

What are the benefits of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning?

The world of work and education is changing; digitalization, ageing societies and globalization are all major factors with a major impact on the type and quality of skills needed to thrive in current (and future) labor markets.

Adult Learning plays a pivotal role for social inclusion and equal opportunities for all. The benefits deriving from AE and Long-Life Learning can be essentially broken-down in the following:

- **Sustainable Economic growth and employment**

One of the major outcomes of Adult Learning is improving employability conditions, self-confidence and professional empowerment – with that, people can experience better opportunities of career development, and ultimately, a raise of their income.

From a different perspective, the set of skills acquired thanks to AE allows participants to reframe the way they see and perceive their current social status, gaining greater self-awareness and self-efficacy.

This is particularly true for individual and categories at higher risk of socio-economic marginalization, i.e. women, migrants, etc.

- **Health and mental well-being – locus of control, self-efficacy**

Keeping your mind active and engaged prevent numerous common diseases typically associated with ageing.

A proactive engagement in education and training stimulates and promotes a healthy lifestyle; skills and competences expected as direct outcomes of the learning programmes are completed by another set of benefits experienced by the cohort of participants; a change of attitude, higher self-confidence and motivation are all results largely observed.

- **Civic and Social engagement – sense of purpose, social network**

Per se, the AE ecosystem is very heterogenic with many different cultures interacting each other. Learners have the opportunity to get in contact with people with different social backgrounds; one of the indirect benefits of AE is in fact the opportunity to become more “diverse-informed” – such renewed awareness is then brought by participants into societies triggering a widespread effect of cohesion and participation.

- **Public Safety**

A very important study published by the Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning claims that people with no “substantial” qualifications/competences for employment are more likely to commit themselves to criminal activities.

Learning and education are two variables strongly related to propensity to commit crimes. The lack of positive role models leads to wrong decisions: when people see the opportunity to avoid desperate measures, they would gladly choose an “honest” way of living.