

CREA.T.Y.V.

REPORT FROM THE PILOTING OF THE INTERGENERATIONAL
TRAINING PROGRAM IN ROMANIA, ITALY AND
THE CZECH REPUBLIC,
OUTLINING PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCE

CREATIVE DRAMA FOR TRAINING YOUNG
VOLUNTEERS IN INTERGENERATIONAL
LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS



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CREAT.Y.V.

Report from the piloting of the intergenerational training program in Romania, Italy and the Czech Republic, outlining participants' experience

“Creative Drama for Training Young Volunteers in Intergenerational Learning Environments”

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The workshops had many similarities in all three countries, from the point of view of group dynamics, atmosphere and mood.

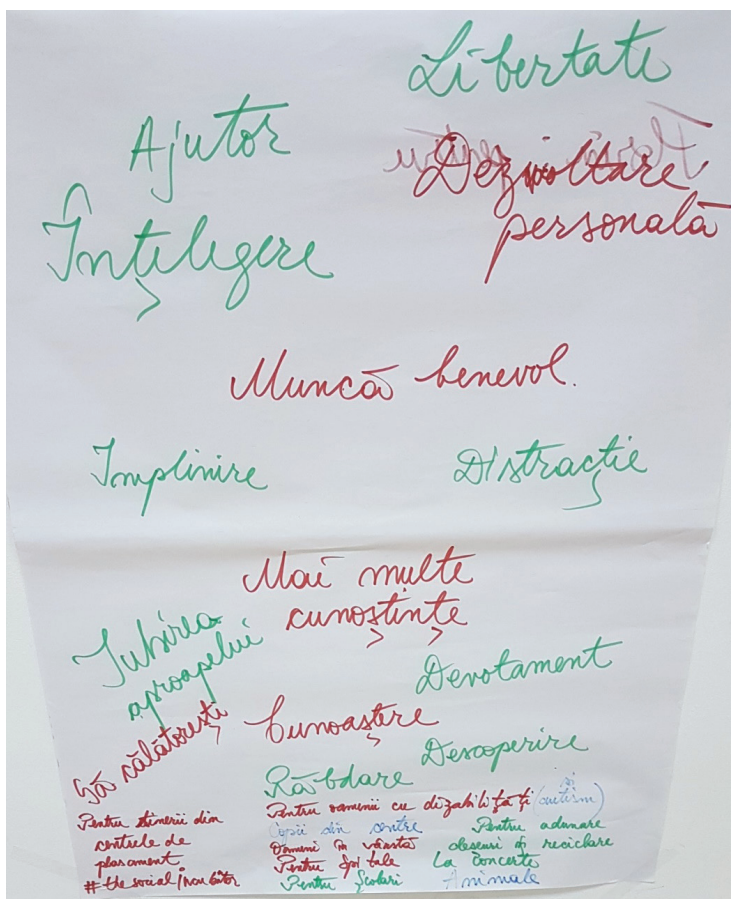
The first workshop allowed young participants to get to know each other in an interactive and fun manner, introduced them to the volunteering world and motivated them for further participation. In Romania more profound topics came out during the group discussions (the abandonment theme and the feelings associated with it), which created a trust environment, open to share emotions and thoughts. Young people showed their interest for intergenerational volunteering and enjoyed the proposed exercises.

The senior volunteers in all countries were open to new experiences, some of them knew each other from previous volunteering activities, and they participated with interest, in an active way, to the activities in the workshop. Even if in the Czech Republic some participants, due to their personal background, induced some negative feelings, these were contained by the group and did not interfere with the general positive atmosphere.

The intergenerational workshops were mostly enjoyed by all participants. The common aspect in all three countries was that at the beginning the 2 generations sat apart, and did not interact much, but in the end of workshops they sat together, exchanged phone numbers and made plans for future common activities in the volunteering field. All participants were totally engaged in the exercises, they shared opinions, reflections, information and emotions during workshops.

WHAT WORKED WELL

In general, role play and active games were the parts most enjoyed by participants, both young and older, and worked better than plain discussions. This allowed them to actively engage in activities in a holistic manner, identifying with the characters and with the situations, and also the use of a 'Community Wall' was an attractive and useful tool for creating a positive and cohesive group unity and gave the participants a good view of all inputs, while acting as acknowledgment of the work done so far. The presentation games such as 'Toilet Roll' were excellent for building familiarity among the participants and introducing dynamism in the workshops. Also, the "Breathing" exercise worked very well and helped participants understand what it means to offer and to receive help and the feelings associated with it. The pair games were also very useful in creating intergenerational connections. The inspirational letter that the young people received – the power of example was a touching and emotional part of the workshop, for both generations.



Also, participants enjoyed learning about volunteering opportunities which exist in their communities, giving them ideas for future activities in this field.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE PROGRAMME

The Training Handbook will be improved, following feedback received from the pilotings held in the three partner countries. For example, the connection between each workshop activity and topic could be made clearer and how chapters are interconnected will be explained further.

