



Generations using training for social inclusion in 2020 (GUTS):

The development of new learning areas: a desk research





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Introduction

The intergenerational relations constitute the essential foundation required for every kind of society. Taking the word “generation” from a demographical perspective, modern sociologists (Mannheim, 1974, 2008; Schizzerotto, 2002) indicate this as the group of people who are born in the same period, have shared significant life experiences (e.g. goals within their education, occasions of social promotion, possibilities of being married and having kids, chance to find a good and permanent job) and at the same time have pursued a system of cultural relationships as steady as possible.

The coexistence of an amount of people within a specific time depends on many factors. First of all on biological fecundity: if the number of women who do not have children increases, the generational chain immediately reduces. A second factor is the age gap between generations: the increase of the average age of parents is, in a different way, proportional to the possibility of having a higher number of coexisting generations. Lastly, the amount of people depends on the mortality rate.

Compared to the beginning of the last century, when the average length of life did not allow a person to see his or her grandchildren and especially to see them growing older, nowadays life is a period, instead, which has “stretched” diachronically¹ (Saporiti, 2004) people’s lives, making the inter-generational exchanges and bonds much more intensive and also allowing, within families, the collection of a heritage which is not only material, but also emotional.

Some factors have caused generations to be distanced or segregated from one another, particularly younger and older people. This separation can lead to a decrease in positive exchanges between them. Yet these separated generations have resources of value to each other and share areas of concern. For example, both younger and older generations are often marginalized in decision-making that directly affects their lives. It is therefore important to create a friendly environment for a balance between generations in life, as well as in learning for life.

Therefore this report will focus on how intergenerational learning can take place within programs specifically designed to bring together young and older people in order to increase their social inclusion. According to De Greef, Segers and Verté (2012) (continuing) education can be a lever in order to achieve an increase of social inclusion. Likewise this report will focus on how two generations learn together about and from each other, and/or share experiences by learning and training activities designed to develop knowledge and skills in a co-creative manner. These principles are closely connected to the idea of active ageing and intergenerational cooperation, which takes place in a community where “diversities” are considered as a value that allows to reach social inclusion.

In this framework, the European GUTS project (Generations Using Training for Social Inclusion in 2020) will combine the strengths of older people and youngsters so that they can learn from each other and increase their skills in order to face daily problems in society (referring to the goal of the

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A diachronic approach is one that analyzes the evolution of something over time, allowing one to assess how that something changes throughout history.



decrease of poverty and social exclusion of the Europe2020 Strategy) (Eurostat, 2014). Most important in the European GUTS project is the realization of new strategic cooperation between local, regional and national partners in Europe in order to facilitate new pathways of learning (according to the goals of Erasmus Plus) (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, European Commission, 2014). Policy makers should be aware of the possibilities and opportunities that education and training offer to realize these goals.

In the intergenerational and cultural learning area, youngsters will provide older people with new paths of knowledge and will try to upgrade their skills in order to increase their social inclusion. On the other hand, the older people will stimulate the youngsters to develop their key competences in order to orient and to join their position in the labor market. The consortium of GUTS, therefore, is based on a constructive cooperation between research and education and training institutes next to local and regional bodies in providing guidance in lifelong learning. The consortium will further develop what was achieved by the previous European projects STAC (Strategies Towards Active Citizenship) focusing on activation of older people, EDAM (Education Against Marginalization) concentrating on scientific evaluation of social inclusion after adult education, EASY (European Activation for Seniors and Youth) and IGLOO (InterGenerational Learning in OrganisatiOns) paying attention to the intergenerational aspect and SMARTE (Strengths for Mastering Ageing by Realising Tools in Europe) developing a new senior learning model.



1. Population ageing: an Active Ageing Perspective

1.1 Population ageing in Europe

While the world's population is growing, the age of people in industrialized nations is rising continually and new births are low. Table 1 presents an overview of the population by certain age groups in 2013 in Europe and in the countries of the Consortium.

If we look at the distribution of population by age segments, we can see that both in Italy and Belgium every fifth person is already in the age group 65+. This exceeds the European average of 17.4%. Latvia, The Netherlands and Romania are slightly below the European average. Beside this, Germany's and Croatia's number of citizens who are 65 years and older is slightly higher than the European average.

Tab. 1. Population by youngest age group and older age group, year: 2013.

	15 - 29 years	65-79 years	80 years and more	65 years and more	Total
	(% of total population)	(% of total population)	(% of total population)	(% of total population)	
EU (28 countries)	12	12,3	5,1	17,4	505.674.965
Belgium	10,9	15,3	5,3	20,6	11.161.642
Germany	11,7	13,9	5,4	19,3	80.523.746
Croatia	9,9	14,9	4,3	19,2	4.262.140
Italy	12	14,1	6,3	20,4	59.685.227
Latvia	12,2	12,6	4,7	17,3	2.023.825
Netherlands	11,8	12,5	4,2	16,7	16.779.575
Romania	11,5	13,1	3,8	16,9	20.020.074

Source: Eurostat, 2014 a.

Given this framework, it is possible to confirm that Europeans have a greater life expectancy than ever before and longer than people in almost every other region of the world (Global AgeWatch Index, 2014). This is a major achievement. In particular, the most commonly used indicator for analyzing mortality is that of life expectancy at birth (I.E. the number of years that a person can expect to live at birth if subjected throughout the rest of his or her life to current mortality conditions). Life expectancy in the EU-28 is generally higher than in most other regions of the world and continues to increase. In 2012, life expectancy at birth in the EU-28 was 80.3 years, reaching 83.1 years for women and 77.5 years for men.

member states, there are still major differences between and within countries. In some cases, improvements in education and standards of living have contributed to longer life expectancy, suggesting that the pattern of increasing longevity could be further extended in the future.

Looking at the extremes of the ranges for life expectancy at 65, years old: In 2012, once a man had reached the age of 65, he could, on average, expect to live between another 13.6 years (as in Latvia) and 18.5 years (as in Italy). The life expectancy of women at age 65 was higher. In 2012 it ranged from 17.7 years in Romania to 22.1 years in Italy (see Table 2 a) (Eurostat, 2014 b).

However, population ageing is not only the result of rising life expectancy. It is also caused by lower fertility, as demonstrated in Table 2 b). Whereas the replacement level is 2.1 for developed countries (since the 1970's in Europe), the total fertility rates are below this level. This will impact the population's structure. Until 2050, Germany's population will shrink by about seven million to 75 million in total, as has been calculated by the Federal Statistical Office of Germany (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014). This decline in population is especially dramatic in Eastern Germany. The situation in Latvia has the same tendency as in Italy, Germany and the whole rest of Europe. According to Eurostat, the population of Latvia will decrease by 100.000 every 10 years, reaching 1.9 million in 2050.

Tab. 2. a) Life expectancy at age 65, by sex, year: 2012			Tab. 2. b) Total fertility rate, year: 2012
	Males	Females	Number of children per woman
EU (28 countries)	17,7	21,1	1,58
Belgium	17,7	21,3	1,79
Germany	18,2	21,2	1,38
Croatia	15	18,7	1,51
Italy	18,5	22,1	1,43
Latvia	13,6	18,5	1,44
Netherlands	18	21	1,72
Romania	14,5	17,7	1,53

Source: Eurostat, 2014 b

Source: Eurostat, 2014 c

In addition, table 3 demonstrates that women outnumber men in older age groups in all European Union countries.

