



European  
Commission

# ***BACK TO THE FUTURE!***

**FUTURE GAZING ON  
ADULT LEARNING  
AND EDUCATION**

**EPALE Community  
Storybook 2023**

European Education  
and Culture  
Executive Agency

## Acknowledgments

The present Storybook is the result of contributions of 86 members of the EPALE community. The 2023 Edition of the EPALE Community Storybook was developed as part of the Community Stories initiative. EPALE is grateful to the many people who were involved in the process and enriched the platform with their experiences and passion.

Editor: Claudia D'Eramo – Lai-momo Società cooperativa sociale  
Graphic Designer: Alessia Capasso – Lai-momo Società cooperativa sociale

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# FOREWORD

The European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) manages the contracts of the EPALE Central Support Services and National Support Services, under the supervision of a Steering Committee that it chairs and which includes representatives of the Agency and the Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, as well as the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion



## Sophie Beernaerts

Acting director of EACEA



Welcome to a rich compendium of experiences, insights and achievements compiled from dedicated practitioners of adult learning who have generously shared their stories in this compelling book.

In envisioning the future of adult learning, we usually imagine a landscape defined by adaptability, accessibility and innovation. EPALE helps to empower adult learning professionals to connect, share, and co-create, fostering a sense of community and collective development. Our wish is for a future where adult learning is a means to acquire skills. Likewise, it is also a transformative journey that nurtures curiosity, engagement in society and resilience.

2023 is the European Year of Skills, it serves as a pivotal initiative, catalysing a continent-wide commitment to advancing skill development. Through collaborative efforts, it strives to enhance workforce capabilities, bridge gaps, and create opportunities for lifelong learning. In its essence, the year underscores the importance of skills as a cornerstone for individual growth and societal progress. Matching people's professional aspirations and skills-sets with labour market opportunities and supporting people's desire for personal development facilitate individual growth. The accumulation of these individual achievements ultimately leads to societal progress.

We are working hard to come closer to the EU target of at least 60% of all adults participating in training every year by 2030, as set out in the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan and endorsed by the Member States. Our European Skills Agenda sets a five-year plan for skills development policies and the Council Resolution on a new European agenda for adult learning outlines a vision of how adult learning should develop in Europe by 2030.

The contributors to this book shared their grassroots' perspective about the future of adult education and training, starting from now and looking ahead. The aim of the initiative was to explore their needs, the latest trends and their future aspirations.

Many stories highlight the role of artificial intelligence and virtual reality, the risks implied and the great opportunities. What connects all the stories is the relevance of the learner's wishes and desires, preserving the humanism, the sense of feeling safe within the learning process, and the creativity that needs to complement every challenge and change.

Thank you to the contributors whose narratives enrich these pages, and to all those who continue to shape the landscape of adult education with passion, expertise, and an unwavering belief in the transformative power of learning.

Happy reading and may the stories inspire your own journey for your further work.

*Sophie Beernaerts*



# INTRODUCTION

How many lives...how many worlds!

What a privilege to enter such an inspiring, experienced and qualified world of adult learning professionals from all over Europe. 86 teachers, trainers and educators from 24 different countries have enthusiastically answered the call and shared their inputs on the future of adult education and training.

This great response led to enriching the EPALE platform with many exciting insights and inspiring ideas on the future of skills and adult learning, and this ultimately led to the Storybook you are about to read.

This year's edition of the EPALE Community Storybook unfolds through three chapters:

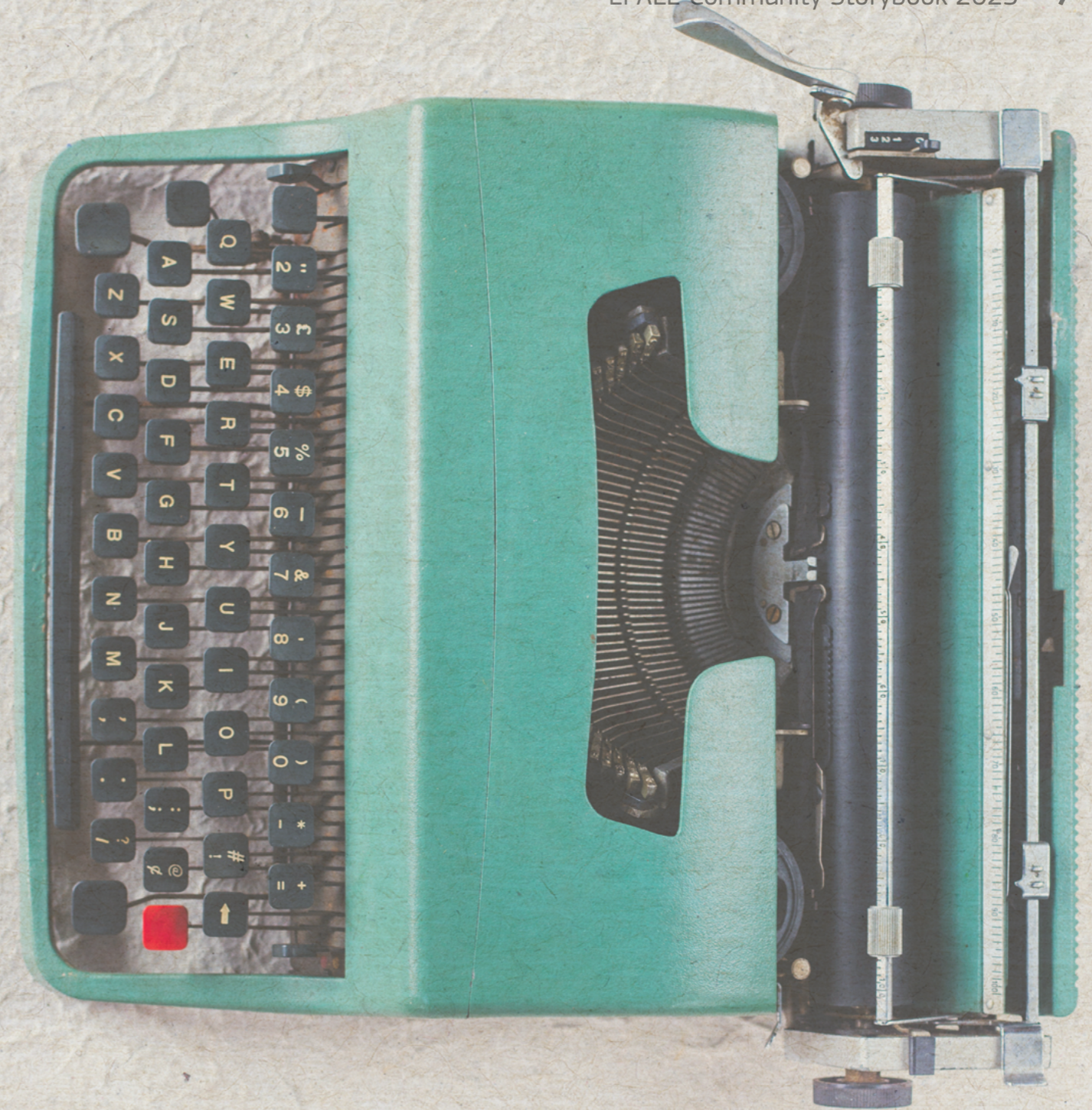
- **The Now**
- **Looking Ahead**
- **Skills! Skills! Skills!**

Each chapter collects many perspectives and considerations. The Storybook starts from today – or even a blast from the past – and spreads over a multi-voice look into the future of adult learning.

What role will skills play in the future of adult education and training?

The future looks more nuanced than ever. The last chapter unveils an incredible array of skills that will need to belong in every toolbox: empathy, active listening, adaptability, creative thinking, flexibility, and creativity along with many specific and practical skills.

So, pop down the Rabbit Hole and take a deep dive into the EPALE Community Storybook!



Chapter 1.

# The Now



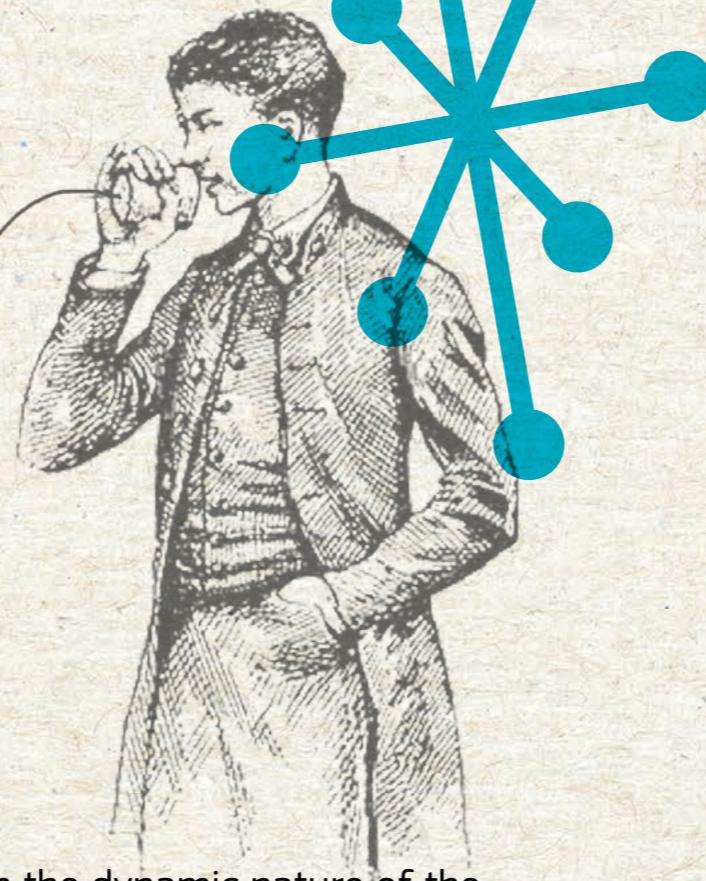
The world of education is undergoing profound transformation both in its organisation and methods. **Digital technology in all its aspects is challenging our vision of adult learning.** Everything is moving faster; we must therefore take action and organise ourselves collectively at a European level to meet the challenges ahead.

**Thomas Edesa**  
France



Given the dynamic nature of the labour market, adult learning needs to adapt for the future. Flexibility and personalisation have become crucial as individuals try to match the changing job requirements. Lifelong learning is essential to stay competitive and adaptable. **Collaborative learning environments foster adaptability and creativity and can support people in career transitions and upskilling.** By embracing these changes, adult education empowers individuals to meet the evolving demands of the labor market and capitalise on the opportunities presented by new technologies.

**Iraklis Varlamis**  
Greece



In the European Year of Skills, it is essential to emphasise the need to **continuously develop and renew the skills and competences needed for employment**, as well as for effective life management and community existence. This can be achieved through education and training policies that pay attention to catching up early school leavers.

**Balázs Németh**  
Hungary



**Society is changing a lot, but the economy is also changing and growing, which will not be any different in the future.** Trying to create a general learning culture is still quite new, but we are working very hard on it. We are also investigating how we can encourage our employees to take lessons or training after hours based on their interests. These courses don't necessarily have to do with their job. Once they get into the habit of continuous learning, it will also be easier to sign up for a course only for their job. I'm very convinced about this. People learn to deal with learning in different ways. Look at this: we organise 'Lunch & Learns'. In fact, we don't refer to this as 'education'. That's why people are often more inclined to learn because it is informal. We try very hard to encourage that.

**Tessa Keymeulen**  
**Belgium**



**Teaching is like a breath of fresh air, where learner feedback is immediate, honest, and instantaneous.** Perhaps the best way to describe being a trainer is to think of it as being the manager, director, actor, stage and sound technician, costume designer, makeup artist, and scriptwriter all in one. After the final presentation slide, it becomes obvious how the audience responds to you and whether the tale connects. You can expect a full house next time if the training ends with applause. If not, you must be able to analyze and improve.

**Maire Raidvere**  
**Estonia**

Education begins with activity and action, doing something and then moving on to reflect. Wondering what happened, what results from it, what we have learned from this situation and how to use the acquired knowledge. **It's a chance to understand whether we can do something differently or better in the future.** Much in the learning process also depends on attitude and motivation.

**Jacek Gralczyk**  
**Poland**



The development of new technologies, the evolution of the processes of digitalisation and digital globalisation can reduce the distances and cleavages among people. **The futuristic but already real virtual world, represented by the metaverse, is one of the most innovative tools of the new millennium**, especially if applied to the formation of adult prisoners and their need to re-insert and re-integrate in society.

**Maria Martínez**  
**Spain**

**To rephrase the quote by the Latvian literary classicist Rainis, “What changes, endures” I suppose today we could say – “What learns, endures”.** And we have to learn many different things – theoretical, but even more so – practical. Artificial intelligence, which creates both opportunities and competition; green and sustainable living; and, in my opinion, one of the most important skills of our time – emotional intelligence and self-awareness.

**Agnese Zarāne**  
**Latvia**



If digital technology was already a fast-running phenomenon, since 2020 it has really taken flight. We have experienced a pandemic that has changed our daily lives from one day to the next. **In our daily lives, we have become more reliant on digital resources for tasks related to work, education, and even bureaucratic processes.**

**Domiziana Castelli**  
**Italy**

I'm a digital migrant, but curiosity and the desire to experiment have led me to use the tools made available by digital technology for many years. **The conscious and careful use of technologies is, in my opinion, a precious resource for many areas.** Some people complain that the ever-increasing digital space in our lives can reduce the ability of human beings to relate. Undoubtedly this is a risk, especially for the younger generations and for people who can find a space of protection from insecurities and difficulties in the virtual world.

**Milena Screm**  
**Italy**



Who am I? What can I do? How can I develop and advance in life? What can I give to society?

**By promoting self-reflection and self-awareness, adults can learn to know and understand themselves better.**

This is an important building block for developing a solid personality that articulates and represents thoughts and values. Promoting social skills enables participants to communicate better and more effectively with others and to work together to get involved in society. By constantly engaging with socio-political issues, participants can question, develop and expand their values and beliefs.

**Liliane Mreyen**  
**Belgium**



**One of the big changes that is needed is to appreciate the sense of psychological safety for the efficiency and atmosphere of learning.** We need to unlearn what binds us and makes us feel threatened. Our brain learns best when it's safe. And if I feel threatened when going to a workshop, meeting or training because I know that I will be watched and evaluated - my nervous system is not able to accept a lot of new information.

