



**earlall**

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL & LOCAL  
AUTHORITIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

# Activity Report 2018

October 2018



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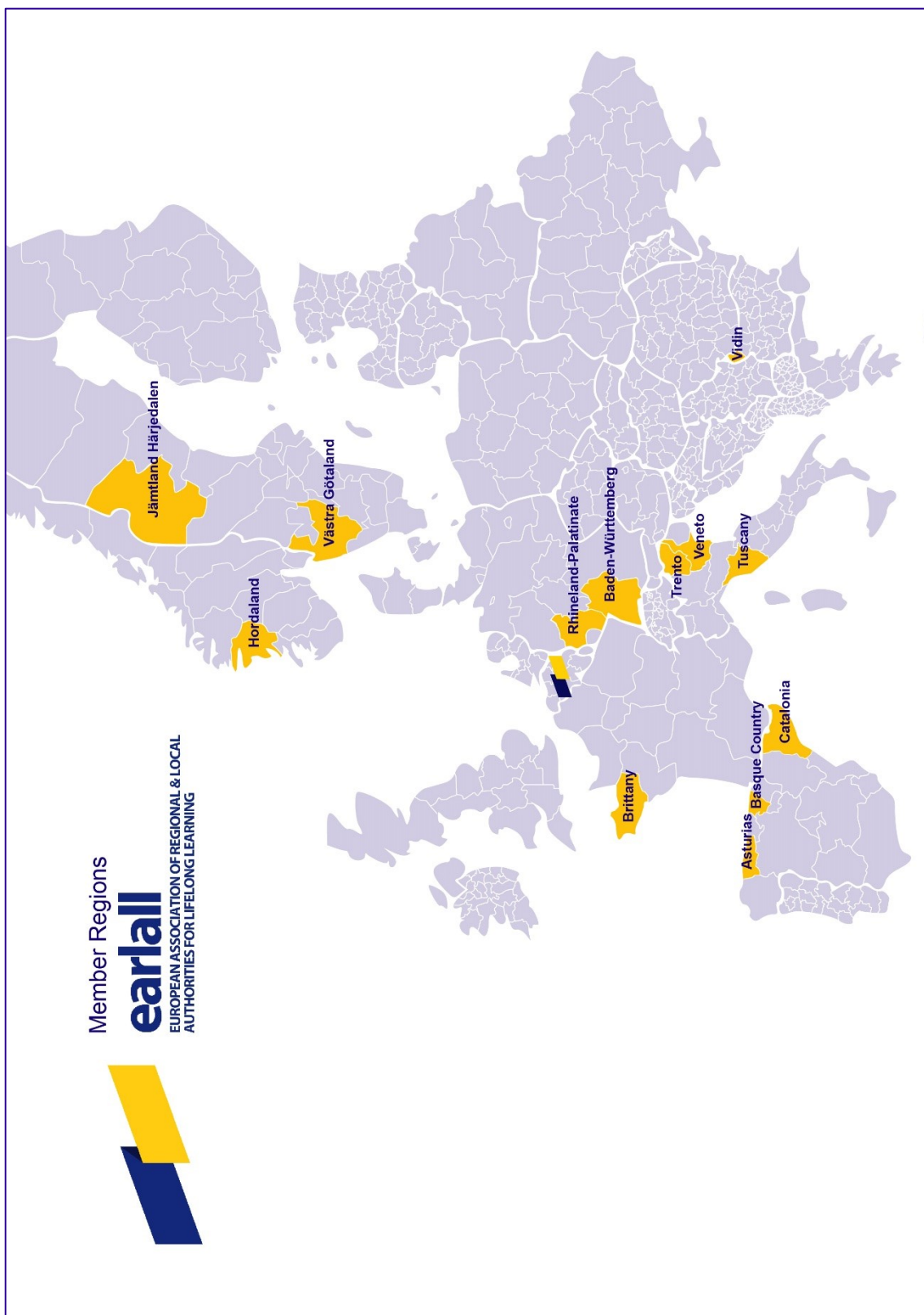
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## Member Regions in 2018



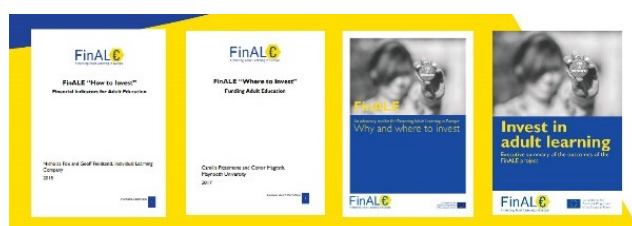
## Projects

Title	Name	Duration	Budget EARLALL	EU funding Programme
<b>FinAL€</b>	Financing Adult Education	Ending March 2018	9.865 €	Erasmus+ KA2
<b>TALENTS</b>	New talents for companies – developing the potentials of immigrants and refugees	2016 - 2018	26.900 €	Erasmus+ KA2
<b>VET in Urban Centres</b>	Development of Sustainable Urban Centres with Active Involvement of VET	2018- 2020	9.375 €	Erasmus+ KA2
<b>FIER</b>	Fast-track Integration in European Regions	2018-2019	66.500 €	EaSI Progress
<b>BRIDGE+</b>	Building up regional initiatives to develop skills-based guidance: a digital multi-actor approach	2018-2020	54.008 €	Erasmus+ KA3
<b>Boost for CLIL in VET</b>	Foreign language and acquisition of marketable skills for VET	2019 - 2021	31.725 €	Erasmus+ KA2
<b>KEYMOB</b>	Key Competences for Mobility	2019-2020	34.820 €	Erasmus+ KA2
<b>TAC</b>	Third Age Competences	2019-2021	11.660€	Erasmus+ KA2
<b>COMORELP</b>	Collaborative Monitoring of Regional Lifelong Learning Policies	2019 - 2020	32.000 €	Erasmus+ KA2
<b>MATCH</b>	Mentoring for intercultural dialogue and learning – Matching newly arrived with locals	2019-2020	24.014 €	H2020 AMIF
<b>KeyCoNet+</b>	European Policy Network on Key Competences	2019-2022	38.952 €	Call for tenders – DG EAC

\*In yellow, proposals submitted in 2018 that were not selected for EU funding.

