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BEST FRIENDS Against Ageism

Intergenerational workshops between elderly people and children to break the isolation of the elderly and promote their social inclusion.



Best Friends

Piloting of IO2 Handbook -Evaluation report

Project Ref: 2020-1-UK01-KA204-079111

November 2022



symplexis

pistes solidaires

Kindervilla





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SUMMARY

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Staff Training**
- 3. Evaluation of the pilot testing outcomes**
- 4. Key performance indicators**
- 5. Organisation of pilot testing workshops**
- 6. Description of pilot testing workshops**
- 7. Summary of evaluation results**
- 8. Conclusions**

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Introduction

The BEST FRIENDS Intergenerational Learning Training Program, developed in the form of a handbook of 75 pages, is one of the main outcomes of the BEST FRIENDS project. It offers a methodological framework for the implementation of intergenerational Learning and Practice. The target groups for this handbook are care work practitioners, social workers and volunteers working with elderly people.

The learning objectives of this training programme were

- Describe the importance of bringing different generations together during a staged process.
- Demonstrate how to address ageism and stereotyping through a range of activities.
- Describe and demonstrate how intergenerational activities and projects can be accessible and inclusive.
- Understand the concept of Intergenerational Learning and how it differs from other forms of learning and intergenerational practice.
- Be able to outline the benefits of bringing different generations together especially young children and older adults in a meaningful way.
- Realize how Intergenerational Learning can be applied within a wide range of contexts and settings.
- Plan and take steps towards implementing an Intergenerational Learning activity involving young children and older people.
- Become familiar with some tools and techniques used to facilitate meaningful intergenerational relationships in order to enhance the social participation of elderly people

The main topics covered by this training handbook are therefore:

1. Learning at different ages
2. Ageism and stereotyping
3. The concept of Intergenerational Learning
4. Intergenerational practice within contexts and settings
5. Plan and implement an Intergenerational Learning activity
6. Facilitate Intergenerational Learning activities





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Staff Training

After the training modules of the programme had been developed by the Consortium, a 3-day staff training took place in the UK in April 2022. The aim of this training was to test the modules and to make eventually modifications in the handbook's content. Attended by professional social workers from all partner countries, it marked the starting point before the pilot phase. It helped all partners to understand both the theoretical and practical parts of the BEST FRIENDS training programme, such as the content, best practices, case studies, group exercises and the training format. The workshop also served to share and exchange practices, knowledge, skills and experiences.

Evaluation of the pilot testing outcomes

Evaluation of the learning materials developed is an important stage of any project, as the usefulness of the materials and their future use by the target groups are the most important indicators of the quality of the work carried out. The partners of this project have attached great importance to this phase and have therefore decided on a longer time frame in order to be able to carry out the workshops despite the difficulties caused by the restrictions of the Covid19 pandemic that are still affecting the life of elderly people in some of the partner countries.

The indicators defined for the evaluation of the pilot tests are part of the targeted long-term impact indicators of the whole BEST FRIENDS project, namely the following:

- enhancement of the social care workers and volunteers' interest and motivation towards intergenerational learning and improvement of professional skills
- change of behaviour in a positive way and development of self-confidence
- improvement of communication abilities of elderly people
- new socialization skills for elderly people
- development of team work and international cooperation among project partners and local stakeholders
- increased awareness and knowledge about different educational intergenerational learning methods and approaches
- exchanges of good practices among the project partners organizations



Key performance indicators

In order to evaluate the pilot testing, qualitative and quantitative indicators were set beforehand. The evaluation methods were questionnaires at the end of the workshops as well as feedback interviews with the participants. These questionnaires were then evaluated by the partners and summarised in a report.

