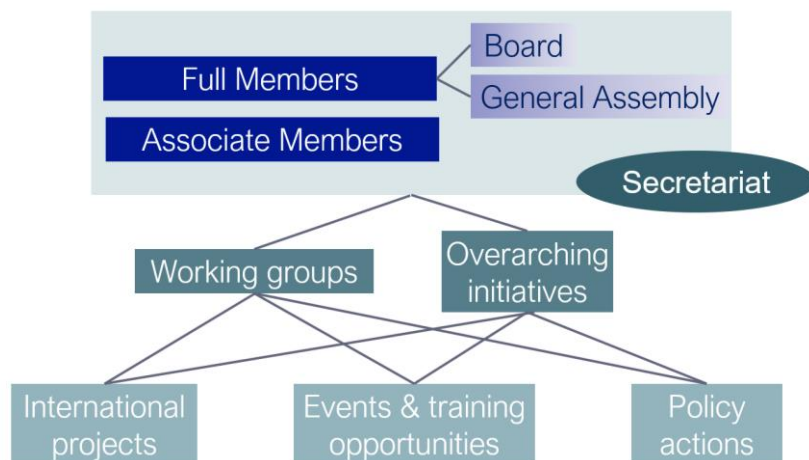




Document updated on 14 July 2021

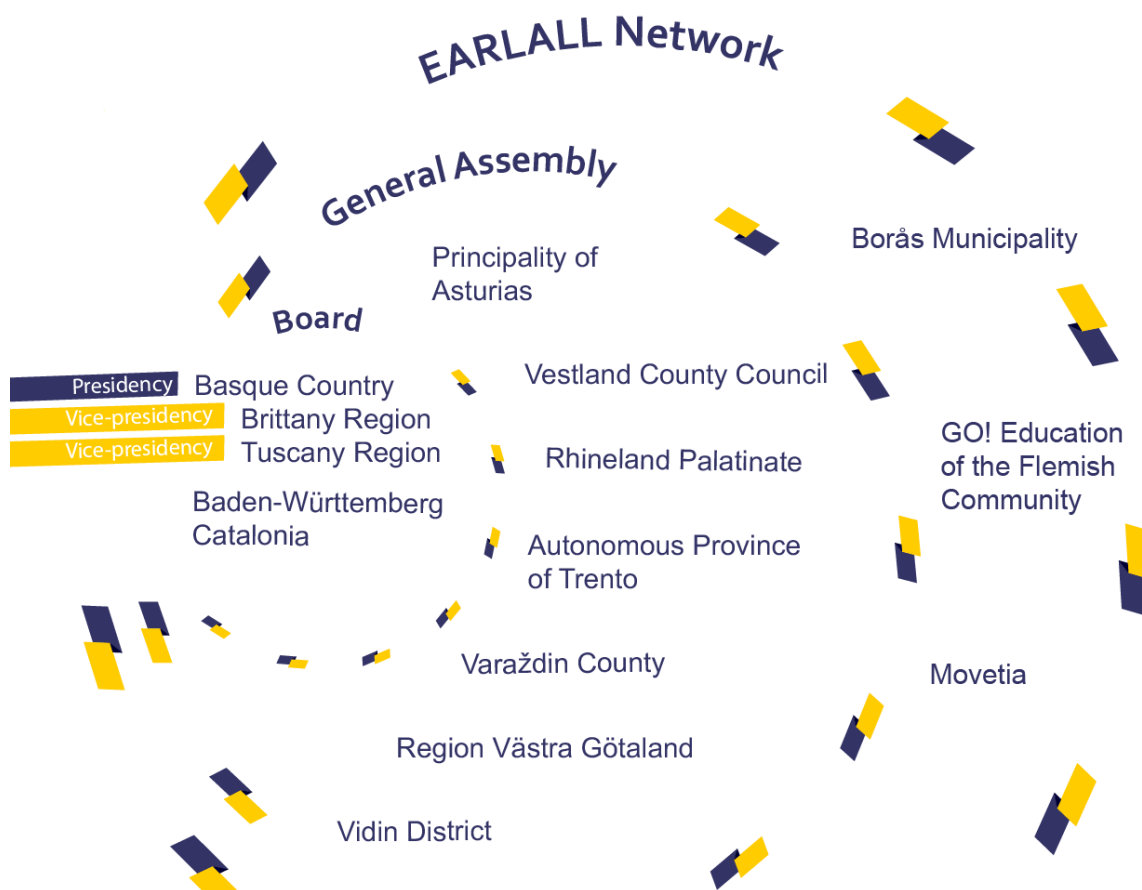
EARLALL believes that regions and local authorities have a **privileged role in designing and implementing strategies on lifelong learning** since they are in direct contact with citizens, educational institutions and other stakeholders. Created at the initiative of European regions, EARLALL was established in 2001 to support **multi-level cooperation in EU lifelong learning policies**.

