



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

# EAEA Grundtvig Award

# 2011

Innovative Approaches in Adult Education  
and Learning - Learning Experiences  
through Volunteering



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



EAEA

EAEA  
October 2011  
[www.eaea.org](http://www.eaea.org)



Education and Culture DG

## Lifelong Learning Programme

With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union.

“This publication has been funded with support from the European Commission. It reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.”





# Table of Contents

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<b>9th EAEA Grundtvig Award 2011 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Winner 2011 in the European category.....</b>	<b>9</b>
SENIOR EUROPEAN VOLUNTEERS EXCHANGE NETWORK ...	9
<b>Winner 2011 in the Outside of Europe category .....</b>	<b>15</b>
ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND LANGUAGE SETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM .....	15
<b>SPECIAL MENTION .....</b>	<b>19</b>
LEARNING EXPERIENCES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING .....	19
VOLUE – VALIDATION OF NON-FORMAL LEARNING IN VOLUNTARY WORK.....	23
<b>PROJECTS SUBMITTED IN THE EUROPEAN CATEGORY .....</b>	<b>26</b>
ELDER EXPERIENCE – NEW KNOWLEDGE .....	26
FLEXI-PATH.....	29
HISTORY IN ACTION 2003-2008: BOSNIA, CROATIA AND SERBIA.....	34
INTERGEN .....	39
INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL VOLUNTEERING IN ASPERN .....	42
LIVING AND LEARNING TOGETHER WITHIN EUROPE.....	45
NEW HORIZONS .....	49
PROVIDE: PROTECT, VITALIZE, DEVOTE .....	53
SLIC – SUSTAINABLE LEARNING IN THE COMMUNITY .....	56
VIF – VIVRE L’INTÉGRATION AU-DELÀ DES FRONTIÈRES.....	61
PARTNERS.....	64
<b>PROJECTS SUBMITTED IN THE OUTSIDE OF EUROPE CATEGORY .....</b>	<b>65</b>
YOUNG GRADUATES AND VOLUNTEERING - JEUNES DIPLÔMES ET VOLONTARIAT .....	65



## 9th EAEA Grundtvig Award 2011

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### Introduction

Each year the European Association for the Education of Adults celebrates innovation and excellence in adult education. The Grundtvig Award highlights projects that produce new ideas, new partnerships, new methodologies and a new understanding of how we can work in adult learning.

The first Grundtvig Award in Adult Education was launched in 2003 by EAEA in order to recognise and celebrate excellence in adult education. The Award was to be given to the organization or participants who present the best product of a transnational project in adult learning: adult education projects which at least one transnational partner were eligible to enter a product for the award, and products included videos, photographs, books, power point presentations, slides and posters, and so on. Any product that is accessible to the public, is presented in a comprehensible way and may be useful and/or transferable to others was eligible to enter this competition.

The symbolic significance of Grundtvig's small beginnings and the momentum of the movement in adult education is also central. We hope that this award will be the first of many, which will reach out to every region in Europe, and will inspire practitioners, providers, participants and all concerned to value their work and link more closely with one another.

Grundtvig's thinking on the connections between social movements and personal learning is also very important. Grundtvig laid the ground work for the development of centres of learning, in all kinds of contexts, from residential educational institutions to money and agricultural co-operatives. It linked intellectual and cultural growth with group development, a prelude to civic relationships.



Grundtvig's emphasis on the intrinsic value of learning as a foundation for living useful and enjoyable lives is central to the adult education that EAEA are promoting, with its focus on basic skills, valuing learning and active citizenship. Grundtvig highlighted the connections between the real human lives, as lived in the real world, and the people's situations as citizens. This is central to the work of EAEA, and it echoes our contribution to adult education thinking in Europe.



## The 2011 call for submissions

The theme of the 2011 EAEA Grundtvig Award was **“Innovative Approaches in Adult Education and Learning - Learning Experiences through Volunteering”**. 2011 is the European Year of Volunteering, and traditionally the topic for the EAEA Grundtvig Award follows the same theme.

According to the European Commission in the European Union close to 100 million citizens make a positive contribution to their community by volunteering. Volunteering can be seen an active expression of civic participation strengthening common European values such as solidarity and social cohesion. The European Commission sees that volunteering provides important learning opportunities, because involvement in voluntary activities can provide people with new skills and competences that can even improve their employability. EAEA also regards volunteering as essential for non- and informal learning. The learning can be for active citizenship, social inclusion, employability and personal development. We particularly appreciate volunteering in and for civil society organisations and associations which are part of participatory democracy.

For the 2011 Grundtvig award we were looking for projects that either had volunteering as their main topic or projects that enhance their learning potential by a volunteering period. In the call for submissions a wide range of topics was accepted: learning material and courses for potential volunteers in order to prepare them, projects that have volunteering periods in the range of activities and projects that validate the learning experience through volunteering.



15 projects were submitted to the competition in two categories:

### **1. European projects**

- ★ EU + candidate countries need to be transnational
- ★ All other European countries need to be either transnational or have a strong national partnership with a diverse range of stakeholders

### **2. Projects from outside of Europe**

- ★ Projects can but need not be supported by the European Commission (and can but need not be Grundtvig projects)

## Criteria

- ★ The project must clearly demonstrate the teaching and/or learning and/or material of the volunteering or for the volunteers
- ★ It must have evidence of outcomes, such as a report, DVD, or any form of verification
- ★ It is desirable that the project is transferable and/or useful for others
- ★ The project or the initiative should be up and running for at least 1/2 year and/or be close to completion.



## What did we expect?

A description of the project:

- ★ The main goals of the project and the role volunteering played in it
- ★ How the learning through volunteering was achieved
- ★ What actually was done and how it was done
- ★ The target group(s)
- ★ What processes or partnerships were important
- ★ How did people get involved?

Some explanation about the impact:

- ★ The impact on the participants / volunteers
- ★ How success was recognised and tracked
- ★ Learning points?

On June 14th 2011 two projects were awarded during the EAEA General Assembly in Malmö, Sweden:

- **SEVEN** (Senior European Volunteers Exchange Network), Italy and
- **ESLSAP** (English-as-a-Second Language Settlement Assistance Program), British Columbia, Canada

## Winner 2011 in the European category

### SENIOR EUROPEAN VOLUNTEERS EXCHANGE NETWORK

The EAEA Grundtvig Award 2011 went to the association LUNARIA from Italy for their project Senior European volunteers exchange network –SEVEN. This thematic network was the result of several pilot projects that experimented transnational exchanges of senior European Volunteers. These proved to be powerful educational tools not only for the senior volunteers taking part in projects based in different European countries, but also for the civil society organisations and the local communities hosting them. The network mainstreamed international voluntary service with specific reference to the contributions that senior citizens can give, to the social, cultural and environmental policies.