Tab. 3. Population 65 years or over by sex, (%), year: 2013.					
	Male		Female		Total
		%		%	
EU	247.612.395	49	259.550.176	52	507.162.571
Belgium	5.487.436	49	5.674.206	51	11.161.642
Germany	40.346.853	49	41.673.725	51	82.020.578
Croatia	2.056.483	48	2.205.657	52	4.262.140
Italy	28.889.597	48	30.795.630	52	59.685.227
Latvia	926.580	46	1.097.245	54	2.023.825
Netherlands	8.307.339	50	8.472.236	50	16.779.575
Romania	9.761.480	49	10.258.594	51	20.020.074

Source: Eurostat, 2014 d

This is confirmed in table 4. For every 100 men who are 65+, there are more than 100 women of 65 years and older. In particular in Latvia, there is a big difference as the Latvian population contains 118 women for every 100 men.

Tab. 4. Women per 100 men	
	2013
EU (28 countries)	104,8
Belgium	103,4
Germany	103,3
Croatia	107,3
Italy	106,6
Latvia	118,4
Netherlands	102
Romania	105,1

Source: Eurostat, 2014 e

In addition, when looking at the prognoses, population ageing will increase. The confirmation of the growth of the population of older people is given by “*projected old-age dependency ratio*” (Eurostat, 2014 f). In particular, within about 70 years, it is estimated that the old age dependency ratio in EU countries, by average, will double.

Tab. 5. Projected old-age dependency ratio			
	2013	2020	2080
EU (28 countries)	27,5	31,8	51
Belgium	26,8	29,4	45,1
Germany	31,3	35,8	59,9
Croatia	27,1	31,7	54,6
Italy	32,7	34,9	56,8
Latvia	28,1	32,1	40,2
Netherlands	25,5	30,8	52,3
Romania	23,9	28,4	49,6

Source: Eurostat, 2014 f

1.2 Definition of Active Ageing

In order to understand better the emphasis on the active ageing phenomenon, a useful distinction is made between ‘chronological ageing’ (i.e. a change in age that people of all ages experience) and ‘social ageing’ (which is a social construct involving expectations as well as institutional constraints that affect people’s actions as they age).

The active ageing concept links specifically with the social ageing phenomenon which considers the rising of life expectancy. More concrete, older people are expected to continue to participate longer in the formal labour market as well as in other productive activities. In the spirit of promoting longer active lives, the active ageing agenda calls for a higher retirement age and adjustments in the work environment adapted to the ageing workforce. So, what do we mean by active ageing?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) provides a formal definition of active ageing, as:

‘... the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age’

(World Health Organisation, 2002).



Here, it is useful to further elaborate the keywords used in this definition: **1. active and 2. health**

1. Active implies a 'continuing participation [of older people] in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, [and] not just the ability to be physically active or to participate in the labour force'.
2. The term health 'refers to physical, mental and social well being'.

Thus, following the WHO definition, the public discourse on active ageing is oriented towards greater opportunities for a labour market engagement and also active contributions towards unpaid work that is productive for individuals concerned, as well as for the societies in which they live. Also, the health maintenance activities are included, and they refer not just to the physical health but also to mental health and social connections (Zaidi & Zolyomi, 2012).





2. Social Inclusion

2.1 Definition of social inclusion


Social inclusion is a multidimensional concept. One of the most holistic descriptions refers to the World Bank's (2007) definition, which includes four kinds of capital, namely financial, physical, human and social capital. Hence, social inclusion can be interpreted as a multidimensional process. In this respect, social exclusion can be explained as a multidimensional disadvantage in terms of a lack of resources and quality of life (Levitas et al., 2007). Besides the lack of resources and quality of life, Scharf, Phillipson, and Smith (2005) describe social exclusion as a lack of material resources, social relations, civic activities, basic services and neighborhood exclusion. Likewise, the indicators of social exclusion according to the European Social Survey refer to the regularity of meeting with friends and relatives, taking part in social activities, self-rated physical health and mental health, self-rated income and the quality of the local area (Ogg, 2005). As a result of the different descriptions of social inclusion, we define social inclusion as a multidimensional process of individuals, who try to control and to cope with resources and services, take part in society and its activities and connect to social relations and feel included in the (local) area. Thus, social inclusion refers to a multidimensional process of behavioural change based on the interaction of an individual with its environment in different situations (e.g. Endler and Magnusson, 1976). The process of social inclusion can be interpreted in two different ways. It consists of one's interaction with his or her environment in order to reach emotional or functional satisfaction.

Specifically, there is a distinction between the increase of social inclusion on an individual level (described as processes of activation and internalization) on the one hand and a collective level on the other hand (described as processes of participation and connection).

First, activation (process one) and internalization (process two) explain the increase of social inclusion respectively as a functional and emotional reward for individuals themselves. Second, participation (process three) and connection (process four) can be explained as the functional or emotional outcome for the individual in interaction with his or her environment (De Greef, Segers & Verté, 2010).

2.2 Activation and internalization

In order to cope with practical daily problems, vulnerable adults need to increase basic skills. In this context, social inclusion refers to the functional outcome for the individual and can be seen as a process of activation. For example, one can read the subtitles on TV or one is able to read and sort out his or her email. According to Bjørkøe (2009), activation concerns the involvement of learners in meaningful and communicative activities with a specific goal orientation. In this context, activation leads to an increase of liveability within the direct surroundings (Fortuin and Keune, 1997). Accordingly,



the learner has the opportunity to increase his or her self-control (Fortuin and Keune 1997). Besides this increase of feelings of happiness and safety (in terms of increase of emotional satisfaction for the individual himself or herself) can be seen as internalization. More concretely, Mastergeorge (2001) explains internalization of a process in which an individual is satisfied with oneself and has the ability to lead his or her life in a responsible and happy way.

2.3 Participation and connection

According to Bjørkøe (2009), participation is necessary in order to be socially included. In this respect, participation refers to a growing stability of the individual's connection with his or her environment (resulting in functional rewards). In other words, increase of social inclusion can be explained as doing more things within the direct surroundings (Guildford, 2000). For example, older people are very active in the neighbourhood or takes part in official organizations (Dury et al., 2014)

The increase of social inclusion can be explained as an increase of connection (e.g. Huisman et al., 2003; Priemus, 2005). In this context, vulnerable adults have better or more contact with others and experience an emotional satisfaction after being in contact with the environment. According to Verté et al. (2007), social inclusion is a process of meeting others and developing new social interactions.

2.4 Social exclusion in Europe

In general in Europe, 24.4% of people risks being socially excluded. Croatia, Italy, Latvia and Romania are above the European average. Belgium and Germany score somewhat better, and Netherlands has the lowest. Table 6 provides an overview of numbers of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age group.

In particular, what is striking are the differences when looking at the risk of social exclusion in the oldest age group, where numbers vary between 6.1% and 36.1% (see table 6).



Tab. 6. People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age group, (%). Years: 2013

	Less than 16 years	16 -24 years	25 - 49 years	50 - 64 years	65 years or over	Total
EU (28 countries)	27,2	31,6	23,6	25,6	18,2	24,4
Belgium	21,5	24,2	19,9	21,2	19,5	20,8
Germany	19,1	24,6	19,2	25,2	16,0	20,3
Croatia	21,8	21,2	16,8	18,1	23,4	29,9
Italy	31,4	36,1	28,8	28,0	31,4	28,4
Latvia	37,0	38,7	31,6	37,0	36,1	35,1
Netherlands	17,0	25,7	14,8	19,3	6,1	15,9
Romania	48,3	47,5	37,3	40,1	35,0	40,4

Source: Eurostat, 2014 g

Therefore, the European Commission underlines the necessity of investing time, effort and resources to relieve at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020. Specific population subgroups are particularly vulnerable.