Some of the physical games could be also played seated by older participants, as some of them might have physical impairments or limitations. The 'Mingle' and 'Yes/No statements' could be grouped together. Also, the "Interview and advocacy" exercise can be slightly changed: for the first 2/3 couples, each persons should present the other one of the couple speaking in third person (he/she is...he/she did...), while for the other pairs, each person is asked to present the other in 1st persons (I am....I did...), as this is helping them to empathise with another person.

As the intergenerational workshop can be very long when a lot of participants are in the room, and this can be challenging both for young people and for older people – several pauses have to be ensured, and some activities can be shortened if the group is very large. For example, in the 'yes, but.../'no, but...' exercises, in one of the role plays the facilitators can exemplify by playing themselves, with the participants watching.

NATIONAL PILOTING REPORT

THE CZECH REPUBLIC

LOCATION AND TIMING

◀ **27th March** (*Youth aspire workshop*)

Dům dětí a mládeže hl. m. Prahy (Prague's Youth Center), Pod Juliskou 2a, Prague 6

◀ **16th April** (*Senior inspire workshop*)

Evropská rozvojová agentura HQ meeting room, Milady Horákové 119-106, Prague 6

◀ **18th April** (*Intergenerational workshop*)

Dům dětí a mládeže hl. m. Prahy (Prague's Youth Center), Pod Juliskou 2a, Prague 6

◀ **23rd April** (*Reflection workshop*)

Dům dětí a mládeže hl. m. Prahy (Prague's Youth Center), Pod Juliskou 2a, Prague 6

The times were set as follows, 10:00 am till approx. 12:00 pm, in all four cases. These times were chosen as the best fitting to all. Also, we did not want to opt for varying times so that the participants remember the times correctly and easily. There were disputes about whether morning or evening should be chosen with both options having certain advantages and disadvantages. In the end we chose the morning option for being more suitable with respect to participants' alertness and daily activity cycle.

The dates were set mostly with respect to mentors' working calendar, partially with participant's availability and partially with deadline. We tried to keep the dates soon after each other in order to have the ideas and thoughts fresh in the mind. It would not be beneficial to have to recap every topic at the beginning of every new session.

The places were chosen with respect to rent, size, transport and availability. Barbora Hrnecková who works at Dům dětí a mládeže hl.m. Prahy, arranged the room for the three workshops. The first one and the third, intergenerational one, were delivered in the theatre space, the last one was delivered in a dance hall. Both rooms were spacious. The second workshop was delivered in EUDA's headquarters due to a sudden change in room occupancy in DDM hl.m.Prahy. EUDA used its conference/meeting room, which was just enough for 15 seniors to fit in. We did not expect any problem given seniors' limited physical capacity.

PARTICIPANTS

YOUNG PEOPLE: On the whole, the young people were very interested in the topic of inter-generational exchange. Since the first workshop they were truly into meeting the seniors, curious about their stories, experiences and opinions. On the other hand, volunteering mostly was not the major point of interest to them. Although, they expressed a certain level of interest during common discussions, some had realised that they possibly had volunteered in the past, some realising as a result of the workshops, that volunteering was very beneficial to both society and the individual. The 16 young people were on average aged 21.5 years old. They were all students who participated in the workshops in order to enrich their knowledge and widen their horizons. They all had a general interest in volunteering and working with older adults. Their curiosity and positive mind-set was evident in the way they interacted, brainstormed and communicated. It was clear that they were enjoying “moments of realisation” during activities and they could interlink all that was said. We worked with young people from immigrant backgrounds (India, Slovakia, Russia), people from interracial marriages, people from multiple-children families, people with physical disabilities (dwarfism), people from single-parent families or people whose close family members had passed away. We believe that their interest in the workshops was partially boosted by their own social situation and they were maybe unintentionally seeking advice, support, friends or simply company. All the young people were truly enthusiastic and open to the workshop content.

SENIORS: Generally speaking, the 15 senior participants were active seniors who naturally divide their time among multiple activities on a regular basis. Given this fact, we can argue that their activity influenced the workshops on a large scale. Firstly, they were initially eager to share, listen and discuss with young people. They were supportive and understood their role to be not an older authority, but to help the younger generation to overcome whatever societal obstacles in their way. Therefore, the senior group interacted nicely, they welcomed the youth cordially and did not hesitate to speak about their lives with new people. Nevertheless, we had two troublesome seniors who may have had a negative influence on the whole group’s dynamics and behaviour. One of the participating ladies admitted that she felt lonely and wanted to find new friends. Her attitude was damaged by a recent tragic event she had been through and despite seeking help she often opposed the general idea of volunteering that people should help and support each other. Her theory was based on the conviction that each person is responsible solely for themselves and that nobody can help an individual, but the individual themselves. The other was an elderly gentleman, full of energy, who came to have fun. His presence was energizing on the one hand, but disrespectful to even older seniors who struggled to move fast or keep their speech short. Fortunately, the remaining participants, both young and senior, identified the difficulty these two individuals tried to bring in and gently made it clear that negativity would not be tolerated. The positive group mentality of the other participants calmed the negative attitudes of both senior participants.