The project had three main target groups: the European institutions, the regional and local governments and the civil society organisations dealing with international voluntary service. During the first half of the project SEVEN co-operated with the European Commission DG-EAC in implementing the creation of the senior Volunteering Program that is now one of the new actions of the GRUNDTVIG programme that was officially launched last 7th Oct 2008. In this framework the network supported the dissemination of the information in the programme as well as hosted an online service to facilitate finding partners. These tasks led the network to a great cooperation between some of LUNARIA members and some of the National Agencies of the Lifelong Learning Programme, in a common effort to promote the opportunity of specific funding for the senior exchanges and delivery training for all the organisations who wanted to start such a project. SEVEN also fostered the creation of bilateral or trilateral partnerships among twinned towns and regional governments.

The partnership of SEVEN was largely diversified; it included regional and local governments, network of associations dealing with active ageing and international voluntary service, universities, research institutes and a great variety of civil society organisations dealing with social, environmental and cultural activities. Some of the main outputs of the project are a research on the impact of international voluntary service on the lives of the senior volunteers and on that of the hosting organisations, a website that includes a range of training and information material including a database with all the opportunities of international voluntary service for senior volunteers and a “partner finding service”. The partnership released 2 handbooks in 4 languages and offered two 30-hour training courses to all organisations willing to organise a senior exchange.

The idea behind SEVEN was to set up a platform where organisations can easily exchange information and take part in a common project-implementing framework. More than 300 volunteers took part so far in a volunteer exchange abroad thanks to European projects, but a good number have left for programmes organised by different local governments without the support of the Euro-



pean institutions. The partnership wanted to create a “European Wide Space” which would facilitate the implementation of mobility and the exchange projects of all the organisations involved (local governments, NGOs, universities, institutions working with volunteers). Aside, but not less important was the setting up



of a voice that can advise and give an informed points of view to national and international institutions dealing with active ageing, educational tools, active citizenship and social cohesion.

On the educational side, the partnership behind SEVEN has shown that a period of voluntary service abroad represents a relevant learning experience. It is a mutual educational process; not only the volunteers in a new situation implement these personal and practical skills but also the local communities who host them will learn from the foreign volunteers. This process addresses not only active citizenship and active ageing but also social cohesion and gives birth in many cases to intergenerational experiences with a potential process of change in mentalities of young people and senior citizens towards each other. More so, volunteers who go abroad and the associations hosting them are involved in a process that starts from a preparation period, continues with the actual exchange abroad and ends up with a general assessment of what can be done next. In other words, in most cases the volunteers start to be active in their local communities and often they help to train and prepare other volunteers for the experience. The exchanges were always anticipated by a training period for volunteers and organisations whose development was another aim of this network.

One of the most striking outcomes of the work of SEVEN is the website ([www.SEVEN-network.eu](http://www.SEVEN-network.eu)). With over 40 000 contacts since 2008 the website has become a reference point for organisations and volunteers interested in international voluntary service for senior people. The website was built to provide as much information as possible to different target groups. The website has also a very important role of document repository; training materials produced by pilot projects have been collected all together and therefore these fundamental documents are now easily accessible.

The SEVEN network has tried to mainstream volunteering across several political issues. The first contribution was toward “active ageing” policies; it is very clear that European population is more and more ageing, so we need citizens to remain active and



healthy until a later age. Transnational exchanges can be a good tool for it; volunteering in general is considered as a good way not only to stay active but also to have a high quality life in terms of social networking and personal achievements. We have demonstrated that these exchanges are also important educational tools; the volunteer from abroad is a source of curiosity and people belonging to the hosting community (from any age) can learn a lot from these experienced citizens while at the same time the volunteers can learn from the new environment they visit and in which they work.

Other activities that resulted from the SEVEN network were involving senior volunteers in work camps that were mostly frequented by young people, setting up a local round table and workshops on senior volunteering by the Bulgarian Red Cross and making a video on the exchange of senior volunteers. Also, Rory Daly of the University of Lancaster was appointed the champion for the Senior Learners Group at Lancaster University. In Graz a Seniors Organisation was founded because the Seniors' Office of the City of Graz could not administrate projects such as Senior Volunteering Projects. This was a direct result of the partners' involvement in the SEVEN-network. SIC in Lithuania started a national database for senior volunteers' exchanges and local activities as a result of its involvement in SEVEN. Finally, some members of the SEVEN network were active as senior volunteers in exchange programmes themselves during the duration of the network.



## COORDINATOR

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EAEA interview with the winner: <http://bit.ly/rU1as0>



## PARTNERS

- ★ Estyes, Estonia
- ★ Institut für Soziale Infrastruktur (ISIS), Germany
- ★ University of Lancaster – Department of Continuing Education, United Kingdom
- ★ Zentrum für Allgemeine Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung der Universität Ulm (ZAWIW), Germany
- ★ Österreichisches Rotes Kreuz, Austria
- ★ And others: Research bodies; Formal Education Institution; Local Governments (see the website for more information)



## Winner 2011 in the Outside of Europe category

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### ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND LANGUAGE SETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The winner of the Out of Europe 2011 Grundtvig Award is the “English-as-a-Second Language Settlement Assistance Program (ESLSAP)” from British Columbia, Canada.

The ESL Settlement Assistance Program (ESLSAP) emerged from a pilot project based on existing program frameworks found in the British Columbia Community Adult Literacy Program and the Home Front Program at Vancouver Community College. The pilot project aimed at providing English language services to adult immigrant and refugee newcomers in rural and remote communities across British Columbia, using a delivery approach that differs from the traditional classroom delivery which requires a higher minimum number of learners. ESLSAP was introduced in 2007 and is funded by the Federal Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia through WelcomeBC of the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Innovation.



ESLSAP fosters community collaboration through program partnerships between non-profit community groups, the British Columbia Community Adult Literacy Programs, public colleges and universities, school districts, public libraries, employment agencies, and volunteer societies. ESLSAP Service providers receive government grants to recruit, train, and support community members who volunteer to tutor immigrants and refugees settling in non-metropolitan communities. The goal of the program is to provide English language tutoring support to adult immigrant and refugee newcomers in order to facilitate their social, cultural, economic and political integration into Canada so that they may become participating members of Canadian society as quickly as possible.

The British Columbia Government engaged Open School British Columbia of the Ministry of Education to develop program resources. In collaboration with program coordinators, volunteer tutors, and the British Columbia Government a team of instruction specialists, writers, videographers, and web designers surveyed training needs and created print-based and on-line ESLSAP volunteer recruitment and training resources ([www.mytrainingbc.ca/eslsap/recruitment/](http://www.mytrainingbc.ca/eslsap/recruitment/) and [www.mytrainingbc.ca/eslsap/training](http://www.mytrainingbc.ca/eslsap/training)).

Volunteers receive standardized training based on the ESLSAP Coordinator Manual. ESLSAP tutor training consists of 2 parts: on-line training and face –to-face workshops provided by local services providers, (each volunteer tutor receives the ESLSAP Tutor Handbook). In addition, volunteer tutors receive on-going support and benefit from frequent learning opportunities arranged by program coordinators and their program partners.