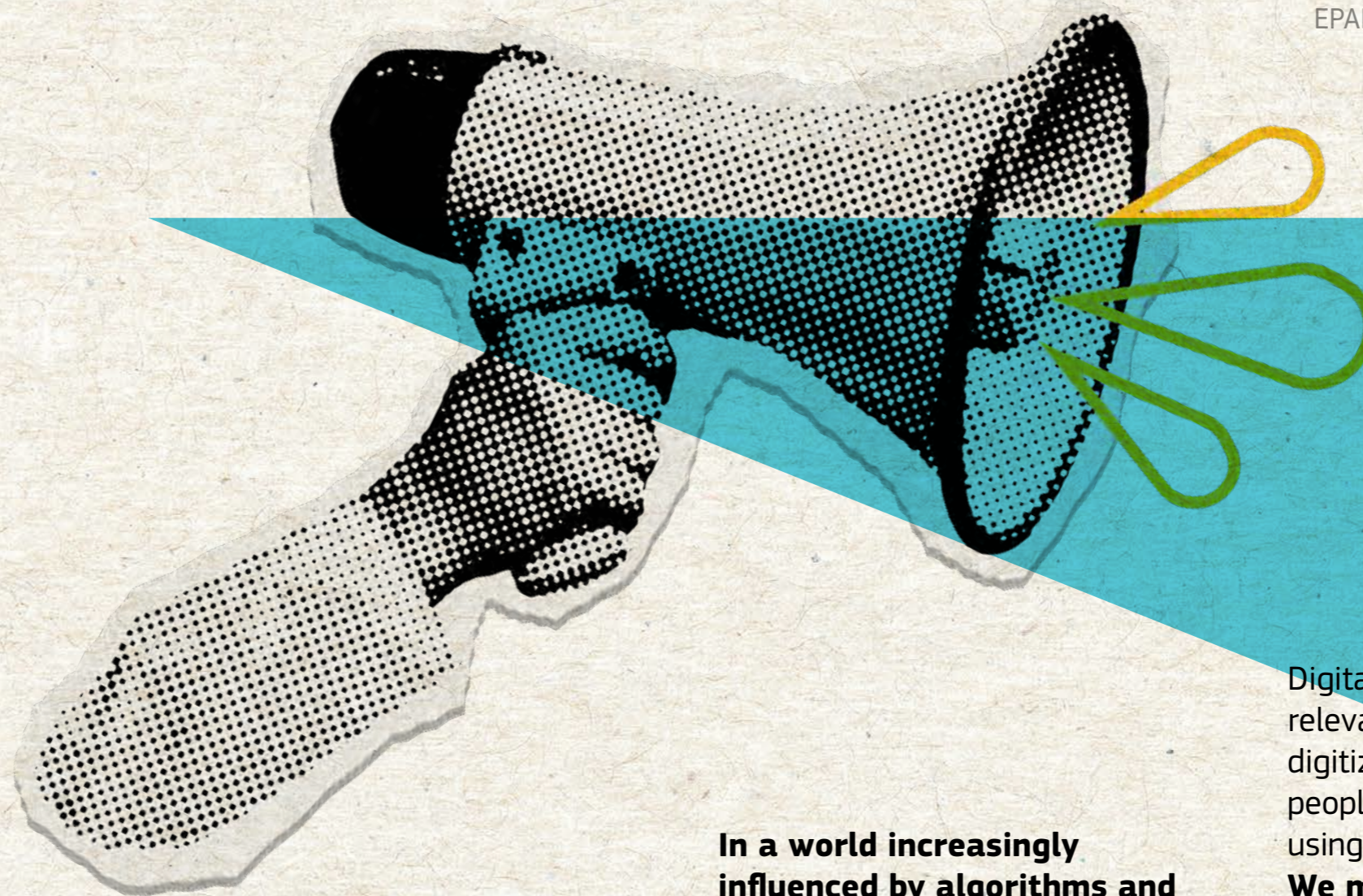
**Maja Wyborska**  
**Poland**

Knowing your inclinations and learning to use them well are the best ways to encourage adult learning. From the teaching experiences carried out in recent years with adult students, it emerges that learning in adulthood is significant for learners if closely linked to previous knowledge and everyone's cognitive needs that have not yet been satisfied, thus leveraging the discovery and valorisation of one's hidden talents. My preferred teaching approach was experimental: it proved effective in implementing new strategies to best respond to the needs expressed. From these experiences comes the importance of continuing to work on the personalisation of the teaching-learning process, involving all disciplinary areas. **For adults, the discovery of one's talents and the valorisation of oneself would also deserve a strengthening of the psychological support adopted at schools in the future, to facilitate well-being.**

**Mariadaniela Sfarra**  
**Italy**

What I have learned myself is that the method of teaching/education must be adapted to the listener's prior knowledge to the greatest extent. **This means that we need to understand each other!** Each profession has its own meta language which is often incomprehensible to the average listener. My experience is that an interested and especially motivated listener learns the most.

**Borut Marn**  
**Croatia**



**In a world increasingly influenced by algorithms and Artificial Intelligence, obsessed by the cult of aesthetics, ego, and consumerism, we are left with too little space for knowledge of a world of relations.** By this, I mean a world composed of feelings and emotions that we are often incapable of recognizing and managing. I think it is important and urgent to contribute to the spread of Emotional Education and all those so-called soft transversal skills. I am referring to the ability to listen and empathize.

**Margherita Colantuono**  
**Italy**

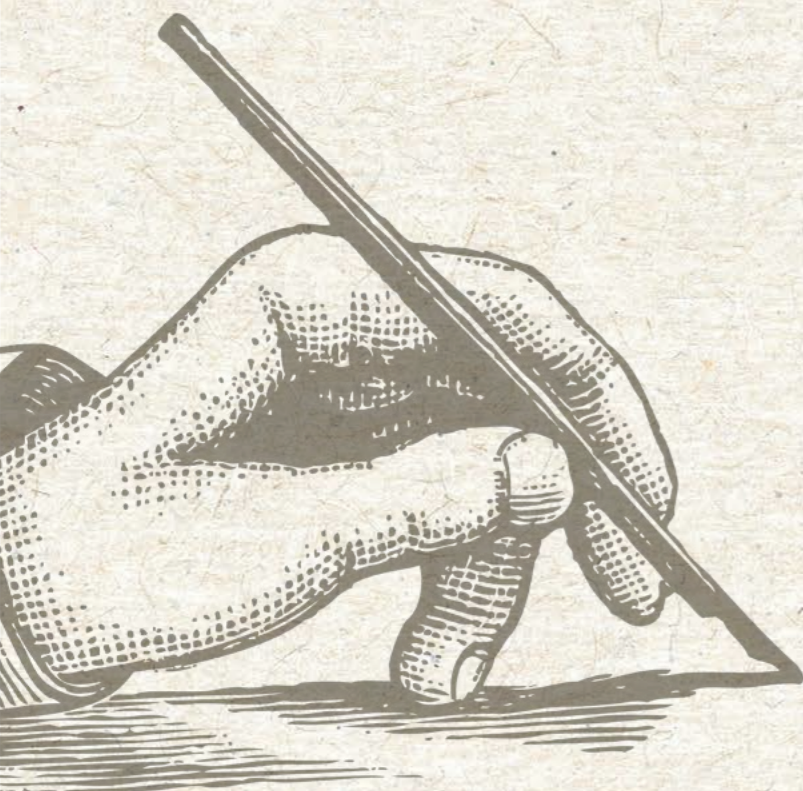
Digital skills are extremely relevant because of the increasing digitization of society. Too many people currently struggle with using computers and smartphones. **We must encourage lifelong development, particularly for people with limited basic skills.** These people are generally less likely to enroll in further training, slowly but surely widening the gap between their skills and those of others. We also shouldn't forget that the increasing polarisation of society demands well-informed citizens. That's why it's important for everyone, including adults taking basic skills courses, to learn to judge whether a source of information is reliable, both online and offline.

**Petra Luteijn**  
**The Netherlands**

**I have been involved in adult education since my student days. Even then, I knew that it would be my calling in life.**

We started modestly, as a family. Over time, I gained more and more experience and acquaintances and saw that every person has a need for self-realisation and lifelong education.

**Maja Milevoj**  
**Croatia**



My commitment to adult education is to teach students to identify, elaborate, and achieve their personal goals, whether they are related to employment, self-employment, volunteering, and/or learning. Defining new strategies in creative activities and everyday lives is very important. **My mission is to help find strategies to motivate adults during stress, depression, or anxiety.**

**Éva Szederkényi**  
**Hungary**

After many years of experience in adult education I am still learning and trying to improve my knowledge and skills and contribute as an active participant in the adult education system. **I believe educational institutions in this sector of education cannot act as islands and must develop cooperation in all segments to mutually help each other.**

**Antun Škrinjar**  
**Croatia**

Learning throughout my life is what has allowed me to succeed. And I've learned in different ways: with education and training professionals for human adults, in specific training that I wanted to do, through MOOCs, with internet searches and watching videos on YouTube, with teachings conveyed by the robot and the artificial intelligence present at home, with my employees, reading books, with family, friends and even strangers in the communities I have on the internet. **I've learned in different ways, and in many places, always because I needed to and motivated myself to do so.** Learning is available to anyone, but we need to be motivated to continue learning. We learn because we want to and because we need to. It is never for obligation.

**Paulo Marques**  
**Portugal**





We must realise just how deeply the environmental crisis affects us all in our bodies and hearts. The effects of climate change are very tangible: from landscapes gone up in smoke, to water shortages, allergies and pollution. Unfortunately, the impacts are on the rise and will not stop without joint action by citizens, politicians, companies, institutions, local authorities, etc. Those involved in education and training have a major role to play in raising awareness of the disaster that is unfolding, in the need to take action and in the acquisition of the skills required to do so. **We must not underestimate the direct and indirect consequences of our actions.**

**Damien Amichaud**  
France



The fact of working with adults who, due to the vicissitudes of life, have not completed their training pathways and seeing them determined to invest in their training is very motivating and enriching. We have also fostered projects that **promote active citizenship, sustainability, and the fight against illiteracy.**

**José Dias**  
Portugal

**Efficient adult educators and trainers need to be flexible creative thinkers, able to adjust the sails of learning according to the current educational wind.** Thus, widening access to adult education by sustaining inclusive online communities that create lifelong learning possibilities for the residents of Greek islands and rural areas is a really promising idea. This means that implementing appropriate outreach strategies and initiatives that keep local inhabitants actively engaged in online learning practices will enable them to build confidence and combat social exclusion.

**Chara Kourlessi**  
Greece



**The tech available to us as educators and community facilitators has made huge differences in how students feel connected to their peers and the learning experience.** I took a training class myself on how to be a better virtual facilitator and that has completely changed the way I design my learning materials and engage students online. I try to build in small ways they can engage with me and others by using the chat, polls and quizzes, and by creating a safe space for them to feel connected.

**Elizabeth Harrin**  
**UK**

Supporting adults in achieving their goals is a huge challenge. **Adult education cannot be boring!** Each lifelong learner may have different learning goals, so it's necessary to know them in advance and tailor the content of activities to the needs of the learners.

**Lidia Pokrzycka**  
**Poland**

**Adult learning has always existed as a mutual sharing of experiences.** This is how people have always learned beyond all university and professional courses, by meeting, talking, or calling each other. It is characteristic for human memory not to retain what it has learned for long – memory needs room for new knowledge, thus old knowledge needs to fade away.

**Matīss Treimanis**  
**Latvia**

**Language learning is an intercultural competence that mobilises and connects most diverse communities.**

By participating in online language sessions, adult learners not only learn languages and master technologies, but they also build intercultural communities, thus becoming global collaborators.

**Virginija Svediene**  
**Lithuania**



**Learning is fun, and you should never be ashamed of doing so!** On the contrary, I wish every adult could say the same. Unfortunately, my experience has taught me differently. Especially for people who speak Dutch as a first language, learning is often a loaded – sometimes even traumatic – subject. And the sense of shame that comes with it is often colossal. That can change! That should change! **I'm a huge believer in creativity as a way of learning, a more accessible way.** The word alone causes insecurity and aversion in some people. In my view, learning is mostly about one thing: confidence, especially self-confidence. If you're struggling with basic skills in a society full of language and focus on performance, that does something to your confidence. This demands a tailor-made learning experience, patience, understanding and – above all – trust. If teachers don't tread carefully, there's a big chance of failure. A door will close, possibly never to open again. It's better to start slow than finish fast.

**Miranda Dahlhaus**  
**The Netherlands**



After the structural change in society, we have moved into working life, where starting a career after graduating from school no longer determines the entire future career path in a linear fashion. As my colleague at work nicely formulated, the tombstone is no longer written: “Here rests he who was an expert in education by profession all his life”. Instead, society is dominated by a neoliberal ethos of top performance, with which both work and free time are defined by a model of agency that is free from external constraints and pursues its own dreams. Adult education can be a route to a full degree or part of developing your own qualifications. **For some, adult education means increasing self-confidence and self-knowledge, promoting mental well-being and achieving one’s own goals.** On the other hand, continuous self-development and the pursuit of change can also have a flip side: with the increase in performance pressure, uncertainty, stress and anxiety also increase. What happens if you ‘fail’ in aiming for the top? What will then happen to your own standard of living, lifestyle and coping in life? **I would like to set a reminder: learning - even aimless learning - is meant to be motivating and fun.** It is meant to offer small and large insights both about yourself and the world around you, and above all, its purpose is to help you understand yourself as well as others. Learning promotes competence and competence promotes equality and empathy. In my opinion, equality and empathy are exactly the things this world really needs right now.

**Susanna Tuominen**  
Finland



Training gives me a sense of doing the right thing. It motivates me to learn and teach, and it’s great to collaborate with others. Training and self-learning are lifelong learning experiences for me. **Every new training request requires me to go through the entire process again.** Feedback from learners is essential for my development as a trainer. A person learns throughout their life, and I also learn through teaching.

**Leina Kreek**  
Estonia

**I take the view that learning in general and adult learning in particular needs to undergo a deep deconstruction process.**

Traditional teaching/learning, so dramatically based on a formal approach, is profoundly disconnected from the context and the real needs of learners. I strongly believe that innovative or mixed learning approaches should be encouraged. Even though pedagogical and psychological studies have already pointed out the relevance of innovation for effective and ‘meaningful’ learning, they are still largely neglected by institutions. Learning in the flow, on/off the job training, simulation and gamification are only a few examples of alternative learning strategies that could be put into action and implemented.

**Lucia Ielpo**  
Italy

**I believe that teaching teaches a person the most.** It creates a constant need for learning and self-improvement and does not allow one to rest on one's laurels. When I was working at school years ago, I structured my lessons to encourage students to ask questions themselves. I am convinced that those who know how to ask questions learn much more than those who only know how to answer. Hence my training motto, "Why am I doing what I'm doing?" Listening to people's stories also teaches me that there is something to learn from every story.

