

# CREA T.Y.V.



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**CREATIVE DRAMA FOR TRAINING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS IN INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

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## **VOLUNTEERING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC, IRELAND, ITALY AND ROMANIA** AN INTERGENERATIONAL APPROACH



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# INTRODUCTION

This E-book was elaborated within the Erasmus + project “Creative Drama for Training Young Volunteers in Intergenerational Learning Environments” further named CREA.T.Y.V.

## ABOUT CREA.T.Y.V

The project is funded by the European Commission through A.N.P.C.D.E.F.P under the Erasmus + Programme for Strategic Partnerships in the field of Youth. It is implemented by the following organisations: Anziani e Non Solo SC (Italy), Evropská rozvojová agentura, s.r.o. (Czech Republic), Gaiety School of Acting (Ireland) and Pro Vobis – the National Resource Center for Volunteering (Romania). It is coordinated by Asociația Habilitas – Resource Centre and Professional Development (Romania).

The E-book provides an overview of the volunteering field in the four participating countries and introduces creative drama as a method for promotion of intergenerational volunteering.

The aim of CREA.T.Y.V is to provide non-formal learning for young people with fewer opportunities aged between 18 and 25 years old. The learning experience will be delivered through mentoring and intergenerational training programmes in the volunteering field. In order to do so we chose creative drama as we believe it is a valuable and efficient method for connecting two generations. Moreover, we believe that creative drama enhances civic engagement and increases social inclusion. Through our project, we are tackling some of Europe’s most present concerns.

Among the top priorities in the EU is the increase of social inclusion of young people through stronger participation of youth in the democratic and civic life and the facilitation of an easier transition of young people from youth to adulthood. A particular emphasis is put on young people at risk of marginalisation and young people with migrant background. Available data<sup>1</sup> shows that in 2016, 30.4% of young EU citizens aged 16-24 were at risk of poverty and social exclusion. In the four project countries the figures vary from 16% in The Czech Republic, 35.8% in Italy, 36.7% in Ireland (latest available data, in 2015) to 47.7% in Romania. Even with considerable differences between countries, for the EU these numbers are concerning. The reduction of the number of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU is one of the key targets of the Europe 2020 strategy<sup>2</sup>.

At the same time Europe is facing an accelerated aging process, which adds another strain on the socio-economic systems of EU member states<sup>3</sup>. The elderly are active for longer in society and may play a crucial

<sup>1</sup> Eurostat Data Explorer: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the Europe 2020 strategy: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Eurostat, Population structure and aging (2017): [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population\\_structure\\_and\\_ageing](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing)

role in boosting economic growth. For instance, through investing their potential and resources in the community they can take part in mentoring younger generations or they could act as good examples for the youth. With all this potential, reality shows most seniors fall into various vulnerable categories, facing social exclusion, loneliness and discrimination (ageism).

Lifelong learning and non-formal education are widespread means throughout Europe to confront the abovementioned issues.

Our goal is to develop innovative practices in non-formal youth education, targeted at young people with specific needs, and to promote volunteering, in particular intergenerational volunteering, to different stakeholders. The desired impact is an inclusive society with improved public policies and increased employability of young marginalised people. Last but not least, we seek to increase intergenerational cooperation and to support active ageing on a wider scale.

## ABOUT THE E-BOOK

In order to efficiently implement an intergenerational volunteering programme, we need to start by understanding the current state of volunteering in the four respective countries. Therefore, the first chapter explores in detail the volunteering practice and infrastructure in each country including the legal basis for volunteering, the relevant financial aspects and any other characteristics relevant in the volunteering landscape. We believe that only by getting acquainted with the *status quo* we can start to develop an effective and relevant methodology for an intergenerational volunteering training programme.

The second chapter highlights examples of intergenerational volunteering projects previously developed by organisations in the four countries. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the intergenerational dimension of such projects with all the benefits and challenges they present, as well as the means and methods that make an intergenerational project successful. Furthermore, the good practices of intergenerational volunteering from Italy, Romania, Ireland and the Czech Republic illustrate the impact on beneficiaries both young and old and suggest possibilities for public policy elaboration and implementation.

The third chapter argues for intergenerational volunteering as a viable solution to many societal issues varying from risk of unemployment and poverty to social exclusion and isolation for all age groups and lack of occupation and depression for senior citizens. Having said that, we plan to prove through our project that by bringing generations together through volunteering programmes we can generate benefits for all the target groups and communities involved.

The last chapter introduces Creative Drama as a training method that is both suitable and effective in creating learning experiences for mixed age groups. We will present here a short summary of the method, as the training handbook is offered as an independent publication within Crea.T.Y.V.

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# CHAPTER 1

## VOLUNTEERING AT ALL AGES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC, IRELAND, ITALY AND ROMANIA

### Volunteering statistics

The Study on Volunteering in the European Union (2010)<sup>4</sup> shows that between 22% and 23% of the European population aged 15 or more volunteer. The same study places the Czech Republic, Ireland, and Romania in the category of countries with relatively low volunteering rates (10% - 19% of adult population). Italy also belongs in the category of countries where volunteering is low (less than 10% of the adult population is volunteering), but this number is misleading. The Italian definition of volunteering makes a clear distinction between formal and informal volunteers, a distinction that we don't find in many other European countries. While in the Czech Republic, Ireland and Romania all categories of volunteers have been included in the survey report, in Italy only the formal volunteers have been taken into account, resulting in a low rate.

After 2010 there have been other different studies which showed a growing number of volunteers in each of the countries mentioned. Volunteering is becoming more popular, it is being valued and is contributing to the socio-economic growth of European countries.

The European Values Study (EVS) lists the Czech Republic with its volunteering rate of 29% of population among countries such as Belgium, Austria, France or Germany (33—24% volunteers).<sup>5</sup> In Ireland, the overall rate of volunteering stood at 28.4% of population in Quarter 3, 2013<sup>6</sup>. In Italy, the data gathered in 2013<sup>7</sup> reveals that 1 in 8 Italian citizens (about 12%) are involved in volunteering activities, meaning that roughly 6.63 million people in Italy are volunteers. In Romania, 20% of the population was volunteering, as indicated by the Eurobarometer no 731 from November 2010<sup>8</sup>.

### Gender of Volunteers

In terms of gender, a 2004 STEM survey<sup>9</sup> confirms there are more women than men involved in volunteering in the Czech Republic (39% of women compared to 29% of men). In 2006, 105 persons contacted Hestia, the National Voluntary Centre, with the aim of volunteering. Hestia confirms that 89 were women and 16

<sup>4</sup> VOLUNTEERING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION, 2010 - [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> CEV – Infrastructure of Volunteering in Europe - 2012

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/q-vwb/qnhsvolunteeringandwellbeingq32013/>

<sup>7</sup> All the following statistical data are part of the „Statistiche”– report issued by ISTAT on the 23rd July 2014 [http://www.istat.it/it/files/2014/07/Statistica\\_report\\_attivita\\_gratuite.pdf?title=Attivit%C3%A0+gratuite+a+beneficio+di+altri+-+23%2Fflug%2F2014+-+Testo+integrale.pdf](http://www.istat.it/it/files/2014/07/Statistica_report_attivita_gratuite.pdf?title=Attivit%C3%A0+gratuite+a+beneficio+di+altri+-+23%2Fflug%2F2014+-+Testo+integrale.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/eb/eb73/eb73\\_vol1\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/eb/eb73/eb73_vol1_en.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> The Centre for Empirical Research , STEM survey, 2004



were men.<sup>10</sup> In Ireland and Romania, there are an almost equal number of male and female volunteers – in Ireland there are 28.7% females and 28.1% males volunteering<sup>11</sup>, while in Romania there were 12.2% women and 13.5% men<sup>12</sup>. In contrast, Italian volunteers working within organisations are more often men than women (13.3% compared to 11.9%)<sup>13</sup>. An explanation for these differences can be found in the nature of volunteering activities that are organised in the country (for example, sports activities that are more appealing to male volunteers).

## A COMPARISON OF THE FOUR COUNTRIES BASED ON GENDER

COUNTRY	GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEERS	
	MALE PROPORTION (%)	FEMALE PROPORTION (%)
Czech Republic	29	39
Ireland	28.1	28.7
Italy	13.3	11.9
Romania	13.5	12.2

Table 1: Gender distribution of volunteers in Italy, Ireland, the Czech Republic and Romania

## Age of Volunteers

In Italy, most volunteers are aged 55 to 64 years old, which makes up to 15.9% of all volunteers. The situation in Romania is quite similar with the majority of volunteers aged between 60 and 69 years old (mostly volunteering for the church), making up 15.3% of Romanian volunteers. The second most numerous groups are volunteers aged 18 to 29 – 14.6%<sup>14</sup>. These findings stress the role of senior volunteers who might become mentors for the youth and inspire them to become volunteers.

There are no official data about the age of volunteers in the Czech Republic however, the interviews conducted within CREA.T.Y.V. indicate that the majority of volunteers are less than 34 years old (up to 75%)<sup>15</sup>. These findings differ from the volunteering patterns we saw in Italy and Romania. Nevertheless, this age structure is similar to Romania where volunteering for NGOs is mostly popular among people under the age of 30<sup>16</sup>. We can conclude from these findings that intergenerational training may encourage the elderly to take part in other activities other than Church related volunteering.

Ireland is characterized by the predominance of volunteers between 45-54 year olds - 23% of the total number of volunteers, followed by seniors older than

<sup>10</sup> Hestia National Voluntary Centre, Facts and Figures – 2006

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/q-vwb/qnhsvolunteeringandwellbeingq32013/>

<sup>12</sup> The 2008 European Values Survey, The Research Institute for Quality of Life, 2009

<sup>13</sup> Statistiche– report issued by ISTAT on the 23rd July 2014

<sup>14</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Romania [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ro\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ro_en.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Czech Republic [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_cz\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_cz_en.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.stiri.org/assets/files/romania-2017.pdf>

65 (15%), while 20-24 year olds make up 10% of all volunteers. Ireland is an example of more balanced ratio of volunteers in age categories. Moreover, there is a predominance of volunteers who are the early productive age, meaning they are focused on fulfillments in career and personal life. This can be a further motivation for volunteering.

## Number of Volunteering Hours

The time spent on volunteering activities can be analysed in Table 2. It is a comparison between the Czech Republic, Ireland, Romania, and Italy. Unfortunately, there is no data from Romania and the Czech Republic regarding volunteering hours performed per age category. In Italy, the retired category performs more volunteering hours than the average and in Ireland the most active group of volunteers are persons above 45 years old. This shows the potential of seniors volunteering, who simultaneously have more time and the potential to get involved in various volunteering actions, which can inspire younger generations.

COUNTRY	VOLUNTEERING HOURS	VOLUNTEERING HOURS BY AGE CATEGORIES
<b>Czech Republic</b>	64 hours/volunteer/year 2007 (Czech Statistical Office) <sup>1</sup>	No data available
<b>Ireland</b>	A total of 232.8 million hours annually worked by volunteers	45 years and above: 65% of the total number of hours 15-24 years old: 6.9 % of the total number of hours <sup>2</sup>
<b>Italy</b>	An average of 19 hours/month/volunteer (228 hours/year/volunteer)	Retired: 25.9h/month Housewives: 20.7h/month
<b>Romania</b>	3.5% of volunteers spend less than an hour in volunteering actions/month 27.6% of volunteers spend between 1-4 hours/month 24.4% spend between 5-10 hours/month 25.2% spend between 11-20 hours /month 17.8% are volunteering more than 20 hours/ month <sup>3</sup>	No data available

Table 2: Time spent on volunteering activities in Italy, Ireland, the Czech Republic and Romania

## The Type of Volunteering Activities Performed

In Ireland, the younger members of the population (15-24 years old) who volunteered had the highest tendency to volunteer through an organization (68.8% of hours worked), in comparison to other age groups. Regarding volunteering by sector, the highest number of volunteers was registered in the social field (34.8%), followed by sports (32.6%), and church/religious organisations (25.9%)<sup>17</sup>.

