



EU Broadening People's Minds in Ageing

Getting Older People Involved in Learning

The EuBiA Guide

www.bia-net.org/EuBiA

Lifelong Learning Programme – Grundtvig Partnership
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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. EuBiA – EU BROADENING PEOPLE’S MINDS IN AGEING	5
2.1. The EuBiA project	5
2.2. Target group	6
2.3. Learning during the partnership	6
2.4. Added value of the project	7
3. SENIOR LEARNERS IN EUROPE	9
3.1. Lifelong learning	9
3.2. The Lifelong Learning Programme	11
3.2.1 Overview	11
3.2.2 Grundtvig	12
3.3. European dimension	13
4. OLDER LEARNERS WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS AND BACKGROUNDS	15
4.1. Intergenerational learning	15
4.2. Older learners and gender	15
4.3. Older learners and disability	16
4.4. Older learners and ethnicity	17
5. NETWORKING	19
5.1. Benefits and challenges of networking	19
5.1.1 Benefits of co-operation in networks	19
5.1.2 Challenges of networking	20
5.2. Working independently	21
5.2.1 Benefits of working independently	21
5.2.2 Risks of working independently	21
6. EMPOWERMENT, ADVOCACY AND PARTICIPATION	23
6.1. Learning, empowerment and advocacy of older people	23
6.1.1 Defining empowerment	23
6.1.2 Defining advocacy	23
6.1.3 Independent and fulfilling lives	23
6.1.4 Increased self-confidence	23
6.1.5 Combatting loneliness and depression	24

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of several overlapping, curved bands in shades of orange, brown, and grey, creating a sense of movement and depth.



Contents

6.1.6	Greater autonomy	24
6.1.7	Staying economically active	24
6.1.8	Skills for empowerment	24
6.1.9	Empowering communities	24
6.2.	Obstacles and barriers to older people's participation in learning	24
6.2.1	Variety of older people	24
6.2.2	Types of provision	24
6.2.3	Obstacles	25
6.2.4	Barriers as a result of personal circumstances	25
6.2.5	Barriers as a result of personal experiences	25
6.2.6	Barriers as a result of policy decisions by public or private bodies	25
6.2.7	Needs of older people not being met	26
6.2.8	Cuts in provision	27
6.2.9	Overcoming the obstacles	27
6.3.	The benefits of learning for ageing societies	27
6.3.1	Profound effects	27
6.3.2	Dividends for all	27
6.3.3	Investment brings benefits	27
6.3.4	A positive development	27
7.	PRACTICE THAT WORKS	29
7.1.	LENA – Learning in Later Life, Austria	31
7.2.	To Live and Let Others Live, Czech Republic	32
7.3.	HarAlt – Bildung und Älterwerden, Germany	33
7.4.	Ways of Attracting Adults to Keep Learning, Italy	34
7.5.	Club Amici di Salvatore Quasimodo, Italy	35
7.6.	Tell Your Story – A Drama Project for Older People, Northern Ireland	36
7.7.	e-senior.eu in action, Poland	37
7.8.	Advocacy and Enforcement of Older People's Rights in Combating Discrimination with Active Involvement of Older People, Slovakia	38
7.9.	Lifelong Learning, Older People and Society, United Kingdom	39
8.	CONCLUSION	41
	Appendix 1: The EuBiA partnership: List of Partners	43
	Appendix 2: Spin-offs from the EuBiA project	55



Executive Summary

In the context of demographic change throughout Europe and in view of the importance of learning in later life, EuBiA, a Grundtvig Learning Partnership, was established. Nine organisations from seven countries (AT, CZ, DE, IT, PL, SK, UK) discussed important issues and **shared their experiences** in the field of learning in later life.

All EuBiA partners are convinced of the benefits of networking. Therefore one of EuBiA's main aims was to establish a European network and to discuss relevant topics concerning **networking** and learning in later life. The results of discussions during the meetings on different aspects of networking – from advantages to risks – are listed.

Each partner organisation presented an example of **good practice** to the EUBIA group. After discussing the team's criteria for good practice, all examples that had been presented were checked against the criteria that had been worked out.

Keywords in the context of lifelong learning and, indeed, for learning in later life are **empowerment, advocacy** and **participation**. These were broadly discussed alongside **barriers** and **obstacles** to participation and the means by which the obstacles could be overcome so as to benefit learning in ageing societies.

Finally we concluded that our societies can reasonably anticipate a positive outcome as ageing societies literally become wiser and more mature, leading to valuable **benefits**.

The EuBiA partners developed this Guide as the product of the partnership.







1. Introduction

Welcome to the EuBiA Guide!

The purpose of this Guide is twofold:

- to disseminate information regarding the overall EuBiA project and network and
- to highlight the importance of lifelong learning and in particular the inclusion of older learners in this process

The widening demographic change in our society highlights the importance of the need to include older learners in lifelong learning. This applies not only in terms of leisure-based learning but also in the provision of learning for older people which helps them remain in the labour market beyond the usual retirement age, and thus to engage fully in society as active citizens.

We set this focus in a European context using the expertise from each of the participating European partners.

The main body of the guide examines networking, good practice, advocacy, participation and empowerment. In outlining what we have learned together in this particular network, we have looked at the benefits of co-operation as well as those of working independently.

EuBiA has also highlighted good practice that has worked for each partner. In addition, we have provided a set of criteria that the partners feel represents good practice for projects for older learners. These examples may provide a good starting point for those thinking about involving older learners in a project. Please note the links to these good practice examples which illustrate and expand the stories behind each project.

Finally, the Guide looks at the challenges and indeed the opportunities that may be encountered when working with older learners. This section examines empowerment and advocacy of older learners and the positive benefits that lifelong learning may offer. It also highlights the barriers that prevent older people from participating in learning.

We would hope that the Guide will be a useful tool for those looking to embark upon a project including older learners, those who would simply like to learn from the experience of the EuBiA partners and/or those who may wish to join the EuBiA network or participate in a European partnership of their own. We wish you well with any future projects you may develop with older learners. We are confident that you will certainly be enriched by the experience.

For further information on EuBiA please log on to the website:

www.bia-net.org/EuBiA



“Throughout the whole project an important aspect has been the contribution and interaction of older learners from each of the seven European countries”



2. EuBiA – EU Broadening People’s Minds in Ageing

2.1. The EuBiA project

EuBiA is a Grundtvig Learning Partnership devised to improve systems of adult education through the development, transfer and innovation of good practice. The name stands for “EU – Broadening People’s Minds in Ageing”, which refers to “broadening the minds of the ageing population in Europe”. The duration of the project was from August 2008 to July 2010.

The objective of the EuBiA project was to find a response to the educational challenge of the evident fact that human life expectancy has increased and, as a consequence, older people constitute a large part of the European population. It is important, therefore, to provide older adults with ways to improve their knowledge and skills, noting that at least three age groups can be identified: over 50, over 65 and over 75.

The project involved seven member states of the European Union, represented mostly by public or private non-profit organisations working in adult education. Throughout the whole project an important aspect has been the contribution and interaction of older learners from each of the seven European countries. (Please find more about the partners in Appendix 1)

EuBiA aimed to strengthen and widen regional and European contacts and partnerships in the field of “Learning in senior age” as well as to find solutions to the problem of sustainability of organisations and partnerships. Thus, the EuBiA team discussed ways of:

- exchanging know-how
- strengthening existing skills and strategies
- adopting and adapting good practice.

With the creation of a trans-national partnership of organisations, and including the participation of older people, EuBiA has established a consortium for later life learning. The intention is to support and promote lifelong learning among the elderly in participating countries, leading to an improvement in the quality of learning programmes through:

- exchanges of experiences, strategies and know-how from the various countries involved in the project,
- empowerment and the active participation of older people,
- research of innovative practices in adult education and their transfer to agencies, regions and countries not involved in the original partnership,
- the creation of the internet platform www.bia-net.org/eubia to support and spread the work and good practice.

2.2. Target group

EuBiA was aimed at organisations involved in lifelong learning, senior students, older people at risk of social exclusion and those who have left education without basic qualifications. A particularly important aspect of this project has been to assist people from vulnerable social groups and in marginal contexts by giving rise to new opportunities to access adult education.

Each partner organisation has been committed to the development of educational opportunities for older people to be able to contribute by sharing experiences from their own country, recognising that across the European Union there are many different approaches. By sharing their own experience and seeking critical appreciation of their ideas and work, each partner has learned about other partners' educational initiatives.

Topics discussed during in the project:

- networking
- the problem of establishing and sustaining effective partnerships and networks
- good practice and effective strategies
- ways of identifying, disseminating and embedding good practice
- empowerment and participation of senior learners
- ways of further enhancing and supporting the empowerment of seniors through the development of their education
- the challenges facing the development of senior learning which include the heterogeneity of older people, their levels of participation and issues arising from gender, disability and ethnicity

2.3. Learning during the partnership

Organisational indicators

- How to empower older people, how to overcome barriers and how to increase participation in learning.
- How to strengthen advocacy and self-advocacy of older people through specific learning opportunities.
- How to involve older people in existing volunteering opportunities, for example, in church, charity organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).
- How to engage key stakeholders and educational providers.

Contextual indicators

- The role of lifelong learning in European education policy can be seen as an expression of inter-generational solidarity. EuBiA strongly supports the notion that younger generations may learn from older adults in public communities and educational settings.
- Sharing different perspectives through learning can benefit all generations by enhancing social and emotional skills, and can promote personal contacts, exchange and respect between generations.
- Lifelong learning activities can have a positive effect on older people, encouraging them to take part in civic activities as a way of expressing their needs and readiness to take on responsibility in society.
- The European Parliament has assumed new responsibilities. A qualified majority now has greater capacity to work on a wide range of policy areas. Various organisations of older people and individual seniors are increasingly better placed to actively participate in important European debates. In this way, older citizens of the European Union are enabled to become more aware of their rights.

- Older people acquire skills in the context of EU institutions and political processes. An active dialogue among European citizens may provide a better understanding of EU law. In consequence, older people can also play a role in influencing EU policy.
- Other policy areas where learning can benefit older people include housing, crime and safety, arts and culture. In addition, learning can enhance understanding of minorities and intercultural differences.
- There is an increasing dependence on information and communication technologies. It is older people who benefit least from the rapid ICT revolution. They appear, therefore, to suffer from a high level of discrimination.
- Older people with low language skills, with disabilities or who are of different ethnicity represent vulnerable groups. The importance of learning in later life for these groups should be recognised.

In its two years of cooperation the EuBiA partnership developed:

- a network for learning of older people at European level
- a webpage available for dissemination and discussion of all relevant matters
- the EuBiA Guide “Getting older people involved in learning”

2.4. Added value of the project

The EuBiA project has fostered the capacity of the partners for team work, for sharing roles and competences and for contributing to proposals for new approaches to intercultural dialogue among European countries.

In addition, it has promoted social cohesion, active and participative citizenship and awareness of a European intercultural dialogue which can unify different cultures. Value has been added to the project through the coming together of different people from different backgrounds who share the same intentions and the same desire to cope and to improve themselves.

Of great help have been partners’ experiences and examples of good practice from every corner of Europe. Looking for good practice in senior education in the European Union, exchanging these models and having contacts with people from various European countries during the EuBiA project has helped to reduce prejudice and made us realize that we are all members of a single community, the European one.

