

Webinar Community Learning Environments

8 juni | 15:00 - 16:15 (CET)

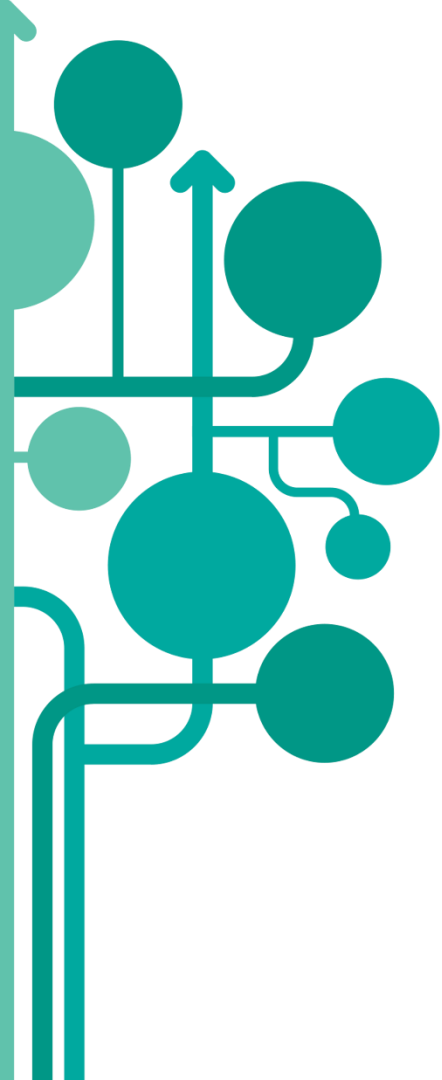


Co-funded by
the European Union



EPALE

Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe



Programme

15:05 – 15:10

Introduction to Community Learning Environments

15:10 – 16:10

Keynotes with examples from:

- Belgium
- Latvia
- Poland

16:10 – 16:15

Wrap-up



Belgium

Lisa Vanhaeren

The Leuven Learning Ecosystem, a network of informal learning settings



Latvia

Iveta Cīrule

Intergenerational Learning, Third Generation Universities



Poland

Katarzyna Zak-Caplot

Community Language Learning Environments for foreigners with migrant and refugee background

Community Learning Environments

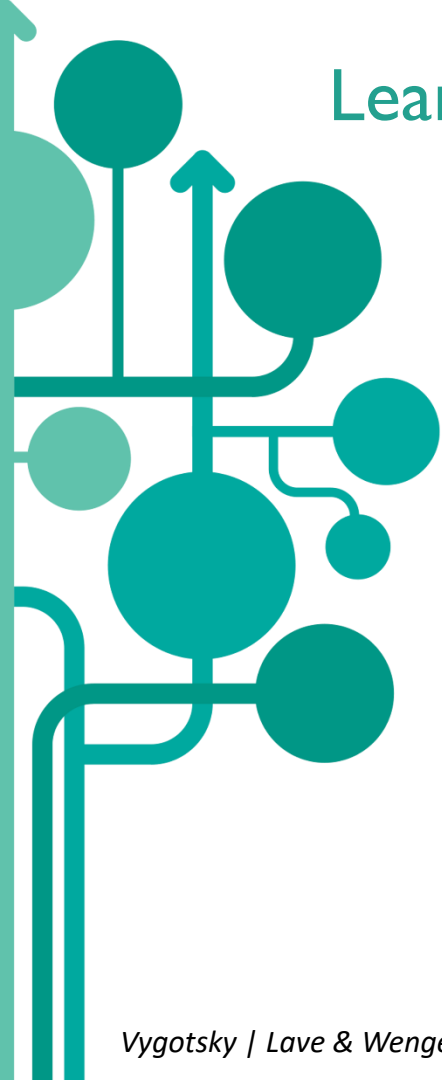
Learning does not only happen in classrooms..

Adults learn in many places..

- *Libraries*
- *Museums*
- *Neighborhoods*
- *Makerspaces*
- *Community gardens*
- *Volunteer networks*
- *Intergenerational spaces*



Learning often starts with participation, conversation and shared activities



Learning as a social process

Community learning is about learning with, from and through others.

People learn through:

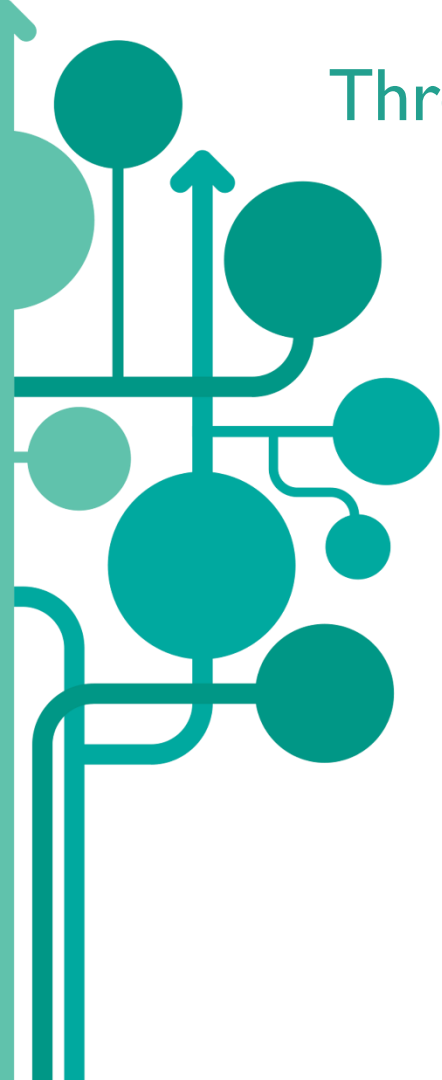
dialogue | making sense together

participation | learning by taking part

shared practice | solving real problems in context

trust and reciprocity | feeling safe to ask, share and contribute

Adults are not only learners; they are also sources of knowledge.



