

30-31 MAY 2022
MECHELEN, BELGIUM

EAEA GENERAL ASSEMBLY, GRUNDTVIG AWARD CEREMONY AND ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022

Transformative Learning & Values




AT A GLANCE

BACKGROUND


EAEA Annual Conference is organised together with the General Assembly and hosted by one of EAEA members or by EAEA in Belgium. Every year, the conference is held under a different theme, which is also the topic of the Grundtvig Award.

This year, the events were held at the Mechelen Cultural Centre and Mechelen City Hall in Belgium. The theme of the events was Transformative Learning and Values.

HIGHLIGHTS



innovative projects on transformative learning and values received the 2022 EAEA Grundtvig Award



79 participants at the events representing 25 countries bring their own perspective on transformative learning: from umbrella organisations to NGOs, adult education providers, and more



two days of plenary sessions and parallel group discussions on global and EU policy as well as reflection of transformative learning and values





OVERVIEW

1/GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The GA discusses the new Erasmus+ programme, CONFINTEA VII, & EU policy on adult education. Seven new members join EAEA.

2/GRUNDTVIG AWARD CEREMONY

Awarding the winners and the festive ceremony.

3/ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

The role of transformative learning in the formation of values.

PARALLEL SESSIONS

Discussions on values and workshops on green transition, digital transition and active citizenship

CONCLUSIONS

WHY MECHELEN?

Mechelen is a small town outside of Brussels with a vibrant adult learning community.

EAEA General Assembly and Annual Conference were held at the Mechelen Cultural Centre, a space for exhibitions, concerts and other cultural activities. The Grundtvig Award Ceremony took place at the City Hall and was hosted by the Mechelen City Councilor for Education Rina Rabau. In her introductory words Rabau described Mechelen as an "education city".



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EAEA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

EAEA President Uwe Gartenschlaeger welcomed everyone to the General Assembly and presented the programme of the day. Anne Van de Voorde from the Mechelen Cultural Centre introduced the participants to the cultural aspects of Mechelen, a city with a vivid circus tradition and well-known theater, conservatory, and a fine arts academy.

The first topic was EAEA's work in 2021. The theme of last year was "Digitalisation & Democracy". In 2021, the main projects of the organization were: Bildung, FutureLabAE, and Regale.

[Consult the main presentation.](#)

Another topic was the workplan of the organisation for 2022. In the upcoming weeks, EAEA will be represented in the CONFINTEA VII conference in Morocco to develop a new global framework of action for adult learning. In 2022 EAEA will also continue its advocacy work on improved policy at the European level, with a specific focus on the European Skills Agenda and the New European Agenda for Adult Learning. The workplan also included a set of internal issues: the upcoming update of EAEA constitution and the revision of membership fees to sustain the solidarity with smaller organisations.



EAEA GENERAL ASSEMBLY: DISCUSSIONS

CONFINTEA VII: national developments and final recommendations

An update on the CONFINTEA VII process was introduced by the Secretary-General of ICAE, Katarina Popovic, who raised her concern regarding the disappearance of civic education and learner-centered approaches from the Marrakech Framework for Action (MfA). During the discussion, facilitated by EAEA's Vice President Bernhard Grämiger, participants discussed the importance of a strong civil society representation at the conference.

Consult the input by Katarina Popovic (1 & 2).

New developments in EU policy on adult learning and education

Klara Engels-Perenyi (DG EMPL) presented the EU Skills Agenda, which attempts to provide Member States with common lifelong learning skills and tools to support adult training, private motivation and investment in training. The approach is multidimensional: broad partnership, individuals, establishment of innovative learning spaces, guidance, and counselling.

Consult the presentation of Klara Engels-Perenyi.



New opportunities in the Erasmus+ programme

Malgorzata Kozak (DG EAC) presented the current Erasmus+ programme, focusing on the novelties from the previous one: learner mobilities, accreditation schemes and small scale partnerships. The main policy priorities for these programmes are: Inclusivity, Civic Participation, Green & Digital Transition.

During a discussion facilitated by EAEA Vice President Lauri Tuomi, participants reflected on the barriers that keep some participants from fully benefitting from the programme.

Consult the presentation of Malgorzata Kozak.