## Recently Finished Projects

### FinAL€ – Financing Adult Education



**FinAL€**  
Financing Adult Learning in Europe

In a context of demographic change and increasingly complex needs of society, adult education is a crucial instrument for promoting social cohesion. However, often adult learning is underfunded as compared to other sectors of the education system. Adult education throughout Europe faces the challenge to secure its financing, or where possible improve it, and providers themselves must cooperate across Europe to lay the foundations for a better decision-making in financing adult education, and to share best practices.

The FinAL€ project brought together partner organisations from six European countries, and organisations working Europe-wide. Over a period of two years, they co-operated to analyse existing funding opportunities and to develop recommendations for ensuring sustainable funding in the future.

The FinAL€ project started in February 2016, and operative work ran for two years. Results were finally published in March of 2018:

- Executive Summary in English, French and German.
- Advocacy Toolkit.
- Research Paper "Where to Invest."
- Paper "Indicators for Adult Education."

They are all available at the project website: [www.financing-adult-learning.eu](http://www.financing-adult-learning.eu). The project is co-funded via the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, under the key action "Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices".

Project partners: Swiss Federation for Adult Learning, Kerigma middle, Instituto de Inovação e Desenvolvimento Social de Barcelos, Lower Saxon League for Liberal Adult Education, Individual Learning Company, Verband Österreichischer Volkshochschulen, Dansk Folkeoplysnings Samråd, European Association for the Education of Adults, National Adult Learning Organisation.

## Ongoing Projects

### TALENTS



The TALENTS project focuses on the inclusion of immigrants and refugees in language and professional training in order to support their fast access to the world of work – as jobs are believed to be the most important basis for integration. Therefore, this project is fully in line with the Erasmus+ horizontal priority of inclusive education and training for groups at risk of exclusion from society. In particular, refugees and immigrants are

regarded to be a high priority group, given the critical context and situation at the moment.

The Austrian, German, Italian, Norwegian and Swedish project partners are involved in integration activities in their regions and, thus, have the urgent need to find new and sustainable approaches of integration. The title “TALENTS” reflects the main interests of the project partners, as their objective is to develop concepts and tools which will help to identify talents and strengths that every person has and develop them through training that is adapted to the needs of the labour market and companies.

The specific project goal is to analyse, build up, test and further develop European role models, guidelines and tools for guidance, training and company cooperation to support the (fast) access of adult immigrants and refugees to the labour market. To serve this purpose, four partner meetings have already taken part in Gothenburg, Stuttgart, Oslo and Florence, and pilot training courses for migrants are being implemented in Baden-Württemberg, Gothenburg and Oslo.

Project partners: vhs Baden-Württemberg e.V., Kultusministerium Baden-Württemberg, Arbetsmarknad och vuxenutbildning i Göteborgs Stad, Cuben Utbildning, Oslo Adult Education Rosenholf, STVG, Università degli Studi di Firenze.

For more information: <https://talentseuproject.com>.

## VET in Urban Centres



The “Development of Sustainable Urban Centres with Active Involvement of VET (VET in Urban Centres)” project pursues the elaboration of governance models to reach an active involvement of VET schools and local businesses in urban planning processes, to create new VET programmes linked to the challenges and needs of urban centres, and to improve the cooperation between VET providers, municipalities and the labour market. The project involves partners from different nature, such as VET schools, municipalities, employment services and regional authorities, from five European countries (BE, ES, IT, NO, SI), who will identify best practices of synergies among the abovementioned actors as a basis for the development of new models.

Coordinated by the Hordaland region, this project will provide two intellectual outputs: a local cooperation model including VET in the development of urban centres and an educational VET programme with the same aim. Two international partner meetings have already taken place in Bergen and Kranj.



Project partners: Hordaland County Council, Agenzia Umbria Ricerche, Istituto Professionale per l'Industria e l'Artigianato "E. Orfini," Barcelona Activa, Kranj School Center, RDA - Business Support Centre Kranj, Sotra Vidaregåande Skule, Knarvik Vidaregåande Skule, Fjell Kommune.

For more information: <http://www.veturbaneu.com>.  
#VETurbanEU



The FIER project aims at developing instruments and strategies for a fast-track labour market integration of disadvantaged groups among refugees and asylum-seekers. Its main objective is to develop quality competence assessment strategies, training curricula, self-empowerment initiatives, and a workplace language learning concept to reach a fast and successful integration process in different European areas, by means of the following processes:

1. Analyse the main challenges for the new arrivals, when it comes to establishment and integration; taking into account and making visible how the newcomers' challenges vary depending on gender, ethnic origin, age, educational level, special needs, religion or sexual orientation.
2. Identify, analyse, adapt and pilot different kinds of measures that are likely to be inclusive as regards disadvantaged groups and that are likely to have a positive impact on the individual's integration into the labour market.
3. Capitalize on the wealth of existing—however fragmented and not always easily accessible—knowledge at local and regional level including main stakeholders (political, education sector, companies, etc.) but also individuals (locals, successfully-established immigrants and asylum seekers themselves).
4. Discuss and further foster knowledge and exchange experience on how the findings can facilitate the establishment of the new arrivals.

Project partners: Region Västra Götaland, Mölndals Stad, Swedish Public Employment Service, Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Baden-Württemberg, vhs Baden-Württemberg E. V., Pädagogische Hochschule Weingarten, Stadt Stuttgart,



GO! onderwijs van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, Oslo Adult Education Rosenhof, Land Salzburg, Yuva Association.

For more information: <https://fierprojecteu.com>.  
#FIERprojectEU



In the framework of the BRIDGE+ project, the participating municipalities and regions, together with their partners, aim at building up, testing and implementing new strategies of skills development on a regional level – supported by innovative technology. These regional initiatives shall include relevant groups of actors, above all companies, career guidance organisations, educational institutions and individuals, and interlink them in the framework of personal and virtual networks and platforms. In trainings, these actors will learn how to use innovative technology for competence management and career guidance according to their needs. They will also be motivated to use the tools as *bridges* to the partners, allowing a constant dialogue on future work and learning – the most important pillar of labour market skills intelligence.

These initiatives will be implemented in the framework of existing multi-actor career guidance and education networks of five European regions: Baden-Württemberg (Germany), the Basque Country (Spain), Brittany (France) Jämtland (Sweden) and Styria (Austria).