Thus EuBiA has helped many older people accept the idea of one Europe. This contributes to the construction of what might be called the “House of Europe” by gradually expanding contacts across the network in order to increase European brotherhood. EuBiA has contributed to the protection and enlargement of European cultural heritage and has promoted related initiatives leading to cultural cooperation at European level.

Besides sharing learning and training experiences and acquiring critical appreciation of initiatives, each partner has had the opportunity to learn about other partners’ initiatives as well as learning how to establish and maintain European collaboration. Additionally, cooperation has been intensified among the nine partners situated in seven European countries.

The organisations have learned to adopt and disseminate new practices and developed additional innovative initiatives in a European context. Several follow-up projects and collaborations have resulted from the EuBiA partnership. More information can be found in Appendix 2.



3. Senior Learners in Europe

3.1. Lifelong learning

“Lifelong learning means all learning activities undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective”.

This definition of lifelong learning is from the 2001 Communication of the European Commission¹. In this document the Commission states that all learning opportunities and strategies should be equally applicable to older people, and that senior citizens, including older workers, should have opportunities to participate more actively in society and in the labour market. This includes the role they can play in intergenerational learning. One of the main messages was that traditional educational systems must be transformed to become much more open and flexible, so that learners can follow individual learning pathways, suitable to their needs and interests, and thus genuinely take advantage of opportunities throughout their lives.

In the 10 years since this report, the European Commission has produced several communications and papers highlighting the importance of finding responses and solutions to demographic change in Europe.

Thus, the Commission refers to the need to ensure a balance between the generations in the sharing of time throughout life, in the distribution of the benefits of growth, and in funding demands stemming from pensions and health-related expenditure. Policy and society should find new bridges between the stages of life as an increasing number of “young retirees” seek to participate in social and economic life. Time spent in education is increasing and young working people want to spend time with their children. These changes alter the frontiers and the bridges between activity and inactivity.² The Commission has also highlighted the importance of adult learning as a key component of lifelong learning.³

In 2009, EU Member States and the European Commission strengthened co-operation in education and training with a strategic framework,⁴ a follow-up to the earlier Education and Training 2001 work programme launched in 2001. There is recognition that high-quality pre-primary, primary, secondary, higher and vocational education and training are fundamental to Europe’s success. However, in a rapidly changing world, lifelong learning needs to be a priority – it is the key to employment and economic success, allowing people to participate fully in society. The “Europe 2020 Strategy” will be a successor to the Lisbon Strategy which has not achieved its ambitious goals.

The new document for the horizon of 2020 is focused on social market economy. There are three important strands:

- economic sustainability
- social sustainability
- environmental sustainability

¹ “Making a European area of Lifelong Learning a Reality” (2001): <http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/MitteilungEng.pdf>

² “Confronting demographic change: a new solidarity between the generations” (Green Paper, 2005): <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2005:0094:FIN:EN:PDF>

³ “Adult Learning: It is never too late to learn” (2006): <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0614:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁴ Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in education and training (ET 2020): http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc1120_en.htm

None of these will be readily achieved unless all countries and their representatives take into account the growing demographic gap, the increase in older people remaining in employment and the desire for retired older people to live actively in society.

Looking at all past or current strategic papers of the European institutions and bodies, we recognise that the agenda for older people is becoming increasingly important and we are confronted with notions such as:

- promoting social inclusion
- improving the employment strategy
- combating discrimination
- promoting access to lifelong learning and training

The role of learning in responding to the impact of ageing is sometimes noted in policy statements relating to issues such as health, social exclusion and isolation, poverty and civic engagement. However, there is growing evidence that much of the educational challenge is not being effectively met, with a reduction in recent years in the provision of opportunities for older learners.

There is a broad consensus across all member states of the European Union of the concept of lifelong learning and it is acknowledged as the systematic way not only of achieving social integration and mobility but also of gaining a better understanding among all generations.

Specific groups of older people are seen as vulnerable, because of fewer opportunities in the labour market, in community life and in decision-making processes. This is perfectly illustrated by the European Commission's focus on older learners as part of the Education and Culture Directorate General's conference in Brussels in January 2010 to celebrate ten years of the Grundtvig programme and all its achievements.⁵ One of the themed workshops at the event concentrated on "older learners" with the conference documentation commenting that:

"Significantly it has now become accepted that education and training have a vital role in helping older people make decisions and exercise choices about their quality of later life, whether this is about employment, engaging in voluntary activity, saving and investing, better understanding of family and intergenerational relationships, or simply through a desire to learn and assess their life's experiences to date. There is an increasing body of research evidence about the health and social benefits of later life learning, well supported by the testimonies of older learners themselves."

At EU level, older people are one of the main target groups for the European Commission as reflected in the 2006 Communication *"It is never too late to learn"*⁶ and the 2007 Action Plan on adult learning *"It is always a good time to learn"*⁷.



⁵ Grundtvig, A decade of European innovation in adult learning, conference programme (2010): http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc/confprog_en.pdf

⁶ "Adult Learning: It is never too late to learn" (2006): <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0614:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁷ "It is always a good time to learn" (2008): http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/adult/com558_en.pdf

The conference documentation also acknowledges that there is no single definition of an older learner. For many policy and statistical purposes this is often defined as people aged 50 and over as traditionally the evidence suggests that people over 50 are more likely to be discriminated against in employment, training and access to education. In addition, there is no single acceptable term to best describe for pan European purposes this very varied group of people, – ‘older people’, ‘senior learners’, ‘third and fourth agers’, ‘silver learners’ are all terms in fairly common use.

EuBiA is very aware of all these tensions in terms of definitions and current policy directions and has tried to find answers to questions concerning the strengthening of the European dimension through learning in later life where older people are involved in the process of working with – but at the same time – challenging European policies.

3.2. The Lifelong Learning Programme

3.2.1. Overview

The **Lifelong Learning Programme** (LLP) supports learning opportunities from childhood to old age. The LLP enables individuals at all stages of their lives to pursue stimulating learning opportunities across Europe. It is an umbrella programme integrating various educational and training initiatives. The LLP is divided into four sectoral sub-programmes and four so-called “transversal” programmes.

The sectoral sub-programmes focus on different stages of education and training as well as the continuation of previous programmes:

- **Comenius** for schools
- **Erasmus** for higher education
- **Leonardo da Vinci** for vocational education and training
- **Grundtvig** for adult education

The **transversal programmes** aim to complement the sectoral sub-programmes and to ensure that they achieve the best possible results. They aim to promote European cooperation in fields covering two or more of the sub-programmes. They also seek to promote the quality and transparency of Member States’ education and training systems.

In addition, there are several more programmes under the LLP umbrella:

- **Jean Monnet programme** to promote teaching, reflection and debate on the European integration process in higher education institutions.
- **Eurydice** is an institutional network for gathering, monitoring, processing and circulating reliable and readily comparable information on education systems and policies throughout Europe. It is a network consisting of a European Unit and National Units.

The LLP also offers **Individual grants and scholarships**

All the actions mentioned are managed either by the EACEA in Brussels⁸ (centralised actions) or by the National Agencies⁹ (decentralised actions).

⁸ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index_en.php

⁹ In each EU state there is a National Agency: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc1208_en.htm

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Agency Executive Agency (EACEA) is responsible for the management of specific parts of the Lifelong Learning Programme under the supervision of its parent Directorate-General for Education and Culture (DG EAC).

Learning in later life is part of the Grundtvig programme.

3.2.2. Grundtvig

Grundtvig aims to strengthen the European dimension in adult education and lifelong learning across Europe by increasing participation and making it more equitable.

It was launched in 2000 and is now part of the overarching Lifelong Learning Programme. Grundtvig aims to provide adults with ways to improve their knowledge and skills, keeping them mentally fit and potentially more employable.

Grundtvig is for adult learners, for teachers, trainers, and for the staff of organisations which provide an educational programme. These organisations include relevant associations, counselling organisations, information services, policy-making bodies and others involved in lifelong learning and adult education at local, regional and national levels, such as NGOs, enterprises, voluntary groups and research centres.

Key objectives of Grundtvig:

- to respond to the challenges of an ageing population in Europe
- to help to provide adults with pathways to improve their knowledge and competences

Grundtvig actions managed by the EACEA

Grundtvig Multilateral Projects

Grundtvig Multilateral Projects are undertaken by institutions/organisations from different participating countries working together, pooling knowledge and experience, in order to achieve concrete and innovative results/products of clear value in a European context. In many cases, this will involve piloting experiences in strategic areas and producing teaching products of high quality. These projects also seek to strengthen the European dimension in the field of adult learning.

Grundtvig Multilateral Networks

Grundtvig Networks strengthen the link between the various 'actors' involved in adult education in the broadest sense, in order to improve the quality of educational provision. The Multilateral Networks illuminate the European dimension in the course of their activities or in discussion of issues of common interest in the field of adult learning. They help to make lifelong learning opportunities more widely known and available to European citizens.

Grundtvig Accompanying Measures

The aim is to support various activities which, though not eligible under the main Actions of the Grundtvig Programme, will clearly contribute to the achievement of its objectives.

Grundtvig actions managed by the National Agencies

Assistantships

This action enables present or future staff involved in adult education – whether formal, non-formal or informal – to spend from 3 to 10 months as a Grundtvig Assistant in an adult educational organisation in another European country participating in the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

In-Service Training

In-Service Training provides opportunities for adult educators to develop their practical teaching, counselling, coaching and/or management skills. The training courses can be from 5 working days up to 6 weeks, taking place in a country other than the one in which they live and work.

Visit and Exchanges

Participants will have the opportunity to broaden their understanding of adult education in Europe and improve their practical teaching, coaching, counselling or mentoring skills. The visit can be from 1 day up to 12 weeks in another country.

Workshops for Learners

The objective of a Grundtvig Learner Workshop is to bring together adult learners from several countries for a multinational learning opportunity and to have an enjoyable and innovative experience relevant to their personal development. Workshops can be on any non-vocational topic relevant to adult education within the objectives of the Grundtvig programme.

Learning Partnerships

Partnerships are small-scale co-operative activities involving the exchange of knowledge, information, staff and learners across Europe. They are focused on the process of European co-operation rather than being ‘product’ or ‘outcome’ oriented and aim to involve a wide range of organisations new to European co-operation.

Senior Volunteering Projects

Grundtvig Senior Volunteering Projects support volunteering projects between organisations located in two different countries. They enable senior volunteers to work for an organisation in another European country for any kind of non-profit making activity.

An annual call for proposals is made for each of the sub-programmes of the Lifelong Learning Programme, including Grundtvig. More information is available online from EACEA¹⁰ or from each National Agency¹¹.

3.3. European dimension

The European dimension is stressed in the general objectives of EuBiA. A framework has been set in which some issues play a key role such as:

- Strengthening and widening regional and European contacts, partnerships and networks relating to “Learning in Later Life”.
- Exchanging know-how, experiences and good practice.
- Highlighting and widening opportunities for older persons’ lifelong learning activities.
- Finding tools, mechanisms, structures and strategies for learning in later life at local, regional and national levels.

Within this European context the seven participating institutions increased their opportunities for an exchange of projects, good practices and initiatives concerning learning in later life.

