

# Intergenerational learning: An effective strategy for work-based learning in CVET

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# Introduction

- Work-based learning (WBL) is becoming increasingly important to enterprises because of decreased training budgets as well as the realization that effective CVET is embedded in the workplace itself
- CVET is important for all age groups including those entering (limited experience) or leaving the market (knowledge loss)

# Introduction

- Forecasts point to huge gaps in employment because of the looming baby-boomer retirements and a lack of younger employees to replace older ones (European Commission, 2010).
- Knowledge-intensive organizations, rely on human capital for sustained competitive advantage (Coleman, 1988) through CVET

# Early leaving from education is decreasing

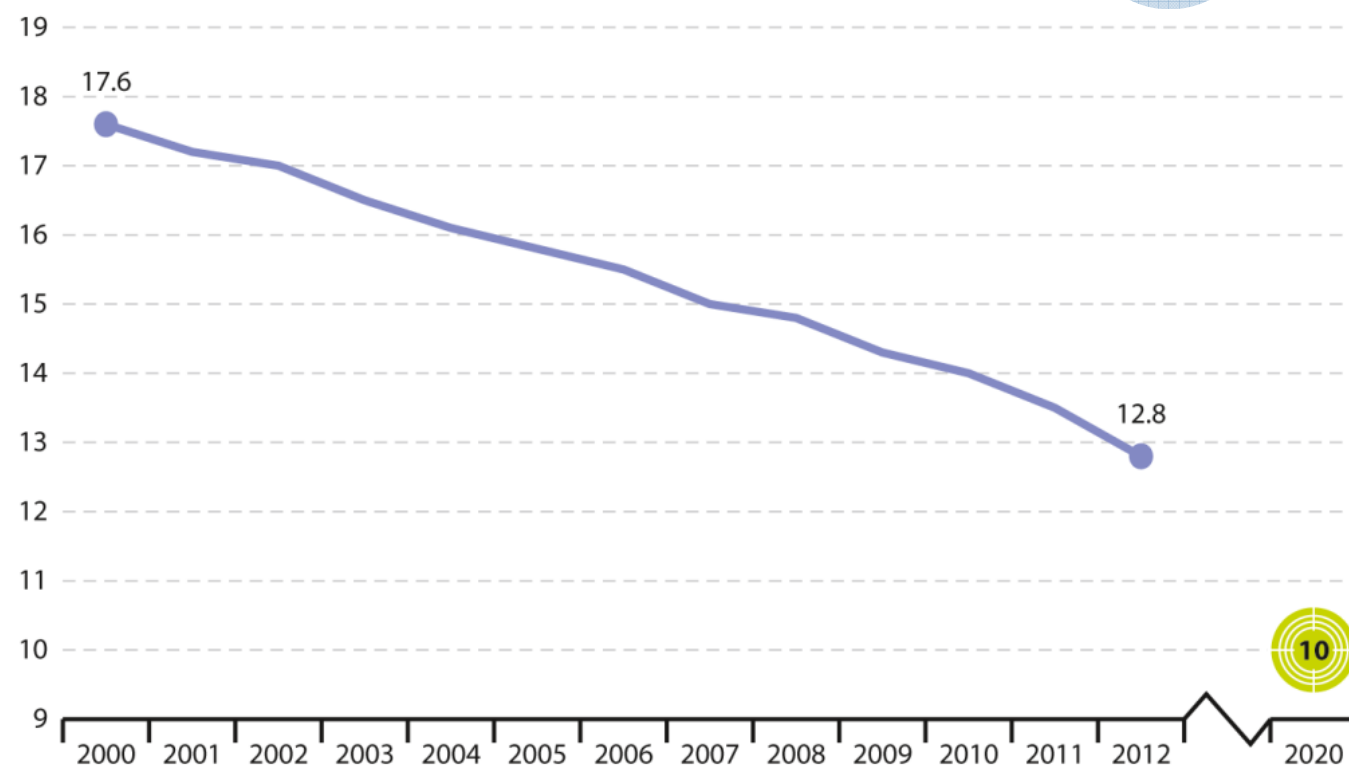


Figure 2: Early leavers from education and training, EU-27, 2000–2012  
(% of population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training)  
Source: Eurostat online data code ([t2020\\_40](#)) (\*) Data for 2000 and 2001 are estimates; break in series in 2003; provisional data for 2012; Europe 2020 target: under 10 %.



