



LIFELONG LEARNING SUMMIT

18.11.2025 ▶ Ceremonial Hall ▶ University of Copenhagen



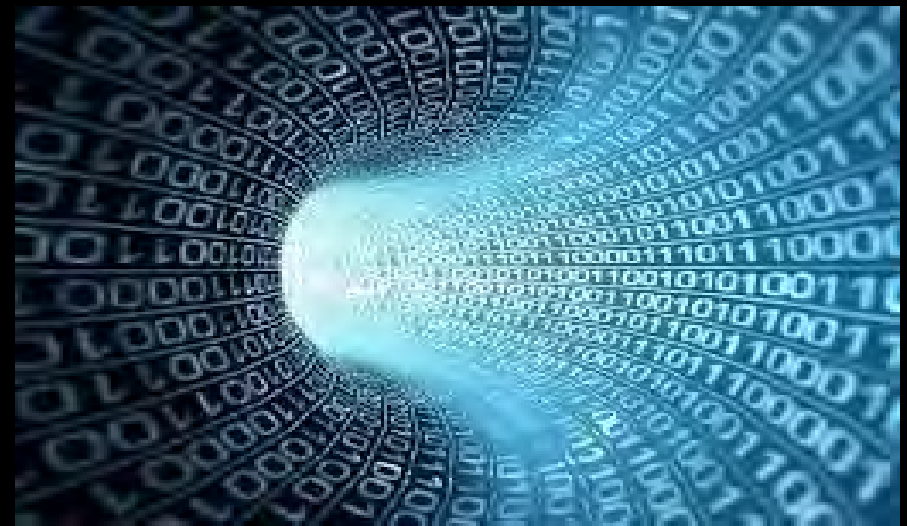
UNIVERSITY OF
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Lifelong Learning and Learning for Long Lives in the age of AI: why this is a strategic imperative for Europe

Geoff Mulgan, November 2025

Copenhagen Lifelong Learning Summit



Curiosity and hunger
to learn ...

...but laziness and busy
lives

So how to make it easy, compelling,
hard to give up?



-
- **EU Definition:** "All general education, vocational education and training, non-formal education and informal learning undertaken throughout life, resulting in an improvement in knowledge, skills and competences". **EU Target:** A key goal is for at least **60% of all adults to participate in training every year by 2030.**
 - Many initiatives: Upskilling Pathways Initiative (2016), the Pact for Skills (2020), and the Council Recommendation on Individual Learning Accounts (2022).

WHY?





The Economist

MenuWeekly editionThe world in briefSearch

A study finds nearly half of jobs are vulnerable to automation

That could free people to pursue more interesting careers

Wage against the machine

Automation risk* and GDP per person, selected countries

Region

Asia

BBC

Your account

HomeNewsSportWeatheriPlayerSounds

NEWS

HomeCost of LivingWar in UkraineCoronationClimateUKWorldBusinessPoliticsCulture

Robots 'to replace up to 20 million factory jobs' by 2030

26 June 2019 · Comments

Up to 20 million manufacturing jobs around the world could be replaced by robots by 2030, according to analysis firm Oxford Economics.

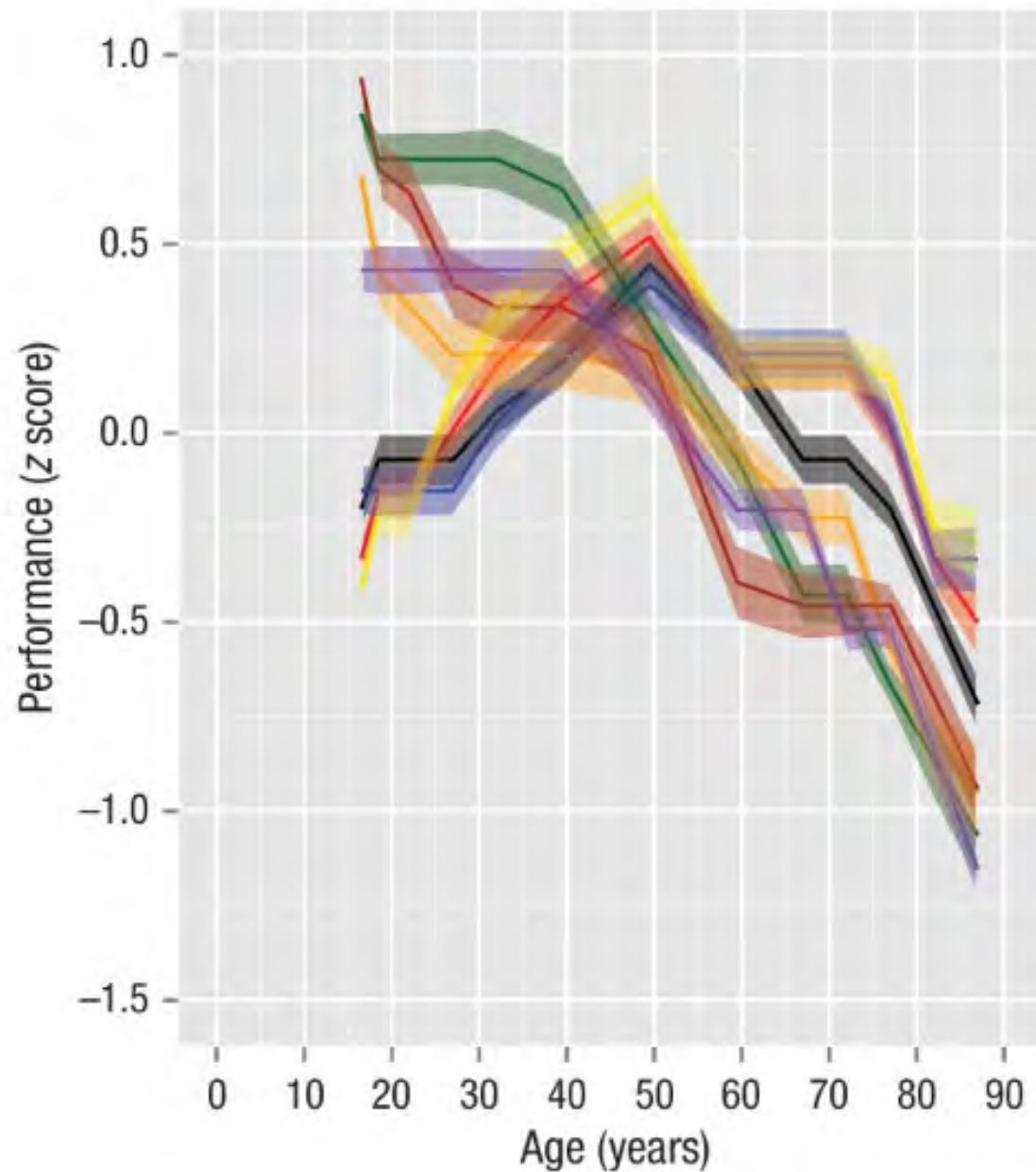
People displaced from those jobs are likely to find that comparable jobs in the services sector have also been squeezed by automation, the firm says.

The Guardian

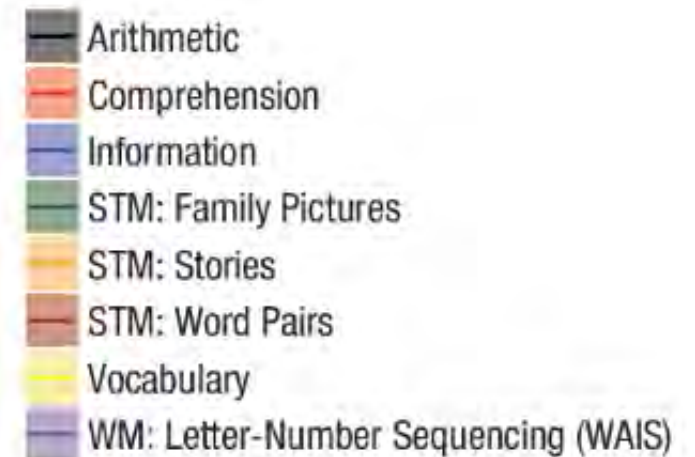
Newspaper of the year

US experts warn AI likely to kill off jobs - and widen wealth inequality

Economists wary of firm predictions but say advances could create new raft of billionaires while other workers are laid off



The rise and fall of cognitive abilities across the lifespan



A positive mindset helps you live longer

Mental attitudes to ageing have a significant impact on health.

Median Survival (years)

Those with :-

- ***positive*** attitude to ageing
22.5
- ***negative*** attitude to ageing
15.0

7.5

Gain

Impressive when compared to improvements in:- *Blood Pressure, Cholesterol: Gain 4 years- Obesity, Smoking, Exercise: Gain 1-3 years*

'Longevity Increased by Positive Self-Perceptions of Ageing', Becca R. Levy et al, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2002, Vol. 83, No. 2, 261-270

