

GRUNDTVIG LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

ACTIVE AGEING THROUGH

# ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP



**INDEX**

1. INTRODUCTION .....	2
2. PARTICIPANT ORGANISATIONS .....	2
3. <i>ACTIVE AGEING THROUGH ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP</i> PROJECT .....	4
4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.....	4
5. PROJECT ACTIVITIES .....	5
5.1. SEMINARS.....	5
5.2. ACTIVITIES .....	6
6. EVALUATION AND PROJECT OUTCOMES .....	7
7. ANEX: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE .....	9

## 1. INTRODUCTION

From September 2012 to August 2014, Adult Education Organisations from six European countries -**Ireland, Sweden, United Kingdom, Belgium, Spain and Portugal**- took part in a EU Grundtvig Learning Partnership: **Active Ageing through Active Citizenship**. The objective of the former Grundtvig action, currently part of Erasmus+, is to improve the quality of education and training throughout life by enabling people working within the adult education to participate in a training in a different country than the one they normally live or work in. The six entities participants in the Project are non-profit organisations. Concern for the person, regardless of their age, social and cultural background, is among the goals of these organizations. They try to provide the best possible service to their communities and wish to help alleviate the harshness of the current economic crisis. Actship was a welcome opportunity to revisit our adult education programmes which, though successful and valued by the local communities, nevertheless -due to the harshness of the current European economic crisis- required new approaches to meet the situation of the unemployed. The concept of linking active ageing and active citizenship led these discussions effectively and focused on a "learn while doing" methodology". The partnership drew on projects within our organisations which promoted meaningful involvement in society through volunteering and intergenerational solidarity. Volunteering is the ideal setting to enhance the personal development and communication skills we envisage for our learners and which we believe constitutes a plus for re-entry to the labour market.



We offer in this handbook a description of the participating institutions, the objectives of the project and main conclusions developed in order to show some guidelines have proven to be effective for promoting active citizenship. The greatest achievement of the project was the organization of 12 seminars in which a variety of activities were developed and where people from various countries could interchange their best practices. In Section 5 workshops developed are detailed.

## 2. PARTICIPANT ORGANISATIONS

The partnership is composed by following organisations:



- 1) BROSNA Educational Centres Ltd is a registered charity in **Ireland** for the purpose of establishing cultural and educational projects for the integral development of people of

all ages and backgrounds. These projects encourage attitudes of respect for each person, personal freedom and a sense of responsibility towards society and social inclusiveness.

### Stiftelsen Ateneum

- 2) The Ateneum Foundation is an independent non-profit organizations established in **Sweden** in 1995. The Ateneum Foundation wants to motivate and inspire women and students to responsibly practice their rights and obligations towards their family and the service of society. The foundation's purpose is to provide formation and education to women from different countries with a variety of cultural backgrounds. The main projects are focused on the formation of women in Sweden and abroad providing professional skills, trainee posts, volunteering opportunities, etc.



- 3) Dawliffe Hall Educational Foundation from **United Kingdom**, encourages families and especially women of all ages and cultures and from every sector of society to reach their potential through formal and informal educational projects.



ASSOCIATION CULTURELLE

- 4) Campus Asbl was established in **Belgium** in 1966. According to the statutes the overall objective is to develop, mainly amongst adults a better information on current issues, the ability to perceive and evaluate the cultural, ethical, legal social and economic implications of the major debates of society and a "responsible and engaged citizenship" base on a critical understanding of society.



- 5) The main aim of Fundació Montblanc per a la promoció de la dona is to contribute to the development of the human person in all its aspects and in the broadest sense. It was established in **Spain** in 1998 and works to build a culture of solidarity and service, to create in society civic awareness, responsibility and unity. Development projects are focused in three areas: education, health and woman.

## COOPERATIVA DE TELHEIRAS

- 6) Cooperativa de Telheiras para a Promocao da Solidariedade e da Cultura is a non profit organisation established in 1981 in **Portugal**. The main objectives centre on Education, social development, health and environment.

### 3. ACTIVE AGEING THROUGH ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP PROJECT

2012 was the European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity. The entities involved in this project got the opportunity to exchange experiences for the older generation to remain in the labour market and continue playing an active role in society. For the unemployed, the acquisition of skills and abilities can be an opportunity to re-enter the labour market. For those who have reached retirement age, the project wanted to help them take up an active role in society especially through volunteering. This current project focuses on participation, one of the key aspects of 'active ageing'.

Over two years Actship held 12 workshops, two in each partner country, aiming at imparting knowledge and developing skills, especially innovative approaches and teaching methods. The participants of the workshops included the target group -core members of staff, adult learners and volunteers- as well as other organisation members. The themes of the workshops range from policies on active ageing and active citizenship, health, nutrition and sports as part of personal development. General objectives of the learning partnership are transversally in all of them.