According to an external evaluation concluded in 2010, the services of ESLSAP have made an impact on clients with respect to enabling them to improve their English language skills and ability to communicate (69% of Clients indicated Major Impact), become more comfortable in using English to communicate in the wider community (65%), become more knowledgeable about Canadian culture (51%), become more independent and confident in un-



dertaking day-to-day tasks and accessing resources and services (54%), increase their knowledge about community resources and services available to them (53%), actually use community services and resources, and improve their ability to meet their professional and personal goals.

Community members build relationship and trust by volunteering to assist newcomers in their language and culture learning. Most importantly, they offer their learners a helping hand to move from social isolation to community inclusion. Currently, program coordinators support over 700 volunteer tutors in 45 communities across British Columbia.

Volunteer tutors and learners state that they are very satisfied with their experience and their participation in the program. Volunteers note that the program has provided them with the opportunity to contribute to the enrichment of lives of others and of their community. Immigrant learners appreciate that community members give of their time and expertise to help them feel at home in British Columbia and Canada.





EAEA Grundtvig Award 2011

## COORDINATOR

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EAEA interview with the winner: <http://bit.ly/vsUaHX>



## SPECIAL MENTION

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The jury thought the following two projects worthy of a special mention.

### LEARNING EXPERIENCES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Lempäälä –opisto started their work with charity projects in 2005. The main teaching subjects are computer skills, languages, art, sports, and dance and handicraft courses. Lempäälä –opisto offers 250 courses every year which build up to about 11000 teaching hours and attendance of 4000 students.

Lempäälä –opisto organised a special day when all who were interested in helping, could take part in sewing washable nappies for orphanages in two villages in Tanzania, Ilembula and Mafinga using mainly recycled materials. This day was very successful, so Lempäälä –opisto decided to continue these kinds of activities and by now have sewn blankets for children’s hospital and orphanage to the city of Gorki in Belarus, clothes for children’s hospital in Ethiopia and Belarus and clothes for school for blind children in Hossana, Ethiopia. The targets were chosen because



somebody within Lempäälä –opisto’s network already has contacts there and delivery of textiles could be arranged safely and mainly without expense. The used material has been recycled textiles and leftovers for diapers and other fabrics received from different textile companies for free. Companies have been willing to help when they can give tangible material instead of money. Learning, recycling, volunteering and helping go hand in hand in very concrete way.

Lempäälä –opisto took on a challenge to design and sew school dresses to all children of a school in Kenya. The Swedish partner MKFC was responsible for collecting information from the children for patterns, organising the shipping of clothes from Finland to Kenya, delivering the clothes to the families and speak about Finland at the Kenyan school. It was very important for this project to get information about cultural issues too. When Lempäälä –opisto raised awareness about the school in Kenya and their problems, they got free fabrics for all clothes from one textile company, Toijalan Tekstiilipalvelu. The work was done by 25 volunteers; some of them wanted to sew, some to cut fabric, some wanted only to do ironing etc. During these several sewing days the volunteers also saw pictures of the Kenyan school, the environment and general conditions around the school. The volunteers got to hear stories about Kenya and learnt more about sewing and how to use for example overlock machines or in which order pieces of trousers are easiest to put together or how to sew a buttonhole. This kind of learning experiences can be useful for them later in everyday life.

The kind of activities mentioned above are a splendid new way to reach people that are not interested in other types of informal adult education but want to get meaningful learning experiences or create social contacts. The modern educational organisation has to have some input in sustainable development too. Lempäälä –opisto wants to believe that these projects have positive outcomes in social and environmental development both in Finland and in Kenya in addition to the individual learning experiences. Volunteering has become an important part of our normal life. Every year since 2005 Lempäälä –opisto has had charity



sewing projects and feels its responsibility is to continue them in the future, too. By bringing together people who are interested in helping, learning, volunteering, local people have a chance to get to know each other and learn together how to sew and make clothes. For many elderly people this is one way to spend time and have contact with their peers. All participants have said that this kind of volunteering is very rewarding when they can help with their skills and learn more at the same time. Every time the attending volunteers have new ideas about the working process, other courses in the school or volunteering in the future.





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## COORDINATOR

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## VOLUE – VALIDATION OF NON-FORMAL LEARNING IN VOLUNTARY WORK

VOLUE (Validation of non-formal learning in voluntary work) started its work in October 2009 and came to an end in June 2011. This learning partnership aimed at developing and exchanging visions on validation of non-formal learning in voluntary work, and aimed to develop guidelines for organisations on how to become aware of non-formal learning, how to develop a vision of validation of non-formal learning, how to use this vision to strengthen the organisation, make voluntary work more attractive, how to support the (validation of) the non-formal learning of their members, and make visible the effects of non-formal learning for the volunteers in order to use these own validated skills and abilities for their occupational orientation or for finding a job.

The partnership's role was to contribute to the development of the project outcomes, and to make sure that the outcomes would be useful on local levels. Local volunteer centres from 4 countries participated in the conference "Inspiration for Recognition". The role of these volunteer centres was to contribute to the way organisations reward the volunteers, to attract new volunteers, to create new ways of cooperation with other organisations and to contribute to a more professional view of voluntary work.



One of the end products of the project is a booklet titled "Guidance for Recognition and Validation of Learning in Volunteering". It describes briefly the benefits of recognition/validation for volunteers, for volunteering organisations and for employers. The booklet also mentions things to consider when developing a recognition/validation strategy, gives examples of tools and methods, and has a list of recommendations for volunteering organisations. Beside this booklet as a joined end product, the project coordinator has developed a card (post card size), that has "Recognition: 10 steps for the volunteer" on one side and "Recognition: 10 ways to support the volunteer" on the other side.

The project has won a prize as the "Best adult education project with an international dimension 2011" in the Netherlands.





## COORDINATOR

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- ★ Open College Network Sweden, Sweden
- ★ Volunteer Development Scotland, United Kingdom
- ★ C.A.R.D.O, Slovak Republic



## PROJECTS SUBMITTED IN THE EUROPEAN CATEGORY

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### ELDER EXPERIENCE – NEW KNOWLEDGE

The Elder experience – New knowledge project started in October 2010 and will go on until the end of September 2012. The aim of the project is to facilitate and improve the pedagogies of transference between seniors and younger generations in the restructuring sector and that way give value to the vital/working experience accumulated by these people. The project aims to stimulate the elders' active participation as both the elderly and the young take part in permanent learning processes.

The project's objectives are to find out the experiences and good practices developed at the European level in the field of knowledge transference among generations and to identify and analyse the necessary competences to facilitate the intergenerational knowledge transference. The project also aims to offer the seniors specific training methodologies and tools facilitating the





exchange and transfer of knowledge between generations. The partnership wants to promote active ageing, volunteer work and the social participation of senior people, reinforcing their social contribution to other (younger) people to learn from their experience. The project objectives also include generating motivating learning environments and improving the self-esteem of the seniors who have left the labour market and achieving a multiplying effect by “chain reaction” promoting performances allowing the senior students of the course to act as trainers for other elder people, so that they also act, in turn, as trainers. The project also promotes new “entrance doors” to lifelong learning for the elderly through the use of NICT training tools, encourages the elders’ mobility through Lifelong Learning Tools (Grundtvig Training Courses) and aims to develop innovative approaches encouraging the mutual contact, knowledge and exchange between different generations.