Test scores of AI systems on various capabilities relative to human performance

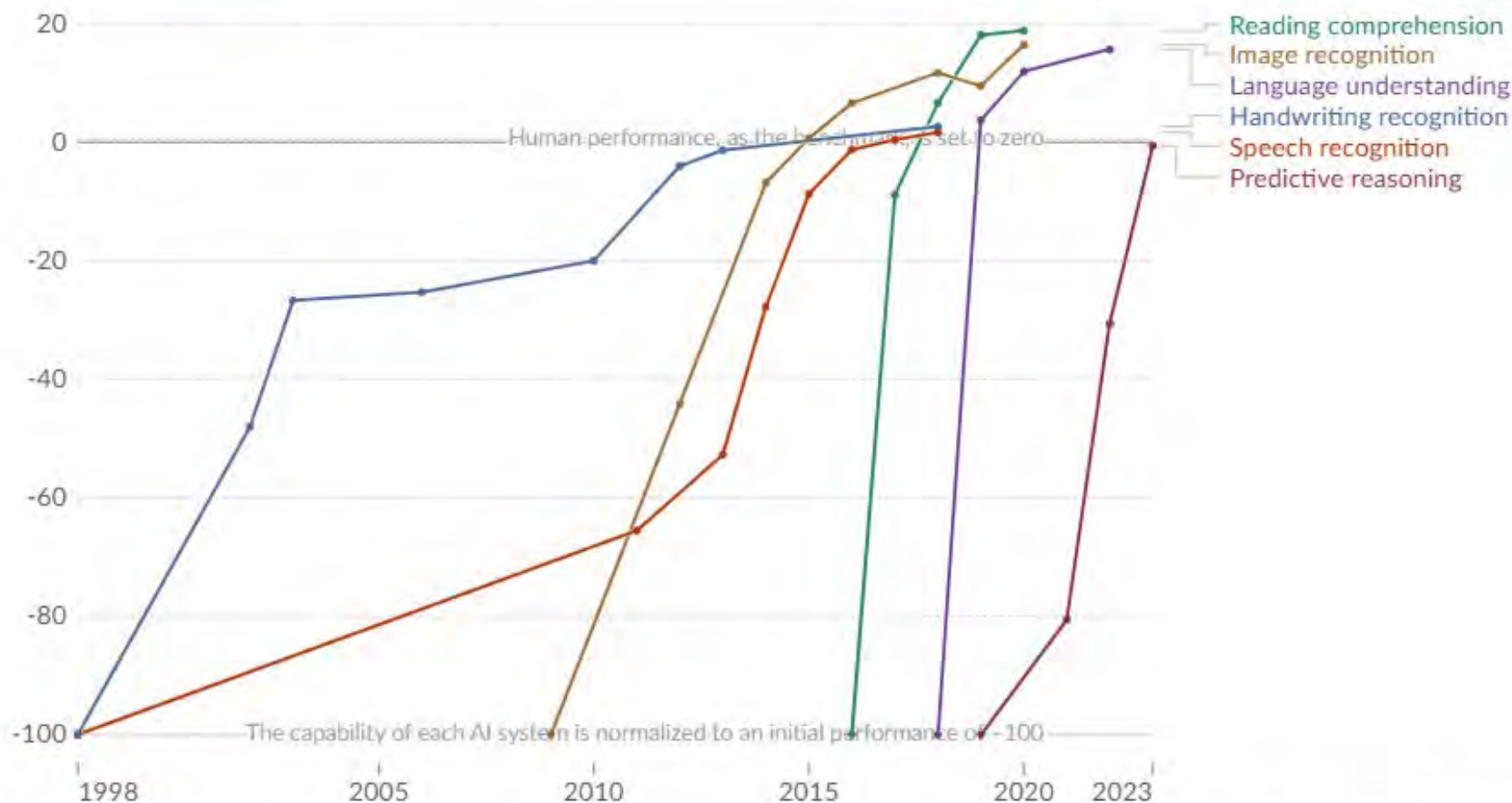
Our World
in Data

Within each domain, the initial performance of the AI is set to -100. Human performance is used as a baseline, set to zero. When the AI's performance crosses the zero line, it scored more points than humans.

Table Chart

Edit capabilities

Settings

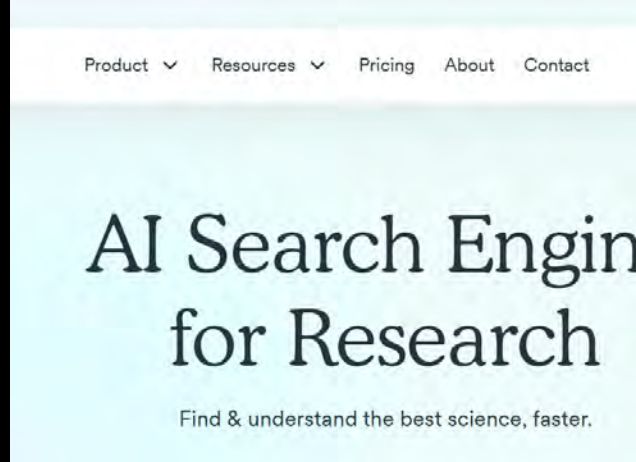


Data source: Kiela et al. (2023) – [Learn more about this data](#)

OurWorldinData.org/artificial-intelligence | CC BY

Note: For each capability, the first year always shows a baseline of -100, even if better performance was recorded later that year.

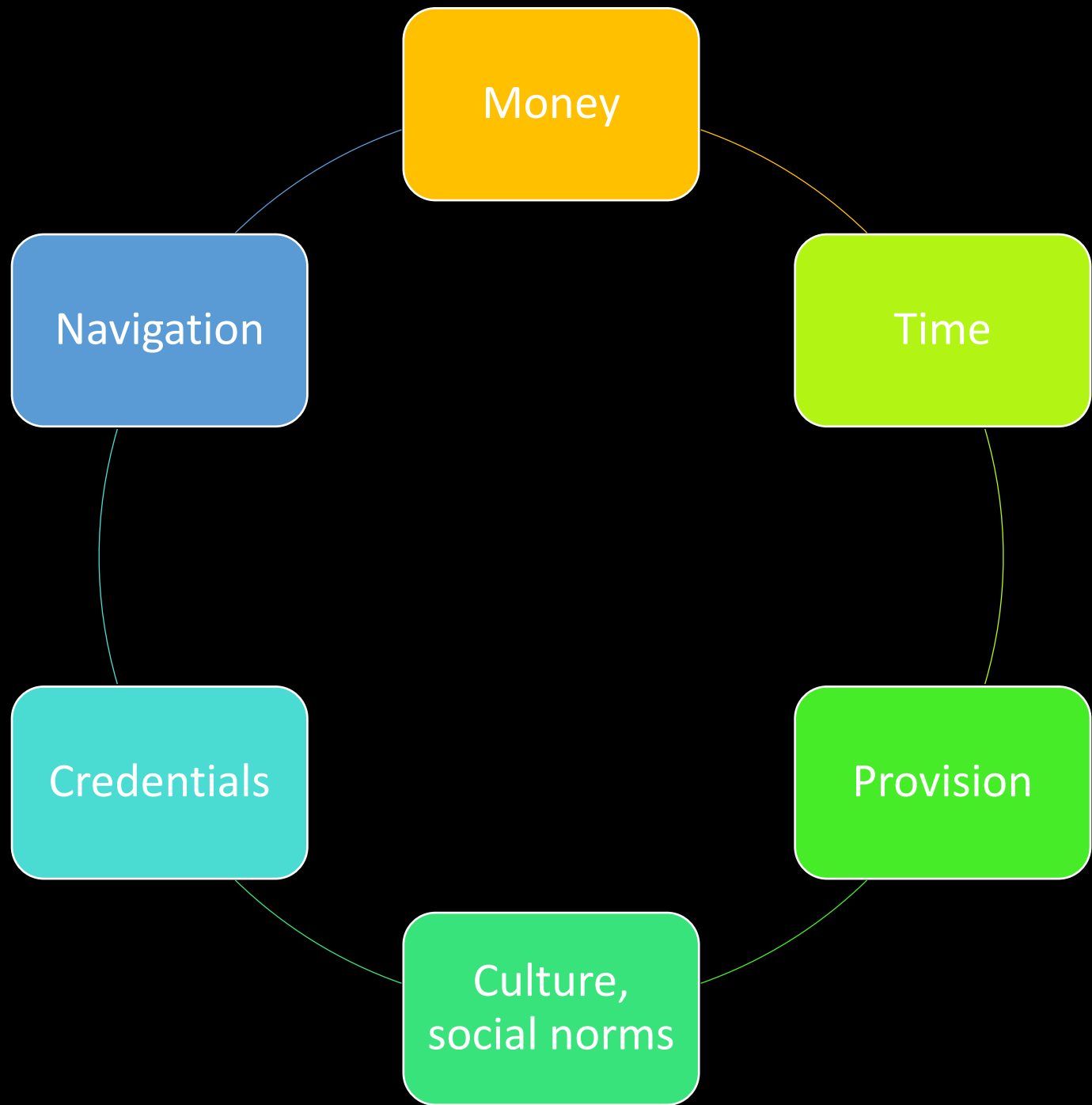




A golden age of tools to:

- Scan, gather and synthesise knowledge
- Describe innovations
- Use different personas
- Offer details on the chain of reasoning
- Propose creative options
- Act as coach, partner

Six essentials for a life learning system in the 2030s:



CULTURE

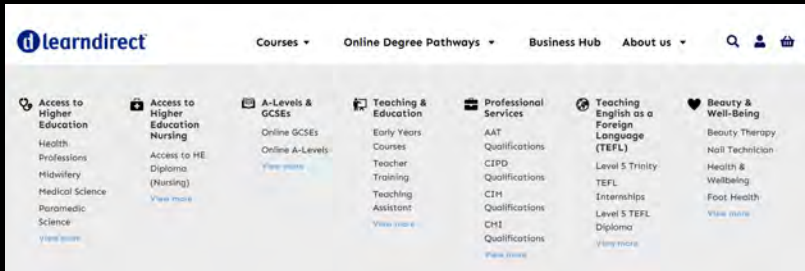
Many different national cultures and approaches and many motivations – fun, future jobs and better play, curiosity, social life and meeting people, hobbies, culture ...

Distinct national cultures and institutions from Sweden's *Folkbildning* to US community colleges, Japan's big financial support (and Prime Minister-led Council for Designing 100-Year Life Society), to Germany's vocational infrastructure and *ProfilPASS*

UK citizens invest £7.3bn a year into their own learning and £55bn worth of their own time - more than the government and employers combined.



