



Report from the conference FuturEDU2023 in Riga

WP2 - ORGANISATION OF CONFERENCES

EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia), 28.11.2023, Jelena Titko, Jevgenija Dehtjare



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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1. Introduction

Digit Edu 2023 (Promoting cooperation and research to address the digital needs in the area of education and training in Europe–Year 1) is a project funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ programme, Civil Society Cooperation in the fields of Youth, Education and Training.

The **European Digital Learning Network ETS (DLEARN)** participates in this project, which runs from January 2023 and December 2023, **as a single partner**.

DLEARN is a non-profit association aimed to embrace the challenges brought by the digital revolution in terms of digital skills mismatch, toward an inclusive digital society. DLEARN pursues the aim of contributing to the objectives defined in the "Digital Agenda" through the implementation of what is necessary for the creation of the so-called "Digital Skills in the economy and European society" pillar. In addition, DLEARN's activities are designed and implemented to be in line and to concretely and positively contributing to the Digital Education Plan 2021-2027 to generate new opportunities for the education and training organisations, policy makers, researchers at national, EU and international level.

In Digit Edu 2023 project, **DLEARN is committed to the following objectives**:

- 1. To raise awareness and contribute to the realisation of the European Education Area and the Digital Education Plan.
- 2. To contribute to the development of policies at European level on the topic of digital skills and digital transformation.
- 3. To promote cooperation between EU organisations for the promotion of digital education and digital needs.
- 4. To promote the participation of organisations in the Erasmus+ programme, the European Solidarity Corps and other EU programmes.
- 5. To facilitate exchange of good practices, results and experiences among stakeholders for an inclusive digital society.
- 6. To increase stakeholder commitment and cooperation with public authorities for the implementation of policies and reforms in line with the European Education Area objectives.

The Digit Edu 2023 Work Plan includes in total 6 Work Packages (WPs), listed as follows.

Two are horizontal:

 WP1 - Project Management and Coordination, which will ensure smooth application of activities.





■ WP6 - Dissemination, Sustainability and Impact, which will ensure DLEARN's outreach.

The other four WPs are for implementation:

- WP2 Organisation of Conferences, which will organise 1 annual DLEARN conference in Brussels and 2 satellite conferences hosted by DLEARN members.
- WP3 Networking, which will organise 2 networking events and participation of DLEARN in EU wide networks.
- **WP4 Research**, which will launch 2 researches, one on "Digital Skills and Jobs", and one on "Digital Footprint".
- WP5 Training, which will organise three training courses and four webinars.

This report is referred to WP2 and reflects the main aspects related to the organization of the International Scientific Conference "Future of Education and Skills (FutureDU 2023)".





2. Preparation of the event

Before the event preparation started several brainstorming meetings (both online and offline) took place. The participants of the meeting included Dlearn representatives, EKA and EKA Scientific institution members, and NewDoor social accelerator foundation representatives. According to the brainstorming results, the preliminary agenda of the event was prepared. It included an opening ceremony with according key speeches, and a panel discussion under the topic "Digitalization of Education as a Response to the Needs of Students and Teachers in Europe. Digital skill gaps in the Baltics with a special focus on the needs of the Ukrainian refugees in the Member States" and two sections "Digital Solutions for Education" and "Inclusiveness and Diversity for Education". The sections were proposed with an aim to ensure maximum coverage of the education topicality, thus ensuring impact on an industry, involving all of the stakeholders - students, academic and administrative staff of education institutions, public body representatives, digital industry representatives, accelerators and supporting foundations, NGOs and decision makers responsible for inclusiveness and diversity. Then the promotion work began and invitations were sent both on the Latvian and international levels. The list consisted of all of the Latvian higher educational institutions (also regional ones) that were invited, public bodies, responsible for decision-making within the fields of education, innovation, digitalization, diversity and inclusiveness, NGOs, also social entrepreneurial ones. International participants were invited from all the EKA's partnering countries, such as Lithuania, Poland, Italy, and others.

Due to the topicality of the conference and current agenda, the ambassadors of Israel and Ukraine to Latvia were invited as well.