In the Czech Republic, the 2004 survey carried out by STEM reports 29% of volunteers volunteered for sport organisations, 11% in the Voluntary Fire Brigade, 11% in church organisations, 6% in fishermen associations, 6% in horticulture associations, 4% in humanitarian organisations, 3% in organisations focused on healthcare and 32% in none of the aforementioned. The situation in accredited volunteering is very different. The vast majority of the 36,614 accredited

<sup>17</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Ireland [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ie\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ie_en.pdf)

projects deal with potentially disadvantaged groups – such as people with disabilities, socially disadvantaged, senior citizens, ethnic minorities, unemployed, victims of domestic violence, ex-offenders, drug misusers, immigrants and children. The remaining programmes deal with projects covering cultural issues, followed by natural, ecological and humanitarian disasters, ecology and development projects and programmes abroad. In Italy, a little more than half of the volunteers (54.3%) are part of volunteering organisations. The rest carry out volunteering activities individually (37.6%) or both individually and through one or more organisations (8.1%). Concerning the preference for volunteering activities, the data available shows only the sectors of activities developed by Volunteer Involving Organisations (OoV)<sup>18</sup> in 2014. Among the 36,846 listed organisations the majority are active in health and social care sectors (56.7%), followed by those involved in cultural/sport/recreational activities (15.3%) and those committed to the defence of the territory such as civil protection (8.4%) or environment protection (7.6%). The rest are divided into organisations dedicated to human rights protection (4.2%), international cooperation (2.5%), research and education (2.3%), promotion of volunteering (1.4%), economic development/social cohesion (0.2%), religion (0.1%) and other activities (1.3%)<sup>19</sup>. In Romania, according to the few studies in this field, the church is attracting the highest number of volunteers (6%), followed by social services in the benefit of disadvantaged persons (3%), and environment, ecology, animal rights (2%), education, music and culture (2%), sports (2%), politics (2%), trade unions (2%), and other fields with less volunteers. One can conclude, from this data, that the most popular volunteering field in Ireland, Italy, and Romania is social/charitable work, while in the Czech Republic sport is the most popular volunteering sector.

## The Geographical Spread of Volunteering

In Italy, from a territorial perspective, the majority of volunteers live in the North-East of the country (64.1%). In particular, in Emilia Romagna, a region in northern Italy, there are 526,000 people who offer their time, competencies and effort for free (13.6% of the total population of that region), and the majority prefer to be volunteers within the framework of an organisation. The area is distantly followed by the North-West (13.9%) and the Centre (13.4%). In the South the percentage decreases considerably (8.6%).

In Romania, the more economically developed regions of Bucharest, Transylvania and Banat have the highest proportion of volunteers.<sup>20</sup> Also, rural areas exceed urban ones regarding declared volunteering activities, for church or for the community.

In the Czech Republic, the data from the Alliance for the Development of Volunteering, an association of voluntary organisations involved in a programme promoting volunteering, shows that there are regions where volunteering is more present. Prague, being the capital and most economically developed region, has 12 volunteer organisations with 44 accredited projects in volunteering from a total of 366 projects. Other regions with a high number of volunteering projects are the Moravian Silesian Region (39 projects) and Central Bohemia (31 projects). Regions with fewer projects include Liberec (5), Karlovy Vary (4) and Pilsen (4)<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> These are just one category of organisations that can work with volunteers in Italy. They organize a big majority of activities involving volunteers, but volunteer work also takes place outside of their frame.

<sup>19</sup> “Report nazionale sulle Organizzazioni di Volontariato censite dal Sistema CSV”, September 2015.

<sup>20</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Romania [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ro\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ro_en.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Czech Republic [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_cz\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_cz_en.pdf)

In Ireland, the 2006 Census revealed that the province with the highest proportion of volunteers was Leinster (54% of the total of volunteers in Ireland). The percentage of volunteers in the other provinces are broken down as follows: Munster (28%), Connacht (15%) and Ulster (6%)<sup>22</sup>.

## Socio-Economical Characteristics of Volunteers

**EDUCATION LEVEL:** In three of the countries analysed (Ireland, Romania and the Czech Republic), the percentage of volunteers grows with the level of education. Although, in the Czech Republic the information regarding the education of volunteers is rather scarce we do have some data from a Facts and Figures Report carried out by Hestia. In 2006 out of 105 persons interviewed who expressed interest in volunteering, 23% were university graduates, 26% had finished high school, and 19% had obtained a certification from a training college.

In Romania, a study found that half of the volunteers were high school graduates, while 26.9% of them had university diplomas. Only a small proportion (4.2%) had no high school diploma<sup>23</sup>. Volunteering Ireland's (2002) statistics confirm that just like in the other 3 countries, people with tertiary education volunteer more (48.6%) compared to people with primary education (only 23.2%)<sup>24</sup>. In Italy, the correlation between educational levels and engaging in volunteering activities is not present: a survey from 2003 shows that 43% of volunteers had no education or compulsory/lower secondary education, 44% had followed upper secondary education, and 13% held a university degree.<sup>25</sup>

This trend in European countries reinforces the idea that efforts need to be made to create adequate opportunities of engaging people from all levels of education and non-formal education is one of these means for building an inclusive society in which all people can contribute to the community and show solidarity to others.

**OCCUPATIONAL STATUS:** In Italy, employed people (14.8%) and students (12.9%) are most likely to become volunteers: in particular, students prefer carrying out volunteering activities within the framework of an organisation as opposed to doing it individually. The remaining percentage is represented by unemployed (10.7%), housewives (9.5%), retired (12%) and other (8.6%)<sup>26</sup>. In Romania, the same trend is manifesting: volunteers are mostly employed, in a proportion of 92.8%<sup>27</sup>. In Ireland, according to Census 2006, volunteering activities were performed by higher and lower professionals (a total of 50.3%), and semi-skilled and unskilled workers have the lowest proportions of volunteering (a total of 22.3%)<sup>28</sup>. In the Czech Republic the exact data is missing however, the estimations are that up to 70% of volunteers are students, 20% working people, 2% senior citizens and 8% unemployed.<sup>29</sup>

**ECONOMICAL STATUS:** In all four countries data shows that people with higher income are the most likely to become volunteers. Please see the Table 3.

<sup>22</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Ireland [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ie\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ie_en.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Rigman, C., (2008), Volunteers in Romania: A Profile, Centrul pentru Studiul Democrației, Facultatea de Științe Politice, Administrative și ale Comunicării, Universitatea “Babeș-Bolyai”, Cluj-Napoca

<sup>24</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Ireland [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ie\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ie_en.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Italy [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_it\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_it_en.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> “Statistiche-report” issued by ISTAT on the 23rd July 2014.

<sup>27</sup> Asociația pentru Relații Comunitare, Tendințe ale comportamentului filantropic în România: donatori individuali și companii, ARC-Allavida, 2003

<sup>28</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Ireland [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ie\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ie_en.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_cz\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_cz_en.pdf)

COUNTRY	STATISTICS REGARDING INCOMES OF VOLUNTEERS
Italy	23.4% volunteers with high income 9.7% volunteers with low income <sup>4</sup>
Ireland	An annual income of more than €15,652 ensures a higher probability to become volunteer An annual income of more than €26,000 ensures the highest probability to become volunteer <sup>5</sup>
Romania	Data shows that there is a significant positive effect ( $p < 0,05$ ) of income on volunteering <sup>6</sup>
Czech Republic	Data shows that there is a significant positive effect ( $p < 0,05$ ) of income on volunteering <sup>7</sup>

Table 3: Statistics regarding incomes of volunteers in Italy, Ireland, the Czech Republic and Romania

The correlation between income and engagement in volunteering, which is present in most European countries, can be interpreted as a need to encourage lower income individuals to engage in volunteering as it has the potential to provide greater access to education, knowledge improvement and various other opportunities.

## Legal Frameworks

In the Czech Republic, Italy and Romania specific legislation regulating volunteering activities has been adopted, whereas in Ireland, there is no law on volunteering. The laws on volunteering in Romania and the Czech Republic offer a framework for volunteering, set the minimum age for becoming a volunteer, stipulate the mandatory contract between the host organisation and the volunteer, and establish the rights, responsibilities and liability of both volunteers and the organisations hosting them. In Italy, the law recognizes the value of volunteering, defines the volunteering activity and the types of organisations that can involve volunteers, sets financing and fiscal rules and the competencies of the Observatory on Volunteering. Despite not having a dedicated volunteering law, Ireland has a set of regulations that apply to different aspects of volunteering, which can be found in legislative acts such as Civil Liability Act 1961<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> The Civil Liability Act can be consulted here <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1961/en/act/pub/0041/index.html>

A comparison of legal basis for volunteering in the Czech Republic, Italy, Ireland and Romania can be found in Table 4.

COUNTRY	LAW GOVERNING VOLUNTEERING	LEGAL DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERS AND VOLUNTEERING	MINIMUM AGE FOR BECOMING A VOLUNTEER	MANDATORY VOLUNTEERING CONTRACT/ AGREEMENT	LIABILITY OF HOST ORGANIZATION AND VOLUNTEER (E.G. HEALTH/ SAFETY INSURANCE)
Czech Republic	Volunteering Law (2002)	The <b>volunteer</b> is a person who has freely decided to render volunteer services on the basis of his/her skills, knowledge and qualities, in the benefit of community or others, and is not entitled to remuneration for the rendering volunteer services.	<b>15 years old</b> <i>(volunteering in national settings)</i>  <b>18 years old</b> <i>(volunteering abroad)</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Italy	Law no. 266/91 (1991) "Framework law on Volunteering" <sup>8</sup>	The Italian Republic recognizes the social value of <b>volunteering</b> as an expression of participation, solidarity and pluralism, promotes its development safeguarding its autonomy and encourages its particular contribution for achieving of social, civil and cultural aims.  The volunteering activity must be carried out in a personal, free and spontaneous manner, not-for-profit and with solidarity aims.	<b>16 years old</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Romania	Law 78/2014 (footnote: <a href="http://federatiavolum.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/LV_promulgata.pdf">http://federatiavolum.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/LV_promulgata.pdf</a> )	A <b>volunteer</b> is any person, without consideration of race, ethnic origin, religion, sex, opinion, political views, who gained work capacity according to the legislation in the work field and develops volunteering activities <b>Volunteering</b> represents the participation of the volunteer physical person to activities of public interest developed in the benefit of other persons or society, organised by juridical persons of public law or private law, without payment, individually or in group	<b>15 years old</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Ireland	Civil Liability Act 1961 <sup>9</sup>	A <b>volunteer</b> is a person who does voluntary work that is authorised by a volunteer organisation and does so without expectation of payment (other than reasonable reimbursement for expenses) or other reward. <sup>10</sup>  <b>Voluntary work</b> means any work or other activity that is carried out for any of the following purposes: a charitable purpose within the meaning of the Charities Act 2009 <sup>11</sup> , mainly to the public benefit.	<b>15 years old</b>	<b>No</b> <i>(It is recommended in best practice examples)</i>	<b>Yes</b>

Table 4: Comparison of legal basis for volunteering in the Czech Republic, Italy, Ireland and Romania

## Recognition for Volunteering

Based on the examples from the 4 countries, recognition and appreciation of volunteers can be done in a formal manner, through awards, certificates, plaques, pins, recognition dinners, receptions and annual ceremonies to honour volunteer achievement. It is the case in Ireland<sup>31</sup> and the Czech Republic, where guide books and other materials personalised by NGOs or public institutions are available, such as The Methodological Guidebook for a Cultural Volunteering or The Methodological Guidebook for Volunteering in Municipalities<sup>32</sup>. In Italy, simple volunteering certificates are given to volunteers to attest the activities carried out, organisations - on an individual basis - sometimes chose also to award volunteers with plaques or other symbolic items during dedicated ceremonies. In Romania, a volunteering certificate at the end of volunteering service is compulsory by law and The National Volunteer Gala<sup>33</sup> is organised each year, by the NGO sector.

Formal recognition systems are helpful mainly in satisfying the need of the volunteer to be appreciated by the community. On the other hand, formal recognition has little impact (occasionally even negative impact) on volunteers, whose primary goal is helping the beneficiaries.<sup>34</sup> These volunteers may very well feel more motivated and honoured by a system which recognizes the achievements of “their” clients and/or recognizes the contribution that the volunteer has made towards this achievement. Effective recognition can occur in the day-to-day interchange between the volunteer and the organization, for instance through expressing appreciation and thanks for the work being done by the volunteer.<sup>35</sup> This type of recognition is more powerful in part because it is much more frequent.

## Recognition of Learning and Competences Developed Through Volunteering

The four observed countries have different systems put in place for the recognition of learning and competencies obtained through volunteering, none of them being nationally regulated. These systems are quite similar as they all aim to ensure a form of accreditation and recognition of all volunteers’ skills and competencies. For example, the Personal Portfolio of Competencies (Osobní kompetenční portfolio – OKP) is used in the Czech Republic for enabling people to define and name competences gained through various activities – also through volunteering. This tool resembles a classical CV but it includes competences gained during informal education (e.g. volunteering), with no external authority involved in the validation of these competences.