200,000 students



500,000 students at its peak: 4.5m in total



400,000 members in 1,000 local groups

MONEY

-
- **European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)** for the European Higher Education Area
 - **France: Compte Personnel de Formation (CPF)** individual-owned, portable, and accessed via the "**Mon Compte Formation**" **mobile app**, which allows users to directly purchase training from a national marketplace
 - **Canada: Lifelong Learning Plan (LLP)** – allowing tax free loans from pension investments



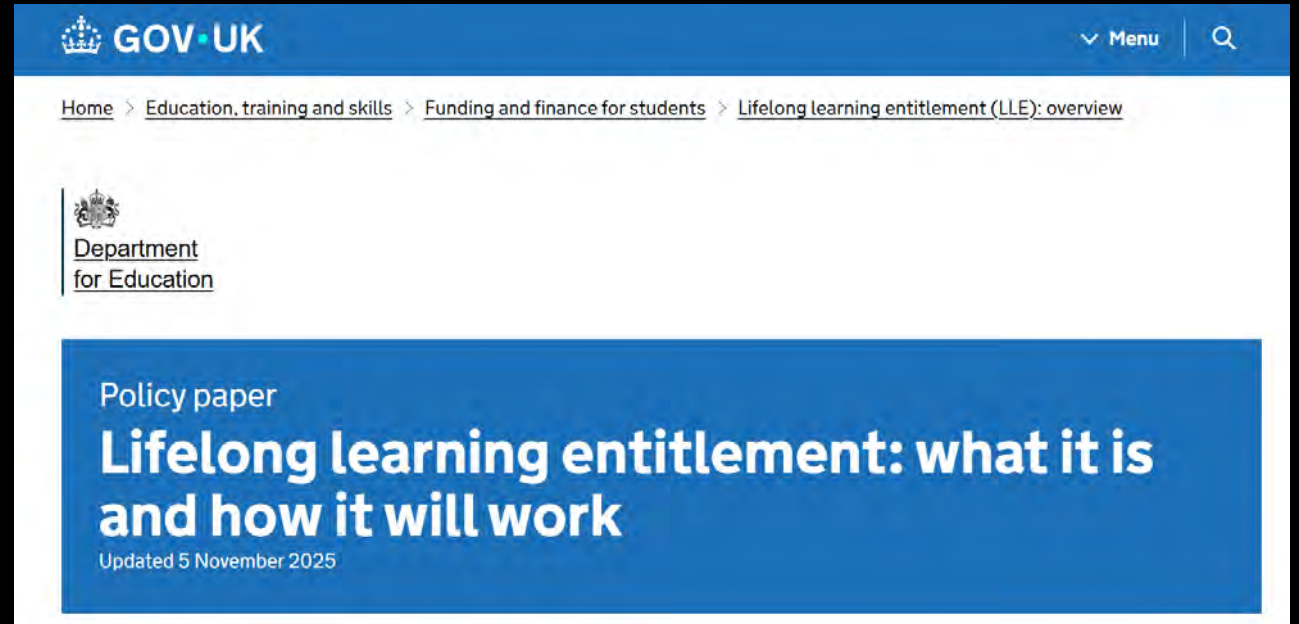
SKILLS *future* SG

A comprehensive, state-led movement to build a national culture of LLL.

- Combines **SkillsFuture Credits** with data-driven **National Skills Frameworks** that map career pathways and identify in-demand skills, helping learners make strategic choices.
- All Singaporeans, aged 40 and above can receive a SkillsFuture Credit (Mid-Career) top-up of \$4,000, from 1 May 2024. Subsequent cohorts of Singaporeans will receive the top-up in the year they turn 40.
- **Employment:** 55% of unemployed participants in the Career Transition Programme found jobs within six months.
- **Wages:** Graduates of the Work-Study Programme earned a **6-11% wage premium**.
- **SME Engagement:** In 2024, 24,000 enterprises supported employee training; 95% were SMEs, a traditionally hard-to-reach group.

UK – Lifelong Learning Entitlement from 2027

More than 40,000 Euro over the lifecycle for all forms of education



TIME



How to use liberated time for learning?

Average working weeks 1800=66 hours;
2020=32hrs

- Life expectancy : 1840=41; 2025=82+
- Both older and younger: average age older than ever; years left to live greater than ever

- 4-day weeks
- Changing retirement ages and phased retirement
- Rights to time off work for training
- Time banks, currencies for skills exchange
- A new volunteer economy
- City time strategies (Barcelona to Buenos Aires)

PROVISION

An explosion of
platforms and tools – but
weak learning from
evidence (how to sustain
learning – tutors, peers,
feedback), and now
complexity of LLMs





HARVARD
Advanced Leadership Initiative

How big a role for universities?



Institute of Continuing Education (ICE)

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Weekend Courses

Book now >



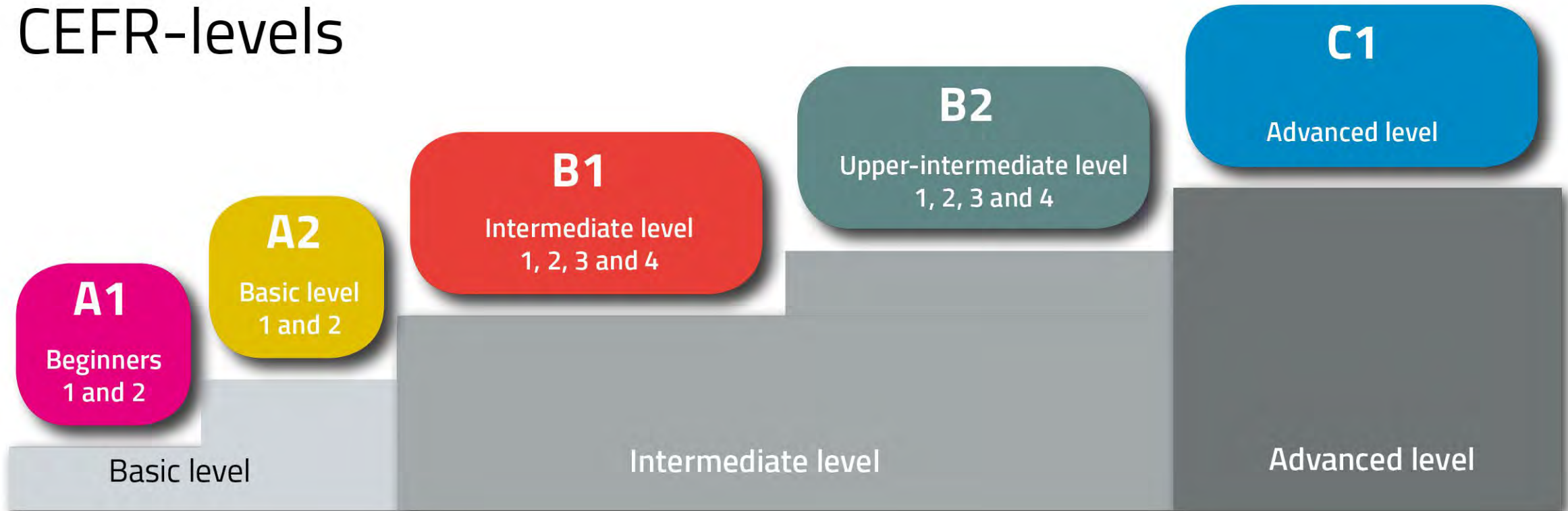
Will the traditional degree at 18-21 survive?

Will universities be able to adapt to LLL – discontinuous, hybrid?

CREDENTIALS

How to make comprehensible – eg Danish Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning

CEFR-levels



Degrees, diplomas, course completion certificates, apprenticeships, professional certificates, badges, MOOCs – sometimes confusing, great for a minority of GenZ, baffling for others



NAVIGATION

Platforms for navigation

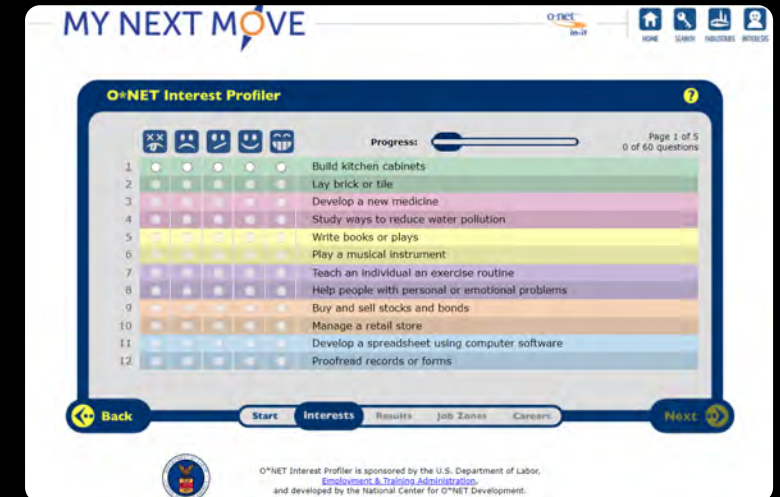
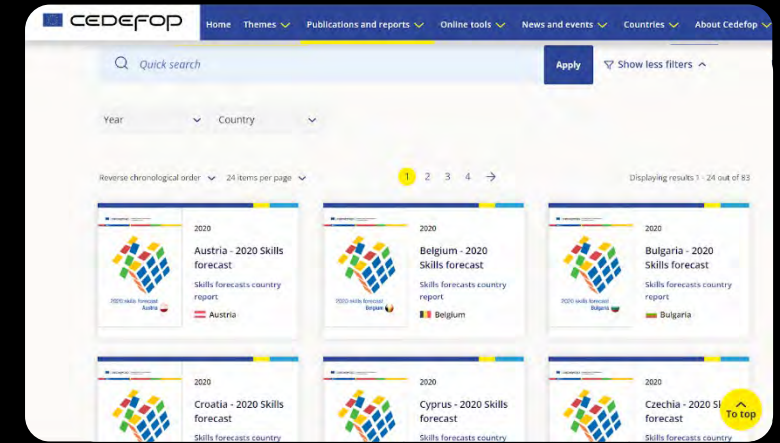
- Aim: to capture data on current jobs, skills requirements, pay, geography, forecasts of likely jobs growth, changing skills demands to connect to navigation tools for 15-year-olds, 55-year-olds to see best pathways to new skills and new jobs.

The screenshot displays the NiSE3 platform interface, which is designed to help users navigate their career journey. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Open Jobs:** A section for finding job opportunities, featuring a search bar and a list of job postings.
- My career journey:** A section for tracking progress, showing a timeline of milestones and a map of the user's current location.
- My real time suggestions:** A section for receiving personalized recommendations based on the user's profile and current location.
- Future jobs 2030:** A section for exploring potential career paths and job opportunities in the future.
- My suggested occupations:** A section for viewing recommended job roles, including details like subject match, average salary, and job satisfaction.
- Map my skills:** A section for visualizing the user's skill set and comparing it to the requirements of various occupations.
- My daily mix:** A section for managing a daily schedule, showing a mix of work, study, and leisure activities.
- Case studies:** A section for reading stories of individuals who have successfully navigated their career journey.



