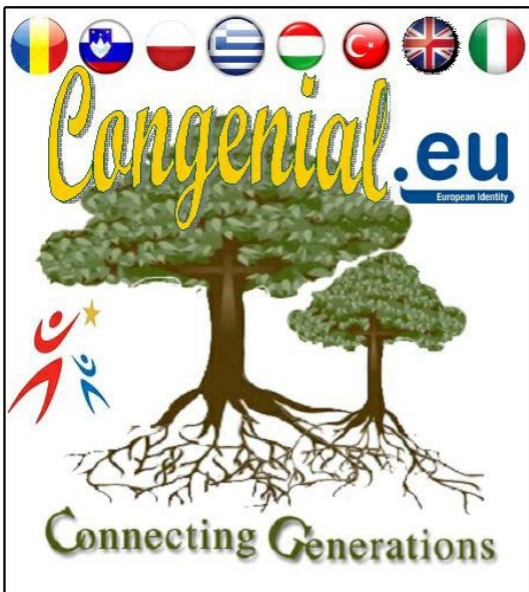


# Congenial Project

eight nations in connecting generations program



LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAM GRUNDTVIG PARTNERSHIP

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# **Congenial Project**

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European Identity



Connecting Generations

**LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAM**

## **GRUNDTVIG PARTNERSHIP**

This learning partnership is the result of a collective collaborative work started in Villasimus, Italy, during a contact seminar organised by the Italian LLP Agency, and that continued at distance in the period November/February, enlarging to other three partners (Romania, Slovenia, and a second Italian Association). Each of the 9 partners wishes to further develop this recently created partnership, built on common interests and visions and translate it into practices in order to develop strategies for lifelong learning and mobility and co-construction of knowledge and lessons learnt consistent

with the Grundtvig priority of intergenerational learning and learning for senior citizens.

We are concerned that, while demographic transformation in our society is already a fact, our adult education organisations still lag behind in offering innovative paths for learning that can contribute to create better understanding among generations and bring forward CONGENIAL ways of living together. We consider that ICTs are a main challenge to face: elder people can greatly benefit from becoming more familiar with social networks and technology, acquiring a codified language to interact with young people. On the other hand, young people,

through interaction with elders based on respect and active listening, will open their view and minds to non-technological aspects of our life, like art crafts, reading and narrative circles under a living value perspective.

We share two objectives:

- a) To strengthen European learning networks, that are contributing to the consolidation of Europe as a knowledge society and as a peaceful and socially cohesive region;
- b) To raise awareness and find appropriate, concrete and measurable answers to the ongoing challenges of active ageing.



## **Motivations for this project**

Global changes and their local consequences, digitalisation of our daily life and demographic ageing are transforming the relationships among

generations and the way Europe, as well as local communities in member states, function. Never before has humanity witnessed such rapid changes in less than a century: grandparents, parents and young people/children are at risk of speaking different languages, using distant symbolic codification and living different lives whatsoever. The future is uncertain, it has always been, but today our present is becoming an inextricable puzzle of diversity and distances. As EU citizens, and as human beings in a globalised world, we need to take immediate and informed action to avoid inequality of opportunities, and any kind of division, that hinder the right of each person to grasp the best, and not the



worst, out of post-modernisation and globalisation.

Rather than focusing on the negative side of ongoing transformation, which surely brings along new challenges and coincides with a deep economical, and value, crisis, our changing reality should be looked at as an opportunity to invert the path and enhance human development for all. Human development, according to UNDP, is “about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accordance with their needs and interests.” In order to create such an environment we need to work to abate inequalities and consequent discrimination, be it

because of cultural, national background, age, sex or any other human characteristic. Our society has to urgently bring about solutions to many current economic and social challenges that cannot be faced with traditional, out of date, methods. Civil society, as we are, can greatly contribute to identify and value ongoing experimentation of new ways of living together, as well as producing brand new ones.

Education and training for lifelong learning (LLL) seem to us to be among the most appropriate path toward building such a renovated society.

Lifelong learning as the continuous building of skills and knowledge throughout the life of an individual is key

to impact not only on the individual as such, but especially the ways he/she lives with and interacts with others within a society built on solidarity and respect.

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, the adjective “congenial” means a) having the same nature, disposition, or tastes, b) existing or associated together harmoniously and c) PLEASANT especially agreeably suited to one's nature or tastes. Our partnership, as a result of a contact meeting organised by the Italian National Agency last October 2011 in Villasimius, Italy, was congenial! We committed to cooperate inward as well, and especially outward, with organisations

and authorities at the national level, to ensure a sound basis for identifying, valuing and modeling ideas and activities and opening up channels for dissemination for further projects, both with local and possibly international funding. We consider this learning partnership as a collective learning circle, based on reciprocity, horizontality and limitless creativity that at the end of the two years process will have produced knowledge, friendship, understanding and respect of the richness of diversity, and therefore a better Europe.

Finally we have decided to create a broad definition of active ageing and intergenerational solidarity and an ample

space for experimentation, according to each country characteristics and partner's experience and aspirations. In fact, according to the European Commission, and the Euro barometer, solidarity and the creation of links between younger and older generations should not be seen in strict financial terms, with negative effects on pensions and social costs. The Commission recommends placing equal importance on the promotion of mutual cooperation and interchanging between the generations, as well as better understanding of new forms of co-existence. Co-existence, co-construction of knowledge, living and feeling together are the priorities of our learning

partnership.



## Goal

To create in our local communities an enhancing environment conducive to intergenerational communication and mutual understanding that will lead to a better quality of life for all, through non formal and informal adult education activities carried out by the partner organisations

To produce and transfer knowledge, methods and good practice for senior citizen education and intergenerational learning through mobilities and a shared on line platform at European level which

also includes Turkey.

## **Specific objective**

To develop innovative methods to foster communication and create learning opportunities between older and younger generations based on exchanging good practices of the participants organisations.