The strength of EARLALL lies with its members. At internal level, decisions are taken by a General Assembly (GA), consisting of EARLALL Member Regions and a Board of representatives of these. The Board is elected by the GA during the Annual Meeting, which takes place in autumn, and is led by the Presidency of the network. A Brussels-based Secretariat ensures its daily work and guarantees the implementation of the GA's decisions by fostering the relation with the EU institutions, managing projects and strategic communication activities, and nurturing stakeholder relations.



Current organisation's chart







- 🚩 **Presidency:** Basque Country (ES).
- 🚩 **Vice-Presidency:** Brittany (FR), Tuscany (IT).
- 🚩 **Board Member Regions:** Baden-Württemberg (DE), Catalonia (ES).
- 🚩 **Full Member Regions:** Principality of Asturias (ES), Hordaland County Council (NO), Rhineland Palatinate (DE), Autonomous Province of Trento (IT), Varaždin County (HR), Region Västra Götaland (SE), Vidin (BG).
- 🚩 **Associate Members:** Adult Education Borås (SE), GO! Education of the Flemish Community (BE), Movetia (CH).



A Unique Network

Because of the uniqueness of its nature, being the only existing network of regional and local authorities engaged in European lifelong learning policies, EARLALL raises as a key actor to **represent the interests of its members towards the European institutions**. Furthermore, it opens a trustworthy **space for cooperation** between regional and local authorities to develop joint projects and peer-learning activities that allow high-level policy innovation in education, bearing in mind the regional dimension and local impact, putting citizens at the centre.

EARLALL benefits its Member Regions by means of different actions that lead to the development of successful regional education and training strategies:

-  Priority-based work
-  Reliable partnerships
-  Best-practice arena
-  Capacity building
-  Visibility at EU level
-  Advocacy for lifelong learning policies

Priority-based work

Finding **common priorities** together with other European regions and setting **specific lines of action** along the lifelong (and life-wide) learning spectrum boosts the development of concrete actions that benefit every region's citizens. It is also worth mentioning the opportunities for **best practice identification** and adaptation to each local context in order to face common challenges.

These priorities and lines of action take shape under working groups that are established as agreed by the General Assembly at the initiative of one or more Member Regions. Each working group is led by a Member Region and tackles a specific aspect of the lifelong learning area. Currently, five working groups set the network's main lines of activity:



Mobility in VET

Coordinated by Borås Municipality on behalf of Västra Götaland



Ageing Population and Lifelong Guidance

Coordinated by Baden-Württemberg



Youth Policies

Coordinated by Tuscany Region



Inclusive Societies

Coordinated by Västra Götaland



Skills & Labour Market

Coordinated by Catalonia

All Member Regions can take part in as many working groups as wished according to their regional priorities and lines of action.

Reliable partnerships

EARLALL has a tradition of long-standing project consortia, involving European regional ministries dealing with education, employment and social affairs and covering the whole geographical spectrum of Europe, with a North-South-West-East balance. Considering all relevant actors in building regional skills ecosystems, from primary schooling to adult education, **international cooperation and innovation projects** are born within EARLALL at the initiative of one (or more) of its regions within its working groups.

A well-connected network as EARLALL allows to find the right partners for each specific project, being in contact with municipalities, education and research institutions (schools, VET centres, adult education centres, universities), job services, NGOs, and the business sector in different European regions by means of its members.

In order to finance these common projects, applications for **EU funding** (Erasmus+, EaSI, AMIF, Horizon Europe) are carried out once the project idea is developed and the right partners are found. The project application and proposal writing process counts on the support of EARLALL Secretariat, providing expertise, attending info-sessions in Brussels and identifying key priorities in the EU agenda. EARLALL also serves as a natural arena for dissemination and exploitation of project results in other regions and cities all over Europe. Currently, EARLALL is involved in six EU-funded projects:



VET's CLIL – Boost for CLIL in VET

Led by Provinciaal Onderwijs Vlaanderen (POV) with the involvement of Catalonia and the Basque Country (Erasmus+ KA2)



EXAM 4.0 – Excellence in Advanced Manufacturing 4.0

Led by TKNIKA (Erasmus+ KA2, pilot CoVE call)



YESpecialists – Youth Entrepreneurial Spirit Specialists

Led by Vestland County Council (Erasmus+ KA2)



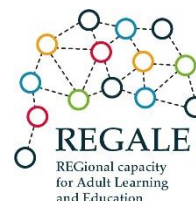
S4Stride – Stride for skills adaptation/anticipation in European regions

Led by Brittany Region (Erasmus+ KA2)



DAMAS – Digital Apprentice Mobility in the Automotive Sector

Led by Adult Education Borås (Erasmus+ KA2)



RegALE – Regional Capacity for Adult Learning and Education

Led by the European Association for the Education of Adults (Erasmus+ KA3)

EARLALL Secretariat has also supported the development of projects for its Member Regions and promotes their involvement in other endeavours related to school internationalisation and adult education through activities such as webinars, partner search promotion, and capacity building opportunities.