EuBiA has contributed significantly to the European dimension by focusing on older learners who have fewer opportunities and less capacity for getting to know the benefits of the European Union. In addition, EuBiA has

¹⁰ <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu>

¹¹ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc1208_en.htm

focused on social cohesion, has identified barriers to the access of older people to learning opportunities and has encouraged older people to participate in learning. Relevant stakeholders and adult education providers have been motivated to ensure that the elderly have access to the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

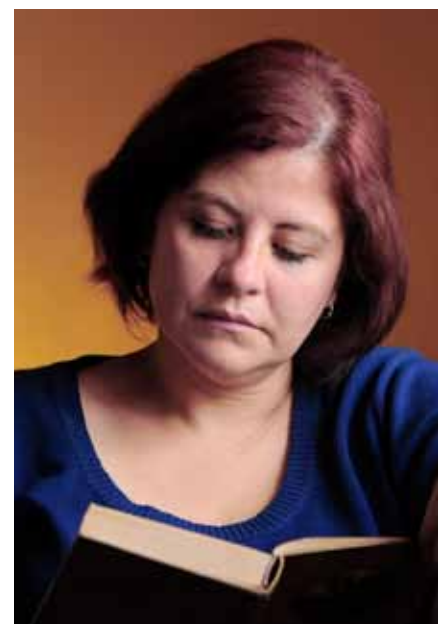
In seeking to strengthen the European dimension, EuBiA has highlighted learning in later life which involves older people in challenging European policies. Awareness-raising at European level in relation to learning in later life has been a significant task of the EuBiA partners.

What has been achieved?

- EuBiA has sought to strengthen the European dimension through learning in later life. The EuBiA Guide represents all relevant outcomes
- the European dimension involves important issues. These include: the ageing of European society, market forces, increasing individualism, ethnic and religious differences, globalisation and sustainability
- pursuit of relevant sources for research and education also raises similar issues in relation to the elderly
- European projects contain important elements of European economic, political and social issues which apply to all generations and which also need to be understood by older people
- during the EuBiA project a European network for later life learning was developed
- several spin-offs of the EuBiA partnership were also developed (see Appendix 2)

Working within EuBiA utilising all the rich pan-European experience of the partners has highlighted a lack of mutual understanding of terms used to describe older people and their educational/training needs and experiences. It has also shown that in working with non-educational agencies, services, bureaucracies and researchers (health, volunteering, social care and welfare) we have 'language' difficulties across the disciplines that engage with older people.

It was not within the scope of EuBiA to provide a dictionary/lexicon of terms because as yet there are no such standardised, mutually acceptable terms but this is an area which EuBiA wishes to highlight as a key element for common understanding in any network developments around learning in later life.





4. Older Learners with Specific Needs and Backgrounds

The content of this chapter consists of the shared experiences of the EuBIA team members.

4.1. Intergenerational learning

All participants from the different European regions had experience of Intergenerational Learning Projects.

Benefits of intergenerational learning:

- give and take relationships are developed between the younger and older generations which enable them to share values
- patience is learned, alongside being kept up-to-date with developments and trends
- gaps between generations are bridged and help is given to pass on all the skills that enable persons to function in society, e.g. using the internet

On an emotional level, participants in intergenerational learning engage positively in these projects. They are motivated to undertake actions; they are interested in social relations and in making friendships; most importantly, older learners want to challenge misconceptions. In this way, the ‘wrinkly, grumpy grey’ become friends and the ‘trouble-makers’ become helpers.

4.2. Older learners and gender

There is a higher number of older women than older men in the population and even more so in classrooms. Women make up 90% of students in some cases. Men tend to participate less in education and training in organised classes. Could this simply reflect a preference to engage in different or more social activities instead?

Some research from the Republic of Ireland on gender differences in learning has found that men prefer more practical learning, but where they do participate in mixed classes, they tend to dominate discussion. It would be interesting and useful to know how men structure their time in retirement.

We should remember that older generations were educated separately and there may be issues around mixing genders in later life, particularly for some ethnic minority elders. Attention should be paid, for example, to appropriate language being used.

Some successful experiences and examples:

- women-only groups seem to work well for physical activities such as self-defence, role playing exercises and empowerment
- a woman's learning project (based in Austria but spread Europe-wide) deals with biography/identity/participation – 'trainers for life'¹²
- computer classes seem to work well in a mixed environment
- the 'Men's Sheds' movement in Australia claims to have successfully attracted older men who are able to get together to make things in a men-only space. Men work well together in sports clubs. Could this be a basis for learning?

Some issues and solutions

The issue of mixed/separate groups depends very much not only on course content, but on the learners themselves and the overall context. In considering advantages and problems around separated or integrated education, we also need to be aware of European anti-discrimination legislation in relation to gender issues.

It would be interesting to consider if there are benefits to the discomfort that can result from changing the traditional patterns – after all, adapting to a mixed environment is still a form of learning. We could think about more self-help groups for divorced women or alternatives for men who have not engaged in learning for a long time. Let us be brave and make a change!

4.3. Older learners and disability

There is generally a distinction between 'adult education' and 'third age learning'. We need to be aware of the overall possibilities that exist in spite of various disabilities and we need to encourage learners to make their disability known, so that relevant provision can be made.

There are different kinds of disabilities related to senses like hearing and sight. They are difficult to identify unless the learner chooses to identify them. Another type of disability relates to a personality disorder which may not be immediately apparent. There is also a vast range of physical disabilities.

In the EuBiA meetings, for example, we realised that repeating questions asked in the room raised the awareness of the audience.



We need to consider the provision of sufficient resources: staff, equipment and additional learning resources designed for varying needs. Participants discussed whether segregation was appropriate and concluded that fitness for purpose was the ideal, with integration as far as possible.

The question of how many learners disabled or not, actually maintain their participation would be an indication of the success rate of the learning on offer.

4.4. Older learners and ethnicity

There are various different ethnic groups in Europe and they also include older learners. The EuBiA partners shared their different experiences in this field.

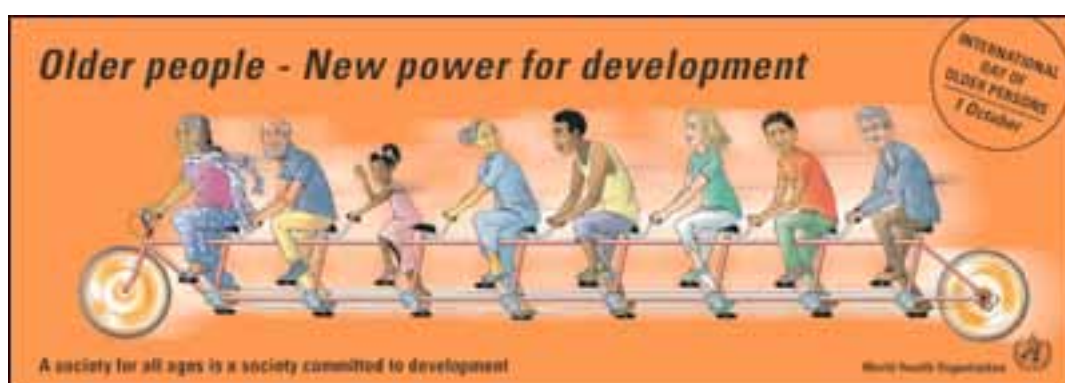
In Slovakia, a significant challenge to participation of ethnic minorities arises from the fact that over the last 20 years, the Roma communities have become increasingly more segregated and issues of poor conditions, poor education and exclusion have become increasingly apparent.

Project work in Northern Ireland with older citizens in the Indian Community revealed good participation rates when courses were tailored specifically for this group.

Our partners from the UK had experience of a research project with Afro-Caribbean groups in Leicestershire, which looked at all aspects of their lives, especially education. It was found that older people in these societies tended to be more active, were treated with a high level of respect and were well looked after in their community.

All projects expressed difficulties in recruiting members of ethnic minorities to learning programmes. A point was made that this could result from the fact that older ethnic persons' needs were already being met within their own communities.

Possible barriers facing older members of ethnic minorities include language. Older learners with a visual problem suffer from being different, and from the fear that the nature and inclusivity of programmes will exclude them. One of the practices recommended is to showcase learning achievements, which encourages networking and the sharing of information among different ethnic groups. Lessons could also be learned from intergenerational learning practices.







5. Networking

The concept of networking was deeply rooted in the EuBiA project. The creation of a network of organisations and older people dealing with older people's issues has been one of the main aims of the project. Networking also has its place among the other aims of the project, for example:

- Putting sustainability at the centre of a solid networking of organisations and older persons.
- Representation of network members and forcing their interests into the public arena.
- Promoting the exchange of knowledge and best practice among the members of the network.
- Developing common understanding of the aims and objectives of all the partners and network members.
- Developing a common language and understanding of terms used to describe older people and the range of work involved among the partners and network members.
- Realisation of initiatives, events and projects on a local, regional and transnational level.

Existing personal contacts from previous actions have been widened and strengthened and have thus offered the possibility of greater knowledge for networking at a local, regional and transnational level, than has been practised within the scope of the project. Networking actions were supported and monitored.

A database of organisations and models of lifelong learning in senior age was created with contributions from all project partners. Thus the network has crossed over the borders of the project partnership's countries.

The list of network partners is available on www.bia-net.org/eubia

In addition to its practical implementation, networking was also considered at a theoretical level during the working sessions of the partnership meetings. Interesting observations which arose from discussions and which can be a source of inspiration for other interested parties are presented below.

5.1. Benefits and challenges of networking

5.1.1. Benefits of co-operation in networks

Despite many possible risks mentioned below, the project partners clearly felt the positive impact networking had on them and/or their organisations. Therefore they were able to articulate many benefits of co-operation.

The main ones are listed below.

Networking is good for:

- the sharing of experience and expertise
- the sharing of knowledge and activities
- sharing good practice
- mutual support
- finding solutions for common or similar challenges
- finding more opportunities of drawing funds from local and regional authorities, particularly for mobility of older learners

- having the opportunity to influence policy with a more powerful voice and on a wider basis
- positively impacting on the spirit of participating individuals and of the team
- functioning as an “energy stimulus” for the participants
- sharing happiness
- having fun
- having more subjects to work at – variety of issues
- developing networks without the necessity of face to face contact
- avoiding mistakes
- avoiding isolation
- getting new ideas
- learning how things run under other legislations (lobbying)
- preparing starting points for European laws
- being able to express things precisely
- discussing things from various points of view
- spreading culture and the practice of solidarity

Partners also felt that the **empowerment of older people** could be achieved via networking.

5.1.2. Challenges of networking

Even if networking is generally perceived as a positive action, sometimes it can be demanding, requiring much personal input and can even be risky.

When networking, openness (of an individual or an organisation) and sharing at least some knowledge and ideas creates the risk of lack of honesty whereby this information could be copied by someone else who might benefit from it.

Where do the risks of networking lie? Here are some eventualities discussed among project partners:

- networking can bring change. Change is challenging – it can be very positive – however, fear of change is a widely spread phenomenon and can create barriers to networking in peoples' minds
- on the other hand, there is a danger of falling into a routine when networking. All networks require regular renewal and this is both time and energy consuming
- there is a lack of legislation for networking activities; therefore its role is limited (to a voluntary basis)
- keeping the balance between partners is demanding as unhealthy competition can arise or a dominating person can disturb it
- networking presents a risky investment of time and energy with uncertain/unpredictable results
- lack of understanding can create barriers and this is not only applicable in international settings but also locally
- it is difficult to keep to deadlines in larger partnerships which can create delays in the progress of projects (sometimes there is too much networking and too little working)
- when the network works in a larger geographical area, there is a risk of losing real face-to-face contacts (people do not meet/work with real people)

5.2. Working independently

As shown above, it is obvious that networking can bring lots of positives but can also be demanding. Working independently might seem to be the easier way; however, it can be counter-productive. When considering its possible effects, it is worth bearing in mind what would happen if cooperation were totally avoided. We examine below possible outcomes of working independently.