The main goal of the project is to tackle skills mismatches between demands of the world of work and competences of employees or candidates. With the help of ICT tools, relevant skills and competences shall be made visible in the two directions of companies and individuals and be accessible for career guidance officers. Respective activities will be developed on regional level and like this in close cooperation with the relevant actors. The kick-off meeting took place in Stuttgart in April, and the second international meeting was held in San Sebastian in September at the Tknika facilities.

Project partners: vhs Baden-Württemberg e.V., Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Baden-Württemberg, Basque Government – Directorate for Training and Learning, Lärcentrum/City of Östersund, IUC-Z Group/Östersund, STVG, Foundation EC-VPL

For more information: <http://bridgeplusproject.com>.  
#BRIDGEplusEU

## Recently Selected Projects (Activities to start in autumn 2018)

### **BOOST to it! VET's CLIL (Erasmus+ KA2, coordinated by POV Flanders)**

This project aims at improving the competitiveness and employability of vocational students in a global European market by developing and testing a Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) on the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, starting by testing and Open Online Course (OOC) in English, which will result in a MOOC; and designing and implementing an electronic open platform that permits to mutualise the different materials developed in each region/country and to share experiences. This will ensure a sustainable transnational community of VET professionals that allows the exchange of materials. The specific objectives are the following:

- To stress the need to master foreign languages as a key competence to foster employability in all VET sectors.
- To highlight the importance of developing intercultural competences as European citizens working in a global market.
- To help teachers disseminate critical thinking skills through their teaching practices.
- To disseminate and exchange innovative methodologies and approaches in the VET teaching and learning context when featuring a foreign language.
- To define assessment strategies and use different tools for assessment of the competences to be acquired by VET learners (digital, social and linguistic contexts).
- To use web 2.0 tools and apps not only for engaging learners but also for the opportunities that they offer with regards to sharing knowledge and good teaching and learning practices among teachers all over Europe, especially in regions with fewer resources.
- To improve teacher training programmes by teaching trainers how to use the many available tools effectively.
- To enhance mutual trust amongst vocational schools and institutions for further future mobility projects.

The kick-off meeting will take place in November 2018 in Brussels.

### **KEYMOB (Erasmus+ KA2, coordinated by Barcelona Chamber of Commerce)**

An increased mobility of apprentices between companies from different countries exposes the apprentices to different situations, new environments, and different cultural and organisational contexts, and stimulates their capacities for autonomy, resilience, problem solving, adaptation to new situations and innovation. The aim of this project is to establish a strategic partnership for the development of innovative products within the project framework and their dissemination among partners and training agents, improving the cooperation between training centres, companies, regional and municipal governments to develop curricular tools and the necessary logistical and organizational agreements. In this sense, the project aims at developing a curriculum proposal and at developing evaluation tools.

The work shall be disseminated among stakeholders in open seminars held in Barcelona, Toulouse, Stuttgart and Chomutov, with a special attention to those units involved in curriculum creation: training centres, teacher organisations, professional organisations, and academic and professional experts.

The main actions will be the following:

- Sharing and mapping of the main methodologies, actions and initiatives.
- Drafting of a curriculum proposal.
- Drafting of a protocol proposal defining the role of the regions.
- Drafting the document: The role of companies in apprenticeships.
- Identifying the main transversal competences acquired by apprentices in mobility programs (fieldwork).
- Organizing three national seminars and the final event in Brussels.

## Policy Papers and Public Consultations

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### **EARLALL's Response to the EC Public Consultation on EU Funds in the Area of Values and Mobility<sup>1</sup>**

The goal of this EC consultation is to identify strengths and weaknesses of existing programmes and actions, as well as possible ways forward and highlight any possible synergies among them. EARLALL's position focuses on learning mobility, education and training, highlighting the role of the Erasmus+ programme and calling attention to VET education.

### **Position Paper on the Erasmus+ Post-2020<sup>2</sup>**

EARLALL and its member regions consider that the renewal and improvement of the present Erasmus+ programme after 2020 is of utmost importance and should be considered a priority for the EU institutions. The discussion about the successor of Erasmus+ is the best opportunity to show political commitment to improve the outreach of the programme in the post-2020 financial framework and meet higher expectations in terms of impact and outcomes.

### **Position to the EC Communication "Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture"<sup>3</sup>**

The EC communication "Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture" sets the institution's vision for how we can create a European Education Area by 2025. EARLALL welcomes this initiative, as it addresses important challenges and objectives in view of the future of education in Europe. EARLALL also recognizes the important role

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<sup>1</sup> Full document available at EARLALL's official website: [www.earlall.eu](http://www.earlall.eu).

<sup>2</sup> See Annex 1.

<sup>3</sup> See Annex 2.

that is assigned to the regions and local authorities in the definition of education and culture policies through the subsidiarity principle.

### **EARLALL's Response to the Consultation on the Strategic Framework guiding European Cooperation on Education and Training (ET 2020)<sup>4</sup>**

The reviewing process of the European Cooperation in Education and Training 2020 strategy (ET2020) started recently. EARLALL received a letter from the European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC), kindly inviting the association to provide feedback on EARLALL's experience and suggestions for improving this important framework.

EARLALL believes that, in the post-2020 period, EU investment in human capital is a prerequisite to achieve European objectives on territorial, economic and social cohesion. EARLALL would like to see a post-2020 education and training strategy that strengthens the role of the regions, brings VET and adult education to the main education stage, reinforces synergies with other strategies (like smart specialisation and ESF, for example), is flexible to reflect changing needs and provides adequate means for migrants and refugees.

## **Participation in High Level Events**

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### **1<sup>st</sup> European Education Summit**

Hosted by Tibor Navracsics, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, the First European Education Summit gathered 24 Education ministers in Brussels on January 25, a clear signal that education is back on top of the agenda. Among the more than 450 attendants, there were education practitioners, stakeholders and business leaders.

Within the broad theme "Laying the foundations of the European Education Area: for an innovative, inclusive and values-based education," the goal of the summit was to discuss the importance of the European Education Area 2025, basic skills and inclusive education, as well as the skills that will be needed in the near future.