**Marek Mekk**  
**Estonia**

In my work, I am guided by the saying: **"In the old days, to survive, you had to see threats - currently, to survive, you have to see opportunities."** It is a challenge to remember the accumulated potential and stay in harmony with each other despite the crises, various threats, diseases, and challenges of civilisation. This is extremely difficult but worth fighting for.

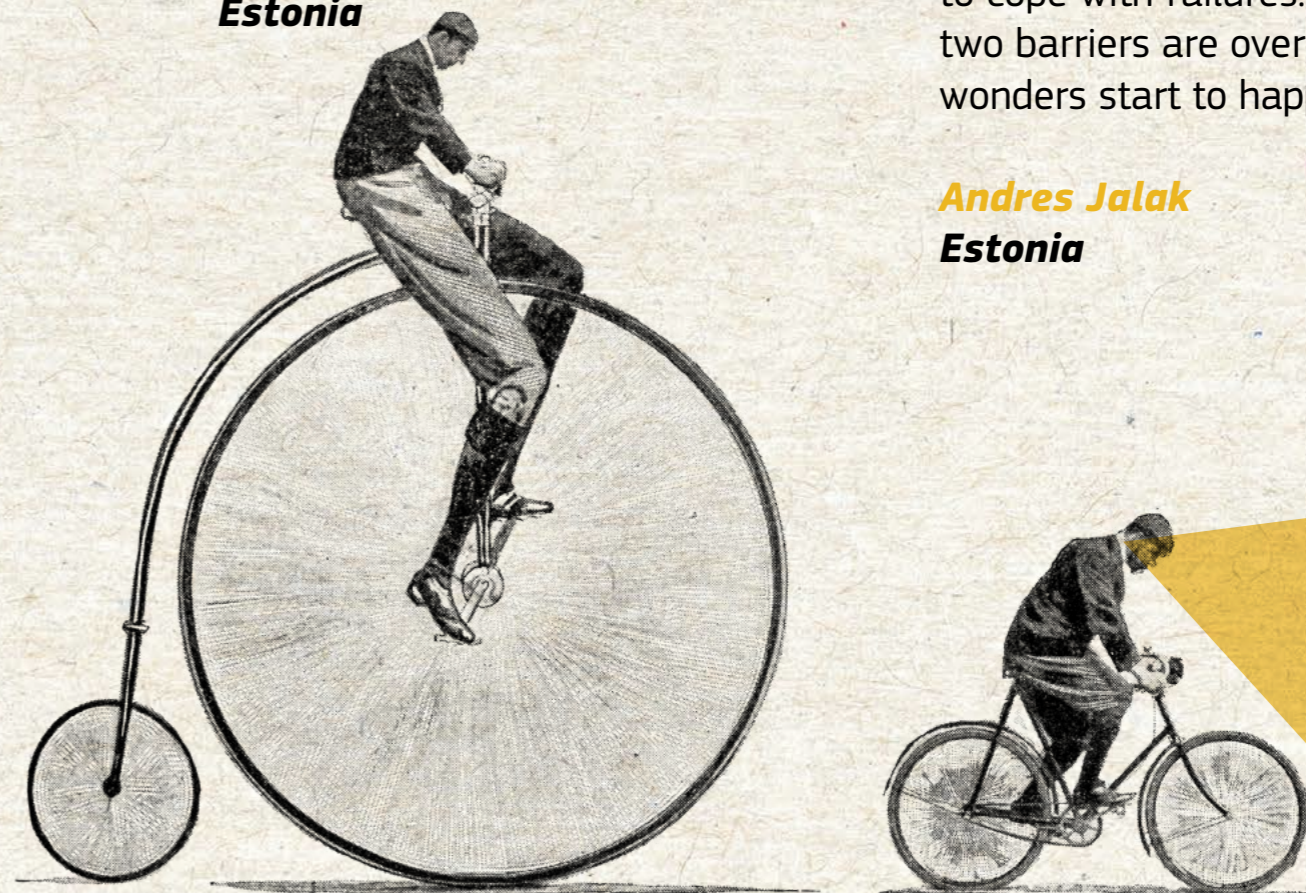
**Oksana Tsyurpita-Polańska**  
**Poland**

I have to try, experiment, and learn so much myself. I can't talk about things I don't believe in or haven't tried. **A trainer must have a sparkle in their eye, and their attitude must exude confidence because they have tried and tested it themselves and know that it works.** Teaching allows me to share, combine, and create something new from the knowledge and experience I've gained during my professional development. This novelty is the main thing. I am always excited. I love my work, and I love teaching! I look forward to every new training session and meeting to share my knowledge and learn from my adult students.

**Kaire Raba**  
**Estonia**

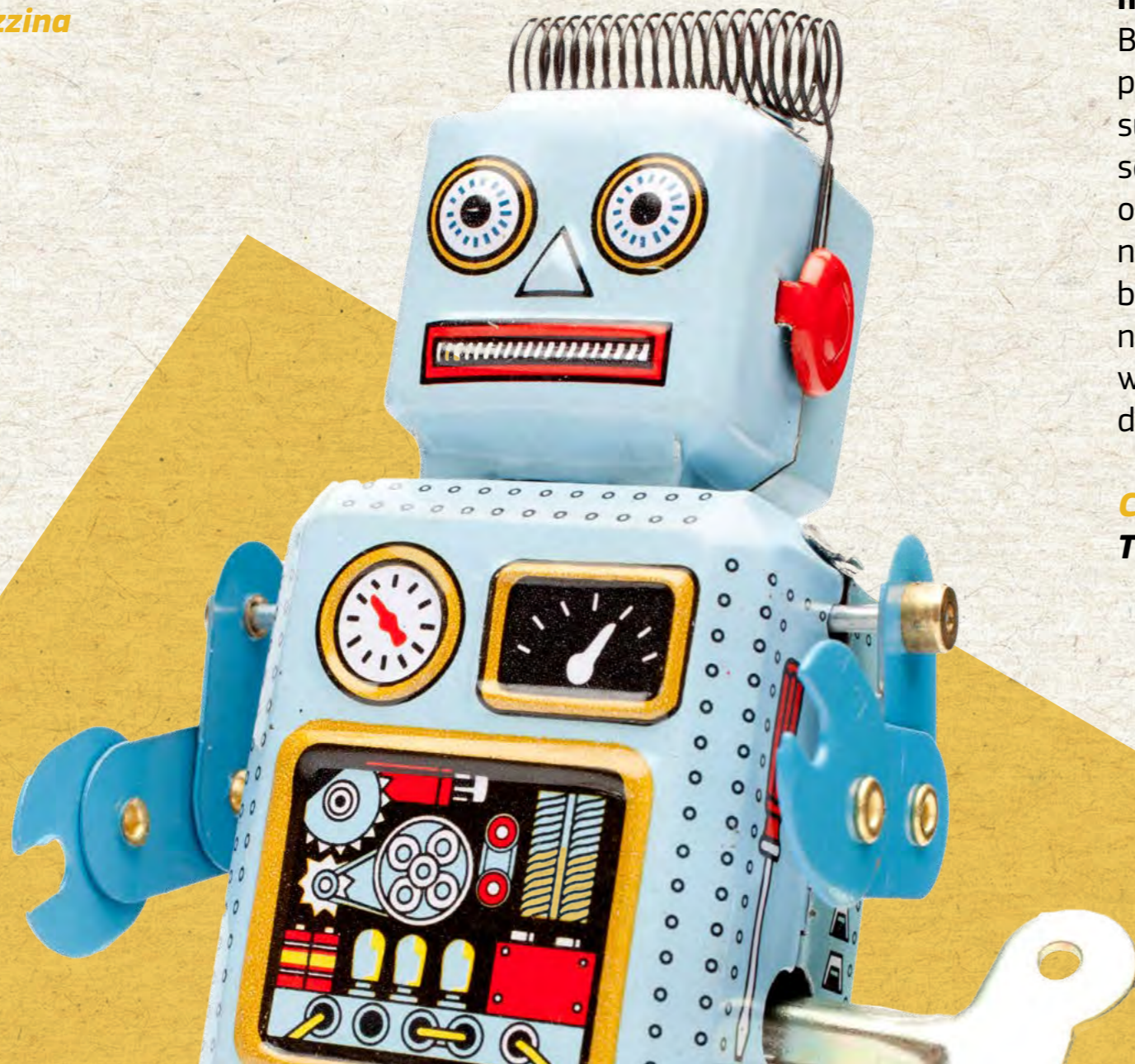
Becoming a trainer will always be a process, a role that grows with all the successes and sometimes uncomfortable lessons. **Being a trainer, for me, primarily means providing learners with a positive nudge to encourage them to try something new and step outside their daily routine.** It is important to support curiosity and encourage experimentation. For some reason, as adults, we instinctively choose the safer (familiar) option and find it harder to cope with failures. Once these two barriers are overcome, small wonders start to happen.

**Andres Jalak**  
**Estonia**



I'm working on a project focusing on digital skills in the context of the AI Revolution, which directly addresses the pressing need for adult learners to adapt to the evolving digital workforce. It provides new skills and empowers learners to understand and navigate the AI-driven changes in their industries. Doing so prepares them for the future, ensuring they remain competitive and relevant in their careers. It is also important that the course is free of charge, so that it removes financial barriers, making learning accessible to all. The certification offered for course completion further adds value to the learners' educational journey, providing a tangible record of their newly acquired skills. In fact, **certifications increase their employability, contributing to their professional growth.**

**Stephen Bezzina**  
**Malta**

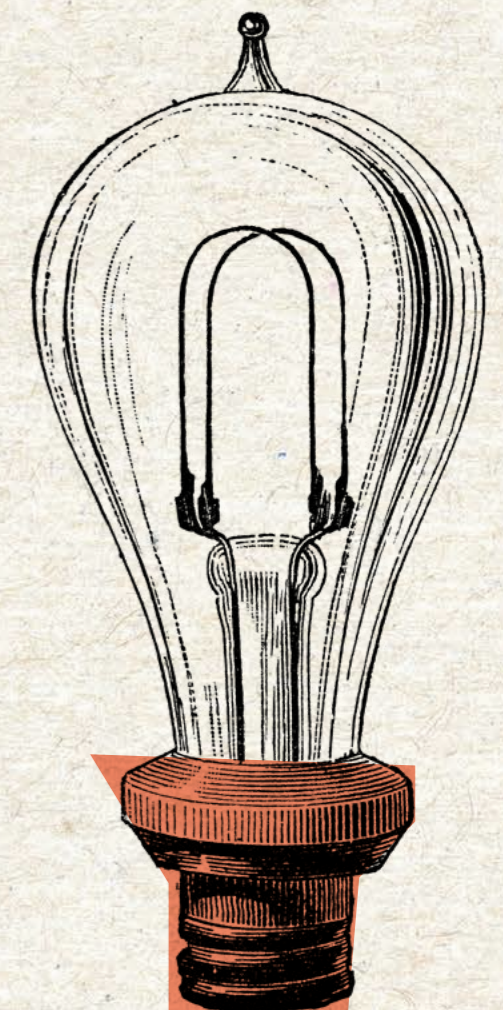


The common phenomenon of low numeracy is less well known, in spite of the increasing importance of maths skills in society. **I've noticed numbers and charts are used more and more often to give meaning to the world around us.** By putting basic skills in a broader perspective, we can improve our support to people who want to be self-reliant. In my experience, people often have the wrong idea about numeracy. It's not about doing sums, but about functional numeracy: using numbers in daily life, for example when weighing ingredients, gauging a distance or planning a trip.

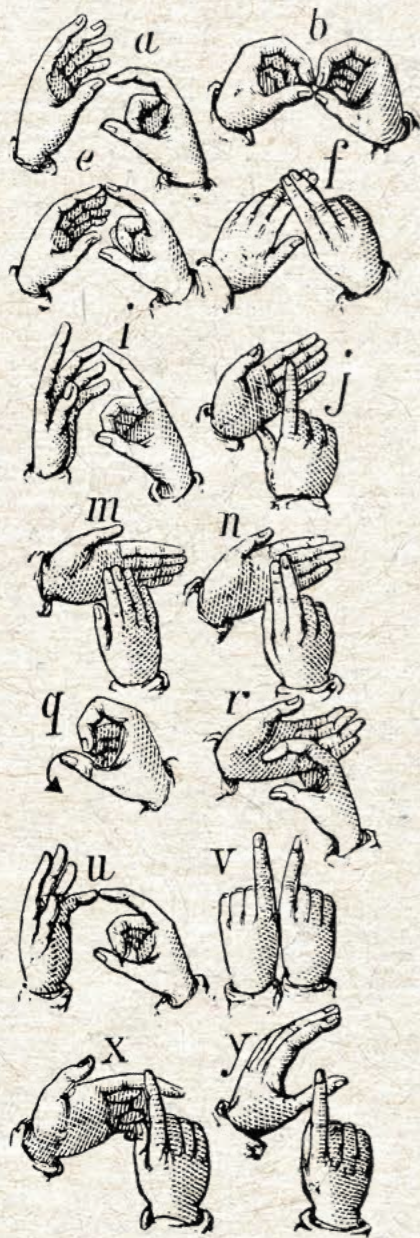
**Corien van Gelder**  
**The Netherlands**

**We have greater and easier access to knowledge, but the ability to discover what we currently need and to transform that knowledge into skills and then action remains a challenge.** Technology and educational methods are undergoing an unprecedented revolution. This gives us, as educators, completely new opportunities to act and support others on their way to new skills.

**Urszula Rudzka-Stankiewicz**  
**Poland**







I offer people with disabilities employment opportunities in which their knowledge, skills and special experiential expertise can be fully expressed/developed.

**Mark Van Assche**  
**Belgium**



**The world's population is increasingly ageing.** Many older people have serious degenerative diseases (dementia, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's), which means that organisations that work with older learners are put in increasingly difficult situations.

**Claudiu Braileanu**  
**Romania**

Education **TOWARDS** old age is the process of consciously preparing people and their environment for the changes that occur as we grow older and take on the challenges involved. **Education FOR old age is about preparing society for creating an environment that is old age friendly.** This includes infrastructure, social and economic solutions, and the perception of the elderly as being valued members of society. Education **IN** old age concerns the elders. It is about influencing their behaviour and promoting their education and self-education, which prevents social and economic deterioration. It aims to counteract the loss of agency and ownership of one's own life.