It was decided to keep EKA premises as a venue place to ensure maximum involvement of its academic staff and students thus enabling them to visit the conference and also aiming to ensure capacitive networking between the participants. Due to the fact EKA doesn't own any catering facilities, it was decided to book catering from outsource and to order Gala Dinner at one of the international dining places – Locale restaurant in the Old tow. All the discussion participants and conference presenters were invited to the dinner and their eating preferences were requested (vegan, gluten-free, etc), so the catering was organized the same properly as the whole agenda. The dissemination materials, such as posters, roll-ups, and brochures were ordered and souvenirs for conference participants and attendees were booked as well (stationery, umbrellas, anti-stress balls, etc.).





3. Detailed description of the event

The conference took part in 2 days – November 8th, when the welcome drink for presenters and panel discussion participants was offered and November 9th, when the main part of the event took place. The thematic areas of the event covered the following topics:

- Digitalization of education, digital skill gaps
- Inclusiveness and diversity
- Current world trends and agenda with a special focus on the needs of the refugees, Ukrainian refugees to Baltic states including.

According to the thematic areas, the following events were held:

- Panel discussion "Digitalization of Education as a Response to the Needs of Students and Teachers in Europe. Digital skill gaps in the Baltics with a special focus on the needs of the Ukrainian refugees in the Member States";
- Section "Digital Solutions for Education";
- Section "Inclusiveness and Diversity for Education" (this sector included also field experts discussion).

The venue started on November 9th, 2023 at 9:30 with the registration and with the opening ceremony at 10:30, followed by the welcome speeches of Jelena Titko, Vice-Rector for Science and International Cooperation (EKA University of Applied Science), Gianluca Coppola, President of the European Digital Learning Network (Italy), Anatolii Kutsevol, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of Latvia, Sharon Rapoport-Palgi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Israel to the Republic of Latvia.

After the opening ceremony, at 10:30 the panel discussion started, moderated by Edgars Čerkovskis, representative of EKA University of Applied Sciences. It also included a foreword by Gianluca Coppola, "Digital Skills and Jobs. A Shared Reflection on the Future of our Workplaces". The topic of the panel discussion was dedicated to the "Digitalization of Education as a Response to the Needs of Students and Teachers in Europe. Digital skill gaps in the Baltics with a special focus on the needs of the Ukrainian refugees in the Member States" and the participants were represented by both academic staff and industry stakeholders, such as:

- Gianluca Coppola, President of the European Digital Learning Network (Dlearn), (Italy)
- Oksana Lentjušenkova, Rector, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia)
- Andrejs Berdņikovs, Head of the Technology Business Center, Investment and Development Agency (Latvia)





- Victoriia Riashchenko, ISMA University of Applied Sciences, ICU coach, participant of Ukrainian integration programs in Latvia, Society "Shelter" Safe House coordinator (Latvia)
- Kateryna Pidkorytova, Ukrainian community representative, LELB Diakonija facilitator, teacher (Latvia- Ukraine).

After the panel discussion, the coffee break followed. Then the two sections were started at 13:00 and continued until 16:00. The participants of the sections presented following reports:

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR EDUCATION (Moderator: Edgars Čerkovskis, EKA University of Applied Sciences):

- Jevgenija Dehtjare, EKA Scientific Institution, "21st century skills" project coordinator (Latvia), "Digital Education in the Context of National Digital Strategy"
- Oksana Lentjušenkova, rector of EKA University of Applied Sciences, "Using networking intelligence for intellectual capital development" project coordinator (Latvia), "Network IQ index: Tool for Professional Development"
- Kristīne Užule, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia) "BENEFIT Project as an Example of the Inclusive Digital Higher Education"
- Marcis Pinnis, Tilde LTD, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia), "Virtual Assistants: Capabilities and Risks in Education"
- Marius Saunoris, Kaunas University of Technology, Kaunas University of Applied Engineering Sciences, (Lithuania), "Exploring the Use of Elements of Virtual Environments in Teaching the Basics of Electrical Engineering and Electronics"
- Loreta Saunoriene, Kaunas University of Technology (Lithuania), "Integrating Digital Escape Rooms into the Teaching/Learning process of Mathematics".
- Stella Kaprāne, Alberta koledža, Biznesa augstskola Turība; LU (Latvia), "The Use of AI in Education: Legal Issues and the EU legislation".
- Julija Mironova, ISMA University of Applied Sciences, LU University, (Latvia) "Generative Tools of AI in Education"
- Julija Surikova, DRIVEN LTD, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia), "Social Media and AI: Any Reasons to Study?"
- Harsh Chauhan, EKA University of Applied Sciences, LU University (Latvia), "Future of Higher Education & Student's Perspective Towards Digital Transformation"