### **Policy Learning Forum on Upskilling Pathways**

This forum constitutes a long-term initiative in the framework of an inclusive growth agenda to invest in people that struggles with literacy, basic maths and digital competences (up to 1/4 of EU's active adult population).

As stated during the event, which took place on February 7-8, the situation can be improved through an adequate application of the EC 3-step approach; indeed, the main focus was set on prevention and early intervention, highlighting the positive role of VET and the need of tailored support programmes and validation tools.

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<sup>4</sup> See Annex 3.

## **4<sup>th</sup> European Migration Forum**

The European Migration Forum took place in Brussels on March 6-7 for its 4th edition, and its main theme pointed at the challenges and opportunities involved in integrating migrants into the EU Member States labour markets. The event welcomed more than 120 civil society organisations from across the EU, as well as representatives from local and regional authorities, Member States and EU institutions. Many aspects of the labour market inclusion of migrants were touched upon, such as the need to promote regular employment and decent work to prevent exploitation and tackle discrimination, the importance of skills validation and development, the encouragement of entrepreneurship among migrants, etc.

## **European Qualifications Framework's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The European Commission organised a conference on March 15-16 in Brussels to celebrate ten years of existence of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The event shone a light on the achievements of a decade of cooperation on the EQF, and looked at the challenges and opportunities for the future.

## **The Future of the EU and the Role of Regions, hosted by the European Committee of the Regions**

Towards the background of the debate about the future of the EU, the subsidiarity principle and the role of regions and cities in European affairs, this conference (which took place on April 10 at the Committee of the Regions) brought together politicians and academics to discuss the role of the regions in a multi-speed context and the main challenges towards a social Europe, among other topics.

## **Bulgarian Presidency Conference on Entrepreneurial and Digital Skills**

The Press Room of the Council hosted a conference organised by the Bulgarian Presidency on April 11. The event was divided in two panels focusing on scaling up digital and innovation education practices and entrepreneurial skills for successful personal development. The event included the presence of MEPs, professionals from the private and public sectors and commissioner Navracsics.

## **High Level Conference on Migrations and the Role of Regions**

This high-level conference took place at the Economic and Social Committee on April 23 to raise the attention of institutions about the need for multi-level governance and the added value of regional and local authorities for more effective results. The discussion focused on the implementation of the 2015 EU Agenda on migration, the recast Common European Asylum System and the external dimension of migration policies.

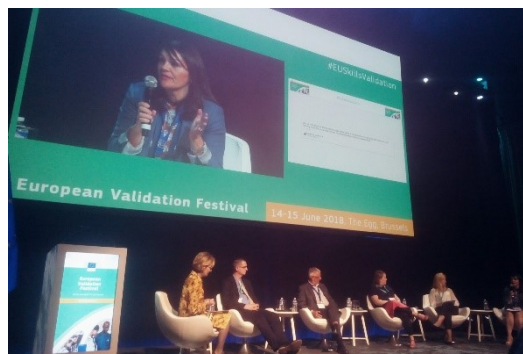
## **Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth 2018**

The Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth (ACIG) is an action-oriented platform bringing together civil society organisations and policymakers to discuss how to achieve

truly inclusive growth. Its third edition took place on April 27, and included a workshop about adult education, organised by the European Association of Education of Adults.

### **European Validation Festival 2018**

On June 14-15, Brussels hosted the first European Validation Festival, which gathered stakeholders from many different backgrounds to discuss skills validation in Europe. During the Validation Conference, held on the second day, EARLALL took part in a panel about multi-stakeholder engagement in the validation process, enhancing the role of local action and global thinking.



Noelia Cantero, business manager of EARLALL, stated that “every citizen has the right to have their skills recognised, and validation is something that has been taking place at regional and local level for many years.”

### **S3 Pilot Peer-Learning Workshop about VET and Adult Learning for Smart Specialisation**

Regional representatives met in Brussels on September 20 to exchange best practices related to VET (vocational education and training) and adult education’s role in smart specialisation (S3) strategies. EARLALL’s member regions Basque Country and Västra Götaland, together with representatives from Lithuania, presented their regional strategies and identified strong and weak points of each other, looking for synergies and opportunities to improve their own VET and adult education systems.

EARLALL was represented during the opening and closing remarks by Rikardo Lamadrid (Director General for New Technologies and Advanced Learning at the Basque Vice-Ministry of VET) and Noelia Cantero (EARLALL’s business manager). The conference also counted on the participation of João Santos (Deputy Head of Unit for VET, Apprenticeships and Adult Learning at DG EMPL), who introduced the Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) initiative.



### **European Day of Languages 2018**

On September 27, the European Commission hosted in Brussels the event “Learning three languages in school: multilingual education and cultural expression” on the occasion of the European Day of Languages. Participants were able to take part in a discussion about policy and practice, enjoy poetry, music and pictures and discover an exhibition presenting some less known languages spoken in the European Union (EU). For more information about European initiatives for multilingual learning, see the



document “Linguistic Diversity in the European Union: the case of Regional and Minority Languages,” by the European Commission.

### **European Vocational Skills Week 2018**

In the context of the European Vocational Skills Week 2018 to take place in Vienna on November 5-9, EARLALL will take part at an EafA session about the role of apprenticeships for social inclusion on Thursday, November 8.

### **Lifelong Learning Week 2018**

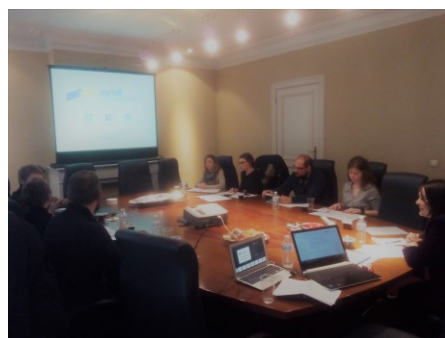
The Lifelong Learning Week will take place in Brussels on December 3-7, 2018. EARLALL will have an active role during a session at the European Parliament about regional practices in guidance (led by the European University Continuing Education Network).

## **EARLALL Events**

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### **EARLALL meeting - member regions representatives Brussels (March 2)**

Brussels-based representatives of member regions met to discuss about the working groups' initiatives, the next general assembly to take place in October, and EARLALL's project proposals, among other topics. The meeting also counted with the attendance of DG EMPL expert Mantas Sekmokas, who presented the European Vocational Skills Week 2018 and the JRC Smart Specialisation Platform.