The project’s final product will be a group of training resources (as a training course) allowing the intergenerational knowledge and experience transfer. The beneficiary target group during the life of the project is the seniors coming from restructuring processes who are willing to participate as experience mentors in training processes for young people. In the long term, the final product of the project (the training course) is aimed at becoming a European reference in the field of generational exchange methodologies. In this regard, the partnership aims to include the course in the catalogue of Comenius-Grundtvig European Courses ensures that the number of new potential users that will have access to the course is enormous once the project is finished.

Although the direct beneficiaries are clearly defined, the final product, as it is a training course, will be used by a wide range of groups among which are seniors (unemployed, retired and pre-retired) coming from restructuring sectors in different geographic environments, adult educators and trainers, adult education centres, foundations and NGOs promoting the elders’ active citizenship, elders’ associations, etc.





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## PROMOTER

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## PARTNERS

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- ★ Folkuniversitetet, Sweden
- ★ Institute of Education Science, Romania
- ★ University of Lodz, Poland



## FLEXI-PATH

Flexi-Path started in the beginning of 2009 and the project came to an end in September 2010. The main goals of the project were to learn more about the means of validation available across Europe for adult education specialists through researching the patterns of recognition for Adult Education Practitioners at Levels 6 and 7 of the EQF in a range of EU member states. Flexi-Path was undertaken on the basis that even if in the adult education field across Europe there are many professionals with competences and functions that are of the highest levels of the EQF, yet the training itineraries are very different and the training and professionalization systems of the sector do not allow the wider recognition and comparability of qualifications in local or European contexts. Agencies have been faced with the challenge of recognising the learning and the competences of these professionals, who in turn have limited opportunities to acquire jobs and training opportunities outside their local areas.

Volunteers from the UK partner the Educational Centres Association (ECA) formed an internal working group which was established by Executive Committee to lead the project work and coordinate contributions from and within the Association. The scene was therefore set for the early engagement of a group of





senior volunteers to determine the shape of the UK response and to manage the resulting progress. Three very experienced and now formally retired practitioners undertook this task and began the process of establishing internal systems to control the staffing, information flows and finances so that these would be compatible with those of the other partners and they would later recruit a key worker. In particular the ECA, which led the process of authoring the resulting toolkit, had to undertake preparatory work leading up to it, in order to gain a greater understanding of EQF and the Bologna and Lisbon Strategies. All those who took part on a voluntary basis, whether for short periods or extensively over two years, gained a great depth of understanding of the range of issues and possibilities in the country profiles of adult education bodies and organisations in the partners' countries. In addition they encountered new dimensions in EU thinking related to their own professional experience. Beyond that, those whose academic knowledge had become dated or remained restricted to their own national practices and standards were able to gain an in-depth understanding of the latest thinking and to encounter new models for describing and thinking about adult learning and the processes and structures that support it.

Producing a comprehensive, functional instrument for sector professionals 'at the top of their game' required close teamwork



from the whole Flexi-Path partnership. The definition of the EQF grades which the project sought to validate was one of the principal challenges. The very varied experiences within the systems of partner countries, as well as the range of professional experience brought by team members, meant that intense dialogue and strenuous efforts at mutual understanding were fundamental to overall success. The fact that across the seven very different agencies involved there was such strong mutuality and professional regard must be considered one of the hallmarks of its overall success. Thus in addition to achieving the practical outcomes of the project there was a strong feeling that ancillary learning took place.

The initial framework for the project set a timetable for the various work packages to be completed and the progress toward these was formally reviewed during the series of residential project meetings. The ECA had also adopted its own scheduling system and was monitoring progress against its own objectives, both internally and externally, so that it was clear which elements had gone well and those that needed more of input or action from various players – either formal ones such as the project partners or those of affiliates who had agreed to assist in various ways, whether paid or as volunteers. At the stage where it became clear that formal accreditation or other means of endorsement could not be achieved within the project life it was necessary to consider an effective alternative. Introducing the role of Mentor fitted well within the conceptual framework that had emerged and this therefore provides a sustainable legacy from the project and one which can satisfy needs in most professional contexts at this level.

The overall success of the project may be seen by the partnership's ability to not only comprehend the EQF and to see both its policy and practice implications but also to achieve a robust and comprehensively endorsed statement that can be used directly within adult education organisations on common terms across Europe and in theory more widely. For primarily UK based professionals the project gave insight from access to a wide range of research and practice from across Europe, both academic and





practitioner based. It therefore added new dimensions to their learning and opened the potential for a range of new initiatives; the full extent of which the partnership believes will only emerge over time; not least due to financial constraints in all systems at present.

The sense that senior practitioners in adult education are naturally fulfilling roles at an exceptionally high level when set against extrinsic grade criteria, while coming as little surprise to practitioners, must be seen as one of the most welcome pieces of learning to derive from this project. The extent to which volunteering will, in the medium term, carry adult education practice further than might otherwise be possible should at least remain with us as a significant question. However whether the rigors of portfolio building and assessment will form part of that future may be more conjectural. In terms of what should best be avoided next time, it is clear that sticking rigorously to the completion of one project 'Work package' before commencing the next was a mistake. The cumulative effect of this contributed to an overall project over-run which placed a heavy load on voluntary effort to complete the task successfully and on time. At the conclusion The Toolkit ISBN: 978-973-7878-51-9 and an accompanying book, 'Flexible Pathways Towards Professionalisation' ISBN: 978-3-7639-4734-8 published by a major German publisher were produced. The final evaluation gave a very high overall score to the initiative.





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### Country Report from:

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- ★ SVEB, Switzerland
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## HISTORY IN ACTION 2003-2008: BOSNIA, CROATIA AND SERBIA

The goal of History in Action was to innovate history education in Former Yugoslavia, to move history education beyond the limited national parameters to a more multi-perspective, plural approach that would promote peace, stability and democracy in countries escaping conflict within and between each other. The project included a range of approaches. 500 educators were trained in innovative educational methodologies through the cultivation of expertise from neighbouring states. Innovative educational material ready-to-use in the classroom was published in Bosnian, Croat and Serb languages, as well as an exemplary English-language version. Throughout the process, policy-makers were made aware of the necessity to deal with history education in the region. History was identified as the emotional core for political instigators of conflict and the teaching and understanding of the subject therefore needed to be addressed comprehensively, particularly with those who deal with the subject on a daily-basis. Over 500 educators voluntarily committed their time and energy to engaging in and conducting training and development workshops, developing innovative teaching material, piloting the material in classrooms and generating the recognition of the initiative amongst stakeholders locally, and across the globe. A core group of around 50 people among these project participants got even more heavily involved and were made responsible for the painstaking process of multilateral editing of the educational material to ensure usability in all countries involved. These volunteers also succeeded in establishing active associations of history educators in their respective country.