**Małgorzata Stanowska**  
**Poland**



In my nearly 15 years of experience as an English language teacher, I have noticed two major barriers to learning in adults: first, their insecurity in understanding text or spoken language, and second, their shyness and hesitancy in producing their own. When I think about adult education, I realise that it is about content, new skills, increasing qualifications and competitiveness in the labour market, but also about supporting and enabling the taking of responsibility for learning, about student autonomy, and above all about **confidence and security, which is hard to learn from books.**

**Dana Boušová**  
**Czech Republic**



By offering a variety of learning options, we can reach a wider range of people and help them reconcile their personal and professional commitments with their educational aspirations. **By facilitating access to education for all, regardless of age, socio-economic status or level of education, we can create equitable opportunities for all who wish to learn.**

Moreover, by valuing knowledge and skills acquired through professional, community or personal experience, we can offer a richer and more motivating perspective on learning.

**Gaspard Joret**  
**France**

Regarding education, communication skills are important from both the teacher's and the learner's standpoint. **Relationships determine the environment in which the teacher and the student exist**, and it is only in a safe and supportive environment that both can reach their full potential.

**Hardi Hansalu, Martin Jõesaar  
and Remo Ojaste**  
**Estonia**

According to the renewed approach and philosophy, the aim of adult education and training activity is to create high-quality and effective provisions in the area of knowledge management and knowledge transfer, which scientifically integrates the existing innovations, takes advantage of their synergies, initiates new topics and collaborations, and develops step-by-step its professional staff. **Planning supported by knowledge management is essential for practitioners to provide well-grounded adult training activities.**

**Pál Zuti**  
**Hungary**



My current experience is leading me towards implementing tools for adult education that will build the skills for the future: **creativity, meta-level critical thinking, awareness, reflection, emotional literacy, and leadership** are the basis on which personalities can be helped to bloom and careers can be built.

**Antonia Castellani**  
**Italy**

Adult learners need a lot of support because some have limited learning skills, while others haven't sat in a classroom for a long time, and some believe that once they've completed training, they know everything. In addition, they have their family life and work to consider. All of this must be considered, and **each learner must be approached individually, helping, supporting, and instilling the belief that everything can be understood.** It's also important to recognize that adult learners are more self-aware and have their own experiences and habits.

**Heili Västrik**  
**Estonia**

Supporting adult learners in achieving their goals requires good listening skills, an individual approach, understanding, inspiration, and support. **Each adult learner is unique, with their own goals and needs.** As a trainer, I can help learners clarify and specify their learning objectives, find the best learning methods, introduce best practices and networks, create a supportive learning environment, inspire and encourage personal development, and provide feedback on their progress. But in the end, teaching others is also the best way to learn.

**Anneli Zirkel**  
**Estonia**

I was naturally curious about the world, I was open to people and I easily established contacts, which determined my professional path. I'm lucky with people. **I constantly meet people who inspire me or encourage me to take part in various initiatives.** When managing my Academic Support Center, my motto is to be flexible. If something goes wrong, let's back out. If something doesn't work, I look for other ways. I feel absolutely fulfilled professionally. What is my secret? I have never had a time in my life when I didn't like or want to do what I do. I have been developing my whole life, and I have always managed to combine family life with professional work.

**Anna Gutowska Ciołek**  
**Poland**





It is late and I'm in my car driving home after a long day at work, passing one of the mountain roads in Iceland. It is springtime, so the days are getting longer. It's almost midnight but still the sun is up. In the distance in front of me, I can see Reykjavík, and I see the sun touching the horizon. **I love my country and the endless daylight in the Icelandic spring gives me extra energy and hope.** However, my mind is on studying for my master's at the University. I enrolled this spring on the course Action research. The research topic is 'me', what torture! How on earth did I think it made sense to choose this course?!

**Gudrun Larusdottir**  
**Iceland**

**Every training is a significant challenge for me because I have to prepare training materials in search of new approaches, new and contemporary teaching methods, which means constantly developing myself.**

I need to be prepared to answer questions that arise in working life and often seek solutions to problems that arise. Changing teaching methods, especially due to hybrid and distance learning, has required significant effort. Distance learning has been a significant challenge since I train in financial topics, which also require calculations. It seems that distance learning in adult education is here to stay.

**Helle Noorväli**  
**Estonia**

**I was born when there was only radio. You weren't allowed to write left-handed, you weren't allowed to use a calculator, and you had to take typing lessons. It was a time when you had to listen and obey, and talking about your experiences and emotions was taboo.** I studied social work, explored society, struggled with personal relations, and learned political thinking. Finally, I became a training worker at a residential folk high school and learned to arrange group conversations about experiences and work with video. I have worked for several education and training centers and developed my professional skills. Against this backdrop, I think education professionals need to be more aware that a quiet, secret skills development revolution is underway in parallel with how the world is transforming.

**Jumbo Klercq**  
**The Netherlands**

Teaching has given me valuable experiences and the opportunity to collaborate with interesting people. **One could say it has become a lifestyle for me.** Almost at the end of every training session, seeing satisfaction and enthusiasm in the learners' eyes, I feel that I am doing the right thing.

**Ruth Pääsuke**  
**Estonia**



In an era of rapid change, the need to cope with an excess of often contradictory information, automation and the digitalisation of many areas of life, the lifelong learning approach is becoming even more desirable. It is up to us, those involved in education and development in the broadest sense, to make this concept a reality in practice. **As never before, we can participate in any form of learning from any corner of the world:** online courses, social networks, videos, podcasts, expert blogs, learning platforms, solutions based on artificial intelligence and more traditional forms of learning. In these places, we can access virtually unlimited knowledge in any field that interests us, often for free or a token cent. An increasing challenge in adult learning is choosing wisely from this palette of available options for acquiring knowledge. Because, unfortunately, quantity does not always translate into quality.

**Bogumiła Starak**  
**Poland**



Nature has always been a source of inspiration for solutions, and education is no exception. **The ability to adapt to changing circumstances is crucial in all aspects of life, and education is no different.** However, the traditional educational system has always been structured and lacks the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. This is where we can take inspiration from nature and learn from the weed strategy employed by the dandelion.

**Kai Pata**  
**Estonia**

**One gardening store's slogan proclaims: "By planting, you become happy!"** There is likely some truth to it, as there are quite a few people interested in acquiring horticultural knowledge in Estonia. Many of them have studied under my guidance. I can acknowledge that I became an instructor thanks to my inspiring students. In my work, I increasingly strive to develop the skill of being a fellow traveller on the student's educational journey. The greatest skill is to enable the students to pursue their own development without imposing the instructor's beliefs onto them.

**Tairi Kruusma**  
**Estonia**



Personal attention is central to my work, whether I'm with colleagues, stakeholders or participants. That's what makes working in adult education so special for me. **I love having the right contacts, hearing and sharing stories, and developing the provision of education together.** We also involve participants in the latter so they can really get the education they need or want. They are truly heard and seen.

**Lianne Knobel**  
**The Netherlands**

**Adults often find it challenging to find time. I tell them that it's always exciting to learn something new and challenge themselves.** I also emphasise that being able to swim gives them the confidence to spend time in the pool or by the sea with their children and grandchildren. I love when the learner is satisfied with their own results and progress.

**Triinu Schneider**  
**Estonia**



This year marked the beginning of the widespread use of learning and teaching tools powered by artificial intelligence, and experts predict that this is just the beginning and that soon most business processes will be based on such technology. We can consider this as good news; it will facilitate access to information for our students, and serve as a tool for personalising and innovating classes for lecturers. At the same time, it is a fact that such tools have also increased the possibility of plagiarism, alienation of the individual in modern society, and can negatively affect the work habits and motivation of participants. That is why **it is crucial to accompany any technological progress with work on developing a critical way of thinking and to think about the ethical implications of this accelerated development of technology.** We must not forget that developing digital competences does not mean that we only learn to use information technologies, but we also learn to use them in a safe, creative and critical way.

**Andrea Maksimović**  
**Croatia**

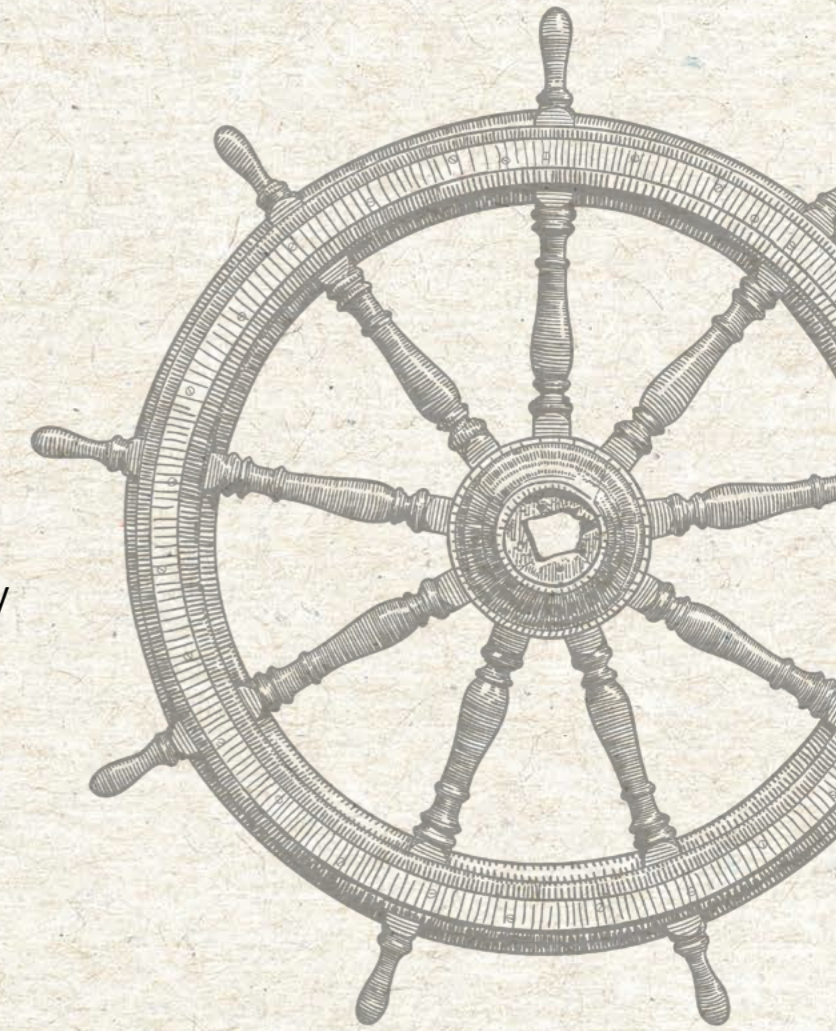
A large number of adult inmates come from leaving school early and have little motivation to study. **However, if the educator manages to spark motivation in them, that's it.** Studying also becomes a time for self-care, for finding similarities or differences in the difficulties and storms of life that have been experienced by people belonging to different eras, spaces and cultures. It allows for discovering the humanity that unites us all, good and bad, if one can only be good or bad that is.

**Wilma Greco**  
**Italy**



Considering lifelong learning as a necessity shared by all is a misleading shortcut. It can also be seen as yet another prescription in Europe, where the feeling of inequity is very strong. Public action is often undermined. So it is not enough to think that training is necessary for everyone to believe in it. There are two important levers: **Breaking away from a vertical approach to knowledge and Rethinking the process of appropriating knowledge in the light of new ways of learning and the wide variety of resources available.**

**André Chauvet**  
**France**



**How can we make people want to take part in training, when it can take a long time and ultimately lead to a job that is not always the beneficiary's first choice?** By mobilising innovative tools, offering a unique experience to trainees - such as adapting to their needs and values - as well as establishing links between the world of training and the economic fabric, the world of training will be better equipped to respond to today's challenges.

**Ludovic Bertrand**  
**France**

**Humankind seems to be blessed and/or cursed with chronic short-term memory failure.** We easily forget and thus stumble into our next catastrophe before we know it. Or just as readily storm headfirst into new adventures and uncharted territory, forgetting we repeatedly crashed off our bikes and into trees. For a species that has produced Mozart, Marie Curie, Nadal, Einstein, Jeanine De Bique, and Shakespeare... to name a few, it would be daft to say we're a freak of nature. For a species that just as inevitably produced Stalin, Thatcher, Pol Pot, and Bloody Mary, it would be stupid to claim we're at the pinnacle of creation, the best universe has ever produced. But haven't we progressed at all in that short span we've been here? I do think the answer to that has to be yes.

**Wim Ipers**  
Belgium



It is essential to empathise and consider the learner, recognising their individual abilities and uniqueness. Maintain motivation as it accelerates progress. Notice, praise, and encourage even when there may not be a reason to do so. Continuously create memorable connections, methods, tricks, and techniques during the training process. **Allow the learner to make mistakes and learn from them.** In driver training, learning through mistakes is physically palpable. Acknowledge the learner's capabilities and support their actions and initiative. Being a trainer means placing oneself in the learner's shoes.

**Aire Tammik**  
Estonia

**What role do emotions and pleasure play in learning and education?** Human action can be supported by three pillars: duty, need and pleasure. When it comes to learning and education or training, the need or duty to study or learn has proven to be ineffective. Learning is tiring, it requires commitment and attention, it inevitably involves making mistakes because by making mistakes you learn. And then we must start again from the desire and pleasure of studying and learning. And the teacher plays a fundamental role in this: they must support learning and not scare the learner, they must clarify and not punish.

**Valentina Cassara**  
Italy





Every adult learner is different, so it's important to take the time to understand their goals, needs, and preferences. Then, help learners define clear and achievable goals and work with them to create a realistic learning plan. Clarifying goals helps learners maintain motivation and focus on what is important to them. Also flexibility is crucial. Whenever possible, we should consider the commitments and schedules of adult learners and provide flexible learning opportunities. A supportive environment, feedback, and recognition are equally important. **We need to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where adult learners feel motivated and encouraged.** Finally, continuous feedback is vital: positive feedback and recognition motivate them to strive harder.

**Janika Pannel**  
**Estonia**



**I have always been interested in the theory of education.** I have carried out research and conducted archive searches on it. I have used this experience in my professional work. I have always been concerned with their educational dimension when organising museum exhibitions. Even today, when working in an office, I regularly use the social competencies I acquired during my work as an educator. This is especially true about communication skills, sensitivity and respect for people with different social and educational backgrounds. I also often use public speaking skills and the ability to use logic and persuasion in communication.