OKP connects formal and non-formal education and offers competence profiles in working with children and youth. OKP was created in cooperation with the National Institute for Children and Youth in the Czech Republic, the National Institute for further Education and with several NGOs working with children and

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.volunteerlimerick.ie/resources/resources/volunteer-appreciation-and-recognition>

<sup>32</sup> <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0BwYByU3CaO4mSUpuWkM2VVZSWUk>

<sup>33</sup> <http://galavoluntarilor.ro/>

<sup>34</sup> [http://www.volunteersouthdublin.ie/about-us/photos/1/detail/7-img\\_2073?tmpl=component](http://www.volunteersouthdublin.ie/about-us/photos/1/detail/7-img_2073?tmpl=component)

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.volunteerlimerick.ie/resources/resources/volunteer-appreciation-and-recognition>

youth<sup>36</sup>. In Ireland, mechanisms are in place to enable accreditation and recognition, but not all volunteering organisations follow this approach<sup>37</sup>. A form of recognition of the acquired competences is **Starting Out**, The National Induction Training Programme for Volunteers<sup>38</sup>. Its activity strives to support the development of nationally recognized, standardised programme for training volunteers in the youth work sector in Ireland. On completion of any of these trainings, volunteers gain a document certifying their new competences. While it is not technically a validation tool for knowledge and skills gained through a volunteering experience, the certificate can bring a little more weight to the recognition of the learning that takes place while volunteering.

In Italy, Volunteering Service Centres are working to recognize and validate competencies and the learning acquired through volunteer experiences. The aim is to elaborate tools that can give value to volunteers and their experiences. To the present day a national reference framework is missing so the Volunteering Service Centres use models and tools elaborated locally, without common methodologies. Below are some local experiences:

- The Volunteering Service Centre of the Province of Verona has elaborated the **Volunteer Dossier** similar to a labour certificate detailing volunteer experiences.
- The Volunteering Service Centre of the Province of Bologna has elaborated the **CVol** a competencies booklet that can be presented together with the Curriculum Vitae to validate the competences acquired through volunteer experiences.
- The Volunteering Service Centre of the Province of Milan has promoted a project called **Attitude** that has involved 9 associations, 7 companies and 137 volunteers. The project aimed to certificate competences acquired through volunteering experiences according to the standardised model approved by the Lombardy Region in relation to the regional framework of Professional Standards (QRSP).
- Some Volunteering Service Centres have promoted a shared project called **Volunteering University** that presents university courses addressed to volunteers. Volunteers have to attend three basic courses, three specialised courses and a final internship, and have to prepare a final essay. Courses concern relational and organisational skills. At the end of the courses volunteers get a diploma which attests a serious preparation on volunteering's issues and the capability of working in third-sector organisations.

According to the latest Romanian Volunteering Law, if a volunteer requests a detailed certificate of his/her activity, it is mandatory for a volunteer organisation to issue it. Also, Harta Voluntariatului<sup>39</sup> (in translation: Volunteering Map) is an online platform that supports organisations by providing guidelines for issuing volunteering certificates. The certificates issued through this tool describe the activities done and the competences developed by the volunteer. There is no external body to recognise training programmes or competencies acquired through volunteering.

## Volunteering Reference Point in Public Authorities

In the Czech Republic and Romania, there are no Volunteering reference points in the Public Authorities. In the Czech Republic, there are several public bodies

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<sup>36</sup> <http://znv.nidv.cz/okp>

<sup>37</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Ireland [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ie\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ie_en.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> [http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/Starting%20Out%20-%20A%20National%20Induction%20Training%20Programme\\_0.pdf](http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/Starting%20Out%20-%20A%20National%20Induction%20Training%20Programme_0.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> [www.hartavoluntariatului.ro](http://www.hartavoluntariatului.ro)



which are involved in volunteering one of them being The Section of Crime Prevention Programmes and Voluntary Service<sup>40</sup>. It is located within the Crime Prevention Department of the Ministry of the Interior. This department administers accredited or formal volunteering projects only. The Crime Prevention Department arranges the accreditation of organisations that have met the necessary criteria, and provides financial support to these organisations. It also maintains a public list of accredited organisations and monitors them. Another public body with responsibilities in volunteering is the Government Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations.<sup>41</sup> This is a permanent consultative, initiative and coordination body of the Government of the Czech Republic. As part of its duties, the Council cooperates with the NGO sector. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs also runs some projects, as volunteering is also increasingly important in the business sector. Most of the companies are involved in volunteering activities such as mentoring, consulting, and short- or long-term company volunteering activities in NGOs.<sup>42</sup>

In Romania, the Ministry of Youth and Sports runs or finances some projects on volunteering. In order to ensure a representative voice for organisations involving volunteers in Romania, Pro Vobis founded VOLUM Federation<sup>43</sup> in 2010. VOLUM is an umbrella structure that gathers 85 member organisations committed to volunteering development. While it is not a public structure, the federation supports volunteering in Romania and has proven to be a representative partner in public dialogues regarding the state and future of volunteering.

Ireland and Italy, choosing a different approach, have established public authorities dealing with volunteering. In Ireland, The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs established in 2002 is the government body responsible for volunteering. The mission of the Department is to promote and support the sustainable and inclusive development of communities, both urban and rural.<sup>44</sup> It is led by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The Department has lead responsibility for developing the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary Sector. It also runs a specific programme –“Supports for Volunteering” – through which it funds volunteering organisations at national and local levels<sup>45</sup> and supports 22 Volunteer Centres that promote and develop volunteering nationwide.

In Italy the volunteering reference point in the public authorities is composed by the Volunteering Service Centres (Centri di Servizi per il Volontariato - CSV), established by Law n. 266/91 and located in every Italian region: in 2017 there are 71 centres (57 with competencies at provincial level, 5 inter-provincial and 9 regional). These centres provide free services to Volunteering Organisations, such as supporting their volunteering activities, promoting volunteering through activities that encourage social and cultural growth and stimulating a culture of solidarity. They offer general information and orientation through training courses and consultancy in different fields (legal-fiscal area, management-administrative area, fundraising etc.), communication services and logistical support. An important field of intervention is one carried out in schools to promote a volunteering culture among young people.

Given the differing nature of volunteering structures, the public authorities are not as involved in Romania and the Czech Republic as they are in Italy and Ireland, where volunteering is more organised, encouraged and supported by the state.

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<sup>40</sup> Oddělení programů prevence kriminality a dobrovolnické služby

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.vlada.cz/cz/pracovni-a-poradni-organy-vlady/rnno/basic-information-45510/>

<sup>42</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union – Country Report Czech Republic - [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_cz\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_cz_en.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> <http://federatiavolum.ro/>

<sup>44</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union Country Report Ireland - [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ie\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ie_en.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ie\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ie_en.pdf)

# Volunteering Strategies

None of the four countries benefits from a National Strategy for Volunteering. In Ireland, while there is no official volunteering strategy, **The Wheel**<sup>46</sup> is Ireland's support and representative umbrella network for community, voluntary and charitable organisations. They represent their shared interests to Government and other decision-makers and promote a better understanding by the public of the organisations and their work.<sup>47</sup> The Wheel promotes a National Policy on Volunteering developed by the member organisations, reflecting their vision for the volunteering field, and the changes they feel are needed, such as strategies to: support volunteering value, develop and promote volunteering, address barriers to volunteering, provide a volunteering infrastructure, regulate and protect volunteering.<sup>48</sup>

In Italy while there is no national strategy for stimulating volunteering, there are efforts being made by the Government to ensure the development of the volunteering sector, while regions have the power to issue their own strategies and policies in the field.

The lack of National Volunteering Strategies in Czech Republic and Romania can be linked to the lower degree of involvement of public authorities and a less developed volunteering sector, not stimulated enough or supported by the state.

## Financial Support from Public Funding for Volunteering Development

While in the other three countries there are special funds dedicated to volunteering, Romania does not benefit from public funding for volunteering activities. This could partially explain the low involvement of Romanian citizens in civic life - volunteering, as we could see in previous sections, is mainly carried out for church and religious organisations, and the rates in citizens' public participation are generally low.

In the Czech Republic, the law includes explicit provisions on state funding. It should be noted that they only apply to formal volunteering programmes. According to national legislation, the Ministry can cover the cost of insurance for damages and provide a pension for volunteers, as well as expenses related to the volunteer management process.<sup>49</sup> According to a Government website,<sup>50</sup> CZK 6,600,000,000 (264,000,000 euro) was allocated to the non-profit sector in 2007, which corresponds to 0.006 % of the state budget. The 2009 budget of the Ministry of the Interior is CZK 61,802,385,000 (2,472,095,400 euro)<sup>51</sup> and CZK 12,653,000 (506,120 euro) was assigned to accredited volunteering projects. Results of the 2003 Current State of Fundraising in Non-Profit Organisations' survey (453 NGOs participated) are also public.<sup>52</sup> 36% of resources came from the state, regional and local authorities (ministries, regions, towns and villages). Income

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.wheel.ie>

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.wheel.ie/about/thewheel>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.wheel.ie/content/national-policy-volunteering>

<sup>49</sup> Art. 11 of the Volunteering Law - <http://www.legislationline.org/documents/action/popup/id/5788>

<sup>50</sup> [http://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rnno/publikace/rozb\\_2007\\_pro\\_web.pdf](http://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rnno/publikace/rozb_2007_pro_web.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> [http://www.mfcr.cz/cps/rde/xbcr/mfcr/475\\_2008\\_SR\\_P3\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.mfcr.cz/cps/rde/xbcr/mfcr/475_2008_SR_P3_pdf.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> [http://www.neziskovsky.cz/Files/Soubory/neziskovy\\_sektor\\_CR/vyzkum\\_FR\\_Spiralis.pdf](http://www.neziskovsky.cz/Files/Soubory/neziskovy_sektor_CR/vyzkum_FR_Spiralis.pdf)

generated by the organisations' own activities made up 20%. Other sources were: business (11%), foundations and foundation funds (10%), individual donors (7%), membership fees (6%), public collections (2%), foreign embassies (2%) and other sources (5%).

Hestia and the Voluntary Centre in the town of Ústí nad Labem<sup>53</sup> both work as umbrella organisations and are held in high regard by NGOs and state authorities (Ministry of the Interior). Data from the Ústí nad Labem 2003 survey showed an above average dependence on state (51%), regional and local (10%) subsidies. While at the same time significant funding (18%) was received from the European Union. The rest was received from private sources (11%), foundations and foundation funds (4%) and own sources and membership fees (3%). Hestia reports that funding allocation is inconsistent and leaves organisations in difficult positions when trying to secure funding. Many of the organisations need to identify alternative sources without any guarantee of securing financial support.

In recent years, successive Irish Governments have increasingly relied on community or voluntary sector organisations to deliver services and outcomes that matter to some of the most vulnerable individuals and communities in Ireland.<sup>54</sup> However, the continued capacity of this sector to play a strong and progressive role in service delivery has been severely tested over the past eight years of recession. Sustained cutbacks in organisational funding have been accompanied by an increased demand for assistance from individuals and communities that find themselves under pressure as a result of the well documented social and economic crisis.<sup>55</sup> Within these organisations employees are increasingly expected to do more, with less and for less. Frequently, personal motivation, commitment and energy make the difference between continued provision or the reduction or discontinuation of services.<sup>56</sup> The funding for volunteering comes from several sources: Central Government and local authorities.