Despite the often hectic schedule of the traditional school year and the very limited salary of a school teacher in Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia volunteers still managed to play such a key role in the project. Volunteering in the context of this project meant, at first, a great deal of trust and confidence building among history educators from countries which were at war less than 10 years earlier. Volunteering also played a key role in pointing out the



short-comings of the way history was taught in the region when the project took place. The volunteers who got involved in History in Action were devoting extra time to their professional capacity building as they considered change needed to be implemented. And eventually, the position of the teachers involved, as professionals having the daily experience of their national school system and at the same time volunteers eager to cross borders to share experience and challenge prejudices, was a key for the success of the project.

History in Action consisted of three main pillars. The first was to contribute to the lifelong learning of history educators in the region through a closely monitored learning and development process, local and international training workshops and seminars with regional voluntary participation, provision of expertise and the development of innovative classroom material on the history of Yugoslavia. The second element retained focus on the building of the voluntary associations of history educators, building democratic procedures for and increasing membership through the provision of innovative professional development opportuni-



ties. The third pillar focused upon the national and international contacts between Bosnian, Croat and Serb history educators who worked according to entirely different methodologies and with entirely different historical content, despite the country's shared past. The volunteers involved managed to overcome these barriers through working together towards a common goal, achieving on the one hand a much higher level of understanding of the importance of professional development and lifelong learning (and the skills to suit), and on the other hand, an exemplary teaching material that mirrored the skills used in trainings, thereby increasing the impact of the initiative, giving the participants' a concrete outcome to use for their future work and subsequent training of colleagues. An exemplary cross-border textbook was published under the title 'Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Country, Every Day Life in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia 1945-1990, Yugoslavia between East and West.

The project was built around the idea that learning with limited resources but the collaborative will to change society is the core ingredient of success. The very ethos of History in Action provided the structured channel to promote the aims of the project. By offering a training program, the opportunity to contribute to and edit innovative educational material and propose practical solutions to societal challenges, the project managed to garner a large number of volunteers' contributing to its activities. People from a variety of cultural, religious and social backgrounds were involved on an equal-footing and asked to think together about common issues, thus producing truly innovative and daring ideas. The project did not only focus on the increase in educational capacities, but also those of organizational capacities such as management, fundraising and strategic planning, thereby promoting transversal competences outside the field of improving formal education. The participants have been involved in a range of activities as agents of change for improving history education on a regional and global level. The project was presented as a best-case example for post-conflict approaches in Cyprus, Turkey, Bulgaria, Netherlands and the United Kingdom. History in Action enabled curricula assessment in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2009. Educators involved have worked with curricula developers



in Bosnian ministry of education, with the OSCE, Soros foundation, CDRSEE, the Georg Eckert Institut and Oxford University. The group of educators acts as a catalyst group for change and has extended the outreach of the project through these new partnerships, to push for further change.

The trust between a younger generation of history professionals in Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia was restored and a growing regional cooperative network was established. A renewed cooperation and collaboration between history professionals from the three countries emerged. The very special environment of the project and the mindset created among participants made it possible for people who would otherwise never have even talked together to do collaborative work and even become friends. The volunteers' team indeed created long lasting professional and personal relationships which fostered an ongoing regional cooperation after the project end. Many positive results have risen from History in Action; the educational material developed during the project has been recognized nationally and internationally; there has been growth in Serbian, Croat and Serb History Teachers Association membership; there has been interest in follow-up initiative from the associations involved and from other voluntary history educators' organizations in countries of Former Yugoslavia. The positive results of the project have also led to start of follow-up initiative History that Connects in 2011-2013 involving new volunteers educators from Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia and from other countries of the region as well as an interest from donors to support follow-up initiatives. History in Action has also gained recognition through international awards: EuroMed Award for Intercultural Dialogue 2009 from the Anna Lindh Foundation and Erasmus EuroMedia Award 2009.



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## INTERGEN

The aims of INTERGEN were to develop methods and techniques to facilitate the exchange of experience and knowledge between generations. Throughout the project a series of workshops involving volunteers were held by the partners and by evaluation and successive improvement, a workshop facilitation manual was created. The project involved young and elderly visually impaired people making diagnosis of informal know-how and skills mastered by blind or partially sighted seniors and young people. This led to the creation of an INTERGEN model for intergenerational workshops, handbooks on daily living skills and handbooks on technical skills.

The emphasis on the notion of voluntary exchange was central to the project highlighting the skills of different groups of people. The project aimed to help the people in increasing their independence and self-confidence and enabling them to play a more active role in society and to combat exclusion. The voluntary nature of the participants in the project meant that they were both spontaneous in sharing their skills and knowledge and open to receiving ideas and information from others.

Eighteen experimental workshops were held in Italy, Germany and Turkey and were attended by 81 young and elderly volunteer participants. The participants were visually impaired European men and women who shared their daily living and practical tips as well as their ICT knowledge. Young and elderly visually impaired participants exchanged experiences and skills through various innovative techniques: drama involving junior and senior actors, hands-on activities and two-person-team facilitation. Both manual and oral participation were very active, which enhanced intergenerational dialogue. Volunteers spontaneously exchanged contact details in order to continue the transfer of skills outside the workshops. More generally, the workshops enabled participants to realise that the daily difficulties they face are also encountered by others, and that tips can be shared for the benefit of the wider community.



The friendly atmosphere amongst partners facilitated the spontaneous exchange of good practice and tools (such as the needs and competences questionnaire and the data collection tools). This improved the implementation and development of the project and strengthened the European partnership. The global dissemination (including common press releases, press kit and the project website) generated by the target groups on the issue of intergenerational exchange was much more efficient than dissemination only on national levels would have been.

During the INTEGREN project the seniors involved discovered new facilitating technologies and improved their knowledge of those they had already encountered while the youth involved benefited from the experience of the elderly and learnt practical daily living skills. The experimental workshops noticeably had a positive impact on visually impaired peoples' lives. Not only did the participants learn new skills, they also developed an increased self-confidence and self-esteem, in particular through sharing their experience and skills with others.



