

Annual Conference
of the EBSN

Basic Skills for Life, Work and Democratic Participation in Times of Transformation

The Basic Skills Network
Annual General Assembly
and Conference



WHEN

17th to 19th June 2026



WHERE

Colégio Almada Negreiros
Universidade NOVA de Lisboa,
Campus de Campolide
Address:
1099-085 Lisboa, Portugal



ORGANIZER

EBSN in cooperation with the
CLUNL - Research Center for
Linguistics at NOVA
University Lisbon.



GET IN TOUCH

✉ secretariat@basicskills.eu

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Draft programme – subject to confirmation and minor adjustments

The programme is currently being finalised together with speakers and institutional partners. Some titles, speakers and session compositions may still be updated.

Day 0 - Wednesday, June 17th Pre-Conference Programme

Networking programme and visit to the Qualifica Centre of Agrupamento de Escolas de Alvalade, Escola Secundária Padre António Vieira (Lisbon)

Meeting point: Participants are kindly asked to meet directly at the venue:

Escola Secundária Padre António Vieira / Qualifica Centre of Agrupamento de Escolas de Alvalade
R. Marquês Soveral, 1749-063 Lisbon

The venue is located in the Alvalade area of Lisbon and can be reached by public transport.

09:30	Welcome and introduction to the programme EBSN community exchange – introductions and thematic clustering (facilitated small-group discussions, open to all participants)
11:30	Introduction to the Portuguese Qualifica approach and the Qualifica Centre of Agrupamento de Escolas de Alvalade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National perspective: Development and evolution of the Qualifica programme <i>Miguel Silva, Head of Adult Qualification Unit, EduQA – Institute of Education, Quality and Evaluation [PT]</i> Local practice perspective: The Qualifica Centre of Agrupamento de Escolas de Alvalade <i>Dina Paulino and Rui Costa and representatives of the Centre [PT]</i> Guided visit and discussion with practitioners Group discussion on guidance, RVCC, training pathways, digital and literacy competences, and progression opportunities
13:15	Lunch at the Centre
14:00	Closing of the visit programme Individual return to the conference venue / city centre / hotels

"The pre-conference programme is organised in cooperation with local Portuguese partners and aims to provide participants with direct insight into adult learning, guidance and qualification pathways within the Portuguese Qualifica system."

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

16:00	Registration and coffee
16:30 18:30	General Assembly including a coffee break
18:30	<i>Short meeting of the Executive Committee</i>

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09:00	Registration and Coffee
09:30	<p>Welcome and Opening Welcome on behalf of the local co-organiser Susana Correia, NOVA University Lisbon [PT]</p> <p>Welcome on behalf of EBSN Zoltán Várkonyi, Secretary General, European Basic Skills Network</p> <p>Opening of the conference and introduction to the morning programme Alex Stevenson, Chair of the EBSN Executive Committee</p>
09:40	<p>Portuguese perspectives on adult learning, basic skills and lifelong learning Welcome from the Portuguese host country and institutional framing: The Qualifica Programme and Qualifica Centres – development, current role and future perspectives Miguel Silva, Head of Adult Qualification Unit, EduQA – Institute of Education, Quality and Evaluation [PT]</p> <p>Adult Literacies and Adult Learning in Portugal: Evidence, Policy Learning and System Development Maria do Carmo Gomes, Senior Expert in Skills Development and Employment; Adviser to the Rector's Office, Iscte – University Institute of Lisbon [PT]</p> <p>The Observatory of Adult Competencies: Addressing Portugal's Skill Gaps and Inequalities through Research and Action Paulo Ferraz, Administrator of the Polytechnic University of Porto and Member of the Installation Committee of the Observatory of Adult Competencies [PT]</p>
10:40	Discussion and Q&A
10:50	Coffee break + Marketplace - transition to parallel sessions
11:20	Parallel sessions: Round 1 R1.1, R1.2, R1.3
12:45	Lunch
14:00	<p>Strengthening Basic Skills in the Union of Skills: European Priorities and Opportunities Klara Perenyi, European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion [EU]</p>
14:20	<p>Introductory input: Strengthening the Action Chain in Adult Basic Skills: Connecting Data, Public Understanding, Policy Development, Implementation Capacity and Evidence Building Judith Alamprese, Alamprese & Associates [US]</p> <p>Panel discussion – From evidence to public understanding, policy design and implementation capacity (moderated discussion, including audience interaction) Moderator: Judith Alamprese, Alamprese & Associates [US]</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armelle Desabaye-Nourry, French National Agency to Fight Illiteracy (ANLCI) [FR] • Ludwig Willaert, CBE Ligo Brusselleer [BE] • Marie Quiter, Arbeit und Leben Berlin-Brandenburg [DE] • Paulo Ferraz, Polytechnic University of Porto / Observatory of Adult Competencies [PT]
15:15	Coffee break + Marketplace – transition to parallel sessions
15:45	Parallel sessions: Round 2 R2.1, R2.2, R2.3
16:45	End of Day 1 Practical announcements for dinner and Day 2
19:00	Conference dinner