Three layers of community learning environments

Community learning | the process

Learning through participation and interaction

Learning communities | the structure

Networks built on trust, identity and reciprocity

Community Education | the purpose

Learning for inclusion, empowerment and participation

A European priority: lifelong learning for all



Community learning environments help turn European lifelong learning goals into local, accessible practice.



The EU target:
60% of adults in training every year by 2030.



Skills are needed for work, digitalisation, sustainability and participation.



Participation remains harder for adults facing barriers.



Community learning environments help turn policy into practice.



When learning is closer to people's lives, it builds skills, confidence and stronger communities.



From concept to practice



1

**City learning
ecosystem**



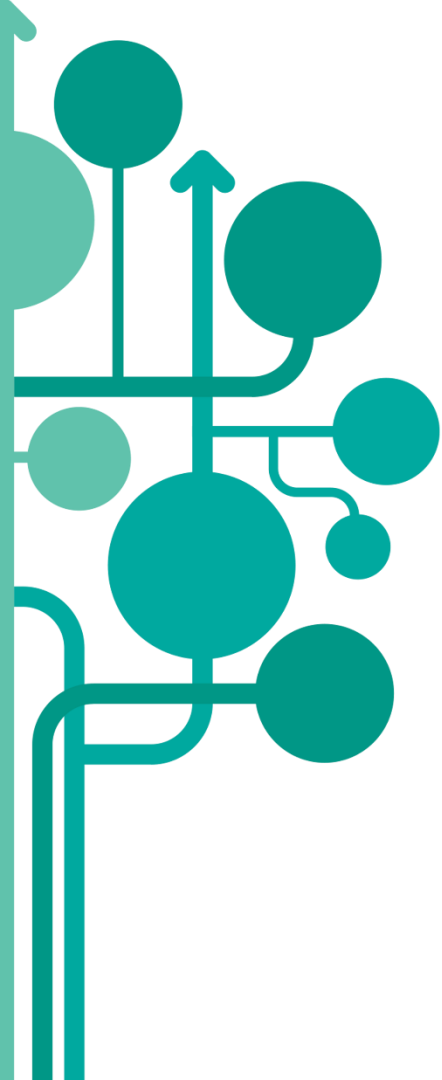
2

**Third generation
universities**



3

**Museum &
language learning**

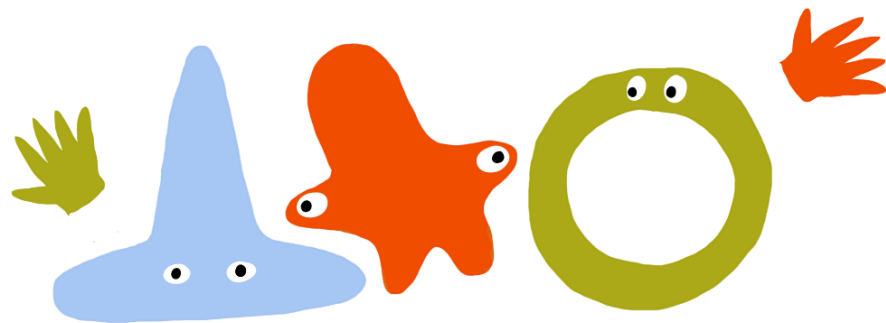


Lisa Vanhaeren

Network coordinator
Leuven Learning Ecosystem
Belgium



The Learning Ecosystem in the city of Leuven,
a strong network of makers spaces and informal learning
settings, where all citizens of Leuven have easy access
to make, discover and learn.



LLES

iedereen kan het **maken**

What is LLES?

The “Leuven Learning Ecosystem” (LLES) is a **strong network** of makers spaces and informal learning settings, where all citizens of Leuven have easy access to make, discover and learn.



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Who is LLES?

LLES is a local ecosystem connecting **eight different organisations** in the wider Leuven region, offering an accessible, strong and complimentary programme of workshops, initiations and trainings for both groups and individuals.





Atelier Circuler

Materials bank (urban mining)

Bespoke projects

Open Atelier (LLES)



Campus Corso

“Third” or “sticky” space

Encounters

Entrepreneurship

Education



Durven Dromen. Samen Doen.



de drukkerij

“Third” or “sticky” space

Neighbourhood hangout

Food hub, because food connects people



maakleerplek

Repair Hub Electro (Maakbaar Leuven)

Tools library (MAAKbar)

Graphics Lab (maakleerplek vzw)

High Tech Lab (maakleerplek vzw)

Textiles Lab (MAAKbar)