Another factor of concern is the dramatic increase of youth unemployment. More and more countries are confronted with youngsters who are disconnected from the labour market. These youngsters have fewer opportunities and are disadvantaged as to social inclusion in daily life. Due to the fact that youngsters are the future “engine” of our economy and society, their opportunities and chances to participate actively in daily life should be increased.



Table 7 shows that, in 2013, the youth employment rate in the Netherlands was the highest of all the examined countries, whereas Croatia recorded the highest youth unemployment rate.

Tab. 7.	Employment rate by age group (%) .Year: 2013			Unemployment rate by age group (%) .Year: 2013		
	16-24	25-74	Total	16-24	25-74	Total
EU (28 countries)	32,3	50,2	68.4	23,5	9,5	10.8
Belgium	23,6	41,7	67.2	29,7	7,1	8.4
Germany	46,8	63,5	77.1	7,9	5,0	5.2
Croatia	14,9	37,8	57.2	50,0	14,4	17,3
Italy	16,3	42,7	59.8	40,0	10,3	12,2
Latvia	30,2	54,8	69.7	23,2	10,7	11,9
Netherlands	62,3	60,1	76.5	11,0	5,9	6,7
Romania	23,5	41,5	63.9	23,7	5,7	7,1

Source: Eurostat, 2014 h

Finally, social gerontologists have responded to the need to increase understanding of the 'structured disadvantage' and special needs experienced by older migrants (Warnes and Williams, 2006). The Belgian Ageing Studies evidenced among circa 70.000 older people that especially older people above 80 years are more social excluded from daily society (De Witte et al., 2012) with a special focus on marginalized groups as women and immigrants experiencing loneliness and social inequality (Buffel et al., 2012).

Women migrations also takes into account a high rate of forced migration, like the human trafficking carried out by international criminal organizations and particularly linked to sexual exploitation. Only in Italy, more than 70.000 women are dedicated to prostitution, and over a half of them are foreigners. Therefore, this social category turns out to be weak and marginalized (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2013).

Furthermore, as shown in table 8, in 2013, Germany has been the country with the highest number of immigrants, whereas in Croatia this number was the lowest.

Tab. 8. Immigration	
	2012
EU (27 countries)	1.693.902
Italy	350.772
Belgium	147.387
Croatia	8.959
Germany	592.175
Latvia	13.303
Netherlands	124.566
Romania	167.266

Source: Eurostat, 2014 i

We can conclude that, as a result of social, economic and demographic changes, the young and the old have become more vulnerable. The awareness of this especially weak status, gave rise to the notion of intergenerational learning, where older and younger generations both represent an opportunity for the development of meaningful relationships. The GUTS project will combine the strengths of older people and youngsters to reach mutual learning and increase their skills, for example in facing daily problems, with reference to the goal of the decrease of poverty and social exclusion, foreseen by the Europe2020 Strategy (European Commission, 2014). More socially excluded people are offered innovative educational paths through which elderly and youths will be equipped to cope with the challenges set by the society nowadays.



3. Definition of Intergenerational Learning

“Intergenerational Learning (IL) defines the way people of all ages can learn together and from each other”

(European Map of Intergenerational Learning, 2014).

It addresses a number of issues, many of them in the agenda of decision makers, such as building active communities, promoting citizenship and addressing inequality. “For centuries, in both traditional and modern cultures, intergenerational learning has been the informal vehicle within families for *“systematic transfer of knowledge, skills, competencies, norms and values between generations – and is as old as mankind”* (Hoff, 2007).

Nowadays, there is a new paradigm of intergenerational learning that is “extra-familial”.

IL is considered as an important part of Lifelong Learning, where the generations work together to gain skills, values and knowledge. Beyond the transfer of knowledge, IL fosters reciprocal learning relationships between different generations and helps to develop social capital and social cohesion in our societies (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1997; Polanyi, 1979; Sennet, 2008).

More concrete IL becomes a social phenomenon that arises from experience and active participation to the practices of the community, in which two generations learn together about and from each other, and/or share learning experiences and training activities designed to develop knowledge and skills in a co-creative manner rather than a mentoring one. The concept of IL that is hereby illustrated assumes three different dimensions: sociological, educational and working.

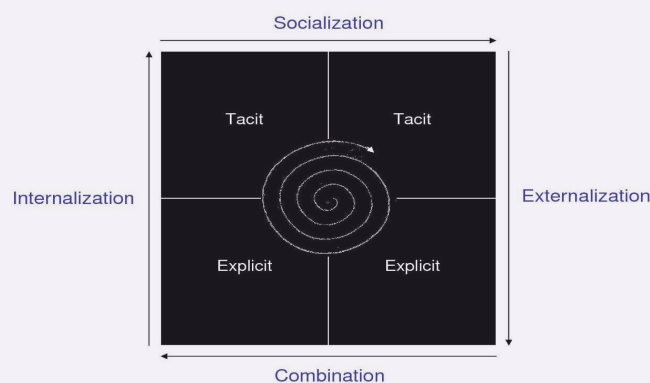
3.1 Sociological dimension

IL is recognized as a socialization process that involves the older people and the youth and that includes modeling of behaviors. When this process develops within a family situation, IL is assumed as an informal way for socializing the next generation in the lifestyles and values of society. Nonetheless, there are other types of IL outside the family, that take the shape of formal meetings between two different generations where learners learn how to respect and value each other to achieve “the creation of a meaningful, trusting intergenerational relationship” (Newmann and Hatton-Yeo, 2008). Furthermore, IL may foster social skills and personal growth by reducing negative stereotypes, enhancing social inclusion and generating a feeling of empowerment.

3.2 Educational dimension

In intergenerational learning-based educational programs the focus is on a principle of solidarity that combines the “know how” (tacit knowledge) and the “knowledge” (explicit knowledge), and may assume the form of a pathway to facilitate employability (Riley et al., 1984). Tacit knowledge combines with explicit knowledge. In particular, tacit knowledge collects all those things that we know (Polyani, 1979) and according to Ikujiro Nonaka’s model it can be converted to explicit knowledge (Nonaka and Takeuchi , 1997). In this model, explained in the image below (fig.1), IL as a knowledge creation process is about continuous transfer, combination, and conversion of the different types of knowledge, as users practice, interact, and learn (Nonaka and Takeuchi , 1997).

Figure 1: Ikujiro Nonaka’s model (Nonaka and Takeuchi , 1997)





3.3 Working dimension

The points discussed above make a good start to understand the possibilities of IL in organizations, which is conceptualized in a way similar to sociology and education.

Here too IL is characterized as an interactive process of knowledge transfer between generations that results in various learning outcomes. As in education, organizational IL is considered to be a planned, formal process and as such a type of workplace learning (Grignoli and Di Paolo, 2009).

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1997) proposed four ways that knowledge types can be combined and converted, showing how knowledge is shared and created in the organization.

The model of Nonaka and Takeuchi (1997) is based on the following elements:

1. *Socialization: tacit to tacit.*

Knowledge is passed on through practice, guidance, imitation, and observation.

2. *Externalization: tacit to explicit.*

This is deemed as a particularly difficult and often particularly important conversion mechanism. Tacit knowledge is codified into documents, manuals, etc. so that it can be spread more easily through the organization. Since tacit knowledge can be virtually impossible to codify, the extent of this knowledge conversion mechanism is debatable. The use of metaphors is cited as an important externalization mechanism.