*Central Government:* There are various references to the allocation of funding to support volunteering. The 2000 White Paper committed the provision of financial support for the Community and Voluntary sector with an annual allocation of €1.27 million.<sup>57</sup> Most central government departments have funding programmes<sup>58</sup> for voluntary organisations with a national remit or undertaking initiatives of national significance. Grant schemes are designed to fit the policy objectives and programme outcomes of each particular department. A great deal of central government funding is available through a wide range of associated agencies, quangos or non-departmental public bodies, such as, the Design Council, Natural England and the Community Development Foundation. Office for Civil Society (OCS)<sup>59</sup> - The Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO) – settled by the Ministry for Housing, Planning and Local Government – has the aim to provide multi-annual funding towards the core costs of national organisations in the community and voluntary sector to assist them to operate and fund core staff positions. SSNO will have a primary focus on the provision of core funding to national organisations that demonstrate good governance and deliver services and supports that have a focus on one or more of the following: addressing poverty, social exclusion and promoting equality.<sup>60</sup> According to the

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<sup>53</sup> DCUL – Dobrovolnické centrum Ústí nad Labem - <http://www.dcul.cz/>

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.impact.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Section-39-Summary.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> [http://www.ul.ie/ppa/content/files/Funding\\_Community\\_voluntary\\_sector\\_organisations\\_to\\_deliver\\_services.pdf](http://www.ul.ie/ppa/content/files/Funding_Community_voluntary_sector_organisations_to_deliver_services.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> Caring – At what Cost? - Rebuilding and refinancing the community and voluntary sector – September 2015 – written by IMPACT Health & Welfare Division - [http://www.ul.ie/ppa/content/files/Funding\\_Community\\_voluntary\\_sector\\_organisations\\_to\\_deliver\\_services.pdf](http://www.ul.ie/ppa/content/files/Funding_Community_voluntary_sector_organisations_to_deliver_services.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> Study on Volunteering in the European Union Country Report Ireland – GHK - [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national\\_report\\_ie\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ie_en.pdf)

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk/Content/help-advice/sources-of-funding.aspx>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.irishaid.ie/what-we-do/who-we-work-with/civil-society/>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.pobal.ie/FundingProgrammes/SSNO/Pages/default.aspx>

Health Service Executive Annual Report 2015<sup>61</sup>, *Putting people at the heart of everything we do*, €3.7 billion was allocated to the voluntary sector that year.

*Local Authorities:* Nearly all local authorities make grants to the local voluntary and community sector, but each one will organise budgets, administration and support differently according to local conditions and resources. Traditionally, different departments within local authorities, such as Education or Social Services, have their own pots of money to allocate in grants to voluntary and community groups. They usually have individual criteria, application procedures and timescales, although there has been a move in recent years to introduce 'corporate' one-stop application forms in some authorities.<sup>62</sup>

In Italy, a National Volunteer Fund has been established by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers-Social Affairs Department. This Fund has been set up with the aim of supporting and financing experimental projects to face social emergencies and to encourage the application of particularly advanced methodologies. Local authorities have to establish special funds to set up service centres to support and qualify the activities of the volunteer organisations. In 2016, €2 million has been earmarked to finance volunteering projects. Only volunteering organisations legally established for at least 2 years and regularly entered in the regional and provincial registers can participate in the call for proposal. Aside from this, in 2016, the Ministry of Labour and Social Politics, Ministry of Education, University and Research and the Department of Youth and Civil Service have allocated €476.000 to promote volunteering among young people in school with 20 projects being funded.

In Romania, in the absence of public funds, volunteering programs and volunteer development projects are funded mostly as a component of other eligible activities. In October 2016, the Ministry for Public Consultation and Civic Dialogue published the report "Financing of Non-Governmental Organisations by the Romanian State"<sup>63</sup> in the context of an appreciated process of transparency of the central administration. However, communication of accurate data and their correlation with actual execution is still missing. Another indirect mechanism for supporting all NGO activities is the possibility for both individuals and companies to donate part of their income tax to an NGO of their choosing. The fiscal code allows individuals to direct 2% of their yearly income tax and companies 20% under specific conditions.

## The Infrastructure for Volunteering

All examined countries have developed infrastructures for volunteering, which are consisting of different organisations, institutions, events and websites.

**In the Czech Republic, Dobrovolnictví nezaměstnaných** (Volunteering of Unemployed People) is a programme to encourage and assist unemployed Czech citizens in order to become active members of the society. It is funded from the European social fund and it has accreditation from the Ministry of the Interior. Through this programme unemployed citizens get a chance to work with in a programme based on their interests and motivations. Participants benefit from the experience within the host organization, acquire new skills, maintain social and work habits and get an opportunity to address needs in their community.

The **Agency for the Non-profit Sector** (AGNES) was founded in 1998 in order to support the development of the NGO sector in the Czech Republic. AGNES

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/corporate/AnnualReportFinancialStatements2015.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk/Content/help-advice/sources-of-funding.aspx>

<sup>63</sup> [http://dialogsocial.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Evaluare-MCPDC\\_Raport\\_Finantarea-organizatiilor-negovernmentale-de-catr....pdf](http://dialogsocial.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Evaluare-MCPDC_Raport_Finantarea-organizatiilor-negovernmentale-de-catr....pdf)

implements many programmes throughout the Czech Republic ranging from education and skills training to the promotion of the NGO sector through cultural and social activities. Over the last seven years, AGNES has instituted eight yearly educational courses for NGO managers, four nationwide studies of NGOs, published 11 publications and founded a library and archive of NGOs in the Czech Republic.

The **National Volunteer Centre HESTIA**, founded in 1993 in Prague, plays the role of both the national volunteer centre and the country's methodological and educational centre. The mission of HESTIA is 'Promotion, support and development of volunteering'. Their main activities include: volunteering research, training and education on volunteering, publications, consultation, supervision and networks for volunteers and volunteer professionals, making national and international contacts with institutions engaged in similar activities and initiatives, promotion of activities and the organization of regional activities, working with volunteers themselves, providing legal advice to organisations and individuals and additional services including the insurance and training of volunteer coordinators.

**The Alliance for Development in Volunteering.** The main programmes HESTIA runs are freely used by HESTIA partner organisations throughout the country according to the needs and facilities of the region. The involvement in at least one of Hestia's programmes in line with the conditions of volunteering management are main requirements for Regional Volunteer Centres (RVC) to become members of the Alliance for Development in Volunteering.

The major information network website – **www.dobrovolnik.cz** – offers a large amount of information about volunteering. This website was largely developed during the European Year of Volunteering in 2011.

**The Donors Forum** is another institution in the Czech Republic providing the service of employee volunteering in NGOs and it is the national coordinator in the ENGAGE Initiative. This international campaign is focused on increasing the number of company employees engaged in community development.

**Volunteer Ireland (VI)**<sup>64</sup> is the national volunteer development organization in Ireland. With 21 affiliate Volunteer Centres and 7 Volunteering Information Services their coverage spans throughout the country. In 2013 they launched **I-Vol**<sup>65</sup> - the national database on volunteering opportunities. They also organise **National Volunteering Week**<sup>66</sup>, as well as the **National Volunteer Awards**.<sup>67</sup>

**Activelink**<sup>68</sup> works with non-profit organisations to develop online communications in the public interest, to promote action and participation and to foster the sharing of ideas, experience and information for a better world.

**Boardmatch Ireland**<sup>69</sup> provides a free service that matches non-profit boards with skilled and experienced volunteers.

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<sup>64</sup> [www.volunteer.ie](http://www.volunteer.ie)

<sup>65</sup> <http://volunteering.force.com/OpportunitySearch>

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.volunteer.ie/events/national-volunteering-week>

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.volunteer.ie/events/volunteer-ireland-awards/about-the-volunteer-ireland-awards>

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.activelink.ie/>

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.boardmatchireland.ie/>

**Business in the Community (BITC)**<sup>70</sup> focuses on developing innovative community involvement and corporate responsibility services.

**Volunteering Options**<sup>71</sup> is a website of resources for volunteering, covering national and international opportunities and tools that have been developed as part of Comhlamh's Volunteering Options programme and funded by Development Cooperation Ireland.

In Italy, in addition to **Volunteering Service Centres**, the main reference points for volunteering organisations, there are different centres where organisations and volunteers can find a room for sharing and support. An example is the project **Volunteering Home** that will be located in Milan and will host info-points, the Volunteering University, libraries, events, exhibitions, conferences, workshops, associations and the Volunteering Hostel - a home for young people that come to Italy from abroad in order to live the European Volunteering Experience in Italian volunteering associations.

The online reference point of volunteering is the **CSVNet** website<sup>72</sup> (the National Association of Volunteering Service Centres), which offers general information, downloadable materials, news on the volunteering field and also promotes events. CSVNet is associated with the European Centre for Volunteering (CEV). Another web resource is the volunteering web magazine, **VolontariatoOggi.info**<sup>73</sup>, created almost 10 years ago. This web magazine can be considered a space for reflection on issues that deal with volunteering. The web magazines page counts 150,000 visitors a year and 11,000 people sign up for the newsletter.

Another example of web portal is **Startempo**<sup>74</sup> which promotes volunteering. It is a platform that allows users to create a free promotional web page for volunteering associations in which they can upload and share initiatives and projects. It also matches volunteers with organisations. Volunteers can create a personal profile specifying their competences, hobbies and ambitions in order to find a volunteering project and apply for it. Startempo aims to enhance volunteering experiences.

In terms of events organised to promote volunteering, since 2011 the Volunteer National Centre (CSVnet) has organised a **Volunteering Festival** which can be considered the national reference event for the world of solidarity and civil commitment. During the Festival many workshops and initiatives concerning the world of volunteering are presented.

In terms of infrastructure in Romania, we have to mention **VOLUM Federation**<sup>75</sup> - the umbrella structure for volunteer involving organisations, **Pro Vobis – the National Resource Center for Volunteering**<sup>76</sup>, the local volunteer centres and the law on volunteering. There are also a number of websites which offer general

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<sup>70</sup> <http://www.bitc.ie/>

<sup>71</sup> <https://comhlamh.org/>

<sup>72</sup> <http://csvnet.it/>

<sup>73</sup> <http://www.volontariatoggi.info/volontariato-oggi/>

<sup>74</sup> <https://startempo.com/>

<sup>75</sup> <http://federatiavolum.ro/>

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.provobis.ro/>

information on volunteering<sup>77</sup>, volunteering opportunities<sup>78</sup>, European volunteering stories and further information.<sup>79</sup>

Notable for our chosen topic of intergenerational volunteering is the website dedicated to seniors - [www.voluntariseniori.ro](http://www.voluntariseniori.ro) that offers volunteering opportunities, a database of senior volunteers, and also a discussion forum for users which aims at developing intergenerational volunteering opportunities.

In terms of events, Romanian volunteers come together to celebrate National Volunteer Week, International Volunteer Day (December 5<sup>th</sup>) and the International Day of the Volunteer Managers (November 5<sup>th</sup>).

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<sup>77</sup> [www.voluntariat.ro](http://www.voluntariat.ro), [www.blogunteer.ro](http://www.blogunteer.ro)

<sup>78</sup> [www.hartavoluntariatului.ro](http://www.hartavoluntariatului.ro)

<sup>79</sup> [www.voluntareuropean.ro](http://www.voluntareuropean.ro)

## Conclusion

A representative research on volunteering was not conducted until 2004 in any of the examined countries however the absence of information is not understood as non-existing, it is rather a lack of systematic processing of information. One common characteristic of volunteer work in all four countries is that it is based on the individuals' free will and initiative. Different states have decided to regulate volunteering to various degrees. The differences were already outlined in the previous chapters. A centralised – and more effective monitoring would be appreciated by the entire society, with the governments and networks of volunteering centres already working in this direction.

Even in cases of the more legislated countries, such as Romania where it is mandatory to have a written contract with all volunteers, these are not registered or reported to any monitoring body. As a result, it is difficult to accurately evaluate the situation. The Czech and Italian legal models legislate specific volunteering activities for instance formal volunteering and volunteering for solidarity purpose, allowing more flexibility for other volunteering activities which are carried on. In Ireland, a written agreement regarding volunteer work is not mandatory. This situation makes it problematic to obtain data about the number of volunteers, their type of interests and motivation.

Another issue in gathering data is a direct effect of the nature of volunteerism which is based on the individual initiative and free will. The effects of volunteering are directed from the ground up and in most cases the initial activity and volunteering act is not even known by the state, making it impossible to account for all volunteers.

The same bottom-up effect is evident especially in infrastructure which differs in each state. In every example above it was built in time, according to the needs and resources of every country. This is not to say the state never contributes to the infrastructure of volunteer involving organisations, by regulating some aspects of volunteer work or through funding. Despite the low engagement of the state, the infrastructure is being built just in time to address the issues which arise with the development of volunteering. On the other hand, the efforts to sustain and stimulate the volunteering field should be intensified and structured. Corresponding research and funding is needed for developing a real volunteering culture as it improves national economies and social cohesion. Former communist countries should take the best practice examples from countries in which volunteering has been part of the culture for a long time.

The variety and specificity of situations present in each country will naturally influence any type of volunteering activity implemented. Thus, any volunteering programme will need to be adapted in order to better plan for a project that is carried out respecting the legal requirements and using the relevant available resources.