- Skills Future Singapore offers some navigation help
- Rapidly evolving platforms in Australia, Canada and elsewhere
- Norway: SkillsPlus (*Kompetansepluss*) program funds basic skills training delivered at the workplace for adults with low formal qualifications. Free, high-quality, all-age career guidance is a cornerstone of the system



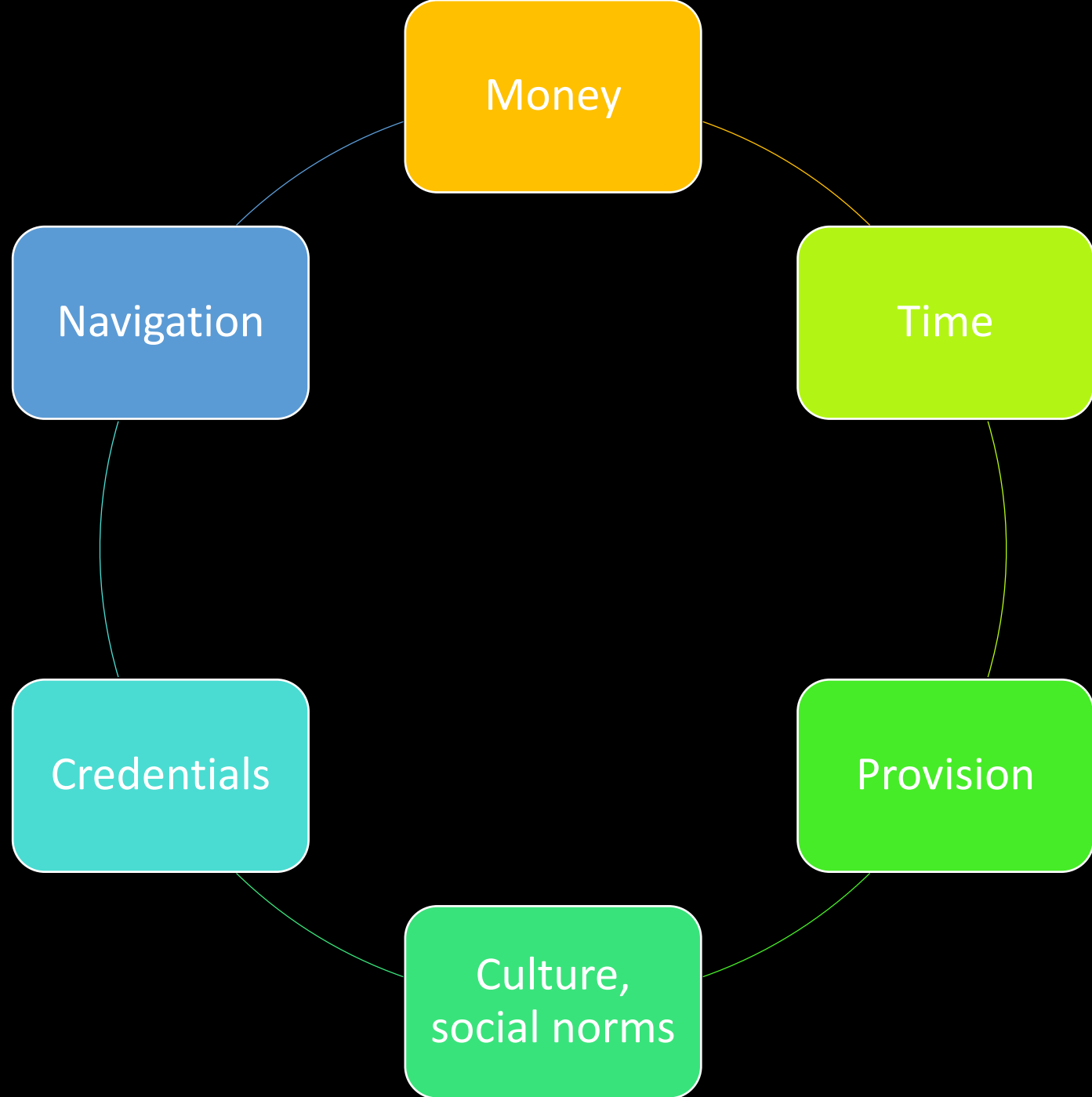


Microsoft 365 Copilot



Potential agentic personal support offering guidance on decisions, options, increasingly knowledgeable about preferences, existing skills and aspirations

Six essentials for a life learning system in the 2030s ... all in need of vigorous innovation



INNOVATION

- Innovations needed in all the elements
 - finance, provision, navigation, platforms, hybrids, existing institutions
- A 1997 report by the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology observed that the US was investing less than 0.1 percent of total K-12 expenditures on R&D, as compared to the 23 percent R&D-to-sales ratio in the pharmaceutical industry.

INSTITUTIONS

Paul Romer: 'only a failure of imagination, the same one that leads [people] to suppose that everything has already been invented, leads us to believe that all of the relevant institutions have been designed and that all of the policy levers have been found.'

INSTITUTIONS AS A FUNDAMENTAL CAUSE OF LONG-RUN GROWTH

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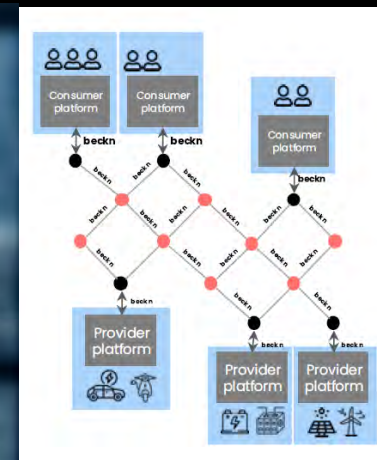
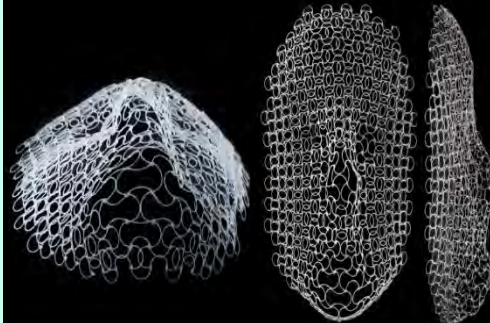
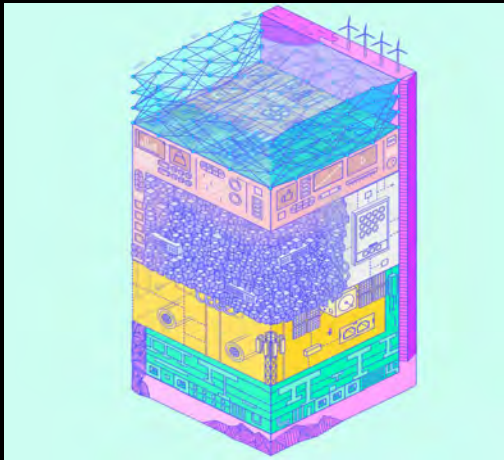
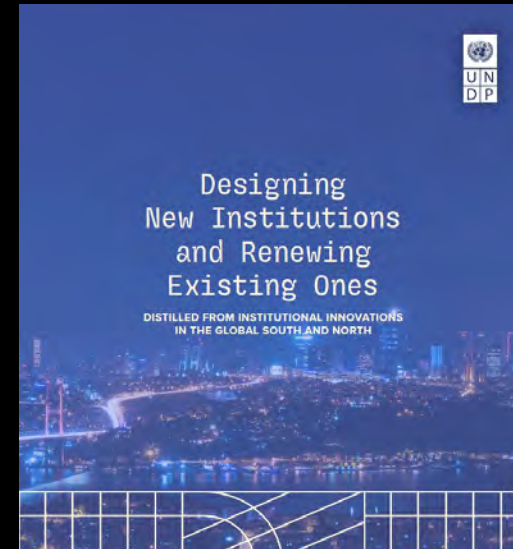
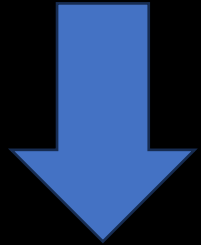
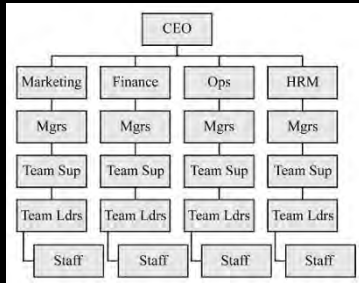
JAMES A. ROBINSON

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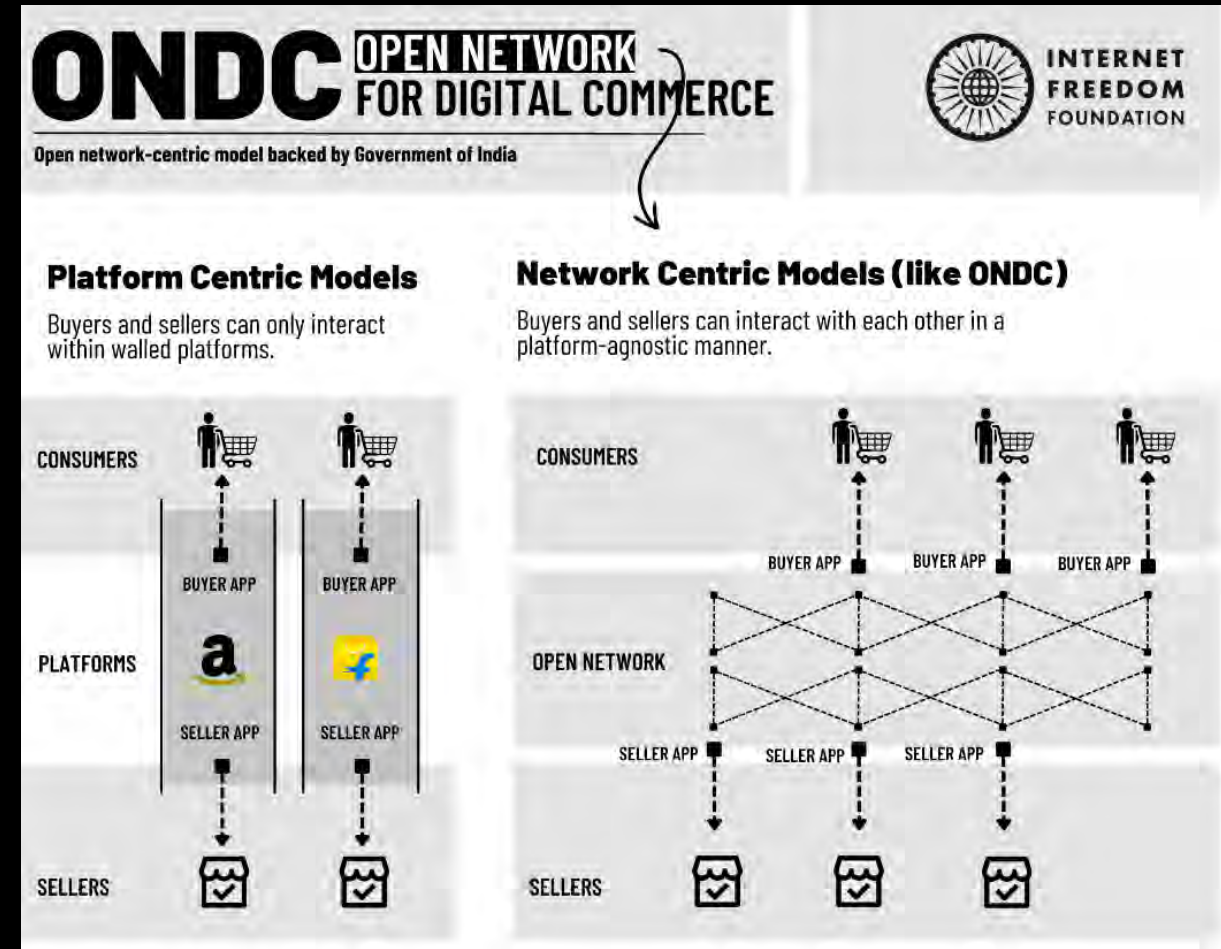


What ... should future public institutions for learning look like in the age of TikTok, Google, ARM, Airbnb, Wikipedia, DAOs?