5.2.1. Benefits of working independently

Here is a list of benefits mentioned by project partners:

- not having to look for joint project funding or solutions
- easier search for sponsors
- having an easy life but for a limited period only
- more control
- not having to share money
- less administration
- less anger, less excitement, less stress
- independence
- no need for consultation if changes in the project/work are urgent
- new ideas will not be stolen

5.2.2. Risks of working independently

Working independently can bring the following dangers:

- passiveness and lack of motivation
- a narrow focus
- isolation
- getting stuck in a circle
- being under pressure
- having lack of ideas
- workaholic trends, burn-out syndromes
- lack of external experiences
- lack of best practice from the outside world
- limited funds
- less fun
- not learning
- not being able to measure/compare achievements

If you are thinking of network creation or development, the ideas presented by EuBiA project partners can be a good basis for you to consider the advantages and disadvantages of cooperation.





6. Empowerment, advocacy and participation

The EuBiA group has discussed and examined a large variety of issues around learning in later life. A significant number of these focus on the benefits of learning, how learning can help to empower older people and increase their powers of advocacy, while others concern the barriers which may prevent older people from taking part in learning activities. This section of the EuBiA guide explores some of these issues.

6.1. Learning, empowerment and advocacy of older people

6.1.1. Defining empowerment

Empowerment may be defined as the process of enabling people to take greater control of their lives and to understand and exercise their rights. It requires knowledge, understanding and skills and a measure of self-belief. To be empowered, people have to be able to analyse their wants, needs and goals, and then to work out the best ways of achieving them. As well as individuals, one can speak of the empowerment of a community whereby its members can collectively gain increased control over their own affairs. Empowerment is associated with notions of autonomy and independence.

6.1.2. Defining advocacy

The term empowerment is sometimes closely linked with the idea of advocacy. This can be defined as 'support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy or action'. It refers to the ability of people to speak out for themselves and to have greater control over their lives and, like empowerment, it entails having the information, knowledge, skills and confidence to represent oneself effectively.

6.1.3. Independent and fulfilling lives

Lifelong learning has an important role to play in helping older people and their families to live independent and fulfilling lives and to cope with a fast-changing world. Learning can help empower older people in all sorts of ways, for example in understanding financial and legal matters, making more-informed consumer choices, developing new skills and interests, and understanding social, political and technological changes. Adult education can help to overcome social exclusion and isolation of older people, can further active citizenship, and bring benefits in fields such as housing, crime and safety, arts and culture.

6.1.4. Increased self-confidence

EuBiA members believe that their own experiences indicate clearly that learning activities tend to increase the self-confidence of those who take part. This accords with the findings of the limited amount of research that has taken place. For example, a study in 2000 of a group of learners in the UK aged between 50 and 71 found that 80 per cent of those surveyed said their classes had a positive impact in ways such as increased self-confidence, enjoyment of life and the ability to cope with events.

6.1.5. Combating loneliness and depression

All learning activities are likely to have beneficial effects on the participants, such as increased self-confidence and self-belief. For older learners, taking part in educational courses often promotes greater independence and autonomy. This may be true of a wide range of courses varying from those on literature or history or science through to classes on cookery, gardening and arts and crafts. Many older people say that their learning activities help them to combat loneliness and depression and enable them to make new friends with whom they can then talk about issues that are bothering them.

6.1.6. Greater autonomy

Some classes, of course, focus on particular themes associated with advocacy, such as educating older people on their rights and entitlements. Other classes may offer education on issues such as housing, arts and culture, mental and physical health and well-being. Other courses can make older people feel more secure, by helping them put their fears of crime and other risks in perspective, and can thereby make them less housebound and increase their autonomy.

6.1.7. Staying economically active

Most European governments are trying to encourage people to remain economically active up to and beyond the current state pension ages, which are set to rise in the near future. Later life learning can help older people to develop new skills for work, enable them to remain economically active for longer, as well as developing new interests and skills for leisure.

6.1.8. Skills for empowerment

The outcomes of all of these types of classes help to empower older people and to promote improved advocacy skills. Some courses focus on teaching older people particular skills that help to empower them. These might be information and communication technology skills which then enable older people to use the internet to find information and knowledge that they need to live more independently. Other courses may teach older people about finance, or legal issues, or how to make more informed consumer choices or how to buy goods at a discount.

6.1.9. Empowering communities

Learning for older people can also assist in promoting the empowerment of communities as well as individuals. Courses may teach older people how to get involved in local government or how to set up a new community or group. Some courses may help to teach people how to run an effective community campaign and how to become more active citizens. In such ways, later life learning can play a central role in developing stronger communities, and in promoting civic renewal and increased public participation.

6.2. Obstacles and barriers to older people's participation in learning

6.2.1. Variety of older people

In its discussions, the EuBiA group has been conscious of the huge variety of individuals, communities and cultures across Europe. There is always a danger of over-generalisation when one is analysing a population of over 500 million individuals, of whom some 77 million are estimated to be aged 65 years old or over. There is great variation amongst older people in Europe, in terms of the many different cultural, social, economic, and political variables.

6.2.2. Types of provision

There are, of course, considerable variations in the types and forms of provision of learning opportunities available

for older people. Courses may be offered by private bodies or by voluntary groups or by the public sector. In the latter case, learning opportunities may be on offer in local schools or colleges or in universities. In the third sector, classes may take place in churches and other religious buildings, community organisations, clubs and even pubs, and in people's own homes. The University of the Third Age is active in many EU countries and its membership has grown considerably in some areas. Some courses are accredited and involve assessment of various kinds while other courses are not examined and may be seen as learning for pleasure. In addition, people may sign up for distance-learning or online courses. For some older people the variety of types of courses may be confusing while others know the sort of learning with which they are comfortable but may not be able to find it in their own locality.

6.2.3. Obstacles

Having acknowledged the great variation in the circumstances of older people in Europe, the EuBiA group identified and examined a number of obstacles and barriers which may make it difficult or impossible for older people to take part in learning opportunities. Some of these are as a result of an individual's personal circumstances or experiences whereas others are the result of policy decisions and choices by public or private bodies.

6.2.4. Barriers as a result of personal circumstances

- Family and caring responsibilities – some older people are carers for their partner while others may have child-care responsibilities as grandparents and this may make attendance at courses difficult.
- Health and disability issues – some older people's disabilities, which may relate to physical or mental health, can prevent them from attending and participating in courses.
- Costs – some older people have limited incomes and cannot afford the costs of courses or of travelling to them.
- Fears about personal safety – some older people may feel unsafe when travelling to take part in courses.

6.2.5. Barriers as a result of personal experiences

- Bad experiences with education – some older people do not want to go back to learning because they suffered bad experiences with education when they were younger.
- Low self-confidence about learning – some older people do not feel confident about taking part in courses.
- Type of learning does not appeal – the types of courses that are available (e.g. accredited courses) may not be the sort that the older person wants or the style of teaching (e.g. discussions) may not be that with which the older person feels comfortable.
- Attitudes towards learning – some older people think that learning is for younger people – this may be affected by images in the media.

6.2.6. Barriers as a result of policy decisions by public or private bodies

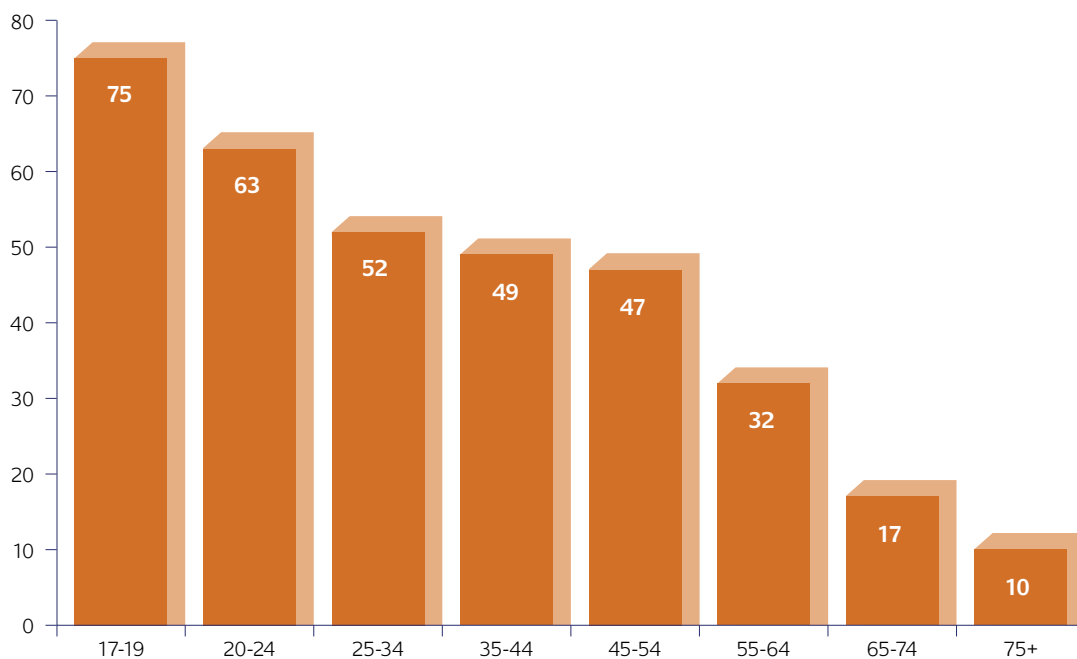
- Practices of employers – some employers have a policy of not supporting older workers attendance on courses.
- Level of fees – some providers have raised their fees considerably so that many older people cannot afford them.
- Lack of availability of courses – cuts in public funding mean that courses on many topics of interest to older people are no longer offered in their locality.
- Lack of advice and information – it may prove difficult for older people to find out what courses are available and whether they are suitable for them.

- Lack of transport – public transport may not be available at the right times or places to enable older people to travel to their courses.
- Access difficulties – some courses are held in venues where access is difficult for older people.
- Course requirements – some courses may have particular requirements (e.g. use of computers, access to websites at home) that preclude an older person's participation.
- Switch to vocational courses – in many EU countries governments have placed increased emphasis on courses that lead to vocational qualifications and have removed funding for general adult education and learning for pleasure.

6.2.7. Needs of older people not being met

Discussions in the EuBiA group indicated that many educational needs of older people are not being met, with a reduction in provision of opportunities in some places in recent years, and only a small (and falling) proportion of older adults participating in learning activities in some European countries. These views accord with findings from elsewhere. For example, as shown below, in the United Kingdom annual surveys by NIACE show that older people's participation in learning is much lower than amongst younger groups. Labour Force Survey data confirm that participation in adult learning is lower amongst older people.

Recent participation in adult learning, by age, in the United Kingdom



Source: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education 2007

6.2.8. Cuts in provision

One of the biggest barriers to participation in learning by older people is the lack of availability of courses they want to follow. In some European countries there have been recent cuts in provision. In the United Kingdom, in both higher and further education, opportunities available for older learners have fallen sharply with adult community learning losing over 1.4 million enrolments in recent years. Adult education in universities has also been badly affected by government funding policies.

6.2.9. Overcoming the obstacles

Awareness of the barriers to learning that older people may face is important in order to try to overcome them. Some obstacles can be removed by consulting older people and then providing courses they want. Other barriers may be overcome by catering for older people's needs in terms of course location, access, costs, timing, and type of provision. Some other barriers may be more difficult to overcome and others may need campaigning for funding or policy changes.

