



International Institute
of Islamic Thought (IIIT)



Albanian Institute of Islamic
Thought and Civilization (AIITC)



International Conference

LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

3-4 October 2020 | Vlora, Albania

IMPORTANT DATES

- ✓ Submission of abstracts: **25 July 2020**
- ✓ Submission approval: **01 August 2020**
- ✓ Full paper submission: **10 September 2020**

Submit your abstracts to: info@iETT.al

In cooperation with



International Conference
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CALL FOR PAPERS

RATIONALE

The turn of the 21st century has witnessed the rise of lifelong learning as a strategy for ensuring social integration, employability, and continuing personal development. Earlier approaches to the notion from the last decades of the 20th century have been crystalized in a number of global and European documents that advocate for learning and education opportunities to be provided throughout the life cycle. As these initiatives to renew the agenda for lifelong learning are being rolled out, the world has itself entered on a fourth industrial revolution, whose major characteristics are digitalization and the permeation of every area of human functioning by technology.

Facing the growing challenges of the digital age, education and learning have turned to re-examine their own roles – in the life of the individual and of society. From the perspective of society, education is supposed to provide solutions to rising insecurity, conflict, and environmental and health issues, as well as to keep abreast of technological and economic developments. The knowledge and competencies that an individual acquires through formal education are no longer enough to function in an ever-changing world.

How education addresses the need for continuous individual development and social transformation is mediated by digital tools (multimedia platforms, mobile phones, applications, online platforms, social media, digitized books and learning contents, to name a few). As the current COVID-19 crisis shows, digitized learning resources and online platforms can play a vital role in keeping us safe while maintaining the continuity of learning processes. Digital technologies have a manifold impact on education and learning that requires close analysis. The digital age offers myriad opportunities for enhancing educational provision while at the same time requiring us to change our customary approaches and practices. It poses demands for new knowledge and competencies and changes the nature of educational interaction and the relationship between the teacher and the learner.

An area where lifelong learning provision needs to be addressed is religious education, with the development of a variety of learning content, media, and forms. Digital technologies make it easier to reach out to groups of learners (e.g. youth, working people, and those in distant places). As the corona crisis has shown, digital technologies can also facilitate regular community religious practices, including the Friday khutbah or Ramadan muqabala. On the other hand, lifelong learning does not always appear to be properly practiced or the opportunities offered by digital technologies to be fully utilized within the religious communities and organizations.



OBJECTIVES

Given this background, the conference hopes to contribute to developing a better understanding of the value of lifelong learning in the digital age. By providing a forum for discussion, analysis, research, and the exchange of good practices based on local experiences, the conference aims are to:

- promote lifelong learning as a way of dealing with growing change, and
- assess ways of better utilizing digital technologies' potential for lifelong learning, with special reference to Islamic education.

The conference will bring together actors from various fields and backgrounds; research and scholarly institutions, government institutions, NGOs, educational organizers and providers, institutions of the Islamic religious communities, community leaders, teachers, and preachers.

Five broad questions will be addressed:

1. What specific needs can lifelong learning address in our societies?
2. What do we know about the unfolding opportunities offered by the digital age for lifelong learning?
3. What unavoidable side-effects of digitalization in lifelong learning should we prepare for and be ready to tackle quickly?
4. How can information technology support the further development of lifelong learning in our countries?
5. How may Islamic lifelong learning be shaped in the digital age, and what opportunities does it offer Islamic education institutions and organizations?

THEMATIC GROUPS

Conference presentations will be organized in five thematic groups intended to cover broad and specific issues of lifelong learning in the digital age. The topics given under each thematic group are not meant to restrict presentations. They serve to indicate the expected scope of discussion. Case studies of actual digital experiences in the school, college, mosque, community, family, and NGOs before and during the pandemic will be given special attention.

Group I: Ethical issues of lifelong learning in the digital age

- Man and technology – ethical and technical aspects.
- Lifelong learning between traditional patterns and the challenges of digitalization.
- Professional education and religious education – connections and differences.
- Challenges and ways to overcome technological difficulties in lifelong learning.

Group II: Lifelong learning as a strategy for facing social change

- Lifelong learning in the service of personal and professional development.
- Changes in society and education in the face of digitalization.
- Capacities for lifelong learning to maximize the potential of digitalization through formal, non-formal, and informal learning.
- Migration, pandemic situations, economic crises, and lifelong learning.
- The role of Islamic lifelong learning in better navigating change.

Group III: Opportunities and challenges of the digital age for lifelong learning

- The level of digitalization in our societies and the necessary technical resources.
- Organizational and institutional capacity for implementing digitalization in lifelong learning.
- Train the trainer programs for the utilization of digital tools in education.
- Making digital learning resources accessible to vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- Digital technologies and migration (digital learning for the elderly to maintain communication with family in distant places, digital tools to help refugees and migrants on their routes).

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Group IV: Local perspectives on lifelong learning

- Existing policies and practices in lifelong learning (strategies, legislation, agendas, etc.).
- The actors of lifelong learning in the digital age and their role in this process: Teachers, Lecturers, Imams, Preachers, Civil Society Activists, etc.
- The role of the state and religious institutions in promoting lifelong learning: their awareness of its importance.
- The impact and benefits of lifelong learning for marginalized groups, such as the survivors of massacre and genocide, people with disabilities, refugees, minority groups, etc.

Group V: Islamic organisations and institutions as providers of lifelong learning in the digital age

- Topics and programs of Islamic education within the framework of lifelong learning.
- Possibilities for digitizing the existing contents of basic Islamic education.
- Online learning platforms for specific groups.
- Capacity building for education providers.
- Assessment of the educational needs of various groups that can be addressed by digital technologies.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Submission of abstracts: **25 July 2020**
- Submission approval: **01 August 2020**
- Full paper submission: **10 September 2020**
- The conference: **03-04 October 2020**

Submission Instructions:

- Papers for presentation at the conference will be assessed by the Academic Committee.
- Papers should address one of the recommended topics or be directly related to the conference main theme.
- Papers should be from 6,000-10,000 words.
- Accommodation and travel expenses for the two days of the conference will be covered by the organizers only for presenters attending the Conference (one person per selected presentation).
- Submit your abstracts to: info@iETT.al

Academic and Organizing Committee:

- **Dr. Ardian Muhaj**, Director of AIITC, Tirana, AL
- **Prof. Dr. Ahmet Alibasic**, Director of CAS, Sarajevo, BiH
- **Prof. Ass. Dr. Ramiz Zekaj**, Director of IETT, Tirana, AL
- **Assoc. Prof. Reis Mulita**, PhD, Vice Rector at CIT, Tirana, AL
- **Prof. Ass. Dr. Fahrush Rexhepi**, Dean FIS, Prishtina, KS
- **Prof. Omer Kajoshaj**, Director of Horizonti, Podgorica, MN
- **Mr. Ali Bardhi**, Head Imam of Ulcinj region, MN
- **Mrs. Anisa Hykaj**, Main Coordinator, Tirana, AL
- **Ms. Resilda Muça**, Secretary of IETT, Tirana, AL
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