Best-practice arena

EARLALL acts as a **window for regional initiatives and best practices in education and training**. Thanks to communication and dissemination activities, EARLALL Member Regions gain visibility at European level that allow them to showcase their best practices and prospectively support their implementation in other European regions.






Member Regions' highlights are featured on EARLALL's website, social media channels (2,348 targeted followers on social media representing EU-level stakeholders and education professionals in July 2021) and regular public newsletters (EARLALL Insights quarterly newsletter, reaching approx. 500 targeted contacts, including EU officials, regional, local and national representatives, European lobbies, NGOs, etc.). Furthermore, their key activities are presented at international panels to which the network is invited to participate in the context of events such as the European Validation Festival or the EU Vocational Skills Week, organized by the European Commission.

EARLALL Member Regions are also regularly invited to take part in conferences and events that allow them to promote their initiatives and learn from others, both organized by the network alone or in cooperation with the European institutions and agencies (as Cedefop policy-learning fora on upskilling pathways) and/or international organisations such as the OECD.

Capacity building

EARLALL supports the development of its Member Regions' and Associate Members' **staff skills in relation to European affairs and projects in the lifelong learning context**. Yearly **over-arching initiatives** have been launched since 2020, aiming at supporting members' work and facilitating access to funding opportunities.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in 2020, the **"Resilient Skills Ecosystems for a Crisis-Proof Future"** initiative emphasised not only resilience as a skill, but also the need of resilient skills governance systems in order to guarantee that lifelong learning never stops, and no one is left behind whatever the circumstances. This initiative contained the following activities, leading to the 2020 Annual Conference:

-  Initiative launch, 28 May 2020
-  COVID-19 best practice report, July-November 2020
-  VET and ALE online workshop, 25 June 2020
-  EU funds online workshop, 28 September 2020
-  Participation at 3 workshops in the context of the European Week of Regions & Cities 2020, 5-22 October 2020

In the light of the new European strategies and programmes recognizing the essential role of multilevel governance in the field of education and training, EARLALL's efforts in 2021 aim at facilitating regional and local authorities' access to the opportunities available. Therefore, and celebrating its 20th Anniversary, EARLALL has launched a new overarching action with a focus on regional capacity building and empowerment:

“Strengthening and Empowering Regions’ Engagement in European Education and Training Policies.” The following activities are being organised in the context of this initiative, leading to the 2021 Annual Conference:

- ▀ Meeting with the European Commission about the Pact for Skills, 5 March 2021
- ▀ What is in Erasmus+ for you? workshop, 28 April 2021
- ▀ Co-organisation of the iqCampusFP#2021, hosted by Catalonia, 2-7 July 2021
- ▀ EU tools workshop, September 2021
- ▀ Participation at 3 workshops in the context of the European Week of Regions & Cities 2021, 11-14 October 2021

Visibility at EU level

EARLALL is a **well-connected organisation** that belongs to umbrellas such as the Lifelong Learning Platform. This allows EARLALL to take part in **international policy discussions** and interact with **stakeholders** that cover the whole lifelong learning spectrum (student unions, teacher associations, educational centres umbrella organisations, NGOs, etc.). EARLALL also counts on **bilateral partnerships and strategic meetings** with organisations such as the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), the European Forum for Vocational Education and Training (EfVET), the European Volunteer Centre (CEV), and the Goethe Institut (StartNet initiative).

Furthermore, EARLALL belongs to initiatives led by the European Commission, such as the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EaFA), the Apprenticeship Support Services, the Centres of Vocational Excellence Community of Practice, and the Digital Skills & Jobs Coalition.

Last but not least, EARLALL Secretariat represents the network at **key high-level events** such as the EU Vocational Skills Week (DG EMPL), Education Summits (DG EAC), Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth (DG EMPL), Policy-learning Fora on Upskilling Pathways (Cedefop), international congresses (as the annual International Congress on VET by the Basque Country).