**Paulina Szelaq**  
**Poland**

Adults perceive information through the prism of their life experiences, which varies for each person. Changing established opinions is very challenging. People are also forced to change. For some, the process goes smoothly, while for others, it's challenging. A teacher's task is to support and guide, to spark interest. **Adults can learn independently but often lack the motivation and energy to break out of their routine and try something new.** I also believe that every leader is an adult educator – some are stronger, some are weaker. There are no uniform rules, but there are common goals – to foster interest in both the profession and life through learning and developing professional skills.

**Galina Kuznetsova**  
**Estonia**



I have always seen learning as an integral part of my profession. Who teaches, needs to permanently learn a lot. It is important to expand and upgrade professional knowledge, but it is even more important to learn about people, interpersonal relationships and themselves.

**It is a great challenge and a difficult task to keep up with a world that is changing rapidly and unstoppably.** We must not allow the hustle and hecticness of the world around us to rob us of personal and family peace, but on the other hand we must never stop when it comes to learning and acquiring skills.

**Marta Lukić Prebeg**  
**Croatia**

**Teaching helps me stay fresh - I have to keep up with what is happening in the field and also work in the field being taught so that I can provide the learners with fresh and personal examples.** In any case, I develop alongside the learners. Of particular interest are learners for whom classical approaches do not work, meaning that we have to take into account the uniqueness of each learner.

**Kertu Pehlak**  
**Estonia**



# LOOKING

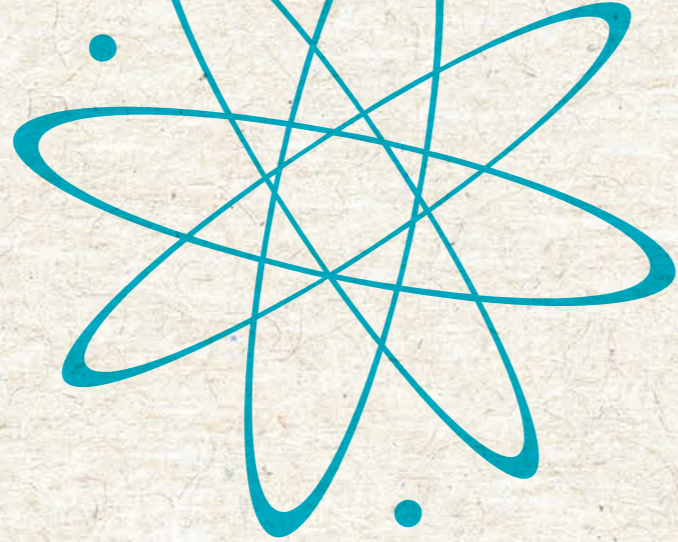
CHAPTER 2.

# HEARD



We must collectively define essential frameworks of digital skills that include small economic structures more extensively in this transition and make digital technology an opportunity for all. **The world of education will be even more cooperative in the future.** It will integrate a greater use of co-design between learners and trainers in pedagogical engineering. The aim here is to replace the top-down trainer/learner approach, and to envisage that, thanks to existing and future digital tools, we can arrive at a situation of more horizontal exchange between the various stakeholders in a training course.

**Thomas Edesa**  
**France**



Learning should be personalised, and adult learners have different needs, goals, as well as preferences, so they therefore need personalised learning experiences. **Personalisation can be achieved through adaptive learning technologies, competency-based education, and other innovative approaches.**

**Roberta Albertazzi**  
**Spain**



Let's imagine the Metaverse as a virtual world that we can enter using a set of technological and digital devices. It is a place where you have the ability and the power to do things that you could never do in the real world without leaving home. Is the phenomenon of bullying possible in the Metaverse? The difference is that real-life bullying often ends when the day ends. For cyberbullying, there is no escape. **In the Metaverse, let's create a space for friendship, inclusion and peace, promoting positive cooperation as well as new digital skills that can make them better citizens in the future.**

**Ioana Sandru**  
**Romania**



Teaching is an imitation of life. Curiosity, which motivates us to search, discover, find out, test, examine, is important for professional advancement and improvement, but above all for personal growth. **Without intellectual curiosity and learning, a person's world narrows and shrinks.** Feeding your curiosity means providing food for the spirit, and then – of course – for the body as well. We must never stop cultivating our garden.

**Marta Lukić Prebeg**  
Croatia



I believe it is important to motivate adult learners and to support collaborative learning based on dialogue, where exploratory and reflective situations are used to transform the learning process into a standard approach for the individual and the community, both in respect of workplace and family/community relations. **In this way, learning is given a new dimension of fun, joy and success.**

**Balázs Németh**  
Hungary



Knowledge, but above all practical steps towards meaningful change, is extremely important for everyone's individual progress. It is even more important to remember the values of humanism – the values that make us human. **The ability to love, support, encourage, to accept our mistakes and the mistakes of others** – these, I believe, will be among the most important skills in a world where humans will have to compete with artificial intelligence, which is advancing so rapidly. And we have to continue to learn it throughout our lives. The ability to think independently and to create original, unusual artwork will also be essential.

**Agnese Zarāne**  
Latvia





In the future, adults will learn theoretical content using virtual IT tools in their homes rather than in training institutions. At the same time, a large part of practical skills will be acquired in a VR environment capable of virtual modelling using regularly updated software. **In this context, professions are no longer named; only competencies and skills are identified.** Governments' AI systems will define the volume of the required set of competencies and skills on an ongoing basis, up to a timeframe before the training period, and these expectations will be loaded into the VET and AE systems. Depending on the duration of the education programme, the expectations will automatically be integrated into the VET or AE system.

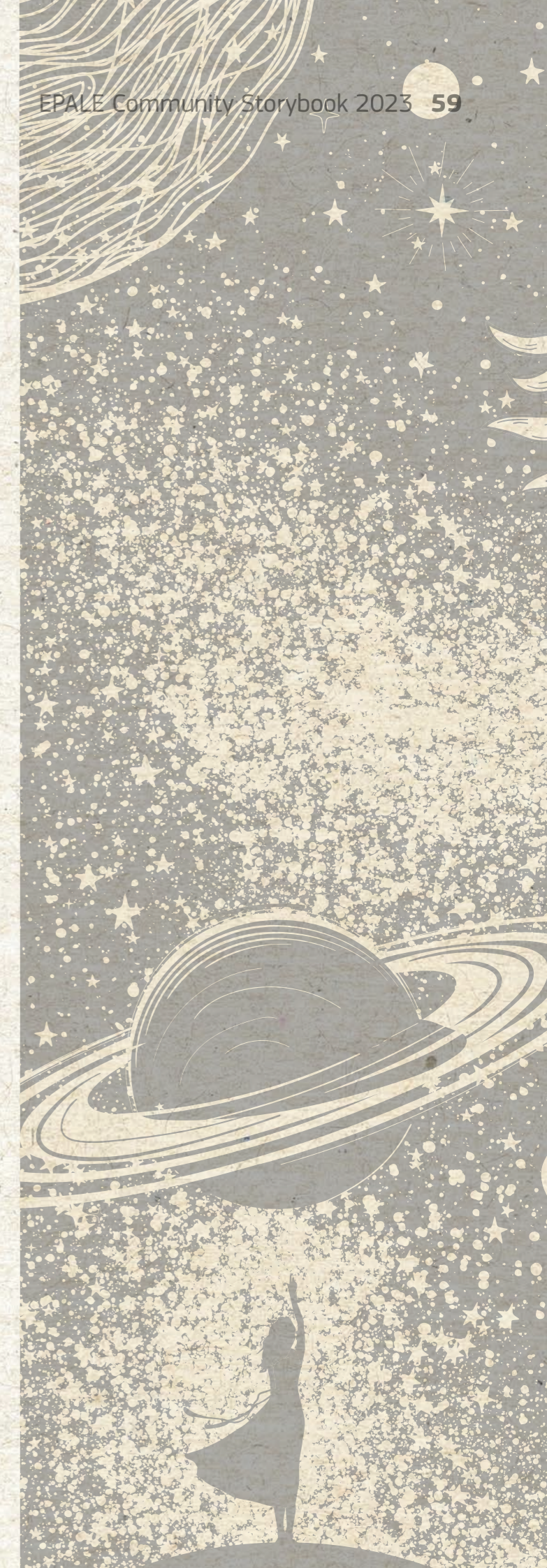
**Szilárd Malatyinszki**  
Hungary

With the technologicalisation of education (which is not a bad thing in itself), it's important that we do not forget about our humanity. Modern education needs contact with other people. I think we need a mindset change from "I'm teaching others" to **"I'm in touch with myself. I use the wisdom within myself and trust that you use yours."** This approach develops wisdom in the field between us and allows both parties to grow no matter whether we are called teachers or students.

**Maja Wyborska**  
Poland

Although digitalisation is useful in some situations in our work and personal life, I still believe that working together with learners in the classroom cannot be completely replaced by digital tools or artificial intelligence. **This is because humans are social beings who build relationships with other people throughout their lives.** Adult education should continue to nurture theoretical learning and teaching in the classroom, as well as the acquisition of practical skills through exercises and practicing at work.

**Borut Marn**  
Croatia



Lifelong learning, flexible learning, and digital learning. Adult education is characterised by lifelong learning, where people continuously learn and develop skills to adapt to changes in the workplace and society as a whole. **Flexible learning means personalised education that takes even more into account the needs and expectations of adult learners.** Digital learning is becoming increasingly important. Interactive learning environments, online courses, virtual reality, and AI-supported learning offer new opportunities. It's how I imagine the future of adult learning.

**Anu Vaagen**  
**Estonia**

**I imagine a future of education where we can rediscover the desire and emotion of learning thanks to empathetic and constructive relationships with teachers.** I imagine a future where school is a place where you make mistakes, but you don't fail. Where you learn from your mistakes, you fall but you get back up and move forward.

**Valentina Cassara**  
**Italy**



The entire process must be designed in such a way that **the participant has a sense of security, friendly learning conditions, predictable rules of participation (contract), and a sense of being in the right place and time.** They must know, understand and accept the purpose of the educational situation and have an influence on its course, which translates into their motivation and involvement.

**Jacek Gralczyk**  
**Poland**



The way I see it, the future of adult learning in prison hinges on three key challenges: **make sure a humane and restorative philosophy is at the heart of all decision-making processes**; provide small-scale, differentiated, and society-embedded living units; train the trainers/counsel the counsellors/teach the teachers to professional standards that also prevail outside prison walls. And be patient. Very patient. Rome wasn't built in one day. Prisons will not be 'unbuilt' in one decade.

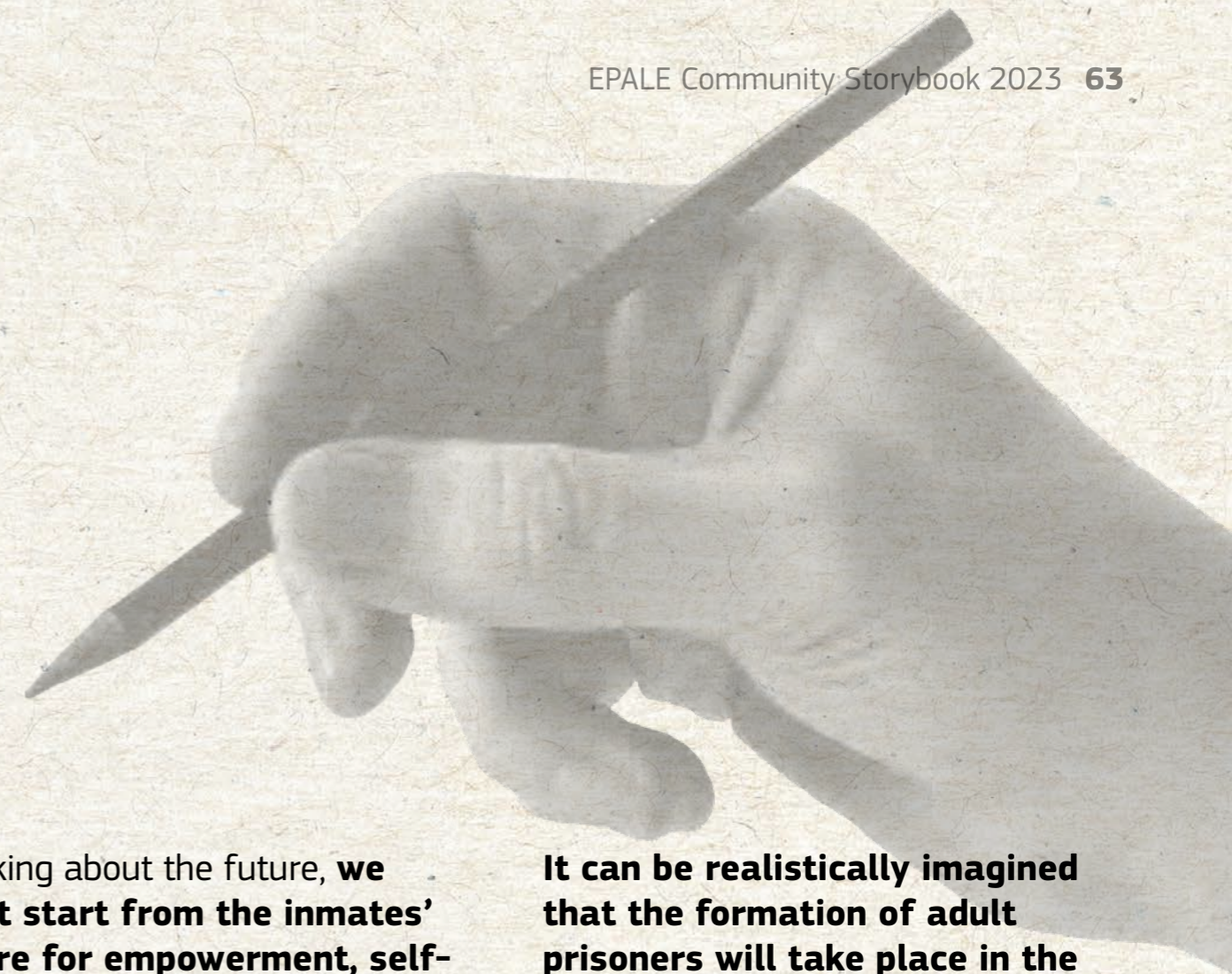
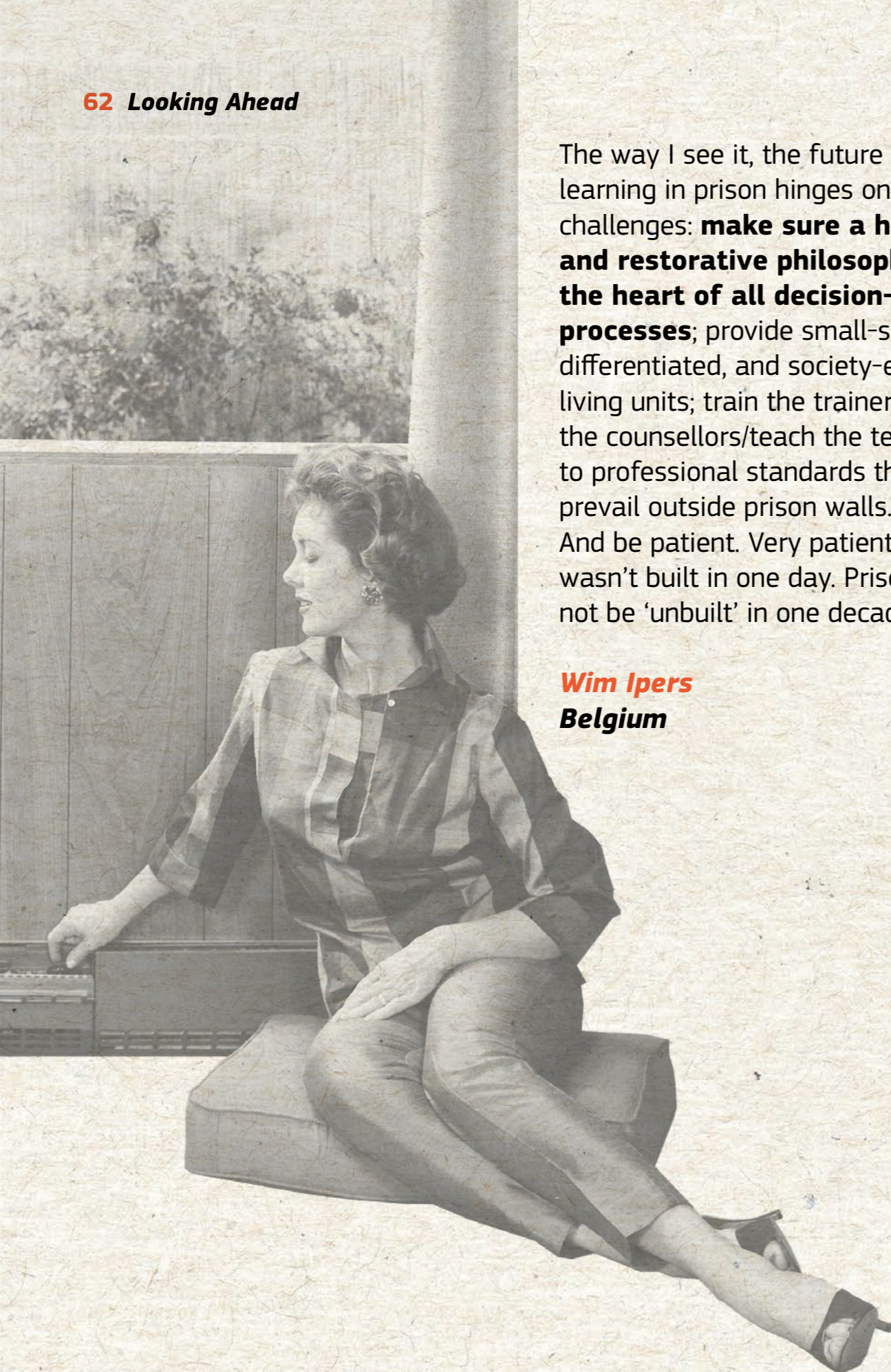
**Wim Ipers**  
**Belgium**