6.3. The benefits of learning for ageing societies

6.3.1. Profound effects

The context for the EuBiA project is that the European population is getting older. It is estimated that half the population will be over the age of 50 by 2030. Gains in life expectancy at birth are currently running at about 3 years every decade. This is reflected across the world where societies are getting older. The demographic changes are affecting many aspects of life – economic, medical, social, cultural, moral, and political. Indeed, the United Nations has said that ‘profound, pervasive and enduring consequences of population ageing’ are ‘transforming the world’.

6.3.2. Dividends for all

The EuBiA project has shown that learning in later life can bring real and tangible benefits for older people, helping to empower them and increase their advocacy skills. But learning for older people can also bring considerable benefits for their families and communities, and indeed for the state itself. Investment in learning opportunities for older people can pay real dividends.

6.3.3. Investment brings benefits

An example of the benefits that learning opportunities can bring is shown by an initiative in the United Kingdom led by a charity called First Taste. It has found that arts and crafts classes in nursing homes in the county of Derbyshire have led to significant reductions in medication for the older people taking part. The expenditure on the courses has brought about large savings on drugs. More research is needed to show other benefits and to quantify the returns that investment in learning for older people can bring.

6.3.4. A positive development

Much of the discussion about the ageing society tends to be couched in rather negative terms, but there are strong arguments for seeing the changing demography as a positive development. European societies are literally becoming more wise and mature and with innovative and imaginative responses, the ageing societies can and should lead to valuable economic, social, cultural and political benefits. In this context, increased learning opportunities promise real benefits. The character and quality of the life styles of older people in European countries vary greatly, and are affected by many factors, but the evidence shows that the capacity to shape and manage them can be significantly enhanced by education and learning.





7. Practice that works

It has been argued that the term “good practice” indicates something that has been tried with beneficial effects with the implication that it may work for others. Usually one would expect an example of good practice to be transferable to others working in similar circumstances. The idea of good practice does not suggest one that cannot be improved, and certainly not a practice which should be applied in all circumstances. “A good practice should reach beyond theory to real-world application in some context where its impact can be observed or measured in some way”¹².

“Good practice” can also be defined as the most efficient (least amount of effort) and effective (best results) way of accomplishing a task, based on replicable procedures that have proven themselves over time for large numbers of people.

In the course of the project the EuBiA team discussed the topic “What makes a good project focused on senior education?” As a result the consortium proposed a set of criteria listed below.

However, it should be acknowledged that the term ‘good’ is very subjective. What EuBiA has discussed and identified is practice that works, that satisfies certain criteria (see below) and therefore has some aspects that may be useful to others for consideration and adaptation.

The use of the term ‘good’ should not be construed as a firm recommendation.

What EuBiA does not advocate is simply replicating ‘good’ practice without considering how applicable it is to the learning needs of the particular older people being considered.

The EuBiA Criteria for a good project:

1. the project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults
2. the project has involved older people in its creation
3. the project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people in order to meet the needs of the end users
4. there is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)
5. there is evidence that the outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term

¹² Senior Project, DELIVERABLE D4.1, Report on Best Practices and Roadmap towards the Roadmap, Project co-funded by the European Commission FP7: http://www.ifa-fiv.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=365:senior-project-report-on-good-practice-in-e-inclusion-ethical-guidance-and-designing-a-roadmap&catid=68:older-people-and-technology&Itemid=240#

Summary list of EuBiA good practice (alphabetical order of the countries)

Country	Institution	The name of the good practice project and link or links	Web Address
Austria	bia-net	LENA	http://www.bia-net.org/lena
Czech Republic	METER SILESIA	To Live and Let the Others Live	http://www.policie.cz/docDetail.aspx?docid=15838&doctype=ART&
Germany	VHS Hamburg	HarAlt – Bildung und Älterwerden	http://www.vhs-hamburg.de/vhsspezial/haralt
Italy	Giustino Fortunato	Ways of attracting adults to keep learning	http://users-forthnet.gr/vol/viglas/
Italy	Cooperativa Tulipano	“Club Amici di Salvatore Quasimodo” SEZIONE SENIOR – ROCCALUMERA	http://www.bia-net.org/en/eubia-outcomes.html
Northern Ireland	Workers Education Association	Tell your story – A Drama Project for Older People	http://www.wea-ni.com/EuBiA/EuBiA-good-practise-example
Poland	PRO-MED sp. z o. o.	e-senior.eu in action	http://e-senior.eu/ http://utw.moodle.pl/
Slovakia	Forum pre-pomoc starsim	Advocacy and enforcement of older people's rights in combating discrimination with active involvement of older people	http://www.forumseniorov.sk
United Kingdom	University of Leicester, Institute of Lifelong Learning	Lifelong Learning, Older People and Society	http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/lifelong-learning/research/seminar-series

Project descriptions can also be found here: <http://www.bia-net.org/en/eubia-outcomes.html>

7.1 LENA – Learning in Later Life, Austria

Partner: bia-net			
Country: Austria			
How is/was the project financed?	European Commission, Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection		
Contact person	Name	Mag. Manuela Hinterberger	Email manuela.hinterberger@bia-net.org
Project website address and/or alternative sources of information about the project			
http://www.bia-net.org/lena			
Good practice criteria, why is it a good project?			
The project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults	The Grundtvig 1 project LENA was a follow up of “LISA – Learning in Senior Age” which had been dealing with transnational networking on various issues concerning older people (www.bia-net.org/lisa). The outcomes made it clear that something had to be done to make learning in later life an issue for European countries. Each organisation involved found that there are organisations which offer adult education for older people, yet the clients were not involved in designing programmes. So it was obviously necessary to involve older people in the follow up LENA project.		
The project has involved older people in its creation	The LENA project has involved older people in its creation and at every step of its development. Focus groups of older people helped to find out what, why and where older learners want to learn.		
The project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people in order to meet the needs of the end users	The members of the consortium coming from AT, DE, CZ, IT, PT, SI and UK were adult educators who had long experiences of dealing with the issue of adult education and in particular with learning in later life. Practice and didactical research were the main themes.		
There is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)	Adaptations of modules being developed by the transnational partners had been one of the genuine tasks of LENA. These modules were designed in one of the participating countries according to specific needs of older learners in specific areas. Each module was piloted in the home country of the organisation which designed it. After testing it was documented and then piloted in another country. There the module was adapted according to the region and the needs of older learners.		
There is evidence that the outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term	The organisations that had been partners in LENA started a follow up with LARA (Learning – a Response to Ageing). This Project aimed to train trainers of all ages for learning in later life. Through LARA sustainability of the Empowerment curriculum which had been the outcome of LENA was achieved.		
Any other comments about the project?			
One of the main outcomes of the project is a process for the development of new learning opportunities, which challenge top down educational practice and rely on a democratic approach involving a range of key players and older people themselves. The main result is an “Empowerment curriculum for Learning in Later Life”. It can be download in several languages here: www.bia-net.org/lena			

7.2 To Live and Let Others Live, Czech Republic

Partner: METER SILESIA			
Country: Czech Republic			
How is/was the project financed?	Czech Ministry of Internal Affairs and Municipality of Frydek-Mistek (town in North Moravia), in collaboration with the Czech Police		
Contact person	Name	Mrs. Marie Poláčková	Email polachova.marie@frydek-mistek.cz
Project website address and/or alternative sources of information about the project			
http://www.policie.cz/docDetail.aspx?docid=15838&doctype=ART&			
Good practice criteria, why is it a good project?			
The project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults	<p>The project reflects the urgent needs of older people to be able to resist violent attacks and above all confidence tricks of criminals.</p> <p>The project reacts to the actual problems of seniors in the region and is strictly goal-oriented towards the acquisition of knowledge by older people leading to crime prevention. Process: involvement of these people in educational activities; production of a tutorial video and its dissemination to the households and old peoples' homes.</p>		
The project has involved older people in its creation	<p>The older people were directly involved in the process of project creation and development. Some victims of former crimes acted in the video that was developed as one of the project products.</p>		
The project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people in order to meet the needs of the end users	<p>The project involved actors from different fields, experienced older learners, regional municipalities, educational organisations, the Police and film-producers. Each of these people contributed their expertise and substantially influenced the project products.</p>		
There is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)	<p>The project was successfully spread into other towns of the Czech Republic and there is real potential for its transfer to other European countries. The project is very clear and therefore easily transferable. It would only be necessary to make minor adjustments to the project process and products to take account of local conditions.</p>		
There is evidence that the outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term	<p>As the project was very successful, it already has a follow-up project called "Behind Closed Doors" (Za zav en mi dve mi"). This deals in the same manner with the issue of domestic violence.</p> <p>The project process brought older people together and enabled them to learn in an informal environment and way. Its products were disseminated to households and are still being used by the TG.</p>		

7.3 HarAlt – Bildung und Älterwerden, Germany

Partner: VHS Hamburg					
Country: Germany					
How is/was the project financed?	HarAlt is a department within the Hamburger Volkshochschule, HVHS is partially financed by the municipality				
Contact person	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name</th> <th>Email</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Gabriela Rose</td> <td>g.rose@vhs-hamburg.de</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name	Email	Gabriela Rose	g.rose@vhs-hamburg.de
Name	Email				
Gabriela Rose	g.rose@vhs-hamburg.de				
Project website address and/or alternative sources of information about the project					
http://www.vhs-hamburg.de/vhsspezial/haralt					
Good practice criteria, why is it a good project?					
The project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults	HarAlt was founded in 1986 when older people approached the Hamburger Volkshochschule with their ideas. They had lost their jobs earlier than the “official” age for retirement and they did not feel old enough to retire in the classical sense. They wanted to keep on learning and developing themselves. They were involved in planning opportunities according to their needs.				
The project has involved older people in its creation	<p>HarAlt was created by these older people who had retired early together with professionals of the Hamburger Volkshochschule. From the very beginning almost half of the courses on offer were delivered by older volunteers. Approximately half of the courses run up to now have been self-organised by older people.</p> <p>HarAlt is still the place to go when older people want to offer their competence in a course for other older people in addition to being able to participate in existing groups or courses.</p>				
The project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people in order to meet the needs of the end users	<p>The Hamburger Volkshochschule has a central planning department. The Har Alt programme is planned by these pedagogically qualified professionals together with the 3 employees of the HarAlt team – also trained professionals – and the regional management. They are supported and inspired by ideas of the participants and volunteer group leaders.</p> <p>The Hamburger Volkshochschule is a member of different networks of organisations that work with older people.</p> <p>The chairwoman of the advisory board of seniors in Hamburg is a member of the advisory board of Volkshochschule.</p>				
There is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)	<p>The HarAlt concept was adopted in one region of Hamburg and is working very well. But, of course, HarAlt needs financial resources.</p> <p>To extend the HarAlt concept into other regions, resources and support from the authorities are needed.</p> <p>We hope that, along with demographic change, decision-makers will become aware of the necessity to support successful projects like HarAlt and its take-up in other regions.</p>				
There is evidence that the outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term	Haralt has already existed for 23 years. During these years HarAlt has developed according to older people’s needs because they are still involved in planning and delivering courses and there still is a close contact and good cooperation between the seniors and the professional team.				