### **EARLALL meeting during the “Anticipating the Future” Congress San Sebastián (May 30 – June 1)**

On the occasion of the international congress organised by the Regional Ministry of Education in the Basque Country, EARLALL member regions held a meeting on Thursday May 31. The will included an exchange of best practices regarding the identification of skills' needs for the labour market in different sectors and levels, as well as the discussion of recent policy initiatives published by the EU institutions, upcoming EARLALL events, etc.

### **“Youth Entrepreneurship Spirit” (YES) Conference Brussels (June 27)**

The main aim of the initiative is to promote an exchange of good practices in the field of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial spirit, as well as to share successful strategies for boosting youth entrepreneurship, encouraging





self-employment and improving the school-to-work transition. The conference took place at the Tuscany Region office in Brussels.

### **EARLALL meeting – member regions representatives Brussels (July 11)**

A second meeting for Brussels-based representatives of member regions took place to assess the progress made during the first half of the year. The agenda included new initiatives and project proposals by member regions, EARLALL Annual Conference to take place in October, and the European Week of Regions and Cities 2018, among other topics. The meeting also included a presentation by LLLP's Director Brikena Xhomaqi, who explained the opportunities and challenges identified by civil society organisations throughout the post-2020 MFF proposal by the European Commission.

### **European Week of Regions and Cities 2018 Brussels (October 9-10)**

EARLALL will host two workshops during this event organised by the European Committee of the Regions:

- FIER workshop the SQUARE centre (October 9). The FIER project will be presented by representatives of project partners (Västra Götaland, Baden-Württemberg, Pädagogische Hochschule Weingarten, GO! and Support Group Network), featuring real testimonies by refugees and teachers.
- “Investing in People for a Regional and European Success” (October 10). The event will feature speakers from different member regions to tackle issues related to VET, skills and lifelong learning from a regional perspective.

### **EARLALL Annual Conference 2018 Brussels (October 10-11)**

- Board Meeting: October 10 (Maison de la Bretagne | Europe)
- General Assembly: October 11 (Delegation of the Basque Country to the EU)
- Annual Conference 2018 #Stride4Stride: October 11 (Delegation of the Basque Country to the EU)

Experience in developing skills anticipation and adaptation strategies at regional and local level has raised numerous concerns and challenges that are worth sharing to facilitate “skills governance.” Education and training provision at regional level require a fast adaptation to the rapidly changing skill needs identified by labour market and civil society stakeholders. This year's Annual Conference will provide an open forum for European regions to present their experiences and the challenges that they face, and

provide innovative solutions. The event will lead the way to launching a study visits programme within EARLALL member regions.

### **Project Development Workshop Brussels (November 22-23)**

The theme of the PDW18 will revolve around new ways of educating and the renovation/reinvention of education, involving all levels: VET, skills, civic education, etc.

## **Partnerships and Cooperation with other Networks**

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### **Lifelong Learning Platform**

- Erasmus+ Coalition
- Policy and Advocacy Task Force
- Validation Task Force.

### **Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (European Commission)**

- Newly joined in 2018

### **Lifelong Learning Interest Group (European Parliament)**

### **European Alliance for Apprenticeships**

### **European Social Fund Transnational Platform**

### **ReSET Network**

### **European Alliance for Apprenticeships EAfA**



ReSET Network

## **Digital Communication and Dissemination Activities**

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### **Social media**

- +270 new followers in 2018 (+65,5%) and +20,000 impressions per month on Twitter (@EARLALLeu)
- Intensive campaign on Facebook (@EARLALL) and LinkedIn (@EARLALL).

## Newsletters

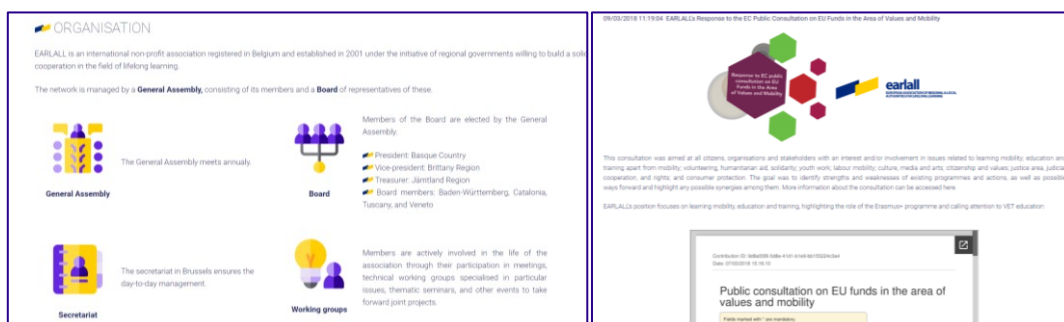
- *EARLALL Insights* (quarterly): dissemination of our network's activities to all our subscribers.
- *EU Monitoring* (monthly): only for members and observers.
- *FIER Newsletter* (semi-annually): dissemination of FIER project progress, results and partners' work.
- *Newsflash* (last calls, partner searches, important events, etc.): only for members.

## General Data Protection Regulation

- Measures have been taken in order to comply with the GDPR, which came into force on May 25.

## Webpage ([www.earlall.eu](http://www.earlall.eu))

- EARLALL's webpage has been updated to provide a more visual perspective of the network (members, partnerships, projects) and to enhance the visibility of our projects. Further updates will come in 2019 to give the member regions a more relevant space.



## Annexes

Policy Papers issued in 2018



## **Annex 1: EARLALL Position Paper on the Erasmus+ Post-2020**

*February 2018*

EARLALL and its member regions consider that the renewal and improvement of the present Erasmus+ programme after 2020 is of utmost importance and should be considered a priority for the EU institutions.

EARLALL endorsed the conclusions from the programme interim evaluation. These conclusions show that the programme's mobility and cooperation actions have supported European citizens gaining new skills and competences, including language competences. The programme has also become an important tool to strengthen European identity, and to promote European values and social inclusion.

The discussion about the successor of Erasmus+ is the best opportunity to show political commitment to improving the outreach of the programme in the post-2020 financial framework and meet higher expectations in terms of impact and outcomes.

