



LLL in the future of Europe: Investment in hope

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Abstract

This year in Spain, we the people over 60, are more in number than those under 15. For the first time in history we, the seniors surpass in number the youngsters.

These are not good news, it is just a demographic fact and a social trend that covers all European Union countries.

Another fact, for every single year that the average level of education of the adult population is raised, there is a corresponding increase of 3.7% in long-term economic growth and a 6% increase in per capita income.

Nevertheless, adult learning, lifelong learning, are much more than an item of social spending or financial outcome.

Lifelong learning is investment in hope, it is the best investment for the future. And it may be one of the last opportunities for Europe to be again on the track.

Because LLL will permit new ways for integration (generations and migrants), enhance old people horizons with new technological tools, and most fruitful of the results, life long learning will improve public health (by preventing depression or loneliness, by disseminating healthy life standards, by improving meals, by encouraging outdoor exercises and by making seniors feel younger by learning and teaching).

But, there is a big but, it is absolutely necessary to accomplish this future scenery: that we, the seniors generation, put into action our best personal generosity. Without this flow of personal generosity and social involvement –for instance- in some weekly hours of volunteering teaching, the European scenery in the next future will not be so bright.

We, the senior generation, must return to society what we have received in terms of education and experience, perhaps a bit increased. We need to make a huge investment in hope.