7.4. Ways of Attracting Adults to Keep Learning, Italy

Partner: Giustino Fortunato			
Country: Italy			
How is/was the project financed?	LLP Programme Grundtvig Multilateral Partnerships		
Contact person	Name	Fabiana Cicoella	Email Fabiana.cicoella@fastwebnet.it
Project website address and/or alternative sources of information about the project			
http://users.forthnet.gr/vol/viglas/			
Good practice criteria, why is it a good project?			
The project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults	The project deals with subjects that have a close connection with the daily life of older adults. That is why the participants are highly motivated. They act like journalists making a report of their own town. What they do is active learning, i.e. when trying to find out the origin and the history of street names, they will have to do research into historic events. And it is meaningful learning, when doing research about well-known local people, jotting down anecdotes, stories and recipes, taking and scanning digital pictures and processing all the information with computer software.		
The project has involved older people in its creation	Older people are personally involved and participate in various stages of the project, acquiring the key competences which will help them to adapt to rapid life changes.		
The project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people in order to meet the needs of the end users	The approach is based on the principle of “Learning by Doing”. The older learners work actively in groups trying to implement the results of learning. The project has been planned in order to motivate and encourage adult learners to participate actively in all parts of the project, to encourage them to share experiences with their peers and different age groups and to improve communication skills in a foreign language (English).		
There is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)	The work can be adapted and transferred to assist people from vulnerable social groups and in marginal social contexts, in particular older people, and those who left education without basic qualifications, in order to give them alternative opportunities to access adult education.		
There is evidence that the outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term	The final products and results are published step-by-step on a website and a common “Non-official guide of the towns” will be printed and distributed at the end of the project, in order to share the experience of lifelong learning with a wider professional community in the longer term.		
Any other comments about the project?			
“Ways of Attracting Adults to Keep Learning” is a project through which we want to encourage adults to come to the institutions to learn through “learning by doing”. The particular goal of the Project is to encourage Exchange, Cooperation and Mobility among different European Educational Institutions. Therefore both instructors and learners involved in the Project maintain an intercultural dialogue involving different experiences and good practice in adult education. The participating institutions benefit from the project by developing innovative practices in adult education and applying them in a teaching and learning process.			

7.5. Club Amici di Salvatore Quasimodo, Italy

Partner: Giustino Fortunato			
Country: Italy			
How is/was the project financed?	Local community and self-financing		
Contact person	Name	Carlo Mastroeni	Email avv.carlomastroeni@gmail.com
Project website address and/or alternative sources of information about the project			
www.impegnocivile.it			
Good practice criteria, why is it a good project?			
The project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults	In Italy some people suffer from a very disadvantaged social position. Creating an association composed of old people over the age of 55 offered those involved the opportunity to grow through seminars, courses and several organised gatherings. The relationship with the other organisations belonging to the same network, involving young people as well, also fostered a dialogue between the two generations and a frequent exchange of opinions and ideas. This proves to have had an additional effect beyond participation in club events.		
The project has involved older people in its creation	The main target group of the project consists of seniors, usually retired people. They are the ones who organise and participate in the different events and effectively promote the various activities. They also create the opportunities for seniors to play active roles at a social and cultural level in the area where they live.		
The project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people in order to meet the needs of the end users	The project has been developed by taking into account the experience of elderly people who, within their working lives, contributed to the social and cultural development of the territory.		
There is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)	Besides adding to the importance of the proposed social and cultural activities, the active participation of the elderly attracts yet more people to the events. This practice can certainly be used and modified to involve both individuals and groups of people at local, regional and national levels.		
There is evidence that the outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term	The pictures of the people involved in these activities show how well the project affected their mood. They completely changed their social behaviour. Before taking part in this project they were insular, without any interest or future hope. Now, on the contrary, they are ready to share their work and family experience with new generations, fostering the dialogue with the young so as to socially and culturally improve the whole area involved. This kind of project certainly represents “Good Practice“ to be exported also at national level, because elderly people are the ones who can convey their great experience, knowledge and wisdom to the younger generations. Italy has large proportion of elderly people in the population. Another aspect of this activity is the opportunity for the elderly to be on the move, to get out of their homes and keep active.		

7.6. Tell Your Story – A Drama Project for Older People, Northern Ireland

Partner: Workers Education Association			
Country: Northern Ireland, UK			
How is/was the project financed?	Part of the Learning Age Programme funded by Atlantic Philanthropies		
Contact person	Name	Sinead Devine	Email Sinead.devine@wea-ni.com
Project website address and/or alternative sources of information about the project			
http://www.wea-ni.com/EuBiA/EuBiA-good-practise-example			
Good practice criteria, why is it a good project?			
The project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults	The Learning Age Project offered a wide range of project ideas to older people's groups and interest in a drama project developed. The "Tell Your Story" project was offered to all older people's groups, in local media & at community meetings. Posters were placed wherever older people gather, eg in local shops, Post Offices, Doctors' Surgeries and notices were placed in local Church Parish Bulletins. As a result a group of women from one area came forward & other women from different areas joined too.		
The project has involved older people in its creation	The project was run on WEA practice of "negotiated learning space" - where the experience of the learners is taken on board and they help direct their own learning with the tutor, e.g. deciding what kind of performance, what story would be told and how it would be presented. They decided to do a devised performance using their own words, arising from their own histories and experiences. Thus learners have helped plan, manage and guide the direction of the project and performance.		
The project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people in order to meet the needs of the end users	The Tutor was specifically chosen for her community drama qualification and experience of working with older people. Development Officer Sinead Devine, who also has a community drama background, made several support visits & acted on any feedback from learners or tutor throughout the process.		
There is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)	This project can be transferred locally, regionally or indeed internationally. It has clear simple ideas but a tutor with community drama expertise is needed. Evidence of this is that we have two other groups in the North West in similar projects.		
There is evidence that the outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term	The original project has been further developed & sustained this year in 2010/11 and developed on 2 other sites in Derry. Performances will continue to be drawn from their own lives/experiences.		
Any other comments about the project?			
The main evidence that this project is an example of good practice is that it has been replicated by 2 other groups in Derry. Also TOP Women – the original group - has gone on to develop other performances showing further growth and development. e.g. at local festivals & participation in other drama projects e.g. Spring Chickens October 2009, performances at WEA Annual General Meeting & at the Learning Age Conference June 2010. The process has also been replicated by a group called Praxis (Disabled Older Learners) who completed a short performance before Christmas which they also devised and they have developed a new performance for their 10th Birthday Celebrations.			

7.7. e-senior.eu in action, Poland

Partner: PRO-MED sp. z o. o.			
Country: Poland			
How is/was the project financed?	The Polish-American Freedom Foundation, Gdańsk University of Technology, Grundtvig Partnership Programme		
Contact person	Name	Dr Anna Grabowska	Email anka.grabowska@gmail.com
Project website address and/or alternative sources of information about the project			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://e-senior.eu/ • http://www.utw.moodle.pl/ • http://www.seniorzywakcji.pl/?p=12 			
Good practice criteria, why is it a good project?			
The project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults	Nowadays the importance of ICT increases day by day in every part of people's social life. On the other hand, people over 55 do not have the opportunity to access ICT. Therefore one of the specific aims of PRO-MED sp. z o.o. is to support this group with ICT training (basic skills and Internet services oriented).		
The project has involved older people in its creation	The fundamental requirements of the main project founder, the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving people over 55 in the creation of the project application. • Person over 55 should play the role of the project animator in the development and implementation phases. 		
The project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people in order to meet the needs of the end users	All sub actions were discussed and agreed with end users over 55. As the result of training needs analysis the following e-courses have been developed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-senior Nordic Walking Club • e-seniors English Club • e-seniors Fitness Club • e-seniors Photo Club 		
There is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual: end users' satisfaction was defined on the basis of voting, questionnaires and interviews. • Local: The Rector of Gdańsk University of Technology is willing to continue the project within the university structure (e.g. University of Third Age). • Regional and National: Information about the project is located in the data base at http://www.seniorzywakcji.pl/?p=12. The study visit was organised in order to share the experiences gathered. 		
There is evidence that the outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to make the outcomes sustainable continuing support to cover the costs of similar activities is needed. • The idea is to include "e-senior in action" outcomes into the structure of the Gdańsk University of Technology Alumnus Association and continue similar activities with the GUT Rector support (premises) as well as other resources (e.g. European projects). 		
Any other comments about the project?			
Co-operation with enterprises, local government organisations would be recommended.			

7.8. Advocacy and Enforcement of Older People's Rights in Combating Discrimination with Active Involvement of Older People, Slovakia

Partner: Forum pre pomoc starsim			
Country: Slovakia			
How is/was the project financed?	Project is financed from resources of Government Office and EC – within AGE project		
Contact person	Name	L'ubica Gáliková	Email forumlubica@gmail.com
Project website address and/or alternative sources of information about the project			
http:// www.forumseniorov.sk			
Good practice criteria, why is it a good project?			
The project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults	This project arises from older people's needs as defined by them within various activities in the regions. We implemented a survey of older people's needs; we monitored their position; older people, representatives of self-government and various organisations were involved. The elderly were informed of their concrete demands and legal norms, so as to raise their legal awareness. We have organised training courses to improve ICT skills and communication with local and regional authorities. Our priorities = to raise awareness, improve skills in new technologies and languages, and to enforce rights and active involvement in social, public, policy life.		
The project has involved older people in its creation	The Project was focused on the active involvement of older people in activities affecting their own life and in national and regional policy. Older people were actively involved in project activities.		
The project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people in order to meet the needs of the end users	The basis of project development was the implementation of the survey and communication with the target group at seminars, conferences, workshops. It arose from the real needs of older people. It was developed in order to meet the needs of end users – to improve the skills relative to the quality of life, as well as those in new information technologies and to raise legal and general awareness.		
There is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)	The project can be transferred and adapted to implementation at various levels – local, regional, national. It is focused on meeting the special needs of older, disabled and socially excluded people. It alleviates problems in their life – it improves their position; physical and health status and self-confidence; it reduces the risk of poverty and social exclusion and the need for support services. This project also impacts on relatives – their work and financial provision.		
There is evidence that the outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term	It provides equal opportunities for all categories of older citizens and the disabled. We actively involve older people; we create active and expert groups and a Seniors Parliament. Sustainability is high. Older people are better educated, they have a broader view and are better informed. Through education we seek to prevent the violation of the rights of older people and their abuse.		

7.9. Lifelong Learning, Older People and Society, United Kingdom

Partner: Institute of Lifelong Learning, University of Leicester			
Country: England, United Kingdom			
How is/was the project financed?	Several small grants from the Learning and Skills Council of England		
Contact person	Name	Professor John Benyon	Email JohnBenyon@scarman.freereserve.co.uk or ijw3@le.ac.uk
Project website address and/or alternative sources of information about the project			
http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/lifelong-learning/research/seminar-series/lifelong-learning-and-ageing			
Good practice criteria, why is it a good project?			
The project arises from the real and perceived learning needs of older adults	In 2005 the Leicester Institute of Lifelong Learning (LILL) launched a series of workshops on Lifelong Learning, Older People and Society. The aim was to enable older people to explore the benefits of later life learning activities for older people and wider society in different areas of public policy. The project is now in its sixth year and 32 seminars have so far been held involving over 1,500 participants.		
The project has involved older people in its creation	The project involves liaison and consultation with a wide variety of individuals and organisations, including the University of the Third Age, Help the Aged, Age Concern, NIACE, and the WEA. Older learners were closely involved in the creation of the project and in its subsequent development.		
The project has been developed by calling on the expertise of a range of people	The project has involved an array of different speakers, participants and groups involved with older people. Experts have been drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds to speak on varied topics, some of local interest, many with national and international dimensions.		
There is evidence that the project can be transferred and adapted to meet specific needs (individual, local, regional, national)	The project has established a widespread national reputation which makes it easier to attract top experts to make presentations at the seminars. The project could be transferred to other locations, probably at a regional level. One of the findings from the seminars is that universities have a duty to engage with their local communities and to promote public policy discussions and to disseminate research findings.		
The outcomes of the project can be further developed and sustained in the longer term	The intention is to continue with, and to develop, the project. The participants would like the project to continue and are enthusiastic about it. The number of participants has continued to grow, with people travelling quite long distances in some cases, which is further testimony to the success of the project.		
Any other comments about the project?			
In December 2009 the team conducted a relatively short survey of people who had attended the seminars. There were 64 responses and the overall view was that the seminars have been highly successful. The results are on the Institute's web pages:			
http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/lifelong-learning/research/seminar-series/summer-2010-seminar-series			





8. Conclusion

Learning in later life is still a new field and researchers, practitioners, and older people in all European countries can learn a lot from each other by sharing knowledge and experiences. It was the intention of the EuBiA project to bring together various different people of different ages from different cultures and countries to share know-how and good practice and to respond to the educational challenge of an ageing population in Europe.

