adult learning and education at the global level**, particularly in the context of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and the main financing mechanisms such as the Global Partnership for Education, using the UNESCO Marrakech Framework for Action in particular.

Read more 

9

**TRANSFORM CEDEFOP INTO A EUROPEAN COMPETENCE AND RESEARCH CENTRE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING**

Empower the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training to become a competence and research centre for lifelong learning in Europe. Enable this new centre to do **fundamental research into modular learning, micro-credentials, and the future of European learning.**

10

**MONITOR PROGRESS IN ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION IN THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER**

Introduce a **mandatory survey on the state of adult learning and education**, especially regarding participation and funding levels, in the country reports and the country-specific recommendations. Ensure that **civil society in adult learning and education is included in the data collection and national focus groups.**

**Learner stories**



*"When you start a course, you wake up every morning and have something to look forward to. Your imagination gets bigger. You start learning different things. You start feeling you belong. You get an education. You get empowered. It just shifts everything!"*

Deborah, 43

*"I have two sons, but for a long time after my brain injury I couldn't remember them. I started a facilities management course that included a work experience. Learning has also made me feel like a man again, and because of this my sons have got their dad back."*

Jason, 48



*"I joined a university programme as soon as I retired. Before that, it just wasn't possible. Today I'm an avid reader, regular visitor of musical concerts and all sorts of exhibitions, volunteer as much as I can, and learn from every person I meet."*

Marija, 75

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