Qualitative indicators	Quantitative indicators
Participants' profile: Care workers, social workers or volunteers working with elderly people in 6 partner countries	108 participants or more in total
Participants state they have improved their knowledge on the subject	80% or more
Participants state that the workshop met their training needs	80% or more
Participants state that they feel prepared to put what they learned into practice	80% or more
Participants state that they intend to put in practice what they have learned	80% or more
Participants state that they will recommend the handbook to other professionals	80% or more

Organisation of pilot testing workshops

The 6 European partners (UK, Italy, Greece, Latvia, Austria and France) organised the pilot workshops in their countries between June and October 2022. As foreseen, these workshops took place mostly in collaboration with the local partners who had already contributed with their expertise to the research results during the project. The facilitators of the workshops were the same persons who were trained during the staff training in the UK. The consortium had decided that each partner was free to test which and how many of the modules, but all partners should make an overview presentation of the whole handbook content.

UK

The 1st session was on 22nd Sept `22 at Millbrook Village Hall.

The 2nd session was on 23rd Sept `22 at Maker Heights.

09:30 – 10:00 Welcome and introductions

10:00 – 10:30 Overview of the project

10:30 – 11:00 Learning at different ages - overview

11:00 – 11:30 Ageism and stereotyping - overview



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- 11:30 – 12:00 The concept of intergenerational learning - overview
- 12:00 – 13:00 Lunch break
- 13:00 – 13:30 Intergenerational practice within context and settings - overview
- 13:30 – 15:30 How to plan and implement an intergenerational learning activity - testing
- 15:30 – 16:00 How to facilitate intergenerational learning activities - overview
- 16:00 – 16:30 Feedback from participants and evaluation

The total number of participants attending were 18, comprising of Point Europa volunteers and staff, childcare workers, care workers and volunteers working with the elderly. There were 2 trainers.

Italy

Two separate workshops were organised, one for educators working with children, the other for old people care professionals and volunteers, so that the participants could have a homogeneous level of knowledge and were familiar with the environment of the sessions. For this reason, a first face to face session was organized for educators at the headquarters of Asilo nel Bosco (APS Naturlamente), while another face to face workshop was organized for aged care professionals at the headquarters of A.S.A.S Missione Jesus.

The first face to face workshop took place at Asilo nel Bosco, (Orecchiuta Street, Palermo) on June 22nd, 2022, at 4.00pm; The second face to face workshop took place at A.S.A.S Missione Jesus headquarters (Prezzolini Street, Palermo) on June 28th, 2022 at 10.00 am.

Both sessions aimed to present the theoretical part of the Intergenerational Learning Training Program and Handbook and to become familiar with some tools and techniques used to facilitate meaningful intergenerational relationships in order to enhance the social participation of elderly people but also to stimulate little children to interact with older people.

The total number of participants to the piloting workshops was 21.

Program followed during the sessions:

- Learning at different ages: theory and learning activity
- Ageism and stereotyping: theory and learning activity
- The concept of Intergenerational Learning: theory and learning activity
- Intergenerational practice within contexts and settings: theory and learning activity
- How to plan and implement an Intergenerational Learning activity: theory and learning activity
- How to facilitate Intergenerational Learning activities: theory and learning activity
- Games to be tested and Toolkit presentation





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Greece

The 6 caregivers participating in the piloting were recruited in Elderly Care Units near Athens. As the sessions took place during the working day, it was decided that they would happen at the care units, to facilitate employees' participation. Similarly, the educators were recruited in a kindergarten near Athens, and the session took place there, to facilitate participation. Finally, the social workers were recruited among people interested in the project; some had already participated in focus groups. The session was held online, as the participants expressed their difficulty at attending an in-person training. A total of 18 persons were trained: 6 care workers, 6 educators, and 6 social workers.

1. 03/10/2022, 13:30-15:00, at AKTIOS (Agia Paraskevi, Ipeirou 17, Athens, Greece)
2. 04/10/2022, 13:30-15:00, at AKTIOS ODIGOS (Leog. Evelpidon, Vari Attikis)
3. 25/10/2022, 11:00-12:30, at Nipiagogio Anthousas (Zakynthou 30, Anthousa 153 49)
4. 01/11/2022, 12:00 – 13:30, online, on the Zoom platform

Latvia

10.06.2022 at SAC Alejas

17.06.2022 at Gulbene 3.preschool "Auseklitis"

13:00 – presentation about our Kindergarten

13:30 – presentation of the BEST FRIENDS Project

14:00 - How to create and implement intergeneration learning activities?