3. *Combination: explicit to explicit.*

This is the simplest form. Codified knowledge sources (e.g. documents) are combined to create new knowledge.

4. *Internalization: explicit to tacit.*

As explicit sources are used and learned, the knowledge is internalized, modifying the user's existing tacit knowledge.



3.4 Intergenerational programs

Intergenerational programs offer a mechanism by which persons of different generations purposefully collaborate to support and nurture each other. In this collaboration, older adults, children, and youth each assume a special role, designed to have a positive and mutually beneficial impact. Intergenerational programs owe their existence to the convergence of a number of social, economic and political factors, as well as a unique synergy that seems to exist between older adults and young people. Such programs offer effective methods for confronting a wide range of concerns, especially those of older adults and young people.

They have addressed the following issues:

- social problems such as isolation, inadequate support systems, disconnectedness of both generations from each other and from their communities
- economic problems, such as inadequate employment opportunities for the young and the old
- political problems, such as competition for shrinking human service funds

3.5 Benefits of intergenerational learning programs


The benefits of intergenerational learning programs are various. Most of all, they develop positive attitudes among generations and integrate benefits for all age groups and the whole community. First, youth develop healthy attitudes towards aging through a more informed understanding, and strengthen their sense of community and social responsibility.

Second, older adults stay involved in their community, improve life satisfaction, develop skills and a feeling of continued usefulness in the community, get an opportunity to engage in lifelong learning and the chance to share their life experiences and knowledge.

As a consequence, cultures as well as generations are linked within the community, thus fostering positive attitudes and positive regard for people of different beliefs and cultures.

In this way, intergenerational learning programs generate social inclusion, social cohesion, solidarity and active participation in the labour market, especially in terms of orientation and connection.

As described above, for all generations, the benefits are the feeling of being valued, accepted and respected; knowledge and skills are enhanced and the creation of a meaningful, trusting intergenerational relationship is established. In particular, Seedsman et al. (2002) analyzed 85 intergenerational learning project initiatives across Australia and identified a number of positive outcomes. They were effective in building societal cohesion of local communities and enhancing local



cultural life and identity (Seedsman et al., 2002). In addition, such schemes provided opportunities for diverse groups of people to engage in health and community advancing activities (Bartlett, 2003). The co-creative method, as mentioned earlier, is compatible with intergenerational learning community building initiatives leading to social inclusion and active ageing. So, the following paragraph define the concept of co-creation and explains how this combines with Intergenerational Learning Programs.

3.6 Co-creation in intergenerational learning

Co-creation is a multidimensional phenomenon with a range of meanings, but all addressing the concept of collective creativity that shows in the joint experience of two or more people.

It is a special case of collaboration where the intent is to create something that is not known in advance. The concept of intergenerational learning is directly related to co-creation.

The value of co-creation is expressed through the collective creativity of people; in particular, the added value of co-creation, in intergenerational learning programs, is that it satisfies the need for creative activity while addressing the need for social interaction and mutual understanding.

In a co-creative space, by definition, the concrete targets, priorities and concepts are realised with the contribution of all the members of the age groups.



So, the co-creative space satisfies the following criteria:

- Inclusion: the activities in the co-creative learning space encompass different generations and cultures.
- Transdisciplinarity: connotes a strategy that crosses many disciplinary boundaries and not only to collect different perspectives and multidisciplinary views, but rather to create a new holistic approach and to develop a new solution for complex issues.
- Community orientation: This concept takes into account the development of learning areas that have their places in concrete social environments (cities and municipalities, urban districts and neighbourhoods) and use local or regional networking.
- Prevention oriented: living and housing in daily life, 'salutogenese' (e.g. to look for ways to stay healthy, to cope with unusual situations and by doing so becoming a stronger person) and building social networks in the own environment.
- Co-creative spaces are supported by successful and sustainable good working relationships with cultural organisations and protagonists (artists and artists associations, museums, libraries, theatres, music and arts schools, choirs or bands and so on). These networks in the field of later life learning will be established in order to develop innovative models in creative settings and to use the various ways of artistic expression and approaches. In this way co-creative spaces will develop a link between artists work, education and lifelong learning, social and political work. Cultural processes are designed to accelerate change making and development of creative solutions. Therefore, it would be important to provide opportunities to create and sustain intergenerational shared sites where co-creative activities take place.

4. Good practices on intergenerational learning in the participating countries

The intergenerational learning initiatives described in the good practices that follow reflect the idea of a social capital paradigm that creates a synergy between individuals, groups, systems and the community. The following programs demonstrate that intergenerational learning in widely varied forms is a tool that can integrate traditional and modern methods for exchanging ideas, knowledge, values and skills and create diverse communities in which individuals and systems can collaborate to reach the following aims: increase of life quality, active participation in the labour market for youths, active ageing, intergenerational solidarity specifically accomplished by means of co-creative and participatory learning programs, fight to marginalization and social exclusion.

The Belgian Ageing Studies showed that the rate of involvement in education or cultural activities is still very poor and should be stimulated (De Donder et al., 2014; Verté et al., 2010). Through innovative learning areas, these underrepresented learners should be attracted to new pathways of adult learning.

Therefore it is necessary to create and innovate learning approaches in which senior citizens (including oldest old, older migrants and older women) and youngsters will be equipped to cope with daily society. Regarding nowadays pathways of adult learning, the learning environment lacks the strength of intergenerational learning, and learning in cooperation with cultural organizations.



4.1 Belgium

Project (1): 'De Brug Over' - 'Crossing the bridge'

Level of project: local (Deurne, Belgium)

AIM:

The aim of the project was to close the generation gap between youngsters and older people. Both target groups would get acquainted, get to know each other and create something together. The aspect of artistic creation would evoke a feeling of connectedness between the two groups. Important themes in the project were the ageing population, youngsters in an urban environment and the generation gap. This project was an initiative of twelve students of social and cultural work.

SUBJECT:


The project was executed in a secondary school in Deurne, Belgium. On the 25th of October 2013, senior neighbours from VL@S (<http://www.vlaamseactievesenioren.be/>) were invited to spend the day with a group of second year pupils of the Spectrumschool Deurne and participate in several artistic workshops: linedance vs streetdance and poppin', slampoetry, graffiti and percussion. At the end of the day, youngsters and seniors performed together on stage and showed their creations.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

The project was a very positive experience for both the participants, spectators and monitors. Although the project was a local initiative, it seemed to have a significant impact on the participants. Afterwards, a facebook group was established where all participants would be able to interact and share pictures after the project was finished.

MEDIA:

- <http://www.stedelijkonderwijs.be/hbo5antwerpen/content/de-brug-over>
- http://www.g-o.be/Net_eMagazineHome/Pages/eMagazineArtikel.aspx?Id=7398
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRol-I9kF84>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/251420235007570/>



Project (2): Elementary school 'De 3hoek', Ekeren (Belgium)

Level of the project: local (elementary school in Ekeren, Belgium)

GUTS component: cultural learning

AIM:

The aim of the project was to bring pupils of the primary school and their grandparents closer together, by teaching each other about something from their own interest.

SUBJECT:


The grandparents of a group of pupils from elementary school 'De 3hoek' in Ekeren, (Belgium) were invited to come to the school in June 2013. Through the use of ICT tools, they were given the chance to explore each other's interests and to exchange knowledge and skills.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

The activity was positively perceived by both the pupils and their grandparents. The grandparents learned to work with an iPad. The pupils learned about their grandparents interests. Grandparents and grandchildren were given the chance to cooperate in a different way.