### **Erasmus+: A Successful EU Programme**

Erasmus+ is **one of the most successful programmes of the European Union**. For 30 years, it has been offering opportunities to study, train or teach abroad, gaining new experiences and broadening horizons of thousands of students, trainers and teachers. International learning and work experience strengthen young people's skills and contribute to their employability. Besides, education institutions benefit from innovation and exchanges of best practices, which are crucial for the competitiveness of the European education sector.

Currently, the Erasmus+ budget amounts to 14 billion euros, which represent only 1.4% of the total EU budget. Nevertheless, to realise the full potential of the programme, advance on the EU's agenda for growth and jobs, contribute to the knowledge economy and labour market, and achieve an impact on the European education quality, the **Erasmus+ programme requires additional funding**. Synergies with the European Social Fund, Structural Funds and Horizon 2020 successors should be made. Institutions are willing to internationalise and provide students with opportunities, and their ambitions should be fulfilled.

Besides, it would be desirable that Erasmus+ opens to **secondary education**. Adult education should also be better funded as it has only represented 5% of the total Erasmus+ budget.

### **A New Structure from 2014**

With the changes brought by the 2014-2020 programming period, many actors had to **adapt to the new Erasmus+ structure**, a process that in some cases has been difficult and time-consuming, especially for smaller entities. Consequently, the programme should maintain the architecture in the next programming period, giving the necessary stability. Transparency and visibility during the discussion regarding the successor of Erasmus + is fundamental so that organisations and individuals can get ready and fully participate from the programme's first call for proposals.

## International Approach

There are risks arising from a possible “hard **Brexit**.” Many schools and educational institutions have partnerships with the United Kingdom and an exit from the Erasmus+ programme of the UK will therefore have a critical impact on individuals and organisations.

Furthermore, it would be positive to continue opening the Erasmus+ programme to other **countries beyond the European Union**.

## European Added Value

The new Erasmus+ should face and tackle key common European challenges. It has to empower citizens through education and support the economic growth and employability providing opportunities to acquire and recognise competences and knowledge.

## Coordination between NAs

Agencies could share more **information** about the projects, enabling links between partners working on similar issues and therefore bringing EU added value. Besides, the **services** offered vary a lot from country to country, as well as the information offered (for instance, about the available budgets per Key Action and per sector).

## Efficiency of the Programme: Simplification & Accessibility

The **administrative burden** for both students and institutions remains too high. Potential participants are often discouraged by the application procedures as well as by the administrative burden, even before a project’s start. Also, the low success rates for certain regions make it less attractive for institutions to invest in applications.

In order to ensure **transparency in the evaluation** process, applicants require more feedback regarding why their project was not selected. Sometimes organisations feel that external experts lack insight about the field, and sometimes similar projects get completely different evaluations by different NAs.

In this sense, **less experienced and small institutions** often do not have the capacity to comply with administrative requirements. New simplified forms adapted to the applicant’s size (and to small structures) are needed. Current forms related to mobility projects (excluding higher education) and for strategic partnerships do not fit with small-scale training projects. A reduced administrative burden would greatly improve the efficiency of Erasmus+ and make participation more attractive.

Obtaining the **Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter** must reap more benefits for the institutions. We suggest to set more flexible criteria in the “VET Mobility Charter” for the accreditation of bodies with a strong record of successful organization of high-quality mobility for VET learners and staff. In general, the potential of the charter should be **promoted and better supported** at European level.

The Erasmus+ **programme guide** is lengthy and technical, generally perceived as being too complicated. NAs should offer quality information and guidance services targeted at organisations. Besides, some terms are not clear (“intellectual output,” “exploitation”),

and there are no examples of documents needed for the application and at later stages of the process.

Finally, **IT tools** should be integrated in one portal and designed in a more user-friendly way. They should also adapt to the size of the organisations when possible, facilitating the participation of small actors applying for lower numbers of mobilities.

## Flexibility

The programme's objectives should be flexible to adapt to a European context that is in constant change and transformation. Challenges and opportunities like migration, new economic sectors, new needs in the labour market, 4.0 industry, education and business partnerships, etc. should be recognized.

## Focus on Specific Target Groups

Erasmus+ must take the **diversity of target groups** much better into account: VET students with lower general education; apprentices and company-based trainers; students from disadvantaged backgrounds; young people from rural areas; unemployed young people, etc.

A **communication strategy** is necessary to open the programme to all the target groups, making Erasmus+ more democratic and inclusive.

## VET and Mobility in VET




The **Copenhagen Process and the Riga Conclusions** aim to improve performance, quality and attractiveness of VET. The objective is to translate European policy and instruments to national and regional organisations, and Erasmus+ is the main programme to reach this objective and provide adequate support.

In the VET sector, there is a pressing need for an **increased budget** in order to meet the 6% mobility target in 2020 in all sectors.

Furthermore, Erasmus+ should better support **long-term mobility**, and NAs need more flexibility to adapt the funding mechanisms to their national and regional needs.

Moreover, **specific obstacles and barriers** linked to long term mobility need to be considered: (1) the cost for the employer; (2) the different status of the apprentice in each MS and the lack of harmonisation of the contracts; and (3) the even more difficult and burdensome administrative management of the mobility.

The following measures would contribute to the improvement of mobility in VET:

-  enhance the quality of mobility: developing and promoting quality labels could be a good option;
-  focus on the duality school + company;
-  facilitate the validation and recognition of skills and competences non-formally acquired, in companies or in training centres;



- ▀ ensure recognition of the benefits of the mobility (for all actors) by creating observatories to evidence the mid- and long-term effects;
- ▀ take the diversity of target groups in VET into account: apprentices, VET students with lower general education, and company-based trainees.
- ▀ Improve the provision of information about VET establishments that is available at the moment. VET centres find it difficult to find peers interested in sharing best practices or exchanges students.

## Synergies

First, it should be possible to develop projects and create synergies **between different sectors** (VET, secondary education, higher education, etc.).

Second, a better **complementarity** between Erasmus+, **the European Social Fund** and **Horizon 2020** would increase the impact of the programmes.

Third, **synergies and exchange of results** of the different projects are necessary through thematic international dissemination events of different projects.

