UNITED GENERATIONS

Nationale Agentur beim Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung

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Mapping IntergenerationalLearning focused on Basic Skills - Cyprus

Developed By:

Emphasys CENTRE

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1. Introduction

Ageing is a global phenomenon. The world population ageing is causing changes in the society as whole. Senior citizens represent an important and ever-growing part of our European population, economy, and society. This poses manifold questions as to how member states can best ensure social inclusion, active citizenship and participation in life, economy and the society, access to services, goods, and opportunities in order to enable healthy well-ell-being and independent living thus minimizing the cost on their families, the society and the economy in general.

The United Generation project aims to open up digitally oriented learning pathways based on intergenerational and lifelong learning opportunities for supporting disadvantaged adults to upgrade their digital and literacy skills, with the involvement of the young people thus supporting in a systematic way active ageing and social inclusion.

This report is part of the United Generation project and aim to provide an overview of the current scene in Cyprus about intergenerational learning, along with the identification of the needs of adult and young learners.

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2. Intergenerational Learning in Cyprus

The population around EU is ageing, and this can also be seen in Cyprus through various statistical indicators. In 2021, the population aged 65 years and above for Cyprus was 14.7%, and it is growing at an average annual rate of 0.80% (Eurostat, 2021). Additionally, Cyprus had the highest decrease in the share of children aged below 14 years old over the period of 2001-2021. Taking into consideration the statistics above, it is clear that steps need to be taken to ensure the active participation and social inclusion of seniors in the society.

Active Ageing Index is a tool which aims to measure the level of which senior citizens continue to lead independent lives, participate in in employment and social activities and their capacity to age actively. The most recent results of the AAI are from the 2018, which Cyprus has an overall score of 35.7 out of 100, which is in line with the average score for all the EU countries. Cyprus appears to score high on independent living, and capacity to engage in active aging, however the score for employment and social participation is low (See full Table on the next page).

In this context, the Republic of Cyprus has formed a Lifelong Learning Strategy 2021-2027, following the successful implementation of the LLL Strategy 2014-2020. A key aim of this strategy is the provision of learning opportunities for elder people by offering formal/ non-formal adult education as well as vocational training. Overall, the strategy aims to ensure that all individuals are motivated, supported and have equal access to participate in learning activities, and engage actively in strengthening the country's productivity, innovation and competitiveness.

Additionally, the Digital Strategy 2020-2025 stresses the importance of equipping basic and lifelong digital skills to all members of the society in order to confidently interact with digital technologies. Especially after the rapid changes imposed by the COVID-19, effective digital transformation is a key factor driving resilience and adaptation to the new reality.

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Table 1: **2018 AAI for EU28 countries (overall and by domain)**

Country	Domain-specific scores				Overall score
	Employment	Social participation	Independent, healthy & secure living	Capacity & enabling environment	
Belgium	23.8	27.0	73.3	62.8	37.7
Bulgaria	30.5	9.7	66.2	55.9	31.8
Czech Republic	34.2	16.2	71.4	58.7	36.5
Denmark	40.6	21.7	78.4	66.5	43.0
Germany	39.4	15.9	74.9	63.6	39.6
Estonia	44.5	14.3	66.5	53.2	37.9
Ireland	35.4	18.8	75.0	63.2	39.1
Greece	20.6	11.8	63.9	50.0	27.7
Spain	25.7	16.2	71.6	59.7	33.7
France	26.9	26.2	75.4	62.2	38.6
Croatia	21.2	15.8	64.2	49.4	29.3
Italy	28.0	17.3	68.0	55.9	33.8
Cyprus	30.8	19.4	71.5	54.9	35.7
Latvia	37.9	17.8	57.7	50.2	35.3
Lithuania	37.9	11.1	65.3	48.5	33.4
Luxembourg	20.2	23.8	74.2	62.2	35.2
Hungary	27.5	11.6	65.6	51.0	30.5
Malta	25.6	20.9	70.6	60.5	35.4
Netherlands	36.3	26.6	77.3	64.7	42.7
Austria	27.2	18.8	77.7	60.0	35.8
Poland	26.5	13.1	66.1	52.7	31.0
Portugal	33.4	11.9	67.7	54.2	33.5
Romania	28.9	13.6	63.7	44.6	30.2
Slovenia	21.3	15.7	71.0	55.5	31.1
Slovakia	26.3	16.1	69.2	52.9	32.3
Finland	35.7	22.6	77.6	63.1	40.8
Sweden	45.4	26.0	79.2	71.2	47.2
United Kingdom	39.3	20.7	75.3	63.9	41.3
EU average	**31.1**	**17.9**	**70.7**	**57.5**	**35.7**