14:30 – coffee break

15:00 - What is ageism?

A total of 13 social care centre Alejas employees who work with the Social Care Center on a daily basis participated in the activity. The workshop at Gulbene was attended by 10 participants.

Austria

Following the successful piloting of IO3 with Wohn und Pflegeheim in Hall in Tirol, Kindervilla already had a working relationship with the care staff there and therefore we felt that it was best to reach out to them regarding the piloting of IO2. The care staff at Wohn und Pflegeheim were more than willing to participate in the piloting. Furthermore, as Kindervilla is a creche and kindergarten, we had no shortage of educational staff members who were willing to take part in the piloting of IO2. Altogether, between both institutions, we had more than enough numbers to complete the piloting successfully: Care Workers – 11, Educators – 5, Trainer – 1





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Wohn und Pflegeheim - October 14th 2022

Kindervilla - October 5th 2022

8:00 - 8:10 Introduction to project

8:10 - 8:40 Learning at different ages

8:40 - 9:10 Ageism and stereotyping

9:10 - 9:15 Break

9:15 - 9:45 The concept of Intergenerational Learning

9:45 - 10:15 Intergenerational practice within contexts and settings

10:15 - 10:30 Break

10:30 - 11:00 How to plan and implement an Intergenerational Learning activity?

11:00 - 11:30 How to facilitate Intergenerational Learning activities?

11:30 - 11:45 Evaluation and feedback

France

The workshops to test the BEST FRIENDS manual took place on two different dates, one in the social centre Denentzat in Hendaye, at the Basque coast and the other in Pau, the capital of our region, in our office.

Two sessions of 2 hours each the 19th and 20th of September 2022.

4:00- 4:10 welcome and presentation of Pistes Solidaires

4:10 – 4:30 presentation of the BEST FRIENDS project and a handbook overview

4:30 – 5:00 "Intergenerational practice within contexts and settings"

5:00 – 5:20 learning activity

5:20 – 5:40 debriefing and discussion

5:40 – 6:00 evaluation

The social centre Denentzat is very active in working with elderly people and with children. The director of the centre as well as the mandatary of the city of Hendaye for senior citizens and a representative of the CCAS (city's social service for senior citizens) participated in the workshop apart from care workers and educators working with children.

We organised a second workshop the next day at our office at Pau attended by participants who are active in community work. The total number of participants was 13.





Description of pilot testing workshops

UK

The piloting sessions were very successful. Both days were positive with all participants being extremely involved and contributing fully to the programme. Where discussions took place, all participants actively engaged. All of the handbook was tested, although some parts more briefly. The main module “how to plan an intergenerational learning activity” was piloted in more detail, with the participants carrying out the activity “did you ever” in line with the handbook. At the end of both days the participants had time to reflect and share their thoughts, as well as providing feedback and evaluating the day. All of the participants expressed an interest in more training in this subject and were keen to use what they had learned and putting it into practice.



Italy



The piloting, based on the impressions of the trainers and the written and oral feedback given by the participants, certainly had a positive outcome. Both sessions took place as planned, without particular difficulties and with the active participation of those present. All participants felt at ease already knowing the environment where the sessions were held and the other participants / colleagues. Both

educators and social / care workers have shown themselves to be very interested and sensitive to the issue of intergenerational learning; some of them had already had experiences or similar training on the topic, so it was also a good opportunity to exchange practices and opinions. The entire training program was tested and evaluated, providing a theoretical overview of all modules developed by the project consortium, presenting some of the good practices and some of the activities designed. In particular, the activity developed by CSC 'Danilo Dolci' within the third module of the training course was tested with the social/care assistants and volunteers who work with old people.



Greece

CAREGIVERS: The piloting was done in two sessions, at a care home, with three participants in each. The participants were very engaged in the training and the handbook being presented, asking questions, and getting ideas for activities to implement with the older persons they care for.