maakleerplek



maakleerplek



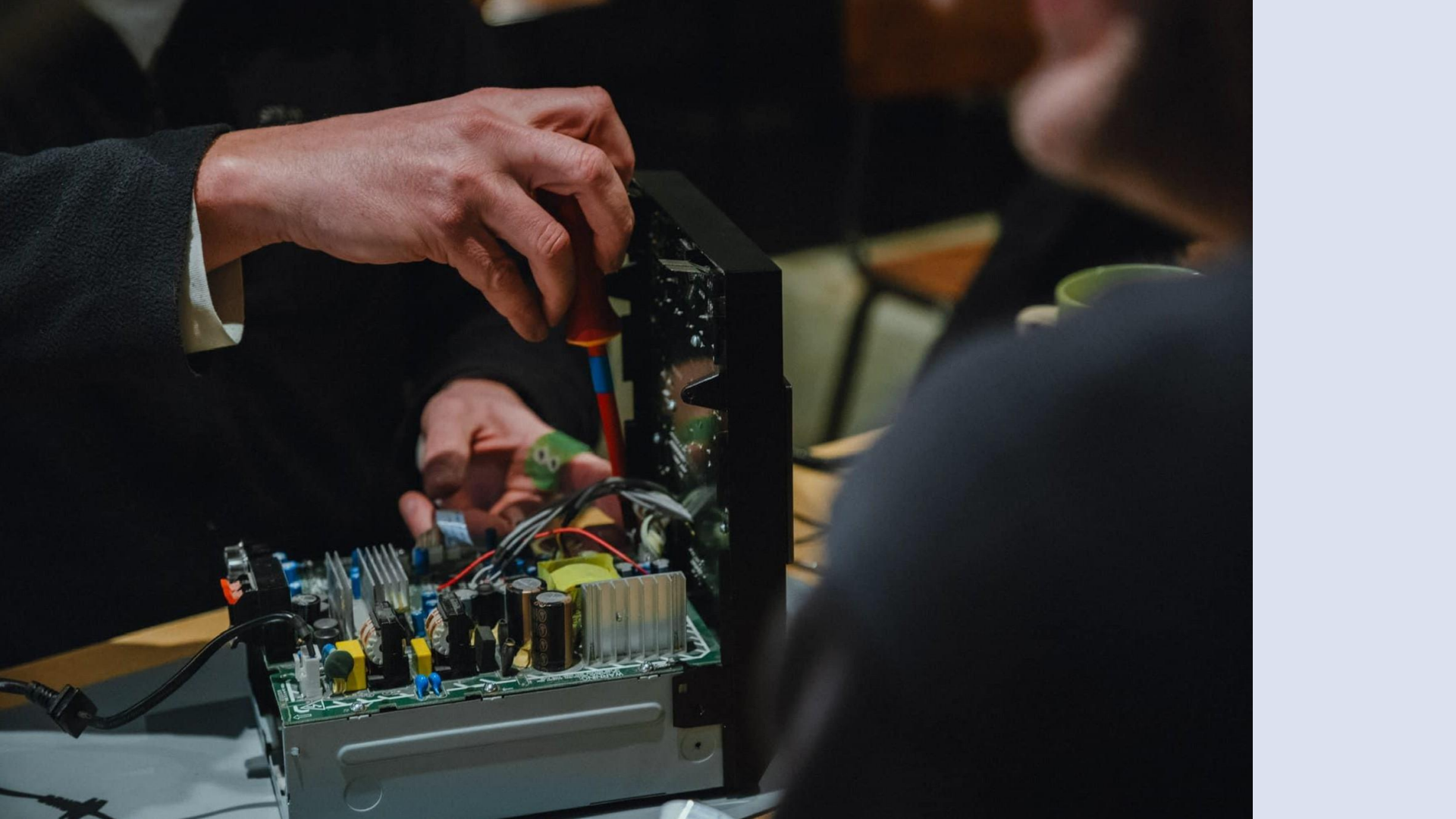
maakleerpleK







maakleerplek



What do we do and how?

Workshops, initiations and trainings

Volunteering for people wanting to contribute

or as **a safe space** for those who need a warm, easygoing place to regain confidence in themselves

Employment of those with a distance to the labour market

incl. those new to Leuven, people with mental or physical disabilities

Funded by Europe and the Flemish Government (Europa WSE) as part of an ESF project for “learning ecosystems”.



Our shared principles

Openness

cf. Open Labs on Thursday evenings

Trust for those new to the community

a sense of responsibility is given, not earned

Progress at your own pace

by supporting their journey from visitor, to volunteer, to employee, or exploring further paths in other forms of education



Does it work?

YES!

Over 200 volunteers are actively involved in one or more spaces within the ecosystem

Countless success stories of people rediscovering purpose, talent, confidence and direction





Contact

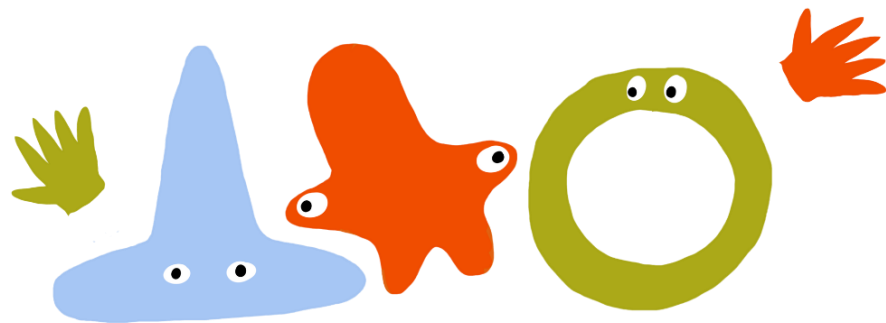
Lisa Vanhaeren

Netwerkcoördinator

Leuvens Leerecosysteem
(LLES)