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3. Good Practices

Here is a list of some good practices at a national level related to intergenerational and lifelong learning in Cyprus:

GOOD PRACTICE 1	
Name	Training Centres 'Epimorfotika Kentra'
Description (50-70 words)	Offering formal and non-formal learning opportunities to everyone.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	National
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Digital Skills, Recreational Activities, Active Ageing
Tools/Resources/ Services	-
Link/ Website	http://www.moec.gov.cy/epimorfotika/

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GOOD PRACTICE 2	
Name	Local Centres – 'Polidinama Kentra'
Description (50-70 words)	'Πολυδύναμα κέντρα' are multifunctional centers organizing training activities such as computer classes, but also recreational activities such as drawing classes/ pottery/ knitting to senior citizens.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	Local Authorities – Municipalities
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	Local, Regional
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Digital Skills, Recreational Activities, Active Ageing
Tools/Resources/ Services	-
Link/ Website	https://www.nicosia.org.cy/el-GR/municipality/multifunctional-foundation/elderly-people/

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GOOD PRACTICE 3	
Name	Cyprus Third Age Observatory
Description (50-70 words)	Cyprus Third Age Observatory promotes the rights of senior citizens in Cyprus and active ageing. They organize seminars and raise awareness to the public about the needs of senior citizens.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	Cyprus Third Age Observatory
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	National
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Active Ageing, Rights of Seniors
Tools/Resources/ Services	-
Link/ Website	https://www.ctaobservatory.org/?fbclid=IwAR2XBR6qXCqb4g6--ojrlby_JovUwtFDIlS1ROVNY0b2RRydC7C0lDwwvHY

GOOD PRACTICE 4	
Name	'Seniors e-Café'
Description (50-70 words)	An initiative organized by the Emphasys Centre, offering weekly digital classes to seniors, along with recreational activities promoting active ageing.
Key Stakeholders/ Provider	Emphasys Centre
Level (Organisational, Regional, Local, National)	Local
Type (Digital Skills, Professional Skills etc.)	Digital Skills, Active Ageing
Tools/Resources/ Services	-
Link/ Website	https://emphasyscentre.com/

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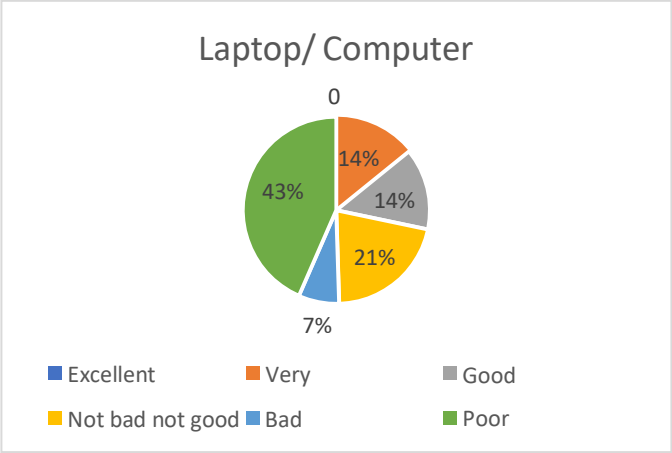
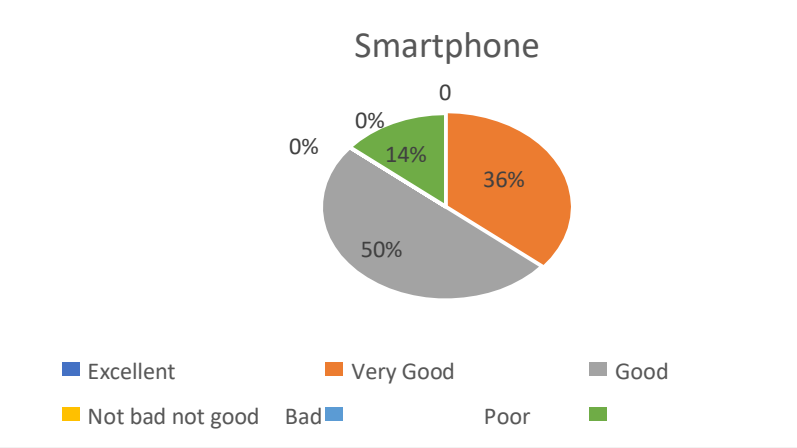
4. The Profile of Disadvantaged Adults (Age 60+)