MEDIA:

- <http://www.ketnet.be/karrewiet/nieuws/6-juni-2013-intergenerationeel-leren;>
- <https://www.facebook.com/3Hoek.ekeren/posts/927543200630037>



Project (3): CVO Antwerpen & elementary school De Pluim, Hoboken (Belgium)

Level of the project: local

AIM:

Students Multimedia Operator in the adult educational center CVO Antwerpen work together with the 2nd and 3rd year of elementary school De Pluim. Aim is to work together on some research questions and to learn from each other.

SUBJECT:

The students and pupils watch the children's news together. Important parts of class are filmed using smartphones and uploaded on a youtube channel. Afterwards, the students and pupils work together and research the discussed topics with the use of smartphones and tablets.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

The students and pupils learned to cooperate and learned from and with each other.

MEDIA:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_WdX-25P7c&index=54&list=UUW8ywoc3wvxcDFmUedpVNhQ



Project (4): Elementary school De Pluim

Level of the project: local

AIM:

The aim of the project is to involve the senior neighbours of elementary school De Pluim in the activities of the school and to set up a mini open learning area for (grand)parents.

SUBJECT:

The school involved senior neighbours in several activities. Whenever the school is closed, they keep a watch on the school area, take care of the plants etc.

In the mini open learning area, (grand)parents of the pupils are invited to play games, read, cook... They get the chance to learn together with the children.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

The neighbours feel like they are more involved in the school activities.

The open learning area offers additional learning opportunities for both the children and the parents. Another benefit is the fact that the (grand)parents are more acquainted with the big Center for Adult Education (CVO Antwerpen) on campus and even go there themselves.



4.2 Croatia

Project (1): Two world WARS in Europe - Towards a better EUROPE

Level of project: European

AIM:

2WARDs - Europe brought together partners from ten countries to reflect on war and memories: an intergenerational dialogue at the moment of the centennial of the First World War. The aim of the project was to build up a learning process on 'Wars and conflicts in Europe', resulting in the transmission of lived stories.

SUBJECT:

2WARDs Europe was a project about sharing the words of senior citizens through a dialogue with younger generations. The project involved methods for innovative and creative learning processes on intergenerational work and brought together partners from different countries to express their personal reflections using storytelling, images, local research, artistic approaches and other instruments to get results and to build outcomes in a participatory way. The themes addressed are the destructive impacts of regional, national and international wars, but also the actual problems caused by racism, extremism and discrimination.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:


The project addressed topics and the work with senior citizens in an intergenerational approach, in combination with the professionalism of the partner organizations, which led to innovative and creative results. The 2WARDs Europe project developed, locally and on the partnership level, an intergenerational and intercultural dialogue. Building up a learning process on 'Wars and conflicts in Europe', resulting from the transmission of lived stories.

Those groups consist of younger generations and the elderly and the result of this common work and exchange was a personal view on wars and conflicts, expressed by European citizens, and a common European statement for peace and on the value of permanent (intergenerational) dialogue in conflict handling, to be presented at the historic moment of 2014, 100 year 1st world war. Organisations involved in the project have learned about methods for innovative and creative learning processes on intergenerational work, using story telling, images, local research, artistic approaches, to stimulate and share expression on a participatory way.

Since the partnership at the European level was very heterogeneous, the local impact differed from partner to partner. For the majority of the partners the impact on their own organisation and working area was very high, therefore the concept of 2WARDs Europe will also continue to be developed by a similar project. On partners level dialogues were organised; exhibitions and workshops with senior citizens and youngsters. Choir's learned old songs from wartime and grandchildren interviewed their grandparents.

MEDIA:

- [//2wards-europe.eu/](http://2wards-europe.eu/)



Project (2): Computers, Languages and Intergenerational Communication in the Kitchen (CLICK)

Level of project: European

AIM:

The project intended to use a simple but effective methodology of thematically based shared classes in order to help adult and senior learners to ease their way through the educational process.

SUBJECT:

The project used thematically based shared classes in order to help adult and senior learners to ease their way through the educational process. The thematically based shared classes were held and they consisted of courses that affect ones participation in the modern society the most: computer literacy, writing and reading, and foreign languages.

The project partners organized:

- Computer courses / ICT training. (basic knowledge, but also the creation of a blog, web site. Facebook..)
- Cooking lessons
- "Online-cooking-events"
- English courses, creative writing course, development of a "cook tionario", recipes
- Games, puzzles, Video channel.

The methodological approach is based on four pillars: motivation, learning through acting, self-confidence and active participation of the adults all along the learning process.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

The CLICK-project invented a way to bring the generations together, to make use of the knowledge of the ancestors as well as the knowledge of the youngsters and to teach them both. The project promoted digital inclusion and online social networking to older people, encouraging younger people to share their skills, but also promote the swapping of skills between age groups. The project combines learning computer skills and foreign language learning for older learners and young learners through thematically oriented courses. In order to facilitate the dialogue between the generations and to promote intercultural exchange, partners used the subject of cooking and eating (past and present) as a central theme. Both generations had the opportunity to incorporate their knowledge - some ICT skills, others their experience in cooking, old recipes, preparation difficult dishes and others in teaching intercultural encounter. By the common theme of "cooking & food" both older and younger people are addressed.

MEDIA:

- <http://www.click-grundtvig.com/index.html>.



4.3 Germany

Project (1): Keywork – Keywork

Level of the project: National

AIM:

The main aim of the Keywork⁴ networking is to encourage and support various innovative forms of voluntary activities in the overlap of cultural activities, social work and education.

The main principles are:

- Innovation, that means to create new innovative responsibility roles in the community for adults and youngsters and to realise concrete projects;
- Participation, that means to meet each other at eye level and to work in a productive and successful cooperation with professionals and volunteers;
- New forms of learning, that means to learn with and from another and to build an extensive network of knowledge;
- Promoting of new scopes of creativity and development, that means to use various public areas and institutions in the community to realise Keywork projects.

SUBJECT:

The Keywork approach was achieved in a lot of projects, especially within the “Experience know-how for initiatives (EFI) / senior trainers” – programme. The core of the EFI programme is a 9-day training. It contained two three-day and one two-day course dealing with the topics of ‘About searching and finding’ – ‘matter close to my heart’, ‘Working in and with groups’ and ‘project management’. Two engrossing days focused on ‘Public relations’ and ‘Fundraising’. It was crucial for the training that the participants reflected their own understanding of volunteer work without pressure, with a lot of creativity and with a lot of ease; that they developed first project ideas and checked them for realisation options – with focus on the overlap of cultural activities, social work and education.

To mention just a few examples in this context:

Based on the “Culture licence” (“Kulturführerschein”) training programme, 7 one day seminars with a theoretical part and a field trip in co-operation with culture institutions (e.g. museum, theatre, dance, literature etc.) and a practical phase of developing and realising a cultural project, seniors in Cologne developed the programme “Culture licence for Kids” for youngsters, which are hindered by difficulties stemming from their family or their social or cultural environment and are not familiar with cultural institutions.

“Culture in the suitcase” (“Kultur im Koffer”), qualification programme for volunteers with the idea “bringing home” small culture events to the elderly in their homes or in nursing homes in form of a suitcase. Some examples: “old proverbs and sayings”, “musical boxes”, “cooking in the early, 1950s”, “Cultural History of Washing”, “the most impressive journey of my life”, etc.

“Generationen Werkstatt Flingern-Süd” (best translated in “generation workshop” in Flingern Süd, a city district of Düsseldorf) – elderly in the retirement phase are working at a primary school as



volunteers with pupils and artists in three workshop rooms three days a week (art workshop, woodworking shop, “research laboratory”).