# Public Expenditure for CVET

- Discrepancies in the expenditure for CVET depending on countries' general educational attainment level, percentage of qualified people and employees' attitudes towards lifelong learning (e.g., in Greece the public expenditure dropped from 2007 to 2009 over 20%)

*Source: Cedefop's calculation, based on Eurostat, labour market policy database.*



# Participation in CVET

- Low participation in training and development is problematic for any organization that relies heavily on human capital as means of production, because training and development of workers has a direct influence on sustained competitive advantage (Wright et al., 1994).
- According to some reports, 40 percent of employees between the ages of 25-34 in European work organizations took part in some form of education and training, while for the 55-64 year age group, considered here to be “older workers”, participation was less than 12% (EQUAL, 2007; European Commission, 2007).



# Why low participation of older workers?

- Often unwilling to invest in themselves (close to retirement)
- Poorly designed training
- Lack of initiatives
- Failure to motivate them
- Negative stereotypes against older workers





# Intergenerational Learning

- Intergenerational learning is an interactive process that takes place between different generations resulting in the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and values (Ropes, 2013)
- Intergenerational learning in organizations posits that learning is beneficial to both the individual and the organization (Ropes, 2013)





# Silver Project

Developed a Toolkit to implement intergenerational learning interventions for organizations.

The toolkit was tested in 47 organizations in 6 countries in 4 different business sectors (Health Care, Education, ICT, SME's)

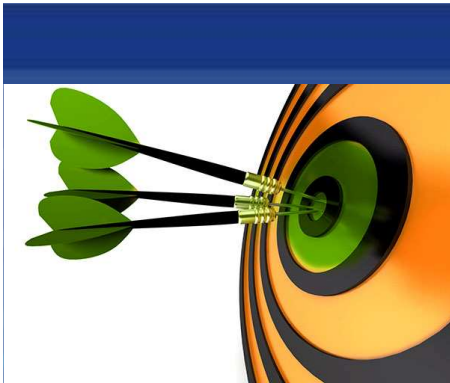
**Website:** [www.intergenerationallearning.eu](http://www.intergenerationallearning.eu)



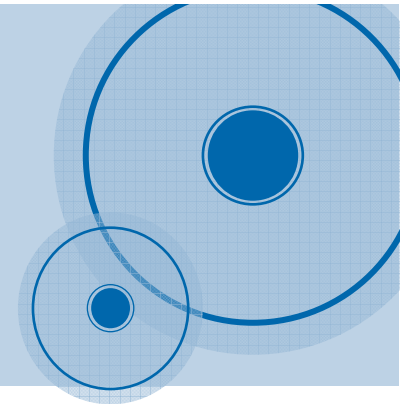
OULU UNIVERSITY OF  
APPLIED SCIENCES



Cedefop: "Designing, implementing and supporting effective work-based learning"  
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# Purpose



The toolkit was designed to:

- Increase older workers' employability and CVET, including learning to learn, learning to innovate and learning to build knowledge collaboratively with different generations.
- Contribute to younger workers' CVET
- Help increase innovation in organizations.
- Assure critical organizational knowledge retention and reuse.
- Provide a way for cost-effective CVET to older and younger employees

# Designing the toolkit

- Desk-research
- Interviews
  - 19 interviews were held in organizations located in Finland, Greece, Romania and The Netherlands
  - HR professionals, HR trainers, consultants and managers dealing with an age-diverse workforce



# IGL interventions

- From the desk research and interviews we discovered five distinct categories of programs for intergenerational learning;
- mentoring,
- mixed-age teams
- workshops/trainings
- mixed-management
- job-rotation programs



# Results

PROGRAM	TYPICAL PROBLEMS ADDRESSED	TYPICAL OUTCOMES	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS
<b>Mentoring (24 examples)</b>	Knowledge loss Ageing workforce Experts leaving	Knowledge/skill transfer and building New employee learning/ training/support Employability	Awareness of problem Management support Mentor training Participant selection
<b>Mixed-age teams (14 examples)</b>	Demographic change Customer needs Knowledge loss	Knowledge/skill transfer and building Managing age-diversity Establishing a more heterogeneous workforce structure Innovation	Awareness of problem Management support Process facilitation
<b>Training/workshops (11 examples)</b>	Age diversity Manage demographic change	Knowledge transfer Improved social capital Keep older workers in service	Awareness of problem Standard quality measures

# The toolkit

- **The Stakeholder Awareness Program (StAP)**
- **DIGL or 'Doing IGL ' Tools**
- **GIGL, Develop a web-based game for practicing IGL**



# Pilots

- Pilots were run in ICT (Finland), Higher Education (Romania), Health Care (Greece), Industry (UK), Knowledge Intensive Sector (Germany) and Public Service (The Netherlands). In total the DIGL, or parts thereof, was tested in 24 organizations.
- Due to reasons of privacy, the organizations cannot be listed here.