Thinking about the future, **we must start from the inmates' desire for empowerment, self-awareness and control over their own choices, decisions and actions, both in the personal sphere and in that of social relationships.** In terms of the future reintegration into the civil community; this is, in my opinion, the real significant challenge for the future of adult education in prison, to foster self-empowerment, integrating in a unified educational environment the three separate fields of formal, non-formal and informal education.

**Wilma Greco**  
**Italy**

**It can be realistically imagined that the formation of adult prisoners will take place in the metaverse:** there will be specific virtual classrooms where they will connect and be represented by their own avatar. The metaverse can be an even more representative and adherent extension of the external reality and an inclusive, pluralist and tolerant context, where people can freely keep expressing themselves.

**Maria Martínez**  
**Spain**







Education must strengthen social cohesion. Regardless of the methods used, education must promote life within society and must enable the emergence of free, conscious, critical beings who are part of a single destiny. I also think that support from a person (and not a machine) will be needed more than ever. Otherwise, learners will be excluded from the learning and training process. A person cannot just be left alone in front of a machine or in front of learning tools. We need to exchange ideas and help each other to learn. The learner must be at the centre of the educational process, interacting with others and with trainers. **The educational community should be considered in the broadest sense (parents, local stakeholders, businesses, etc.).** Finally, the shift beyond real or personal borders should enable individuals to better understand the issues at stake. Learning languages and travelling within and outside Europe is essential if we are to avoid withdrawal and the emergence of forms of exclusion. This individual and collective shift is essential. And a final remark: cross-curricular skills (education in democracy, knowing how to behave in a group, taking the floor, etc.) must complement basic subject-specific skills.

**David Lopez**  
France

**Thinking about the future, I see basic skills becoming ever more essential.** Their importance for participating in society will increase. Take digitisation, for instance: everything is increasingly done online, such as taking care of your financial affairs, logging in with DigiD and making a dentist appointment. All of this requires digital skills.

**Corien van Gelder**  
The Netherlands

**Digitisation and various new technologies present new opportunities** to our target groups. VR or Artificial intelligence may help, for instance, to make work more accessible or easier. Take a future plumber who puts on VR goggles to see what knob they have to turn and what they have to do to fix something. There's also an increasing number of technological solutions in case of a language barrier, such as translation apps that may help people in civic integration find a job quicker. We'll continue to look for innovative training methods so everyone gets the opportunity to develop themselves!

**Sjoerd van het Erve and Marleen Olijslagers-van den Meerendonk**  
The Netherlands



I strongly believe that adult education must include programs of self-care, timekeeping, and patient engagement in healthcare to make it democratic and accessible to all people. **Health is a valuable asset that we must protect and promote.** As European citizens, we have a great responsibility to support the democratic processes that underpin the right to health for all, without distinction. Health systems must be accessible to all people. Because a person's health is part of the health of all of us. One Health for all!

**Sabrina Grigolo**  
Italy

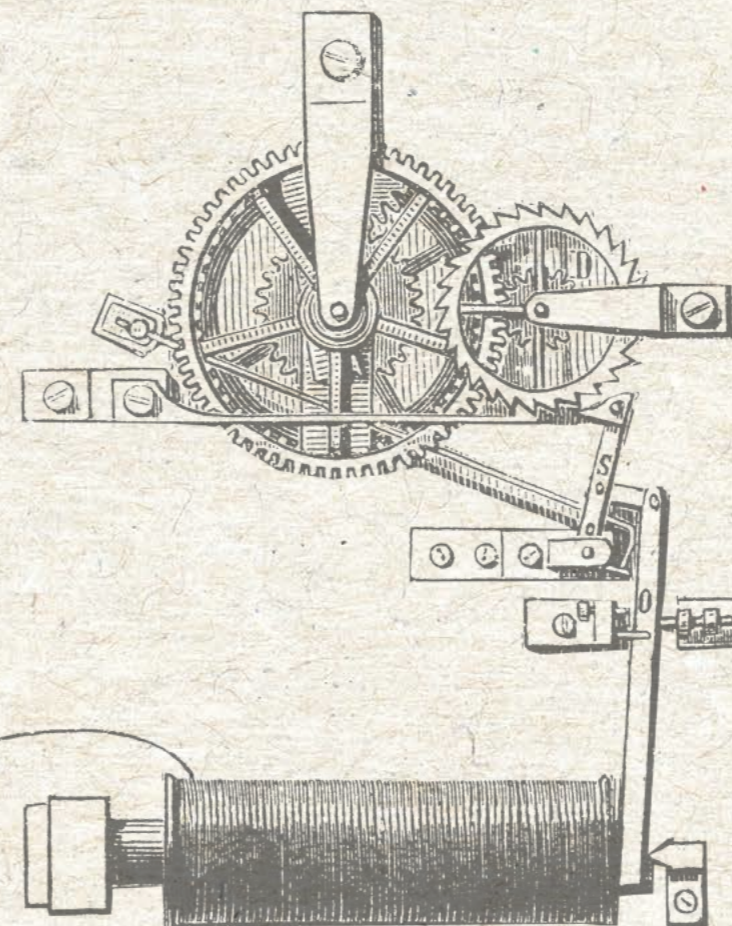
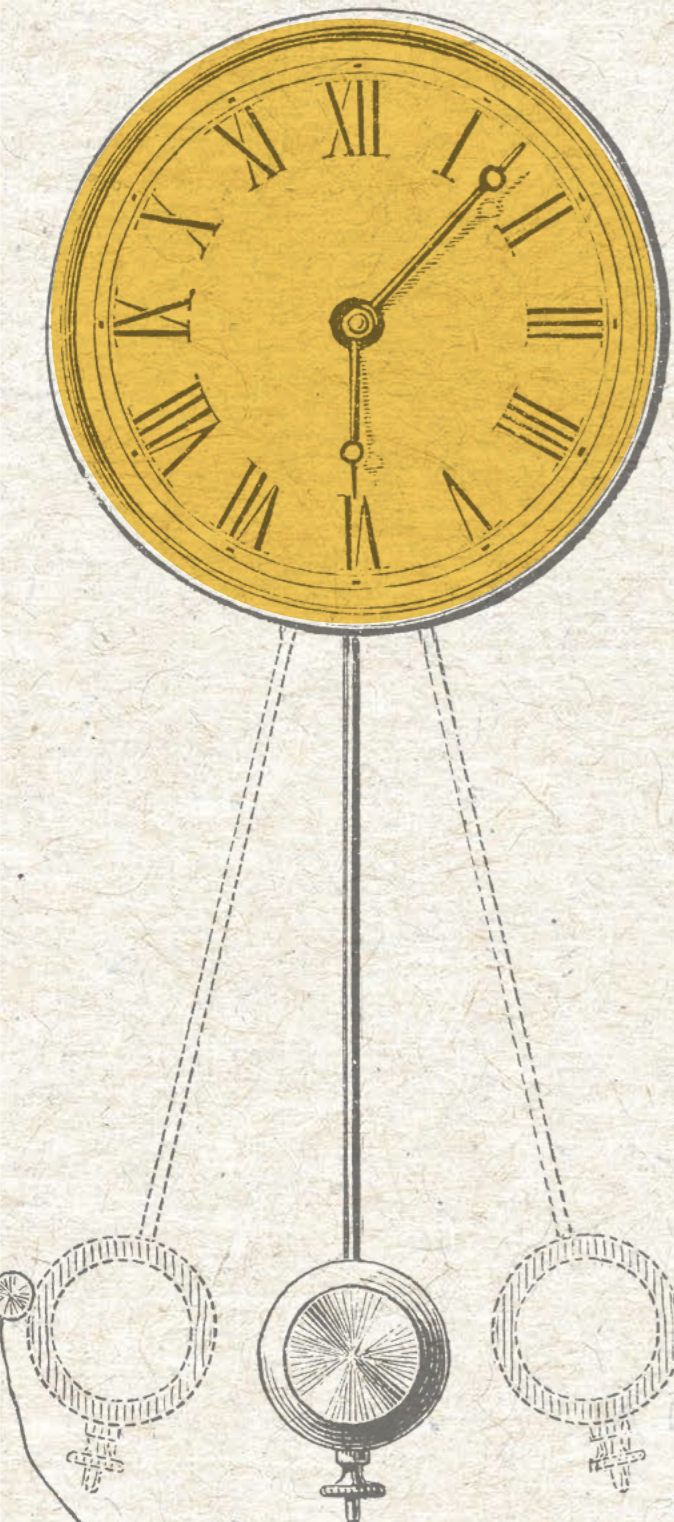
**Be humble and accept guidance from fellow travellers and your environment.** Be brave, embrace your inner persistence - be the leader of your life, make your voice be heard - never give up!

**Gudrun Larusdottir**  
Iceland



Looking at the adult holistically, as a working person with a private life, psychological and health conditions, it is not enough for educators to base competence development on knowledge, skills and experience building alone. A good trainer should be able to get to the motives of the learner and their sources of possible resistance, notice what is going on between the words and respond to it adequately. Due to the rapid development of learning, the growth of knowledge and changes in the environment, adult education is a requirement of the modern age. **The role of educators is to accompany learners on this journey by pointing out opportunities, sound selection of material, deepening critical issues in direct contact and taking a holistic approach to adult development.**

**Bogumiła Starak**  
Poland



**We are in the year 2050.** There are fewer students in basic and upper-secondary education and many more senior students who have already made lifelong learning their daily routine. In Portugal there are now almost 800,000 people over 85 years old, i.e. practically double of what we had in 2023. For this reason, there are fewer and fewer people of working age and more and more older people (for every 10 seniors, there are only 15 people of working age making contributions to social security. In 2023, there were 27). But these older people are not like the ones I knew when I was an adult, who were busy with photography, ceramics, music, English or computer classes, more for entertainment and socialising than for practical use. Now we have to work almost 15 years after the age of 65. Therefore, we cannot stop learning. Fortunately, work today is much more digital than manual and almost everyone my age works and learns from home. This helps us to have a more restful life, with more quality, and also to pollute the environment less with unnecessary trips.



**Paulo Marques**  
**Portugal**

I believe that in the future the **services for healthy 60+ people**, who want to move, socialise, and spend their free time will be developed. From their desire to improve their quality of life, social activities for older individuals will also need to be developed in the future.

**Claudiu Braileanu**  
**Romania**

Looking at the future, intergenerational educational activities should be given increased attention in the years to come by us andragogues, as well as by the new generation of young adult educators. The aim of intergenerational practices and activities is to develop the potential of the older ones by focusing on learning together between generations. While at the same time, working together to better achieve a common goal. **Education thus is a product of horizontal and vertical generational relationships.**

**Kateřina Pávková**  
**Czech Republic**



I hope that in the future of education, I will no longer hear from some lecturers that remote learning is less valuable. The quality of e-learning depends on the skills of the lecturers, so I hope that the continuous training of teachers will become the norm, rather than a form of innovation. **Let's give e-learning a chance, it is the future of our education.** There is no escape from it anymore.