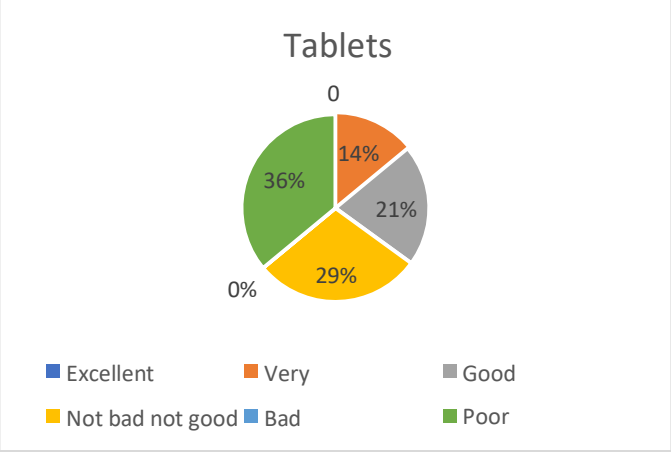
To identify the profile and the needs of disadvantaged adults, 14 responses were collected from a questionnaire asking respondents to self-assess their digital skills and English language skills and their experiences with life-long learning.

Regarding the background of the respondents, 43% were between 60-70 years old, 50% 70-80 and the remaining 7% 80+. In terms of the academic background, 43% attended primary education, 29% completed university studies, 29% secondary education.

To start with the digital skills, the majority of the respondents (43%) rated their ability to operate a computer as poor, compare to their ability to use a smart phone which 86% rated as good or very good. Additionally, the ability to use a tablet has been rated low (0-2 out of 5) from the 64% of the respondents.







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In regard to their ability setting up and use equipment such as microphones and cameras, 50% rated this ability as poor (0), whereas 28% rated it as good and very good. Additionally, in terms of the respondents' ability to search for information (articles, news etc.) on the internet, 43% of the respondents rated this as low (0-2), whereas 57% rated this high.

Regarding social media and communication services, more than half of the respondents (43%) rated their ability to use social media towards the high-end, 43% indicated low (0-2) and the remaining 24% somewhere in the middle (2-3). The most common social media channels used are Facebook (77%), TikTok (23%) and Instagram (15%). Moreover, the majority of the respondents (50%) rated poorly (0-1) their ability to use different means of communication such as chats and emails, whilst only 29% rated this highly (4-5). The most common services identified are: Instant Messaging (76%), Social Media (69%), Emails (23%), Video Conferencing (23%).

In terms of other services, 57% poorly rated their ability to make online payments and to book an appointment online. Additionally, 43% are not confident in their ability to protect their personal data online and to recognize potential threads (50%).

The second part of the questionnaire was focusing on the English Language Skills, asking the respondents to assess their ability to use the English language. The majority of the respondents rated their reading (50%), writing (57%) and listening (50%) ability somewhere in the middle (2-3), whereas in relation to understanding abbreviations 79% of the respondents rated this poorly (0-1). The vast majority of the respondents (86%) select Greek as the language operating their electronic devices, whereas 36% chose English.

Finally, in terms of attending seminars, 57% agreed to attend to a seminar targeting digital skills development compared to 36% that agreed to attend to a seminar targeting English language skills. The majority of the respondents (72%) said that they would be interested to participate in intergenerational learning activities, and they would also be interested to share their own experiences in topics such as: story telling (67%), culture (50%), cooking (50%), language (17%) and entrepreneurship (8%).