GROUP DYNAMICS

W1 – At first the young people were reserved, but after the few games and introducing each other they realised the workshop was going to be playful and interactive, not just a presentation of our theories and they started to relax. They did not want to object to anybody’s opinion and agreed on every suggestion.

W2 – The seniors had difficulty remembering the names of the other participants, but were tolerant with each other. During the whole workshop there were opposing opinions and light disputes

over which attitude and opinion was right or wrong. This situation did not happen with the young people who were more tolerant.

W3 - The third workshop had the best atmosphere, with both generations genuinely looking forward to meeting each other and getting to know each other. The bonds appeared already during the first group activity/discussion, when the young and older participants had their first conversations. Many pairs found out their lives have had similar courses and thus wanted to remain in the same pairs during the whole workshop in order to speak more with each other. We saw an emergence of a couple of intergenerational friendships which became even clearer on the fourth workshop. For instance, there was young girl who once was a professional ballerina until she broke her shoulder. This girl paired up with a lady who also wanted to be a professional athlete (gymnast), but her health issues stopped her in a young age from becoming a famous sportswoman. Another pair found a connection in their foreign experience and immigrant/emigrant background.

W4 – The last workshop was a bit slow and the participants were tired, but the mood was good. Young and old participants greeted each other cordially. We wanted to give them enough space to talk as they previously expressed the desire to speak to each other much more, but it was clear after a while that some of the participants were already eager to continue activities from before. Therefore, we had to put a lot of effort into explaining the purpose of the final meeting and had to lead participants to conclusions. Despite this, there were some interesting thoughts on volunteering. After congratulating each other on the successful series of workshops most of the participants, both old and young, went out for lunch together, they exchanged contacts and promised to remain in touch. Some of the younger and older people already had common activities outside the workshop and they spoke about the options of others they could undertake.

ATMOSPHERE AND MOOD

W1 – The group was attentive, expectant and slightly nervous. The participants saw each other for the first time and did not know what to expect from the workshop. However, they were a cooperative group and quickly started to understand the concept of the workshop. At first, the START/STOP game relieved them, they started feeling more confident and started engaging in small talk. During the workshops, the group understood what was asked from them and began responding to our questions with openness and attention. Soon they formed small groups and engaged in a discussion.

W2 – The seniors started small talk instantly, without waiting for the official start of the workshop. There was a 15 minute delay due to administration which was widely criticized by Irina, who at first refused to sign the attendance sheet. We started the workshop without asking names, which confused the participants. They showed initiative when objected and asked for introducing. We explained that the introducing was part of a game we would play, this calmed them and since then on they trusted us. During the activities the seniors showed a more positive attitude than the youth; they were fast with ideas and suggestions. The difficulty we faced was caused by a lady who did not respect others' opinions when she did not agree. The rest of the group did not rise to the conflict, but rather calmly told her she had her right to think that way, but her opinion was only one-sided. The seniors were more sceptical to the roleplay saying that the young people are very ambitious and brave therefore, the sample situation with speaker's break down was unrealistic. The workshop finished in a positive mood, participants sang songs and cordially said goodbye looking forward to the third workshop.

W3 - At the beginning of this workshop the seniors and young sat separately and did not interact much. During the first group work they already found a lot of common topics and shortly after in-

roducing each other began to chat and discovered common hobbies. It was difficult to end their discussion as they all became very engaged and passionate about their commonalities. The majority of people said there was not enough time to speak about everything and that they found it very pleasant. We noticed that some of the participants already started planning to go out together for coffee, exhibitions or concerts. It was our great pleasure when we learned during the fourth workshop that the young and elderly already arranged meetings and some visited exhibitions of modern art together.

W4.– During the last workshop we could see that people were glad to see each other, they started talking to each other instantly and spoke about what has happened since the last meeting, what they saw, visited, planned, etc. Although, the last workshop was very tiring since we gave more space to group discussion. All of the seniors had a lot to say about volunteering, their experiences, etc. therefore, it took slightly longer than planned, but we saw that it was important for the seniors to share. After congratulating each other on the successful series of workshops most of the participants, both old and young, went out for lunch together, they exchanged contacts and promised to remain in touch. Some of young and old already had common activities outside the workshop and they spoke about other options.

WHAT WORKED WELL DURING THE 4 WORKSHOPS?