**Lidia Pokrzycka**  
**Poland**

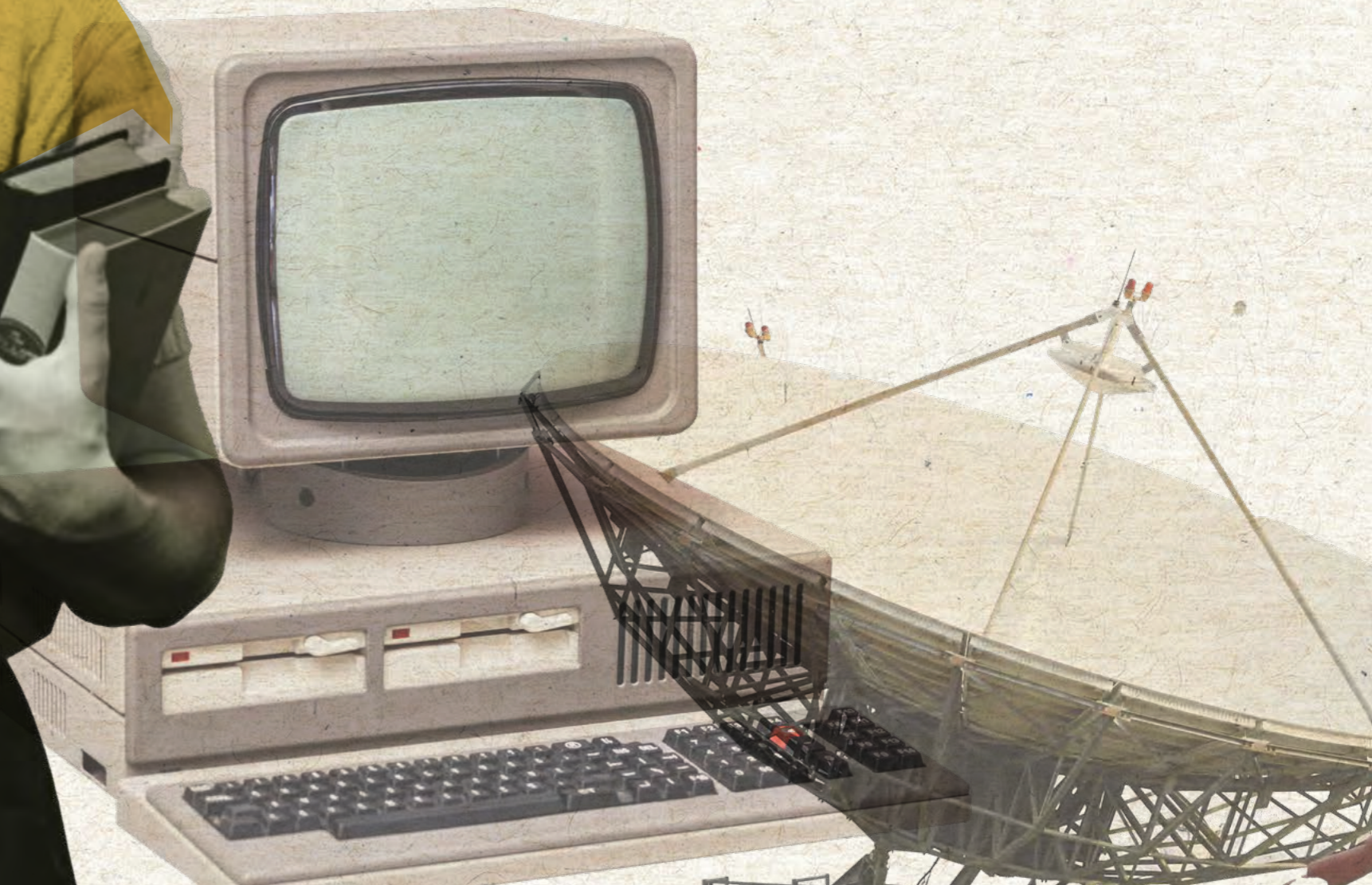


The pandemic and changing geopolitical situation are modifying teaching and learning formats. Remote communication platforms provide opportunities to connect the most distant communities of adult learners, develop their chosen foreign language and improve their ICT skills. **This is also an important direction of education for contributing to sustainability.**

**Virginija Svediene**  
**Lithuania**

There's a risk that online learning is not engaging, and I think we need to reimagine what it means to connect with each other online. **It's hard to create those powerful moments for sharing stories and expressing vulnerability when you aren't in the same room,** but delivering that kind of learning experience is key to helping learners retain and use their skills.

**Elizabeth Harrin**  
**UK**

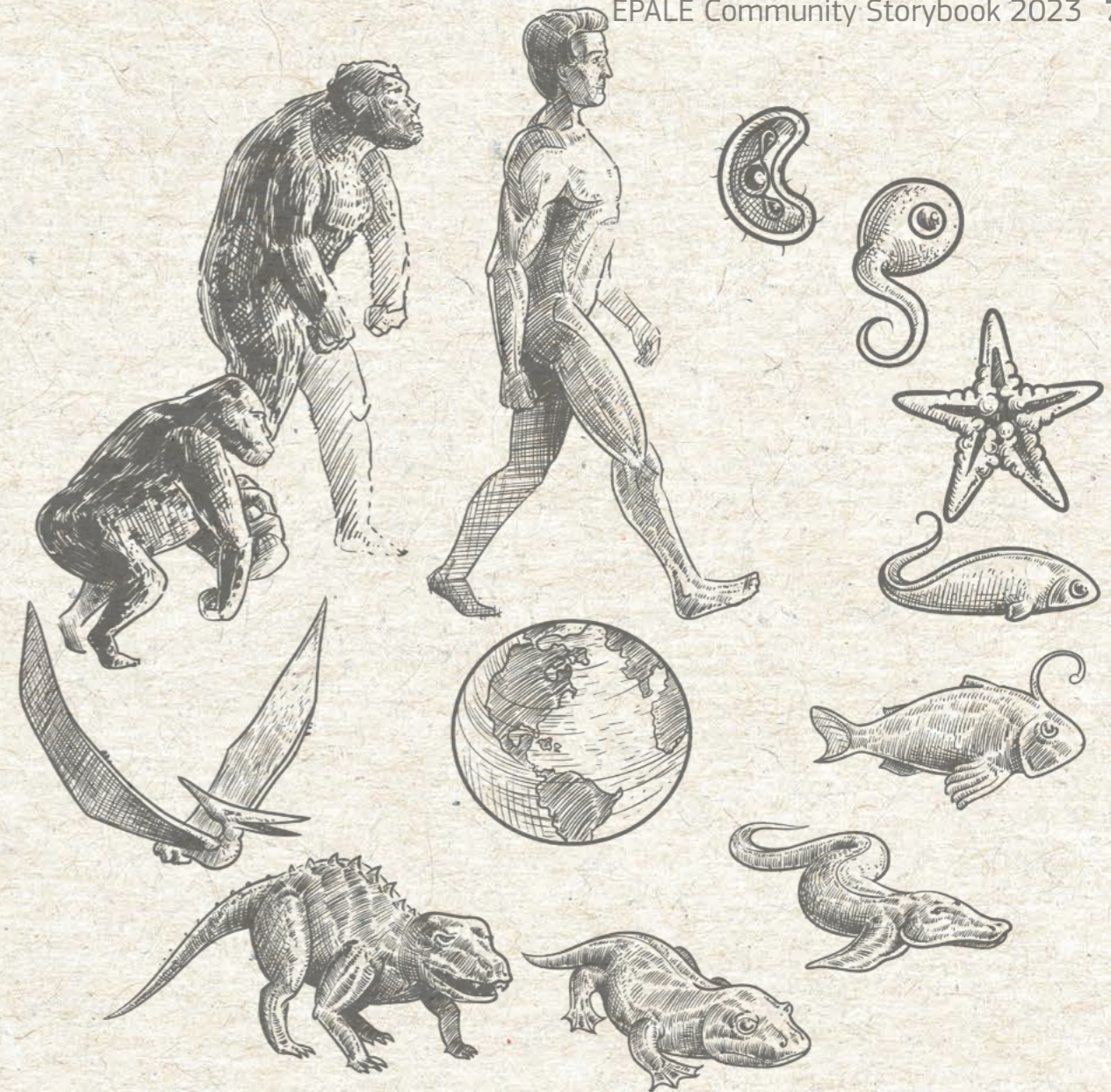


In the future, skills and education will be characterised by a greater emphasis on soft skills, alongside technical proficiencies. **Problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, adaptability, and emotional intelligence will become increasingly valued in a rapidly evolving world.** The future of skills and education will revolve around equipping individuals with the agility and adaptability to thrive in a changing landscape.

**Iraklis Varlamis**  
Greece

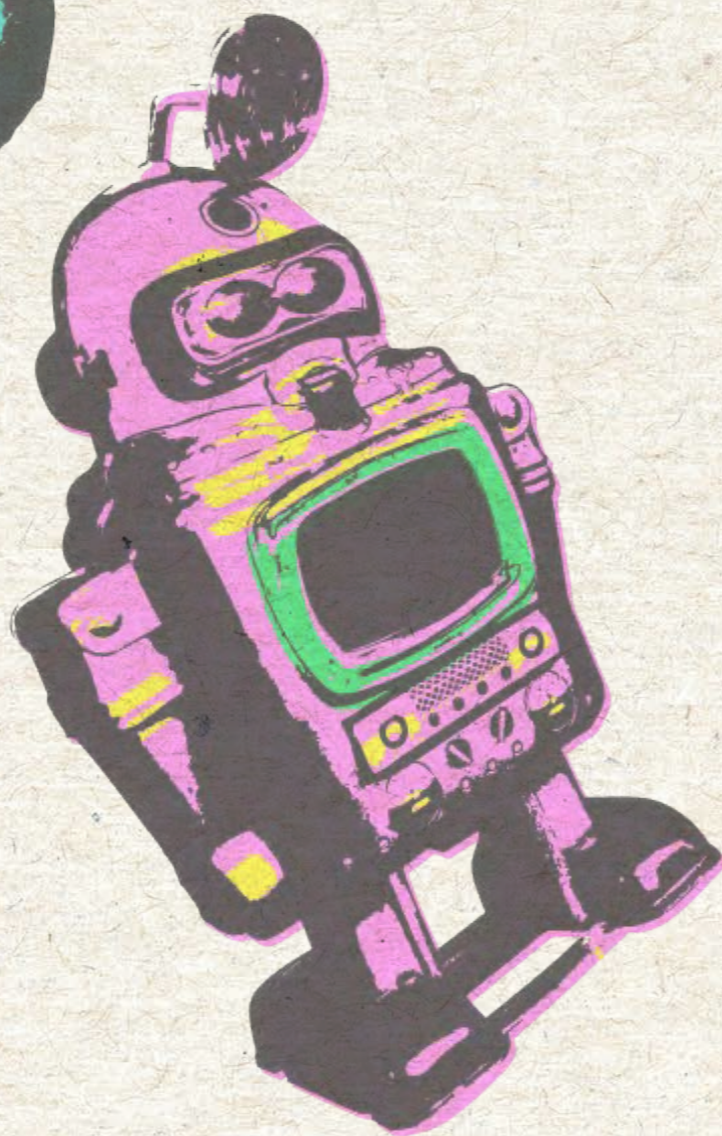
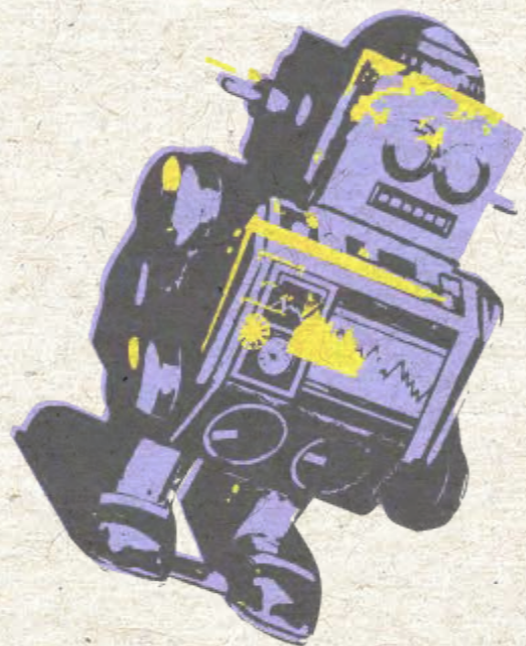
I see the future of adult education and training as being a possible constructive response: **it is essential to keep in mind and promote relationships and communication in all its forms**, with particular attention being made to those contexts and ways in which it is possible and functional to promote attention to the exchange dimension of an individual's life: sharing, contact, respect for diversity and uniqueness.

**Milena Screm**  
Italy



**Adaptable education is the key to success.** The learning process should allow learners to solve real-world situations and provide them with opportunities to experiment with new knowledge. In general education, learners must experience various work situations through job shadowing and internships. Specialised studies must test flexible work, and the learning process should involve experiencing different work situations. People with different skills create a more resilient society capable of finding solutions to new situations. Plus, everyone should include such learning based on their interests in their lives. This makes our society flexible, adaptable, and joyful.

**Kai Pata**  
Estonia



If I look at the future of adult education, I see tailored programmes aligned with the needs of those enrolled in them. I see a lot of module-based digital content. I see that skills acquired in practice are validated and that this validation is equivalent throughout Europe. I see more organic exchanges between the different branches of education, which also makes it easier for people to advance through these branches. I see a strong focus on life skills, which play a major role in education. The term 'final diploma' will cease to exist. **Diploma's aren't a final destination, but a place where you stopover or even start your journey.** And everything you learn informally or non-formally has a function and is valuable.

**Muriel Borst**  
The Netherlands

**The development of AI raises the question of whether humans can be replaced.** This may be a science fiction cliché, but it has become a reality. More broadly, it will call for a new way of organising work and a redefinition of how decisions are made. Faced with this, the issue is not just one of training, but rather one of constant adjustment to the new relationship between our mastery of technological intelligence (programming it, questioning it, being wary of it, etc.) and what humans design, create and decide.

**André Chauvet**  
France

The development of technology brings us an accelerated rhythm of life, surrounded by a huge amount of information, which often results in reduced concentration and therefore weaker memory among students. **People today are taught to absorb information in much shorter and more concise formats, and education itself will have to adapt to this in a certain way.** It remains to be seen whether there will be YouTubeisation and Tiktokisation of education or whether it will continue in the usual form. Adult education will have to change a lot in the future, and it must already respond to numerous challenges in order to take advantage of the opportunities that the future offers.