EDUCATORS: The piloting was done in a kindergarten, with educators working there. The handbook developed by the Best Friends project was presented,

and the participants trained on issues of ageism and implementation of intergenerational activities. As these professionals are not in daily contact with older persons, it was especially useful for them to get this perspective, as well as ideas of activities to organise, for the mutual benefit of the children they work with, and of older persons.

SOCIAL WORKERS: The piloting was done online, with participants working in several municipalities, thus having a wide range of experiences and opinions on issues of ageism and intergenerational learning. These professionals were more experienced on those issues, and thus the training focused on new ideas for older persons and activities to implement for them.



Latvia

The participants of the first workshop studied with interest the curriculum of the training programme. They shared their experiences in strengthening intergenerational relationships and acknowledged that they would like more training programmes of this type.

The workshop at the kindergarten went as planned. The participants were very interested about ageism, how we encounter it in daily life. A discussion took place about stereotypes between teachers of different ages. The lecturer was actively involved during the workshop with various ideas of what activities could be organised for children together with seniors.



Austria

The piloting was run successfully, though some participants felt overwhelmed by the amount of content in the beginning, they were nonetheless enthusiastic about taking part in the training. The content of the handbook itself generated good discourse between the participants and there were a lot of talking points for the participants to share some of their own professional experiences.

France

The reactions of the participants at the first workshop were in the beginning somewhat wait-and-see, as they were in fact already familiar with many of the topics covered in the manual. However, they were interested in the good practices in other European countries, in intergenerational housing and in strategies to reinforce intergenerational bonds within the communities. The participants of the second workshop the following day were particularly interested in the modules on ageism and on intergenerational learning. They were also very interested in good practices of intergenerational learning in other European countries as well as in the different challenges to set up intergenerational activities depending on the community settings (city or rural area, town centre or banlieue etc).

The various discussions have shown that the topics are very relevant because they touch on different areas of life, including those that have only become important in recent decades due to socio-demographic changes.



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Summary of evaluation results

The evaluation questionnaires given to the participants at the end of each workshop contained ratings from 0 to 6 (“not at all”/“certainly not” to “excellent”/“certainly”) and space for comments on all 5 questions.

1. After participating in the BEST FRIENDS workshop, on a scale of 0-6, how much do you think you have improved your knowledge and skills on the subject?

Not at all Excellent

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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PLEASE COMMENT:

2. On a scale of 0-6 how far did this workshop meet your needs?

Not at all Excellent

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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PLEASE COMMENT:

3. On a scale of 0-6 how prepared do you feel to put what you have learned into practice?

Not at all Excellent

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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PLEASE COMMENT:

4. How likely is it that you will apply what you learned into practice?

Not likely at all Will certainly do

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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PLEASE COMMENT:



5. How likely is it that you will recommend this handbook to other professionals working in the field?

Not likely at all Will certainly do

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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PLEASE COMMENT:

Not all questions were answered with comments, but the following is a list of some of the comments made:

“knowledge at European level”

“new ideas for workshops”

“new ways of working”

“interesting support to bring new actions”

“it is very interesting to exchange on new practices”

“very interesting presentation and useful support for several structures of the city”

“it is absolutely necessary to impulse intergenerational activities and against ageism in schools”

“well-constructed handbook which answers to the needs of who is interested in the subject”

“the learning activities are very interesting”

“the elements I discovered are in synergy with our centre's project”

“good to see the toolbox available to help setting up activities”

“it has stimulated my desire to get involved in a ‘Best friends’ scheme”

“reinforced pre-existing experience and put concepts into words”

“It would be great if the information for the training could reach more people. It was wonderful and interesting!”

