

Social
Impact



Impact Story

54th EUCEN Annual Conference 2024

Leading Positive Change Through Lifelong
Learning



CONFERENCE DETAILS

WHEN

29–31 May 2024

DELEGATES

200

WHERE

**University
College Cork**

ECONOMIC IMPACT

€339k

**54th EUCEN Annual Conference 2024
was aligned with UN Sustainable
Development Goals including:**

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



european university
continuing education network

The **European University Continuing Education Network (EUCEN)**
is a European non-profit association that promotes university
lifelong learning and continuing education across higher education
institutions in Europe.

University Lifelong Learning: Leading Positive Change In Challenging Times



Hosted by Adult Continuing Education (ACE) at University College Cork, the 54th EUCEN Annual Conference brought the European University Continuing Education Network to Cork for the first time. Under the theme "University Lifelong Learning: Leading Positive Change in Challenging Times," the conference convened international higher education leaders to explore how universities can drive social transformation through lifelong learning.

The programme focused on three key themes: empowering learners through flexible and inclusive education; embedding lifelong learning within university strategies, structures and culture; and extending learning beyond campus through partnerships with communities, industry and civil society.

Guided by a strong commitment to inclusion, equity and social impact, the



conference positioned universities as agents of positive change, amplifying marginalised voices and highlighting the role of lifelong learning in promoting equality, democratic participation and resilient communities. By linking values to practical institutional action, the event created a lasting legacy centred on accountability, collaboration and meaningful social changes commitment to ensuring that the values discussed translate into lasting change.

Key Highlights and Outcomes

- A key outcome was the co-creation of the Anne Burke Declaration, a call to tackle racism against Irish Travellers in education. Submitted to the Taoiseach post-conference, it provides a framework for action, including funding restoration, curriculum inclusion, and mandatory anti-racism training and has strengthened partnerships advancing inclusive education across Europe.
- Strengthened Ireland's push to widen access to higher education, recognise prior learning (skills gained outside formal study), and expand short, flexible courses (micro-credentials) to support lifelong learning.
- Raised national awareness of inequality in education, particularly for Traveller communities.
- Strengthened Cork's reputation as a UNESCO Learning City and centre for inclusion.
- Amplified local organisations on an international stage.
- Inspired new approaches to inclusive teaching, learning pathways, and outreach.
- Built partnerships and demonstrated a model for socially responsible, values-driven conferences.

AWARDS

Dr. Lyndsey El Almoud was awarded the Social Impact Spotlight Award at Fáilte Ireland's Conference Ambassador Recognition Awards 2025.



(L-R) Niall Tracey, Head of Demand Development, Fáilte Ireland; Dr. Lyndsey El Almoud, Conference Ambassador of EUCEN 2024; and Ruth Andrews, Chair of Fáilte Ireland.

“ The Cork conference showed that when universities lead with values, they can create meaningful and lasting change – ensuring that lifelong learning truly serves society as a whole. ”

Lyndsey El Almoud, Conference Ambassador