## The Role of the Regions

Regions and local authorities play an **essential and specific role** in accompanying and implementing mobility and cooperation projects.

In many Member States, they are **responsible for education and training** and have therefore specific expertise and experience. If regions were involved in the design of the programme, they would more efficiently link it to the public policies.

It would also be important to open the discussion with the European Commission and the NAs concerning a better **territorial balance** when dividing the funding of Erasmus+.

## Annex 2. EARLALL Position to the Communication from the European Commission “Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture” (COMM 2017, 673 final, published on November 14, 2017)

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March 2018

### Background







The Communication ‘Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture’ (the Communication) sets the European Commission’s (EC) vision for how we can create a European Education Area by 2025. It is important to harness the full potential of education and culture as drivers for job creation, economic growth and social inclusion as well as to experience European identity in all its diversity.

The Communication was the EC contribution to the Gothenburg Summit on the European Pillar of Social Rights on November 17, 2017. The European Council meeting held on December 14, 2017, endorsed this Communication.

Recently, on January 17, 2018, the EC published a first set of initiatives and documents meant as a follow up to the Communication:

-  Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning.
-  Digital Education Action Plan.
-  Proposal for a Council Recommendation on common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching.

A second and more ambitious set of initiatives will be published in the spring 2018 about the following topics:

-  Early childhood education and care.
-  Language learning.
-  Setting up university networks.
-  Recognition of diplomas.
-  Youth strategy.
-  Action plan on Culture.




EARLALL’s opinion is meant to inform the political discussions and the Communication’s follow-up actions taking place in Brussels at the European Parliament, the European Committee of the Regions and other fora.

### Statement

EARLALL welcomes the Communication as it addresses important challenges and objectives in view of the future of education in Europe. For the first time in decades,

social policies and education are on top of the EU leaders' agenda and this development should be highlighted. EARLALL also recognizes the important role that is assigned to the regions and local authorities in the definition of education and culture policies through the subsidiarity principle. Regions and Local entities can actively contribute not only to the design of effective measures that take into account local and European needs, but also to the provision of innovative best practices that can be replicated elsewhere.

The Communication is best linked to the Social Agenda, but at the same time it has to be understood together with the New Skills Agenda adopted by the Commission on June 10, 2016 which focuses on trends and patterns in demands for skills and jobs. Nevertheless, EARLALL would like to highlight the following issues that could have been given greater emphasis in the Communication:

-  The Communication has rightly given a prominent role to the regions and local authorities, as it has been mentioned earlier. The text could be better aligned with the European Commission's Cohesion Policy and Smart Specialisation Strategies that aim to reduce differences and ensure smart growth across Europe. European 'identities' and societal challenges ahead can be further strengthened if we recognise national and regional competitive advantages and we learn from these. As it has been recognised in other EC documents like the new Modernisation Agenda for Universities (May 2017), synergies between Cohesion Policy and research, innovation and education funds should be encouraged and promoted.
-  The benchmark for participation in lifelong learning activities to 25% by 2025 seems to refer more to adult education than to those learners involved in lifelong learning processes. Lifelong learning has to be understood "from cradle to grave" and not only from when an individual completes their education. EARLALL however welcomes the 25% benchmark for participation in adult education (being the EU average for participation in adult learning in 2016<sup>5</sup> of 10.8%).
-  The role of VET should be strongly supported. None of the "Way Forward" measures announced in the Communication is directly tackling VET issues. The positive role of VET to prevent early education leaving and to bring people back to education should be highlighted. It will be difficult to understand an education area by 2025 if we do not recognise a proactive VET system that takes into account:
  - A diversified offer that meets the skills demands of the productive sectors and anticipates future qualification needs.
  - Innovation and new technologies in VET.
  - New active learning methodologies that improve the technical skills and competences and reinforce transversal skills, entrepreneurship and creativity.
  - Joint work and cooperation between VET and higher education institutions to provide answers to new qualifications and new training itineraries.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Education and Training Monitor 2017 – EU targets for 2020.'

- As it is recognised in the Communication, education systems need to impart all the knowledge, skills and competences that are deemed. However, skills needs are changing rapidly and work-based learning, apprenticeships, and education and industry partnerships referred in the Communication are important tools, together with peer learning, but need to be properly developed and exploited. For the most part, employers and industry leaders do not know the skills that will be needed in the next ten or twenty years. Therefore, we need to set up flexible but ambitious strategies and processes that could be put in place to respond rapidly to new needs and demands.
- The geographical scope of the European Education Area proposed by 2025 is not clear either. Will it just refer to the EU countries? Erasmus+ programme countries include the EU countries and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Turkey. Erasmus+ Partner countries and mobility can reach out to many more countries and regions in the world. Two important processes promoted by the EC, Bologna (1999) and Copenhagen (2002), show a different geographical area as they include 48 and over 30 countries in Europe respectively.
- This last point also raises questions regarding the implementation of the European Education Area at policy level. Will it be an overarching structure to the Bologna, Copenhagen and upcoming Sorbonne (on diplomas recognition) processes? How will it be aligned with the next generation of EU funding programmes? A strong and ambitious strategy in the area of education and skills can only work with appropriate governance structures and appropriate level of funding.

## Annex 3. European Cooperation in Education and Training 2020 – EARLALL Reflections to the consultation by DG EAC

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May 2018


The present document highlights EARLALL's experience and opinion on the implementation and evolution to date of the Education and Training 2020 framework. It responds to the call launched by the European Commission (EC) – DG EAC in April 2018 to collect stakeholders' reflections on ET2020 in the preparation of its successor in order to make sure that its future design is fit for purpose and takes into account future challenges. It also needs to be understood in the context of the EC Communication on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture of November 2017, to which EARLALL has already published a policy statement, and the Erasmus+ programme in its present and future design (see EARLALL's position on the future Erasmus+ design from March 2018).

### **In what way does EARLALL consider the activities under the scope of ET2020 to have been helpful to the organisation's goals and mission so far?**

EARLALL welcomed the ET2020 strategy in 2009, and its revision and revisited priorities in 2016. Even though education and training systems are the responsibility of EU Member States and regions, EARLALL member regions have considered the ET2020 strategy supported by the EC as the reference framework to identify common education and training challenges and benchmarks and relate them to the different regional contexts.