The dynamic in the group as a whole was a great plus in delivering the workshops. On the whole, all of the participants welcomed the interactivity and fast dynamics of the workshops. Reportedly they were concerned at first that the workshop would be much more of a presentation/lecture. The icebreaker games were highly effective as participants had a good laugh and relaxed a bit. Furthermore, we noticed that games, role plays and model situations worked better than plain brainstorming. Participants realised things way faster when being “part of the process” than calling out words. Also, some could not understand why others would think of certain words.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 4 WORKSHOPS? HOW COULD THIS BE DONE?

The connection between each workshop activity and topic could be made clear. We made sure that the whole concept of piloting workshops as well as the main message was understood, but we had to interconnect the chapters. A way to avoid this situation would be to reflect on the need to interconnect each section/chapter within the manual, and if the authors could provide few words on how the chapters are to be connected.

We also had concerns about the fourth workshop. It was apparently too much for the participants, the group discussion was too long for them, which negatively influenced the aforementioned behaviour of some of the seniors. Our suggestion is to either change the concept of the fourth workshop or to include the topic of volunteering in depth in the third session.

WHAT IS THE MOST RELEVANT FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM THE PARTICIPANTS, FOR EACH OF THE 4 WORKSHOPS?

Most of the participants approached us asking about further possibilities to meet with other generations, they expressed a willingness to meet on a regular basis.

Some important feedback was concerning the concept of the workshops; it was evaluated very positively and participants thanked us for organising such an event.

Some of the older participants, who take part in different workshops and courses, told us that the activities were not totally new to them and that they knew some of these techniques from before. On the other hand they admitted that the topic was new and interesting.

Last but not least we were told an interesting opinion. One of the young participants pointed out that it is very popular these days to volunteer abroad. Most of these volunteer options are in exotic developing countries, often related to animal help and similar kind of “nice and cute” experiences. This results in a relatively high number of young volunteers who misinterpret unselfish volunteering for exotic experience. The opinion was that these people are seeking nice photos with wildlife or orphan children, but mostly for their own feeling of self-development.

NATIONAL PILOTING REPORT

ITALY

LOCATION AND TIMING

1ST EDITION

◀ **Workshop with Young People** (*Aspire wks*):
6TH of March 2018, 7-9 p.m., Casa del Volontariato, Via B. Peruzzi, Carpi

◀ **Workshop with Elderly Volunteers** (*Inspire wks*):
12th of March 2018, 10-12 a.m., Anziani e non solo premises, Via Lenin 55, Carpi

◀ **Workshop with Young People and Elderly Volunteers** (*Intergenerational wks*):
22nd of March 2018, 7-9 p.m., Casa del Volontariato, Via B. Peruzzi, Carpi

◀ **Workshop with Young People and Elderly Volunteers** (*Move forward wks*):
22nd of March 2018, 9.30-10.30 p.m., Casa del Volontariato, Via B. Peruzzi, Carpi

PARTICIPANTS

YOUNG PEOPLE: 9 (*5 female and 4 male, between 18 and 21 years old*)

Among the expectations that led to their participation in the workshops, the most common one was an interest toward creative drama techniques. Some others expressed the expectation of relating to other people or be more informed on the topic of intergenerational volunteering.

Among their qualities, the most frequent adjectives used were curious, responsible and friendly. One participant described herself as shy, while others gluttons or winter-lovers.

The motivations to participate were different: "it's interesting", "it could be useful for my future", "it's personal development", "I want to discover new horizons", "I want to meet/converse with new people", "I want to talk about a topic that is new for me", "I want to try a new experience", "I want to overcome my shyness".

The disadvantaged family situations varied: from divorced/single parent family backgrounds to migrant family backgrounds. One girl had nonverbal dysfunction syndrome.

ELDERLY VOLUNTEERS: 10 (6 female and 4 male, between 62 and 77 years old)

Their expectations were different: “to transfer my experience”, “to interact with peers and younger people”, “to better cope with 3rd age problems and involve younger member of the family”, “I’m always willing to help others, this make me know and explore new things”, “to help people”.

They defined themselves as curious, willing to know new things, to communicate and interact, open, altruist, willing to help, sensitive, reliable, collaborative, fair, honest, optimistic, precise, active.

They feel that their capacities and knowledge could contribute to: examine the communication barriers among generations, find new communication channels and ways, renovate the way to do volunteering, work together, soften contrasts, accept differences, train new volunteers, improve the curiosity toward training new volunteers, create a good environment among volunteers of different age.

GROUP DYNAMICS

WKS_1 (*Aspire wks*): Young participants came in small groups from different areas of Carpi, so some of them already knew each other and some other not. During the workshop the group got closer, mainly thanks to the ice breaker games.

WKS_2 (*Inspire wks*): Elderly participants already knew each other as they all belong to the same association (the local branch of the National Association of Social Centres, Committees for Elderly and Vegetable Gardens). Their previous common experience in working together as volunteers has been an obstacle in some cases, as not all previous relationships were completely positive. Nevertheless, the group was open to share ideas, points of views and experiences.