### 4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The general objectives of *Active ageing through active citizenship* learning partnership are following:

1. Improve the competences and skills of adult educators to reflect the current economic crisis.
2. Equip educators and learners with appropriate resources allowing them engage in active ageing through meaningful involvement in society, especially through volunteering
3. Introduce innovative approaches and teaching methods to incorporate into the adult education offered
4. Provide the learners with professional skills and competences to better serve local communities
5. Contribute to European integration by collaboration with partners and sharing best practice

## 5. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The main activity was the organization of 12 seminars in the 6 countries corresponding to the partners. In each seminar various activities were organized. The most important activities are registered in the second part of this section.

### 5.1. SEMINARS

The following table shows the titles and hosting country of the 12 workshops of the project. The topics were chosen so that the activities that were developed around them contribute to effective active citizenship of participants.

#### 2013

	TITLE	PLACE
1	Active ageing policies as they relate to active citizenship within the EU framework	Belgium
2	Citizenship on the Go! Participation models for active citizenship	United Kingdom
3	Innovative approaches to labour market activations among the older working ages incorporating IT skills	Spain
4	Stimulate adult learners's community engagement and transfer of expertise between a stable economy and partners experiencing economic challenges	Sweden
5	Exploring the use of social media as a tool for meaning consultation and motivation of those socially or vocationally deprived	Ireland
6	Reaping the benefits of volunteerism. Examples and best practices	Portugal

#### 2014

	TITLE	PLACE
7	Intergenerational volunteering: best practice training	Belgium
8	Adult learning methodologies to enhance life skills	Ireland
9	Synergies in Adult Education and Youth Work: Bridging the inter-generational gap	United Kingdom
10	Volunteering to promote Social Good , Health and Life style	Sweden
11	Benefits of volunteering to a successful market economy (as per Pp5 Common European Adult Learning Framework)	Portugal
12	Ways of participation, commitment and responsibility in the construction of European society	Spain

## 5.2. ACTIVITIES

Activities developed over 12 seminars are selected in this section: lectures, discussions, workshops and other complementary activities around the seminar topics. They have eased the exchange and understanding of other countries and promoted active citizenship.

- Explanation on the origin and consequences of the economic crisis. Discussion forum on knowledge/soft skills necessary to help others deal successfully with the economic hardship and/or unemployment caused by current economic crisis.
- Post modernism and the effects on commitment, solidarity and communication between generations in our present fragmented society. Keys to understand society nowadays.
- Explanation and discussion on the effects of the economic crisis on family values and intergenerational support.
- Discussion on the influence of cultural movements in the current widespread crisis.
- Discussion about the benefits of new technologies and their proper use.
- Exchange of experiences on websites, blogs and social networks. The participants of the various entities explained their presence in social media and the possibilities of achieving their goals with the use of these instruments.
- Workshop on sharing experiences on adult education activities using IT.
- Case studies: senior volunteers and solidarity between generations. Presentation about the roles actually taken up by senior volunteers in organizations.
- Practical session: How to improve your communication skills:
  - Recognizing communication barriers
  - Develop skills in asking questions
  - Identify what your non-verbal messages are telling others (body language, self-image, clothing)
  - Develop skills in listening actively and empathetically
  - Anger management. Assertiveness.
- Conference on “the Founding Fathers of Europe” by Mrs. Victoria Martin de la Torre (Belgium), journalist specialised at European history and institutions.
- Conference on “healthy ageing” by Dolores Maluenda, PhD internal medicine (Spain)
- Conference on “Physical activity in the prevention and treatment of disease” by Dr. Ingeborg van der Ploeg (Sweden)
- Conference on “Swedish welfare, family life and freedom of choice” by Lic. Elisabeth Polastri and Roni Engstrand (Sweden)
- Presentation of successful educational models that have worked for both youth and adult groups
- Presentation of the country of origin of the participants to promote mutual understanding.
- Cultural tours in cities where the workshops were developed and nearby
- Visit to the European Institutions and Parliamentarium
- Hikes and sports to strengthen ties between the entities.

Moreover, at local level activities have been developed to disseminate the project and partners have implemented volunteering activities and intergenerational exchange.

## 6. EVALUATION AND PROJECT OUTCOMES

Attendance at the seminars has been the main achievement of the learning partnership. Representatives of all entities involved in the Grundtvig project and also from other countries -Switzerland, Lebanon, Australia- have participated in various seminars. Participation in the activities has been very active.