INCLUSIVENESS AND DIVERSITY OF EDUCATION (Moderator D. Pershtein-Lapkis, NewDoor),

- Natajja Novikova, president of Children and Youth Para Sports Association (Latvia), "Integration and Adapted Physical Education".





- Artur Banaszak, Alcide De Gasperi University of Euroregional Economy in Jozefow (Poland), "Challenges Facing Schools in the Process of Meeting the Educational Needs of Students".
- Velga Vēvere, EKA University of Applied Sciences, "CSR and ESG practices for stakeholders' well-being" project coordinator (Latvia), "Are We ready for Diverse Study Environment in EKA University of Applied Sciences?"
- Olegs Nikadimovs, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia) "University Social Responsibility, Inclusivity, Diversity and Human Skills: Stakeholders' Perceptions"
- Baiba Blomniece-Jurjāne, Social entreprise "Barboleta" (Latvia), "Movement and Coordination Integration in Education"
- Jeļena Budanceva, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia) "Digital Framework for Students` Psychological Support"
- Natālija Cudečka-Puriņa, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia). "Inclusive Digital Education a Tool to Understand Circular Economy"

Expert discussion:

- Liesma Ose, inclusive education expert
- Natalja Novikova, president of Children and Youth Para Sports Association
- Velga Vēvere EKA University of Applied Sciences, "CSR and ESG practices for stakeholders' well-being" project coordinator
- Baiba Blomniece-Jurjāne, Social entreprise "Barboleta"

The total amount of registered participants consisted of 55 persons, 26 panel discussion speakers, section presenters, and discussion experts. It is clear from the schedule that the composition of the participants is very diverse. It's done intentionally to underline the linkage between higher education, public bodies, NGOs, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders. The entrance to the conference was made upon preliminary registration but for a wide audience. As seen from the agenda, the participants consisted of Latvian, Lithuanian, and Polish HEIs representatives, NGOs, and foundations, such as New Door, Social enterprises, such as "Barboleta", digital industry representatives, such as "Driven" and "Tilde" and representatives of inclusiveness and diversity sector, such as Victoriia Riaschenko, Kateryna Pidkorytova (Ukrainian community representatives), Natalja Novikova (President of Children and Youth Para Sports Association). Industry experts were represented by Liesma Ose (Senior Expert of the Ministry of Welfare) and Andrejs Berdnikovs (Head of the Technology Business Center, Investment and Development Agency).

The conference's results were widely disseminated online (EKA website, LinkedIn accounts of EKA, participants, and visitors). The participants indicated a high level of the agenda, speakers, and organizers' preparedness and there were many requests to repeat the event in the future.





4. Follow-up

To monitor the satisfaction of the participants, the conference hosts (EKA Vice-Rector for Sciences and International Cooperation Prof. J.Titko and Head of Development of EKA Scientific Institution J.Dehtjare) have developed a feedback questionnaire (Fig. 1).

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If you have any additional comments or advise, please, write them here:												

Fig. 1. Feedback questionnaire

17 from 55 conference participants (12 females and 5 males) have answered to the feedback questionnaire. 10 respondents represented EKA, other — Latvian and foreign companies and Universities. (31% - response rate). The low response rate (31%) is explained by the limited time for making follow-up analysis.

The results, in turn, are quite positive. 88% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with FuturEDU2023 in general. The distribution of responses is reflected in Fig. 2.





