LIFELONG LEARNING AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AMONG SENIORS

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LIFELONG LEARNING

SOCIAL INCLUSION

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

SOCIALLY ACTIVE

demographic changes
KNOWLEDGE
SKILLS
CAPABILITIES

EMPOWERMENT
HEAR ME

HEAR ME is a project targeting elders as part of a life-long learning initiative of the European Union under their Grundtvig programme. This five country project has developed and organised mentoring courses for elderly volunteers who already possess skills from their professional and life experiences and match them as mentors with young people who are in danger of dropping out of education.

This mentoring process supports the young people to move forward in their educational pursuits and helps them set goals for themselves to move ahead in their lives as well.

These projects have been running successfully in Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, England and Spain from early 2010.

In many European countries we find a situation where elderly people live isolated lives and are socially excluded. The focus of this project has been to address this issue and make the elders participate in community life, with their active involvement with the young and share their skills and understanding for the benefit of youth in particular difficulties.

It is hoped that this project will lead to social cohesion and inclusion for the elderly, while reducing the incidence of juvenile delinquency as well as risk of addiction and gang involvement on the part of the young. We have combined the desire for development of training for older people with mentoring since the elderly have good skills and experience and because the contact between the different generations is valuable.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the welfare state in many European countries is under pressure, with public spending coming down. The service delivery models of the state need to change accordingly and these cannot survive by just doing "more of the same". There is a need to be socially innovative, creating activities that contribute to community development, achieving as much as possible in simple ways.

Social innovation is also about money or cost/benefit analysis: how can we can contribute as much as possible to the community with as less cost as possible. The Hear Me project can be considered as a true example of social innovation.

As the Hear Me projects are implemented in the five different countries, they look quite different in each country. In Spain, for example, there is no tradition of young people getting mentoring and even the term itself is new and alien to them. In England (London) mentoring is well established, and we are working with a community organisation that already has many activities and services for different sections of the community, including for elders. In the Netherlands there is a long tradition of volunteering, including in schools, so there it is relatively easy to organise.

In Denmark there is not so much of a tradition of volunteering in education, and there is also a discussion about where the line between paid work and volunteering is drawn. Each of these countries has their own specific contexts and pose specific challenges for the implementation of the project.

We have been learning from each other, from the different and rich experiences in these five countries. From this learning and review we have now been able to develop a common framework for how to train mentors; and how to organize and anchor mentoring programs, as well as continue training / support for mentors. Please visit our website for further information and materials.
Hear Me! Escúchame!

Highly EducAted Retirees Mentoring Early school leavers
This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This website reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.
## The Point of Departure

### A Double European Problem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elderly Social Contribution</th>
<th>Early School-Leaving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A growing population with skills and interest in making a productive contribution to society</td>
<td>• A labour market that requires high qualifications and life-long learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Little offer and habit of training elderly people for social participation</td>
<td>• Too many youth that leave school without an upper secondary education</td>
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</tbody>
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Sacramento Pinazo-Hernandis, Spain
### The Point of Departure

**An Aggravated Situation in Spain**

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<thead>
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<th>Elderly Social Contribution</th>
<th>Early School-Leaving</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lower rates of engagement in life-long learning and social volunteering than European average</td>
<td>• More than 30% youth that leave school without an upper secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Less consolidated offer and tradition of training elderly people</td>
<td>• A strong recession in low-qualification labour market</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A huge amount of youth who are both unemployed and underqualified</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVE ROLE IN A SOCIETY OF ALL AGES

EMPOWERING

TRANSFER

COMMUNITY PROBLEM

LEARNING

Lifelong learning

LEARNING

Training for intergenerational mentoring to prevent early school leaving

LEARNING

SENIOR CITIZENS

Intergenerational relationship

PARTICIPATION

YOUTH

Early school leaving

HEAR ME PROJECT
LIFELONG LEARNING

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

solidarity between generations

Intergenerational exchanges

mentoring

ACTIVE ROLE IN A SOCIETY OF ALL AGES
Erfahrung weitergeben

Senioren treffen Jugendliche – Programm „Escúchame“ in Gandia


„Die Senioren, die an dem Programm teilnehmen, machen sich nützlich und tragen dazu bei, dass der Jugendliche seinen Weg geht“, erklärt die Psychologin Sacramen
to Pinazo, die das Programm in Gandia leitet. Die Jugendlichen ihrerseits erhalten ein positives Bild vom Alter, lernen etwas über das Leben, erhalten Orientierung.