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- ★ Italian Union of the Blind and Partially Sighted (UIC), Italy
- ★ Italian Institute for Research, Training and Rehabilitation (IRI-FOR), Italy
- ★ Turkish Federation of the Blind, Turkey
- ★ Turkish Six Dots Foundation, Turkey



**INTERGENERATIONAL  
KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**



## INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL VOLUNTEERING IN ASPERN

Project Aspern, named after an area near the Austrian capital Vienna, is a Ukrainian charity organisation that provides help and support to economically and socially vulnerable families and children in crisis situations. It was officially created in 2000 by sociologist Vera Koshil and is based in Darnytsa, an impoverished suburb of Kiev. The main goal of Aspern is to promote volunteering and bring together volunteers of different ages (from 14 to 88 years old) and various backgrounds from Ukraine and abroad. Aspern's tasks consist of raising awareness, working with volunteers, organising events (such as round tables and meetings) and offering a series of workshops aimed at developing professional skills through the Job training center opened in October 2008. Aspern also has a Rehabilitation Center for children and a Social Dormitory for young people. The Rehabilitation Center is a home and shelter for youth and children (from 0 to 16 years old) in crisis situations from the Darnytsa district in Kyiv. The children come to the Center because their parents are unable or unwilling to take care of them or because they have no family left. Aspern works to find a permanent solution for each individual. The children receive medical and psychological treatment at the center, as well as food, clothing, a place to stay and an education. Residence at the Center is voluntary and temporary and the goal is to find a loving and caring family and a home for each child as soon as possible.

The Social Dormitory is a residential project for adolescents (from 15 to 23 years old) aiming to prepare them for independent living. The majority of the adolescents in this program are orphans or youth at risk and they all come to stay at the dormitory on a voluntary basis. While at the dormitory, they receive psychological and medical support. They are also taught life skills and follow vocational training. When they are ready, Aspern helps them find a job and eventually their own apartment. Aspern also has a Babushka ("Grandmother") project which is a program that provides material and logistical support to some 150 impoverished



families, thus reaching about 500 children. Every week a social worker visits each family and assists them in preparing official documents, managing the family budget, providing food, clothing, and medication, taking care of the children, or where appropriate, refers the family to other social services.

Aspern believes in the power of volunteering, wants to facilitate knowledge sharing and promote intergenerational learning through volunteering. The continuous international cooperation has resulted in very good volunteering experiences; Aspern has received volunteers from Austria through Interculture Centrum and Caritas Vienna, from Belgium through Teachers without borders and Bouworde Foundation and from Sweden through Eastern Aid Mission. Practical examples of work done by volunteers include directly improving the lives of 12 children living in the Rehabilitation Center and 12 youngsters living in the Social Dormitory. The volunteers have also constructed a playground for the children and refurbished homes for 14 families.





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- ★ Pfarre Aspern, Austria
- ★ Intercultural Center, Austria
- ★ Teachers without borders, Belgium
- ★ Bouworde Foundation, Belgium
- ★ Eastern Aid Mission, Sweden

## DOMESTIC PARTNERS

- ★ Darnitsa district administration in Kiev, Ukraine
- ★ 4 Higher educational establishments in Kiev, Ukraine
- ★ Hotel Opera in Kiev, Ukraine
- ★ Restaurant Reprisa, Club 44 in Kiev, Ukraine
- ★ Private sponsors



## LIVING AND LEARNING TOGETHER WITHIN EUROPE

Gemeinsam leben und lernen in Europa (Living and learning within Europe, short GLL) offers a free training course for older volunteers interested in volunteering. In the theoretical part of the training the participants learn practical/hands on information about running volunteer projects and getting a better idea about their future role as a volunteer. Apart from theoretical training and a joint project the program included also personal coaching of all participants for a year. Each participant goes through orientation depending on which field of volunteering they want to be engaged in and what role they want to play. By participating in the training course the participants improve and professionalise their volunteer work. The project also helps to improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of learning opportunities for elder volunteers. What GLL is very proud of is the fact that one third of the participants have a migrant background. This experience led to the idea that volunteering offers a lot of chances to learn to get free training and to gain new skills and know-how.



In Germany, many NGOs have complex and intensive training programs for volunteers. So GLL invited volunteer organisations CSV (from United Kingdom), HESTIA (from Czech Republic), CNVC (from Romania), CSV Napoli (from Italy) to form a Grundtvig learning partnership and discuss the topic of volunteering, exchange experiences, identify good practices for training programs for volunteers and measures of recognition of the gained learning experiences and skills and know-how through volunteering. The main aim of this partnership is to identify transferable best practices used in the member countries and organisations which address effectively the promotion of learning opportunities through volunteering and the barriers to volunteering. The partners research, analyse and compare related materials and activities on their regional and national level and share their know-how. Their exchange of good practices focus on the following issues: contribution of volunteering to peoples' learning and skills development, creating strategies to encourage citizens to realize the learning opportunities through volunteer work, using volunteering programs to develop personal, social and professional skills and reflection on them, rewarding and recognising volunteering activities, using volunteering as a catalyst for citizens to engage more effectively with other learning (or in some cases re-engaging with formal learning or training qualifications) and improving training and learning programmes within volunteer organizations.

The partnership's exchanges also focus on identifying different types of learning that occur in volunteer settings (e. g. instrumental, social-expressive or experimental learning, training in skills needed for specific tasks, group socialisation and collaborative activities, problem solving, teamwork), comparing formal education, training, informal, and incidental learning in volunteer settings, promoting successful content, methods and programs of learning and training in volunteer settings (e. g. workshops, seminars, mentorship, apprenticeship, training manuals, and other methods), discussing professionalisation and standards for entry and practice in the volunteer sector and recognition for the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained and developed through volunteering and creating of conditions for greater participation



in volunteering for various target groups (e.g. youth, migrants, disadvantaged, elder, disabled).

Both volunteers and volunteer organisation staff are involved in this learning partnership. In face-to face meetings participants share their know-how, experiences and good practices, discuss them (for example using the world café method) and continue the discussion and further develop the joint workshops, curricula, exchange their thoughts and experiences, etc. Partners and volunteers who are involved in several different ways learn a lot about the vast variety of learning opportunities through volunteering.

Visits to workshops with partners facilitate learning best practices in volunteer recruitment, retention and management. Each organisation provides new points of views on the concept of volunteering because of their different historical and cultural contexts, their different scopes, settings and target groups. The partners also benefit from the development and promotion of new education material, knowledge and the better use of existing facilities. Being an active partner in a transnational working group improves the motivation, personal skills and confidence of the participants. The partnership also enhances the understanding of local contexts through the mutual dialogue and raises awareness on the European learning environment. Due to the recommendation of the British partner CFV, the project coordinator Perdita Wingerter was appointed a volunteer delegate for the conference "Volunteer! Make a difference" in Brussels organized by the EU commission where about 200 volunteers from all around Europe had the opportunity to exchange know-how and expertise. Through this experience the partnership's network of contacts in volunteer organisations all around Europe has grown even further.



## COORDINATOR

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- ★ HESTIA, Czech Republic
- ★ CSV Napoli, Italy
- ★ CNVC, Romania



## NEW HORIZONS

New Horizons is a LLP Grundtvig Senior volunteering project which sends and hosts 6 senior volunteers between two community-based organisations in UK and the Czech Republic. Hodina H hosts 6 volunteers from Great Britain between November and December 2011 for 3 weeks and will send 6 Czech volunteers in May 2012 to Great Britain also for 3 weeks. Both partners are very experienced in the organisation of international youth volunteering, and both have extensive activities in order to provide services and learning for elderly people. This project is a link between the two elements.