The organising entity prepared at the end of each seminar a report which contained the specific objectives, detailed activities and results. This report has been shared among all participants. Here we list some of the accomplishments resulting from the project as a whole.

- **Adult educators:** significant improvement in competences and skills enabling them to assist learners respond to the current economic crisis. At the end of the seminar a questionnaire was distributed among the participants to assess various aspects of the organization and content of the seminar. Annex collect a sample of the required rating.
- **Resources:** Through personal development and appropriate knowledge, educators and learners were equipped to engage in active ageing and meaningful involvement in active citizenship.
- **Innovation and Methodology:** Constructive discussion and exchange of experience – particularly in IT – led to updating of skills, curricula and content which is of direct benefit to adult learners. This development is ongoing.
- **Formal and non formal learning:** cultural, interpersonal and professional insights provided by the project gave an understanding of the wide range of educational media and communication that can be effectively used in methodology and -through promoting volunteering- make a valuable contribution to the local community.
- **European Dimension:** Working together in a transnational project was a successful experience of European integration and capacity building for all in the partnership. Participants have deepened their knowledge of six countries involved, their corresponding culture, besides a greater understanding of the cultural roots of Europe.
- **Bank of practical ideas** on how to engage the older generation in educational volunteering activities for younger people

Summarizing the assessment of participants can conclude that the workshop has achieved its objectives.



**Main outcomes:**

## 7. ANNEX: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

### Programa Grundvitg: Active Ageing through Active Citizenship Cuestionario de evaluación

Gracias por participar en la asociación de aprendizaje **Active Ageing through Active Citizenship**. Esperamos que el workshop haya sido de su interés y haya cubierto sus expectativas. Agradeceríamos que dedicara un momento a completar la siguiente evaluación:

**Lugar del workshop:** CAN NADAL

**País:** ESPAÑA (FUNDACIÓ MONTBLANC)

#### Contenido y organización del Workshop

Escala: 1 – Muy satisfactorio; 2 – Satisfactorio; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Insatisfactorio; 5 – Muy insatisfactorio  
Por favor, escriba sus comentarios en cada sección

1. Se han cumplido los objetivos del workshop Comentarios:	1 2 3 4 5
2. El lugar y alojamiento son apropiados para el desarrollo del taller Comentarios:	1 2 3 4 5
3. Las instalaciones y servicios son apropiados y satisfactorios Comentarios:	1 2 3 4 5
4. El material entregado en el workshop es claro y apropiado Comentarios:	1 2 3 4 5
5. El taller me ha dado las habilidades y conocimientos para motivar a personas adultas en el uso de IT Comentarios:	1 2 3 4 5
6. El taller me ha dado una buena comprensión de la ciudadanía activa y los beneficios de empoderamiento de los adultos para utilizar sus talentos en beneficio de la comunidad Comentarios:	1 2 3 4 5
7. El taller me ha proporcionado un mayor conocimiento de las raíces de la crisis actual como punto de partida para buscar soluciones Comentarios:	1 2 3 4 5
8. Otros comentarios:	

Nombre:

Firma:

Fecha:

País:

**POR FAVOR, ENTREGUE EL CUESTIONARIO COMPLETO Y FIRMADO A LOS ORGANIZADORES**

## Lifelong Learning Programme: Active Ageing through Active Citizenship Workshop Evaluation Form

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Thank you for attending the Grundtvig Learning Partnership Workshop. We hope that you found the workshop interesting and that we met your expectations. We would be grateful if you could take a moment to complete the workshop evaluation.

**Workshop Venue:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Country:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Workshop Content and Organisation

Scale: 1 - STRONGLY AGREE; 2 – AGREE; 3 – NEUTRAL; 4 – DISAGREE; 5 – STRONGLY DISAGREE

Please provide feedback in the comments section after every section

9. The workshop met its stated aims and objectives      1 2 3 4 5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. The workshop location and facilities were appropriate      1 2 3 4 5  
& satisfactory

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. The catering arrangements were appropriate  
& satisfactory      1 2 3 4 5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. The workshop material was presented in a clear  
and organized manner      1 2 3 4 5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. The workshop has helped me take more interest in nature,  
sports or outdoor activities.      1 2 3 4 5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 
14. The workshop has given me skills and knowledge  
to engage in a more active lifestyle                      1 2 3 4 5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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.....PTO

15. The Workshop has given me ideas of how to get                      1 2 3 4 5  
people I know to volunteer and take a more active  
role in society.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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16. Following this workshop do you think you would you be able to organize similar  
outdoor/sport or nature activities in your community?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ No      \_\_\_\_\_ Not sure

Why?

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17. Other comments:

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Name of Participant:

Country of Origin:

Signature:

Date:

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH!**