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Day 2 - Friday, June 19th

08:45	Coffee and informal conversations
09:00	Plenary session – Literacy, Learning Societies and Human-Centred Transformation
09:00	Basic Skills, Literacy and Democratic Resilience in Times of Transformation <i>Anke Grotlüschen, Universität Hamburg [DE]</i>
09:20	Learning Societies in Times of Transformation: Strengthening Adult Learning Systems for Inclusion, Participation and Resilience <i>Piotr Sadowski, Vice President, Lifelong Learning Platform – European Civil Society for Education, LLLP [BE]</i>
09:40	Moderated discussion – Human-centred transformation: implications for adult basic skills systems Audience questions and reflections on democratic participation, inclusion, digital change and lifelong learning Moderator: <i>Damian Fäh, Flying Teachers, Member of the EBSN Executive Committee [CH]</i>
10:00	Coffee break + Marketplace - Movement to Parallel Sessions
10:20	Parallel sessions: Round 3 R3.1, R3.2, R3.3
11:45	Panel Discussion - Balancing Work, Life and Democratic Participation: Priorities for Basic Skills Systems <i>Exploring priorities for adult basic skills systems in times of technological, labour market and societal change. (moderated discussion, including audience interaction)</i> Moderator: <i>Alex Stevenson, Learning and Work Institute [UK], Chair of EBSN Executive Committee [UK]</i> Panellists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Antra Carlsen, Nordic Network for Lifelong Learning [DK]</i> • <i>Dina Soeiro, Polytechnic University of Coimbra / APCEP [PT]</i> • <i>Jana Wälchli, Swiss Umbrella Association for Reading and Writing [CH]</i> • <i>Francesca Faienza, INDIRE – National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research [IT]</i>
12:30	Closing Session: Key Messages and Next Steps <i>Executive Committee Members EBSN Secretariat Local Hosts</i>
13:00	Lunch and Farewell

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PARALLEL SESSIONS: STRUCTURE

In line with the conference theme, parallel sessions are grouped into three vertical tracks that reflect the main pillars for advancing adult basic skills policies and practice:

- **Track 1: Systems, Policy and the Action Chain**
- **Track 2: Inclusion, Participation and Democratic Life**
- **Track 3: Learning, Work and Innovation**

Each vertical track continues across the three rounds of parallel sessions (R1, R2, R3).

Each session features 2-3 short presentations (15 minutes each) followed by structured, interactive discussions.

Rapporteurs will collect key insights, conclusions, and future directions for the final plenary and action planning workshop.

Parallel Sessions Round 1

1 Track 1: Systems, Policy and the Action Chain

Governance, evidence, policy design, implementation capacity, programme impact and scaling.

Parallel Session R1.1:

Thursday,
June 18th

11:20

Atlas Laaggeletterdheid Brussel: a study on the approach of basic skills, now and in the future

Ludwig Willaert, CBE Ligo Brusselleer (BE)

Knowing adults facing difficulties with basic skills at the heart of national and local data

Armelle Desabaye-Nourry and Veronique Joulie, French National Agency to Fight Illiteracy, ANLCI (FR)

The RIA-AE Network: A Transnational Approach to Monitoring Impact of Erasmus+ in Adult Education

Janina Meyer, National Agency at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training / NA at BIBB (DE)

2 Track 2: Inclusion, Participation and Democratic Life

Participation, democratic resilience, outreach, vulnerable groups, community approaches and inclusion.