Regardless of how volunteering appears in your country, of the laws and systems that are in place to support it, there is at least one common trait: individuals represent an incredible resource for development. As long as this resource is stimulated and properly channelled, the profile of the volunteer can vary from total lack of experience to proficiency, from a very young age to seniority. In the following chapter we are providing case studies that reached the level of best practice in intergenerational volunteering. The following volunteering programmes involve young and senior volunteers working together. We can learn from these examples how such programmes work, what the results and the challenges are and what is the impact they have on volunteers and communities.



## Introduction

Intergenerational learning programmes are a valuable tool for social progress. They bring together the experiences and resources of older generations with the energy and potential of the younger ones. It is a way to build bridges between the two demographic groups for the sake of new shared outcomes.

The challenges of modern societies lie in the restructuring of traditional family models. The link between older and younger generations is cut by distance and lack of time, but also by policies and practices which focus only on a certain population group. For instance, there are services solely for older people or solely children<sup>80</sup>. Therefore, implementing intergenerational programmes is crucial for attenuating these social issues and for bringing generations together, stimulating social solidarity and defining the public agenda of the states. As research shows, in Europe intergenerational programmes initially arose in 1990<sup>81</sup>.

Intergenerational practice is understood in a variety of ways. One of the recognized definitions of intergenerational practice is proposed by the Beth Johnson Foundation (BJF), referring to *purposeful activities which are beneficial to both young people (normally 25 or under) and older people (usually aged over 50)*.<sup>82</sup>

The following chapters will provide a detailed picture of intergenerational practices in the four researched countries; examining their characteristics, procedures and benefits.

## The Czech Republic

There are several programmes aimed to develop an intergenerational volunteering level, such as Program 3G – Three generations (HESTIA) or Five P (HESTIA) that are supposed to strengthen the relationship between generations and to support further activities of the people involved. Within these programmes, the youth and elderly who do not have the benefit of relatives from the other generation were gathered and encouraged to interact, bringing many positive results in the field of establishing new friendships and links.

Some resources were developed in the Czech Republic, on international volunteering and methodology, such as the Methodological Guidebook for Cultural Volunteering etc. They were elaborated by the organisation,

<sup>80</sup> Hatton-Yeo, A.(2007), Intergenerational Practice: Active participation across generations, Beth Johnson Foundation

<sup>81</sup> Springate, I., Atkinson, M. and Martin, K. (2008).Intergenerational Practice: a Review of the Literature(LGA Research Report F/ SR262)

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.bjf.org.uk/>

# CHAPTER 2

## BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES IN INTERGENERATIONAL VOLUNTEERING IN ROMANIA, ITALY, CZECH REPUBLIC AND IRELAND

HESTIA<sup>83</sup>. They offer a large variety of documents and publications on its website and they also offer training courses and other opportunities for volunteers.

In the Czech Republic there is a deep concern for the relationship between the youth and elderly, because young people tend to view the elderly as parasites on the younger generation. On the other hand, the elderly often choose isolation instead of participating in social activities, which is harmful for their mental health as it may lead to depression etc. According to a survey done in 2014, senior citizens who participated in some sort of volunteering face less physical as well as psychological suffering.<sup>84</sup>

Below, there are two interviews revealing the details about good practices in intergenerational volunteering in the Czech Republic.

## Intergenerational Civil Education and Political Literacy for Everyone Intergeneration, z.s.

The Intergenerational Civil Education project was aimed at raising political awareness and strengthening civic activism in the Czech Republic across generations. The three-stage project, running between 2014 and 2016, also aimed at raising citizens' awareness of the functioning of municipal policy.

The project was financially supported by the South Moravian Region and was designed to, among other things, raise citizens' interest in public affairs, thereby enhancing civic activism. Everything was prepared so that participants would become aware of their influence on politics and thus they would accept their share of responsibility for the society. People often feel that they do not have effective resources to influence political affairs, and only a very small percentage of citizens are involved in civic life. In particular, the needs of young people under 29 years old and children are often omitted from political debate, which only deepens the young generation's lack of interest in politics because they feel excluded. The effort was to strengthen the political literacy of citizens and to increase their interest in the civic activism through interactive intergenerational workshops that took place in a playful manner.

**THE MAIN ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN THE PROJECT:** During the programme, the guests participated in the tour of Brno City Hall, where municipal policy is formed. Here, one of the city representatives provided a brief explanation of the functioning of the council. After the tour there was a festive opening of the workshop and the visitors took part in various activities. They played a so-called "post-election coalition" simulation game that accurately copied the pre-election programme and the results of the 2016 regional elections.

The participants were given a task that let them experience the basic elements of democratic politics when they had to publicly take a stance on the given topic, then associate themselves with supporters of the same position and select one representative of the group who would present the pre-formulated arguments of the whole association. The purpose of the game was to build a coalition and elect a governor. The participants got a hands-on experience with political thinking and at the same time the attitudes of the younger generations and the older ones merged into one.

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<sup>83</sup> <http://www.hest.cz/cs-CZ/>

<sup>84</sup> <https://theses.cz/id/tatx6q/Diplomovprce-Bartonov-2015.pdf>

The result of the game was evaluated by Jakub Čech (age 17), who is well known for his political activism at a very young age. Through his work, he also inspired the young and the seniors in being more civically active and encouraged his audience to engage and influence public affairs. This was followed by a lecture that inspired the participants to be more interested in political affairs. The listeners were encouraged to ask questions and to think about politicians as people, who simply do their job. A summary of political principles in the Czech Republic followed.

**THE MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED IN THE PROJECT:** Through this exercise everyone could experience the fragility of a political coalition, therefore, to understand the principles of a democratic society. At the same time, the young and the elderly were looking for political partners across age groups, which encouraged the convergence of generations and participants had the opportunity to realise that they could agree with each other despite their age. Thanks to the presence of a civic activist, the participants were encouraged to be active, which would ultimately lead to the improvement of political culture. Through practical examples we were able to motivate the young and old to feel more responsible for their surroundings.

64 people aged 10-76 participated in the project. There were 56% children, 30% middle-aged and 14% seniors. Six local politicians participated in the event. The output of the project was a specific initiative of the participants - pupils of Gajdošov primary school. They heard about a case of civil activity in Tišnov, which resulted in the revitalisation of a neglected underpass. Near the Gajdošova primary school there is also a neglected underpass therefore, the school together with the local town hall decided to rebuild it. Currently, this activity is at a project stage.

**EVALUATION:** Participants were given evaluation forms, which showed that the overwhelming majority was exceedingly satisfied. Some respondents suggested greater involvement of politicians and not only regional ones.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** During the years, the organisation learned how to organise similar activities. For example, they found out that it is good to have the workshop in November, so teachers have enough time to select suitable pupils' representatives. They have also realised that organising the programme in the morning increases the interest and productivity of the participants. There were interesting differences between children from primary and secondary schools. Older children seemed much more reserved and needed more encouragement to express their opinion. On the contrary, younger children behaved in a very direct manner. The hypothesis of the benefits and viability of the project was confirmed. The project received a great deal of appreciation and is also applicable directly at schools in the context of teaching social sciences.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER ORGANISATIONS INTENDING TO IMPLEMENT SUCH A PROGRAMME:** As with all similar projects, it is important to focus on the motivation of people, personal attitude and flawless communication. It is not very effective to communicate through leaflets or to focus on broad masses. You need to define a target group and address a specific offer directly to them. This works for schools, for clubs and clubs for the elderly. It is also necessary to bring in the programme and lectures representatives of both generations so that both groups can express their opinion. That is the only way to achieve constructive dialogue.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** A report about the programme was created and distributed through Facebook and the Mezigenerace's<sup>85</sup> website. There is also an educational film that maps the entire project. From each workshop, a brief motivational spot was created to inform about examples of civic activism. It is usable at schools in civil education lessons. Last but not least, a methodology was developed to describe the whole project in detail. It can inspire other people to

<sup>85</sup> Mezigenerace - eng: Intergeneration

organise intergenerational, political meetings.

## Let's Play

The intergenerational afternoon was organised by Mezigenrace in Brno and has already taken place five times. It is a project aimed at bringing the young generation closer to older people and at overcoming age barriers and stereotypes. This is a regular, recurring event that Intergeneration, z.s. organises in public places in Brno. The activities are organised either completely without subsidy or with only a small financial contribution. Approximately 20-30 volunteers help with the organisation.

**AIM OF THE PROGRAMME/PROJECT:** The motivation for the intergenerational afternoon to take place was composed of various factors. First of all, there was an attempt to connect different generations that share one space together, yet are distant. The objective was to achieve changes in attitudes towards seniors, who are often seen as uninteresting and unnecessary, so that the younger generation can understand that old people can enjoy themselves, they like to learn new things and have a lot to say.

In order to prove that elderly are not boring and grey, seniors who were far less socially active than young people were enlisted. We also wanted to change the atmosphere of these meetings and bring new and interesting topics. Bringing together seemingly incompatible target groups was successful and thus the stereotypes of both the old and the young generation were reduced.

**MAIN ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN THE PROJECT:** Within the intergenerational afternoon, several dozen people were invited in public places in Brno, where they played various games together. The teams were mixed so youth was brought together with old age. The choice of games included Petanque, darts and board games like *Dame*, *Man Don't Be Angry!* and more. Everybody could choose. Primary school children were supposed to explain the rules of the games to seniors or help them with sport activities. This is how children tried out the role of the organiser of the event and also meant they were in direct contact with all the guests. Moreover, the children prepared a cultural programme in which they had the opportunity to show their dance skills and other types of art. There was also a book bazaar, a place where everyone could make and decorate gingerbread and other attractions. Within the programme, a free blood pressure check and the opportunity to talk to a doctor were provided. The moderator was very important, as he set the course and the pace of the event so that no one was left behind. The moderator also spoke throughout the event, encouraging participants.

**MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED IN THE INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMME:** Each one of the five afternoons took about 4 to 5 hours. The total number of participants is somewhere between 100-200 people. These numbers include the people who were invited to the event, as well as schoolchildren from the accompanying elementary schools with their escorts. Last but not least, a large section of the participants were passers-by who came to see what was happening. The representation of age groups was more or less the same. Similarly, the representation of women and men was balanced. Overall, the project was repeatedly accepted very positively. Everybody received diplomas from the afternoon and the most active participants also got small awards, which left a very good impression. There was a tremendous interest among the children, therefore some primary schools showed interest to continue in similar activities by themselves.

## TESTIMONIALS FROM VOLUNTEERS AND BENEFICIARIES:

*“I am surprised that it is possible to play like this in the middle of the city. We should organise these activities more often. “*

*“We are very glad that we could be a part of another interesting activity organised by the civic association Intergeneration, which contributes to the mutual convergence of generations “*

*“I am 58 years old, a friend of mine told me about this event and because I live nearby I had decided to come and see. I was surprised by the amount of people and I thought that these kind of games were just for young. I was pleased that I was quite good at them. I am really glad that these events are happening also for our generation “*

**LESSONS LEARNED:** There is an interest in such activities and people are happy to get involved. It was a great surprise that except for a few minor complaints about the weather, rejection or criticism were not met. It was also interesting to watch how joyfully people were while involved in the games. The selection of the place for the event was also important. During the previous years we have found that busy squares are not suitable for such activities. School playgrounds dramatically reduce the number of random incomers. Ideal areas are quieter but busy zones, such as city parks.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER ORGANISATIONS INTENDING TO IMPLEMENT SUCH A PROGRAMME:** the first premise for success is the balanced representation of young people and older generations. If one of the groups has a numerical disadvantage, the whole action changes its character. If there are more youngsters involved, seniors can be seen as lecturers. If, on the contrary, there is a predominance of elderly citizens, young people may feel uncomfortable. Also, there may not be a desirable mix of generations within every activity. The right motivation is the key to the success of such actions. Even the simplest type of recognition or a certificate is very important for the participants. If at the end of the programme people receive a prize, a reward, or written praise, they have more positive memories and impressions from the event. Children are also motivated by the opportunity to exhibit their art during the programme.

At the same time, it is important to constantly communicate, especially with the young people who quickly lose concentration and enthusiasm. It is necessary to keep in touch with them and maintain their enthusiasm. On the contrary, seniors need to be slightly pushed and someone has to give them the courage to get involved. However, in both cases communication should be simple and comprehensible. Leaflets and advertisements have only a very small response, while direct contact with school directors, who later motivate their pupils or visits to the facilities where seniors live, is much more effective.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Every edition is described on the website<sup>86</sup>, where there is also a detailed methodology for other programmes.

