

The ENHANCE Roadmap Workshop Methodology



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Adult learNers voiCEs
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The ENHANCE Roadmap Workshop Methodology



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Contents

1. Executive Summary	4
2. Purpose of the Workshop Methodology	5
Target Audience	7
3. The Workshop Methodology	8
Area 1: Creating a Roadmap Setting the Scene	9
Area 2: Building a Community	12
Area 3: Defining Practices on the Voice of the Learners	15
Area 4: Designing Policy	17
Area 5: Addressing Re-Routes and Dead-Ends	19
Area 6: Collecting Data	21
4. Reports on the ENHANCE Workshops	23
Ireland	24
Hungary	28
Austria	32
The Netherlands	41
Sweden	46
European and International Workshop	52
5. Annex	63
Annex 1: Facilitation Checklist	64
Annex 2: Sample Workshop Schedules	66
Annex 3: The Datasheet	68

Executive Summary



The ENHANCE Workshop Methodology is a participatory tool designed to support the co-creation and implementation of the ENHANCE Roadmap, a key output of the ENHANCE project. This methodology enables adult educators, civil society organizations (CSOs), policymakers, and learners to work together in building environments where adult learners' voices are not only heard but drive meaningful change in education systems and policy processes.

Developed through a series of co-designed workshops and grounded in the values of democracy, inclusion, and empowerment, the methodology provides a modular structure that can be adapted to different local contexts and community needs. It supports participants in exploring what learner voice means in practice, how it can be embedded in adult learning provision, and how these insights can shape institutional change and inform policy recommendations.

Each Area offers structured activities, critical reflection tools, and facilitation guidance, ensuring accessibility and flexibility. The methodology is both a product and a process - a roadmap in action - helping communities of practice align their work with the broader ENHANCE objectives of strengthening learner agency, building participatory education ecosystems, and amplifying marginalized voices.

By connecting local workshops to national and European policy dialogues, the ENHANCE Workshop Methodology offers a framework for sustainable impact. The expected outcomes include a stronger recognition of learners as co-creators of education, increased capacity among educators and CSOs to embed participatory practices, and a more responsive and inclusive adult education system across Europe.

Purpose of the Workshop Methodology



The ENHANCE Workshop Methodology is designed as a hands-on, adaptable framework that facilitates the co-creation and implementation of the ENHANCE Roadmap. Its core purpose is to empower adult learners and practitioners to shape educational practices and policies by embedding the principles of participation, voice, and agency into the learning process. It responds to a key challenge identified by the ENHANCE project: despite growing attention to learner-centered education, many adult learning systems still lack the structures, spaces, and tools to meaningfully involve learners in shaping decisions that affect their learning journeys.

This methodology offers both a pedagogical and strategic approach. On the one hand, it provides facilitators and educators with a structured process to organize reflective, participatory workshops that give adult learners space to express their needs, challenges, and aspirations. On the other hand, it equips participants — including civil society actors and policymakers — with a common language and pathway to translate lived experience into policy recommendations, community initiatives, or organizational commitments.

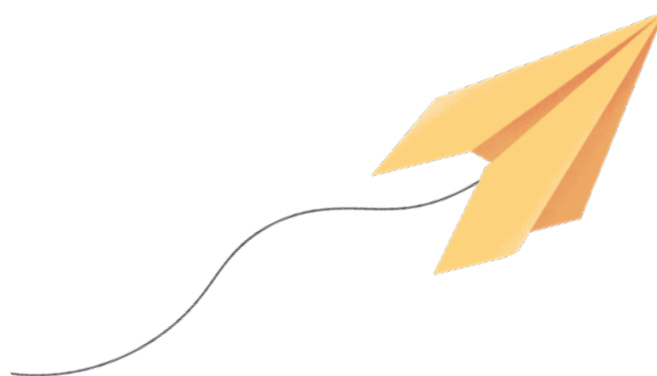
The six Areas follow a journey that mirrors the logic of the ENHANCE Roadmap:

- Area 1: Setting the scene: introduces the roadmap concept and invites participants to reflect on their contexts and motivations.
- Area 2: Building a community: focuses on relationship-building and shared values to foster trust and cooperation.
- Area 3: Defining practices: draws out concrete examples of how learner voice is (or could be) expressed in different settings.

- Area 4: Designing policy: links these practices to systemic change by identifying opportunities for advocacy or reform.
- Area 5: Addressing re-routes and dead-ends: creates space to navigate obstacles, adapt strategies, and remain resilient.
- Area 6: Collecting data: supports the monitoring and documentation of workshop outcomes, including learner contributions.

The methodology is grounded in real-life piloting experiences from across Europe, and especially in the piloting of the methodology in Sweden, Austria, Hungary, Ireland and the Netherlands as well as in the membership of EAEA and SOLIDAR across Europe, with policy makers, adult education providers and learners contributing insights and tools that enrich each Area. It also supports iterative learning: facilitators are encouraged to adapt the content and revisit earlier Areas as needed.

Importantly, the methodology is designed for use beyond the lifespan of the ENHANCE project. It provides a lasting infrastructure for dialogue and action, helping adult learning organizations, networks, and policy platforms sustain momentum toward learner-centered innovation. Whether used in grassroots workshops, national forums, or transnational exchanges, the methodology ensures that adult learners - particularly those facing systemic barriers - have the tools, space, and support to shape the systems that shape them.



Target Audience

The ENHANCE Workshop Methodology is designed to serve a diverse yet interconnected audience committed to improving adult education through participatory and inclusive approaches. **Each workshop is designed to last a total of 4 hours (either altogether or in 2 sessions of 2 hours each) and with a group size of 5 to 7 participants.** The target audience includes:

1. Adult Educators and Learning Providers

These include facilitators, trainers, program designers, and institutional leaders working in non-formal, community-based, or formal adult education. The methodology helps them create safe, structured environments in which adult learners can express their experiences and contribute to the design and improvement of learning processes.

2. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Organizations working in social inclusion, migrant rights, women's empowerment, digital equity, or community development often act as bridges between learners and institutions. This methodology supports CSOs in gathering, elevating, and acting upon the voices of marginalized learners, ensuring that their advocacy and service provision is co-created and responsive.

3. Policymakers and Public Authorities

Municipal, regional, and national authorities responsible for adult education, skills development, and lifelong learning strategies are key stakeholders. The methodology provides them with tools to engage meaningfully with learners and communities, fostering inclusive policy development and accountability.

4. Adult Learners

At the center of the methodology are the adult learners themselves — especially those traditionally excluded from decision-making spaces. The workshops are structured to ensure that learners from diverse backgrounds (including low-income, migrant, unemployed, rural, or racialized communities) can participate safely and meaningfully. In each workshop setting, learners are actively engaged as co-creators of knowledge and strategy.

5. Networks and Alliances

Umbrella organizations, EU platforms, and advocacy alliances can use this methodology to facilitate cross-border learning, support member organizations, and scale good practices.

The Workshop Methodology



Area 1: Creating a Roadmap | Setting the Scene

Why Setting the Scene Matters

The first step in any participatory process is creating a shared understanding of the journey ahead. In adult education, especially when aiming to enhance learner voice and influence decision-making, this means starting with an open space where expectations, roles, and values can be co-developed. Setting the scene is not only about logistical clarity — it is about trust-building, role reversal, and grounding all voices, including those traditionally marginalized, in the process from the outset.

In the ENHANCE project, learner voice is not a symbolic goal — it is a structural one. Involving adult learners, educators, civil society actors, and policymakers in co-developing a roadmap requires an intentional pause before the journey begins. This Area allows for such a pause. It invites participants to reflect on **why they are here, how they define learner voice, and what changes they hope to see**. In doing so, it lays the foundation for authentic collaboration.

By the end of this Area, participants will:

- Understand the objectives of the workshop series and their role within it;
- Be introduced to the ENHANCE Draft Roadmap and the journey it proposes;
- Start building shared language and trust with other participants.
- Begin reflecting on what steps or milestones resonate with their context;



Introducing the ENHANCE Draft Roadmap

The draft ENHANCE Roadmap (see visual below or on printed handouts) is a visual, non-linear journey through key stages that support learner participation in shaping education policy and practice. It is not a fixed tool — it is an evolving map that will be modified, debated, adapted, and localized throughout the workshop process.

The roadmap includes the following key milestones:

- 1. Building Communities**
Creating spaces of belonging and solidarity where learners, educators, and CSOs can exchange experiences and build mutual trust.
- 2. Understanding the Power of Policy Representation & Visibility**
Exploring how learners are (or are not) represented in education policy and public discourse, and what visibility means for empowerment.
- 3. Addressing Barriers and Enablers to Participation**
Identifying what prevents or supports learners from participating actively — including institutional cultures, systemic inequalities, and the role of policy actors.
- 4. Developing Engagement Strategies for Learners & Practitioners**
Co-designing ways for adult learners and educators to engage meaningfully in decision-making processes — both in organizations and broader governance.

5. Developing Community-Based Advocacy Actions

Turning ideas into action: working with others in the community to raise awareness, mobilize support, and advocate for policy or practice change.

6. Learning to Listen in Policy Making

Shifting power through listening: building capacity among decision-makers and institutions to listen with accountability and humility.

7. Strengthening the Role of Learners in Decision-Making

Moving from tokenistic inclusion to structural participation: ensuring learners are part of agenda-setting, resource allocation, and governance processes.

How to Use the Roadmap in This Workshop

In this Area, the draft roadmap is used as a **conversation starter** and **co-design tool**. Participants will:

- **Review the roadmap visually and conceptually**, using the image as a metaphor for the learning and action journey;
- Reflect in small groups or pairs on which elements feel most relevant or missing in their own local contexts;

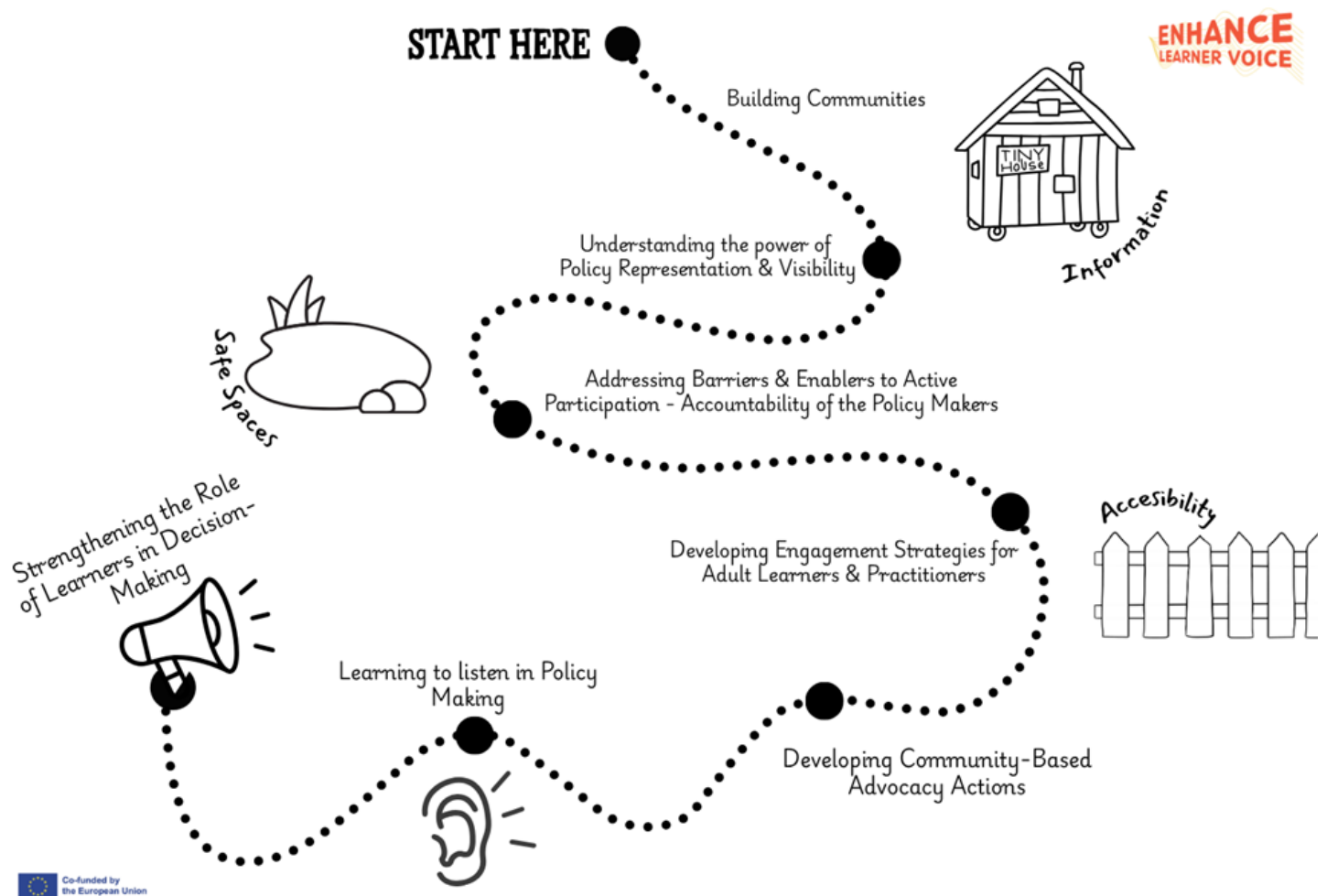
- Be invited to place themselves on the roadmap — where do they currently stand? What is the “next step” they would like to take?
- Begin suggesting edits, additions, or adaptations to the roadmap based on lived experience.

