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Short Insight into Conferences on University Lifelong Learning

The European Perspective

56th Eucen Conference on University Lifelong Learning at the University of Cagliari (IT), 3-5 June 2026. – Empowering Futures: Lifelong Learning, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in a Changing World

In a rapidly evolving world, LLL is at the heart of universities' missions to foster inclusive, adaptable, and forward-looking societies, as a fundamental pillar of social progress, equity, and equality. With the participation of 114 conference delegates from universities across Europe, the 56th Eucen conference, hosted by the University of Cagliari (IT), provided an opportunity to explore how university lifelong learning has been shaping not only individual trajectories, but the very fabric of our societies, economies and futures.

The conference focused on dismantling barriers to education and fostering inclusive environments where all individuals – regardless of gender, background, socio-economic status or other situations- can thrive. By fostering collaboration and sharing innovative models, this conference acted as a catalyst for meaningful change, inspiring new initiatives and policies that make LLL an engine for diversity, equity and inclusion in society.

Participants of the conference have explored three different strands to better understand and relate to the roles of universities in promoting both social and economic aspects of lifelong learning with sensitive attention to sustainability, solidarity and synergies:

- **Strand 1. – Shaping Society:** *Universities as catalysts for inclusive social transformation.* The focus will be on LLL as a tool for social equity and mobility; addressing systemic barriers through accessible education; community partnerships and widening participation; EDI and gender equality in LLL policy and practice; and the university's role in fostering civic engagement and democratic resilience.
- **Strand 2. – Shaping Skills:** *Equipping diverse learners for a changing world of work.* Just and inclusive digital economy; Embedding inclusive pedagogy in up-reskilling programs; Gender pathways in STEM and leadership roles; LLL frameworks to serve underrepresented groups; Unconscious bias and barriers in professional development.
- **Strand 3. – Shaping Tomorrow:** *Designing Futures – Policy, innovation and Equity in LLL.* Future-facing strategies for inclusion; Gener-responsive digital and AI-based learning environments; Innovative models for integration and cross-cultural learning; LLL as a driver for UN SDGs; EDI-informed curriculum co-design and learner voice integration.

Inclusion, it must be recognized that the focus on community partnership has led EUCEN to contribute to the learning city–learning ecosystem discourse by establishing its thematic platform and organizing webinars to promote learning community development through stakeholder collaboration, in accordance with the principles of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities.

Source: 56th eucen Annual Conference – CAGLIARI - EUCEN and unica.it - 56th EUCEN Annual Conference

The Hungarian Perspective

22nd MELLearn Conference in University Lifelong Learning

MELLearn – Higher Education Network for Lifelong Learning Association organized the 22nd National and International Lifelong Learning Conference for June 5, 2026 with the National University of Public Service. The main themes of this event was:

- The role of lifelong learning in higher education in the implementation of quality and efficient learning during the era of AI (*Venue: National University of Public Service – Ludovika Campus*)

This conference, which took place with more than 130 registered participants, reflected upon the trends that determine the processes of efficient and effective learning in higher education environment during digital and technological transformation and sustainability challenges. At the event, researchers and experts representing the research and practice aspects of MELLearn member institutions and the host National University of Public Service, as well as domestic and international professional partners, highlighted the individual, social, and community benefits of continuous learning through innovations and practice-oriented examples.

The plenary session began with welcoming remarks: First, the elected MELLearn President, László Szegedi, Vice-rector for Education at the National University of Public Service, welcomed the conference participants, then András Döbör, outgoing MELLearn President and Board Member from the University of Szeged, addressed the conference.

On behalf of Eucen (European Universities Lifelong Learning Network), Executive Director Carme Royo welcomed the event via online video.

In the first block of plenary presentations, Éva Bíró from the National University of Public Service presented the training and continuing professional development programs at the National University of Public Service, as well as methodological innovations within them. András Benedek from Budapest University of Technology and Economics analyzed the connections and challenges of higher education and adult learning by highlighting domestic and international trends and issues.

This was followed by an intensive plenary Round Table Discussion on the effects of digital learning technologies on the higher education environment, involving research and development experts, entitled The Application and Regulation of Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education.

The roundtable participants were:

- László Horváth – associate professor from ELTE Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology and its Institute of Educational Sciences
- György Molnár – professor of Óbuda University and its Kálmán Kandó Faculty of Electrical Engineering
- Zoltán Vörös – associate professor from the University of Pécs and its Digital Education and Learning Support Center
- Enikő Szőke-Milinte – associate professor from Esterházy Károly Catholic University and its Institute of Educational Sciences
- Moderator: Dóra Egervári – senior lecturer from the University of Pécs and its Institute for Human Development at the Faculty of Humanities

In the second plenary block, George Koulaouzidis, a professor at the Hellenic Open University, discussed the role of AI in influencing both adult learners and their personalities in his lecture entitled Who has Voice in Adult and Lifelong Learning? The Educational Encounter in the Age of AI. Then, Pieter Sprangers, professor at the University of Antwerp gave a lecture entitled Ode to stunning learning for all in relation to effective educational planning and design.

The afternoon workshop was held in ten sessions with a total of 96 presentations on the following topics:

- Learner Engagement, Motivation, and Educational Experiences
- Education in the Age of AI – Quality, Responsibility, Efficiency in Public Education Institutions
- Integrating AI into University Teaching and Student Activities. Regulation, Evaluation
- Organizational Learning in the University Environment – New Paths for Higher Education Research
- The Role of Libraries and Information Professionals in Supporting Higher Education LLL in the Age of AI
- Challenges of Inclusive Learning Spaces and Learning Communities in the Age of Digital Transformation
- Developing Workplace and Work-Based Learning in Higher Education Partnerships
- Renewed Skills and Competence Development in Higher Education LLL Environments
- The Transformation of the Adult Education Profession in the Age of AI: Theory or Reality? EPALE Workshop
- Higher Education LLL Challenges: Developing and Providing Flexible Learning Pathways
- Doctoral Section
- Educational Development and Digital Culture Change in Higher Education – Methodological Responses in the Age of AI

Finally, at the end of the day, the closing plenary session was formulated by Professor László Christián, vice-rector from the National University of Public Service, to report as a Fulbright scholar on the changes in the American higher education environment as a Visiting Professor in the United States. Finally, participants were informed that the venue of the 2027 MELLearn Higher Education LLL Conference would be the Eötvös Lóránd University and its Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology.

Organizers thank cooperating partners, namely the Hungarian Rectors' Conference (MRK), Tempus Public Foundation (TKA), EUCEN, ASEM LLL HUB and the European LLL Platform, for their collaborative partnership, and especially thank EPALE Hungary as a key partner for its help and supportive contribution!

More details can be found at: [Konferencia program 2026 – Mellearn Egyesület](#)