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

Volunteers and professionals in cultural institutes both are interested in innovative concepts, the interest of the volunteers is clearly higher. There is intense networking taking place between Key Workers. A lot of concrete projects were implemented. The cooperation of volunteers and professional have to be increased, new forms of qualification, support and coaching of mixed teams have to be developed.

Project (2): Research and development project “Generationen lernen gemeinsam” (generations are learning together)

Level of the project:

National, founded by the Federal ministry of education and research (2006 – 2008)

AIM:

The project focused on the connection between Global Education and Education for Sustainable Development with intergenerational groups of learners. Against the background of social and demographic processes of change the intergenerational handling of complex and global challenges appeared to be especially fruitful. The key issue of the project was the development and realisation of a qualification for adult educators which focused on two main aims: the development of competences in working with age-heterogeneous groups and using adult education learning settings for intergenerational learning and using topics in the context of “Education for Sustainable Development” as a specific chance for conceptualising and realising intergenerational learning settings.


SUBJECT:

Based on a qualification for adult educators a lot of small projects were implemented, the processes and results were evaluated and published. Different types of intergenerational learning were identified and described.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

“Intergenerational learning can be considered as a chance for institutions of adult education. Besides explicitly planned courses for different generations, intergenerational learning opportunities also take place incidentally in the educational work in seminars and courses, when the participants belong to different age groups. In both cases, the question arises how to arrange those courses didactically in order to support intergenerational learning processes. Based on systematic considerations of potential intergenerational learning opportunities, didactic principles of intergenerational learning are developed. For example “reflection – bringing differences to the surface in a productive way”, “interaction – bringing generations in a dialogue”, “biographical approaches –linking learning processes to life stories” or using the social space as a resource and learning area for intergenerational learning.

Nevertheless it must be considered that the developed projects are mostly singular and not part of a new strategic and sustainable orientation of the involved adult education institutes.



4.4 Italy

Project (1): InterGenerational Learning in Organisations

Level of project: European

AIM:

The project IGLOO – InterGenerational Learning in OrganisatiOns sets out to develop a toolkit for companies and organizations in order to support and facilitate intergenerational learning and exchange.

SUBJECT:

The target groups of the project are the employers and employees of all ages. The background of this project is the demographic change and therefore the necessity to re-establish the intergenerational balance in order to improve work climate, competence development of employees as well as the competitiveness and innovation of organizations. The model includes latest scientific results on learning abilities and on workplace learning. It is a complex mix of new learning strategies, settings and techniques aimed at raising the sensitivity of employers and workers concerning the issue of intergenerational learning in workplaces.

OUTCOME:

The project developed, as well, an online training course (and a offline version of the same course) which is addressed to human resource managers and/or employers who want to enhance intergenerational learning and knowledge transfer in their companies.

An online training course (and a offline version of this course) which is addressed to human resource managers and/or employers who want to enhance intergenerational learning and knowledge transfer in their companies by transferring know how, skills and tacit knowledge from older to younger employees and the reverse. This leads to optimization of the knowledge/resources inside of organizations

MEDIA:

- <http://www.iglooproject.eu>



Project (2): Strategies Towards Active Citizenship (STAC)

Level of project: European

AIM:

The educational program “Let’s rebuild our story”, designed within the scope of the Grundtvig Learning Partnership “Strategies Towards Active Citizenship - STAC”, promotes active ageing on the grounds of intergenerational and intercultural communication of elderly with youth.

SUBJECT:

The element of mutual learning unfolds in interactive ICT laboratory classes where youths teach seniors how to use new technologies primarily to satisfy needs (whose emergence had been previously monitored): communicating with family and distant relatives, promoting relational opportunities through the use of social networks, being independent on daily matters like paying bills, reading newspapers, shopping online, thus gaining skills leading to autonomy and activation. In their turn, youth gain the opportunity for informal learning as a corollary to their educational growth, thanks to the narration of the elderly personal experiences with references to the historical moment, the evolution of times.

OUTCOME:

The project brought to the establishment of a teaching/learning community that gave to both social categories the opportunity to work on their empowerment and contribute to the promotion of active citizenship also into a broader European scope.

MEDIA:

- est.indire.it/upload/05-ITA01-S2G01-00050-2-prod-001.doc



4.5 Latvia

Project (1): Senior persons' education and training to become childminders

Level of project: National (European Social Fund-ESF)

AIM:


To acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes for taking care of and being engaged in work (interaction) with children. To take care, educate and interact with children of different age groups. To facilitate the physical and mental well-being of children, to encourage children to interact in a socially acceptable way, to promote the children's' creativity. To support the parents in the upbringing process and to contribute to the personal growth and overall progress of the child concerning knowledge, skills and attitudes.

SUBJECT:

The topics within the program include: communication and development psychology, sanitary and hygiene issues, first aid, facilitation of child's physical, psychic and emotional development, planning of the daily schedule of the child and organising the respective activities for a child. The trainers in the course must comply with the requirements set by the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of Latvia.

OUTCOME:

As a result of the project seniors who had acquired the course got involved in inter-generational activities beneficial for all the involved parts – the children, their parents and the seniors themselves. The seniors received income, did not feel lonely (were socially included), felt useful and received positive emotions from the children, became more tolerant (not so self-centered), their overall health and well-being improved. The families got practical support in the upbringing of their children. The children were not left unattended, spent time in a meaningful way, learned a lot from the seniors and occasionally were emotionally supportive to the seniors in certain situations (became more emotionally responsive).



Project title: Training the ICT practical skills for senior citizens - Switch in, Latvia!"

Level of project: National (EU funds support)

AIM:

To promote the personal, professional and social activity of senior citizens in relation to ICT literacy and to prevent their social exclusion due to technological barriers (in their personal, professional and social life)

SUBJECT:

Project supported by Lattelecom (in co-operation with the ICT Association of Latvia).

The project started several years ago in 2008 – in the capital of Latvia Riga and in all 4 regions of Latvia (Vidzeme, Kurzeme, Zemgale and Latgale). The courses are being organised in 3 levels – total beginners, false beginners and more substantial training for varied practical applications, including the use of e-services. So far around 20.000 senior have been involved in the courses. It is being planned that till 2018 (the 100th anniversary of the independent Latvian state) around 30.000 seniors will have acquired the ICT course for seniors within the project "Switch in, Latvia!"

For example, in 2014 3.709 seniors acquired the course.

An important element in the project is the pedagogical and methodological approach, with the involvement of professional teachers and also assistants from the younger generation. This is especially important, since an individual approach and assistance can be rendered to each senior.

OUTCOME:

This has allowed the seniors to acquire skills for work with Word, Excel, Google search, Skype, e-mail and internet banking. This has enabled the young people to acquire some pedagogical skills, patience, empathy, tolerance and commitment. There are cases when the younger generation could benefit from the actual previous professional knowledge or experience of the senior or the general life experience of the senior. Sometimes the seniors have been able to render practical type of help to young people.



4.5 Romania

Project (1): Sharing European Memories BETWEEN Generations - SEMBET

Level of project: European

AIM:

The main aim of the project is to retrieve and share the social memory through the testimony of seniors who lived in the past decades.