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF INTERGENERATIONAL EDUCATION OR VOLUNTEERING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC:** Intergenerational educational programmes in general are a fairly frequent topic of political debates and promises, especially at the communal level. But the truth is that in practice not many activities are developed. Intergenerational exchange is very important for the mutual convergence of generations, who must understand each other and learn from each other. Children should be told that old people are not unnecessary and slow, but they have much to hand over. At the same time, with the help of children,

<sup>86</sup> [www.mezigenerace.cz](http://www.mezigenerace.cz)

seniors recognize the modern world and find that they can do a lot of interesting things. What is also important is the support of civic activism when we show people that they can change things around them and contribute to the development of society.

## Seniors to Schools

Mezigenerace, z.s. regularly organises senior visits to schools. Seniors have a chance to tell the stories of their lives to children and students who might be interested. Those participating elderly are usually people who have lived through many interesting events and they therefore have a lot of things to say and thus can easily inspire their listeners. At the same time they succeed in breaking stereotypes about the older people and they improve the intergenerational relations. The reactions of the children are usually very encouraging for the guests.

Purpose and the objective of the project: the project aimed to mediate the experiences and life stories of those who could be admired and who could inspire. The intention was that the stories of a WW2 veteran or of an Olympic athlete, who has been dealing with unimaginable challenges in her life, could bring children closer to adult life. At the same time, an objective was to encourage children to treat older people with dignity and respect and to make them appreciate what they have done in their lives and also their active approach to life at such an advanced age.

**MAIN ACTIVITIES THAT TOOK PLACE IN THE PROJECT:** Within the programme, the schools are being visited by four seniors – lecturers who tell the students their life stories and try to change the way of children’s way of thinking about aging. For example, Colonel Emil Boček who served in RAF during the WW2, tells the children about his pre-war and after-war experiences and explains them how he got into aviation. Children love his stories and often they ask him how many enemy planes he shot down or what type of air plane he used to fly. He is also an inspiration for the children in terms of facing advanced age because he still exercises every day and pilots often.

Other interesting stories are usually about the former Czech Olympic gymnast Věra Růžičková, who won a gold medal back in 1948. She tells the children that she went to the Olympics as a reserve player and she was allowed to compete only because her colleague died shortly before the race. The children always have enough time for questions and many of them take photos with their new heroes. They can later show the pictures to their friends and family members. This sort of enthusiasm mesmerized the guests who are pleased that the kids later post photos with them on social networks.

**MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT:** Mezigenerace, z.s. collaborates with four lecturers, but the availability of volunteers and demands of the school principals decide the number of visits. The meetings are attended by students of elementary schools, who are given an opportunity to see how the lives of active seniors look. The feedback the teachers receive from the children shows the enthusiasm for the project. Up to this point the meetings have been attended by 250 students.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** The children loved everything they were told and their questions seemed never-ending. This proves the impact the project had on them. The important conclusion is that today’s children often miss a role model, but through this project we are able to give them a few. The children are often curious about the careers of their guests and about their other activities – which may influence their future choices. It was also shown that proper moderation of the meetings makes them more dynamic.

Recommendations which could help other organisations, willing to work on an intergenerational exchange and intergenerational education: It is necessary to

choose really inspirational seniors who, in spite of being elderly, are still active and change the stereotypes. People and especially children love stories, hence even more important than mentoring was telling stories, because it has a great impact on the children.

## Ireland

In recent years, there has been increasing interest in Ireland in developing initiatives that seek to bring older and younger generations together.<sup>87</sup> This reflects growing international recognition of the range of benefits for individuals, communities, and societies as a whole that can arise from intergenerational practice.

In this respect, intergenerational practice can best be understood as any activity which “aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities.”<sup>88</sup> Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the young and old have to offer each other and those around them<sup>89</sup>.

Despite the growing Irish interest in intergenerational activities, to date no attempt has been made to draw together information about the nature of projects that bring the different generations together<sup>90</sup>. Such information is likely to be of value to policy-makers, practitioners and researchers in helping to understand the current state of intergenerational programmes in Ireland and to plan future work in this emerging area.

In the absence of relevant information, the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology at NUI Galway, Age Action Ireland, and the Beth Johnson Foundation – three organisations with a longstanding interest in this area – combined their efforts to undertake an exercise that not only gathers necessary information about intergenerational activities in Ireland, but also helps to identify examples of best practice in relation to intergenerational programmes.

On the basis of the information presented by each project, key features of intergenerational initiatives can be summarized as follows<sup>91</sup>:

- There is good evidence that intergenerational activity is present right across the Republic of Ireland. Such activity is not restricted to certain parts of Ireland, such as the major cities.
- The types of intergenerational activity taking place vary considerably in their scale and scope. Relevant projects encompass such diverse activities as art and craft, DVD production, storytelling, advice and mentoring, and environmental projects.
- Some projects involve relatively few participants, while others engage with several hundred people.
- The age range of participants involved in intergenerational projects varies broadly across initiatives. The youngest reported participant was two years old, the oldest 88 years. Despite the popular perception that intergenerational work primarily involves interaction between people aged 18 years and under and those aged 65 years and over, some projects currently taking place in Ireland also include participants of working age.
- In terms of time scale and duration, many of the intergenerational projects reported on here are either continuously on-going or occur on an annual basis.

<sup>87</sup> [https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping\\_report\\_november\\_2012\\_web.pdf](https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping_report_november_2012_web.pdf)

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.ageaction.ie/how-we-can-help/generations-together>

<sup>89</sup> Beth Johnson Foundation, 2001 - <https://www.bjf.org.uk/>

<sup>90</sup> [http://www.icsg.ie/sites/www.icsg.ie/files/personfiles/intergenerational\\_projects\\_in\\_ireland.pdf](http://www.icsg.ie/sites/www.icsg.ie/files/personfiles/intergenerational_projects_in_ireland.pdf)

<sup>91</sup> [https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping\\_report\\_november\\_2012\\_web.pdf](https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping_report_november_2012_web.pdf)

However, in instances where intergenerational projects were/are one-off endeavours, it is evident that they often lead to other developments in terms of intergenerational activity.

- Sources of funding varied greatly across projects. Many projects were funded either publicly or privately, with some receiving funding from public-private partnerships. Several projects reported receiving no funding or did not report whether or not they were funded.

Approximately two-thirds of intergenerational projects reported having been evaluated, with methods of evaluation varying across projects<sup>92</sup>.

- The overwhelming majority of projects reported that they had either become sustainable after an initial period of activity or had developed further from the reported intergenerational activity. Many projects remain ongoing; in other cases, one-off projects had resulted in the implementation of, or discussion around the implementation of, further intergenerational activity.
- Most of the projects produced outputs as part of their intergenerational activities. The type of outputs varied greatly, with examples including DVDs, photography, books, brochures, calendars and leaflets.

The two examples provided below represent projects that used drama or creative arts:

## Living Scenes

Lead organization: National University of Ireland Galway

Details were offered by Dr. Mary Surlis, Director of Living Scenes Programme of Intergenerational Learning.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT:** Living Scenes<sup>93</sup> is an intergenerational programme of learning designed, implemented and funded by NUI Galway. It is currently operating in six schools in the Western Region. As a programme of intergenerational learning, Living Scenes seeks to promote and cultivate the enriching relationship that has been established in the course of the programme's 11-year history. The relationship is that of the bond between older and younger adults in an educational setting.

In a curricular context, the programme is primarily focused on developing links between teenagers and retired adults in a school setting as part of the school curriculum and transition year ethos. The programme listens and responds to the needs of younger and older adults in our society through specifically designed media that allows a platform of equal expression for both groups.

**EVIDENCE OF NEED:** Living Scenes<sup>94</sup> responded and responds to an identified need both at a community and second level school context.

**PARTICIPANTS:** To date 1,485 teenagers and older adults have taken part in the programme. The project currently has 180 participants ranging in age from 18 to 60+ years. These participants are recruited by school-based coordinators.

**ACTIVITIES/EVENTS:** Modules: Art, Music, Drama, Writing during a 30-week programme, facilitated by NUI Galway-trained facilitators.

**EVALUATION:** The National University of Ireland Galway are carrying out an evaluation of the programme which is ongoing in all eight centers. This is qualitative and quantitative evaluation, which is examining the effects of intergenerational learning in established sites throughout Ireland.

**OUTPUTS:** Books, DVDs, exhibitions, public performances.

**FUNDING:** NUI Galway is funding six centres; Society of St Vincent De Paul Croína Gaillimhe is self-funded.

<sup>92</sup> [https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping\\_report\\_november\\_2012\\_web.pdf](https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping_report_november_2012_web.pdf)

<sup>93</sup> [https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping\\_report\\_november\\_2012\\_web.pdf](https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping_report_november_2012_web.pdf)

<sup>94</sup> [http://www.nuigalway.ie/living\\_scenes/](http://www.nuigalway.ie/living_scenes/)



**SUSTAINABILITY/DEVELOPMENTS:** There are currently 50 secondary schools on a waiting list.

## Sligo Arts and Health<sup>95</sup>

**LEAD ORGANIZATION:** Sligo County Council Arts Service. Details were offered by Rhona McGrath.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:** As part of its annual Arts Programme, Sligo Arts Service manages a number of two-year, schools-based Intergenerational Arts Projects in communities around County Sligo. The projects offer participants opportunities to collaborate with professional artists in high quality, person-centred experiences of the arts.

At the core of the Intergenerational Arts Project is a creative journey taken by the pupils in the local school and the older people who live in the same neighbourhood along with an artist. Over two years, the pupils, older people and artist come together for a series of high-quality, explorative arts experiences to explore who they are, where they live and what constitutes their sense of place and community.

**EVIDENCE OF NEED:** It was important to implement the programme for the following reasons:

- To enhance social relationships drawing on personal and group creativity, reflecting growing evidence that good relationships are a major determinant of health.
- To promote better understanding of health and well-being using creative projects as a means of expression.
- To initiate projects that bring communities and health promotion closer together through the use of creative methodologies to explore, disseminate and communicate health messages.
- To celebrate creativity in older age through the Bealtaine Festival.
- Work and professional development opportunities for professional artists in all art forms.

**PARTICIPANTS:** The young people are generally in 5th and 6th class or in smaller schools, 3rd class through 6th class. The older people range in age from 55 years to 80+. On average 60-65 young people, 10-15 older people and 5 artists take part annually

**ACTIVITIES/EVENTS:** Activities take place weekly for a period of 8-10 weeks during school terms one and two. A lead artist facilitates the sessions assisted by a number of other artists depending on the art activity.

**EVALUATION:** There have been three evaluations to date, as follows:

- Sligo County Council Arts Service in association with the Sligo Arts and Health Steering Group commissioned 'He+Art: A participatory Arts and Health Strategy for Sligo 2007 – 2012'
- Sligo County Council Arts Service published 'Space for Art: Sligo arts plan 2007 – 2010'
- Sligo County Council Arts Service published 'The Maugherow Project: Unwrapping Creativity 1998 -2001'

The biggest challenge was moving the emphasis from the Pilot Project in Maugherow to mainstream it as a 2-year project which could be accessed by schools & communities around the county. However, the investment in The Maugherow Project was necessary to build partnerships and funding and to research, evaluate and disseminate outcomes – as detailed above in the current two-year Intergenerational Arts Projects<sup>96</sup>.

The benefits of intergeneration arts partnerships are as follows: The School This programme will support the core educational mission of the school and, in line with the Primary School Curriculum, will aim to:

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.sligoarts.ie/ArtsinHealth/>

<sup>96</sup> [https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping\\_report\\_november\\_2012\\_web.pdf](https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping_report_november_2012_web.pdf)

- Celebrate the uniqueness of each child and to nurture the child in all dimensions of their life - spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical.
- Encourage pupils to value and appreciate different ways of learning and different forms of intelligence.
- Give pupils a deeper understanding of their own creative potential and greater confidence when engaging with different arts experiences and art forms.
- Make direct connections between strand units in SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) and different subjects on the Arts Curriculum such as Visual Art, Drama and Music. The school and pupils will benefit from the closer connections that will be made to older people living in their local community and to the breaking down of pre-conceived conceptions and stereotypes of older people, replacing them with positive attitudes towards ageing and older people. The Older People and the Wider Community Participation in an intergenerational arts project will bring different groups in the community together for a shared creative experience and so help make connections between individuals and help break down social isolation<sup>97</sup>. Such projects open up dialogue and conversations between people who may not otherwise be in direct contact and thus break down pre-conceived conceptions and stereotypes<sup>98</sup>.