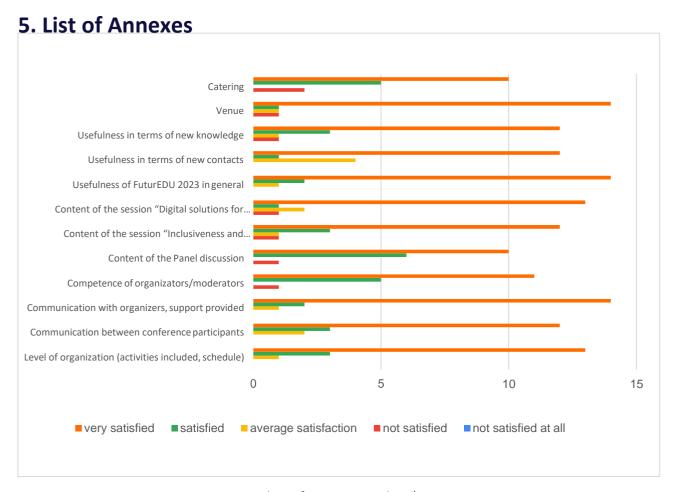


Fig. 2. Analysis of responses on the 1st question

Mostly the respondents were satisfied with the conference content and treated this event as a useful one. 15 from 17 respondents would recommend participating in this event to their colleagues; 16 - would like to participate in similar conference/event in the future.





5. List of Annexes

Annex 1 - The AGENDA

Annex 2 – The LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR PANEL DISCUSSION

Annex 3 - The ATTENDANCE LIST

Annex 4 – PHOTOS

Annex 5 - MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED DURING THE EVENT





Annex 1 - The AGENDA







International Scientific and Educational Conference Future of Education and Skills

FuturEDU 2023

NOVEMBER 8, 2023, RIGA, LATVIA

VENUE: Room 402 EKA University of Applied Sciences, Str. Pernavas 62, Riga, Latvia 17:00 – 19.00 WELCOME DRINK FOR PRESENTERS AND PANEL DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS

NOVEMBER 9, 2023, RIGA, LATVIA

VENUE: EKA University of Applied Sciences, Str. Pernavas 62, Riga, Latvia

AGENDA

9:30 - 10:00 REGISTRATION AND WELCOME COFFEE, ROOMS 302-303 10:00 - 10:30 OPENING CEREMONY / PLENARY SESSION, ROOM 303 Welcome speech

- Jelena Titko, Vice-Rector for Science and International Cooperation, EKA University of Applied Sciences
- o Gianluca Coppola, President of the European Digital Learning Network (Italy)
- Anatolii Kutsevol, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of Latvia
- Sharon Rapoport-Palgi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Israel to the Republic of Latvia

PANEL DISCUSSION

10:30 - 11:00 OPENING OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION, ROOM 303

- Edgars Čerkovskis, Moderator, EKA University of Applied Sciences
- Gianluca Coppola, President of the European Digital Learning Network
- "Digital Skills and Jobs. A Shared Reflection on the Future of our Workplaces"

11:00 – 12:00 PANEL DISCUSSION "Digitalization of Education as a Response to the Needs of Students and Teachers in Europe. Digital skill gaps in the Baltics with a special focus on the needs of the Ukrainian refugees in the Member States" (Moderator: Edgars Čerkovskis) ROOM 303

Participants:

- o Gianluca Coppola, President of the European Digital Learning Network (Dlearn), (Italy)
- Oksana Lentjušenkova, Rector, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia)
- Andrejs Berdnikovs, Head of the Technology Business Center, Investment and Development Agency (Latvia)
- Victoriia Riashchenko, ISMA University of Applied Sciences, ICU coach, participant of Ukrainians integration programs in Latvia, Society "Shelter" Safe House coordinator (Latvia)
- Kateryna Pidkorytova, Ukrainian community representative, LELB Diakonija facilitator, teacher (Latvia- Ukraine).