Facilitators should make it clear that there are no “right” answers — participants can challenge the order, content, or structure of the roadmap. This is their opportunity to shape the shared tool they will use throughout the next Areas.

Key Messages to Reinforce

- The roadmap is a living tool — it evolves with your input.
- Your voice is central — this process is about co-creating pathways to systemic change.
- We start by setting the scene because transformation requires shared clarity and trust.

The roadmap tool



Area 2: Building a Community



Why Community Comes Before Content

In participatory adult education, the quality of dialogue depends on the quality of relationships. Before we can meaningfully explore policy, voice, or advocacy, we must take time to build a temporary but powerful learning community. This Area focuses on nurturing trust, openness, and mutual respect among participants — many of whom come from very different lived experiences, roles, or power positions.

Community-building in this context does not mean consensus or comfort. Instead, it means creating a space where differences are acknowledged, lived experience is respected, and vulnerability is possible. This is especially important when amplifying adult learners' voices, particularly those from marginalized or underrepresented communities. They must know — through practice, not just words — that their perspectives are valued and that the space is safe to speak.

This Area aims to:

- Foster a shared sense of purpose and belonging among participants;
- Surface values, hopes, and concerns that will shape future discussions;

- Prepare the group to engage respectfully with tension, power, and difference;
- Create a “short community” that can support honest conversation throughout the roadmap process.

The Role of Educators, Facilitators, and Learners

This Area invites a brief shift away from roles — teacher, learner, policymaker, facilitator — and instead focuses on **people as contributors** to a shared journey. All participants are invited to bring their full selves into the room, not just their professional or learner identity.

Facilitators are encouraged to lead by example — being transparent about their own positionality, and actively inviting the voices of those who may be less likely to speak first. Learners, especially those with lived experience of exclusion, should be supported in finding ways to participate without pressure. The community-building process should also acknowledge structural inequalities (such as language, education level, digital skills, or social status) that may shape who feels safe to contribute.

Suggested Framing Questions

- What brings us here today — beyond our job titles or roles?
- What are we hoping to learn — and what are we ready to unlearn?
- What does a “participatory” space look and feel like to you?
- What agreements do we need to make to feel safe, heard, and respected here?

Activities to Build a Short Community

Use this space to insert an activity designed to build quick rapport, psychological safety, and connection among participants.

These could include creative warm-ups, storytelling circles, role reversals, values ranking, or short partner dialogues. Aim for 15–30 minutes total. - Recommendations from EAEA:

Activity 1: “The River of Voice” (20–30 minutes)

Purpose: *To help participants connect through personal experience and reflect on what voice and participation have meant in their lives.*

How it works:

1. **Introduction (2 min):** Invite participants to imagine their own “river of voice” — moments in life where they felt heard, silenced, empowered, or ignored. These can be from education, work, family, or civic life.

2. **Silent Reflection (5 min):** Ask each person to sketch or map their “river” on a piece of paper (or digitally), marking a few key moments along the way. No artistic skills needed — just symbols or words.
3. **Pair Sharing (10 min):** In pairs, participants take turns sharing their river and briefly describing one or two moments that stand out.
4. **Group Debrief (10–15 min):** Come back together and reflect as a group:
 - What did it feel like to reflect on your voice?
 - What conditions helped you feel heard?
 - What do we need to make this space one where all voices can flow?

Why it works:

This activity centers participants’ lived experience and gently shifts the conversation toward voice, participation, and trust. It helps break down hierarchies and encourages empathy.

Activity 2: “We Share / We Don’t Share” (15–20 minutes)

Purpose: *To quickly uncover common ground and respectfully acknowledge difference among participants.*

How it works:

1. **Preparation:** Prepare a list of 8–10 statements (see examples below). These should be broad, relatable, and designed to spark connection or insight.

2. **Instructions:** Read out each statement one at a time. After each one, participants move to one side of the room (or use emoji/thumbs up in online chat) if it resonates, or stay seated if it does not. Invite people to look around and notice patterns.
3. **Optional:** After each movement, you can ask a few people to explain their choice if they feel comfortable.
4. **Debrief:** Reflect as a group:
 - What surprised you?
 - What does this activity tell us about who we are — individually and together?
 - How can we honour both shared and different experiences?

Sample Statements:

- *I consider myself a lifelong learner.*
- *I've felt left out of decisions that affect me.*
- *I speak more than one language.*
- *I've struggled to access education at some point in my life.*
- *I believe communities have the power to change systems.*
- *I've seen policy work... and I've seen it fail.*

Why it works:

This activity builds a shared emotional “map” of the group — reinforcing that while differences exist, there is also powerful common ground. It lowers barriers and fosters mutual respect without requiring deep vulnerability.

Building Shared Agreements (Optional but Encouraged)

After initial activities, facilitators may choose to co-create a set of **community agreements** or “working principles” for the sessions. These could include:

- Listen to understand, not to reply.
- Speak from personal experience.
- Stay open to discomfort and learning.
- Respect language and cultural differences.
- Step up, step back (balance participation).

These agreements can be noted on a visible poster or digital slide, and revisited or revised throughout the workshops as needed.

Closing the Area: Holding the Community Lightly

This is a short community — built for the duration of this meeting or series of workshops — but that doesn't make it less real. What is built here can echo far beyond the meeting room, in new practices, partnerships, and insights. This Area is not about creating permanent groups, but about setting the tone and shared ethic for what comes next.

Area 3: Defining Practices on the Voice of the Learners

From Principle to Practice

After building trust and reflecting on shared values and experiences, this Area focuses on identifying and articulating **what learner voice looks like in practice**. “Learner voice” can be a broad or abstract concept — often used in policy, pedagogy, or civil society frameworks — but it must be grounded in real experiences, settings, and relationships to drive meaningful change.

This Area supports participants in mapping and sharing examples of where learner voice already exists in their context, as well as identifying gaps or areas where it is still missing. Through this process, the group begins to build a **collective vocabulary** of practices, tools, and strategies that enable meaningful participation. These may range from formal consultation structures to informal cultural practices, or from grassroots initiatives to institutional innovations.

Why This Step Matters

Too often, conversations about participation remain aspirational — focused on what should happen rather than what is happening. But the ENHANCE Roadmap depends on our ability to identify **practices that work**, even if they are small, local, or

under-recognized. This Area invites a shift from general discussion to shared learning.

It helps participants:

- Recognize and name effective practices that give voice to adult learners;
- Understand the conditions that allow these practices to succeed;
- Compare experiences across roles and sectors (learners, educators, CSOs, policymakers);
- Begin documenting practices that could inform policy or be scaled elsewhere.

Key Discussion Themes

You may want to organize discussions around these guiding themes:

- **Where and when do learners currently have a voice?**
- **What forms does this voice take?** (e.g. consultation, co-design, storytelling, leadership)
- **How is that voice heard or acted on by institutions or systems?**
- **What tools, approaches, or spaces support meaningful engagement?**

- What risks, barriers, or tokenism have we encountered?

Suggested Activities

Activity: “Mapping the Practices” (30–45 minutes)

1. Small Group Work (20–30 minutes)

Break into small groups (3–5 people). Each group receives a large sheet of paper (or shared digital board) with a simple grid or map. They are asked to write down or sketch:

- Examples of where learner voice exists in their setting
- Tools or strategies used (e.g. councils, peer support, policy feedback, storytelling)
- Who initiates the practice, and who benefits
- Whether these practices are formal, informal, or grassroots

2. Gallery Walk or Group Sharing (10–15 minutes)

Groups place their maps around the room or present key examples. Participants move around and add comments, questions, or connections with sticky notes or in discussion.

Optional Follow-Up: “Case Study Deep Dive”

Invite one or two participants to present a practice in more depth — describing not just what it is, but how it was developed, what made it work, and what challenges remain.

Facilitation Tips

- Emphasize that practices can be small-scale and still significant.
- Avoid idealizing examples — encourage honest discussion about limitations and learning.
- Validate informal or cultural practices that may not be “recognized” but hold power.

Link to the Roadmap

This Area supports progress along several roadmap points, and the practices identified here may serve as **case studies** or **evidence** in later Areas — particularly when participants work on advocacy actions or policy design. Ask the participants to recommend where in the roadmap these practices that you are discussing fit in.

Area 4:

Designing Policy

From Practice to Influence

This Area marks a critical shift: participants move from identifying and sharing existing practices (Area 3) to imagining and proposing **policy change**. It asks participants to reflect on what they believe should change in the systems, institutions, or policies that shape adult learning — and to articulate those ideas in ways that can be communicated to decision-makers.

The emphasis here is not on producing perfect policy documents, but on enabling participants — especially learners — to **recognize their right to shape policy** and practice their capacity to do so. The process is about confidence, clarity, and shared purpose. It helps groups translate their lived experience and knowledge into concrete suggestions for change.

This Area also serves as a critical checkpoint for the ENHANCE Roadmap: how has the roadmap helped surface new thinking? Where did it support or limit the emergence of bold ideas? These reflections will feed directly into the project's broader evaluation and advocacy work.

Aims of the Area

By the end of this Area, participants should:

- Identify key areas of policy that affect learner voice, participation, or inclusion;
- Express clear and relevant recommendations for change;
- Reflect on who needs to hear their message (policy targets, institutions, etc.);
- Evaluate how the ENHANCE Roadmap helped (or hindered) this process.

Suggested Framing Questions

- What is one policy (local, national, institutional, EU) that limits participation in adult learning?
- What needs to change in that policy — and what would a better version look like?
- Who holds the power to make that change happen?
- How can learners and practitioners be involved in shaping, monitoring, or implementing that change?

Suggested Activities

Activity: “From Experience to Recommendation” (45–60 minutes)

Step 1 – Reflection (10–15 minutes)

Each participant reflects individually or in pairs:

- What did we hear in earlier Areas that revealed a gap in policy?
- What is one issue that feels urgent and possible to change?

Step 2 – Group Work (20–25 minutes)

Participants work in small groups to answer the following three questions:

1. **What should change in policy?**
Be as specific as possible: funding rules, consultation processes, curriculum design, access criteria, language support, etc.
2. **Who needs to hear this?**
Identify the relevant policymaker(s): e.g. ministry officials, local authorities, education providers, EU actors, etc.
3. **How did the roadmap help or hinder this expression?**
Did the steps and visuals of the roadmap support clear thinking? Were any key issues or stages missing from it?

Step 3 – Share and Synthesize (10–15 minutes)

Each group presents 1–2 key recommendations and answers the three core questions. Facilitators record the results for use in reporting and toolkit development.

Tips for Facilitators

- Reassure participants: you don't need to be a “policy expert” to see what needs to change.
- Support clarity and feasibility, but do not limit ambition — this is a space to **practice power**.
- Validate the knowledge participants bring from lived experience and professional practice.
- Ensure that learners are not overpowered by institutional voices during group work.

Link to the Roadmap

This Area supports progress along several roadmap points, and the recommendations identified here may serve as **steps in the roadmap, re-routes or alternative paths**. Ask the participants to recommend what the role of their recommendations would be.