"EAEA continues to monitor the situation in Ukraine, thanks to our colleagues in Kyiv. We need to see how ALE can support them and the Ukrainian refugees, all over Europe"

Uwe Gartenschlaeger

EAEA GENERAL ASSEMBLY: NEW MEMBERS



Seven new members have joined the European family of ALE. Among them Nahla & ALDI from Bosnia and Herzegovina, ODYSSEA from Greece, Catholic Adult Education Association from Austria, L.U.C.E. University and Didaxe from Italy, and LIGA 33 from Serbia. Four of the new members were present at the events.



ALDI, Bosnia and Herzegovina



Odyssea, Greece



NAHLA, Bosnia and Herzegovina



Catholic Adult Education Association, Austria



EAEA GRUNDTVIG AWARD

Awarded annually since 2003, the EAEA Grundtvig Award celebrates excellence and innovation in adult education. In 2022, it showcased projects which foster transformative learning and values. The festive ceremony took place in the Mechelen City Hall and included a performance of musicians from the Municipal Conservatory in Mechelen. The awards were handed over by Rina Rabau, Mechelen City Councilor for Education. The award ceremony was also joined by Christophe Busch, Director of the Hannah Arendt Institute in Mechelen.

“Hannah Arendt said that education is a point in which we decide if we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it”.

Christophe Busch

National category: Aging Laboratory, Câmara Municipal Ílhavo (Portugal)

Aging Laboratory encourages seniors to learn and fosters interest on intergenerational learning. The project connects several stakeholders, such as artists, students, researchers, and seniors to collaborate and develop projects focused on aging and learning. The project has collaborated closely with the Coimbra University. “We are really impressed by the creativity of the elderly people who took part in the programme,” said Mariana Ramos from Câmara Municipal Ílhavo upon accepting the award. According to the jury, this innovative project demonstrates the expansion of knowledge and collaborative learning among different generations.



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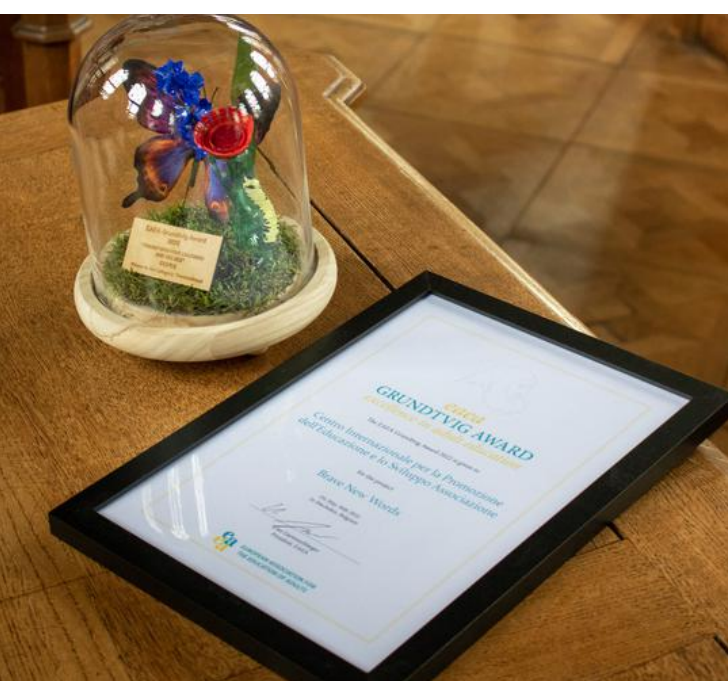
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Mariana Ramos, Câmara Municipal Ílhavo
and Uwe Gartenschlaeger, EAEA



Uwe Gartenschlaeger, EAEA, Sonia Nociforo
and Musa Kirkar, CEIPES



Transnational Category: Brave New Words, CEIPES (Italy)

Supporting students with Special Learning Disorders (SpLD), the project offers tailor-made learning approaches using 3D Printing and Augmented Reality.

“We have been working for a long time on projects that use the 3D printers as a tool to improve learning. The Grundtvig Award means an opportunity to raise visibility of the products of the Brave New Words project, empowering adult learners with SpLD and educators all over Europe”, said Sonia Nociforo, Project Manager of CEIPES.