SUBJECT:

Based on individual memories, the project aimed at building the social memory of a community by investigating different aspects which enhance the transition of our societies within the central decades of the 20th century: family, love, work, leisure, school, gender system, etc. The seniors coming from 5 European partner countries became trainers of their successive generations, transmitting a memory of daily life, which otherwise would be permanently lost.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

The main outcome is an innovative methodology meant to enable the transmission of memories from elders to adults and young adults. It is a form of intergenerational and family learning characterized by mutuality, which may be used within institutional, community or family contexts as it strengthens the contribution of seniors involved in the teaching of the others, including young adults.



Project (2): Inter-Generational Learning: From Diagnostic to Impact Evaluation – CROSS AGES

Level of project: European

AIM:

The main aim of the project is to promote a successful and active ageing process, as well as to ensure the social inclusion of older members of society on a local level. Thus, the project started from the idea that different aspects, such as the willingness and ability to learn, contents of the learning and methods for transferring know-how, should be combined in an intergenerational model for lifelong learning, taking into account the needs and skills, level of motivation, experience, etc. of older as well as of younger people.

SUBJECT:

The project addressed to older workers exiting from their working life or to older people who have already retired in order to prevent the risks of social exclusion. By favouring intergenerational exchange in which aged people could bring their long-term life experience and younger people could contribute with their updated knowledge, active ageing, defending social inclusion processes are promoted.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

The project defined a series of LLL methodologies and tools designed to meet the specific requirements of older people's learning, such as motivation, contents of experience, communication and transmission means, flexibility needs in terms of time and methods, in order to favour the complete fulfillment and active participation of older people in the different living and working contexts.



4.7 The Netherlands

Project (1): Mirror of Talents

Level of project: Regional

AIM:

The project 'Mirror of Talents' gives older people the opportunity to describe their life stories, which will be played by youngsters in order to increase understanding of each other's lives and perceptions of life.

SUBJECT:

The target groups of the project are older people following a course at the regional adult education center and the youngsters following a theatre course at a regional theatre school. First the older people learn to write a story of their lives during the course in the regional adult education center. When the stories have been finished the youngsters (supported by a director) translate these stories into scripts during the course of the theater school. These scripts will be used as a new play for the older people, which will be performed during a common meeting.

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

As a result the youngsters increase their understanding and empathy towards older people and their lives. After the play they are more aware of the perceptions of older people and their view on life. On the other hand older people are aware of the fact how youngsters experience life and look at the lives of older people and their experiences of the past. Eventually both age groups increase the understanding and empathy for each other's visions of and patterns in life.



Project (2): Ipad lessons

Level of project: Local

AIM:

The project 'Ipad lessons' aims to increase the ICT skills of older people concerning the use of an Ipad next to the increase of transfer skills of youngsters towards other age groups.

SUBJECT:

The target groups of the project are older people living in a nursery home next to young employees working in the same nursery home. More concrete the young employees are able to use an Ipad and aware of the need of using it during daily life. Therefore they organize a course for older people (living in the same nursery home) in order to increase their skills in using an Ipad in daily life. Besides this the young employees train their transfer skills and their empathy in other to increase their possibilities of guiding other people (age groups).

OUTCOME/IMPACT:

As a result the young employees have more competencies in training others (especially their older clients). Furthermore they have the possibility to increase their empathy towards older people. Besides this older people (living in the nursery home) train their ICT-skills and have more possibilities to use an Ipad during their daily life.



4.8 The good practices and the presence of the criteria of the co-creative space

All these European projects in intergenerational learning aim an increase of inclusion of the involved target group(s) and besides this in most cases it is realised in a transdisciplinary context. These are the most important guidelines for the GUTS consortium in order to compare these practices and to define them as best practices in intergenerational learning. Besides this the consortium tried to describe some practices, which are community or prevention oriented and eventually also realised in a cultural context. According to table 9 it becomes clear that especially projects, which are prevention oriented and realised in a cultural context are a challenge in realising projects of intergenerational learning. Therefore the consortium of GUTS would like to combine these criteria with the criteria of inclusion, transdisciplinarity and community oriented.

A combination of these criteria seems to realise a good foundation for intergenerational learning.

Tab. 9: The good practices and the presence of the criteria of the co-creative space

	Belgium				Croatia		Germany		Italy		Latvia		Romania		The Netherlands	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Inclusion																
Transdisciplinarity																
Community orientation																
Prevention oriented																
Cultural																



5. An overview on future perspectives in the field of IL in the participating countries

5.1 Belgium

According to statistics, the share of Belgian citizens aged 55 and plus will expand during the following decades (Vercauteren, 2009). In Belgium, there is currently no general policy on intergenerational learning. Instead, there are several local and regional initiatives that mainly focus on non-formal intergenerational learning in a local context.

One organization that focuses on the theme of intergenerational learning is the King Baudoin Foundation (De Mets & Vassart, 2008). They aim to include intergenerational work in fields like education, community development and youth and elderly care. The focus is often on the very young and very old. The generations in between are most of the time excluded from these initiatives (Vercauteren, 2009). The Fund Alain De Pauw supports local initiatives of individuals regarding intergenerational cooperation. In 2015, they will fund several projects in the region of Brussels (Fonds Alain De Pauw, 2015).


To conclude, Belgium has no general policy regarding intergenerational learning and cooperation. There are several organizations that support and fund local initiatives of intergenerational work.

5.2. Croatia

On a policy level, as expressed in the key government and various stakeholder documents, Croatia has established solid grounds for the enactment, development and implementation of the lifelong learning principles throughout the whole educational system. However, in practice, two major obstacles for the implementation of lifelong learning can be found. Firstly, on the conceptual level, there is a conceptual vagueness of what lifelong learning should be as a guiding principle of the system, and through which tools these principles should be promoted. Secondly, the complex web of administrative bodies responsible for the implementation of lifelong learning is often marked with unclearly defined and overlapping responsibilities. Furthermore, there is an inefficient system of communication and coordination among the key stakeholders, and its improvement is a necessary precondition for the successful implementation of lifelong learning policies.

Because of a lack of recognition of adult education as an equally important part of the whole education system, Croatia does not provide for systematic statistical observation of adult education. It is, therefore, impossible to completely rely on any information regarding the number and kind of institutions, the structure and quality of education, the structure and quality of students and teachers, the sources and purposefulness of funding, and other relevant indicators.

Europe 2020 makes clear that older workers are part of Europe's economic recovery, not a burden to be carried. But the EU has a wider responsibility to ensure that people in later life participate fully in society. However, in Croatia older people are often seen as burden on health and public services – thus, as an economic threat.



Croatia also lacks research and development projects in adult education which is one of the main reasons for its insufficient level of development.

Croatia has, in January 2011, entered the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). International projects are important not only from the aspect of European and global integrations, but also for the development of education within the country through the exchange of experience and examples of good practice, the presentation of achievements, through creating and developing networks. Croatia is lagging behind other countries in participating in international projects on adult education and the main reason is a lack of understanding of the importance of adult education.

Participation patterns in continuing vocational training and adult learning in Croatia are among the lowest for European countries. In 2012, participation of adults aged 24 to 64 in lifelong learning was only 2.4% in Croatia which is well below the EU average of 9%.

Data from Eurostat (2015) suggest that, in Croatia, interest by adults in training is low.

Some two thirds of adults not participating in training said it was because they did not want to. Some of the recommendations and directions related to the implementation in practice of the Strategy on Adult Learning and the first Adult Education Act are the improvement of adult learning provision to reach the individuals' and labour market educational needs; developing sustainable partnership between relevant stakeholders at all levels: local, regional and national; developing sustainable financing mechanisms from public source to improve adult teachers' and trainers' competencies, to recognize prior learning outcomes; and to develop quality management system in adult learning.