The general goals of New Horizons are: to build new transnational links between the partners and to develop cooperation, to create new learning opportunities for groups with fewer opportunities through the experience, energy and new ideas of elderly volunteers, to empower and enable learning with emphasis on non-formal learning for elderly people, to help build confidence, skills and awareness in elderly people by actively making



use of their experiences and skills in the project, to develop the organisational aspects of the senior volunteering programme for future extension to other work areas and for inclusion of people with fewer opportunities as participants and to build a long-term network of partners across Europe. The more specific goals of the project include: organising transnational links between older professionals (retired or working) as individuals and as part of the organizations; providing the structure to enable the elderly volunteers to offer new ideas for working methods, equipment and training and this way enriching the organisations themselves; extending the participation of elderly people in adult education by building confidence and motivation through the project (this applies to the mobility participants themselves, but also to the elderly people that meet during their placements); asking participants to help us develop and extend the senior volunteering concept by including them in extensive evaluation activities and developing the follow-up methods leading to improvements; encouraging the participants to take direct responsibility for dissemination work supporting the staff with presentations to community organisations, especially those focused on elderly people.

Senior volunteering gives the chance to include the target group as full partners in the creation of the learning framework and learning opportunities within intercultural experience. Volunteering work is focused on the activities for elderly people and local community in the two partners' organisations. The visiting volunteers work with staff and local volunteers to enrich their work, offer comparisons with their own country and learn about operations in the hosting organisation. This project is based on volunteering as a process of learning, gaining experience and creating broader involvement in the local community. The level of involvement of the volunteers is determined by an individual basis, depending on personality, language skills, experience and interest. The volunteers spend part of their time on the assessment and evaluation of the project. They work with the staff to document their experiences, reflections and assessment of the process and the outcomes. The overall added value of the learning through volunteering is foreseen to result in cultural enrich-



ment, new perspectives and confidence-building.

The partnership believes that the main impacts and benefits of the project include: new understanding of the culture and customs of the other country, new personal friendships and for many participants an enhanced confidence from the fact of having travelled and worked in another language and country. Since the project will be relatively short, the partnership does not foresee opportunities for dramatic changes in learning outcomes but believes that the project will offer very significant benefits in regards to motivation. A period spent in the other country trying to communicate with new friends is the best way to motivate languages learners. Working firsthand in centres that provide similar services to the home country with the inevitable variations in methods, equipment and structure enhances the professional development of the volunteers.

The activities of the volunteers hosted in the Czech Republic include activities with children from the age of 1,5 years, non-formal learning and intercultural activities with young people and young people with fewer opportunities, cooperation with the local Senior club and common activities, involvement in the activities at a rest home. All the mentioned activities include exploring different aspects of the Czech culture.

The preparation of the volunteers going to the UK include regular English lessons for the period of 9 months with individual approach which are oriented improve the competence of active communication in English, participation in specific workshops and activities related to the hosting programme in Great Britain (creative and leisure time activities – methods, techniques), gardening, intercultural learning and preparation of the diverse ways of sharing the Czech culture, regular preparatory meetings and active involvement, sharing tasks and responsibilities of hosting senior volunteers from Great Britain.



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## PARTNER

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## PROVIDE: PROTECT, VITALIZE, DEVOTE

The project Provide: Protect, Vitalize, Devote has been worked out in the focus of Research and Development Programme that promotes environmental awareness and education, cross-border dimension of environmental problems and the need for international cooperation in finding solutions.

The aim of this project was to support the managers of the beaches awarded with the Blue Flag, the eco-symbol of quality, in meeting the Blue Flag Program's relevant Criterion concerning the implementation of activities aiming at the Education for Sustainability. These activities can be put in practice by the Blue Flag beach managers, either on the beach, or at the mini Clubs of the neighbouring hotels, whose managers, in the case of Greece, are dynamically involved in the implementation of the Blue Flag Program.

Volunteers from both participating in the project countries, Spain and Greece, identified the best practices in the host coun-



try during their mobility visits, after having spotted the best practices in their own country first. Four volunteers from Greece and five volunteers from Spain worked voluntarily as national “Blue Flag Beach Controllers” and visited the Blue Flag beaches of both countries to check whether the beaches that have received the award comply fully with all the criteria of the Blue Flag Programme, since observation and checks in both countries have shown so far that beach managers need help in implementing the environmental activities required in the Programme. One of the detected main problems for the beach managers has been the one concerning the difficulty in distinguishing the difference between the activities of Environmental Management and those of Environmental Education. Another problem for the beach managers has been the lack of ideas to be put in practice on a small budget.

The final product of the close cooperation between the volunteers of the partner NGOs, Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature (HSPN) and ADEAC-FEE, is been a kit with Environmental Education activities. This supportive kit is a tool of ideas for Environmental Education activities for the Blue Flag beach managers, in order to raise awareness to the local community about the crucial need to protect the Environment. This kit, also enriched with ideas by the National Operators of the Blue Flag Program in other countries, is also available for the Blue Flag National Operators worldwide, who promote in turn the dissemination of the results of this project.



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## PARTNER

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## SLIC – SUSTAINABLE LEARNING IN THE COMMUNITY

The aim of the SLIC-project (Sustainable Learning in the Community) was to empower older people to become active citizens, encouraging the development of skills and competences through formal and informal learning opportunities and directly linking the concepts of lifelong learning, volunteering and community involvement.

SLIC was coordinated by the Austrian Red Cross and carried out by nine organisations from six European countries - Austria, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and the United Kingdom. The partners came from different sectors, such as, educational and cultural institutions, volunteer organisations, a university, an umbrella organisation, a local government institution, the Red Cross and an independent research institute. Therefore, partners brought varied experience into the project and this provided the possibility to approach the issue in a multidisciplinary fashion and learn from each other. On several occasions other organisations in adult learning or volunteering were involved in the SLIC



activities and further cooperation and networks could therefore be developed.

The project contributed to an open learning environment through supporting older people to assess their experience and know-how that they had acquired over the course of their life. Future learning processes were initiated by identifying which type of learning and training the participants would need for further active engagement in society. The partner organisations took on their responsibility and contributed to the flexibility in the learning system by providing and encouraging mainly informal, non-formal, self-directed, but also formal learning opportunities for older people. In order to develop the workshop according to the actual needs of older people, older learners were consulted in the first project phase. 100 older people (74 women and 26 men) were consulted in 5 countries about their opinions on community engagement and volunteering in interviews and group discussions. Together with research on existing tools for assessing competences, the results of the consultation with older learners were the basis for the development of the workshop design. In Finland, two people from the Voluntary Unit of the City of Hel-



sinki Social Office participated in the SLIC workshop to develop the model further for the use of the unit. Furthermore volunteers and learners were invited to the last two project meetings to discuss the feedback from the workshops and further cooperation. The SLIC-project also made an effort to involve disadvantaged groups, such as migrants, ethnic minorities, unemployed older people, older people from isolated communities as learners and educators in the community in the course of developing the workshops. While the SLIC-project targeted active potential champions as well as those not active and from disadvantaged groups, it was shown that many of the tools can be used with people who have not had much learning experience.