The jury acknowledged the innovation behind the personalised learning pathways that CEIPES designed particularly for students with specific learning disorders.

Find out more about the winners from the media release.

"Transformative learning allows people to self-reflect and act upon new information. That is the way to go for big challenges".

**Rina Rabau, Mechelen City
Councillor for Education**



ANNUAL CONFERENCE

75

PARTICIPANTS

Held under the theme Transformative Learning and Values, the Annual Conference discussed how adult learning can change individual lives and societies, linking the topic to challenges we are confronted with, such as green and digital transitions.

25

COUNTRIES

We looked at role and impact of transformative learning on individual and collective values. Throughout the day, we discussed what values education should promote, and how they can contribute to a more democratic, digital society.



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Roundtable discussion: How can transformative learning shape values among citizens?

The facilitators, EAEA Board members George Koulaouzides and Dina Soeiro introduced the speakers of the roundtable: Deborah Oniah, AONTAS, Anne-Sophie van Vyve, Kazerne Dossin and Laura Formenti, University Milano Bicocca. They then opened the discussion by inviting participants to share their questions and comments via mentimeter.

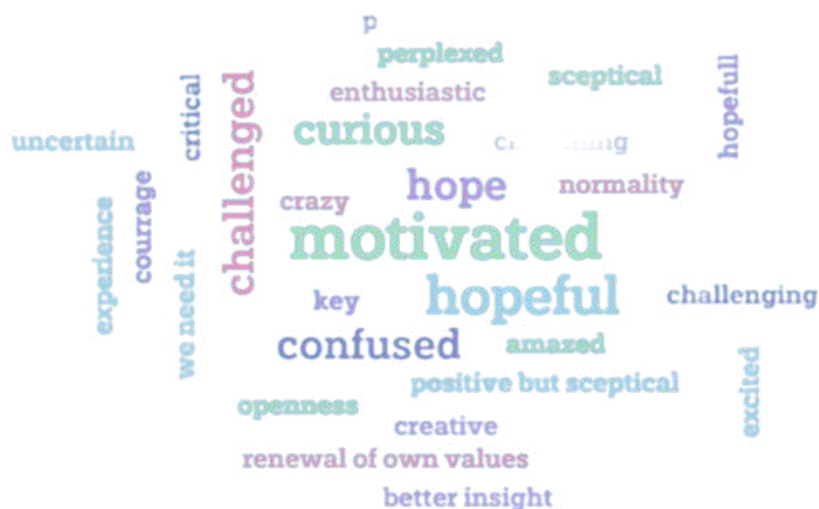
During the discussion, the speakers reflected on the fact that the current pandemic combined with rapid digitalisation have enhanced social isolation.

"People need to regain the sense of belonging and openness. Transformation is possible when people actively participate in the learning process and ask questions to explore different perspectives", said Laura Formenti.

"Social change can take place in both formal and non-formal educational settings where people decide to be receptive, to self-reflect and focus not only on the individual but also on the community level", said Deborah Oniah.



How comfortable do you feel with the idea of transformation?



**"YOU NEED TO FOCUS
ON THE STRENGTHS,
SKILLS, AND
EXPERIENCES THAT
PEOPLE BRING WITH
THEM; A GOOD
TEACHER REMINDS
LEARNERS OF THE
STRENGTHS THAT THEY
HAVE IN THEMSELVES."**

DEBORAH ONIAH

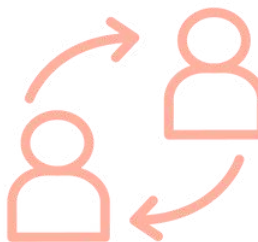


PARALLEL DISCUSSIONS

Maja Maksimovic from the University of Belgrade approached the theme of transformative learning by asking “Which values do you think adult education should promote?”

During five parallel discussions, participants looked at values in adult learning and education from the perspective of policy, providers, educators, learners and European values. Each group created a map with the following categories:

- proclaimed Values
- lived Values
- imposed Values



A common map will soon be available!