Area 5: Addressing Re-Routes and Dead-Ends

Why We Need to Talk About What Goes Wrong

Any journey of transformation — especially one involving learner participation and policy change — will encounter obstacles. Some are external (resistance from institutions, lack of funding), some internal (burnout, fear of speaking up), and others are systemic (inequality, bureaucracy, tokenism). This Area creates space to confront those obstacles, not as signs of failure but as invitations to adapt, reflect, and resist collectively.

In the context of the ENHANCE Roadmap, this Area is about naming the re-routes (changes in strategy, shifts in focus) and the dead-ends (moments when actions stall or become impossible). These experiences are not setbacks — they are critical data for learning, advocacy, and system redesign.

Aims of the Area

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Identify moments in their practice or advocacy where voice initiatives struggled or failed;
- Share how they adapted or what lessons emerged;
- Recognize patterns in what hinders learner voice or systemic change;
- Build collective resilience through honest reflection and peer support.

This Area strengthens the *integrity* of the roadmap: a roadmap without obstacles is fiction. Mapping and naming these tensions makes the entire process more credible and useful.

Framing Questions for Dialogue

- Have you ever tried to give or gather learner voice... and hit a wall?
- What systems or structures make it difficult for learner voices to be heard?
- What did you do in response — change direction, give up, find support?
- What patterns do we notice across our stories of resistance or difficulty?
- What would it take to overcome these recurring blocks?

Suggested Activity: “The Wall and the Bridge” (45–60 minutes)

Step 1 – Story Circles (20 minutes)

In small groups (3–4 people), invite each participant to share a short story of a time when:

- A learner voice initiative faced strong resistance
- Their voice (or someone else’s) was not taken seriously
- A promising action hit a “dead-end” (policy, funding, internal power dynamics, etc.)

Encourage honest, non-performative storytelling. This is not about polished narratives — it’s about making the struggle visible.

Step 2 – Pattern Mapping (10–15 minutes)

On a large sheet or whiteboard, each group writes down the barriers they heard across stories (e.g., gatekeeping, lack of time, low confidence, political resistance, no feedback loops). Highlight recurring themes.

Step 3 – From Wall to Bridge (15–20 minutes)

Now shift the lens: what helped participants move forward — or what could help next time? Write these “bridges” beside the “walls.” They might include:

- Peer support
- Involving learners earlier in the process

- Partnering with CSOs or allies in the system
- Changing language or reframing arguments

Optional Extension: Systems Reflection

Facilitators can invite the group to place the identified “walls” and “bridges” onto the ENHANCE Roadmap itself. Where do these blocks typically appear in the process? Are some stages more vulnerable than others? This helps refine the roadmap for future use.

Facilitator Tips

- Normalize challenge and failure — they are part of real change.
- Frame “dead-ends” not as endings, but as places that require rethinking.
- Listen carefully to silences — sometimes what’s not said reveals structural pain points.
- Be aware of emotional load; ensure time for closure and support if heavy experiences arise.

How This Area Strengthens the Roadmap

This Area is a reality check. It enriches the roadmap by introducing **feedback loops**, allowing the process to acknowledge and integrate failure, resistance, or diversion. This makes the roadmap not only more realistic but more usable.

Area 6: Collecting Data

Why Documenting Matters

The journey of enhancing learner voice in adult education is deeply experiential — but to create lasting impact, that experience must be documented, interpreted, and shared. Area 6 ensures that the valuable insights, innovations, and tensions that surface during workshops don't disappear when the session ends. Data collection is essential not just for evaluation, but for learning, advocacy, and future replication.

This Area is not about monitoring for compliance — it's about building a culture of reflection and learning **with** participants. Every idea, emotion, obstacle, or quote can help inform future policies, shape revisions to the ENHANCE Roadmap, and support the recognition of adult learners as co-creators of educational transformation.

The ENHANCE Workshop Data Sheet

This Area introduces and supports the use of the [Workshop Data Sheet – Roadmap Testing for Inclusive Adult Learning Policy](#), a tool developed by the ENHANCE consortium to capture rich, multi-dimensional data across all workshop Areas.

This tool is to be completed by **facilitators and co-facilitators** — ideally in real-time or directly after the session. It is structured to:

- Align directly with the **flow of the workshop Areas**;
- Capture both **quantitative and qualitative information**;
- Support the **aggregation of insights** from multiple sites;
- Enable the project team to identify patterns, gaps, innovations, and tensions.

Framing the Tool in Use

Facilitators are encouraged to:

- **Introduce the purpose** of the data collection to participants at the start of the workshop series;
- Reassure participants that data will be anonymized and used for reflection, not judgment;
- **Engage co-facilitators or note-takers** where possible to avoid the burden of solo documentation;
- Use quotes, visuals, or emotional observations **with participant consent**, especially when photos or personal reflections are involved;
- Make the tool **visible and open to feedback** — treat it as a shared resource, not a hidden checklist.

Ethical Considerations

- **Informed consent** must be obtained when collecting identifiable data, photos, or direct quotes.
- Make space for **withholding or withdrawing** consent at any time.
- Ensure **accessibility** of the tool — it should not create barriers for facilitators with different communication or processing styles.
- If translating notes later, retain **original meaning and nuance** wherever possible.

Using the Data for Change

The information gathered through this Area will:

- Support the ongoing **refinement of the ENHANCE Roadmap**;
- Feed into national and EU-level **policy recommendations**;
- Contribute to **toolkit development**, podcasts, and case studies;
- Recognize the contributions of adult learners and community educators in a documented, visible way.



Reports on the ENHANCE Workshops | Our experience



Ireland

Workshop Information

January 8th, 2026
Belfast, Northern Ireland
Eve Cobain and Larisa Sioneriu

Participant Profile (Area 2: Building Communities)

8 participants
3 learners; 3 educators; 2 policy makers

7 females; 1 male
7 White; 1 Black

3 learners involved in adult education
3 practitioners with experience in the
adult education sector ranging from 5
years to 20 years
2 policymakers from the Department
for the Economy Northern Ireland
including Head of Skills Strategy Branch

Gender:
1 M + 6 F
Age: 39 to 67

Familiarity with Learner Voice:
4;3.5;4;2;3;3;2;2;
English
N/A

Ideas & Contributions (Area 3: Defining Practice)

Participants felt that all the steps coexist and should not be treated as a linear sequence, but rather as a circular set of actions. They emphasised that the process is not linear, noting that “learning to listen” appears late in the current map and comes across as more passive.

The map was also seen as lacking flow, with participants suggesting that listening should be placed at the top to reflect its central importance.

Additionally, the language used in the roadmap was identified as a barrier to its use. Learners and educators provided various comments and suggestions to improve clarity, accessibility, and engagement. Participants noted that they struggled with the language, and that the tool should be in plain English:

‘I don’t really understand, the language is too dense.’

‘A barrier with it (the map) is the language used as it disrupts absorption; use plain English.’

‘Language is ambiguous and not accessible enough’

Suggestions for changing its form and structure:

Replace the current roadmap with a Venn diagram or circular layout,

featuring four main overlapping sections: Accountability, Safe Space, Information, and Accessibility.

Arrange it as a flow chart, with Policymaking at the bottom, illustrating a clear structure for strengthening the voice of learners.

Step three is unclear, particularly the addition of the “accountability of the Policy Makers” piece. This step links to the sixth step “Learning to listen in Policy Making”

Replace the word “for” in the fourth step (Developing Engagement Strategies for Adult Learners & Practitioners) with “with” to reflect learners’ and practitioners’ key role in this process.

Policy Impact Reflections (Area 4: Designing Policy)

Participants agreed that more people should be involved; and that everybody needs to hear about adult education.

The roadmap reminded participants of the importance of building strong networks and sustaining meaningful conversations. It reinforced the need to represent and value everyone, and to remain comfortable with change and with hearing different voices.

Participants also reflected on the idea that change is continuous – it is a circle, constant and never-ending. At times,

certain voices may be given more weight than others, which should not be the case. Because of this, the message needs to be repeated, revisited in new contexts, and kept alive. Ongoing communication and connected networks are essential to making that happen.

Participants observed that some of the language in the map felt overly passive, particularly the phrase ‘learning to listen’ in policymaking. They stressed that the role of civil society is not simply to be listened to, but to act, to influence, challenge, and advocate. Policymaking must be open to scrutiny, and voices should be heard at every level.

The group emphasised the need to draw on expertise from harder-to-reach places and communities, and to ensure quality, diversity, and inclusion across councils and decision-making structures.

Particular challenges in Northern Ireland were noted, where coalition government can result in disagreement at executive level.

The need for stronger inter-departmental collaboration was also reinforced.

In the absence of a rural development policy for Northern Ireland, co-design has been adopted as an alternative approach. However, co-design without implementation is insufficient. Advocacy remains essential.

Participants highlighted that priorities are ultimately reflected in how funding is allocated, and that progress often depends on reaching political agreement.

While a comprehensive funding policy would be ideal, participants acknowledged the importance of making progress step by step in the current environment.

Paths Identified (Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

The group agreed that the most effective way to ensure policymakers listen and respond to issues is through pressure, organisation, and lobbying.

Participants shared several examples illustrating how advocacy and lobbying were crucial in ensuring policymakers listened and acted; and also, where actions have reached dead-ends:

One participant recalled a three-year course they were attending as a learner, which suddenly lost its funding overnight without prior

consultation. The learners approached the Minister, who claimed he had not been informed. As a result of their advocacy, funding was reinstated, highlighting the importance of Learner Voice in action.

Another participant described applying for a university placement during their third year, only to be denied a visa due to being classified as a mature student. Despite advocating to politicians, no funding or support was provided.

Access to childcare remains limited, making it difficult for parents to return to education.

In a community gardening group younger members initially planned activities in a specific way. Advocacy encouraged broader thinking about what the community actually needed, demonstrating the importance of challenging standard course offerings to achieve real impact.

One learner requiring ongoing disability support received less assistance than anticipated. Through continued advocacy, the situation was adjusted, turning a potentially negative experience into a positive one.

In one case, Level 4 funding was initially withheld. The participant had to meet with the fund manager and provide a detailed write-up demonstrating progression from Level 1 through Level 4, including testimonials from learners, to secure funding.

Points of Tension / Friction (Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

No disagreement noticed within the group. They all agreed on challenges and effective actions to push for change.

Quotes:

'What a great level of maturity is there in the room; 10 years ago, it would have been 'the government is the enemy.'

'I feel energised and has been thought provoking.'

'Very positive; lot of warmth in the room and to meet people I haven't met before.'

'Commitment to Northern Ireland is incredible and we want to support.'

'I enjoyed being here meeting so many viewpoints and experiences; fascinated with all the different aspects.'

'I'm privileged to be in this space; quite an intense session; enjoyed every bit of it.'

'Very grateful for the opportunity and the importance of being in room with people. I'm here to serve people.'

'I didn't know what to expect but I'm blown away by everyone's backgrounds and experiences.'

'Thank you to everyone, I feel very comfortable and didn't feel anyone had an agenda. Thank you (addressed to policymakers) for being able to be myself.'

7. Emotional Journey

Started with a sense of curiosity, and perhaps precarious but soon participants became more relaxed and opened up. Towards the end there was an unexpected sense of connection and warmth. We finished with a sense of hope, solidarity and possibility of change, amidst shared awareness of limitation and challenge.

8. Facilitator Reflections

How comfortable the learners felt around policymakers; how honest and respectful conversations were; the shared understanding on the different challenges the different actors faced

The Roadmap itself – its linearity and language; the definition/ metaphor

See above



Hungary

Workshop Information

The workshop took place on February 17, 2026 in Pécs, Hungary, in an in-person format. It was facilitated by colleagues from the Educators' Centre Association (NHE). This was a standalone workshop focused on testing and reflecting on the ENHANCE roadmap. The roadmap was introduced as a flexible and evolving tool, and participants were encouraged to relate it to their own experiences and contexts.

At the beginning of the session, Dixit cards were used as an icebreaker, helping participants reflect on what the concept of "learner voice" means to them in a personal and intuitive way.

Participant Profile (Area 2: Building Communities)

There were 6 participants in total. The group consisted mainly of adult learners and professionals working in education. Participants came from different backgrounds and age groups, which created a diverse and open atmosphere for discussion. Most had some prior experience with adult learning, either as learners or facilitators. Their familiarity with the concept of learner voice varied, but

overall they had a basic understanding and were able to reflect on it through examples. The working language of the workshop was Hungarian, but we used the materials in English because every participant speaks also English.