Alfredo Díaz‘ Strategie ist es, unter anderem aktiv auf die Berufswünsche seines Schützlings einzugehen. Architekt wollte dieser zunächst werden, „ich bin mit ihm spazieren gegangen und habe mit ihm über Gebäude gesprochen“. Einen Monat später war der Kochbe
tief angesagt, „da habe ich ihm nach rumänischen Rezepten ge
LIFELONG LEARNING

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Intergenerational exchanges

mentoring

SENSE OF MEANING AND PURPOSE

GENERATIVITY

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

LONELINESS

ISOLATION

ACTIVE ROLE IN A SOCIETY OF ALL AGES

solidarity between generations
Active Ageing Across the Life Course
Active Ageing Across the Life Course

- Healthy Ageing
- Home and Community
- Biogerontology
- Unequal Ageing
- Social Protection
- Inclusion and Social Participation
- Mental Capacity
FINDINGS:
1) older people do not only learn but also act, and by acting they contribute not only to their own well-being but also to their community

2) older peoples’ skills and knowledge are recognized and used as a platform for further learning

3) the action learning process is not only an individual process but a collective one, and hereby it contributes to a sense of community and a feeling of being involved.
THE MANY FACES OF MENTORING

MECHANISMS AND POSSIBLE ROLES INVOLVED IN MENTORING

AFFECTIVE BOND

It involves EMOTIONAL resources
The role is that of a FRIEND

GOAL SETTING

It involves COGNITIVE resources
The role is that of a COUNSELOR

COACHING OR QUALIFICATION

It involves APTITUDINAL resources
The role is that of a COACH

SPONSORING OR ADVOCACY

It involves POSITIONAL resources
The role is that of an ADVOCATE

PAWSON, 2004
LIFELONG LEARNING

ACTIVE ROLE IN A SOCIETY OF ALL AGES

- PARTICIPATION
- INVOLVEMENT
- SOCIAL SUPPORT

- ▼ OVERCOME AGE STEROTYPES
- ▲ HEALTH CONDITIONS
- ▼ MORTALITY RATES
- ▼ DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOM LEVELS
- ▲ PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE FUNCTIONNING
- ▲ EMOCIONAL FUNCTIONNING
Thank you!

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HEAR ME

Intergenerational • Mentoring • Cohesion

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Purpose of HEAR ME

The HEAR ME project wanted to educate senior citizens to become mentors for youth at risk of marginalization and/or school drop-out.

Main results of the project

- A Guide for developing senior mentor courses
- Concrete mentor courses
Elder mentors and youth at risk
Anchoring an intergenerational mentoring program in Spain

Abstract

This paper poses some preliminary reflections about the viability of youth mentoring schemes in Spain basing upon a pilot experience developed in the frame of a project aiming to train elder people as youth mentors in five European countries. It begins with an introduction to the field of intergenerational mentoring and the Spanish developments in this realm. A description of the pilot program design and implementation follows, with special attention to the development of the Spanish local project. Drawing upon the project evaluation some open questions are posed regarding (a) the optimal institutional framing of an intergenerational mentoring program in Spain; (b) the problem with social representation of the mentor role. The paper ends with some recommendations for future intergenerational mentoring programs in Spain.

1. Introduction

Mentoring is an ancient term for an expanding social intervention scheme. In the social welfare and human services fields, the term usually describes a relationship between an older, more experienced adult and an unrelated, younger protégé—a relationship in which the adult provides ongoing guidance, instruction, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the protégé (Rhodes, 2002, p.3). Although there are some other fields in which mentoring is a thriving issue, such as student-faculty mentoring and workplace mentoring (cf. Eby, Rhodes and Allen, 2010), our focus in this paper will be on what is usually referred to as ‘youth mentoring’ (Dubois and Karoher, 2005; Keller, 2010). This label composes an array of schemes that may differ widely in objectives and format, but they share a common target on disadvantaged young people, whose optimal development is sought by means of a mentoring relationship characterized by asymmetry in experience, guidance and an emotional bond based on trust (Dubois and Karoher, 2005).

This paper poses some preliminary reflections about the viability of youth mentoring schemes in Spain basing upon a pilot experience developed in the frame of a project aiming to train elder people as youth mentors in five European countries. Beginning with an introduction to the field of intergenerational mentoring and the Spanish developments in this realm, a description of the pilot program design and implementation follows, with special attention to the development of the Spanish local project. Drawing upon the project evaluation some open questions are posed regarding the particularities that the implementation of this kind of schemes entails in Spain, given the characteristics of the Spanish welfare society. The paper ends with some recommendations for future intergenerational mentoring programs in Spain.

Youth mentoring as an expanding field

The idea and practice of mentoring is indeed an old one, dating back to ancient Greece and Medieval guild training traditions (Hall, 2003). But the multiplication in mentoring programs for at-risk young people enacted by volunteers and its flourishing as a movement and a social policy promising trend is somewhat more recent. It started in the late 80s and early 90s in the US and UK, from where it spread to most Western countries (Baker and Maguire, 2005; Llabe, Lucas and Roberts, 2005; Evans, Jory and Dawson, 2005), and it was linked to an interest in eradicating poverty and preventing social breakdown while eschewing the expenditure of significant government amounts at the same time (Freedman, 1999b; Randolph and Johnson, 2008).