

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

17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:secretariat@basicskills.eu)  
🌐 [www.basicskills.eu](http://www.basicskills.eu)

### 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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	<b>Welcome and introduction to the programme</b> <b>EBSN community exchange – introductions and thematic clustering</b> (facilitated small-group discussions, open to all participants)
11:30	<b>Introduction to the Portuguese Qualifica approach and the Qualifica Centre of Agrupamento de Escolas de Alvalade</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>National perspective: Development and evolution of the Qualifica programme</b> <i>Miguel Silva, Head of Adult Qualification Unit, EduQA – Institute of Education, Quality and Evaluation [PT]</i></li> <li><b>Local practice perspective: The Qualifica Centre of Agrupamento de Escolas de Alvalade</b> <i>Dina Paulino, Rui Costa and representatives of the Centre [PT]</i></li> <li>Guided visit and discussion with practitioners</li> <li>Group discussion on guidance, RVCC, training pathways, digital and literacy competences, and progression opportunities</li> </ul>
13:15	<b>Lunch at the Centre</b>
14:00	<b>Closing of the visit programme</b> 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	<b>Registration and coffee</b>
16:30 18:30	<b>General Assembly</b> including a coffee break
18:30	<i>Short meeting of the Executive Committee</i>

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# CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Day 1 - Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>

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

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15:45	<b>Parallel sessions: Round 2</b> <b>R2.1, R2.2, R2.3</b>
16:45	<b>End of Day 1</b> Practical announcements for dinner and Day 2
19:00	<b>Conference dinner</b> (Pano de Boca Restaurant - R. Ramalho Ortigão, 1070-238 Lisboa)

## Day 2 - Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>

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

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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 18<sup>th</sup>

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 18<sup>th</sup>

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 Dũuna, 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 18<sup>th</sup>

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 18<sup>th</sup>

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 18<sup>th</sup>

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,  
June 18<sup>th</sup>

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)*

**Basic Skills in the Workplace: Reaching the Unreached through Proximity and Active Engagement**

*Alda Bernardes, El Corte Inglés (PT)*

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## Parallel Sessions Round 3

### 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 19<sup>th</sup>  
10:20

#### Strengthening Implementation Capacity for Reintegration: Insights from the PROMOTE Project

*Ana David, Innovative Prison Systems (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 19<sup>th</sup>  
10:20

#### 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)*

*Marco Cecchinato, National Support Service EPALE - AEF-Europe (BE)*

### 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 19<sup>th</sup>  
10:20

#### 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)*