To support community building, participants also took part in the "We Share / We Don't Share" activity, which helped reveal common experiences and differences in a simple and engaging way.

3. Ideas & Contributions (Module 3: Defining Practice)

Participants emphasized that learner voice is already present in small, informal ways, but often not recognized or structured. They highlighted the importance of creating safe and supportive environments where people feel comfortable speaking. Some suggested that the roadmap should be less linear and more flexible, reflecting the ongoing and cyclical nature of learning and participation. There was also a strong emphasis on using simpler and more accessible language so that the tool can be understood by everyone.

During the session, participants used art-based methods to express their experiences through the "river of

voice” activity, where they visually represented moments when they felt heard, silenced, or empowered. This helped deepen reflection and supported more personal sharing.

Participants shared examples from their own experiences where dialogue, trust, and personal relationships played a key role in enabling participation. Informal conversations, peer support, and community-based activities were mentioned as important practices that help amplify learners’ voices.

6. Policy Impact Reflections (Module 4: Designing Policy)

Participants felt that policies should become more inclusive and responsive to the real needs of learners. They highlighted the importance of involving learners directly in decision-making processes, not only as consultees but as active contributors. Key actors who should hear these messages include local authorities, education providers, and policymakers at different levels.

The roadmap helped participants structure their thoughts and connect personal experiences to broader systemic issues, although at times it felt abstract and required additional explanation.

4. Paths Identified (Module 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

The group agreed that building strong relationships and maintaining continuous dialogue is essential for influencing change. A commonly identified path was starting from small, local initiatives and gradually connecting them to larger systems.

At the same time, participants noted that progress is often slow and dependent on external factors such as funding or institutional openness. Alternative approaches included working through informal networks, partnerships, and community initiatives when formal channels are not accessible.

5. Points of Tension / Friction (Module 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

Some tensions emerged around structural barriers, such as limited resources, lack of time, and institutional rigidity. Participants reflected that in the Hungarian context, decision-making processes are often centralized, which can make it more difficult for local initiatives and learner voices to reach policymakers.

It was also noted that the concept of “learner voice” is not always immediately understood. In many

cases, both learners and educators are used to more traditional, top-down systems, where participation is not an expected or embedded practice. As a result, learners may not naturally see themselves as active contributors, and they often lack the confidence or habit of expressing their opinions. Compared to some Western European contexts, this kind of participatory mindset is less established, and the demand for being heard is not always explicitly present.

There were also challenges related to limited opportunities for meaningful participation, as consultation processes are not always transparent or accessible. Participants mentioned that even when spaces for dialogue exist, they do not always lead to real change, which can reduce motivation and trust.

Language and terminology were also identified as barriers, especially when policy or project-related language becomes too abstract or technical. This can exclude learners who are less familiar with such frameworks. Despite these challenges, the group remained open and engaged, and there was a shared willingness to reflect on how these barriers could be gradually addressed.

7. Emotional Journey

At the beginning, participants were curious and slightly reserved, supported by the use of Dixit cards that helped them connect to the topic in a more personal way. As the session progressed, they became more open and engaged, especially during the art-based “river of voice” activity and the group exercises.

Participants created drawings and visual representations during the “river of voice” activity using art-based methods. These included personal maps, symbols, and keywords reflecting their experiences. Additional notes and reflections were captured during group discussions.

There were moments of deeper reflection when participants visualized and shared their personal experiences. By the end of the workshop, there was a sense of connection, mutual understanding, and cautious optimism. Participants expressed that it was valuable to hear different perspectives and to reflect on their own role in shaping learning processes.

8. Facilitator Reflections

It was surprising how quickly participants opened up and engaged in meaningful discussions, especially through the use of creative and visual methods. The small group size supported a more personal and interactive dynamic. What worked well was the combination of reflective, visual, and discussion-based activities.

Some parts of the roadmap required additional explanation, as the concepts were not always immediately clear. In the future, it would be helpful to simplify the language and provide more concrete examples to support understanding.



Austria

Workshop Information

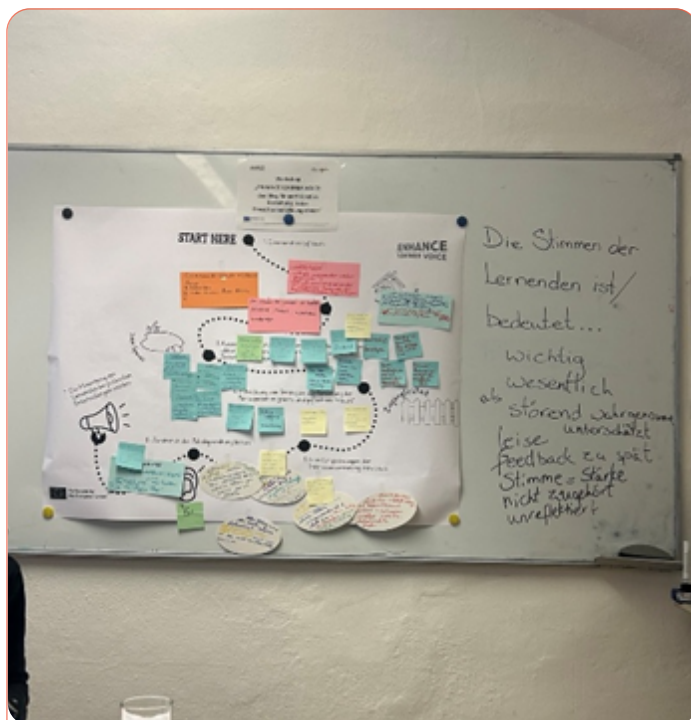
- Date: 04.03.2026
- Location / Format (in-person/online): das kollektiv, Linz / in person
- Facilitators: Kim Carrington
- Workshop Number (if part of a series): 1/1
- Roadmap Approach Being Tested: 2,5 hrs super short session with the focus on modules 1, 3, 4 & 5

Participant Profile (Area 2: Building Communities)

Number of Participants: 5

Experience with Adult Learning
(brief description):

- o Mag.a Abena Carty-Pinner (policymaker): indirect experience, comes from a family of educators, personal experience and awareness
- o Renate Heitz (policymaker: indirect experience, speech therapist, awareness, focus of political work is to improve the living situation of women in Upper Austria
- o Gul Ghuncha Qurbani (learner): Student and Peer-educator/multiplier at das kollektiv



o Parasto Mumtaz (learner): Student and Peer-educator/multiplier at das kollektiv

o Damijan* Stranner (educator): Educator in participatory, intersectional adult education for 10+ years

Ages: 31 to 61

Gender: female, non-binary

Background: Austrian (born, migrant heritage), Afghan, Canadian

Familiarity with Learner Voice (scale 1–5 + notes): learner 1: 4, learner 2: 4, educator: 5, policymaker 1: 3, policymaker 2: 4

Language(s) Spoken:

- o language spoken in the workshop: German
- o languages spoken by the participants: German, English, Pashto, Dari, French

Ideas & Contributions (Area 3: Defining Practice)

To enhance a roadmap step

Step 1: Communities: Replicate the 'das kollektiv' model as a practical community-building exercise. A learner described how she was asked, for the first time, what she wanted to learn, rather than being given a fixed textbook. This was identified as a transformative community-building moment.

Step 3 — Barriers: Add an explicit intersectional/feminist lens. The educator argued that the barriers faced by migrant women cannot be understood in isolation from classism, racism and sexism, including the ways in which these are perpetuated by educators themselves.

Step 4 — Strategies: Participants proposed that strategy development must start with preconditions, specifically free childcare and multilingual information materials, as strategies for participation remain inaccessible without them.

Step 6 — Listening: Expand from a citizen-facing action to include mandatory reform of educator training. The educator argued that most adult educators lack training in participatory, emancipatory, or intersectional pedagogy, meaning listening cannot be structurally embedded without reforming educator training.

Step 7: Strengthening Learners: Move beyond citizenship as a prerequisite for

participation. A policymaker noted that mechanisms such as the Chamber of Labour elections (Arbeiterkammer) and trade unions already allow participation without full citizenship, and these should be explicitly named in the roadmap.

o To modify or replace a step

Step 2 — Political Representation: A participant noted that adult education is rarely covered in media. Proposed addition: a media/public visibility sub-step to increase representation beyond formal political channels.

Step 3 — Barriers: Suggested splitting this step into two: (a) barriers attributable to individual educators (ego, prejudice, burnout) vs. (b) structural/systemic barriers (funding logics, methodological prescriptions, Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) constraints). This distinction was seen as important for targeting responsibility correctly. (The educator)

Step 6 — Listening in Policy: The current framing focuses on policymakers; participants proposed extending this to educators and institutions, not just state-level decision-makers.

o To better include learners' voices

Feedback must happen during courses, not only after. A policymaker observed that feedback questionnaires after a course cannot change the experience the learner just had. Voice must be integrated into the design process, not appended at the end. Ask learners at the beginning of a course what they want to learn. A learner's 'das kollektiv' story illustrated the profound difference

this makes. Learner voice should be the starting point for professional reflection, not a consultation afterthought. The educator proposed reframing it as ‘a necessary, integral, direction-setting aspect of participatory education.’ Podcast format as a visibility and voice tool — already used in the project (facilitator description of prior practices).

Innovative Practices Shared (formal or informal):

- o Specific practices linked to specific steps

Practice	Linked Roadmap Step & Source
das kollektiv model: learners are asked what they want to learn; no fixed textbook used	<i>Step 1 (Communities) & Step 7 (Learner Role) — , a learner</i>
Podcast production with migrant women about their educational experiences	<i>Step 2 (Visibility) — facilitator</i>
Project Moving On - a participatory event designed and organised by learners in collaboration with educators at das kollektiv	<i>Step 7 — facilitator</i>
Municipal Advisory Council for Integration (Integrationsbeirat der Stadt Linz) as a formal local advocacy channel	<i>Step 5 (Advocacy) & Step 6 (Listening) a policymaker</i>
Chamber of Labour elections / Unions as political participation for those without citizenship	<i>Step 7 ; a policymaker</i>
Peer discussion & social circle advocacy ('speaking to colleagues, attending this workshop')	<i>Step 4 — a policymaker</i>

Policy Impact Reflections (Area 4: Designing Policy)

What do participants believe should change in policy?

- Free adult education and free childcare — identified as the single most structurally impactful change. A policymaker noted that in Oberösterreich, free afternoon childcare was reversed in 2017, directly limiting women's access to education and employment.
- Multilingual information materials and flexible course times — proposed as a minimum accessibility standard. (a learner)
- Recognition of non-formal skills and multilingual competence — formal credentials currently overshadow actual skills. A policymaker argued that this represents a 'constructed barrier' that society could remove.
- Reform of educator training to include intersectional, anti-racist, feminist, and trauma-sensitive approaches. Currently, competency-oriented and output-oriented training dominates, excluding participatory/emancipatory pedagogy. (the educator)
- Language assessment reform — speed and accent should not be penalized as deficits. Language should be reframed as a bridge, not a barrier. A learner described receiving minus points on an exam for speaking quickly.
- Political participation mechanisms

beyond citizenship — Chamber of Labour elections and union elections should be maintained and expanded; parties must create spaces for migrants without citizenship.

- Austrian Integration Fund (Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF))-prescribed value courses (Wertekurse) were specifically criticized for constraining educators' methodological freedom and preventing genuine listening. (the educator)

Who needs to hear this?
(policymaker targets)

Local Level:

Municipal Advisory Council for Integration / Integrationsbeirat der Stadt Linz — bring education to the agenda

Municipal childcare authorities

Regional or provincial Level:

Landesregierung Oberösterreich — reverse childcare cuts (Landeshauptmann-Stv. Christine Haberlander named)

National Level:

Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) — reform prescriptive course formats

Ministry of Education / Bildungsministerium — reform educator training standards

Political parties across the spectrum — create participation spaces for migrants

Institutional:

Adult education providers — adopt

a model of learner-led curriculum similar to that of das kollektiv Educator training institutions — embed intersectional pedagogy amplify mechanisms for migrant political participation

- How did the roadmap help or hinder this expression

Helped: The roadmap's physical metaphor (road, walls, bridges, detours) gave participants an accessible and non-hierarchical vocabulary for naming systemic issues, lowering the threshold for contribution.