Platform and protocol-based institutions

Like the Internet, new institutions set protocols and rules of interconnection and impose requirements for interoperability, sharing data, use of platforms and APIs. Beginning to be applied to credentials – so individuals can carry their authenticated credentials with them



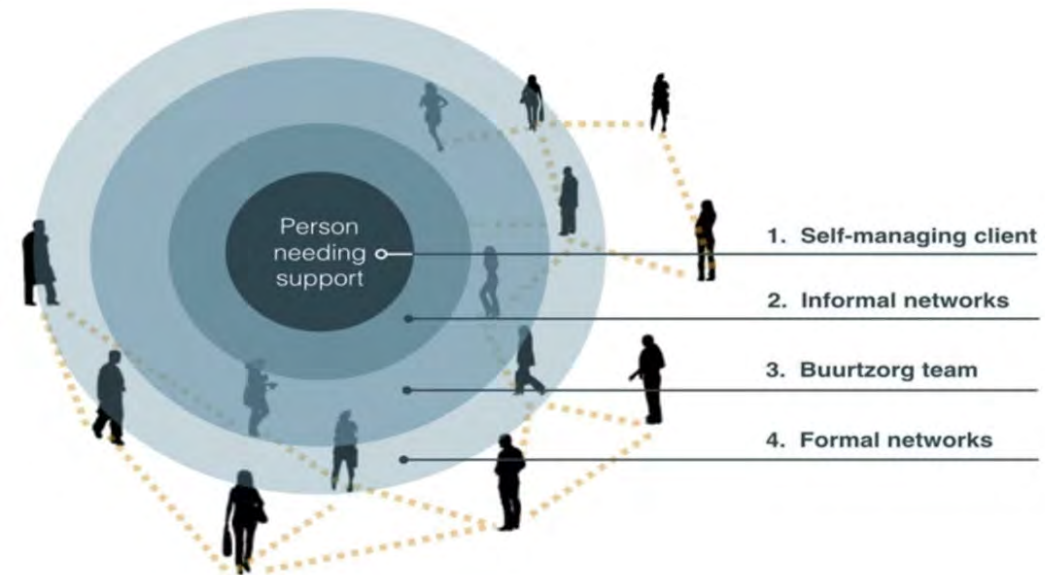
Mycelium-like networked institutions

Multiple entities loosely coupled, providing mutual support, acting both above and below ground (i.e. with both formal and informal networks), highly flexible and resilient.

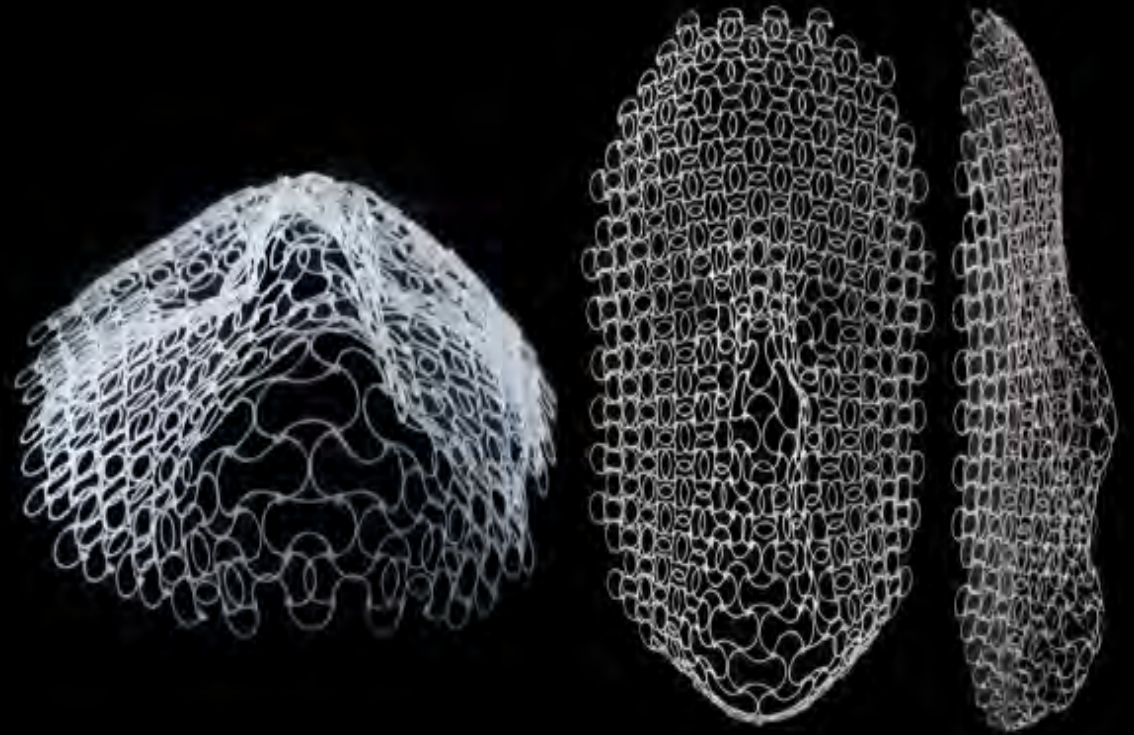


Buurtzorg Onion Model

Buurtzorg works inside out, empowering and adaptive, supportive and network creating.



Mesh structures
linking multiple
tiers of
government,
business and civil
society



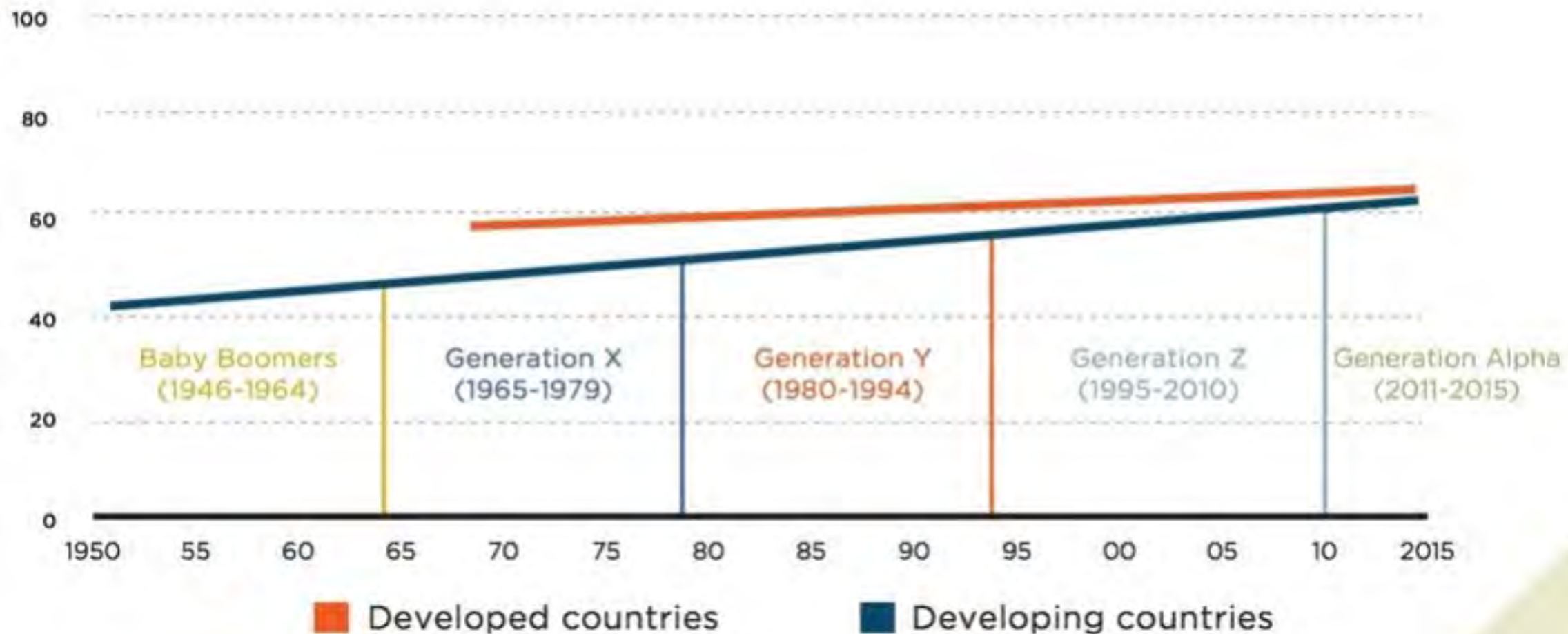
Summary

- Why: ageing, declining birth rates, AI and tech churn, divides between the winners and losers
- What, how and who, including:
 - Funding – entitlements for individuals and SMEs
 - Provision – multiple forms, timescales, hybrids
 - Credentials – micro and macro, in integrated, transferable form
 - Navigation tools continuously updated and supported by agents
 - New institutions, and repurposed existing ones, using stacks, protocols and other methods to orchestrate support



THE FLYNN EFFECT

Improved worldwide IQ test performance



PISA test scores, OECD average

Mathematics



Reading



Science



Not able to “use mathematical reasoning when reviewing and evaluating the validity of statements” has climbed to 25 per cent on average in high-income countries, and 35 per cent in the US.