WKS_3 and 4 (*Intergenerational and move forward*): young and elderly participants enjoyed the intergenerational workshops. They had fun together and enjoy the possibility of directly meeting each other. At the end of the workshops, some young and elderly people exchanged their mobile numbers.

ATMOSPHERE AND MOOD

Participants had fun and enjoyed spending time together and getting to know each other. All of them were active and involved.

WHAT WORKED WELL DURING THE WORKSHOPS

Participants enjoyed the warm up games and role plays in general.

WKS_1 (*Aspire wks*): they liked “active games” and the role play, but also the “Toilet Roll” and the “building up” of the community wall. The ball exercise on the openness/closeness was an important opportunity to introduce the topic of non-verbal communication, the importance of which young people often do not understand.

WKS_2 (*Inspire wks*): the idea of the community wall worked well.

WKS_3 (*Intergenerational wks*): the “interview and advocacy” exercise (a bit revised – see below), the “breathing” exercise, the “yes, no..and yes, but” exercises and the role play were very appreciated.

WKS_4 (*Move forward wks*): younger people enjoyed the description of some volunteering possibilities and what types of activities social centres in Carpi usually do.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 4 WORKSHOPS? HOW COULD THIS BE DONE?

WKS_1 (*Aspire wks*): younger persons would have appreciated more drama exercises.

WKS_2 (*Inspire wks*): we decided for changes in some “physical” activities, as we knew these participants would have difficulty appreciating them. For example, we substituted a warm up game: as elderly volunteers already know each other, we decided to “work” on some probably unknown aspects of their life: the origin of their name. This warm up game was very appreciated. Also the “Mingle game” was played seated.

As participants were experienced volunteers they found it a bit boring reflecting on volunteering (mingle + yes/no statement + work group with markers and sheets). It could be shortened.

WKS_3 (*intergenerational wks*): the “interview and advocacy” exercise has been slightly changed. When each member of the pair presents the other person to the larger group, we proposed a gradual change: for the first 2/3 couples, each person should present their partner speaking in third person (he/she is...he/she did...), while for the other pairs, each persons is asked to present the other in 1st persons (I am....I did...). This game of identification helped participants to get build up a closer relationship with the others by “stepping” into another person’s life and point of view. In general, it would be useful to pay more attention to prejudices and stereotypes as basic obstacles that strongly affect communication and relationship between different generations. A specific exercise on stereotypes and prejudices could be added (one in workshop_1 and a specular one in workshop_2) and a role play on a typical situation during the intergenerational one, where a pair (1 young and 1 old persons) interacts showing some critical ways of communication and reacting, while the other participants propose changes to solve the conflict.

WHAT IS THE MOST RELEVANT FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM THE PARTICIPANTS, FOR EACH OF THE 4 WORKSHOPS?

Participants expressed most appreciation for the intergenerational workshops: many of them were surprised that they had so much fun together and that they had so many things in common.

Older volunteers appreciated the opportunity to spend time and talk with younger people, overcoming the stereotypes and prejudice promoted by media.

Also young people appreciated the time spent with the elderly, some of them said that it have been useful for their self-development and to overcome prejudice on the older generation.

All of them enjoyed meeting people belonging to a different generation, spending time together.

Some of them would have appreciated more workshops to go on staying together.

2ND EDITION

As the first edition of the workshop didn't reach the numbers foreseen in the AF, ANS organized a second edition in another city. The second edition was shorter than the previous one as the 2 groups of participants were smaller, thus the implementation of the activities needed less time.

LOCATION AND TIMING

The group met in Bologna (Cassero premises, Via Don Minzoni 18) on the 4th of May, from 7pm to 11pm.

The Inspire and Aspire workshops were held simultaneously in two different rooms, for about one hour each (7-8 p.m.). After a short break, the activities restarted with the Intergenerational workshop (8.30-10.30 p.m.), which lasted 2 hours. The last workshop was the closing part of the meeting, for about half an hour (10.30-11.00 p.m.).

PARTICIPANTS

YOUNG PEOPLE: 6 (3 female and 3 male, between 22 and 25 years old)

Among the expectations to participate in the workshops, the more common one was the interest in the techniques that could improve the intergenerational relationships. Some others expressed the expectation of gaining experience on the topic of volunteering or of interacting and communicating with people of different age (but also with peers).

Among their qualities, the adjectives used were: open, curious, pragmatic, European, "with imagination" and LGBT+.

The motivations to participate were different: "I intend to improve my skills on the topic", "to learn about intergenerational relationships", "I'm curious and open to new experiences", "to enlighten my knowledge", "to enrich my relational skills".

Their disadvantaged family situation varies: from divorced/single parent family to physical disability to migrant background.

ELDERLY VOLUNTEERS: 5 (3 female and 2 male, between 64 and 72 years old)

The expectations were different: to learn new strategies for volunteering, interests toward relationships and solidarity, to improve capacities in volunteering activities

They defined themselves as joyful, determined, free, emotional, generous, loyal, supportive.