**Filip Frančić**  
Croatia

Psychosocial skills are an essential aspect of the professional competence of (future) education and training professionals. The roles they take on involve **engaging in social relations, communication and interpersonal relations, working in a spirit of collaboration and developing a sense of citizenship among learners.**

Psychosocial skills are therefore essential in these professional contexts. Developing these skills is therefore a fundamental challenge in the training of those involved in education and those who are returning to or continuing their studies. Practitioners in education and training need to develop personally if they are to provide effective support for the development of their learners. We postulate that to pass on civic and human skills, it is necessary to have built, learned and integrated for oneself the possibility of acting in and on the world.

**Geneviève Weber**  
**Belgium**



The rapidly changing society demands creativity from people. The labor market, for instance, is changing quickly, not only within the professional fields themselves but also through the introduction of new professions and the disappearance of others. This means that as time passes, people are sometimes forced to leave the job they trained for or, at the very least, to start doing it differently from how they used to. **Employees must be able to adapt accordingly, which demands creativity.** Also, in many professions, being creative increases the quality of the work. Take hairdressers, chefs, and people who repair things and are faced with unusual problems in the process.

**Petra Luteijn**  
**The Netherlands**

**The main keywords to describe future education are: personalised approach, lifelong learning and digital world.**

The future skills which adults would not be able to cope without in the future are firstly problem-solving skills. Education provides the ability and confidence to solve problems. Additionally, adults will need to be flexible and able to filter information. Information overload is immense, and a significant portion of energy is spent wandering in the information chaos. The days when we had to know all formulas by heart are gone - we will need to know where to look when necessary and what is a reliable source. Teamwork skills are also indispensable - in this world, nothing can be accomplished alone. Strength lies in cooperation.

**Kertu Pehlak**  
**Estonia**

Recently, I had a nice chat with ChatGPT. Acknowledging its potential seemed a smart thing to do. Irresistibly, the development of ICT is moving forward, and I am anxious to see where it goes. However, without fear that it will extinguish our role, I would like to call for a parallel development which at first sight, may seem to go backwards in time. **As a strong believer in the eternal presence and importance of human wisdom, I envision people interacting in communities established geographically or thematically.** These individuals exchange, experiment, create knowledge (in its finest, all-encompassing sense), and act – not only to react to but to co-create challenges of the future. So called ‘reflect, learn & act-tanks’ or communities should be based on the meaning-making of learning, equal intergenerational and intercultural representation, flexibility as well as values, mutual respect, and trust. By wisely using and constantly enriching our wisdom, humanity could and should become invincible.

**Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik**  
**Slovenia**



In the future, the most effective solution would be blended learning, which combines both online and face-to-face instruction in the right proportions. **To truly challenge oneself, it is necessary to step out of the comfort zone.** While online learning can provide a solid theoretical foundation and initial practical exposure, it all takes place in a comfortable environment. For growth and the consolidation of learning, it's important to step out of that environment and put oneself to the test in different situations. .

**Hardi Hansalu, Martin Jõesaar  
and Remo Ojaste**  
**Estonia**

**I believe that adult learning is less about teaching and more about helping,** navigating and forming the lives of people who found themselves in the whirl of change and the unexpected.

**Veronika Pizano**  
**Slovakia**





What I'd like adult education to look like in the near future? This question inspires me to do a little bit of wishful thinking, but without losing sight of reality. I'll limit myself to three aspects, which are all part of the bigger lifelong development picture. I can already see it now...

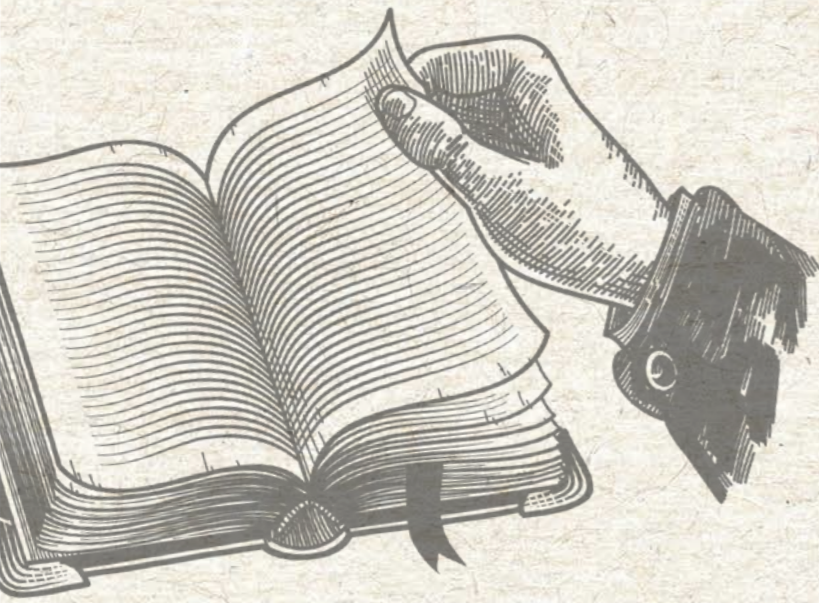
Every neighbourhood has a centrally located tea/coffee house, community centre, living room or whatever you want to call the low-threshold, light space that's been made available by a housing association, local company or municipality. You can drop by for a drink or chat, to ask a question, because you want to organise an activity in the neighbourhood or because there's something you want to learn. **Here, you feel at home and you're challenged to develop and use your talents, for yourself and others.** Neighbourhood residents are jointly responsible for this space, from the furnishings to the activities taking place there. A self-managed place, in direct contact with facilities in the neighbourhood, district and city. This allows you to discover your own learning goals, explore the different opportunities for informal, non-formal and formal learning, and see what it's like to be part of a society and a democracy. A place that accommodates small-scale activities. The walls are adorned with pictures of past, current and future neighbourhood events. **A place that's part of a wide and close-knit local network.** An educational worker regularly drops by to assist, for instance by giving you ideas and helping you with the practical side of things. A place that's frequented by people who see learning as a matter of course and people who are taking their first significant step towards lifelong development.

**Lidwien Vos de Wael**  
**The Netherlands**



Younger people are busy discovering their preferences. In addition to the pressure of school performance and more personal responsibility, they will therefore also feel social performance pressure around and on social media. Nowadays, we increasingly think that life can be made. **In this information society, you may see what you get but can't always get what you want. It feels like your fault if you don't reach certain goals. You should have done better.** People want to get the most out of themselves and life, and mediocrity doesn't seem okay. That is why it is important to gain self-confidence and learn that setbacks and failures are part of life and that they can learn from them.

**Jumbo Klercq**  
**The Netherlands**



**Adult education services must be continuously developed according to social and individual needs and market trends and based on participant feedback.** Positive steps can be taken to improve the environment of responsible, innovative adult education activities, including creating an attractive operating model and an attractive spin-off environment.

**Pál Zuti**  
**Hungary**

I wish in the future adult education will apply a mixed way of learning theory and developing skills with the use of technology tools, combined with the use of books since traditional learning which is conducted in physical presence using books still brings us special feelings. **With lifelong education, experiential educational programs help adults to externalise emotions in the educational space** so that the lesson deeply touches the psyche of each interested party with interaction and empathy.

**Manara Harikleia**  
**Greece**

I would like to see more focus on digital learning. There should also be more support from the asylum centers regarding learning and discovering all the learning opportunities here. During coronavirus, we experienced and learned that digital learning is also possible. It's even easier for some. The threshold to get started is lower. There can be more individualized learning compared to classroom learning. **People should be able to learn more in a non-formal way, in daily life, and practice with other people.** The combination of learning and volunteering or work and learning should be easier. Learning with a buddy is very important to integrate into society. Moreover, learning through art also strengthens your self-confidence and self-knowledge. It is important that people, especially foreign-speaking newcomers, know where they can go to learn. This was my frustration.

**Hakan Eyimen**  
**Belgium**





Chapter 3.

**SKILLS!**  
**SKILLS!**  
**SKILLS!**

# TRANSVERSAL SKILLS

SET GOALS AND TAKE ACTIONS  
COPE AND ADAPT TO CHANGES  
SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS

## ADAPTATION

COMMUNICATE, LISTEN, HEAR

PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS CIVIC EDUCATION

## FLEXIBILITY INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

COMPREHENSIVE PROBLEM SOLVING EXPERIMENTING

## LIFELONG LEARNING

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS LISTENING SKILLS CREATIVITY  
WORKING TOGETHER TEAMWORK SKILLS LEADERSHIP SKILLS  
TEAMWORK SKILLS 21ST-CENTURY SKILLS PROBLEM SOLVING  
SEEING THE BIG PICTURES SYSTEMIC ANALYSIS

## COLLABORATION

WILLINGNESS TO COLLABORATE  
STORYTELLING PUBLIC SPEAKING  
CREATIVITY SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS COOPERATION  
LIFE SKILLS COGNITIVE SKILLS  
CONSTRUCTING A WELL-REASONED POINT OF VIEW

## SOLVE COMPLEX PROBLEMS LEARNING TO LEARN

PROBLEM SOLVING ADAPTING TO CHANGE  
ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING EXPERIENCE-BASED LEARNING  
CO-DESIGNING FAMILY CULTURE DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

## SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE AND CRITICAL THINKING

### CREATIVITY

CREATIVE AND SOLUTION-ORIENTED IDEAS

## CRITICAL THINKING

ACT INDEPENDENTLY UNLEARNING  
COOPERATION CREATIVITY AND INITIATIVE  
INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND INTEGRATION  
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

ANALYSIS AND VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION

### ONLINE COMMUNICATION PROBLEM SOLVING

SOCIAL SKILLS INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION EMBRACE DIVERSITY  
FLEXIBILITY TEAMWORK SKILLS AWARENESS AND OPENNESS TO CHANGE  
INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION RELATIONAL AND NETWORKING SKILLS  
CITIZENSHIP SKILLS SUSTAINABILITY SKILLS ABILITY TO THINK

### ENVIRONMENTAL DISCUSSION REDUCING SOCIAL DIVIDES

INFORMATION LITERACY SOCIABILITY SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY LEARN AND THINK CRITICALLY META-LEVEL CRITICAL THINKING  
INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING LINKING ALL PRISONS

### ACCEPTABLE TO OTHERS COLLABORATION

COMMUNITY CREATION ENGAGEMENT ACCESSIBILITY  
TOLERANCE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT INFORMATION SELECTION CAPABILITY



## EMOTION AND AWARENESS

SELF-AWARENESS

## EMPATHY

RECOGNISING PERSONAL STRENGTHS ACTIVE LEARNING ADAPTATION  
PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE MINDFULNESS

## OPENNESS TO CHANGE

ABILITY TO LEARN THE JOY OF LEARNING AWARENESS  
PERSONAL, INTERPERSONAL AND CIVIC SKILLS SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS

## CREATIVITY

COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY DEALING WITH CHANGES BEING EAGER TO LEARN  
FEEL CONNECTIONS LEARNING TO LEARN

ASSERTIVENESS RESILIENCE PHILOSOPHY SKILLS SELF-RELATIVISM

### HUMOUR COPING WITH PERFORMANCE PRESSURE

COPING WITH DISAPPOINTMENTS AND FRUSTRATIONS

COURAGE RISK TAKING ANALYSE ONESELF BE RISK-TOLERANT

BE FLEXIBLE CREATE AND EVOKE NEW OPPORTUNITIES

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE EMPHATIC AND ACTIVE LISTENING

AWARENESS IN COMPETENCES DEVELOPMENT BALANCE

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE IMPACT OF YOUR ACTIONS

USE OF TALENTS EXPERIENCE EXPERTISE

SELF-EMPOWERMENT CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

CURIOSITY EXPERIMENTATION LEARNER'S AUTONOMY MOTIVATIONAL SKILLS

VULNERABILITY SHARING COMFORT PLEASURE

BEING AWARE OF EMOTIONS

## DIGITAL SKILLS

### DIGITALISATION IT SKILLS

SKILFUL USE OF TECHNOLOGY ONLINE COMMUNICATION

DIGITAL HEALTH LITERACY DIGITAL COMPETENCES DIGITAL LITERACY

VIRTUAL COLLABORATION DIGITAL WRITING SKILLS

FURTHER DEVELOPING SKILLS ADVANCED DIGITISATION TECHNOLOGY

ABILITY TO USE DIGITAL TOOLS TECH LITERACY

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE DESIGN ONLINE COURSES

ROBOTIC SCIENCE FACE TO FACE AND IN THE CLOUD

MASTERY OF DIGITAL TOOLS COLLABORATIVE DIGITAL TOOLS

TECHNOLOGY ICT SKILLS NEW TECHNOLOGIES

NOT LOSING THE HUMAN ASPECT REDUCING DIGITAL DIVIDES

## TECH AND DIGITAL SKILLS

## BASIC SKILLS

LANGUAGE SKILLS HEALTH PROMOTION  
NUMERACY LITERACY SWIMMING  
INFORMATION LITERACY TAILOR-MADE APPROACH  
FINANCIAL LITERACY  
LINKING NON-FORMAL AND FORMAL EDUCATION  
MATHEMATICAL SKILLS MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS  
INFORMATION SKILLS DIGITAL LITERACY  
EMOTIONAL LITERACY CORPUS LINGUISTICS  
COMMUNICATION

## LABOUR MARKET SKILLS

ACQUISITION IN THE LABOUR MARKET TIGHT LABOUR MARKET  
PROFICIENCY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES ABILITY TO LEARN  
RECOGNISING LIFELONG LEARNING AS A VALUABLE RESOURCE  
IDENTIFYING AND RECOGNISING COMPETENCE THERAPEUTIC ADHERENCE  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP TAILOR-MADE APPROACH  
CORRECTLY VALUING SKILLS PARTICIPATING IN THE DIRECTOR'S SEAT  
LEARNING SKILLS EVALUATION/REFLECTION  
COPING WITH PERFORMANCE PRESSURE EMPLOYEE SKILLS  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP INNOVATIVE AND ATTRACTIVE ENGINEERING



THE  
AUTHORS

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**Geneviève Weber**  
*Somewhere between academic and reflective*



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*Learning with a buddy*



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*Adult education and social development influence each other*

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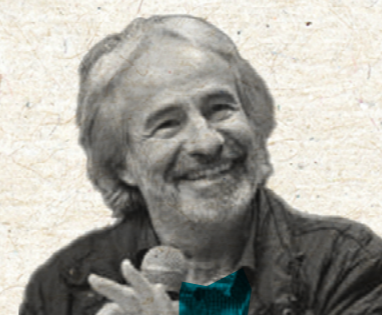
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