Dr. Marjo Kyllönen (Helsinki):

„Education for the Future - Phenomenon based learning as a tool to promote 21st Century skills“

The rapid and turbulent change in our society is challenging teaching methods and traditional school models. The testing and teaching of routine skills is no longer relevant as machines will handle most of the routine work and also part of the non-routine work. More flexible and customised models will replace the traditional way of teaching and learning.

Today and not to mention tomorrow we are and will be confronted with problems that require innovative approaches. If we want to be successful in our education task, we must be brave enough to break our own routines and habits.

The traditional way of teaching fragmented pieces of knowledge is not relevant anymore. We need to equip our children and teenagers with holistic competences needed in the future and must develop and nurture skills such as critical thinking, creativity collaboration, cultural sensitivity, and social responsibility. In order to solve tomorrow's manifold problems we need not only cross-disciplinary thinking but also the ability to solve problems using tools from various sciences. And this cannot be achieved by a learning process that is split into isolated subjects.

One very effective and practical tool to achieve this change in our classrooms is phenomenon based learning. Instead of learning isolated pieces of information in different subjects, pupils are tackling real life problems. Life is not split into subjects, so why should learning be? Phenomenon based learning is a holistic approach where pupils use authentic tools in realistic environments. Learning is meaningful and related to our children's everyday lives and the focus lies on the learning process instead of the end product. The role of the pupil is an active one throughout the whole learning process – from planning up to assessment. The role of the teacher is to make the objectives visible to the learner and scaffold the learning process.