AUDITORS: 3 (female; 57, 35 and 31 years old) participated to the workshops as auditors.

GROUP DYNAMICS

Participants had fun together and enjoyed the possibility of directly meeting each other.

As the hosting association (Cassero) is active in the LGBT field, some of the participants, of both generations, were LGBT. This offered the possibility for participants to listen to very different points of views and life experiences, supporting them to develop a deeper capacity of dialogue and relationship.

ATMOSPHERE AND MOOD

The atmosphere was friendly and relaxed. Participants were active, involved and willing to engage in dialogue.

WHAT WORKED WELL DURING THE WORKSHOPS

Participants mostly enjoyed the role plays.

More in detail, very similarly to the previous edition:

WKS_1 (*Aspire wks*): they liked “active games” and the role play, but also the “Toilet roll” and the “building up” of the community wall. The ball exercise on the openness/closeness was an important occasion to introduce the topic of non-verbal communication that young person often do not know its importance and effects.

WKS_2 (*Inspire wks*): the idea of the community wall worked well.

WKS_3 (*Intergenerational wks*): the “interview and advocacy” exercise (a bit revised, as in previous edition), the “breathing” exercise, the role play were very appreciated.

WKS_4 (*Move forward wks*): younger people enjoyed the description of some volunteering possibilities and what types of activities the Cassero Association usually do.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 4 WORKSHOPS? HOW COULD THIS BE DONE?

See the report of the 1st edition.

WHAT IS THE MOST RELEVANT FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM THE PARTICIPANTS, FOR EACH OF THE 4 WORKSHOPS?

The second edition also received good feedback. Participants expressed most appreciation for the intergenerational workshop and the opportunity to share time and talk with persons from different generations, overcoming stereotypes and prejudices.

Some participants defined the activities as very educational, while others expressed the desire for a longer intergenerational workshop.

NATIONAL PILOTING REPORT

ROMANIA

LOCATION AND TIMING

All workshops were organized in Bucharest and delivered by Asociatia Habilitas Centru de Resurse si Formare Profesionala.

◀ **Workshop with Young People (the Aspire workshop):** Two workshops were held, one on the March 2018, in the meeting room offered by DGASPC sector 1 for the purpose of the CREATYV workshops (Bd. Maresal Averescu 17, sector 1) and one with four participants in the Seniors' Club of DGASPC sector 4 (Str. Covasna 3 bis, sector 4).

◀ **Workshop with Senior Volunteers (the Inspire workshop):** Two workshops were held, one on the March 2018, in the meeting room offered by DGASPC sector 1 (Bd. Maresal Averescu 17, sector 1) for the purpose of the CREATYV workshops, and the other one in the Seniors' Club of DGASPC sector 4 (Str. Covasna 3 bis, sector 4).

◀ **Workshop with Young People and Senior Volunteers (the Intergenerational workshop):** Two intergenerational workshops were organised, one in the meeting room offered by DGASPC sector 1 (Bd. Maresal Averescu 17, sector 1) for the purpose of the CREATYV workshops, and the other one in the Seniors' Club of DGASPC sector 4 (Str. Covasna 3 bis, sector 4).

◀ **Workshop with Young People and Senior Volunteers (the Move Forward workshop):** Two workshops were organised, one, in the meeting room offered by DGASPC sector 1 (Bd. Maresal Averescu 17, sector 1) for the purpose of the CREATYV workshops, and the other one in the Seniors' Club of DGASPC sector 4 (Str. Covasna 3 bis, sector 4).

PARTICIPANTS

YOUNG PEOPLE: Fifteen for the first piloting and three for the second piloting, aged between 18 and 23 years old.

All young people were in disadvantaged situations and were recruited in collaboration with social services from Bucharest: DGASPC sector 1, DGASPC sector 5, DGASPC sector 6, DGASPC sector 4. They are under the protection of social services, in different situations: institutionalised in residential

centres, foster care, social apartments, and one of them has left the social protection system, and has no permanent job or house.

The motivations to participate in the workshops were mostly linked to personal development, learning about volunteering, understanding what volunteering is and what a volunteer does, learning to help other people, acquiring new experiences. Other reasons for participating in the training program were to communicate, socialise with older people, get more knowledge from people who have life experience, meeting new people, learning new information for the future, to contribute to the wellbeing of society through the techniques and methods learned during the workshops, to participate in an European project, to be more responsible, to have more patience, to better understand themselves, to trust themselves more, to get out of their comfort zone.

They described themselves as being loyal, determined, curious, open to new things, enthusiastic, involved, dedicated to learning, serious, responsible, attentive, friendly, optimistic, proud, correct, difficult, kind, direct, energetic.