Parallel Session R1.2:

Thursday,
June 18th

11:20

The role of basic skills in inclusive political deliberation: unlocking participation in the MultiPoD project

Alice Vieira, NOVA University Lisbon (PT)

Too Old to Matter? Literacy, Ageing, and Democracy in Portugal

Dina Soeiro and Silvia Parreira, Polytechnic University of Coimbra (PT)

Making the Invisible Visible: Harnessing the Hidden Curriculum for Adult Basic Skills Development

Margit Düüna, Estonian Non-Formal Adult Education Association (EE)

3 Track 3: Learning, Work and Innovation

Teaching and learning design, workplace basic skills, digital inclusion, innovation and progression pathways.

Parallel Session R1.3:

Thursday,
June 18th

11:20

Making Critical Thinking Teachable: A Dialogue-Based Approach to Adult Basic Skills

Francesca Faienza and Daniela Ermini, Istituto Nazionale di Documentazione, Innovazione e Ricerca Educativa, INDIRE (National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research) (IT)

"Easy is not easy enough" – Reflections on Digital Basic Competencies: Project Examples

Jana Wälchli, Schweizer Dachverband Lesen und Schreiben, DVLS (Swiss Umbrella Association for Reading and Writing) (CH)

Supporting adults' holistic literacy needs through emerging technologies

Alex Stevenson, National Learning and Work Institute (UK) and Gina Ebner, European Association for the Education of Adults / EAEA (BE)

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Parallel Sessions Round 2

1 Track 1: Systems, Policy and the Action Chain

Governance, evidence, policy design, implementation capacity, programme impact and scaling.

Parallel Session R2.1:

Thursday,
June 18th

15:45

Rethinking systems for inclusion: Making lifelong learning accessible for adults with lower basic skills

Ellen van den Broek and Famke de Boer, CINOP / ECBO (NL)

Skill gaps and training provision in times of change: insights from PIAAC's Employer Module

Ana Lúcia Pereira, Polytechnic University of Porto [PT]

2 Track 2: Inclusion, Participation and Democratic Life

Participation, democratic resilience, outreach, vulnerable groups, community approaches and inclusion.

Parallel Session R2.2:

Thursday,
June 18th

15:45

Communication skills programme to enhance employability for forced migrant communities

Melanie Ferreira, WordWise (UK)

Digital integration – a key to ensuring equal participation

Antra Carlsen, Nordic Network for Lifelong Learning, NLL (DK)

3 Track 3: Learning, Work and Innovation

Teaching and learning design, workplace basic skills, digital inclusion, innovation and progression pathways.

Parallel Session R2.3:

Thursday,
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15:45

Micro-credentials for Basic Skills in a Changing Labour Market: From the Italian Experience to a European Perspective

Federica Purpura and Arianna Noera, CEIPES ETS (IT)

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1 Track 1: Systems, Policy and the Action Chain

Governance, evidence, policy design, implementation capacity, programme impact and scaling.

Parallel Session R3.1:

Friday,
June 19th
10:45

Strengthening Implementation Capacity for Reintegration: Insights from the PROMOTE Project

Rita Lourenço, Aproximar (PT)

The value of a co-creational community approach for basic skills learning and participation in a changing world

Willeke van der Werf, Nuffic (NL)

2 Track 2: Inclusion, Participation and Democratic Life

Participation, democratic resilience, outreach, vulnerable groups, community approaches and inclusion.

Parallel Session R3.2:

Friday,
June 19th
10:45

Building a grassroots community of basic skills managers: the importance of extra-institutional spaces to confront challenges, share insights and build connections

Paul Sceeny, NATECLA (UK)

From Fragmented Practices to Scalable Impact: EPALE as a Lever for Connecting Adult Basic Skills across Europe

Daniela Ermini, INDIRE - Agenzia Erasmus+ (IT) and Cecchinato Marco - National Support Service EPALE - AEF-Europe

3 Track 3: Learning, Work and Innovation

Teaching and learning design, workplace basic skills, digital inclusion, innovation and progression pathways.

Parallel Session R3.3:

Friday,
June 19th
10:45

Bridging Basic Skills, Inclusion and Care: Integrated Onboarding in Times of Transition

Marie Quiter, Arbeit und Leben Berlin-Brandenburg gGmbH (DE)

What We Are Learning about Integrating Digital Tools into Adult Basic Skills: Lessons from the CREATE Network

Judith Alamprese, Alamprese & Associates (US)