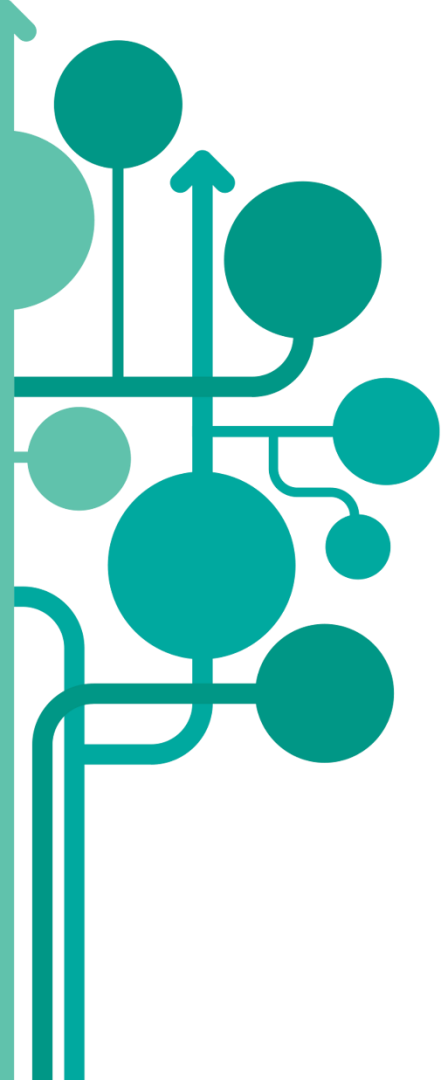
Lisa.vanhaeren@lles.be

+32 469 44 21 85

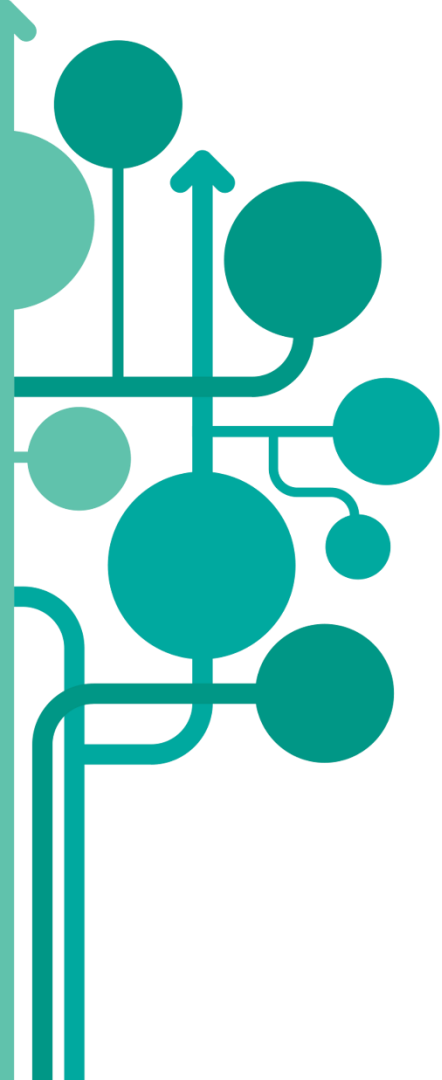


LLES

iedereen kan het **maken**



Questions?



Iveta Cīrule

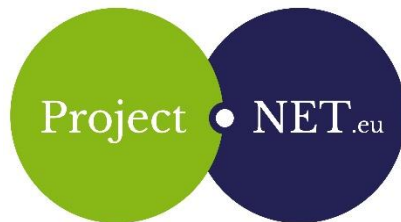
**Associate professor at
Liepaja university
Epale regional coordinator
for Riga & Vidzeme**



Intergenerational learning and Third Generation Universities. Examples from Latvia.

Community learning environments: Third Age Universities

Iveta Cīrule, PhD
NGO Project Net Boar Member,
EPALE Latvia regional coordinator
June 8,2026



EPALE
Electronic Platform
for Adult Learning
in Europe

Intergenerational Open Innovation



Multi-Generational Community



Open Innovation Framework



Third Age Universities



Examples from Latvia



Call to Action

Gen Z:

1996 - 2015

(Ages 11-30 in 2026)



Millennials:

1980 - 1995

(Ages 31-46 in 2026)



Gen X:

1961 - 1979

(Ages 47-65 in 2026)



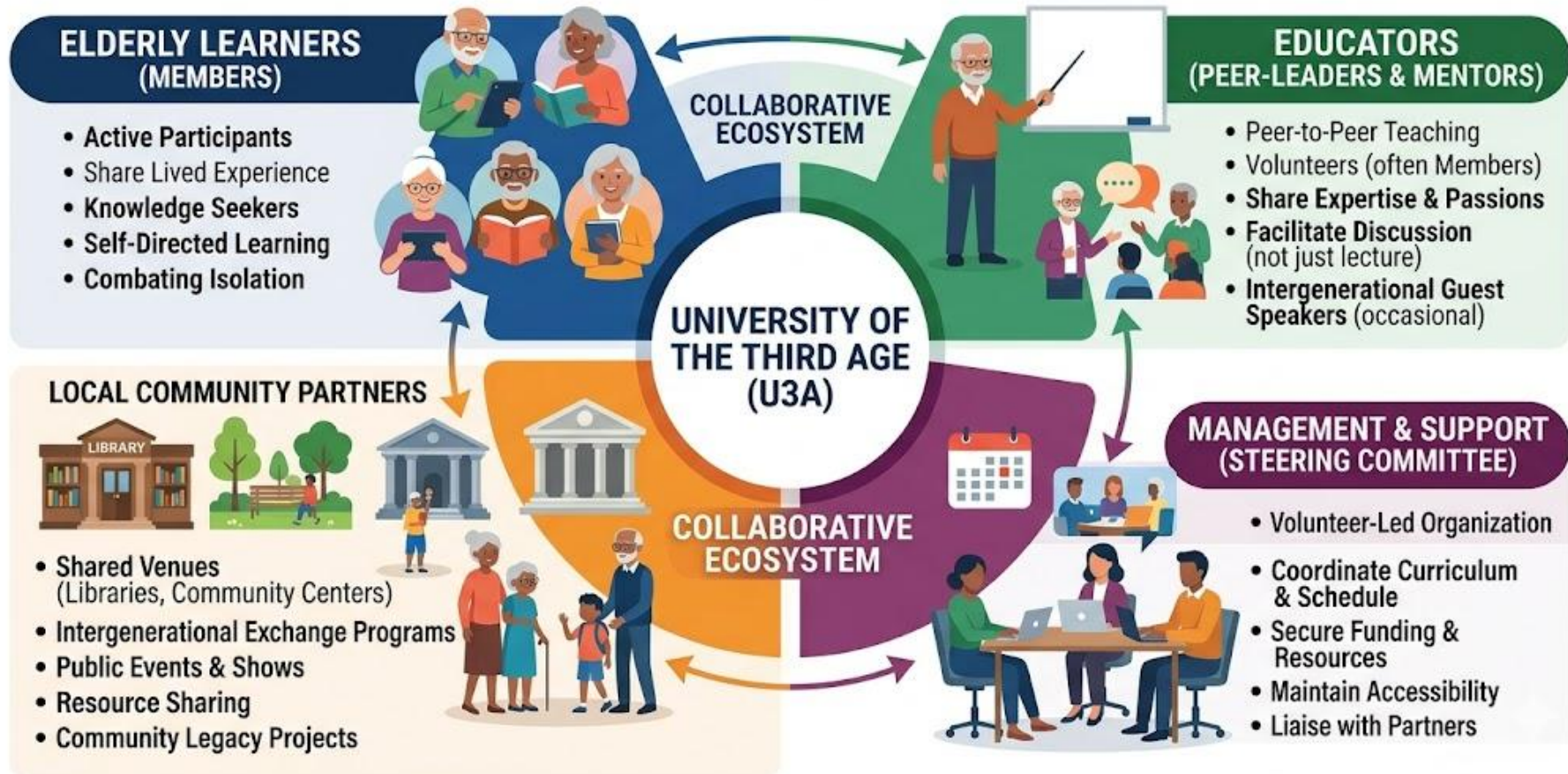
Baby Boomers:

1945 - 1960

(Ages 66-81 in 2026)



Third Age University Model



OPEN INNOVATION MODEL FOR COMMUNITY LEARNING



Learning venue + Open Innovation

Library

School &
University

Youth Centre

Kindergarden

Local
company

Culture House

NGO House

Parks &
recreation
public spaces



Local Library, Ikšķile Senior School, 2026



Youth Centre, Ikšķile Senior School, 2026

KOPIENAS CENTRS

The image shows the exterior of a light orange building. Large, white, three-dimensional letters spell out 'KOPIENAS CENTRS' across the upper part of the facade. To the right, a Latvian flag (red with a white cross) flies on a pole. To the left, a large window reflects a sky with colorful, semi-transparent dots. The building has several windows with dark frames and a decorative cornice.

Community House, Vidusdaugavas NGO Senior University , 2026



Community House, Vidusdaugavas Centrs NGO Senior University ,
2026



Community House, Vidusdaugavas Centrs NGO Senior University, 2026



Community House, Vidusdaugavas Centrs NGO Senior University , 2026



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 **SENIOR VIGOUR**



#IESpejuEuropa

Publicity Disclaimer

Project "Senior Mental Vigour: Wellbeing and Development of Senior Learners" (No 2025-1-LV01-KA220-ADU-000355078) is funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



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Senior Vigour

**Call for action:
Intergenerational
Open Innovation**



**Multi-Generational
Community**



Open Innovation



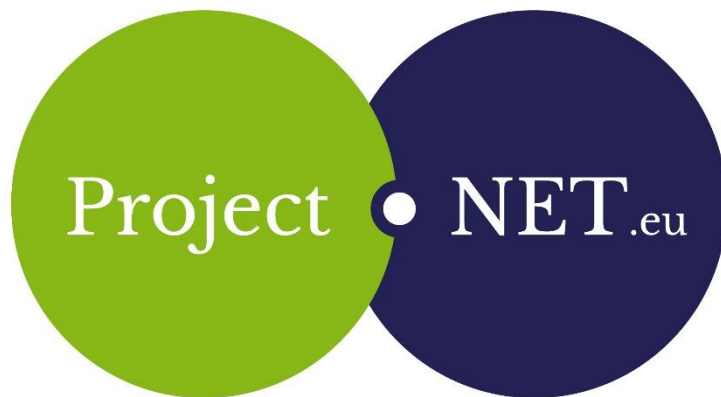
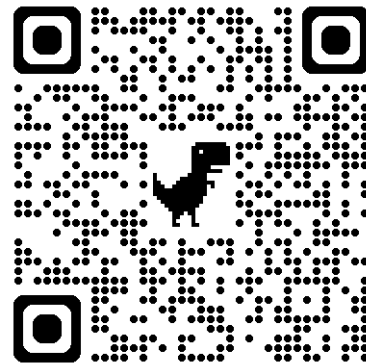
**Third Age
Universities**

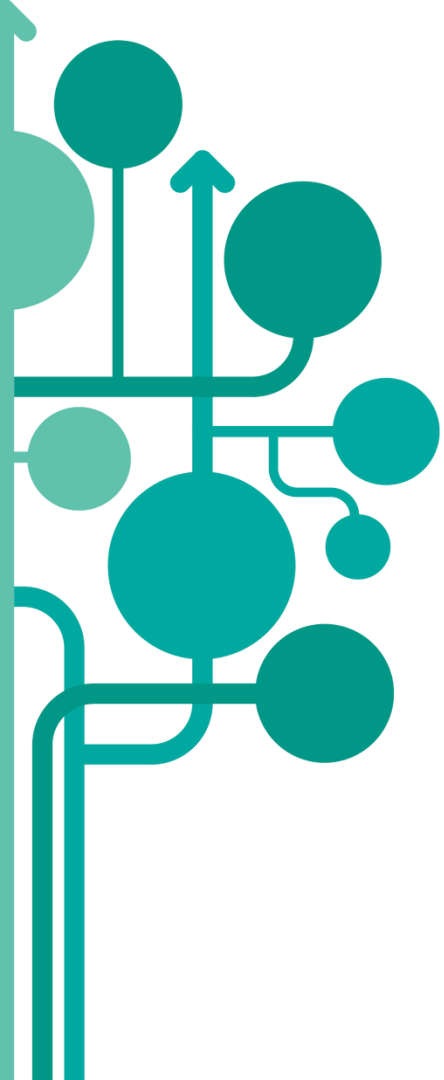


Let's co-create for adult education!