Helped: The visual and non-linear structure allowed participants to place their observations across multiple steps rather than feeling constrained by a single answer. The facilitator explicitly noted that the roadmap is not strictly linear and that there is definitely the possibility that a discussed topic could also revert or jump ahead to another step.

Hindered: Some milestones felt too abstract or broad. The group naturally collapsed and re-sequenced steps, suggesting the step boundaries were not fully intuitive.

Hindered: The roadmap does not yet include an explicit intersectional or feminist axis, so this perspective had to be introduced by participants themselves — it did not arise from the tool's structure.

Paths Identified (Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

Primary Path:

- Most agreed-upon route to policy inclusion 10 The group converged on the following sequential logic, validated through discussion and post-it placement: Community Building --> Barrier Identification (intersectional) --> Strategy Development --> Advocacy --> Policy Listening --> Structural Learner Empowerment

Steps and sub-steps validated by participants

- Step 1 (Communities): Essential and foundational — safe spaces, trust, and shared experience must precede political action. Validated by 'das kollektiv' example and opening card exercise.
- Sub-step validated: Asking learners from the outset what they want to learn (not at the end via an evaluation)
- Step 3 (Barriers): The most extensively validated step — all participants contributed barrier identification. Rich consensus around language, childcare, educator attitude, citizenship, structural/funding constraints.
- Sub-step validated: Distinguishing between educator-level barriers (ego, prejudice, burnout) and system-level barriers (Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) prescriptions, funding logics)

- Step 4 (Strategies): Validated with concrete proposals — free childcare, flexible times, translation services, multilingual materials, free education.
- Step 5 (Advocacy): Validated — AK, unions, Municipal Advisory Council for Integration (Integrationsbeirat) named as concrete advocacy channels.
- Step 6 (Listening): Validated, but with the critical caveat that educators and institutions must also be targets of this step, not just formal policymakers.
- Step 7 (Learner Empowerment): Validated — the shift from symbolic participation to structural co-determination was strongly affirmed. “Our voice is our strength” - ‘Unsere Stimme, unsere Stärke.’

Secondary Paths / Alternatives:

o Divergent suggestions

- Media/visibility as a parallel track to formal political representation (not just a sub-step of Step 2). Podcasts and public discourse proposed as standalone activities.

Peer-to-peer network building and ‘speaking to colleagues’ as a grassroots alternative to top-down policy advocacy. A policymaker argued that individual sphere-of-influence action is more immediately actionable than waiting for systemic change.

o Context-specific strategies

- Linz/Austria-specific: Using the Municipal Advisory Council for Integration (Integrationsbeirat der

Stadt Linz) as a model; referencing the Chamber of Labour’s election cycles.

- Using EU project frameworks (ENHANCE, Moving On) as legitimising structures to open doors with institutional decision-makers. (facilitator)
- Working within educator training programs to introduce intersectional content — a ‘long game’ strategy for systemic change.

o Conditional ideas (“if X, then Y”)

- If childcare were made free and flexible --> more migrant women could access education and employment pathways. (a policymaker)
- If educator training included intersectionality and emancipatory pedagogy --> classrooms would become genuine safe spaces. (the educator)
- If learner voice were treated as the starting point of professional reflection --> course quality and relevance would improve measurably. (the educator)
- If language were assessed as an asset rather than a deficit --> migrant women’s multilingual competences would be valued in education and employment.
- If citizenship were decoupled from participation mechanisms --> migrant women could contribute to democratic processes early on. (a learner)

Points of Tension / Friction Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends

Type of tension:

- Conceptual (e.g. disagreement on definitions)

- Definition of 'learner voice': ranged from 'necessary starting point for professional reflection' (the educator) to 'too quiet and still underestimated' (a policymaker) too 'uncomfortable / perceived as disruptive' (a policymaker describing systemic perception). These framings reflect fundamentally different assumptions about where the problem lies: in the voice itself, or in how it is received.
- Definition of 'language barrier': tension between language as an objective obstacle (needing more courses) vs. language as a misrecognised asset (framing speed and accent as deficits rather than signs of fluency). The facilitator explicitly reframed this during discussion.
- Scope of citizenship: disagreement on whether citizenship 'solves' participation, with a learner noting that her husband waited 13 years for citizenship, only to find its benefits more limited than expected.

- Structural (e.g. time, funding)

- Educator working conditions: The educator noted that educators working 38 of 40 hours in front of classes have no bandwidth to listen,

reflect, or adapt. This is a systemic constraint, not an individual failure.

- Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) prescriptions (Wertekurse): methodological and content constraints imposed on educators limit their ability to adopt participatory approaches, creating a structural ceiling on how much 'listening' can occur.
- Costs: adult education courses remain expensive, and childcare costs amplify this barrier for women with children. The reversal of free childcare in Upper Austria (2017) was cited as a concrete policy regression. (a policymaker)
- Dual school system: selection at age 10 (Academic secondary school vs. middle school) was identified as a deep structural determinant that streamlines many migrant children and shapes their trajectories long before adult education becomes relevant. (facilitator)

- Emotional (e.g. feeling excluded)

- A learner described receiving minus points in a language course for speaking too fast — a direct experience of her competence being penalised.
- A learner recounted a young Afghan woman in a computer workshop who said she wished she had been born in Austria — because being born here would mean she could speak German fluently and have more opportunities.

- A learner described a young girl who was placed in a special needs school (Sonderschule) due to language barriers, which permanently closed off future educational pathways.
- A policymaker expressed sharp frustration at the impudence of people with citizenship who do not vote, contrasting this with migrants who have no such luxury and option.

- Cultural (e.g. language, norms)

- Language hierarchy in Austria: certain languages (English) are more privileged than others; languages associated with migration are devalued: "Good languages, bad languages".
- Patriarchal listening: the concept of "sexist listening" / "patriarchal listening" was introduced — the idea that women's voices are heard differently (more critically, less seriously) than men's voices, both in learning settings and in political spaces. (a policymaker)
- Conservative family ideology: the political insistence that mothers remain home with children was identified as not economically rational, but ideologically motivated — reproduced even by women in positions of power (e.g., Christine Haberland).

7. Emotional Journey

Use an emotional timeline or draw on participant reflections. • Checkpoints (Before / During / After Session):

Before	Opening cards suggested a mixture of resignation ('still too quiet'), critical alertness ('underestimated, treated as unknowing'), and normative aspiration ('our voice, our strength'). The dominant pre-session emotion appears to be frustration at a gap between the importance of learner voice and how rarely it is genuinely honoured.
During — Highs	<p>A learner's <i>das kollektiv</i> story : Describing the first time she was asked what she wanted to learn — her surprise and delight ('okay, das ist aber sehr gut!') — was an empowerment high point, demonstrating that change is possible and already happening.</p> <p>A policymaker's call to action — "Get out and vote!" and 'we are all part of this' — generated a sense of collective agency and political energy.</p>
During — Lows	<p>Opening round consensus: participants across different roles (learner, educator, advocate) converged on shared language quickly, creating early group cohesion.</p> <p>A learner's <i>minus-points</i> story : Describing being penalised in a language test for speaking fluently (but too quickly) provoked visible discomfort and empathy in the group.</p> <p>The special needs education story : A learner recounting a young girl channelled to special needs school due to language barriers — and the permanent closure of educational paths this created — was an emotional low point.</p> <p>The Afghan woman who wished she had been born in Austria : This moment crystallised the weight of structural exclusion in a single personal wish.</p> <p>Childcare regression (a policymaker): The reversal of free afternoon childcare in 2017 in OO provoked frustration — a concrete example of policy going backwards and the impact it has on women's access to the labour market and to further education. This impact is compounded for migrant women as they do not have the family/friend network (e.g. grandparent) to depend on for childcare.</p>
After	The session ended with concrete proposals and a shared sense that the roadmap — though imperfect — is a useful living tool. The group's energy suggests the workshop successfully moved participants from naming frustrations to identifying actionable leverage points. The statement "We don't need to start from zero" (facilitator) likely left participants with a sense of cumulative progress.

8. Facilitator Reflections

- Frustration: Educator burnout and overwork as a structural barrier to listening (the educator)
- Frustration: Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) prescriptions constraining educator autonomy
- Frustration: Conservative political ideology actively reversing childcare provision
- Frustration: Learner voice still being reduced to post-course evaluations
- Hope: ‘das kollektiv’ model showing what authentic learner-centred education looks like
- Hope: EU framework as an entry point for change (a policymaker)
- Empowerment: “Our voice, our strength” — written by a learner as their definition of learner voice
- Empowerment: A policymaker’s argument that everyone can act within their own sphere of influence today

The Netherlands

Workshop Information

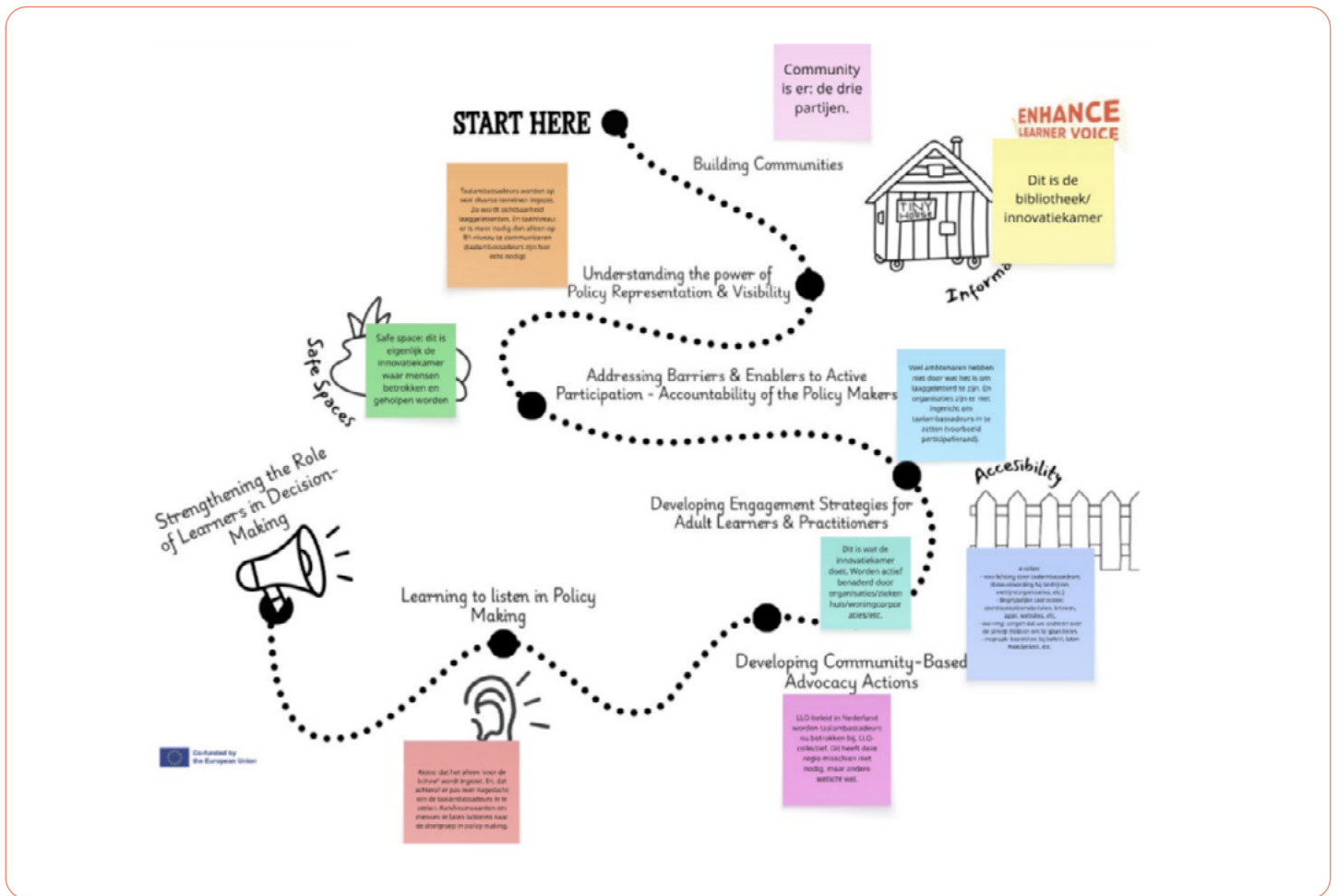
- 12 March 2026
- Online workshop
- Matthieu Mes (Stichting ABC) & Elke van Doorn (CINOP)
- Single session.
- Testing the ENHANCE Policy Roadmap as a tool to explore how learner voices can be structurally integrated into adult education policy and practice. The roadmap was used to reflect on existing practices, identify barriers, and explore possible policy improvements regarding learner participation.