“The whole event was very well organized”

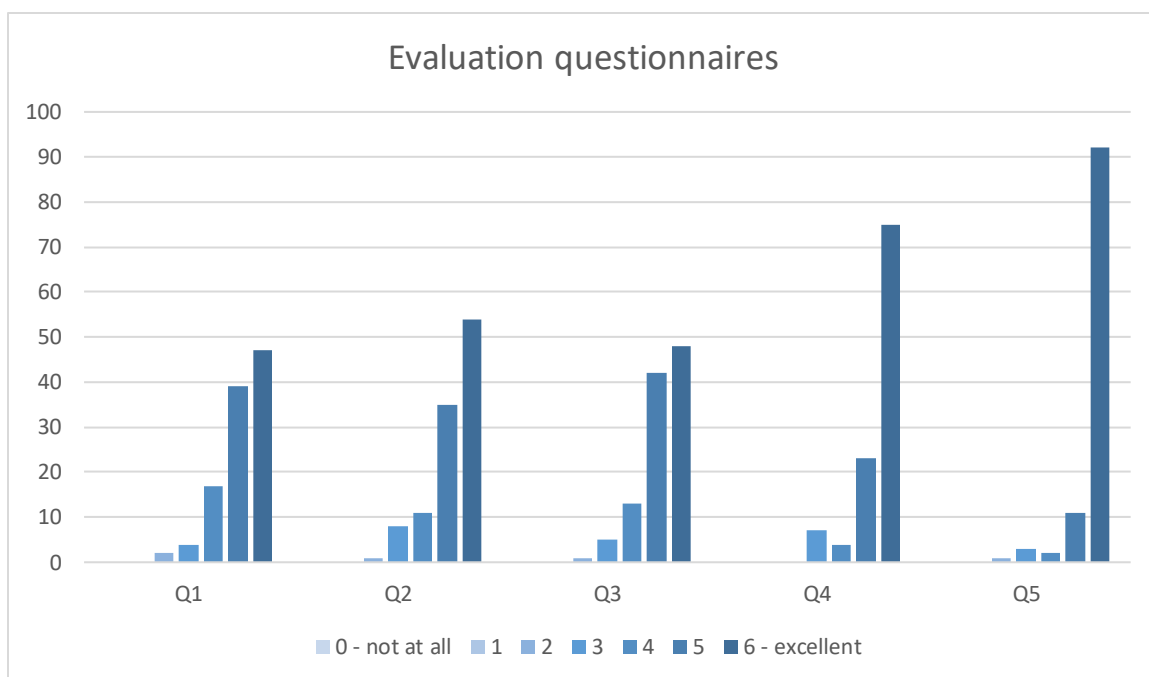
“I am very excited to start to organise some intergenerational activities at work”



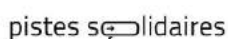
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Qualitative indicators	Quantitative indicators	Results
Participants' profile: Care workers, social workers or volunteers working with elderly people or children in 6 partner countries	108 participants in total	109 participants in total: social workers, care workers, educators, pre-school teachers, volunteers
Participants state they have improved their knowledge on the subject (Q1)	80% or more	79% rated 5/6 or 6/6
Participants state that the workshop met their training needs (Q2)	80% or more	82% rated 5/6 or 6/6
Participants state that they feel prepared to put what they learned into practice (Q3)	80% or more	83% rated 5/6 or 6/6
Participants state that they intend to put in practice what they have learned (Q4)	80% or more	90% rated 5/6 or 6/6
Participants state that they will recommend the handbook to other professionals (Q5)	80% or more	95% rated 5/6 or 6/6





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Conclusions

The handbook is a suitable, useful learning material for professionals and for any learner interested in implementing intergenerational learning activities. The handbook also provides insight into good practice in the different partner countries, an aspect that was repeatedly highlighted during the feedback interviews. The exchange of good practice at European level is of great importance in this domain. The learning activities of the handbook give impulses to think about new forms of intergenerational activities. Some of the theory is already known to the professionals who participated in the pilot testing, but it has an essential place in the handbook to guarantee the successful implementation of the activities. Together with the toolkit, which contains practical tools for application, the manual is a very complete set of resources that can be downloaded from the website by the project's target groups and is translated into all partner languages.



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