The share of adults who struggle to process information is rising

Share of adults with only basic numeracy or literacy proficiency* (%)



Share of US 18-year-olds who report particular issues on at least 5 of the past 30 days (%)

Difficulty thinking or concentrating



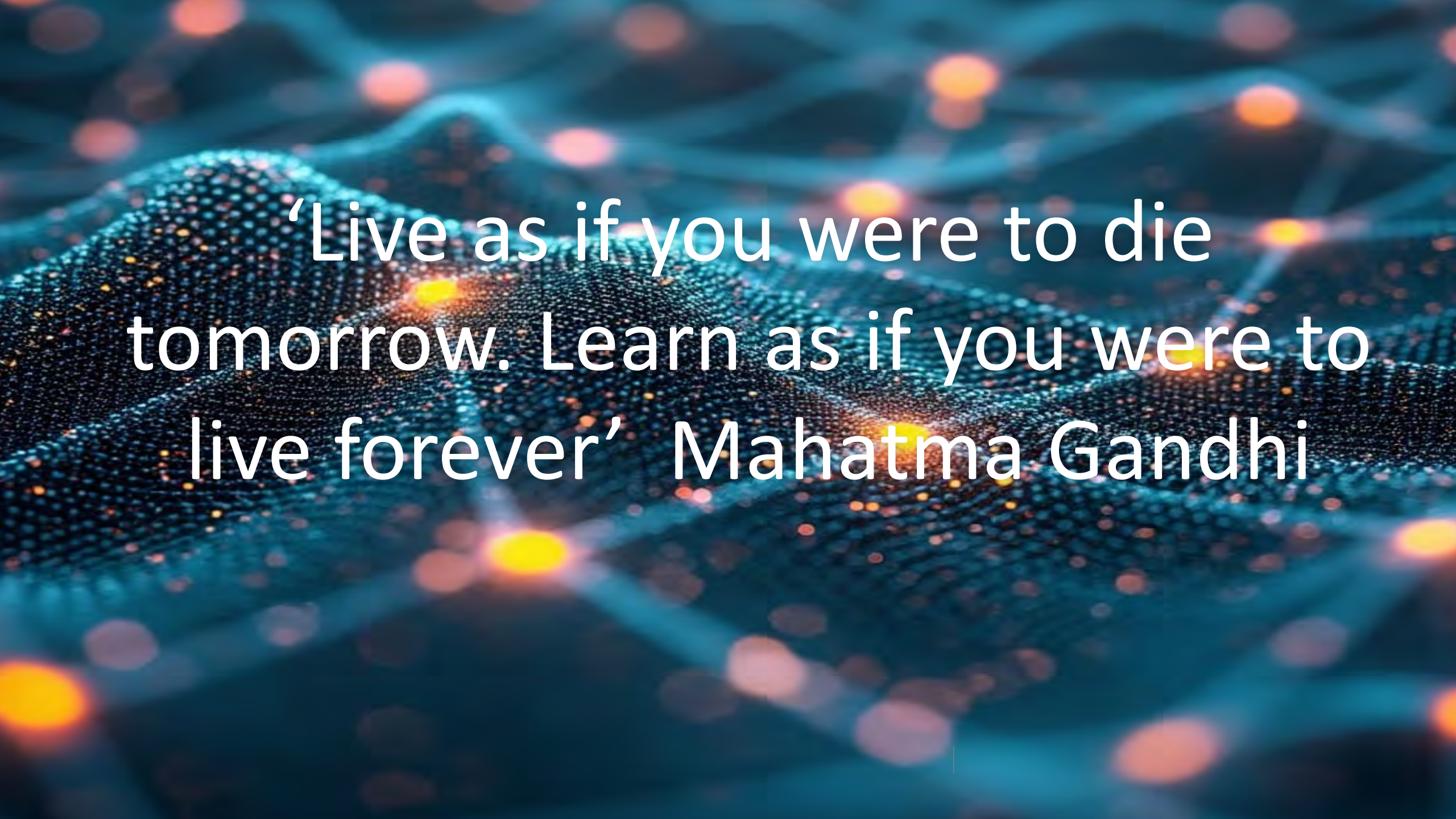
Trouble learning new things



Source: FT analysis of Monitoring the Future survey

FT graphic: John Burn-Murdoch / @jburnmurdoch

©FT

The background is an abstract digital composition. It features a dark blue field filled with out-of-focus light spots in shades of orange, yellow, and pink, creating a bokeh effect. Overlaid on this is a complex, three-dimensional mesh of fine blue lines and dots, resembling a digital network or a particle simulation. The mesh forms undulating, wave-like patterns across the frame. The text is centered and rendered in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

‘Live as if you were to die
tomorrow. Learn as if you were to
live forever’ Mahatma Gandhi



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Micro-credentials – a strategic response to the LLL challenge? challenge? The Swiss experience

Sophie Huber, PhD

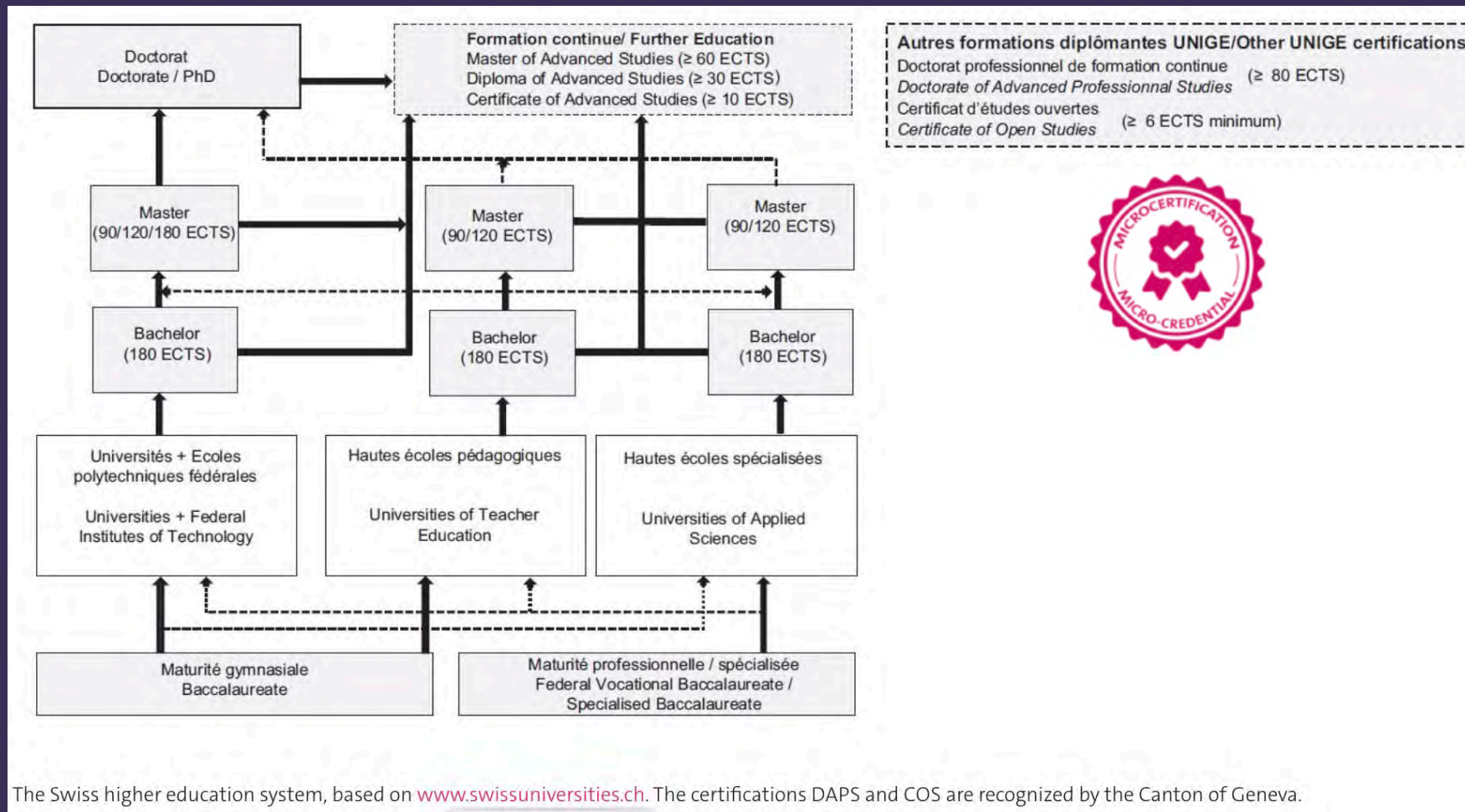
Centre for Continuing and Distance Education

sophie.huber@unige.ch



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Micro-credentials, 'same old same old' in new packaging?