Participant Profile (Area 2: Building Communities)

- 3 participants (plus facilitator and note-taker)
- Regional stakeholders involved in adult learning and basic skills policy and practice: municipality representative, library representative, ROC (VET provider) representative.
- 3 female participants represented institutional stakeholders working

with adult education and basic skills in a regional context. Male moderator, female note taker. No other specific demographic data collected.

- Participants have extensive experience working with adult education and basic skills initiatives, including literacy programmes, digital skills training, and coordination of learner participation initiatives.
- High familiarity (estimated 4–5 on scale). Participants actively work with learner involvement through language ambassadors and participatory initiatives.
- Dutch (working language of the workshop).
- One of the participants is visually impaired, so visuals were explained with words by moderator and note taker.



3. Ideas & Contributions (Module 3: Defining Practice)

- Participants emphasised the importance of creating structured infrastructures that allow learners to participate in policy processes. The Innovation Room model was identified as an example of such infrastructure. Participants suggested that learner voice mechanisms must be embedded early in processes rather than consulted only at the final stage.
- Participants suggested that the roadmap should highlight the need for structural embedding of learner voice within organisational

processes, not only consultation moments. The roadmap could better emphasise long-term collaboration structures between institutions.

- Establishing organised learner groups (such as language ambassadors) that can act as representatives. Structural involvement of learner representatives in policy development and communication processes. Creating safe spaces where learners can express their perspectives. Providing support structures such as coordinators who maintain relationships and trust with learners.

- The Innovation Room (Innovatiekamer) model, where language ambassadors collaborate with institutions such as municipalities, libraries, and VET providers. Language ambassadors are involved in awareness raising, testing communication materials, recruiting new learners, and contributing to policy discussions.
- Examples include: language ambassadors reviewing policy documents and communication materials; learners participating in municipal advisory councils; involving learners in outreach and recruitment activities; testing whether institutional communication is understandable.

- National government (regarding funding and policy frameworks for adult education), municipalities, educational institutions (especially VET providers), and organisations responsible for social services and community support.
- The roadmap helped structure reflection on learner participation and policy influence. It provided a framework to discuss existing practices and identify missing elements. However, participants emphasised that real change depends on structural embedding of learner voice in institutional processes rather than isolated consultation moments.

6. Policy Impact Reflections (Module 4: Designing Policy)

- Participants highlighted the need for stronger structural support for learner participation in policy processes. Policies should ensure that language ambassadors and learner representatives are involved earlier in policy development processes. More long-term funding for adult education and literacy initiatives is needed. Institutional processes should require consultation with learner representatives when developing communication materials and policies.

4. Paths Identified (Module 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

- Creating organised structures for learner participation, such as the Innovation Room model. Ensuring language ambassadors are involved in multiple roles: awareness raising, communication testing, recruitment, and policy consultation. Embedding these practices structurally within organisations and local policy processes.
- Building trust with learners through dedicated coordinators; creating safe spaces for

dialogue; involving learners in testing communication materials; integrating learner feedback into institutional processes; collaboration between municipalities, libraries, and VET providers.

- Expanding the network of partners involved (e.g., housing associations, hospitals, welfare organisations). Increasing outreach to rural communities through local community centres and village halls. Using storytelling and personal narratives of learners to influence policy and awareness.
- If long-term funding and policy commitment exist, learner participation structures can become sustainable. Without funding stability, initiatives risk disappearing.

5. Points of Tension / Friction (Module 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

- Structural embedding of learner voice in policy processes.
- Structural (funding, institutional processes), conceptual (understanding of learner voice), cultural (language barriers).
- “Many civil servants do not realise what it means to be low-literate.”
- “Sometimes it feels like participation happens only for show, rather than real influence.”
- “Language ambassadors are sometimes involved too late in the process.”

7. Emotional Journey

Participants entered with strong engagement and experience in learner participation initiatives.

During the session:

Pride in successful initiatives such as the Innovation Room and the work of language ambassadors. Recognition of strong collaboration between organisations in the region.

Emotional highs:

Participants expressed pride in language ambassadors who now confidently speak publicly about their experiences. Strong sense of partnership between library, VET provider, and municipality.

Frustrations:

Structural barriers such as limited funding for adult education, insufficient awareness among policymakers, and institutional processes that do not yet structurally include learner input.

Overall reflection:

Despite challenges, participants expressed optimism about collaborative regional approaches and the potential of learner ambassadors to influence policy and practice.

8. Facilitator Reflections

- The level of structural collaboration between regional organisations and the strong role played by language ambassadors.
- Small group helped to give all participants enough room to express their thoughts. Structure of the questions we extracted from the datasheet worked very well for the conversation and note taking.
- Using Miro is not accessible for everybody (e.g. for visually impaired). It was not a big issue; note taker could easily take over.
- The roadmap could emphasise the need for institutional structures that enable continuous learner participation. It should also highlight the importance of long-term funding and coordination roles.

Sweden

Workshop Information

- January 26th 12.00-16.00
- Brunnsviks folkhögskola in Gävle
- Jonathan Korsar, Teacher at Färnebo folkhögskola.
- Mats Ehn, chair of the board, Färnebo folkhögskola
- Half day version

Participant Profile (Area 2: Building Communities)

19 participants in total: 2 facilitators, 4 folk high school teachers, 9 folk high school participants, 3 local politicians and 1 researcher.

11 women and 8 men. The folk high school participants were mainly young adults, several of them born outside Sweden.

1. Jonathan Korsar, teacher, Färnebo Folk High School and workshop facilitator
2. Mats Ehn, chair of the board, Färnebo Folk High School, co-facilitator
3. Rebecca Stråfors-Enderborn, teacher at Färnebo Folk High School and notetaker



4. Widad Kawasmi, teacher at Färnebo Folk High School

5. Mariwan Phoksap, course participant at Färnebo Folk High School

6. Istarlinaa Muhamed, course participant at Färnebo Folk High School

7. Lara Urbansdottir, course participant at Färnebo Folk High School

8. Yamen Safout, course participant at Färnebo Folk High School

9. Kevin Törngren, course participant at Färnebo Folk High School

10. Sine Buck, teacher at Brunnsvik Folk High School

11. Camilla Gerell, teacher at Brunnsvik Folk High School

12. Alfred Strömberg, course participant at Brunnsvik Folk High School

13. Noelle Fossè, course participant at Brunnsvik Folk High School

14. Sarah Carlsson, course participant at Brunnsvik Folk High School

15. Ali Shebri, course participant at Brunnsvik Folk High School

16. Stefan Sjöberg, professor of social work at Gävle University

17. Jörgen Edsvik, politician and member of Gävle City Council

18. Therese Metz, politician and member of Gävle City Council

19. Anders Öqvist, politician and member of the Gävleborg Regional Council

Ideas & Contributions (Area 3: Defining Practice)

One of the goals of the ENHANCE project is to create a roadmap for how policy can help adult learners have the opportunity to influence their educational situation and increase their ability to develop beyond the injustices that characterize today's society.

Our leadpartner EAEA has created a draft roadmap to be tested in the different partner organisations. When planning on how to use this roadmap in our context we considered it to general or abstract for us to be able gather people for a workshop. We therefore made contextual adaptations

of the roadmap to fit our local setting based on the proposed roadmap. The roadmap we tested in the workshop had the following steps.

1. Identify an engaging theme for the workshop participants related to the learners voice:

We chose the role of folk high schools in working for a more just and sustainable Gävle.

2. Define who to invite:

For the purpose of the workshop we wanted to create a meeting between folk high school participants and teachers with local politicians and researchers.

3. Building community:

Many workshop participants had not met before, were of different ages and had wide differences in life experience. After a welcome by the facilitator and an introduction to the day, everyone stood up and greeted each other with the task of remembering at least two other names. This was followed by a round of introductions with names and background. Next, participants spoke with someone they had not met before about the question "What does a just and sustainable Gävle mean to you?" The answers were then reported on a whiteboard.

4. Listen to participants' experiences of folk high school

This was a very important part of the workshop where participants were listened to by politicians and teachers.

Discussion took place in two groups, where politicians and teachers listened to participants' experiences of studying at a folk high school. The starting points were the questions "What does the folk high school mean to you?" and "What do folk high schools do that others do not?" Answers were documented and presented to the whole group on a whiteboard.

There are lots of quotes from the participants in the attached document.

5. Identify challenges regarding justice and sustainability in the local community

Pairs discussed and shared their thoughts on the social and ecological challenges and injustices they see in Gävle today. The pairs wrote the challenges they identified on post-it notes and stuck them up. Politicians and the researcher commented on what participants had written.

Challenges that were identified by the participants:

- Low educational attainment
- High unemployment
- Mental ill-health
- Insecurity
- Exclusion
- Segregation and status hierarchies between neighbourhoods
- Inequality and growing gaps
- Drugs and crime

- Climate change, extreme weather and flooding
- Racism
- Conspiracy theories and "fake news"
- Despair about collective solutions among young people

From the political side the elected representatives stressed the importance of:

- continuing to invest in deprived neighbourhoods (in the municipality, for example, there is an initiative called "the neighbourhood boost" that was mentioned)
- creating meeting places to reduce fear of the unknown
- working on a social housing policy
- investing in good public transport, and
- investing both in education and supporting the movements that exist in the different neighbourhoods and finding ways to encourage youth engagement, and that folk high schools could have a role in this

6. Identify how folk high schools and participants can tackle identified challenges and barriers

In the final session we divided into two groups again and discussed the intersections between the city's challenges and the folk high schools' work. How could the folk high schools and participants work even more on the challenges? What barriers exist?

Here is a summary of the ideas that emerged:

- Folk high schools are an alternative to regular school and a way into society for those not born in Sweden.
- Because folk high schools have the freedom to design course content together with participants, we can address important societal issues in our courses and thereby develop the ability and willingness to engage in society.
- Before elections participants can learn about the parties' proposals and then visit different neighbourhoods to meet people there and encourage them to vote.
- One possibility is to place more folk high school activities out in the neighbourhoods. The folk high school can be a meeting place where people from different backgrounds get to know each other.
- Work for closer cooperation with various civil society organisations.
- It is important that more politicians hear participants' stories about what the folk high school has meant to them. Participants should be encouraged to contact and invite politicians to their school continuously and not only at election times.
- Participants learn a lot about current issues such as climate change and can contribute that knowledge and counter misinformation and conspiracy theories.

- Folk high schools and the municipality could together develop forms of real participation for young people in the city.
- A major barrier to doing more is eroded funding for folk high schools and the fact that teachers' workload is already large.

7. Raise various ideas in relevant forums and seek ways to overcome barriers

The workshop reached point 6 above, but the purpose of the workshop was of course to generate knowledge and ideas to act on.

Based on the possibilities and barriers identified in the workshop there are several ways forward. We need to raise new ideas and concrete proposals at our folk high schools, as well as in associations, neighbourhood networks, political parties and decision-making bodies that see the value of folk high schools' activities. The barriers we identified can be overcome if there is political will. The workshop gave inspiration to move on with this tasks.

Policy Impact Reflections (Area 4: Designing Policy)

The participants perception is that the pedagogy of folk high schools very much is focusing on the learnes voices at the school level but that there is room for improvement when it comes to participation more widely in society.

They think that more young adults should have the opportunity to study at a folk high school.

Another issue that was addressed is how to finance studies, especially for people that have come to Sweden recently.

To create possibilities for the participants to meet politicians is very important and the folk high schools as institutions has a responsibility to facilitate this.

The roadmaps focusing on listening is very important, and also the step to identify possible actions.

As mentioned earlier it is important to adjust the roadmap to the context in which you are working in order to make it relevant for the participants.

Paths Identified (Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

Creating safe spaces where participants feel secure to express themselves.

Let politicians listen to the participants experiences – creation of spaces where this is possible.