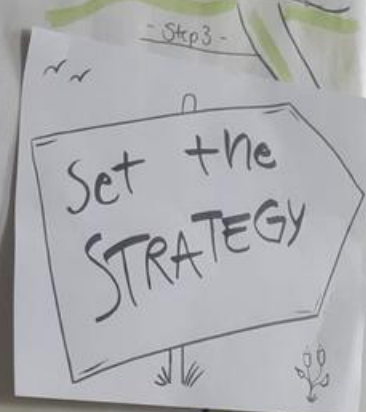
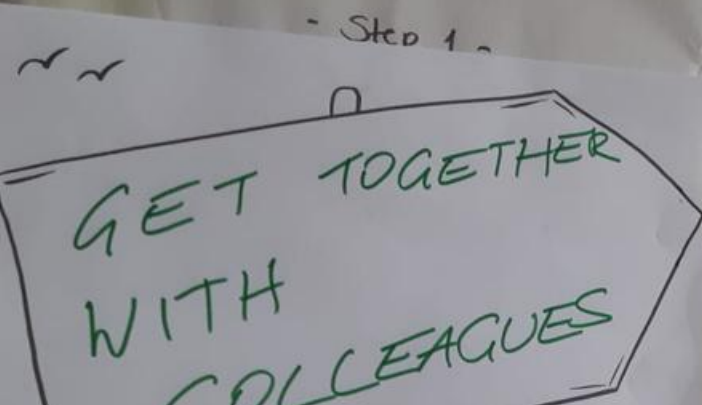


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Green Transition Travel Journey 1



PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

Transformative Learning & Green Transition

Moderated by Susanne Rodemann-Kalkan and Sabine Bertram, the workshop looked at how educational institutions can transform themselves as well as the stakeholders involved. Also, how can values contribute to green transition.

Participants worked in small groups to conceptualise a green transition travel journey for their organisations, and reflected on the values that underpin their adult learning provision.

Consult the presentation & worksheet (which you can use for your own reflection process!)

Transformative Learning & Digital Transition

The workshop moderated by Daiana Huber explored the potential of citizens in the digital world. The participants discussed the challenges of digital transformation and how adult education can facilitate the process of a beneficial digital transition.



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Building a roadmap on transformative learning from the digitalisation perspective

INSIDE OUT:

- Training of trainers
- Willingness to try new tools
- Re-development of the institutional vision
- Flexibility
- Organisational cultural change
- Dedicated funding to explore digital tools, alongside with a method to test, see what fits and what not.
- Evaluation, constant and scheduled.



Participants agreed that digitalisation has become a reality which neither educators nor learners can opt out from. The discussion also focused on the role of adult educators as digital mediators.

Participants then split into two groups to develop a roadmap on transformative learning from a digitalisation perspective (see above).

Transformative Learning & Democratic Processes

In this workshop, moderated by Cathy Del Rizzo, participants exchanged their ideas on the values that education should provide to promote active citizenship.

OUTSIDE IN:

- Close engagement / collaboration with stakeholders
- Sharing information, exchanging with the outside, being on the lookout for new information
- Understanding the needs
- Advocacy, being constantly connected to the public policy
- Seeking resilience through digitalisation
- Exercising critical thinking and evaluation
- Build competency development model for adult educators
- Taking values into account; without them, digitalisation is exclusivist

They suggested the following recommendations to policymakers in order to improve civic education:

- Integrate civic education to what is already out there / funded
- Diversify spending channels: give responsibility to participants
- Practicing democracy (praxis), live the experience of citizenship
- Create common understanding / language
- Policy makers should give more trust and control less
- Integrate and mobilize research and academic insights into evidence based policymaking
- Capacity building for adult educators advocacy skills
- Fostering forms of participation, political literacy
- Problem-based education.



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CONCLUSIONS



The intense discussions during the events have shown the need for a continued the conversation on the topic of transformative learning in adult education. Stay tuned for the Grundtvig Award publication, to be released in the autumn, and our statement on transformative learning and values, which will be ready later this year!



**WE HOPE TO SEE YOU
NEXT YEAR!
BUT BEFORE THAT WE
WOULD LIKE TO HEAR
FROM YOU!**

**WHAT DO YOU THINK
ABOUT THE EVENTS IN
MECHELEN?**

GIVE US FEEDBACK!

EAEA would like to thank our host Mechelen Cultural Centre, our moderators and presenters for their contributions and all of you for your active participation!



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