The concept of social responsibility in universities

Historical Development

A concept that has been in more frequent use since the early 2000s (Talloires Declaration 1990, Bologna Declaration 1999, European Commission Communication 2011) - Echoing corporate social responsibility (CSR – a concept dating back to the 1950s)

Community Focus

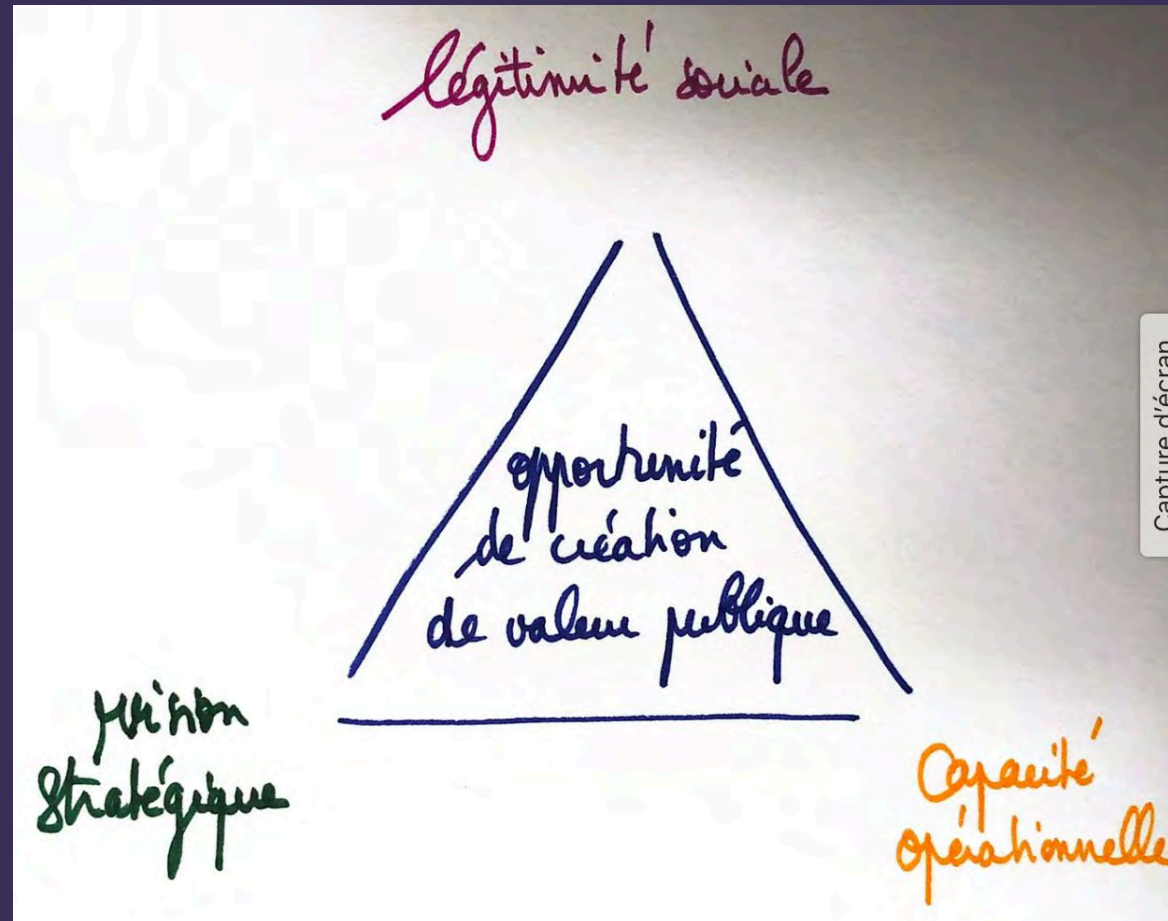
Universities must take into account the needs of their communities – both the university communities themselves and the communities around them – and contribute to meeting those needs

Comprehensive Integration

USR encompasses the integration by universities of economic, social and environmental concerns into their activities and relationships with all stakeholders with whom they interact



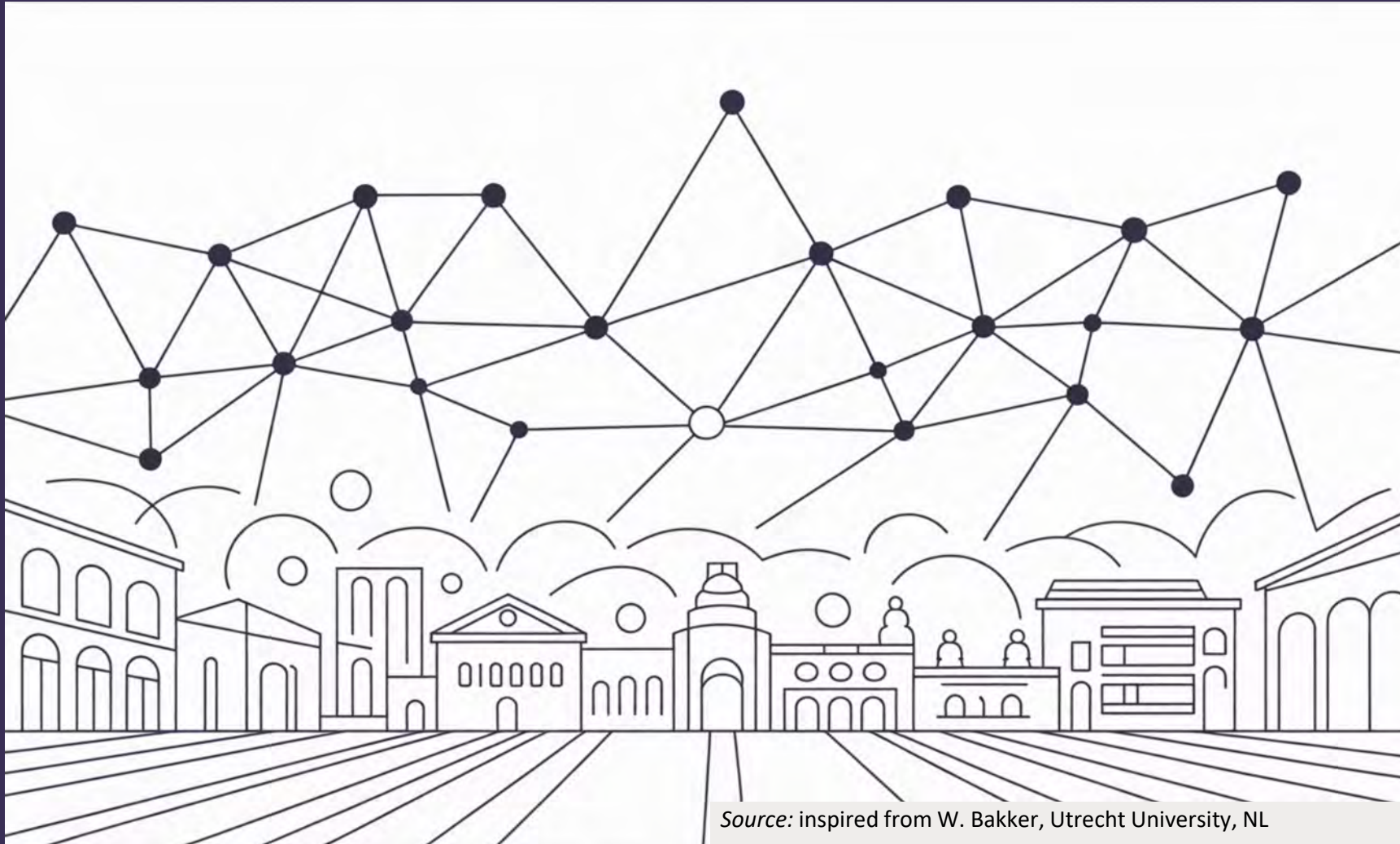
Creating Public Value



Source: D'après M. Moore, *Creating Public Value* 1997



Understanding the **ecosystem**



Source: inspired from W. Bakker, Utrecht University, NL

Knowledge and Skills Intelligence

The ecosystem can provide information on the knowledge and skills needed to meet economic and social challenges.

Multi-Level Engagement

National/regional/local and/or sectoral level.

Mobilising the Geneva ecosystem around employability

According to the ILO, employability refers to 'the ability of each individual to find and keep a job, to progress at work and to adapt to change throughout their working life'

An old concept that has regained relevance since the world of work has been subjected to the pressure of several major major simultaneous transitions: demographic transition, digital transition and environmental transition – the issue is no longer issue is no longer just job creation/destruction, but also skills shortages/obsolescence



La roue de l'employabilité est une représentation graphique de la démarche employabilité.
Elle met en exergue les acteurs, les leviers d'actions ainsi que les objectifs visés.
Elle est impactée par les grandes transitions en cours et le contexte conjoncturel et structurel.

Plan directeur cantonal de l'employabilité – Horizon 2035

Prospective analysis of the external environment

Futures of jobs

Futures of occupations

Futures of skills



Méthode OPTIC

Orchestrer la prospective des métiers et
des compétences pour agir aujourd'hui

ÉCRIT PAR

Nathalie Delobbe, en collaboration avec Kevin Boti,
Damien Brochier, Sabrina Cohen Dumani, Bryan
Emmenegger, Sophie Huber et Giorgio Pauletto*

EN COLLABORATION AVEC

45 professionnels membres de la plateforme inter-
entreprise de la Fondation Nomads et de la Prospective
Emplois et Compétences de 4 pays

EDITION SPÉCIALE

Les 10 ans de la Fondation Nomads

*Les co-auteurs apparaissent par ordre alphabétique



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Formulating a response: a new certification format

- **Definition**

A microcertification is a document (digital format) that certifies the knowledge, skills and competences acquired following a short training course. It is neither a diploma nor a qualification.

- **Assessment Standards**

These skills will have been assessed against clearly defined, transparent criteria importance of a framework (national/European) specifying the levels

- **Quality Assurance**

They are supported by quality assurance in accordance with standards standards agreed within the sector or field of activity concerned. concerned.

- **Flexibility**

They may be stand-alone or combined (stacked) to form more more extensive certifications.