Adapt the roadmap to the context.

Points of Tension / Friction (Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

The concept of policy raised some difficulties for this group. We had to reframe it.

The concept of Learner Voice is somewhat difficult in the folk high schools context. We were more talking about the participants real possibilities to have a say on the design of their studies and in society.

As priority was given to the expressions of the participants we did not perceive feelings of exclusion.

7. Emotional Journey

When we started the group was quite quiet but with the initial “icebreaking” activities and with the focus on listening to the participants this changed and the atmosphere was very open.

When we were talking about all the challenges that the local community and the world faces there was some resignation but also frustration and anger.

When we focused on the role of folk high school there was a lot of hope and feelings of empowerment.

The participant expressed it as a very positive that the politicians listened to their stories and asked question.

8. Facilitator Reflections

The adapted workshop methodology worked very well. Participants were active and engaged. The methodology permitted a respectful but intensive interaction between people with very different experiences or social belongings.

With this group it was a bit difficult to use the concept of policy. To many it is very abstract.

European and International Workshop

Workshop Information

Thursday, 11th of December 2025,
9:30-13:30h (4h)

Co-coordinated by EAEA and SOLIDAR+

EAEA ivzw/aisbl (BOZAR Offices),
Rue Ravenstein 78/4, 1000 Brussels,
Belgium - In person

Facilitators:

- Angeliki Giannakopoulou, Senior Policy and Projects Coordinator, EAEA
- Katarina Popovic, Secretary General of ICAE (Invited Speaker: Setting the Scene)
- Alexandra Matthys, Education and Lifelong Learning Officer, SOLIDAR Foundation (Wrap-up and reflections)
- Note taker: Beatrix Martin Pique

LLL Week 2025

4h (half a day) version



Participant Profile (Area 2: Building Communities)

15 (11 + 3 facilitators + 1 notetaker)

1. Angeliki Giannakopoulou:

- EAEA, educator, facilitator
- woman, Greece
- greek, english

2. Alexandra Matthys:

- SOLIDAR+, policy officer
- woman, Belgium
- english, french/dutch?

3. Bea Martín Piqué:

- EAEA, policy and pedagogical trainee
- background in PPE and education
- gender queer, Canary Islands
- spanish, english, german

4. Zsófia Balla:

- AEGEE-Europe (European Students' Forum/ Association des États Généraux des Étudiants de l'Europe), projects director, elected to the executive board, after volunteering for 2 years
- woman, Hungary
- hungarian, english

5. Valentin Giroud:

- Maks vzw, teaches numeric stuff to people
- man, Belgium (?)
- french, english

6. Elisa Gambardella:

- SOLIDAR+, policy director
- woman, Italy
- italian, english

7. Gabrielle Vander Elst:

- Lire et écrire, advocacy officer
- woman, Belgium
- french, english

8. Klara Engels-Perenyi:

- European Commission, DG EMP, policy officer
- woman, Hungary
- hungarian, english

9. Katarina Popovic:

- ICAE (International Council for

Adult Education), University of Belgrade

- veteran, board of EAEA, international policymaker, professor on adult education/ andragogy
- woman, Serbia
- serbian, english

10. Petra Krajcar:

- European Commission, DG EAC, policy assistant
- adult educator teaching french at university while also being a student
- woman, Croatian (?)
- croatian, english, french

11. Marianne Müller:

- SVEB (Swiss Federation for Adult Learning/Schweisses Verband Erwachsene Bildung), board of EAEA
- woman, Switzerland
- english, french/german/italian?

12. Charlotte Ede:

- EAEA, capacity building and projects coordinator
- woman, Dubai, UK
- english, arabic, french, german

13. Veronica Arduino:

- LLLP (Lifelong Learning Platform),

networks from cradle to grave,
project and policy coordinator

- woman, Italy
- italian, english

14. Ana Filipa da Costa Cândido:

- EVBB (European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training)
- woman, Portugal
- portuguese, english

15. Tina Mavrič:

- EAEA, head of capacity building
- woman, Slovenia
- slovenian, english

Ideas & Contributions (Area 3: Defining Practice)

Ideas Proposed by Participants

Participants engaged actively in reflecting on the structure and content of the roadmap, proposing several enhancements to ensure that it better reflects participatory, inclusive, and iterative processes. A key contribution was the recognition that **listening should not be positioned as a single step**, but rather embedded throughout the entire roadmap. Participants symbolically represented this by placing “ears” across multiple stages, emphasizing that listening

is a continuous, transversal practice essential to meaningful participation and policy co-creation.

In addition, participants highlighted the importance of **integrating knowledge, skills, and competencies across all stages of the roadmap**. Rather than treating these as isolated elements, they suggested embedding critical thinking, communication, dialogue, and media literacy throughout the process. This reflects a shift from a linear understanding of learning to a more dynamic and ongoing capacity-building approach.

A significant conceptual modification proposed was to transform the roadmap from a linear sequence into a **cyclical and iterative process**. Participants stressed that participation, learning, and policy engagement are not finite processes but require constant reflection, adaptation, and re-engagement. This resulted in the visualisation of the roadmap as a loop, reinforcing the idea that outcomes feed back into new cycles of learning and action.

Ideas to Modify or Replace Steps

Participants suggested refining the initial stages of the roadmap to more explicitly include **“getting out there” and actively seeking or building communities**. This step was seen as essential prior to structured engagement, highlighting that participation does not begin within formal settings but through outreach, connection, and relationship-building grounded in shared values.

Furthermore, participants proposed strengthening the stages related to **decision-making and accountability**, particularly by incorporating reflection on power dynamics within communities. This included questioning who assumes leadership roles, how decisions are made, and how democratic processes can remain both inclusive and effective.

Ideas to Better Include Learners' Voices

To better integrate learners' voices, participants emphasized the need to **create and sustain safe (physical, social, and emotional) spaces**, where individuals feel able to express disagreement, vulnerability, and diverse perspectives. Importantly, safe spaces were not understood as inherently existing but as something that communities actively **construct and negotiate**.

Participants also stressed the importance of **accessibility** in all its forms—access to communities, to dialogue with stakeholders, and to understandable and relevant information. This included highlighting the need for **clear, accessible, and shared information and data**, as well as the development of skills to interpret and contextualize such information.

Another key contribution was the recognition that learners' voices are expressed in **multiple forms**, including art, storytelling, photography, and collective action. This led to a call for a broader and more flexible

understanding of “voice” within the roadmap.

Innovative Practices Shared

Participants shared a range of innovative practices, both formal and informal, that support participatory processes. These included:

- The use of **community-based advocacy** actions, grounded in shared values and collective reflection.
- The creation and use of **safe and autonomous spaces**, such as universities or community-led environments, where dialogue and participation can flourish.
- The integration of **arts-based approaches** (e.g. photography, performance) as powerful tools for expression and civic engagement.
- Practices of **direct democracy and participatory decision-making**, while also reflecting critically on their limitations in terms of scalability and efficiency.

Specific Practices Linked to Roadmap Steps

Participants identified several concrete action points aligned with specific stages of the roadmap. These include:

- **Developing knowledge and skills:** fostering critical thinking, communication, and dialogue across all stages.

- **Ensuring information and data accessibility:** collecting, contextualising, and sharing information in inclusive ways.
- **Empowering individuals and communities to act:** creating opportunities, safe spaces, and fostering solidarity and motivation.
- **Encouraging self-reflection on values:** supporting individuals and groups in articulating and reassessing their guiding principles.
- **Promoting the ability to listen and speak:** cultivating both active listening and the confidence to express one's voice.
- **Rethinking and testing decision-making models:** experimenting with different forms of governance and participation.

Policy Impact Reflections (Area 4: Designing Policy)

What do participants believe should change in policy?

Participants highlighted the need for policies that **strengthen communities' capacity to act and their sense of agency**. This includes recognising learners not merely as beneficiaries of policy but as **active agents in shaping educational and societal processes**. There was a strong emphasis on the importance of awareness—both

individual and collective—regarding the ability to influence change.

Furthermore, participants implicitly called for policies that support **participatory, inclusive, and bottom-up approaches**, ensuring that spaces for dialogue and co-creation are structurally embedded rather than ad hoc.

Who needs to hear this? (policymaker targets)

While this question was not explicitly addressed during the workshop, participants indirectly pointed to the relevance of engaging **policymakers across different levels (local, national, and European)**, as well as stakeholders involved in education, community development, and civic participation. The absence of a structured discussion on policymaker targets suggests a potential gap in the roadmap methodology that could be strengthened in future iterations.

How did the roadmap help or hinder this expression?

The roadmap facilitated rich discussions around participation, agency, and community-building. However, the lack of a clearly defined step focusing on policy targeting and stakeholder mapping limited participants' ability to translate their reflections into concrete policy advocacy strategies. This indicates that while the roadmap is effective in generating ideas and reflections, it may require further development to support policy-oriented outputs and strategic engagement with decision-makers.

Paths Identified (Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

Primary Path

The primary pathway identified by participants outlines a **progressive and interconnected** process towards policy inclusion, grounded in community-building and participatory practices.

The process begins with **actively reaching out and forming communities**, based on shared values and mutual listening. This is followed by the creation of **safe and inclusive spaces**, which enable trust-building, dialogue, and collective reflection.

Communities then move towards **developing advocacy actions**, while simultaneously reflecting on internal governance, accountability, and decision-making processes. Participants emphasized the importance of balancing democratic participation with effectiveness, particularly in complex or large-scale contexts.

The pathway also includes addressing **barriers and enablers to participation**, with a strong focus on accessibility, inclusion, and the availability of resources and information. This leads to a stage centred on **knowledge, information, and skills**, particularly media literacy, critical thinking, and the ability to understand and contextualize policy processes.

The final stages involve **communication and dialogue with policymakers and stakeholders**, alongside fostering a culture of being heard and learning to listen within policy processes. Importantly, this pathway is not linear but cyclical, with continuous feedback loops that enable reflection, learning, and adaptation.

Secondary Paths / Alternatives

Participants also identified several alternative and context-dependent pathways. These include:

- The recognition that **community-building may take different forms** depending on context, with variations between centralized and decentralized approaches.
- Conditional strategies such as: *if communities lack trust or shared values, then initial efforts must focus on dialogue and relationship-building before moving towards action.*
- The understanding that **decision-making models must be adapted to context**, with some situations requiring more structured leadership, while others benefit from horizontal, participatory approaches.

Additionally, participants highlighted that **skills development (e.g. political literacy, communication)** may need to be prioritized earlier in contexts where individuals lack the capacity or confidence to engage.

Discussion:

- **Chosen end goal:** strengthening voice of learners in decision making at EU level
- **Start: building communities:** being part of something in person, gives you sense of belonging and makes you feel safe. Not just clicking on something online. Finding your voice to take action (have the confidence).

Self-reflection

- o Issue of performative activism (e.g. just sharing something online, and that's it): building a community can keep each other accountable.
- o However, building online communities can be very powerful, should be included in some way. Connect people more widely but actions shouldn't just stay on the level of online communication. Both online and offline community building is important.
- o Question of representation/ type of community you're in. more structured, classic organisation.
- **Information step:** understanding the system; if you don't understand it, you can't tackle the problem. You need to look for information before.
- **Safe Space:** learning to listen; reflect on your own dynamics of your organisation/movement be aware of not explicit rules, etc., get to know barriers and enablers for communities – dead end: policy makers that don't listen: huge

role should be played by political parties

- **Accessibility:** addressing barriers & enablers: awareness of policy makers important.
- Developing engagement
- Developing community based advocacy
- Add self-reflection, crucial to building communities:
- Dead end: problem of gathering in some contexts
- We don't want to be the voice of the students, they should represent themselves

Dead ends and reroutes:

- Self-reflection missing in organisation. Need to raise awareness and train people, put mechanisms in place. There is the need for really having a participatory methodology in every stage of the process. => need to monitor the participatory process and steer/adjust it if it doesn't go as planned.
- Unable to address the barriers and enablers: how to reroute? E.g. a possibility is to have different Working Groups in organisations, that keep an eye on these things/ monitor/safe person and can collect the concerns of the group. Continuous monitoring structure.

