



European Map of Intergenerational Learning

Concept paper: Intergenerational Learning and Lifelong Learning

EMIL supports lifelong learning through Intergenerational learning. Therefore, it is relevant to explain the connection between intergenerational learning and lifelong learning. This concept paper intends to do so.

Lifelong learning consists of different forms of learning. That is learning in **formal** settings as in schools (from preschool to university) where students learn what is decided in a curriculum and students are graded and where they are awarded a certification after examinations. There is also **nonformal** learning where participants take courses that are particularly relevant for their work. This may be either part time studies at the same time as they are working or full time studies during a certain period of time after which they go back to their former workplace or to a new job. Nonformal learning mostly includes a curriculum and some form of certification. The third part of lifelong learning is called **informal** learning. This includes everything that people learn from each other – that is values and attitudes as well as knowledge and skills. (Tuijnman, Boström, 2002)

Learning takes place from the moment a child is born and continues throughout his/her life until death. During every individual's lifetime, there will be moments of formal, nonformal and informal learning taking place. Sometimes there is a mixture of these entities. Especially during times of formal learning, the informal part of values and attitudes will be present in the specific context as showed by the peers/colleagues and teachers/tutors and will also be included in the total learning as experienced by the individual.

Intergenerational Learning (IL) is defined by EMIL as:

“The way that people of all ages can learn together and from each other. IL is an important part of Lifelong Learning, where the generations work together to gain skills, values and knowledge. Beyond the transfer of knowledge, IL fosters reciprocal learning relationships between different generations and helps to develop social capital and social cohesion in our ageing societies. IL is one way of addressing the significant demographic change we are experiencing across Europe and is as a way of enhancing intergenerational solidarity through intergenerational practice (IP).”

Considering this definition of intergenerational learning, it is evident that when young and old people meet and share their experiences, work together, help each other or in any way act together there will always be learning taking place. Mostly this will be informal learning when values and attitudes are involved. There can also be nonformal or informal learning when different generations meet at the workplace and share skills and knowledge. They will always be influenced by each others attitudes and values at the same time.

Intergenerational Learning as a part of Lifelong learning

Therefore, **Intergenerational Learning** is a part of **Lifelong Learning**. When people from different generations learn together or from each other either in the form of formal learning, in nonformal learning or in informal learning there will be an interactive exchange of knowledge and skills as well as of attitudes and values (Boström, 2003).

EMIL aspires to become a hub for connecting **Intergenerational Learning** from different countries to share our experiences of how generations are involved in learning processes. This means that EMIL supports **Lifelong Learning**.

References:

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- Tuijnman, A., and Boström, A-K. (2002). Changing notions of lifelong education and lifelong learning. *International Review of Education*, 48(1/2): 93-110.