

European Certificate in Intergenerational Learning

(ECIL) – Newsletter No.3

Intergenerational news



Generations, intergenerational relationships, generational policy – a multilingual compendium

Research in the analysis of the dynamics of private and public intergenerational relationships, including international and cultural comparisons, is a popular and important theme in the social and cultural sciences, politics, and practice. For this reason, an understanding of the conceptual foundations – one that takes into account the diversity of languages – is helpful. To this end, the members of the international network GENERATIONES (with support of the Center of Excellency, “Cultural Foundations of Integration” of the University of Constance) have created a multilingual compendium that is also helpful in teaching. It has been composed to make direct comparisons between the German, English, Italian, Spanish and French versions possible and to stimulate the exchange of ideas. The publication has been launched also on the web-site of the EMIL-network.

ECIL Pilot trainings in all project partner countries

Intergenerational Learning, Intergenerational Education, Intergenerational Training, what are they?

All participants involved in the ECIL projects' pilot training have been engaged in a discussion with these topics. These pilots, conducted in the UK, Slovenia, Spain and Bulgaria were testing the educational and training materials developed by Beth Johnson Foundation to encourage intergenerational learning. The most extensive part of the education/training programme was devoted to the evaluation of intergenerational projects, activities and practices. ECIL has also been designed to develop an education/training on-line programme that would help mentors (tutors), organisers, institutions, etc. to establish intergenerational practice(s) and encourage intergenerational learning within different communities. Partners within the ECIL project have agreed that successful intergenerational practices, education/learning/training programmes should be based on the accumulated knowledge of different settings and learners - their characteristics and issues. ECIL has touched upon an important burning social issue – how loose social ties can be repaired and intergenerational education/training should enable generations to meet.

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Message from UK

The Beth Johnson Foundation, provided the location for the UK training pilot. 13 participants took part over the course of 2 days, bringing an excellent range of intergenerational skills and experience with experience of working in community or voluntary sector organisations, local authorities or educational organisations and a keen interest in helping to develop this innovative project. The pilot course was facilitated by Alan Hatton-Yeo and Clare Batty. Day one involved participants sharing intergenerational skills and knowledge to help with the development of Standards for Intergenerational Learning Programmes such as ECIL. Using a draft set of standards the group made some very helpful suggestions about how these could provide a supportive training framework for the course materials especially in the context of VET.

On the second day of the pilot, the group focused on a review of the draft training materials and discussed the following topics: How well the training met the Learning Outcomes; Improvements which could be made to the course materials; Additional 'support' and materials which would be useful.

Overall, very interesting and helpful discussions took place.

A key message from delegates was:

'The course is valuable and there is a need for this course amongst many professionals, people working with communities, schools, VET, and many more...'

In terms of further developments some key points raised were:

'Learning outcomes need to be measurable'

'The course needs to cater for different learning styles and be a foundation for further learning'

'As this is a course aimed at people from diverse professions and backgrounds, it is important that the language is simple, jargon free and accessible.'

In summary, the training was a very productive and enjoyable experience, with participants expressing a desire to stay engaged with the programme as it develops.

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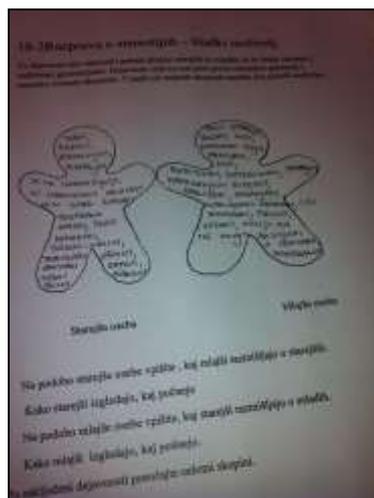
Message from Spain

On July 11th and 12th, a group of twelve professionals gathered in Madrid to help with the assessment of ECIL's draft training materials. Nine of the participants were experienced intergenerational practitioners, and four of them were particularly familiar with the formal Vocational Education and Training (VET) system in Spain.

After a considerable discussion, a group of experts presented their recommendations on the materials. Overall, it was suggested that the training materials should meet more closely average expectations among VET students in terms of clarity, implementation, relevancy, and 'how-to-do' orientation. Likewise, an increased emphasis on the life course perspective was deemed to be introduced.

In the case of Spain, the online ECIL course is being planned to serve VET teachers and students involved in the areas of social integration, early childhood education, and social health intervention. To this regard, one interesting conclusion from our pilot was finding out and improving the link between the professional profile of practitioners in those areas, and the profile of intergenerational practitioners

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Message from Slovenia

We had our ECIL pilot training in April. I have recently been engaged in a discussion with a group of Slovenian colleague's professors specializing in andragogy, the science of adult education. Mentioning ECIL and its objectives, the reaction of most of them was: "I have difficulties understanding what intergenerational education/training is. I know what intergenerational learning is, that it goes on in different communities, members of these communities are from different generations and contribute to their communities, it is influenced by the characteristics of these communities or settings and by the learners themselves but I do not know and I cannot imagine what it is". The situation reminds me of the discussion going on within Age Platform Europe's expert groups preparing for the International Year of Active Ageing. What is 'solidarity of generations', co-operation of generations and active ageing and how is it related to the issue of intergenerational relationships.

It seems that post-modern society has displaced all generations and simultaneously their well-established relationships. This is a matter of further in-depth discussion, that intergenerational education approaches different disciplines, study fields, topics and intergenerational issues like understanding generations, their similarities and dissimilarities, overcoming generational stereotypes, alleviating generational prejudices and discrimination, intergenerational exchange and cooperation, transmission of knowledge between generations, creating new knowledge together. To this purpose, lasting intergenerational practices are needed, as well as stable settings which provide stable conditions for the meeting and cooperation as well as joint learning and education of different generations.

In some Slovenian cases this has been achieved by setting up intergenerational practices based on:

- *permanent cooperation of at least two institutions (each of them devoted to a different generation - a school and older people's homes);*
- *accredited formal educational programmes approaching different disciplines and topics with programmed intergenerational learning and co-operation;*
- *intergenerational education and learning in institutional settings;*
- *on-going public campaign raising public awareness as concerns intergenerational relationships.*

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Message from Bulgaria

Is the intergenerational approach important for adult education and in business training? Should it be implemented in VET trainings, and how? What kind of training materials have to be used for this purpose? These were the main issues discussed during the ECIL pilot training in Sofia. The training involved 12 experts from various fields of adult education - vocational training centers, universities and training centers to big enterprises, freelance trainers, and teachers in centers for foreign languages. As the topic is not well known in Bulgaria, the Beth Johnson Foundation has supported us by sending a trainer with extensive experience in the field of IG education who understood the training and was able to facilitate the exchange of information on existing good practice in IG learning. An especially useful part of the training that deserves mentioning was the development of new ideas about different IG projects prepared by the participants. The Beth Johnson Foundation delivered to all project partners IG training materials; participants gave their opinion about applicability in the environment in which they conduct trainings, as well as some valuable suggestions that will help to adapt these materials to the requirements set out in the ECIL project proposal.

Responsible for compiling of the ECIL newsletter –

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