

HOMESCHOOLING EUROPE

European HS Conference, Rasnov, September 25-27, 2025

Schedule

Thursday, September 25

09:15 - 10:00 Registration

10:00 - 11:00 Who we are and what is our vision? Including an update on Home Education across Europe
Debora Lütolf & Alison Sauer

11:00 - 11:30 Break

11:30 - 12:30 What is home schooling / Home Education? Panel – **Mateja de Laat, Erika Di Martino, Monica O'Connor**

12:30 - 12:45 Break

12:45 - 13:45 Homeschooling insights from parents/children (Panel) **Debora Lütolf, Juliet English, Elva O'Neill, Olivia Louise Curto**

13:45 Lunch Break

14:30 Excursion Râșnov Citadel (Cetatea Râșnov) – guided tour 10 lei per person (please sign up)

19:30 Camp fire – singing and socialising – bring a song from your country

Friday, September 26

09:15 - 10:00 Registration

10:00 - 11:00 The homeschooling / home educating mother **Debora Lütolf, Juliet English, Monica O'Connor, Joanna Dzieciatkó**

11:00 - 11:30 Break

11:30 - 12:30 Hands-on Fathers and Grandparents **Wander de Laat, Gabriel Curcubet, Mariusz Dzieciatkó**

12:30 - 12:45 Break

12:45 - 13:45 Organising home school support groups **Juliet English, Debora Lütolf, Gabriel Curcubet**

13:45 Lunch Break

14:30 Excursion "Dracula" Castle (Bran Castle)

20:00 - Camp fire (Presenting the host country and the Romanian culture)

Saturday, September 27

09:15 - 10:00 Registration

10:00 - 11:00 Home Education and the International Scene (law and politics) **Alison Sauer**

11:00 - 11:30 Break

11:30 - 12:30 Some words from **Deputy Aurora Tasica Simu**

12:30 - 12:45 Short Break

12:45 - 13:45 The Legal situation in Romania – lawyer **György Marosi**

13:45 Lunch Break



HOMESCHOOLING EUROPE



14:30 Free time – please consider visiting the Dinosaur Park

Speaker Biographies:

Juliet English - United Kingdom (BA Hons Social Work)

Juliet is an experienced home educator who is passionate about encouraging and empowering parents to educate their children with boldness and freedom. She has home educated her seven children for over 25 years, and draws not only from her own experience, but also her knowledge gained from working with many home educating parents, within various home educating communities over the years. Juliet is engaged in a number of initiatives which benefit home educators in the UK, drawing on her personal experience of educating her own 7 children, running groups, activities and conferences, as well as her background in Social Work. Juliet's idea of fun is creating, crafting, and singing.

Debora Lütolf - Switzerland

Over 16 years of experience have made Debora a household name for homeschooling families all over Switzerland. As the founder of the first network and website for homeschooling families in the French-speaking part of Switzerland and an active member in her local community, Debi is involved with neuro atypical students and working with their families to make learning successful and fun. Regularly in contact with the local school district to facilitate communication between the local administration and families, she has gained invaluable insight into the needs, successes, and challenges of those involved.

Today Debi is the go-to coach for families in need of help or faced with learning issues -even to those still in the classic school system.

Debora is currently on the board of IEL-VD heading the learning disability coaching team and has just been appointed to set up the media and social networking team for IEL-BzH Switzerland, all while still supporting all four of her children with their studies.

Alison Sauer - United Kingdom

Alison was born in the 1960's before the moon landings. But, although her friends laugh at her for having very few popular culture references, she is a modern and innovative thinker. Having brought up two children, whom she home educated, and devoted much of her adulthood to improving the lives of children, her knowledge of home education neurodiversity and the challenges of childhood is lived, experienced and learned along the way. She is a level 4 paralegal, trained in youth mental health and suicide intervention and runs a number of support groups from SEND support to home education and Flexischooling. She has been a political activist in home education and alternative education for over 25 years.

Mateja de Laat - Slovenia

Mateja's history studies in Ljubljana, and later theology in Amsterdam, gave her valuable insight into the diversity of human experiences. Parallel to this, she has also been on an inner journey since the age of 15, connected to yoga and self-exploration.

Today Mateja and her husband Wander live in Slovenia with their three children, who are homeschooled. Two of them were homeschooled from the beginning, which inspired her to research homeschooling academically. During my doctoral studies, she delved into pedagogy, developmental psychology, and educational theory.

Mateja has written articles, books, and manuals on education, lectured at international conferences on homeschooling, founded an institute, and collaborated with the media... but counts motherhood as the most precious thing she experiences every day. Mateja developed the MagicTree method, which helps to understand the child's learning process in a creative and natural way.

Wander de Laat is married to Mateja. He was born and educated in Amsterdam where he studied environmental sciences. They met in 1999 and now live in Slovenia with their 3 children. Wander spends

HOMESCHOOLING EUROPE

much of his time taking care of the children, home, education and their smallholding. Wander and Mateja work as an amazing team within the family and home.