The EuBiA project is a good example of effective networking and working in a large group. Nine partner organisations from seven different European countries, including older learners, worked together. The partnership was composed of people from diverse cultures, with different backgrounds and from different settings, with different languages, spread over the whole of Europe. The number of participants during the transnational meetings varied between 20 and 36, which was sometimes a challenge for the coordinator and for the whole team.

Looking back we see clearly that the project has worked. The project has succeeded in enabling the team to exchange know-how, to strengthen existing skills, and to adopt and adapt good practice. We hope the project has helped to advance learning in later life in the European Union. This booklet is designed to contribute to further improvements. The partnership has addressed a number of relevant topics such as networking, effective strategies for working with older learners, advocacy and empowerment and, above all, the participation of older learners.

During all transnational meetings and during all national events older learners from all partner countries were included. They were very actively involved in all discussions and working groups and this was a very fruitful contribution to the project work and to its outcomes.

During the project lifetime one main focus was networking, meaning discussing theories but also practising networking. In this way we were able to enlarge the EuBiA network by involving 18 new partners from other countries.

What we are proud of is that out of the EuBiA project several follow-up projects and cooperative activities have already arisen and more are planned.

This booklet is dedicated to other organisations in Europe and older people themselves who want to gain more information about later life learning. What we did not do is “reinvent the wheel”, but we discussed topics that we found necessary and helpful for other projects, co-operations and networks dealing with later life learning on a regional and European level. And we developed “our” own criteria for good practice for later life learning and elaborated good practice projects. All this is summarised in this small booklet.

We hope this Guide comprises helpful hints and suggestions for new discussions, projects and networks. The booklet should particularly alleviate the fear and the reservations of many organisations about working in European projects, of networking and of working for and with older people.

We wish all interested readers successful projects and networks! More and detailed information about the project, the partners, the network and the products are here: www.bia-net.org/EuBiA. You can contact us using this email address: office@bia-net.org

Finally we want to thank the European Commission and the relevant national agencies for enabling us to work together by funding this Learning Partnership!





Appendix 1: The EuBiA partnership

List of Partners (in alphabetical order)

		Page
• Austria, Graz (Coordinator):	bia-net – Netzwerk Bildung im Alter	31
• Czech Republic, Ostrava:	METER Silesia, Ltd	32
• Germany, Hamburg:	Hamburger Volkshochschule	33
• Italy, Naples:	IPSSCT Giustino Fortunato	34
• Italy, Roccalumera:	Cooperativa Tulipano 86	35
• Northern Ireland, Belfast:	Workers Educational Association (WEA NI)	36
• Poland, Gdansk:	PRO-MED Co. Ltd.	37
• Slovakia, Prievidza:	Forum pomoc pre starsim	38
• United Kingdom, Leicester:	University of Leicester, Institute of Lifelong Learning	39



Name	bia-net Netzwerk Bildung im Alter
Address	Schöckelblickstrasse 2/3, 8044 Graz, Austria
Website	www.bia-net.org
Contact Person (name, e-mail)	Manuela Hinterberger manuela.hinterberger@bia-net.org office@bia-net.org
Brief description of organisation	
<p>bia-net is a registered not-for-profit association, founded in 2008. Our central purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting the topic LEARNING IN SENIOR AGE • Promoting exchange of experiences between our members in the field of LEARNING IN SENIOR AGE • Promoting cooperation and partnership of organisations and individuals who work with older people • Developing sustainable regional, national and European networks 	
Fields of activities	
<p>What we do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives and projects in the field • Concept and project development • Application and implementation of projects at national and European levels • Monitoring of projects 	
Activities concerning learning in later life	
<p>We organise projects and initiatives in the field at national and European levels, such as LARA – Learning as a Response to Ageing (www.laraproject.net). In Graz we organise the “Summer academy for Lifelong Learning for Seniors”, each year in July at the Karl-Franzens-University. bia-net founded and led the “Netzwerk Bildung im Alter” – “network for learning in later life” in Graz. We also offer workshops and seminars in the field for organisations who work with seniors.</p>	
Feedback on EuBiA	
<p>The EuBiA project is a great opportunity for networking at a European level. During the lifetime of the project there have already arisen other projects and cooperations and we hope that there will be more!</p> <p>We have organised very interesting, productive meetings and we also had fun together. It is has been a pleasure working with the EuBiA Team and we have produced an interesting output.</p>	



Name	METER Silesia, Ltd.
Address	Premyslovcu 48, 709 00 Ostrava
Website	www.meter-silesia.wz.cz
Contact Person (name, tel, e-mail)	Mrs. Hana Danihelkova Tel: + 420 599 529 980 Meter.silesia@seznam.cz

Brief description of organisation

METER Silesia, Ltd. is a private company for adult education. It was established in 1998 with the aim of providing training of trainers and managers especially in SMEs and with consultancy in the fields of organisation, management, change management, environmental protection, risk analysis and emergency planning for SMEs. Its activities cover training of trainers, tutors and mentors in and for SMEs using the latest ICT and user friendly methodologies. METER Silesia is one of the leading Czech companies in European project management and it provides consultancy for this topic mainly for SMEs. Its target groups are not only SMEs, but also public bodies like Employment Offices and municipalities because METER Silesia possesses the know-how to support endangered people or those afflicted by unemployment. METER Silesia was the coordinator of several European LdV and Grundtvig projects.

Fields of activities

Its activities cover further education, the creation of interactive e-learning, educational programmes containing informal learning elements, research in the field of lifelong learning, development of training content and the realisation of training. METER Silesia also provides pre-project consultancy for companies, institutions, and individuals.

Activities concerning learning in later life

METER Silesia deals with development of training materials for groups that are disadvantaged in the labour market, including older people. METER Silesia collaborates with a network of local partners – universities, local authorities, adult educational organisations and NGOs.

Feedback on EuBiA

Members of the regional network of adult education providers, NGOs, regional umbrella organisations, NGOs dealing with training activities for seniors, all shared in the activities and the interim outcomes of EuBiA. They were enthusiastic especially for the new approaches to the training of elderly people and the methodologies applied in various countries. They will incorporate some of them into their activities and regional offers for elderly people.



HAMBURGER VOLKSHOCHSCHULE

Name	Hamburger Volkshochschule Department Basic Education and Externally Funded Projects
Address	Billstedter Hauptstraße 69a, 22 111 Hamburg
Website	www.vhs-hamburg.de
Contact Person (name, tel, e-mail)	Heike Kölln-Prisner +49 40 428 86 77 – 31 h.koelln-prisner@vhs-hamburg.de
Brief description of organisation	
The Hamburger Volkshochschule (HVHS) is the largest municipal centre for adult (further) education in Hamburg. HVHS aims to create opportunities for people to be independent, self reliant and responsible members of their communities.	
Fields of activities	
HVHS offers about 8000 courses per year. These include languages, IT, cultural and political education and health / sports programmes. In addition, HVHS offers courses for people with disabilities, basic skills / literacy courses for people of German origin and a range of courses for German as a foreign language. HVHS has been partner in several European projects (Socrates, Leonardo, Lingua, INTI, Grundtvig) and develops projects funded by the national Ministry for Education and Research and projects funded by the City of Hamburg.	
Activities concerning learning in later life	
Among the broad range of courses there are courses in the fields of languages, IT and health/ sports that are designated for older people only. In one part of Hamburg HVHS runs the department “Bildung und Älterwerden” (Education and Ageing) with courses for older people only. Furthermore, this department offers the opportunity for older people (as volunteers) to deliver courses themselves. Future activities of HVHS intend to involve older migrants in learning in later life. For example the German-Turkish women group 50+ (result of the LENA project) is still active.	
Feedback on EuBiA	
We really appreciated being part of the EuBiA group and enjoyed the exchange of ideas and experience and the discussions on important issues concerning learning in later life. We gained new ideas and discovered new possibilities for our work with older people as well as for cooperation with partner organisations.	



Name	IPSSCT GIUSTINO FORTUNATO
Address	Via Acitillo, 57
Website	www.giustinofortunato.it
Contact Person (name, e-mail)	Marina d'Angelo marinadangelo@live.it
Brief description of organisation	
<p>Giustino Fortunato is a State School for 14–19 year olds and adults, offering vocational programmes in Travel & Tourism and in Business & Accounting. Our school aims to provide the students with a comprehensive curriculum. Great importance is given to language skills and to gaining an awareness of European citizenship. Adult education is an important part of our educational activity. We run evening courses for adults, thus giving them better opportunities to re-enter the job market. Our school has been dealing with EU Programmes since 2003 and has already taken part in EU projects both as an Applicant and as a Host Organizer under the Programmes: Socrates, Youth in Action, LLP (Comenius, Grundvig and LdV). We look forward to finding new partners for European cooperation, which will lead to long term collaboration in promoting intercultural dialogue, social cohesion and European awareness.</p>	
Fields of activities	
<p>Giustino Fortunato has links with various organisations in the tourism industry: tour operators, travel agencies, local tourist authorities, advertising agencies, European Agencies for Training and Employment, National and European Committees for Employment and COP – Regional Centre for Employment Guidelines. In addition, the school promotes female entrepreneurship with initiatives to support the development of technical, scientific and linguistic competences. These competences can facilitate entrance to the world of work.</p>	
Activities concerning learning in later life	
<p>The school offers vocational programmes in Travel & Tourism and in Business & Accounting. Adult students can choose to graduate with a qualification and enter or re-enter the world of work or they may decide to continue studying for two more years, graduating as tourist services or management technicians. In addition, the school offers many extracurricular activities such as musical and theatrical workshops, training activities in some business and tourist companies, English and French courses, ITC qualification (ECDL) and training courses in the field of equal opportunities.</p>	
Feedback on EuBiA	
<p>IPSSCT Giustino Fortunato has contributed to the EuBiA project offering its established experience in the field of lifelong learning. During the project many networking activities have taken place. The teachers and the students involved in this project have worked to find partners in the field of adult education. These have joined the network, widening and strengthening regional and European contacts.</p>	