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5. The Profile of Young Generation (15-30)

To identify the profile of youth, 17 responses were collected from a questionnaire asking respondents to self-assess their digital skills and English language skills and their experiences with life-long learning. The majority of the respondents (65%) fell into the age group of 26-30, followed by 21-25 years old (29%) and 16-20 (6%). Moreover, 41% completed a university degree, whilst 59% received post-graduate education.

As it was expected, the majority of youth appears confident (4-5) using the computer/ laptop (94%), tablet (88%) and smartphone (100%). Additionally, 77% stated that they are confident (4-5) setting up and use equipment such as microphones and cameras, and all the respondents rated highly (4-5) their ability to search the internet for information.

Similarly, respondents rated highly (4-5) their ability to use social media (92%), and different means of communication (100%). The most common social media apps mentioned are Facebook (94%), Instagram (88%), TikTok (47%), Twitter (12%), SnapChat (6%) and Reddit (6%). In regards to various means of communication, social media chats are the most popular option (94%) along with instant messaging apps (94%), followed by email (82%) and video conferencing tools (77%).

Moreover, youth appear confident (4-5) in their ability to manage appointments online (90%), protect their privacy and personal information (77%) and to recognise potential online threads (82%).

In terms of English language skills, all participants rated highly (4-5) their ability to read and understand English, and the majority (89%) of them also rated highly (4-5) their ability to write texts. Regarding understanding of abbreviations, 77% of the respondents rated highly (4-5) this ability. Lastly, all the respondents stated that they use English as the main language in which they operate their electronic devices.

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Relating intergenerational learning and activities, 29% of the respondents stated that they had some experience in the past, 53% had no experience and 18% answered maybe. This was usually in the form of teaching digital skills to adults (71%) and offering social activities (71%). Gardening (14%) and teaching a foreign language (14%) were also some activities mentioned.

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6. Lifelong Learning Providers

In addition to the data collected from youth and adults, a focus group was organized with providers of adult education to share their views and needs about intergenerational learning in Cyprus, along with suggestions and good practices that they might use in organizing and delivering those sessions.

For the focus groups, representatives from 3 organizations took part – all 3 organizations are dealing with adult education and aim to provide lifelong learning opportunities through the development of key skills such as digital skills and literacy.

The first point discussed was about the different ways they use to reach the target group. The most common ways mentioned were:

- Through networking with municipalities and key stakeholders, NGOs
- Advertising in social media, but also traditional media such as newspapers
- From mouth to mouth – existing learners bring their friends and family

Regarding good practices/ methods they use to engage adult learners are:

- Practical activities when possible (scenarios, case studies, role play) – when theoretical always ask questions to ensure understanding.
- After 45 minutes try to have a short break in order to keep them focus and attentive – during online trainings maintaining their attention was harder.
- Relate the lesson to their experiences and needs - adult learners learn differently compared toyounger students.

In terms of challenges, some challenges faced by adult educators are:

- Finding ways to motivate them.
- Finding ways to keep their attention – especially during online learning as they usually do something else in parallel.
- Senior students having difficulties accessing video conferencing tools, hence online learning was not an option during pandemic.
- Usually, adult learner will have different backgrounds and abilities, hence adult educators needs tofind a balance on his approach.

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Finally, about intergenerational learning all the participants agreed that it can be beneficial for adult learners, especially if the youth engage are relatives or someone known to the learner as they will feel more comfortable. However, at this moment only one of the organizations participated are offering some opportunities of intergenerational learning and this takes the form of workshop for developing digital competences.

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7. Conclusion/ Summary

To sum up, The United Generation project aims to open up digitally oriented learning pathways based on intergenerational and lifelong learning opportunities for supporting disadvantaged adults to upgrade their digital and literacy skills, with the involvement of the young people thus supporting in a systematic way active ageing and social inclusion.

This report is part of the United Generation project and aims to provide an overview of the current scene in Cyprus about intergenerational learning, along with the identification of the needs of adult and young learners. To accomplish this task, desk research was conducted and along with the data collected from youth, senior learners and adult educators will be used to design the United Generations Framework and learning material to be used as part of the intergenerational activities to be organized.

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