

23rd

EUROPEAN WEEK of
REGIONS and CITIES

Shaping Tomorrow, Together

13-15
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EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL & LOCAL
AUTHORITIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

EARLALL at the EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES

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Introduction

As part of the European Week of Regions and Cities 2025 (EWRC), the European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL) took an active role in showcasing the power of lifelong learning for regional development, social inclusion and skills empowerment. Through a series of activities held in Brussels from 13 to 15 October 2025, EARLALL and its member regions highlighted how education and training policies can address territorial challenges and foster innovation across Europe.

The association's participation featured a rich programme combining visibility, exchange and collaboration through:

- Bilateral Exchange on Tuesday, 13 October, between EARLALL, Borås Stad's Working Life Department, and representatives from the Basque Country Delegation focused on social affairs and inclusion.
- An EARLALL Stand in the Exhibition Area at Square Brussels, where EU-funded projects and regional initiatives demonstrated how lifelong learning drives regional transformation.
- A Side Event, "The Power Within: Territories and People Realising Their Potential", hosted by Region Västra Götaland, exploring regional strategies to counter brain drain through inclusive learning ecosystems.
- A Co-organised Workshop, "Inclusive Regions, Safer Spaces: Local and Regional Approaches to Gender Equality, Wellbeing and Digital Safety in Education", jointly developed with EARLALL's Gender Equality Task Force, addressing social and digital inclusion in learning environments.

Together, these initiatives reflected EARLALL's commitment to promoting learning as a lever for territorial cohesion and citizens' empowerment, while strengthening collaboration among European regions. The following sections provide an overview of the activities and its key outcomes.



EARLALL Stand in the Exhibition Area

EARLALL's stand at the European Week of Regions and Cities (EWRC) showcased the network's diverse initiatives advancing lifelong learning across Europe. Through an introductory video, we presented our ongoing projects, thematic working groups, and skills analysis, illustrating how education drives local development, strengthens regional economies, and fosters social cohesion and sustainable growth.

Attracting a wide audience of policymakers, experts, and practitioners, the stand offered an engaging way to communicate the scope and impact of EARLALL's work. We extend our gratitude to our regional representatives for highlighting the benefits of active participation within the network, as well as to our associate members, such as Camilla Winter, who shared insights on the EARLALL Academy and addressed topics relevant to our partner territories.

The exhibition also provided space to present EARLALL's Working Groups and Skills Analysis, key instruments for knowledge exchange and support on lifelong learning and skills development.

Overall, our presence at EWRC created a dynamic and interactive platform for dialogue, strengthening cooperation with existing partners, connecting with new stakeholders and reinforcing the importance of local collaboration in building inclusive ecosystems for life long learning across Europe.



The Power Within: Territories and People Realising Their Potential

What does it mean to have the right to stay and build a future in one's own region?

This question was at the heart of the workshop “The Power Within: Territories and People Realising Their Potential,” co-organised by EARLALL and Region Västra Götaland. The event explored how territories can turn brain drain into brain gain by investing in people, skills, and local ecosystems that foster growth and inclusion.

Noelia Cantero, EARLALL Director, opened the event with welcoming remarks, followed by **Madeleine Jonsson**, President of the Environment and Regional Development Committee of Region Västra Götaland, which holds the EARLALL Presidency. Together, they set the scene for the keynote address by Eva Schultz, Member of the Cabinet of Executive Vice-President Roxana Mînzatu at the European Commission.

Schultz's intervention underlined the importance the EU places on regional cooperation to ensure fair and inclusive transitions, sharing key messages that resonated strongly with participants and fellow speakers, including;

Region Västra Götaland – Campus Dalsland

City of Borås – ViA: Pathway to an Inclusive Labour Market

Basque Country – VI Basque VET Plan

Brittany Region – The Third Place: Learning Lab

Centre-Val de Loire – Guidance and Apprenticeship to Attract Youth

The event continued with networking, giving speakers and the audience to interact with each other and share their insights further. Do not miss the opportunity to read the presentations from our speakers!

Download the event presentation here →



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Inclusive Regions, Safer Spaces: Local and Regional Approaches to Gender Equality, Wellbeing and Digital Safety in Education

EARLALL joined forces with FORMA.Azione srl, the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), and EfVET through the [Gender Equality Task Force for Lifelong Learning](#) to host a workshop.



The session, opened with a call for Equality and safety by Sylvia Liuti, Gender Expert at FORMA.Azione, who highlighted that gender equality is not only a human rights issue but also a question of business competitiveness and economic growth. Continuing by presenting the GenderEd Coalition Project seeking to promote changes in attitudes to ensure equality in public and learning spaces.

Simona Meloni, Councillor for Gender Equality and Agriculture at the Umbria Region, shared regional perspectives to combating gender-based violence and promoting the inclusion of women. Meloni also shared demographic data illustrating a declining birth rate and persistent gender disparities in employment. Continuing with inspiring practices from Vocational Education, Lorena Ripoll Ferri, Manager of the EdTWomenDays initiative at the Escola del Treball, presented a VET project designed to encourage more women to pursue traditionally male-dominated technical and engineering fields.

Reflecting on Safer Learning Spaces, Facilitator Yiannis Karoumpalos led participants through a reflection activity, inviting participants to discuss experiences and how gender and power dynamics influence learning spaces. Co-creating a list of “barriers” and “builders” to gender equality. The workshop concluded with a powerful reflection from Paola Freire: “If the structure does not permit dialogue, the structure must be changed.” Read more about how the session showcased how local collaboration shapes gender equality and promoted digital safety in lifelong learning.



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Snapshots from Our Members' Visit

EARLALL's stand at the EU Regions and Cities Week served as a key opportunity for our members to connect, exchange experiences, and explore new partnerships. Many members were present, sharing insights from their regions and building connections with potential new collaborators.