5.3 Germany


The model of Lifelong Learning is a committed framework concerning all generations, and Germany is no exception.

In today's societies knowledge is increasing very fast. Existing knowledge becomes obsolete over a relative short period.

In consequence elderly people are no longer experts by seniority and haven't by tradition more relevant knowledge than the younger generation. On the one hand elderly people have certainly more individual experience, on the other hand they are faced with knowledge areas and a lot of subjects they are not familiar with.

Nowadays the model of intergenerational relationship is changing far reaching in comparison with the past. In consequence German adult education researchers (e.g. Franz, 2010) developed a new model concerning learning processes.

The basic assumptions are: everybody should learn from everybody and all generations should learn from another supported by professional adult education. Programs of intergenerational learning are becoming increasingly important. Professionals in adult education institutions and settings are facing the challenge to enable intergenerational learning processes through the development of specific courses and designing learning settings.



Different models of intergenerational learning are possible (Franz 2010, 2014):

- Learning from each other: One generation learns from the other generation
- One generation has more knowledge and experience and is transmitting this knowledge and experience to the other generation. For examples mentoring programs
- Learning about the other generation
- In the learning setting, typically, two generations work together by focusing on one theme (for example civic matters, ecological issues, means of livelihood for future generations).


5.4 Italy

Italy does not have a specific legislation on intergenerational learning: LLL segments are approached and managed separately and the resources allocation is also different. Intergenerational learning is in Italy strictly related to employment strategy and national policy documents do not clearly indicate 'intergenerational learning' as a major objective.

According to recent investigations, lots of the best senior workers prematurely pulled out of their jobs, have been or are being asked to re-enter their job. They are now offered new responsibilities such as to train young workers of the same company. Italian companies are realizing that old and young workers' competences are different, not interchangeable but rather complementary. If we look at recent personnel manager interviews we find out that they consider old workers as more reliable and responsible. Moreover, old workers have a greater ability of working in team. Young workers, instead, appear more flexible and have a higher improvement potential.

5.5 Latvia

In the Latvian society intergenerational communication and learning is deeply rooted in the national tradition and folklore, which is living and part of the national ethical code. At the same time the current social, economic and demographic developments have a profound impact also on deeply-rooted traditions and put under threat also these processes, including the remembrance and transfer of accumulated knowledge, experience and wisdom. In social and employment categories this implies also an increased number of retired experts within the overall ageing population trend. Young people nowadays tend to have a high level of education, and in this context the traditional argument in favour of intergenerational learning is that young people lack wisdom of life which could be 'offered' by the older generation. However, in the new technological era it can become increasingly challenging to persuade young people in their need for the life wisdom potentially offered by the elder generation and even (former) high level experts of senior age. This calls for deliberation on an alternative type of platform as a basis for intergenerational communication, co-operation and learning, not only to prevent social isolation of the elderly but potentially also the social isolation and exclusion of part of the younger generation due to various reasons, such as the negative consequences of the technological era, lack of contact between children and parents etc. Thus, among other things, seniors and youth representatives can increasingly provide mutual support in many ways, including the



social and practical aspects of life. In the ideal case all this should be combined with a positively stimulating cultural context and aspirations for improved and personally fulfilling community life.

In Latvia there is no formal national level strategy for intergenerational learning, although there are major strategic documents in the context of lifelong learning. There are several organisations acting at national and also European scale to promote discussion and support the national government on the issue of (active) ageing and intergenerational co-operation, such as the Latvian Pensioners' Federation, the Riga Active Seniors Alliance and others. These organisations unite experienced professionals and experts from the fields of arts, sports, medicine and many others.

Currently the key questions for discussion in the context of intergenerational communication and learning in Latvia are:

1. How do you deal with intergenerational tolerance problems?
2. What are the risk factors of social exclusion of the involved target groups?
3. What is the added value of bringing closer the seniors' and youth 'systems'?
4. What are the opportunities and benefits for integrating seniors (back) in the social environment?
5. How can the seniors and youth representatives jointly contribute to development of different sectors?
6. What are seniors' and youth opportunities for self-realization through joint activities as part of major strategic approaches?
7. How can art and culture become the natural environment and stimulating factor for intergenerational communication, learning, improved community life and a stimulus for one's own personal development?


5.6 Romania

According to Gilbert Highet:

'Wherever there are beginners and experts, old and young, there is some kind of learning going on, some kind of teaching. We are all pupils and we are all teachers.'

The focus should be placed on the increase of the intergenerational beneficence in some European countries (Romania is one of them), which do not have a solid tradition with respect to IG programs. In other words, experts should increase their abilities to make all citizens aware of the benefits of cooperation, and especially, of intergenerational cooperation.

At a more general level, intergenerational cooperation should focus on the benefits for the community rather than on the benefits for individuals, either young or old, taking into account that it strengthens the community, it maximizes the capitalization of human resources and also encourages cultural exchanges. However, in order to commute the interest from the individual to community, we should



start our approach from the individual level as we need to establish some general and valid patterns based on different factors (life experience, work experience, aging, positive or negative attitude towards the learning process, preference for formal or informal education, etc.).

5.7 The Netherlands

Since many years in The Netherlands lots of intergenerational projects have been realized. Most of the time the basic foundation of these projects refer to the exchange of skills and knowledge between youngsters and older people. Especially projects concerning ICT skills have been used in order to increase ICT-skills among older people and to increase transfer of competencies and understanding of older people among youngsters. Second intergenerational projects were focusing on increase of social inclusion and decrease of feelings of loneliness by giving older people opportunities to do something for children like reading or meeting babies in daily child care. More and more the intergenerational practices became diverse concerning their defined goals and planned activities. According to the Dutch situation most of the communities and regions does not have a special policy in intergenerational practices. Some of the policy makers are well willing to facilitate these projects especially by subsidizing welfare projects, but most of them will not create possibilities in sustainable policy making. Due to the fact that in the upcoming future the Dutch citizens are more and more confronted with an increase of their responsibilities (based on the trend of an upcoming “participation society”) a sustainable policy in intergenerational (learning) projects can be a good solution in order to achieve an increase in social cohesion and inclusion among the different age groups.




6. GUTS project


In the contemporary society, social, economic and demographic changes contribute to the development of a new intergenerational learning paradigm. In this way, the GUTS project will combine the strengths of older people and youngsters in order to learn from each other and increase their skills facing daily problems in nowadays society. In particular, GUTS aims at realizing a new strategic cooperation between local, regional and national partners in Europe in order to facilitate new pathways of learning. Policy makers should be aware of the possibilities and opportunities in education and training. Furthermore, one of the main objectives of GUTS is to attract more youngsters in joining education and training in order to acquire better key competencies, useful to orient and connect them to the labour market, seriously damaged by the rapid increase of youth unemployment (see table 7 p. 12). In fact, more and more countries are confronted with youngsters who are disconnected to the labour market. These youngsters have fewer opportunities and are disadvantaged as to social inclusion in daily life. Due to the fact that youngsters are the future “engine” of our economy and society, their opportunities and chances to participate actively in daily life should be increased. We can conclude that, as a result of social, economic and demographic changes, the young and the old have become more vulnerable. The awareness of this especially weak status, gave rise to the notion of intergenerational learning, where older and younger generations both represent an opportunity for the development of meaningful relationships.

The links between intergenerational learning, research and policy are key to the development of intergenerational practice throughout Europe and to the integration of intergenerational learning into relevant policy areas. In Europe there is an emerging need to promote IL as a means of achieving social cohesion in our ageing societies.

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