## Italy

In Italy Intergenerational volunteering is understood to be young and older people carrying out volunteering activities together, as well as each party volunteering for another generation recipient. In both cases the benefits of a renovated dialogue and relationship between different generations and those of the volunteering activity itself are achieved.

In Italy, this second “type” of intergenerational volunteering, more often called intergenerational solidarity, is much more common: young volunteers supporting fragile elderly or adult/old volunteers helping young people in need.

Sometimes, if the projects also involve elder volunteers as mentors to accompany the young volunteers in their new volunteering experience, the true intergenerational volunteering takes place indirectly, without being the main focus of the activities and becoming an unexpected result.

There is a variety of intergenerational solidarity programmes developed all over the Italian territory and below are some examples.

### Generazioni per l’Ambiente (GE.A. – Generations for the Environment)<sup>99</sup>

Ge.a is an example of an intergenerational programme in which older and younger people benefit from their reciprocal relationship. It is a two-year programme funded by the Italian Government and implemented by Anziani e non solo<sup>100</sup> that developed intergenerational solidarity, intergenerational learning and active ageing activities on a specific theme: environmental protection.

The project involved elderly (51 to 70 years old) and young persons (children and young person: 3-10 years old, 11-18 years old, 18-25 years old) carrying out different activities aimed at raising awareness towards environmental protection. The main activities were composed of laboratories where older and young

<sup>97</sup> [http://www.icsg.ie/sites/www.icsg.ie/files/personfiles/intergenerational\\_projects\\_in\\_ireland.pdf](http://www.icsg.ie/sites/www.icsg.ie/files/personfiles/intergenerational_projects_in_ireland.pdf)

<sup>98</sup> [http://www.icsg.ie/sites/www.icsg.ie/files/personfiles/intergenerational\\_projects\\_in\\_ireland.pdf](http://www.icsg.ie/sites/www.icsg.ie/files/personfiles/intergenerational_projects_in_ireland.pdf)

<sup>99</sup> <http://www.generazioniambiente.it/>

<sup>100</sup> <http://www.anzianienonsolo.it>

people worked side-by-side, reflecting on specific environment-related issues, but there also have been events where older volunteers met young people for the purpose of baking bread.

Other widespread intergenerational programmes where elderly volunteers support young people are those related to school homework: older people dedicate their time, efforts and knowledge mentoring school students to help them with studying and doing homework.

## Ri-Generiamoci - Let's Re-Generate

The project is named Ri-Generiamoci: progetto per la promozione della solidarietà tra le generazioni<sup>101</sup> (Let's re-generate: a project for the promotion of solidarity among generations) and was developed in Ancona in 2012. It involved 25 students from secondary school (14 years old), 16 elders from an elderly home and 16 elder volunteers (average age: 70 years old) for a period of 9 months.

The general aim of the project was to develop intergenerational solidarity and overcome negative stereotypes through activities enhancing dialogue and collaboration. In more details, the main activities carried out were craft laboratories, singing activities and games where young students spent time with the elderly home residents.

The students were supported and mentored by elder volunteers, belonging to 2 different local volunteer involving organisations that initially shared their experience on volunteering and then engaged with the young persons in all the activities in the elderly home. In this case, because of the presence of older volunteers as mentors, both types of intergenerational volunteering were developed.

The regular contact between young and elder volunteers gave birth to strong relationships: students saw elder volunteers as models, living examples of ethics. Intergenerational activities affected young people's idea of volunteering: while at the project beginning it was exclusively linked with the activity of donating blood, by the project end young people defined a volunteer as someone who offers free assistance to people in need. On the other side, elder volunteers saw young people as an important resource ("they are hope, future and energy"), they had the opportunity to connect with them and have themselves and their volunteering organisations recognised.

## ABCDigital

Developed in the Milano Area, the programme is now at its fourth edition. ABCDigital<sup>102</sup> is a programme of digital alphabetization dedicated to people over 60 years old. The training, aimed at gaining new technological competencies, is run by young volunteers (students of the secondary school who carry out this activity in the framework of the compulsory period of the *Alternanza scuola-lavoro*, a kind of work-based learning to facilitate the transition from school to work). The general aim of the project is to decrease the digital division of older generations in order to facilitate the development of public and private web services for the citizens by increasing the number of web users to make the European Digital Agenda for the territorial competitiveness feasible and to involve companies in volunteering and social responsibility activities.

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<sup>101</sup> <https://www.inrca.it/inrca/files/focuson/Sintesi%20progetto%20Ri-generiamoci%20-%20versione%20del%20080812.pdf>

<sup>102</sup> <http://www.abc-digital.org/>

The project also benefits young people by empowering their digital knowledge and developing their soft skills. The programme activities are: an initial training for the company trainers and tutors-volunteers (4 hours), the training of young volunteers (in school, 2 lessons of 4 hours each), the training of elderly people run by young volunteers (each class has a teacher and some facilitators, each course lasts minimum 15 hours).

The difficulties of older people in using new technologies are a very widespread issue and the programmes aimed at digital alphabetization are some of the preferred activities in which intergenerational volunteering took place.

Furthermore, intergenerational volunteering can also be indirectly developed in projects specifically designed to sensitize young people to the volunteering world or to involve them in volunteering associations as there is a strong need for new volunteers. In many cases the local Volunteering Service Centre (CSV) carries out activities to promote volunteering. These include meeting young people in schools, training them to become volunteers and to choose the activities closest to their interests and inclinations. Alternatively, young volunteers are involved directly by an association and trained and mentored by older volunteers to take part in its activities.

The development of dialogue and relationship between different generations, the ability to work together on overcoming negative prejudices and to learn and benefit from each other are not the main aims of those activities, but they are still indirect achievements and results.

## Resources available on intergenerational volunteering

In Italy there are various available resources related to the general issue of volunteering, while those related to intergenerational solidarity are less common and those specifically concerning intergenerational volunteering are very rare. Websites of the most famous volunteering associations provide interesting materials and info. Also, the CSVs, the Volunteering National Centre and the observatories on Volunteering run by Regions or Universities offer publications, research and materials, more or less connected to the issue of intergenerational volunteering.

## Romania

Intergenerational concept is still not widely used in Romania, yet there are few programmes implemented based on this approach. These are the following:

### Generatii (Generations) Project

The Community Centre Generații<sup>103</sup> (created by Princess Margareta of Romania Foundation) in Bucharest, implements an intergenerational model, with the support of the local organisations and community involvement, both to provide social services and to support part of the funding. Another part of the Centre's budget comes from the local authorities. This way, the project creates a durable link between an after-school centre and the community. There are 10 centres and organisations in Romania, which implement the intergenerational model with the support of Princess Margareta of Romania Foundation<sup>104</sup>.

<sup>103</sup> <http://www.centrulgeneratii.ro/>

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.fpmr.ro/>

We have organised an interview with Mrs Anca Sohorca, coordinator of the Generatii project<sup>105</sup>, and found out more details about how it was implemented, the results and the challenges.

The Generations Centre has two main activities: an after-school programme and socio-educational activities carried out in an intergenerational way. The after-school programme hosts 60 children from sector 6 Bucharest. The goal is to offer social services to the children from disadvantaged environments and to prevent school drop-out. The centre has been functioning for 10 years now. The socio-educational activities carried out are the following: handcraft of decorative objects, workshops in good manners, painting, reading club, English club, communication lab, sports activities: gymnastics, football, theatre, choir. The centre's activities are attended by 25 senior volunteers, 23 women and 2 men, from all over Bucharest. They are involved in the activities according to their own passions. There are also senior volunteers who are teachers and come and support children in doing their homework. The model serves several vulnerable population categories: children, families in socio-economic difficulties and older people who are often in difficult situations. For example, they feel alone, their children go abroad and they see the Centre as family. The most common benefits of the intergenerational program, as evaluated by the project team, are observed directly in connection with the people involved. The children are learning a lot from the older people, they are getting attached to the elderly and developing good supportive relationships. The senior volunteers find a new social mission and feel useful through sharing their knowledge and energy, thus avoiding depression, isolation and loneliness.

This is not to say the intergenerational model does not come with its own challenges. There is, after all, a difference between generations. A difference in experience, knowledge, and their way of doing things. The elderly sometimes feel offended if others do things differently or dismiss their proposal or opinion. In this case, the psychologist and social worker intervene as mediators. It is necessary to select the older persons through an interview process and to clearly specify their role. They are very fit to make decisions and feel capable and determined to do so. This creates the need for a detailed and clear job description, and constant – in the Centre's case, monthly – supervision meetings. Sometimes, they require the intervention of a psychologist.

The results over the 10 years have been: 16,808 volunteering hours (young people and older people); 16,000 hours for homework delivery; 500 volunteers - young people and older people; 500 children beneficiaries; 150 senior volunteers who have spent their time for children. An Intergenerational Handbook<sup>106</sup> has been developed by FPMR, which details the principles and actions to be carried out for creating an intergenerational centre. However, the foundation has not elaborated any training programme in this field.

## Seniors – Resources in the Community: Volunteering at Third Age

Habilitas Association<sup>107</sup> has implemented a volunteering programme where generations interacted, focusing on the elderly: seniors volunteered in public social institutions – day care centres, residential centres and social apartments of the General Departments of Social Assistance and Child Protection Sector 3, Sector 5 and Sector 1 from Bucharest. About 40 older people carried out volunteering activities with more than 150 children and young people (up to 35 years old) with social disadvantages within a framework of the project “Seniors – Resources in the Community: Volunteering at Third Age”, financed from EEA Grants 2009-2013 (NGO Fund).

<sup>105</sup> Generations Center, Bucharest, The Princess Margareta of Romania Foundation (CentrulGeneratiiBucuresti, FundatiaPrincipesa Margareta a Romaniei) – interview taken on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2017.

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.fpmr.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Intergenerational-Handbook.pdf>.

<sup>107</sup> <http://www.habilitas.ro/index.php/en/>

The main activities performed by the volunteers were helping with homework, playing games, spending time together, engaging in creative activities (handcraft, painting, manufacturing objects), accompanying the children in outdoor activities.

Their feedback was very positive – the young people felt that they could benefit from the attention and help of older people and had the experience of interacting with another generation. On the other hand, the seniors' opinion was that this was a life-changing experience, it gave them another perspective and the fact that they could help children and young people in difficulty improved their communication abilities, self-esteem and provided a meaningful way to spend their time.

**BELOW, THERE ARE TWO TESTIMONIALS OF THE SENIOR VOLUNTEERS.**

*A tear, two, three, don't cry anymore! I remembered my childhood; physically I had parents, but not emotionally. Not everyone is prepared to become a parent. Maybe this motivated me and I was ambitious in my life: I had to help myself. And here I am now, 60 years old, landed in the middle of children left by parents in the care of the state. Every time I was with the 8 boys, I told them they had to help themselves. Gradually, a relationship between us was created, expressed by smile, waving, hugging (...) I tried to understand them, not to judge them and tell them that the whole universe is not against them, that they must see all the hands stretched out to them. They were the 8 boys from a social apartment, eight sad stories, eight little hearts, and eight bundles of dreams that will be fulfilled or not. I was glad when they asked for my help or when they appreciated the things I did for them. It was an experience full of charm and innocence, an experience I will never forget. I hope I have been a small ray of sun and hope in their lives. I found myself in them, a fairy-haired little girl. And then I understood that my purpose is to help people, as I did in my job, just now in another way. I'm pleased to find my way and a goal in my senior life.*

L. R., 61 years – Habilitas Association Senior volunteer

*Volunteering within the Habilitas Association has given me the opportunity for a short period of time to engage in the lives of some special children. For 2 hours, each week, I visited a family type apartment where 8 girls lived together with social workers. Generally, children are so eager to offer and receive love and we quickly got attached to each other. My intervention consisted of doing homework with them, learning poems or playing various social games, like rummy. It is true that the time spent together passed very quickly and we often asked ourselves how much we can do for these children both on a personal and on an institutional level. I hope that I had an important contribution to their rather difficult life, and if for a few minutes, an hour or two, they could feel the love of a grandmother in me, it means I used that time in the most precious possible way.*

A. O., 62 years – Habilitas Association Senior volunteer

The local strategy for supporting seniors' volunteering elaborated in this project was adopted by the General Council of Bucharest - Bucharest City Hall, as a strategy for Romania's Capital for the period 2017-2021. This further enhances the intergenerational dimension of volunteering, as senior volunteers will act for the benefit of disadvantaged children and youth.