Even if the regional level is understated and should be strengthened in the future strategy, EARLALL regions believe that the country analysis and the European Semester recommendations to Member States introduced through the EU 2020 is a good way to assess progress and tackle most urgent challenges and reforms. This also creates a dynamic dialogue between regions within the same country. The EU policy documents and benchmarks published in the context of the ET2020 strategy, notably those that support acquisition of skills and competences (upskilling pathways, new skills agenda, lifelong learning competences, digital plan, etc.) have been useful for EARLALL regions to make comparisons, to position themselves, to undertake peer learning and to adapt innovative practices developed in other regions. The ET2020 has also supported EARLALL regions to shape policies in line with the EU framework, to prioritize their objectives and target learners.

As included in the association's statutes, EARLALL supports policies aiming at achieving objectives which are in line with the ET2020 priorities, and include the following:

-  Ensure universal and continuous access to learning (acquisition and renewal of skills) to facilitate active participation in society.

- ✚ Ensure tangible investments in human capital to build resilient societies which can rapidly adapt to changing environments.
- ✚ Develop efficient and innovative education and learning methods delivered as close as possible to the learners, learner-centric, at local and community level and with the support of digital structures.
- ✚ Promote socially inclusive principles where education and training rely on the individual needs and demands and adapt the organization of work to allow people to participate in lifelong learning while balancing professional, personal and family life.
- ✚ Develop and promote quality, flexible and efficient education and training systems that closely match the individual's knowledge and skills to the changing demands as far as professional profiles, organisations and work methods are concerned.

As regards the association's activities, the ET2020 agenda has always been taken into account. Moreover, ET2020 priorities are relevant but general enough as to address most past and present education challenges tackled by EARLALL:

- ✚ Communication: EARLALL's newsletters (*EARLALL Insights* and *EU Monitoring*) and website have been providing information about EU major events (European Vocational Skills Week, Education Summit, Upskilling Pathways PLF, 4<sup>th</sup> Migration Forum, EQF PLF, Validation Festival, etc.).
- ✚ Policy: EARLALL has released policy papers on mobility, the European Education Area by 2025, the new Erasmus+ post-2020, etc., and has also replied to public consultations like the recent one on mobility and values.
- ✚ Governance: Our events and general assemblies have been tackling issues related to skills and labour market, validation, youth entrepreneurship, integration of refugees and migrants, etc. EARLALL members are experienced regional policy makers and civil servants dealing with education and training. EARLALL is member of EAfA, the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition and the ESF TN "Learning and Skills," initiatives supported by the EC.
- ✚ EU-funded projects: EARLALL is involved in an important number of EU-funded projects that add value to the current association's activities. They are dealing with the integration of migrants and refugees into the labour market, supporting digital tools to assess skills and competences and facilitate career guidance, financing of adult education, involvement of VET establishments in the definition of urban priorities at regional level, etc.

The Erasmus+ programme has been a valuable instrument to facilitate and strengthen cooperation among EARLALL regions themselves and with other stakeholders. At central level, EARLALL also takes part in an important number of EU-funded projects that support the organisation's strategy and mission.

## In what does EARLALL think that ET2020 would need to change in order to better respond to present and future challenges?


Skills are a driving force for economic and social development. As the EC Communication Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture points out, education is part of the solution to get more people into decent jobs, respond better to the economy's skills needs and strengthen Europe's resilience in a context of rapid and profound changes induced by the technological revolution and globalisation.

EARLALL believes that, in the post-2020 period, EU investment in human capital is a prerequisite to achieve European objectives on territorial, economic and social cohesion.

The changes that EARLALL would like to propose to the current ET2020 strategy are:

-  The role that European regions have in the design, development and implementation of education and training policies needs to be recognised in line with the subsidiarity principle and the present role of the EU Member States. The support that ET2020 provides through the European Semester, the country analysis and other instruments to the Member States has to be extended in the future strategy to the European regions, especially to those that already have devolved competences in education and training. The EC Communication mentioned earlier already points in this direction though more needs to be done to take this to a more practical and efficient level.
-  Vocational education and training should be strongly supported in the future education and training strategy post-2020. The positive role of VET to prevent learners education early-leaving and to bring people back to education should be recognised. The next ET strategy should include a VET system that considers:
  - A diversified offer that meets the skills demands of the productive sectors and anticipates future qualification needs.
  - Innovation and new technologies in VET.
  - New active learning methodologies that improve the technical skills and competences and reinforce transversal skills, entrepreneurship and creativity.
  - Joint work and cooperation between VET and higher education institutions to provide answers to new qualifications and new training itineraries.


At present, the EU target of 40% of those aged 30-34 to have obtained a higher education or equivalent qualification by 2020 does not give enough visibility to the higher VET pathway. EQF could be used as a point of reference for future targets.


-  The future Education and Training Strategy governance, reporting process and priorities should be simplified. The work carried out by the technical working groups (ET2020 Working Groups) should be assessed for impact and evaluated in order to decide on its future mandate. The future strategic priorities should be flexible enough as to adapt to the rapidly changing context for education and training. Priorities should also be defined in line with the EC Communication on



Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture, but also on the New Skills Agenda for Europe and promote:

- Identification and provision of skills needed for the labour market.
- Attractiveness of vocational education and training including further promotion of work-based learning and apprenticeship at all levels and new developments of higher VET.

 The future Education and Training Strategy and its priorities should be better aligned with other EU strategies. As it is recognised in different EC documents, synergies between Cohesion Policy and research, innovation and education policies and funds should be encouraged and promoted. The Smart Specialisation Strategies operating at regional level aim at reducing economic differences and ensuring smart growth across Europe too. By investing in skills, the future Digital Europe programme will help to complete the Digital Single Market, a key priority of the Union. The current scenario, in which the education and training principles are described under the ET2020 strategy and their targets under the general EU 2020 strategy (approved two years later), is confusing for policy makers and practitioners, and should be brought together in a future EU strategy.

 The challenge for Education and Training with regard to the influx to Europe by immigrants – often refugees – will possibly not be met adequately by formal and non-formal education alone as the challenge includes cultural aspects. We therefore recommend that EU take steps that stimulates education and training providers to include informal education as new challenges need new solutions, and new solutions are developed by new partnerships.



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