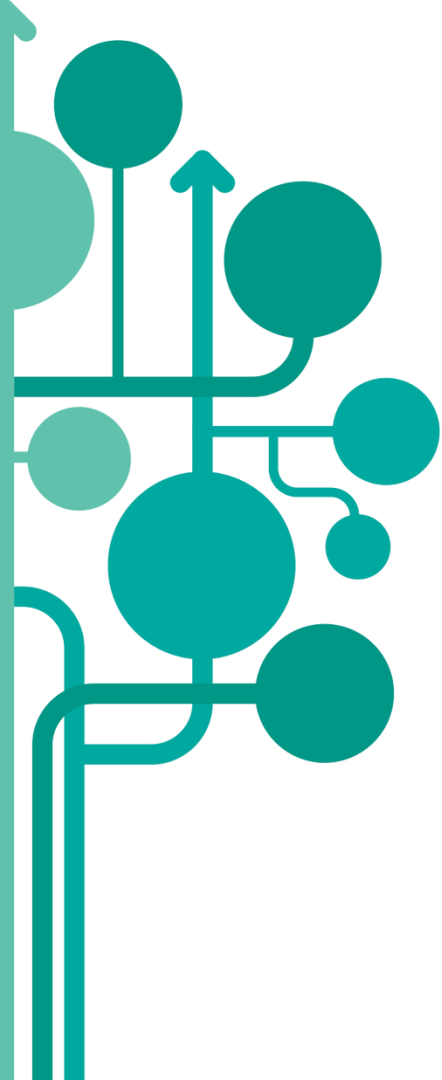
info@projectnet.net

Iveta Cīrule, PhD, Project Net NGO
Board Member





Questions?



Katarzyna Zak-Caplot

Head of Museum Library
The Museum of Warsaw
Poland



The Museum of Warsaw as a community language
learning environment.



Museum as a microcosm for simulating real life

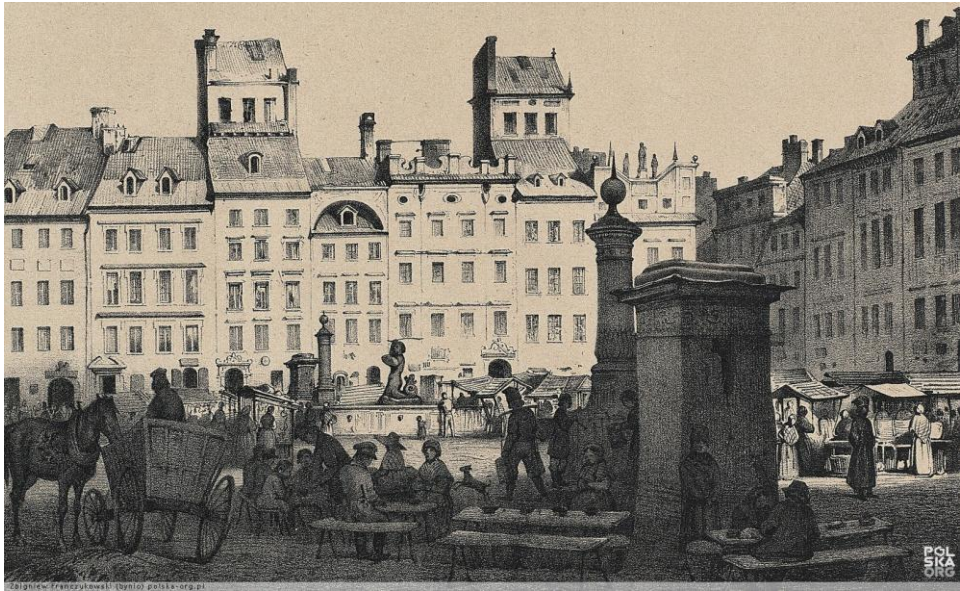
**Community Language
Learning Environment
for Foreigners with
Migrant and Refugee
Background in the
Museum of Warsaw**

Katarzyna Zak-Caplot

The Museum of Warsaw

The Museum of Warsaw was established in spaces where Warsaw residents lived before World War II. The museum had to adapt its exhibition, work, and operations to these former apartments where the presence of past inhabitants is still felt today.

This is the first and most fundamental sign of our orientation toward **building communities around the museum**.





11 Buildings, 9 Locations & Dogs from all over the World

Old Town

11 buildings on the Old Town Market
Square

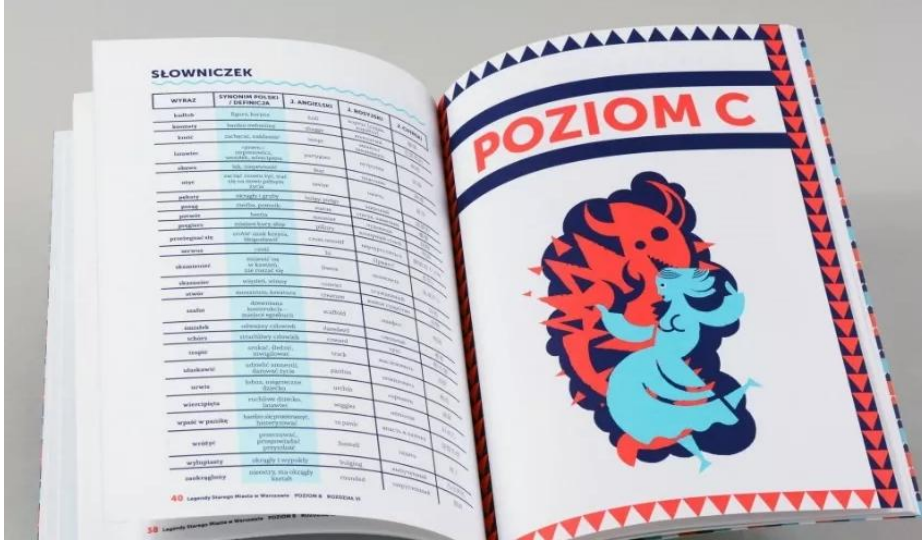
City-Wide

9 additional locations across
Warsaw

Living Heritage

A network of spaces connecting
past and present communities





Museum Language Education Since 2017

6× European Language Label Award



European Language Label

Our Approach

Since 2017, the Museum of Warsaw has run educational projects focused on **integrated Polish language and culture learning** for foreigners.