Erika Di Martino - Italy

Erika Di Martino is a European social entrepreneur in personal growth, education, and family. She has a master's degree in language, literature and culture, and has lived in Italy and California during her youth. Presently, she lives with her family in Ireland. Along with her husband, she founded the Italian Home Education Network in 2012 (www.edupar.org), a pioneering organization that popularized and normalized homeschooling in Italy and has been promoting and defending educational freedom for over 15 years. While homeschooling her five children, she supports and advises several family and associative projects throughout Europe and is the best-selling author of *Educazione Parentale* in Italia, the first manual on home education published in Italy. She hosts various homeschool support activities and is the managing director of EDUlearn, a learning platform that aims to empower families to pursue what matters through flexible and personalized online education. Erika has also collaborated with numerous Italian and international newspapers and has participated in various television programs and events to explain how to homeschool to millions of people.

YouTube https://www.youtube.com/@Erika_DiMartino

IG <https://www.instagram.com/erikadimartino.official/>

FB <https://www.facebook.com/ErikaDiMartinoLifeCoach>

Olivia Louise Curto - Italy/Ireland

Olivia Louise Curto is an 18-year-old filmmaker, SFX makeup artist, and proud homeschooler who has never attended traditional school. Growing up with the freedom to explore her imagination and passions, Olivia developed a unique voice in storytelling, blending genre filmmaking with deeply personal, performance-led narratives.

Her award-winning short films have been recognized internationally: *Freequencies* won 2nd Place at the Fresh Film Festival, Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year 2024, and Best Direction at the Youth-REC Film Festival, while also screening at the All American High School Film Festival in New York City. Her horror short *Reality Check* won the Little Cinema/Galway 48-Hour Challenge and screened at the Galway Film Fleadh 2025.

Olivia's journey as a homeschooler has instilled independence, creativity, and resilience—qualities that shine through her filmmaking.

Website: <https://www.livvielou.com/>

IG https://www.instagram.com/livvielou_filmsfx?igsh=MWR6bWpxNjZaG81aQ%3D%3D&utm_source=qr

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/@LivvieLouFilmSfx>

Gabriel Curcubet - Romania/Hungary

Born into a family of pedagogues, Gabriel is very familiar with what is happening in public schools.

As a child with dyslexia, he struggled especially with grammar and languages as his parents and relatives didn't realize that Gabriel needed a special teaching approach. For these reasons Gabriel learned almost everything by himself, starting to read books at age 14, and studying from the books they had in their family library of 3000 volumes.

Even though Romanian educational law did not provide a basis for homeschooling, Gabriel his wife Gabriella and Gabriel started to home school their child and later their four children. They have not a legal basis as home schooling was not included into the Romanian Educational Law, but the law allowed them to enroll their children in schools outside Romania. Three of their children graduated from Home Life Academy. They founded the Romanian Home-Schooling Association in 2002, in the same they their youngest son born.

HOMESCHOOLING EUROPE

Since then, they promoted HS in Romania, organized conferences, and are working to legalize HS in Romania. They published two books on home schooling and are helping hundreds of families yearly to start HS and to fight with their struggles with authorities.

From a small start in 2002 the Romanian homeschooling movement grew up to several thousand families and is still growing up yearly.

Elva O'Neill - Ireland

Elva O'Neill is a multi-instrumentalist, producer, music teacher, composer, and conductor.

She is in the final year of her bachelor's degree in Music at MTU (Munster Technological University) Cork School of Music.

Home Education allowed Elva to focus on her musical education, while also engaging with hobbies of reading, writing, crafting and her interest in politics, history and education.

Elva has taught privately and in music schools since the age of 16, with an emphasis on listening to students and making learning an enjoyable and engaging process. Being home educated has informed her ethos and choices as a teacher.

She's been a member of a variety of choirs, wind bands, orchestras and other musical ensembles, including the Aspiro Youth Choir, Carlow Youth Orchestra, Coro and Fleischmann choirs of CSM, and the CSM Symphony Orchestra.

Since 2023, Elva has worked as a Student Leader at MTU, a role which involves working the orientation and registration of new students, and assisting at various events across the college campuses throughout the year.

Elva is also involved with college societies, last year she was the Irish Representative for the MTU Cork International Students Society and the Chairperson of the MTU Cork Feminist Society.

Monica O'Connor is mother to 6 children and has been home educating in Eire (Ireland) since 1986.

She is the local county Carlow contact for the Home Education Network, a parent support group.

Monica was very influenced by the unschooling ideas of John Holt and names her other heroes as Maire Mullarney, Maria Montessori and Suzi Andres.

Monica's youtube channel showcases interviews with 16 home educated young people, discussing their education and what they did with college study and work.

<https://www.youtube.com/@monicaconnor1810>

Mariusz Dzieciatko is father to three adult children who were home educated. He is a Doctor of technical sciences, Data Scientist and lecturer at the Warsaw School of Economics. He is President of the Education in Family Association [Stowarzyszenie Edukacji w Rodzinie](#)

Joanna Dzieciatko is the wife of Mariusz and the vice President of the association mentioned above. It was following a conversation with the parents of a friend of their second child that they discovered home education. Very quickly she and her husband realised that this was the right path for their family. Joanna played a pivotal role in changing the law in Poland ensuring that home education could become established and accepted the way it is today.

Dep. Aurora Tasica Simu is Deputy for Cluj in the Romanian Parliament. She is a member of the Legal, Disciplinary and Immunities Committee. She is a lawyer, dedicated to justice and representing the interests of citizens.

Marosi György is a home educating father who developed his passion for home education after advising and helping to register the home schooling association in Romania in 2002. He continues to fight and advise in the law regarding home education in Romania.