Name	Tulipano 86 Società Cooperativa
Address	Via Puliatti, 3 – 98027 Roccalumera (ME)
Website	www.impegnocivile.it
Contact Person (name, tel, e-mail)	Carlo Mastroeni +390942745300 info@impegnocivile.it
Brief description of organisation	
Tulipano 86 is a non-profit organisation created in Roccalumera, Italy, in 1996 to protect the rights of citizens, young and old and to provide further local resources at both a social and economic level. Since its foundation Tulipano 86 has undertaken several activities aiming at the integration of disadvantaged persons and the elderly.	
Fields of activities	
Tulipano 86 promotes and supports education and guidance services, cultural and leisure activities for younger and elderly people. It manages cultural services within the organisation “Literary Park Salvatore Quasimodo” in Roccalumera and participates in the management of training courses, also founded by ESF.	
Activities concerning learning in later life	
<p>Our main aim is to give older people an opportunity to be an important part of our society. We organize intergenerational meetings in the Sicilian area. Older people are able to share their life-experiences and to learn something from each other. Tulipano 86 in cooperation with “Associazione Internazionale Impegno Civile” aims at a genuine understanding between the generations. Leisure time activities are offered for all age groups.</p> <p>In cooperation with “Club Amici di Quasimodo” – “Senior Section“, it performs various social and cultural activities for the elderly. It also works with the University of the Third Age of Santa Teresa di Riva, ensuring dissemination activities.</p>	
Feedback on EuBiA	
The experience gained through the European project Grundtvig “EuBiA”, implemented in a positive way, provided intercultural knowledge between the partners, as well as different methods of approach to the problems that afflict the elderly. It was an invaluable experience which contributed to a European perspective on methods to support the activity of the target group.	



irresistible learning

Name	Workers Educational Association NI
Address	3 Fitzwilliam Street, Belfast, Northern Ireland, BT9 6AW
Website	www.wea-ni.com
Contact Person (name, tel, e-mail)	Carolyn Hale 00442890329718 carolyn.hale@wea-ni.com
Brief description of organisation	
<p>The WEA Northern Ireland is the leading voluntary sector provider of adult education in Northern Ireland, providing learning to over 5000 people per year. Its vision is of a prosperous, creative and cohesive society where everyone is a learner. Its mission is to make learning irresistible. It has three strategic aims: to enhance prosperity; to foster social cohesion; and to promote lifelong learning. We operate in community settings which help to encourage the participation of those adults who would not normally avail themselves of opportunities offered through more institutionalised settings.</p>	
Fields of activities	
<p>The WEA actively promotes the inclusion and participation of all adults in education and works with local communities in targeting those at risk of social exclusion, adults with disabilities and minority groups. The WEA offer a range of programmes including a Men's Health Programme, Creativity Thirst Programme, a Learning to Earning Programme, Learning in a Shared Society and two projects aimed specifically at learners over the age of 50, the Learning Age Project (LAP) and Changing Ageing Partnership (CAP).</p>	
Activities concerning learning in later life	
<p>WEA'S Learning Age Project (LAP) delivers high quality education courses to older people and aims to create a culture and policy environment in which learning opportunities are available for older people for the whole of their lives. We encourage the development of a self help learning culture where older people take responsibility for their own learning utilising local resources available to them and building on participants' skills. WEA offers a series of workshops in sustainability of learning in later life to all participants on the programme. We aim to promote social inclusion and active ageing through involvement in educational opportunities.</p> <p>Alongside LAP is the Changing Ageing Partnership (CAP) which offers empowerment training to older adults and senior groups in the ageing sector. In partnership with Age NI and Queens University Belfast CAP offers a holistic programme which combines training with policy and research in ageing.</p>	
Feedback on EuBiA	
<p>WEA NI has found being part of the EuBiA project to be an informative and rewarding experience. We have particularly enjoyed discovering new cultural backgrounds and as a team we have developed our expertise through the sharing of information and experiences with our European partners. We have gained lots of new ideas which we have been able to carry forward in our work in Northern Ireland.</p>	



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Address	Dolne Migowo 16 C, 80-282 Gdansk, POLAND
Website	http://www.pro-med.org.pl/ http://blanka.moodle.pl/ http://utw.moodle.pl/
Contact Person (name, tel, e-mail)	Dr. Anna Grabowska +48 601 329 795 anka.grabowska@gmail.com
Brief description of organisation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation and maintenance of medical equipment • Translation and verification of technical and medical literature and documentation • Adaptation and localisation of Web pages • E-learning, development and delivery of blended learning courses • Participation in the following projects: Phare (1998-2000), Leonardo da Vinci (1998 - 2008), Socrates (1998 - 2007), EQUAL (2005-2008), Interreg (2005-2006), Lifelong Learning Programmes Grundtvig Partnership and Multilateral (2008-2011) • Translation and localisation of a Polish Language Pack for Learning Management System (BSCW, WebCT, Moodle) 	
Fields of activities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicine • ICT • Education 	
Activities concerning learning in later life	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organising meetings, seminars, workshops for seniors • Nordic Walking for seniors • Delivery of “Basic ICT” course for seniors • e-courses development and delivery • Grundtvig Partnership Mobility for seniors 	
Feedback on EuBiA	
<p>The following activities realised under EuBiA Partnership are valuable and should be underlined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Best practice and effective strategies based on the rule “identify, disseminate and embed”</u> • <u>Networking which leads to establishing and sustaining effective partnerships</u> • <u>Empowerment and participation of senior learners which in practice enabled seniors to take an active part in the international meetings as hosts and visitors.</u> 	



Name	Fórum pre pomoc starším – národná sieť
Address	Kukucínova 5, 971 01 Prievidza, Slovakia
Website	www.forumseniorov.sk
Contact Person (name, tel)	Lubica Gálisová 00421 46 5420349
Brief description of organisation	
<p>Fórum pre pomoc starším is a civil association operating nationally. It is a national network associating 240 member organisations which operate regionally and nationally. It deals with older people's issues: their position, the improvement of their living conditions, protection of their rights, increase in their skills and legal awareness. We cooperate with NGOs in Slovakia, self-government, state administration, police, the ombudsman, the Slovak national centre for human rights, universities and other relevant organisations and experts. It is member of the international network – AGE – European platform. The members work as experts in specialist groups of AGE – on ways of solving the problems of older people in EU and member states.</p>	
Fields of activities	
<p>It organizes activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meetings, workshops, conferences, education, surveys and monitoring of problems and needs of the elderly with their active involvement • protection of older people's rights • Senior line service – emergency care – counselling – provision of information – prevention of violation of rights and abuse • Training – courses to increase the skills of the elderly – Parliament of seniors – mechanism for active work of older people in influencing national and local policy. 	
Activities concerning learning in later life	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We implement formal and informal education • Courses – trainings to improve skills in ICT • Raising legal awareness and the acquisition of information • Prevention of the violation of older people's rights • Communication with local and public authorities with the aim of enhancing the articulation of needs and influencing policy 	
Feedback on EuBiA	
<p>The implementation of common features of the EuBiA project impacts significantly on the work and activity of Fórum pre pomoc starším. We gained much experience, various possibilities for the education of older people, in respect of the impact on their living conditions, self-confidence and entire life-style, as well as on their physical state and health.</p> <p>There is an increasing need for the education of this group because of the increasing number of older people in society and their position as equal and fully-fledged citizens. Education can help in reducing poverty and improving relationships between generations, limiting the need for various social and health services.</p> <p>We welcome the possibility of networking in this field and for cooperation among organisations in the EU to underline the needs of older people, increasing their dignity and their positive contribution to society.</p>	



University of Leicester

Name	Institute of Lifelong Learning, University of Leicester
Address	Institute of Lifelong Learning, University of Leicester, 128 Regent Road, Leicester, LE1 7PA, United Kingdom
Website	www.le.ac.uk/lifelonglearning
Contact Person (name, tel, e-mail)	Professor John Benyon or Ms Isobel Woodliffe 0116 252 5914 or 0116 252 5911 ijw3@le.ac.uk or jtb2@le.ac.uk

Brief description of organisation

The University of Leicester is a leading research university which was named the UK's University of the Year (2008–09). It has 22,803 students, including 11,857 postgraduates and embraces Arts, Humanities, Law, Medicine and Biological Sciences, Science, and Social Sciences. It has a long tradition of providing adult education and each year there are some 3,500 enrolments on Leicester Institute of Lifelong Learning (LILL) courses, while over 4,500 people attend other events, including activities in the Richard Attenborough Centre for Disabilities and the Arts.

Fields of activities

The Leicester Institute of Lifelong Learning (LILL) offers an extensive programme of CPD, part-time degrees, diplomas and certificates, liberal adult education courses, and social, cultural and artistic events. LILL works with many partners in the region, including further education colleges, private companies, public-sector organisations and voluntary bodies. It also has an extensive programme of research including issues in lifelong learning.

Activities concerning learning in later life

Much of the programme focuses on the ageing society, lifelong learning and the benefits for older people and the Institute has an extensive reputation for its work. The learning and ageing society group is undertaking various projects, some of which involve leading experts from the UK and abroad, and also policy makers and practitioners. The group's work indicates that later life learning can bring considerable benefits for older people, for their families and community, and indeed for the government itself.

Feedback on EuBiA

The LILL group has found the EuBiA group and its work to be very useful and beneficial. We have greatly enjoyed working with our EuBiA partners in Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Northern Ireland, Poland and Slovakia. The project has succeeded in enabling us to exchange know-how, to strengthen existing skills, and to adopt and adapt good practice. We have found our discussions most worthwhile – these have addressed a number of relevant topics such as networking, effective strategies for working with older learners, and empowerment and participation of adult learners.

We are particularly impressed by a number of the outcomes of the EuBiA project such as the guide to good practice and effective strategies and the development of a strong and effective sustainable network. Overall, we believe that EuBiA has achieved its aim of widening, deepening and strengthening knowledge in this field and of identifying and promoting effective strategies and good practice. It has helped to advance learning in later life in the European Union. We would like to thank all our EuBiA partners for their contributions and their friendship.



“Awareness raising on the European level concerning learning in later life has been a significant task of the EuBiA partners”





Appendix 2: Spin-offs from the EuBiA project

Several follow-up projects arose out of EuBiA. This is a brief list. For more information, please contact our partners via Email.

One spin-off is the 4AGE network (submitted 2010) which wishes to extend networking to include relevant EU and national educational and older people policies. For more information please contact Jim Soulsby: jim.soulsby@btinternet.com

As a result of the EuBiA project the WEA Northern Ireland and Club Amici di Salvatore Quasimodo in Roccalumera, Sicily have submitted an application (submitted 2010) to Grundtvig for a Senior Volunteering Project, which will allow the exchange of volunteers in the field of arts and cultural heritage. For more information please contact Carolyn Hale: carolyn.Hale@wea-ni.com

Another result is a Senior Volunteering Project with partners from Austria (Compass) and Sicily (Tulipano 86), called “Apples – An Apple a day keeps the doctor away”, submitted 2010. It is a Social-Health project which seeks to strengthen the health protection of older people by using the skills and knowledge of the age group. For more information please contact Dr. Rosemarie Kurz: rosemarie.kurz@gmx.at

And a final spin-off is a co-operation between the Silesian University in Opava and the Medical University of Gdansk in the field of ERASMUS. For more information please contact Anna Grabowska: anka.grabowska@gmail.com

“The partnership was composed of people from diverse cultures, with different backgrounds and from different settings, with different languages, spread over the whole of Europe”



EU Broadening People's Minds in Ageing

Lifelong Learning Programme – Grundtvig Partnership No: LLP/AT-430/74/08

www.bia-net.org/EuBiA