We use the **CLIL method** and publish original materials for learning Polish through Warsaw's heritage.

A New Audience Arrives

Following the escalation of war in Ukraine, Warsaw saw a significant increase in its Ukrainian population and their strong interest in our museum.

Drawing on our experience with international audiences, we quickly launched project **"My Museum, My Story"** created in response to a group of Ukrainian and Chinese women who remained in Warsaw during the summer of 2022.

Cooperation:
Erasmus+ mobility project
University of Warsaw
City Hall Office of Culture





Built on **participatory principles**

- participants chose objects and described them from a personal perspective.
At the vernissage, they spoke publicly in Polish and answered audience questions.

In Just 2 Months

Polish Course
Intensive
language training

**Exhibition
Prep**
Curate and label
displays

**Object
Selection**
Participants
choose personal
items

**Public
Vernissage**
Presentations and
Q&A

*This hard work
united us as staff.
We knew we
were doing
something good.*

Chief Curator taught participants how to work with an exhibition and lead guided tours.

Librarians edited and refined the participants' texts.

Conservators helped build the exhibition at express pace.

Communications built the entire website and organized the vernissage in one week.





Museum as a microcosm for simulating real life

- Café
- Cinema
- Ticket Office
- Library
- Bookshop

Six Months of Presence

The intervention remained in the museum for **6 months**. During this time, participants led guided tours in both Polish and Ukrainian, and organized accompanying events.

New Educator - one participant joined the museum as an educator.

Volunteer - another became a regular volunteer.



Community Beyond the Project

Participants continue to take part in our projects to this day and often visit simply to say hello and catch up.

Their connection to the museum opened doors to other Warsaw cultural institutions. This gave rise to the **"Cultural Club"** allowing the migrant community to visit many interesting places in Warsaw free of charge.



Klub Kulturalny

Grupa Prywatna · 71 członków



+ Zaproś

Udostępnij

Dołączono

Informacje

Dyskusja

Członkowie

Wydarzenia

Multimedia

Pliki

Q

...



Napisz coś...



Post anonimowy



Nastrój/aktywność



Ankieta

Najtrafniejsze



Monika Michalek

21 maja o 23:11 · @

Hej,

Daję znać o majowym spacerze Kulturalny polski dla początkujących: Zielona strona Pragi. Spacer poprowadzi [Małgorzata Kędzierszawska] ([https://www.facebook.com/groups/1757304981687842/user/1000000389118184/?__cft__\[0\]=AZaM-_m6BVDYB3UOJTEUegkUDM0Owc5W_unJi7UZTz1cgGFYBj-7LxoJwB9ISTW26Ytqm1BSfOKU0SBZxoNJBcm5vDcTK2gNllqORUMDNplahq23RzeZXUsWm7B1gIPImyQCjIWZRmkCDj9Sh9m2ojab&__tn__=-JK-R](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1757304981687842/user/1000000389118184/?__cft__[0]=AZaM-_m6BVDYB3UOJTEUegkUDM0Owc5W_unJi7UZTz1cgGFYBj-7LxoJwB9ISTW26Ytqm1BSfOKU0SBZxoNJBcm5vDcTK2gNllqORUMDNplahq23RzeZXUsWm7B1gIPImyQCjIWZRmkCDj9Sh9m2ojab&__tn__=-JK-R))

Kiedy 31.05 (niedziela) o 14:00... Wyświetl więcej



Informacje

Grupa dla osób uczestniczących w spotkaniach Kulturalnego Klubu przy Muzeum Warszawy. Tu możemy wrzucać zdjęcia, filmiki, ale też wszystko, co n... Wyświetl więcej



Prywatna

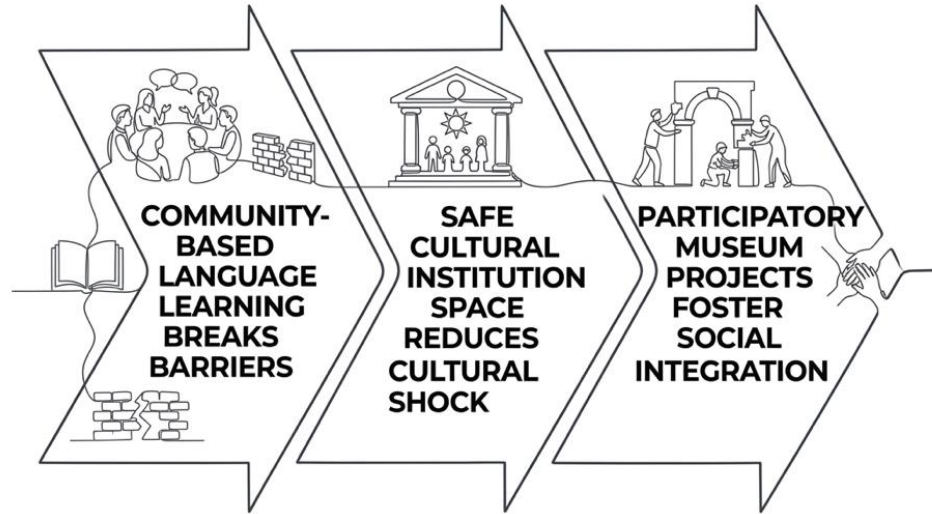
Tylko członkowie grupy mogą sprawdzić listę członków grupy i zobaczyć ich posty.