- o What if this fails? How to redirect? A lot of self-reflection + evidence based policymaking. Self-reflection: why can we not make part of the people to participate? If we cannot figure this out, we cannot address our barriers.
- o Systematic challenges:
- o Community learning: active participation is not obvious to most people. Some need a trigger/ confidence to be active. If this doesn't happen, we don't reach the end goal.
- o Community that has been built has to be resilient to change (e.g. people/staff leaving, funding challenges, etc.), no handovers etc.
- Challenges to develop engagement strategies:
 - o Dissemination, should go beyond the specific community.
 - o The bigger the community the more strategies people will bring to the table, the more possible division among the community. => need to have a community to allows to have democratic processes/or focused on the aim for consensus but create conflict, etc.
- Advocacy action:
 - o Policymakers that aren't listening, need to reroute

Specific Action points & Specific Roles

- Team: Veronika, Gabriela, Valentin, Zsófia, Elisa
- 1. **Joint activities/joint moments & informally discuss/ build a relationship with the collective** (build communities) could be both in-person & online
- 2. **Create & nurture spaces for community building: Building spaces for communities to meet** (either online or in-person) requires time and people.
- 3. **Self-reflection: continuously assess community structure/ accessibility barriers**
- 4. **Fostering internal and external dialogue**
- 5. **(Dissemination)**
- 6. **Invite policymakers to join the communities**

Specific Action points & Specific Roles

- Team: Klara, Katarina, Charlotte, Marriane, Petra, Ana Filipa
- 1. **Develop Knowledge and skills, especially community and dialogue**
- 2. **Information and data --> accessible and shareable**
- 3. **Empower people to act, create**

opportunities, create safe spaces, motivate, act as community, connect with other

4. **Nurture Solidarity**
5. **Selfe reflect and reflect on community values**
6. **Be able to listen and dare to speak**
7. **Rethink and test our decision-making**

Points of Tension / Friction (Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)

Conceptual Tensions

A recurring tension the group named but did not fully resolve is how to keep growing communities inclusive and cohesive as they scale, given that larger communities bring more diverse strategies but also greater risk of fragmentation or conflict. Inclusion, safe spaces, and awareness of gender dynamics and stigmatisation were highlighted as non-negotiable throughout the entire journey.

Structural Tensions

Participants expressed a general sense of limited time, which constrained the depth of discussion and the ability to fully explore all steps of the roadmap. This suggests that the methodology may require adaptation depending on the duration and objectives of the workshop.

Emotional Tensions

Emotional tensions were present but less explicitly articulated, often linked to broader discussions on feeling unheard, lack of follow-up in participatory processes, and frustration with tokenistic participation.

Cultural Tensions

Cultural differences emerged in discussions around safe spaces, norms of dialogue, and political contexts, particularly when comparing experiences across countries.

7. Emotional Journey

Emotions Observed/Shared

The emotional trajectory of the workshop was rich and multifaceted, characterised by **empathy, frustration, motivation, awe, and hope**. Participants connected deeply with both personal experiences and collective reflections, particularly during storytelling and exchange moments. The participants drew their river of voice which was shared in a very personal and communal way.

Emotional Highs and Lows

A significant emotional high was linked to **Katarina Popovic's intervention on the Serbian student movement**, which evoked strong

reactions, including admiration and inspiration. This moment created a shared sense of urgency and demonstrated the transformative power of collective action and learning.

Another high point was the **collective reflection phase**, where participants expressed appreciation for the **safe and trustworthy space** created during the workshop. This contributed to a renewed sense of motivation and solidarity.

Moments of lower energy or frustration were primarily associated with time constraints and the complexity of navigating participatory processes in practice.

Frustration / Hope / Empowerment Moments

Participants expressed frustration with existing systems where voices are often not genuinely heard or acted upon, particularly in institutional or policy contexts. However, this was counterbalanced by strong expressions of hope and empowerment, driven by the experience of being part of a participatory and respectful environment.

The workshop itself functioned as a **space of empowerment**, reinforcing the importance of dialogue, trust, and collective engagement in fostering meaningful participation and policy change.

8. Facilitator Reflections

As facilitators, we were particularly struck by the level of openness and trust that emerged quite quickly in the room. Although participants came from different organisations, countries, and roles, the workshop created a space in which people were willing to share personal experiences, political concerns, and reflections on participation in a meaningful way. The “river of voice” exercise worked especially well in this regard, as it helped participants connect the concept of voice to lived experience rather than discussing it only in abstract or policy terms. This created a strong foundation for the later group work on the roadmap.

We were also positively surprised by how naturally participants moved from discussing learners’ voices to questioning broader issues of power, accountability, democratic practice, and decision-making. The discussion did not remain at the level of inclusion as a principle, but developed into a deeper reflection on what makes participation genuine, what blocks it, and what kinds of structures are needed to sustain it. Katarina Popovic’s intervention was particularly powerful in setting this tone, as it grounded the discussion in a concrete and urgent example of collective agency, political learning, and public voice. It clearly resonated with participants and helped create a sense of shared purpose.

Another important reflection is that the roadmap was useful in giving participants a common structure and vocabulary, but it also revealed its own limitations through the discussion. One of the clearest outcomes was that participants did not experience the process as linear. Instead, they repeatedly returned to the importance of listening, knowledge-building, dialogue, and reflection as continuous elements running through all stages. This led to the idea of the roadmap as a cycle rather than a sequence, which feels like a significant insight for the further development of the methodology. In that sense, the workshop did not simply validate the roadmap, but actively improved it.

At the same time, we felt that time was one of the main constraints of the session. Even though the 4-hour format allowed for meaningful exchange, there was not enough space to go deeper into all the steps, especially around tensions, re-routes, and policymaker targets. Some of the most thought-provoking moments emerged when participants challenged definitions, raised concerns about tokenistic participation, or reflected on internal accountability within communities, and these areas would have benefited from more time. This suggests that the shorter format works well as an entry point or testing space, but that a longer version may be needed for fuller policy design and deeper collective analysis.

We also reflected on the importance of facilitation as a practice of holding

space for discomfort without closing it down too quickly. A key insight from the session was that a safe space is not a space without disagreement or unease, but one in which people can remain present, reflective, and respectful through those moments. This was visible in the way participants engaged with political differences, cultural contexts, and questions of leadership and representation. As a facilitator, I found it important to allow those tensions to surface while still keeping the group connected and constructive.

Finally, we came away with a renewed sense that enhancing learners' voices requires more than creating opportunities to speak. It also requires nurturing confidence, collective agency, critical awareness, and concrete pathways through which voices can influence learning processes and policy. The workshop confirmed that participants see this as both an educational and a political process. It also reinforced for us that adult learning spaces can and should be places where people not only gain knowledge, but also experience their own power to act, connect with others, and shape change.

Annex



Annex 1: Facilitation Checklist

This checklist supports facilitators before, during, and after ENHANCE Roadmap workshops. It helps ensure consistency, safety, accessibility, and alignment with the participatory principles of the methodology.

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP

✔ Content & Planning

- Read through all six Areas and understand the flow
- Define goals and expected outcomes for the session(s)
- Select/adapt activities based on the group's context

✔ Participants & Communication

- Share invitation, agenda, and accessibility information in advance
- Collect consent for participation, photos, or data if applicable
- Clarify expectations with any co-facilitators or notetakers

✔ Materials & Tools

- Print or prepare the ENHANCE Roadmap (poster or slides)
- Prepare Workshop Data Sheet and documentation tools (pen/paper, digital templates)
- Organize materials: markers, post-its, flipcharts, digital tools (Jamboard, Miro, etc.)

✔ Space & Access

- Check venue accessibility (physical access, signage, restrooms, sound)
- Ensure inclusive participation (translation, interpretation, quiet spaces if needed)
- Test technical equipment (projector, microphones, internet connection)

DURING THE WORKSHOP

✔ Tone & Culture

- Establish community agreements at the start
- Make space for different kinds of contributions (verbal, written, visual)
- Ensure balanced participation — learners' voices are prioritized

✔ Facilitation Practice

- Use open-ended, inclusive questions
- Acknowledge tensions and diverse viewpoints respectfully
- Adapt time and flow if necessary — prioritize depth over speed

✔ Documentation

- Take notes using the Workshop Data Sheet
- Record quotes, photos, emotional checkpoints with consent
- Note points of friction, adaptation, or powerful insight

AFTER THE WORKSHOP

✔ Follow-Up

- Debrief with co-facilitators or note-takers
- Complete missing data points from the Workshop Data Sheet
- Share a thank-you message with participants and next steps (if applicable)

✔ Reflection

- What worked well? What didn't? What surprised you?
- What would you do differently next time?
- Submit or archive the data and reflections for the ENHANCE project team

Annex 2: Sample Workshop Schedules

These are **example agendas** for ENHANCE Roadmap workshops. Each can be adapted based on your local context, group size, or delivery format (in-person or online).

First Option: 1-Day Intensive Workshop (5 hours)

Time	Area / Activity
09:30 – 10:00	Arrival, welcome, housekeeping
10:00 – 10:15	Area 1: Setting the Scene + Roadmap Introduction
10:15 – 10:45	Area 2: Building a Community (1 activities)
10:45 – 11:30	Area 3: Defining Practices + Mapping Exercise
11:30-11:45	Light Lunch
11:45 – 13:00	Area 4: Designing Policy + Group Work
13:00 – 14:00	Area 5: Re-Routes & Dead-Ends
14:00 – 15:00	Wrap-up and reflections

Second Option: 2-Hour Super Short Session

Time	Area / Activity
00:00 – 00:10	Welcome & Objectives
00:10 – 00:30	Area 1: Setting the Scene + Roadmap Walkthrough
00:30 – 01:00	Area 3: Identifying Practice (quick mapping)
01:00 – 01:40	Area 4- 5: Quick-fire policy reflections and re-routes
01:40 – 02:00	Group check-out & closing thoughts

Third Option: Multi-Day Series (e.g. 1 x 1 hour session + 2 x 2-hour sessions)

Session 1: Foundations - Online 1 hour

- Area 1: Setting the Scene
- Area 2: Building a Community

Session 2: Practice & Policy - F2F 2hours

- Area 3: Defining Practices
- Area 4: Designing Policy

Session 3: Complexity & Continuity - F2F 2hours

- Area 5: Re-Routes and Dead-Ends
- Area 6: Collecting Data + Reflections

Annex 3 - The Datasheet

	Data Point / Question	Response/ Observation
Workshop Information (Area 1: Setting the Scene)	Date: Location / Format (in-person/online): Facilitators: Workshop Number (if part of a series): Roadmap Approach Being Tested:	
Participant Profile (Area 2: Building Communities)	Number of Participants: Roles (e.g., learner, educator, policymaker, facilitator): Demographics (age, gender, background): Experience with Adult Learning (brief description): Familiarity with Learner Voice (scale 1–5 + notes): Language(s) Spoken: Accessibility/Support Needs	
33. Ideas & Contributions (Area 3: Defining Practice)	Ideas Proposed by Participants: To enhance a roadmap step To modify or replace a step To better include learners' voices Innovative Practices Shared (formal or informal): Specific practices linked to specific steps	
6. Policy Impact Reflections (Area 4: Designing Policy)	What do participants believe <i>should</i> change in policy? Who needs to hear this? (policymaker targets) How did the roadmap help or hinder this expression	

	Data Point / Question	Response/ Observation
4. Paths Identified (Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)	Primary Path: Most agreed-upon route to policy inclusion Steps and sub-steps validated by participants Secondary Paths / Alternatives: Divergent suggestions Context-specific strategies Conditional ideas (“if X, then Y”)	
5. Points of Tension / Friction (Area 5: Re-routes and Dead-Ends)	Topic or roadmap step related to tension: Type of tension: Conceptual (e.g. disagreement on definitions) Structural (e.g. time, funding) Emotional (e.g. feeling excluded) Cultural (e.g. language, norms) Quotes or Notes:	
7. Emotional Journey	Use an emotional timeline or draw on participant reflections. Checkpoints (Before / During / After Session): Emotions observed/shared Emotional highs/lows Frustration / hope / empowerment moments	
8. Visual and Media Documentation	Photos Taken (reference filenames): Drawings / Diagrams / Maps Created: Post-it Notes / Whiteboard Captures: Moodboards / Visual Metaphors Used: Note: Include reflections or analysis on visual data separately if needed.	
9. Facilitator Reflections	What surprised you? What worked well? What didn’t land with the group? Suggested improvements to the roadmap or process	



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