- **Purpose**

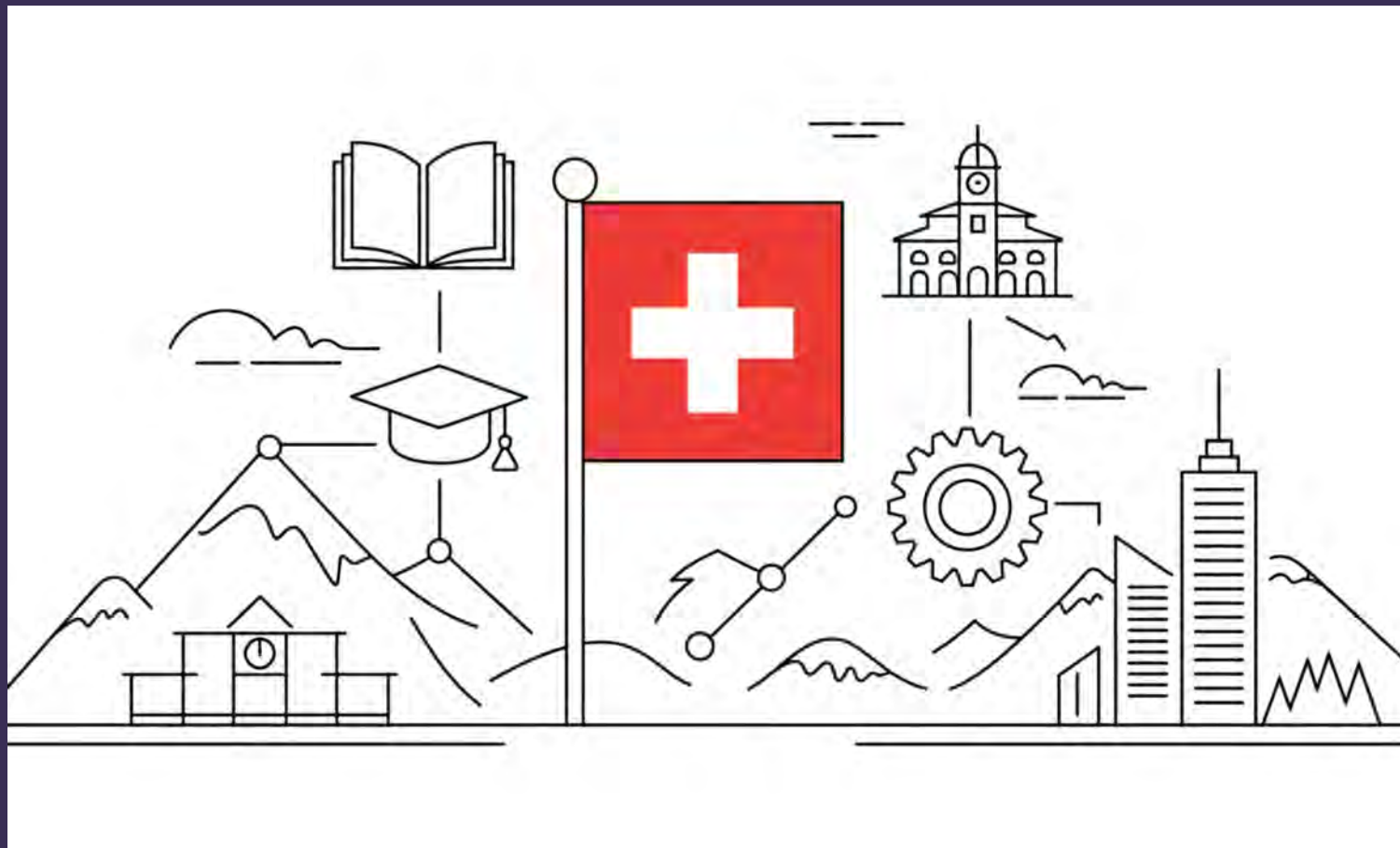
Training courses leading to micro-certifications are designed to meet societal, personal, cultural or labour market needs public policies related to education, the labour market, employability and social rights

- **European Framework**

Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability of 16 June 2022



History of adoption in **Switzerland** since 2022



November 2022

Swissuni position statement

1

Since 2022

Higher education institution initiatives

3

June 2024

Swissuniversities working document

2

Cantonal Level

Cantonal initiatives in vocational education and training – GE, VS

4

Micro-credentials at the University of Geneva

Vie de l'UNIGE

Les microcertifications se développent à l'UNIGE

L'Université de Genève étoffe son offre avec des formations courtes et flexibles qui aboutissent à un certificat.



Micro-credentials are being developed at the University of Geneva. The University is expanding its offer with short, flexible programs that lead to a certificate.



Des «microcertifications» comme solution contre la pénurie de personnel

Les certificats liés à des formations courtes, plus accessibles que des cursus longs, gagnent du terrain en Suisse. Mais des critères communs sur leur qualité manquent encore

Micro-credentials as a solution to staff shortages. Certificates linked to short, more accessible programs than full degree courses are gaining ground in Switzerland. However, common quality criteria are still lacking.

Le cursus comprend environ 20 heures de cours et un travail de recherche. Getty

GENÈVE L'Uni propose depuis peu des cursus de quelques jours, couronnés d'une microcertification. Une nouveauté qui séduit les employeurs.

standard de qualité valables dans tout le pays.» La certification d'une «université de réputation mondiale apporte une valeur ajoutée», juge Raoul

The University has recently started offering short programs of a few days, culminating in a micro-credential. This new approach is attracting the interest of employers.



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Micro-credentials at the University of Geneva



The Legal Protection of Water in Armed Conflicts

Short course 2025 Law

Enhancing understanding and implementation of regulations protecting water in armed conflicts

Overview

Registration



Download brochure



Geneva Course on Drug Policy, Public Health and Diplomacy

Short course 2025 Health

The course is highly participatory, drawing on the national and international experiences of participants through a multi-disciplinary learning process. It includes lectures by internationally-renowned experts and negotiators, case studies, working groups, and a negotiation simulation exercise.

Overview

Registration

Curriculum



Information

Period
27 January 2025 - 30 January 2025



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Challenges ahead



Critical Questions for **Implementation**

Ecosystem Input

To develop MC, higher education institutions need input from the ecosystems around them

Mobilisation Requirements

An ecosystem must be mobilised at a given time by a legitimate and authoritative actor

Sustaining Momentum

The dynamic must be maintained

Structural Complexity

Variable geometry ecosystems? Interlocking ecosystems?

Evolving Dynamics

The positions, interests and needs of the actors constantly change their investment in the ecosystem

Internal Negotiations

Don't forget the internal negotiations within each actor (double-level games)

Learning by doing

How long will we still be allowed to fail our way forward?





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Mission Healthy Aging

Challenges, opportunities and collaborations

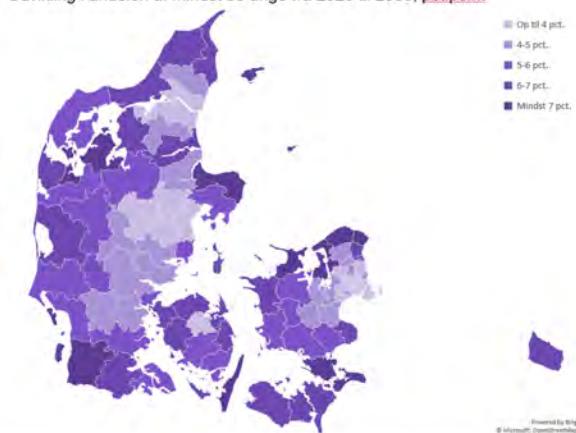
Maria Kristiansen
Professor in Participatory Health Services
Research & Research Group Leader
Department of Public Health
Former co-director, Center for Healthy Aging

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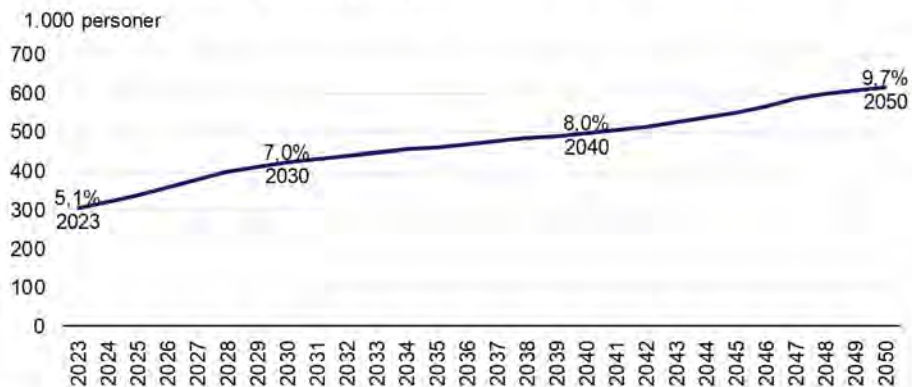


Healthy aging: a complex societal challenge & opportunity

Store geografiske forskelle i udviklingen i +80-årige
Udvikling i andelen af mindst 80 årige fra 2023 til 2050, pct.point



Næsten hver tiende dansker er mindst 80 år gammel i 2050
Personer i Danmark på mindst 80 år



10 key challenges and implications for life-long learning

**Chronic diseases
and
multimorbidity**

**Care needs and
caregiver roles**

**Mental health,
loneliness and
identity**

**Inequity, the
aging gap, and
diversity**

**Aging across the
life-course
situated in
context**

**Cities, housing
and communities**

**Technology and
digital inclusion**

**Working life,
pension and life
transitions**

**A sustainable
welfare state –
hands, money and
priorities**

**Resources,
representation
and engagement**





How might we..?

**Collaborative, research-based and curiosity-driven lifelong learning
rooted in complexity across policy and practice**

Bridging perspectives, disciplines, silos and contexts

WORK HEARTER

“Nothing about us without us” – partnerships for lifelong learning



Mission lab on healthy aging – co-design for lifelong learning

Mission Statement

nova nordisk
fonden

Kernen i udfordringen og mission?	Udfordringen er, at der er færre offentlige ressourcer samtidig med en stigning i antal af borgere i aldersgruppen; borgere som har behov for at blive anerkendt som en heterogen gruppe med mange muligheder, ønsker, ressourcer og et diverst problemkompleks
Hvad står på spil?	På samfunds niveau er risikoen, at samfundskontrakten i velfærdsstaten knækker, fordi ældre borgere ikke får anerkendelse eller nødvendig støtte og den sociale ulighed i gruppen stiger. For den enkelte står en meningsfuld, økonomisk tryk og værdig alderdom på spil.
Nødvendige kompetencer?	På tværs af både ældre mennesker selv, pårørende og professionelle omkring ældre mennesker er der brug for en række forskellige kompetencer. Fælles for dem er, at de er <i>adaptive</i> , dvs. at man opøver evnen til at tilpasse sig sin situation og kontekst. Desuden peger panelet på vigtigheden af højt fagligt niveau inden for de professionelle i berøring med ældre og evnen til fx at kombinere tekniske og medicinske fagligheder med relationelle kompetencer
Muliggørende faktorer og infrastruktur?	"Den grå seks-part": NGO'er, det offentlige, faglige organisationer, uddannelsesinstitutioner, arbejdsgiverorganisationer og forskningsinstitutioner bør gå sammen om at lave forskellige former for formater af uddannelser, der skal spænde fra læring i forhold til den enkelte ældre, familie og netværk omkring den ældre til de professionelle, der arbejder med ældre og alderdom. Det betyder mange forskellige formater, lige fra frivillige kurser til professionel efteruddannelse. Fælles for dem er fleksibilitet og at de har forbindelser til samtaler i seks-partten.
Idéer til livslang læring?	Fælles for mange konkrete ideer til kurser var, at det skulle tage udgangspunkt i de gamle selv – fx med aldringsuge, borgermøder og praksisnær kompetenceudvikling. Desuden med udgangspunkt i løbende dialog mellem medlemmer af "den grå seks-part", der kan arbejde med konkrete behov for forskellige grupper.

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