Advocacy for lifelong learning policies

EARLALL, by means of its Member Regions’ representatives and Secretariat, maintains a **constant dialogue with the European institutions** to ensure that the regional and local dimensions are considered all along the EU policy-making process. Regular meetings, participation in strategic institution-led networks and contributions to public consultations are carried out in order to guarantee that our Member Regions and the regional dimension in general are well positioned.

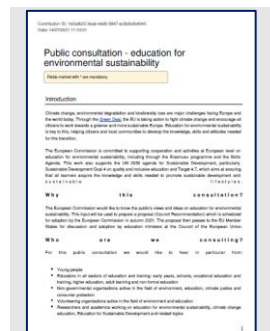
Furthermore, **joint policy papers** about different lifelong learning topics are developed within the network in order to strengthen the message and make it arrive to EU officials and key actors. Online campaigns are also carried out in order to increase the visibility of the position of the network regarding lifelong learning policies.

Joint Policy Papers

The latest position papers published by EARLALL are listed below:

Reflections on European Commission’s consultation on education for environmental sustainability (2021)

EARLALL has provided a reaction to the European Commission’s public consultation that will invest the development of a Council recommendation proposal on education for environmental sustainability for learners of all ages and at all levels of education.



GreenComp joint position paper with EFVET and the EAEA (2020)

Through a lifelong learning perspective, green skills need to be mainstreamed and incorporated into education policies and practices, including VET, as one of the measures to provide a skilled labour force that is also an agent of sustainable development and growth. This paper was presented to members of the European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Affairs Nicolas Schmit’s cabinet in June 2020.



Reflections on EC consultation about the European Institute of Innovation and Technology – strategy 2021-2027 (2019)

This policy paper answers to a consultation launched by the European Commission about the Strategic Innovation Agenda proposed for 2021 – 2027 by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).



Position Paper on Erasmus+ Post-2020 (2018)

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

"In many Member States, [regions] 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."



Position to the EC Communication “Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture” (2018)

“Lifelong learning has to be understood “from cradle to grave” and not only from when an individual completes their education.”

“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.”



Reflections on EC DG EAC Consultation about ET2020 (2018)

“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 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.”



Contact with European and international institutions

On another note, **first-hand contact with the EU institutions** allows EARLALL Secretariat to provide its Member Regions with the latest news and information about EU policies, funding programmes and opportunities for cooperation. Regular updates are sent to all Member Regions via the monthly newsletter EU Monitoring, and regional officers and representatives are contacted when niches for engagement are identified.

European Commission

DG EAC (Education and Culture)

DG EAC takes care of the EU policies in education, culture, youth, languages and sport, mainly by means of actions such as the strategic programmes ET 2020 and 2030 (education and training) or the structured dialogue (youth), as well as funding programmes such as Erasmus+, Creative Europe and the Marie Skłodowska Actions.

EARLALL cooperates at different levels with DG EAC, providing **input in the form of policy papers in the context of consultations** launched by the Commission, and taking part in **strategic dialogue meetings for stakeholder engagement** together with organisations such as the Lifelong Learning Platform and the European Association for the Education of Adults. In terms of the future strategy for the horizon 2030, EARLALL was present at the Forum on the Future of Learning that took place in Brussels on January 2019, and the organisation reinforces this cooperation also by attending high-level events such as the Education Summit (January 2018, September 2019, December 2020 and December 2021 [expected]).

Furthermore, EARLALL has been recently involved in the development of **education for sustainability** initiatives (competence framework by the Commission’s Joint Research

Centre and Proposal for a Council Recommendation), by taking part in expert discussions and focus group sessions.

DG EMPL (Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion)

DG EMPL is the executive branch of the European Union responsible for employment, social affairs and inclusion, distributed in seven directorates. The main ones directly dealing with lifelong learning are EMPL A (European Pillar of Social Rights), EMPL B (Jobs and Skills) and EMPL E (Labour Mobility and International Affairs), and EARLALL cooperates with them at different levels. Its activities are articulated around initiatives like the European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Employment Strategy, and implementation is done by means of funding programmes such as the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

EARLALL is invited to actively take part in meetings organised by different directorates of DG EMPL to **represent the region's view on certain topics**, act as a **window of regional best practices** and offer **new ideas for policy development**. By membership in strategic groups such as the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) and Apprentices Support Services, the network reinforces its role as platform for the regions to make their voice heard (for example, the network was actively involved in the organisation of the EAfA re-launch conference hosted in July 2021). DG EMPL policy makers also take part in EARLALL events, such as the Annual Conference or Brussels-based representatives' and working group leaders' meetings, and EARLALL is often invited to **inform high-level panels** to represent the regions' views on lifelong learning issues. For example, Member Regions representatives and EARLALL Secretariat are invited to actively take part at the EU Vocational Skills Week, an annual high-level event by DG EMPL to promote vocational education and training, in the context of which local events are also organised by EARLALL.