# DIGL tool

Type of IGL	Problem it helps solve	Investment needed
<b>Intergenerational and reverse mentoring</b>	Prevent knowledge and competence loss; stimulate knowledge creation and innovation.	Moderate to high
<b>Intergenerational teams</b>	Prevent knowledge and competence loss; stimulate knowledge creation and innovation.	Moderate to high
<b>Intergenerational Knowledge Capturing</b>	Prevent knowledge loss	Low
<b>Trainings and Workshops</b>	Prevent knowledge and competence loss; stimulate knowledge creation and innovation.	Low

Intervention	Success factors	Barriers
<b>Intergenerational mentoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Older people enjoy teaching younger people</li> <li>•Younger people gain valuable skills</li> <li>•Financial rewards for mentors increases motivation</li> <li>•Useful for managerial/organizational skills</li> <li>•Open corporate culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Time-consuming</li> <li>•Requires resources</li> <li>•Requires support for mentors</li> </ul>
<b>Intergenerational Trainings and Workshops</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Reduces mobility</li> <li>•Flexible for trainer</li> <li>•Adaptive to specific needs of the organization</li> <li>•Best used in medium sized groups (8-10 people)</li> <li>•Raise awareness</li> <li>•Elevates negative stereotypes</li> <li>•A good facilitator is a key to the success of the tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Requires qualified trainers</li> <li>•Time pressure is always an important barrier</li> </ul>
<b>Game-based learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Fun and enjoyable</li> <li>•Short duration (10-15 minutes)</li> <li>•Good at raising awareness</li> <li>•Experiential learning (role playing)</li> <li>•Open corporate culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Technical issues</li> <li>•Requires web-connection</li> </ul>

# Discussion

- Learning to learn (Meta-competences)
- Vocational competences are related to the ability to perform a task while meta-competences are higher-level cognitive processes such as critical reflection, creative thinking and adapting to change in the work organization
- Older workers exhibit an inability to change along with the organization
- IGL programs should be designed for helping older workers increase their capacities to change and develop



# Discussion

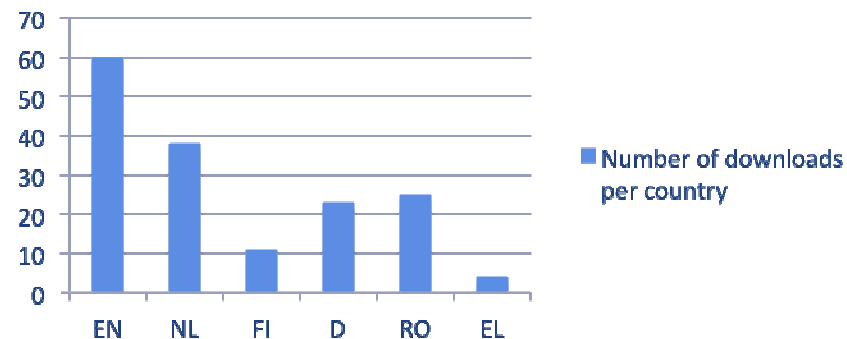
- IGL should be seen as a specific type of social learning between and among generations that takes place in the natural activity system of the workplace, where employees participate regularly in organizational group activities such as team meetings, formal and informal discussions, etc.
- Often formal training is demotivating for older workers, as it does not consider their specific learning styles or motivations for learning.
- An important mechanism behind IGL is social capital, which is also product of social interaction between generations and decreases knowledge exchange barriers such as negative stereotypes.

# Impact Analysis of SILVER

	Entire Toolkit	GIGL	IGL game design report	STAP design	Stakeholder intervention inventory	Report on testing	Johari window	Generic evaluation forms	Game test protocols
Total	161	46	108	258	67	69	945	297	28

Country	Entire Toolkit
EN	60
NL	38
FI	11
D	23
RO	25
EL	4
Total	161

**Number of downloads per country**





# Final Comments

- Handbook for trainers (essential for supporting the supporters)
- We found no sectorial or cultural differences in the pilot (the tool is very much applicable to any business sector/country)
- The tool has been tested in organizations that varied in size (50 workers-2000 workers)
- The tool can be used in subgroups within an organization
- The tool was co-created with companies to reduce the gap between research and practice
- The tool is very flexible, it has been used by each trainer differently depending on the needs of the organization.



**Thank you for your attention!**  
**Questions/Comments**

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