12:00 - 13:00 COFFEE BREAK, Room 302





PARALLEL SESSIONS

13.00 - 16:00 DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR EDUCATION (Moderator: Edgars Čerkovskis, EKA, ROOM 303)

- Jevgenija Dehtjare, EKA Scientific Institution, "21st century skills" project coordinator (Latvia), "Digital Education in the Context of National Digital Strategy"
- Oksana Lentjušenkova, rector of EKA University of Applied Sciences, "Using networking intelligence for intellectual capital development" project coordinator (Latvia), "Network IQ index: Tool for Professional Development"
- Kristine Užule, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia) "BENEFIT Project as an Example of the Inclusive Digital Higher Education"
- Marcis Pinnis, Tilde LTD, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia), "Virtual Assistants: Capabilities and Risks in Education"
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- Julija Surikova, DRIVEN LTD, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia), "Social Media and AI: Any Reasons to Study?"
- Harsh Chauhan, EKA University of Applied Sciences, LU University (Latvia), "Future of Higher Education & Student's Perspective Towards Digital Transformation"

13:00 – 16:00 INCLUSIVENESS AND DIVERSITY OF EDUCATION (Moderator D. Pershtein-Lapkis, NewDoor), PRESENTATIONS AND EXPERT DISCUSSION ROOM 306

- Natalja Novikova, president of Children and Youth Para Sports Association (Latvia), "Integration and Adapted Physical Education".
- Artur Banaszak, Alcide De Gasperi University of Euroregional Economy in Jozefow (Poland), "Challenges Facing Schools in the Process of Meeting the Educational Needs of Students".
- Velga Vêvere, EKA University of Applied Sciences, "CSR and ESG practices for stakeholders' well-being" project coordinator (Latvia), "Are We ready for Diverse Study Environment in EKA University of Applied Sciences?"
- Olegs Nikadimovs, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia) "University Social Responsibility, Inclusivity, Diversity and Human Skills: Stakeholders' Perceptions"
- Baiba Blomniece-Jurjane, Social entreprise "Barboleta" (Latvia), "Movement and Coordination Integration in Education"
- Jelena Budanceva, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia) "Digital Framework for Students' Psychological Support"
- Natālija Cudečka-Puriņa, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia). "Inclusive Digital Education – a Tool to Understand Circular Economy"
 - Expert discussion
- o Liesma Ose, inclusive education expert
- o Natalja Novikova, president of Children and Youth Para Sports Association
- Velga Vēvere EKA University of Applied Sciences, "CSR and ESG practices for stakeholders' well-being" project coordinator
- Baiba Blomniece-Jurjāne, Social entreprise "Barboleta"

FuturEDU DINNER

19:00 - 21:00

DINNER FOR PANEL DISCUSSION SPEAKERS, SESSIONS PRESENTERS AND EXPERTS "Locale" restaurant, Grécinieku str. 8, Old Town





Futuredu organizing committee



Gianluca Coppela, Founder and the president of the European Digital Learning Network (Italy)

Giantuca COPPOLA is a founder and president of the "European Digital Learning Network" Diegrn www.diesrn.eu an EU network made of organizations from all over Europe siming at fostering the opportunities brought by the digital mesos in the educational paths in 4 sector: Schools, Higher education, Adult education and Vocational training.

Moreover, Glaniuca is external evaluator for the European Commission, several agencies of it as well as for several Erasmus+ National Agencies'. Glaniuca is a trainer on European projects and financial reporting.

https://it.linkedin.com/in/glanluca-co B-mail: glanluca.coppola@dlearn.eu



Jelema Titko, Vice -rector, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia)

Jelena TITKO, Dr.eec. Vice-Rector for Science and International Cooperation and the Professor at EKA University of Applied Sciences, as well as a researcher at the Institute of Economics of the Latvian Academy of Sciences (LATVIA). She is an expert of the Latvian Council of Science in the field of Economics and Entrepreneurship and Education management. The author of more than 70 scientific papers in the field of economics, business, management and education. Expert representing Latvia in Eurydice study "Digital Education at School in Europe". She is an Editor-in-Chief of the journal "Economics and Culture" and a member of a scientific board of the journal "Business, Management and Economics Engineering". E-mail: joinnatitio@ela.edu.ly



Jevgenija Debtjare, Head of the Development of the Scientific Institution, EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia)