The best practices shown above are certainly strong arguments for carrying out intergenerational projects. The examples described are a proof that intergenerational programs have benefits for both age groups, fostering mutual understanding and trust, building bridges between generations and combating social stereotypes. If you are searching for even more examples and reasons to set up an intergenerational volunteering programme, we invite you to read the next chapter.

**W**e strongly believe that intergenerational learning is a way of bridging people in community. It encourages gathering of different age perspectives in order to create a common ground for collaboration, for inner development and for social innovation. Our belief is reflected in the examples shown in the previous chapter.

While intergenerational volunteering is not a traditional type of volunteering and its history is still a short one, there are models to be found in every researched country. Thus, there are concrete arguments for the support of intergenerational volunteering and valuable lessons to be learned.

There is a number of EU-funded projects, in the Grundtvig programme framework, implemented in the member states. Some examples are:

- EAGLE-European approaches to inter-generational lifelong learning
- Education For Parents: School Of Inter-Generational Communication
- Network of Intergenerational Learning in Europe (NIGEL)
- Intergenerational Learning in Organisations
- Inter-Generational learning: from diagnostic to impact evaluation

From our research and knowledge about the field of intergenerational programmes, they are usually focused on the following areas: education, community development projects, health, mentoring, creative arts, social outings, learning, reminiscence etc.

During the time of their implementation some of the identified results of intergenerational practice are:

- Greater understanding between the two age groups<sup>108</sup>
- Improved relationships and friendships between older people and young people<sup>109</sup>
- The feeling of enjoyment is increased and also confidence in others is stimulated<sup>110</sup>
- Improvement in the health status of older persons<sup>111</sup>;
- Loneliness is reduced for older generations<sup>112</sup>;

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<sup>108</sup> Jarrott, S. E., & Bruno, K. (2007). Shared site intergenerational programs: A case study. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 26, 239-257

<sup>109</sup> Robinson T., Umphrey, D., (2006) First- and Third-Person perceptions of images of older people in advertising: an inter-generational evaluation, *International Journal of Ageing and Human Development*

<sup>110</sup> Pain, R., (2005) Intergenerational relations and practice in the development of sustainable communities, ICRRDS

<sup>111</sup> Granville, G., (2002) A Review of Intergenerational Practice in UK, Beth Johnson Foundation

<sup>112</sup> Stanton, G., Tench, P. (2003). Intergenerational storyline bringing the generations together in North Tyneside, *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*

# CHAPTER 3

## WHY CHOOSE INTERGENERATIONAL VOLUNTEERING?

- Seniors gain a new sense and goal in life<sup>113</sup>;
- Improved skills for young people (communication skills, social skills etc.)<sup>114</sup>;
- Improved self-esteem for youth<sup>115</sup>;
- Communities benefit from intergenerational practice, coming out with an enhanced cohesion, improved policies and a diversification of volunteering activities – to more domains<sup>116</sup>.

Intergenerational programs aim to tackle this eventuality and restore a relationship that can provide reciprocal advantages. Research shows that when generations come together everyone benefits, children and youth, older adults and the general community<sup>117</sup>. For young people, volunteering has many benefits including developing skills, values, and a sense of empowerment, self-esteem and citizenship. Interacting with older adults enables youth to develop social networks, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, sense of efficacy and trust and positive attitudes towards aging. It also decreases negative behaviour.

For the elderly, intergenerational activities are strongly linked to active aging as the number and the range of interpersonal relationships positively affect the aging process. The interaction between different generations, among all the various benefits, give the elderly the chance to enhance socialisation (preventing isolation), actively participate in the life of the community and stimulate learning (especially the use of new technologies).

In the OECD countries, older people who volunteer are more likely to report a better health status than non-volunteers. Furthermore, formal volunteers in the OECD, on average, also report higher life satisfaction than non-volunteers.<sup>118</sup>

Research also identifies some key factors for successful implementation of intergenerational programmes. Among these factors there are: a long-term approach, training of staff involved, activities created with the participation of young and old persons and an orientation towards relationships. The participants have to be prepared for the activities and mutual benefits must be ensured for all age groups

The benefits of intergenerational volunteering are numerous and support all arguments in favour of attempting to develop such a programme. Among the four researched countries, the most experience in these types of project is to be found in Ireland.<sup>119</sup>

We propose Creative Drama as a method to facilitate the interaction between generations in the next chapter. The perceived gap can often be a real barrier in the process of getting mixed teams to work together. The young as well as the seniors might feel reluctant to spending time with the other age group. Creative Drama facilitates the initial interaction, connecting people in shared experiences and emotions through games, role play and group exercises and can be a real tool for bringing generations together.

<sup>113</sup> idem.

<sup>114</sup> Hatton-Yeo, A.(2007), Intergenerational Practice: Active participation across generations, Beth Johnson Foundation

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<sup>117</sup> Springate, I., Atkinson, M. and Martin, K. (2008).Intergenerational Practice: a Review of the Literature(LGA Research Report F/SR262)

<sup>118</sup> How’s Life in the Czech Republic? -OECD Better Life Initiative – May 2016 - <https://www.oecd.org/statistics/Better-Life-Initiative-country-note-Czech-Republic.pdf>

<sup>119</sup> for more information about intergenerational projects in Ireland please see [https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping\\_report\\_november\\_2012\\_web.pdf](https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping_report_november_2012_web.pdf)



# CHAPTER 4

## CREATIVE DRAMA THE PROJECT APPROACH

**V**olunteering is a form of active citizenship and we believe that training young people to be volunteers through creative drama in intergenerational environments will give them an opportunity to build up social and civic competences and to contribute to social change. They will learn how to offer their resources and time to others/community, they will embrace values such as tolerance and will respect human rights. Last but not least, they will improve their social capital and cohesion. Training will help them to engage in a process of learning and changing and to further build the capacity to address social issues and leave their mark.

**Creative Drama** is holistic in nature and combines internal reflection and external representation.<sup>120</sup> The common core of basic activities is always improvised. In practice, individuals and groups set out to resolve problems and seek solutions through the medium of exploration and expression.<sup>121</sup> Creative drama is an approach specifically developed for educational and awareness raising purposes.<sup>122</sup> It is an improvisational, non-performance driven and process oriented form of drama. Learner participants are guided by a facilitator to imagine, enact and reflect on experiences that may be real or hypothetical scenarios designed to raise specific issues in a space where thoughtful engagement with difficult subjects can occur.<sup>123</sup> Creative drama is the preferred term for dramatic experiences that are designed for the development of cognitive, affective, aesthetic, and moral thinking of the participants.<sup>124</sup> Methods of creative drama which address social and cultural issues are varied in their approach. The common core of basic activities is always improvised. The process leads to an acceptance of self, an awareness of personal resources, and an awareness of the internal and external influences on living.<sup>125</sup>

For this reason creative drama has been used as a means of addressing the mental, physical, and emotional development of varying cultures. In practice, individuals and groups set out to resolve problems and seek solutions through the medium of exploration and expression.<sup>126</sup> Creative drama has grown in recent years

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<sup>120</sup> <https://gaietyschoolofacting.wordpress.com/2016/04/18/combating-elder-abuse-through-creative-drama>

<sup>121</sup> <https://gaietyschoolofacting.wordpress.com/2016/04/18/combating-elder-abuse-through-creative-drama/>

<sup>122</sup> <https://gaietyschoolofacting.wordpress.com/2016/04/18/combating-elder-abuse-through-creative-drama/>

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<sup>125</sup> Freeman, G.D., Sullivan K., & Fulton, R.C.(2003) Effects of Creative Drama on Self-Concept, Social Skills, and Problem Behavior, , The Journal of Educational Research

<sup>126</sup> <https://gaietyschoolofacting.wordpress.com/2016/04/18/combating-elder-abuse-through-creative-drama/>

and become the keystone of the work of numerous charities, NGOs and theatre companies across Europe.<sup>127</sup> Programmes using this approach provide bespoke toolkits and advanced training, tailored with care to individual situations in order to access the cultural traditions and understanding of a project's audience to clearly and sensitively address areas of conflict for communities or age groups.<sup>128</sup>

As outlined above, creative drama is an exploratory tool used with other multi-disciplinary methods to understand, promote and achieve social change. Creative drama, in its development, has expanded to meet the needs and demands of our ever changing demographic environment.<sup>129</sup> As an exploratory tool used with other multi-disciplinary methods to understand, promote and achieve social change, creative drama will be an effective tool to develop social skills and improve civic participation of young people, to create mentoring nurturing relationships between older volunteers and young people, to create inclusive communities, and to support also active aging.

Below there are some of the outcomes observed in the use of creative drama in the context of intergenerational volunteering:

**SELF-CONFIDENCE** Intergenerational volunteering helps young people and older adults to understand how to appraise situations, think outside the box and be more confident going into unfamiliar situations. Participants learn to trust their ideas and abilities. Confidence gained from intergenerational programme applies to school, career, and life.

**CREATIVITY** Being creative and learning to make creative choices helps participants to get better at thinking of new ideas, allowing them to view the world around them in new ways<sup>130</sup>.

**EMPATHY** The method allows participants to relate better to different situations, backgrounds, and cultures. It encourages them to show compassion and tolerance for others.

**COOPERATION, TEAM WORK, SOCIAL SKILLS** Creative drama supports and teaches all those taking part to engage in discussions, feedback, collaboration, and the performance.

**COMMUNICATION SKILLS** It improves verbal and nonverbal communication. It improves vocal projection, articulation, tone of speech and expression. It also develops listening and observation skills.

**EMOTIONAL OUTLET** It allows participants to express a range of emotions and encourage them to understand and deal with similar feelings they may be experiencing. Aggression and tension are released in a safe, controlled environment – often allowing for a period of reflection afterwards.

**FUN** Last but not least it brings elements of play, humour and laughter to those taking part – it improves motivation and reduces stress.

<sup>127</sup> <https://gaietychoolofacting.wordpress.com/2016/04/18/combating-elder-abuse-through-creative-drama/>

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<sup>130</sup> <https://stagewise.ie/performing-arts-helps-young-people-blossom/>

# Conclusion

As we can see in the first chapter, the available resources – human, legal, financial, etc. - for volunteering differ from country to country, and even from region to region. The profile of the volunteer in the four analysed countries tends to follow the European trend – wealthy, educated, employed, of varying ages – from younger to older people volunteering. Nevertheless, there are existing gaps between the development of volunteering field in the four countries, with a slower advancement of Romania and the Czech Republic, compared to Italy and Ireland, where a veritable culture of volunteering exists. The Czech Republic and Romania suffer from the legacy of the communist era in the volunteering field, which had negative effects, but efforts are made to progress. The state should intensify its support for advancement of volunteering and for a growing number of volunteers, volunteering organisations and projects. Being aware of the state of the volunteering field in Ireland, Italy, the Czech Republic and Romania is crucial for developing future volunteering programmes in these countries.

The second chapter presented real experience and good practices that come as arguments in favour of bringing an intergenerational approach to volunteering. This approach ensures a valuable knowledge and experience exchange while at the same time brings the community together and solves particular issues in different target groups. As described, there are a number of projects and programmes developed in the intergenerational field and volunteering in all four countries, presenting various activities and outcomes. All examples show that intergenerational programmes have benefits both for young people and older adults in terms of sharing experiences and knowledge, mentoring, bridging the gap between generations, and enhancing social inclusion of these two age categories. The challenges of implementing such activities can be overcome by attentive planning, evaluation, and adequate recognition of seniors and young people's merits, as these examples show. Even if intergenerational programmes are still in an initial phase in Romania, efforts are being made by the public and NGO sectors to empower these age groups and to build up strong connections between them.

In order to facilitate the successful participation of the volunteers in intergenerational volunteering programmes, we propose the method of creative drama. A method attractive for young people that will make them engage easier in the training activities and which will allow young people with fewer opportunities to participate, increasing their chances of socio-professional integration. Creative drama is briefly described in the fourth chapter, as an exploratory method that can be used to produce social change with multiple effects of improvement in the area of communication, social skills, emotional life, empathy or team work. More information about the method and its implementation can be found in the *Intergenerational Training Program for Young People with Fewer Opportunities*, on the CREA.T.Y.V. project website: [www.creatyv.eu](http://www.creatyv.eu).

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## (Footnotes)

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