The SLIC workshops further encouraged the participants to become active citizens and to motivate them to take part in formal and informal education and volunteering activities. The skills profile and action plan were useful tools in raising self-esteem, serving as a starting point for volunteering and creating a feel-good factor in the workshop. The skills profile especially helped participants to detect hidden strengths and recognize their value. All partners were also actively involved in networking on national level and dissemination activities. Contacts have been made with other organisations and institutions as well as within organisations to disseminate the SLIC-workshop idea and the handbook. The SLIC-project on the one hand, enabled older people to reflect on prior learning experience and to become aware of their existing skills and competences. It also allowed them to reflect on future opportunities to contribute actively to the life of their local community and to plan ways to do this. The presentation of voluntary work opportunities, exchanging opinions with the other participants and mutual learning, the productive and friendly atmosphere as well as the working methods, materials and handouts were much appreciated. The workshop attracted different age groups: young seniors as well as seniors in their 70's, older learners or volunteers who were already active and people who haven't been engaged in activities before. The overwhelming majority of participants had the intention to start volunteering or engage in other learning activities.



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## VIF – VIVRE L'INTÉGRATION AU-DELÀ DES FRONTIÈRES

The 2-year project VIF started in August 2010 as a Grundtvig senior volunteering project. The project aims to facilitate an exchange between France and Germany on the experiences gained in integration efforts including a comparison of structural, content-related and practical work and giving the opportunity to get new insights and ideas for implementation in the partners' home towns and regions.

The project enables older migrants to gain new experiences and to achieve new capabilities. The project partners encourage the participants to gain an intercultural experience in another EU country. The volunteers' traineeships offer plenty of opportunities for informal learning related to language, social competences, practical skills, and, in more general terms, the experience of lifelong learning. The project develops the participants' openness for new experiences, their capacity to actively take part in



the social life in Europe and to enjoy life after 50. The project also strengthens the regional identities.

The participants undertake a range of activities, e.g. language classes, intercultural training, IT classes. Up until now, four French participants have completed a three-week internship in Germany and five German participants a three-week internship in France. The participants have already taken over responsibilities, e.g. for the organisation of an international breakfast, excursions to different social institutions (hostel for the homeless, institution for asylum seekers, etc.) and cultural communities (Turkish and Algerian mosques, the Roma, Italian and Turkish festivities, a Berber and a Moroccan centre) and an exhibition on Arabian calligraphy, assisting in general organisational matters and helping with translations. The latter is combined with the work on a German-French glossary collecting the vocabulary concerning "integration".

Regular visits on both sides to exchange experiences and to learn about the partners work and their culture are key stones in the progression of the project. This offers participation in the project not only to the core group (trainees and mentors) but also to a wider public who might not be prepared for a three-week mobility at the moment. During a German-French hiking weekend 28 participants could be motivated.





The intercultural trainings will be pursued and already had a positive impact on people participating so far (resulting in more respectful and positive behaviour towards strangers). Migrants who have been interviewed in the framework of the internships react more positively on invitations for meetings. More people are getting involved in the project by contributing voluntary "services" like hosting, transport, associations and institutions giving information about their structures such as representatives of the city council and cultural centres.

This process helps to achieve one of the aims of the project: to enlarge the network of associations and institutions involved in integration. Part of the exchange is at the same time a reflection on the vocabulary and understanding of "integration" in France and in Germany (understanding of the handicapped, discriminated, stigmatised, etc.). The individual intercultural awareness raising of the project participants is going parallel with considerations concerning a more sensitised approach by social institutions involved in the work with migrants.

For 2012 three further internships are planned. A round table discussion shall help to clarify a new understanding of integration and diversity and an exhibition of the project's outcomes as part of an international festivity in June 2012 is supposed to enhance the biggest possible dissemination at the end of the project.



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- ★ APALIB Colmar, France



## PROJECTS SUBMITTED IN THE OUTSIDE OF EUROPE CATEGORY

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### YOUNG GRADUATES AND VOLUNTEERING - JEUNES DIPLÔMES ET VOLONTARIAT

Young Graduates and Volunteering started in 2000 and aims to improve the employability of graduates, support a provision for potential human resources structure and contribute to organizational and institutional structure through volunteering. The direct beneficiaries of the project are young unemployed graduates with little or no professional qualifications with different educational backgrounds and nationalities (African, European, American, Canadian. etc). Using the voluntary system, Jeunesse et Developpement aims to help overcome the employment challenges of graduates, particularly with the efficient implementation of local development projects.

The reasons behind supporting a provision for a potential human resources structure comes from the unstable work settings of NGO staff. A staff member hired and trained by an organisation may resign as a result of a more appealing job offer. In this



situation, volunteers can help to keep the project (or other tasks) going without the work suffering a negative impact. Also, sometimes it is difficult to find staff with the appropriate skills for specific projects. Volunteers often have great knowledge of different areas, methods and approaches of organisational work and are therefore a great source of human resources. Volunteers can also contribute positively to existing organisational and institutional structures by providing an outside perspective and a critical analysis of the organisation and its operations and this way increase its capacity.

The Young Graduates and Volunteering project has resulted in 44 trained volunteers including 9 expatriates of various nationalities (French, German, British, Canadian and American) and 14 full-time employed volunteers. These volunteers employed by Youth Development work with issues related to non-formal education, citizenship, community development, micro financing, reproductive health and STI prevention (HIV/AIDS). The tasks include working with the board, administrative and financial management, monitoring / evaluation of the management as well as





field activities (training, monitoring, evaluation, education) of 6 project teams on the operational level.

Currently, Jeunesse et Developpement has the support of eight volunteers, of which three are working on the operational level and five working in the field but also with the management of the association. Seven of the volunteers are Malian (3 women and 4 men) and one an American. All volunteers work with the organisational tasks of Jeunesse et Developpement or the six on-going project focusing on monitoring and supervision, participation of training sessions or assisting with technical support in a specific area. For example, the current American volunteer is working on establishing a directory of technical and financial partners that could fund the projects of organisation, in addition she is working on an application to apply for funding from a foundation. Also, she supports the staff in the capacity building in English. A field agent of a project was injured in an accident and to avoid the project from pausing, one trainee is working to replace him and this enables the project to continue normally. Two volunteers work with the organisation's regular accounting tasks and prepare monthly financial statements, financial reports and record and classify items of expenditure, etc. Positive impacts of volunteering can be seen at the local level as capacity building of staff through knowledge sharing that benefits all parties. These contributions relate to the sharing of experiences gained elsewhere, know-how and life skills which are often perceived as innovations at Jeunesse et Developpement. Another important impact was the establishment of a community newspaper by a German and a Malian volunteer which was appreciated by the community because it greatly improved existing communication.



## COORDINATOR

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