Jevgenija DEHTJARE, Dr.oec. Head of the Development of EKA Scientific Institution, Certified Career Coach, member of EUMMAS (European Marketing and Management Association) and NetworkiQ community. Graduated from Riga Technical University and worked at ISMA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia) as Business Administration in Tourism program director, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and researcher. The author of more than 55 scientific papers in the field of economics, business, management, tourism, invgentia.dehtiaresbeks.edu.lv hospitality and education. E-mail:



Diana Pershtein-Lapkis, CEO & Co founder at NewDoor (Latvia)

Diāna PERSHTEIN-LAPKIS is a co-founder and CEO of NewDoor, an internation social innovation and sustainability platform dedicated to driving positive change through innovation. Additionally, she is a member of the Council of the Latvian Space Industries Association (LAIK). Diana represents Top 100 Women in Social Enterprise



Edgars CERKOVSKIS, director of the Master study programme "Circular economy and social entrepreneurship", EKA University of Applied Sciences (Latvia)

Edgars CERKOVSKIS (Mg.sc.soc., PhD. Cand.) is a Lecturer at the EKA University of applied Sciences (Latvia); a director of the Master study programme "Circular economy and social entrepreneurship". He has created and runs more than 10 innovative study courses in several Latvian universities - digital economy, digital technologies, artificial intelligence, digital tools and their applications and many more. He is the author of several digital tools, such as the Virtual Economy Cabinet and several simulation online games for students. The digital materials, programs and methods developed by Cerkovskis are still used in the largest Latvian learning centers - Riga Distance Learning Secondary School, European Distance Learning Center, Latvian Distance Learning Professional Center and European Distance Learning Secondary School.

E-mail: e.cerkovskis@eka.edu.lv





Annex 2 – The LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR PANEL DISCUSSION

Question	Main addressee
What do you envision as the key challenges in the future of education and skills development?	Gianluca Coppola (with the reference to discussion during DIGIT EDU 2023 Conference)
What role should traditional classroom education play in the future, given the growth of online and remote learning options?	Oksana Lentjušenkova
In a rapidly changing job market, how can education systems adapt to ensure individuals have the skills they need for their careers?	Andrejs Berdņikovs
How can education be made more accessible and inclusive for learners from diverse backgrounds and abilities?	Gianluca Coppola
What are the pros and cons of personalized learning approaches in the future of education?	Oksana Lentjušenkova
What are the ethical considerations in the use of artificial intelligence and data analytics in education?	Oksana Lentjušenkova
What are some innovative approaches or models you believe will be instrumental in shaping the future of education and skills?	Andrejs Berdņikovs
What are the key digital skill gaps that students and teachers in Europe, particularly in the Baltic region, are currently facing?	Gianluca Coppola (referring to the latest reports of DLearn)
What challenges do Ukrainian refugees face in adapting to the digitalized	Victoriia Riashchenko
education systems of European Member States, and how can these challenges be overcome? What measures have been taken to support Ukrainian refugees in acquiring digital skills and accessing education in European Member States?	Kateryna Pidkorytova
In what ways can digital education initiatives be tailored to better serve the educational needs of Ukrainian refugees in Europe?	Victoriia Riashchenko Kateryna Pidkorytova
How can European countries collaborate to develop a unified approach to addressing digital skill gaps in education?	Gianluca Coppola
How will the changes in education affect the role of educators and teachers in the future?	Any who is ready to contribute





Annex 3 – ATTENDANCE LISTS

Annex 4 - PHOTOS



FuturEDU 2023 organizer: DLearn President Gianluca Coppola and EKA Vice-Rector Jelena Titko



FuturEDU 2023 participants at the Plenary session





FuturEDU 2023 Plenary discussion

From the left: D.Lapkis-Pershtein (NewDoor Social Entrepreneurship accelerator), Kutsevol Anatolii (Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Latvia), J.Titko (EKA Vice-Rector), O.Lentjusenkova (EKA Rector), G.Coppola (DLearn Presedent





Photo gallery: https://www.augstskola.lv/?parent=545&lng=eng





Annex 5 – MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED AT THE EVENT

During the conference, 100 DLearn prepared leaflets were distributed among the participants and visitors, as well as between EKA students (Fig.3).



Fig. 3. DLearn leaflet