Their expectations regarding the programme were to put in practice their qualities, to learn more about volunteering, to develop skills useful for getting a good job in the future, to become more courageous in their relationships with other people, to help them succeed in life and to fulfil their dreams.

SENIOR VOLUNTEERS: *Sixteen for the first piloting and seven for the second piloting, between 60 and 78 years old.*

They are motivated to participate in the workshops by the desire of sharing with young people their life experiences, helping young people, sharing with them the principles of volunteering, to guide the youths in volunteering activities and encouraging them to be more sensitive towards the needs of other people.

They believe they are characterised by traits such as kind, gentle, positive, generous, empathic, calm, serious, perseverant, correct, and communicative.

Their expectations for participating to the workshops were different: “to transfer my experience”, “to interact with peers and younger people”, “to better cope with 3rd age problems and involve younger members of the family”, “I’m always willing to help others, this helps me know and explore new things”, “to help people”.

GROUP DYNAMICS

WORKSHOP WITH YOUNG PEOPLE (*the Aspire workshop*): This workshop created group cohesion and allowed participants to know each other better and to start working together as a team. Due to the main themes on which this workshop was structured (including obstacles in life, ways of overcoming it and supports that we have in life), the workshop (in the first piloting) had a psychological impact on young participants, as it was congruent with their life experiences and the difficulties that they had. The abandonment theme came out during the group discussion (as all of them experienced this event in their lives), which was accompanied by expressing emotions of anger (towards their parents) of one participant. The discussion was then lead to other supports in life that they had and might have, to the idea that no matter how difficult it is in life, we can overcome all obstacles and achieve our goals, without surrendering. These confessions showed that in the group was a mutual confidence and nurturing atmosphere that allowed participants to show their vulnerabilities and to share their most intimate feelings. In the second piloting the group dynamics was an interactive and relaxed one, young people showing their motivation and openness

of working together and experiencing new exercises.

WORKSHOP WITH SENIOR VOLUNTEERS (*the Inspire workshop*): The senior volunteers in both pilotings knew each other from their volunteering activities and from attending the same facilities (seniors' clubs in communities, other NGOs). The dynamics were appropriate for new experiences, they collaborated in teams and were open.

WORKSHOP WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND SENIOR VOLUNTEERS (*the Intergenerational workshop*) and *workshop with Young People and Elderly Volunteers (the Move Forward workshop)*: The intergenerational workshops were a great source of fun and a discovery process for both generations. At the beginning, when they met, they were more reluctant in interaction, and we noticed that the two generations were sitting separately, not mixing one with another. But at the end of workshop three, after working in intergenerational pairs and in mixed groups, the two generations were sitting together, talking, and exchanging mobile numbers for future communication. These workshops allowed them to get out of their usual interaction zone and to enter a new territory, that of the other generation. During Workshop 4, in the first piloting we invited several NGOs to present their volunteering opportunities: The Social Incubator Association, Arhidiacon Sf. Stefan Association, the Group of Education and Action for Citizenship and the International Foundation "Ana Aslan" presented their work, projects, programs, for youth and older people, and how volunteers can help and be involved. For the second piloting, the Group of Education and Action for Citizenship presented its activity and volunteering options.

ATMOSPHERE AND MOOD

The atmosphere was energetic, fun, dynamic, and full of laughter, the mood of participants was very positive; they were all active and involved in the activities. They enjoyed being together, sharing moments, reflections and emotions.

WHAT WORKED WELL DURING THE WORKSHOPS

Participants enjoyed all the games, in particular the warm up games, the role plays, the group exercises and the work in intergenerational pairs.

WORKSHOP WITH YOUNG PEOPLE (*the Aspire workshop*): Young people liked the warm up games, the 'Toilet Roll' game when they presented themselves. The active games worked very well also, such as the Obstacle Relay, the Obstacle Wall, and the role play. Participants were fully engaged in the activities, very attentive, involved, they wanted to give their best in this workshop and to their contribution to be acknowledged – for this purpose, the Community Wall was an innovative idea for gathering all inputs of participants.

WORKSHOP WITH SENIOR VOLUNTEERS (*the Inspire workshop*): The 'Mingle' exercise worked very well, older people enjoyed having physical activity, and even persons with limited mobility participated in the active games. The group work was also attractive for older people, as they discovered more opportunities for volunteering. The role play also worked very well, and this allowed older persons to experience being young people and trying to feel and think as the young do. At first, they considered the distant attitude of the young person to be a sign of superiority and rejection, but as the role play advanced, they realized that a young people might feel also other emotions – fear, not trusting themselves, overwhelmed. This changed their perspective on the

young generation.