Furthermore, a strong cooperation has been established with the directorate's Unit for VET, and EARLALL is fully committed with fostering vocational education and the upskilling pathways initiative. The latter is also promoted by Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training), the agency of the European Union that promotes vocational education and training, and invitations are received by EARLALL Member Regions to take part in their activities (see above).

European Parliament

At the European Parliament, EARLALL belongs to the Lifelong Learning Interest Group, which brings together civil society representatives and MEPs to discuss key issues connected to lifelong learning with a strong emphasis on adult education. **Regular meetings** take place twice a year, and each of them revolves on a specific topic, allowing participating organisations to present their **initiatives, remarks and proposals to MEPs**.

EARLALL Secretariat also attends the CULT and EMPL committees' meetings to ensure that the regional dimension is taken into account in EU policies. MEPs are also invited to EARLALL events, such as the YES (Youth Entrepreneurial Spirit) conference, organised

in June 2018 by Tuscany and EARLALL Youth Policies Working Group, or the GreenComp workshops co-hosted by EARLALL and EfVET in the context of the Lifelong Learning Weeks 2019 and 2020. This allows EARLALL and its members to gather MEPs' insights on regional initiatives and **raise awareness at a more political level of the regions' role in lifelong learning policy making and implementation.**

Council Presidencies

The Council of the EU coordinates Member States' policies and is informed by the respective area ministers from all MS. The presidency of the Council rotates among the EU Member States every 6 months. During this 6-month period, the presidency chairs meetings at every level in the Council, helping to ensure the continuity of the EU's work therein. Member states holding the presidency work closely together in groups of three, which are known as *trios*:

Germany 🇩🇪	Portugal 🇵🇹	Slovenia 🇸🇮
(July-December 2020)	(January-June 2021)	(July-December 2021)
France 🇫🇷	Czechia 🇨🇪	Sweden 🇸🇪
(January-June 2022)	(July-December 2022)	(January-June 2023)

EARLALL cooperates with the Council Presidencies, letting them know its priorities and informing their initiatives. In the context of the Slovenian Presidency (July-December 2021), expert preparatory meetings on the update of the Adult Education Agenda have been attended by EARLALL, and representatives from the Slovenian Ministry of Education have taken part in EARLALL events, such as the BRIDGE+ conference hosted online on 9 June 2021.

European Committee of the Regions

EARLALL has established contact with the SEDEC commission in order to develop joint initiatives in the future. The network's secretariat also takes part at public hearings and consultations held in Brussels and has set up contact with the "Regions for Integration" initiative.

In 2018 and 2019, EARLALL Secretariat helped coordinating one workshop featuring regional best practices in education and training at the European Week of Regions and Cities and organises an additional workshop within the Week's framework to promote one of its projects. In 2018, a workshop was held at the Brittany representation in Brussels to promote investment in people for a European and regional success, with the participation of representatives from the European Commission, the Basque Country, Brittany, Baden-Württemberg, Asturias Hordaland and Osijek-Baranjia. A second workshop was held at the SQUARE centre to promote the FIER project. In 2019, a session was held at the European Committee of the Regions, led by the Basque Country and with the participation of the European Commission, OECD, Brittany, Baden-Württemberg, Asturias, Hordaland and Varaždin County, plus a workshop about the BRIDGE+ project at the SQUARE meeting centre.

In 2020, three webinars were co-hosted with the StartNet initiative of the Goethe Institute, the European Commission, and the Porto Business School. For 2021, three

webinars are expected to take place in cooperation with EfVET and the European Commission; Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg and TKNIKA in the context of the EXAM 4.0 project; and E40 and ZSI Centre for Social Innovation.

Furthermore, in the context of a cooperation initiative between the European Commission's DG EMPL through EAfA and the European Committee of the Regions, EARLALL has been involved in the development of a series of webinars (September 2020, and January and March 2021) and high-level events, featuring its members' best practices. A key landmark for this cooperation efforts was the High-level Conference on the Role of Regions and Cities in Delivering High-Quality Apprenticeships for All, hosted online on 3-4 June 2021.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

In 2019, EARLALL Secretariat established contact with the OECD Local Economic and Employment Development unit and took actively part at the Local Development Forum held in Antwerp in December 2019. Furthermore, OECD representatives have participated at EARLALL events related to skills matching policies, in the context of the European Week of Regions and Cities 2019 and the launch of the S4Stride project in November 2020. EARLALL Member Regions are also regularly invited to participate in events by the OECD.