Widoczna

Każdy może znaleźć tę grupę.

What the Research Showed



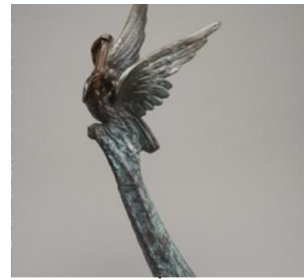
The project was accompanied by a research study based on interviews. It demonstrated that **working with language in a community and safe cultural space** contributes to overcoming communication barriers and cultural shock.

The Museum of Warsaw as a community language learning environment - a model worth replicating.

**Thank you for your attention.
I look forward to your
questions and comments.**

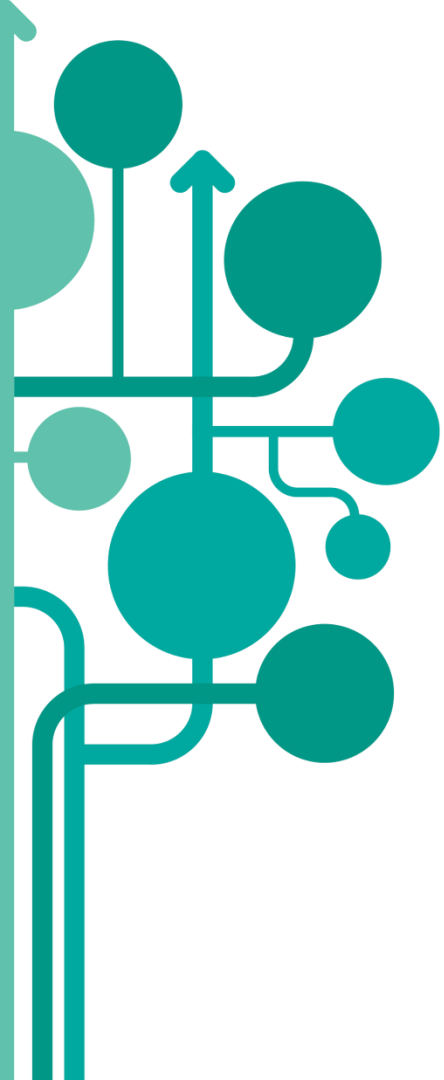


To read more about project

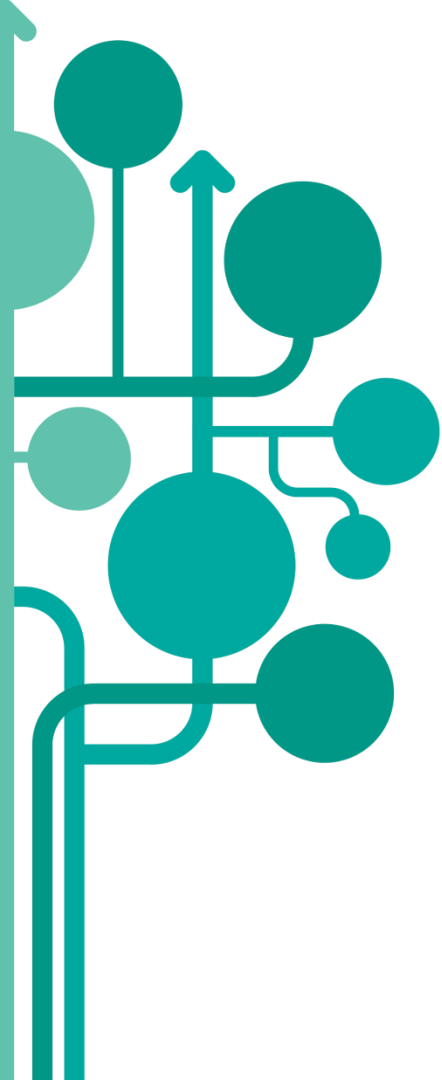


[...] The girl reminds me that when I was a teenager, I looked at the world differently. Time passes quickly; there is no way back to those days. [...] Today I know that we need to live here and now, and make ourselves and our loved ones happy every day. I have noticed that if not today, then never. It is worth doing something nice for yourself: going to the doctor or buying these beautiful earrings. [...] Let us not put life off until later, all right?

This sculpture is one of the most unsettling and ominous objects in the exhibition. Unfortunately, the demon is relevant once again. It resonates strongly with our fears, because now the demon of death is flying over Ukraine, bringing sorrow and destruction. Its great wings know no fatigue, and in its hands are an endless supply of bombs and missiles. Every day we fear for our loved ones and friends, whom this demon may destroy.



Questions?

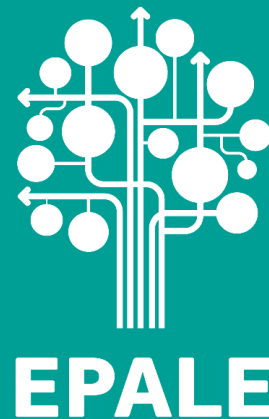


Takeaway messages

- Lisa: *By sharing space, infrastructure and knowledge, our ecosystem offers a powerful, informal learning setting for those who find it difficult to function in more traditional learning environments or in the regular labour market.*
- Iveta: *Inter-generational Open Innovation approach is important for community learning. From free of charge learning venues like libraries, youth centers, culture houses to volunteer teachers - youngsters and elderly. Communities are rich in resources - we just need to be more proactive and seek solutions.*
- Katarzyna: *The museum as a microcosm creates a shared learning space where learners, staff, and audiences continuously influence one another.*

Thank you for joining!

- Upcoming EPALE magazine
- Survey



EPALE Belgium Flanders

Maddy Bollen

maddy.bollen@epos-vlaanderen.be

EPALE The Netherlands

Nick den Hollander

epale@cinop.nl