WORKSHOP WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND SENIOR VOLUNTEERS (*the Intergenerational workshop*): The most powerful tool of this workshop was the role play, accompanied by the inspirational letter that the young people received – the power of example was a touching and emotional part of the workshop, for both generations. Also, the “Breathing” exercise was played with much interest by participants, and they all wanted to be in the middle – understanding in an experiential manner how it feels to need help to survive, to depend on others, to be offered help and to offer help to other people. The pair games allowed participants to build up personal intergenerational connections and to share experiences. Each pair should present its work and each other, as this need of communicating about themselves as connected in an intergenerational way. Even if this workshop was long (4 hours and a half for the first piloting, as there were many participants), young and older people did not get bored and fully participated until the end.

WORKSHOP WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND ELDERLY VOLUNTEERS (*the Move Forward workshop*): All participants enjoyed learning about volunteering opportunities which exist in community and where they could participate in. The Group Sculpture exercise was also a moment of inspiration and fun, showing the group cohesion. When certificates of participation were offered and congratulations were delivered, all young participants expressed loudly their joy and congratulated all the other participants.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 4 WORKSHOPS? HOW COULD THIS BE DONE?

The workshops functioned very well, participants were enthusiastic and really enjoyed it. The link between exercises has to be improved and better explained for trainers who would like to implement the CREA.T.Y.V. training program.

WORKSHOP WITH YOUNG PEOPLE (*the Aspire workshop*): Young people expressed the desire to have more exercises in order to improve their communication and their way of expressing themselves in front of other people.

WORKSHOP WITH SENIOR VOLUNTEERS (*the Inspire workshop*): During this workshop, we changed the ‘Mingle’ and ‘Yes/No statements’, in the way that exercises were grouped together – senior volunteers analysed all statements, one after the other, rather than separately. This change gave more consistency to the exercise and a good flow of the activity.

Workshop with Young People and Senior Volunteers (*the Intergenerational workshop*): This workshop was very long in our experience: as there were many participants (more than 30), the workshop’s duration was 4 and half hours, with only one small pause. This can be challenging both for young people and for older people – several pauses have to be ensured, and some activities can be shortened if the group is very large. For example, in the ‘yes, but...!’/‘no, but...!’ exercises, in one of the role plays the facilitators can exemplify by playing themselves, and participants are just watching the scene.

WORKSHOP WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND ELDERLY VOLUNTEERS (*the Move Forward workshop*): This workshop functioned very well, and it brought new experiences and knowledge about volunteering to participants.

THE MOST RELEVANT FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM THE WORKSHOPS' PARTICIPANTS

Participants enjoyed very much the time spent together, in an intergenerational connection. The two generations are now more open towards one another and have different views. Feedback from the young people was that they have changed their opinion about older people, and now see them as active persons. They were impressed by the activities that the seniors do in their volunteering work. Both young people and senior volunteers discovered now that, despite the age difference, there are common points between the two generations. They were all surprised by how well they connected and at the end they exchanged phone numbers, in order to maintain contact after the program ends. They all said they learned new things: they learned about the structure of NGOs which are working with volunteers, what 'volunteer' means, what it means to offer your free time to persons that you do not know, how to become useful in different situations, how to work in a team, to communicate, how volunteering helps people without expecting a reward, how volunteering helps us for self-development and for professional development, how to express themselves freely, how to listen to each person's story in order to offer help, they learned when to speak and when to listen. Also, the young people affirmed that they learned from the life experience of the seniors, and how to overcome difficult moments to continue in the achievement of your objectives.

For the future, they would like to participate in more collaborative opportunities between seniors and young people, seniors to support youth with attractive ideas and solutions in the volunteering work, more involvement in volunteering activities, they want to attract more volunteers.

The young people appreciated the creativity and innovative nature of the workshops, communication; they liked the games and the power of working in a team.

The older volunteers appreciated the methods used in the training, the trainers' activity, the creative aspect of workshops, communication and interactivity of the exercises.

Some opinions were that these kinds of training workshops between generations should be organised more often, and the program extended.

CONCLUSIONS

The CREA.T.Y.V. intergenerational training programme implementation was very successful in all three piloting countries: the Czech Republic, Italy and Romania. The feedback from both young people and senior volunteers was very positive, and there were solicitations to repeat the programme and also to extend it. The programme has certainly contributed to reach its goal of raising social inclusion, building up civic attitude and the skills of young people with fewer opportunities, having as models/mentors older people who can act as a source of inspiration for them. Creative drama as a training tool proved to be a powerful way to connect participants and to engage them in activities, to change attitudes and perceptions and to create new relationships based on trust and confidence.

The CREA.T.Y.V. training program has successfully brought together two generations and broken down social stereotypes and negative perceptions that older and younger people held about each other. It offers a safe and fun space for sharing life experiences, emotions, knowledge, in discovering the field of volunteering, where concepts such as altruism, help, support and love are primordial. Through an experiential process, the participants came to the realisation that different generations have stronger common points rather than differentiating aspects, that communication is the key for collaboration and that stronger communities can be built up in a common effort.

Intergenerational learning programs are a way for overcoming division between generations and for finding a common and solid background for discovery, progress and active citizenship.

