



Newsletter - Spring 2014

Welcome to TEAL's 2nd Newsletter!

Life transitions are challenging because they force us to let go of the familiar and face the future with a feeling of vulnerability. Most life transitions begin with a string of losses: The loss of a role; person; place or sense of where you 'fit' in the world. TEAL (Transitions into Enterprise for Adult Learners) responds to these challenges which all partners (UK, Spain, Germany) face by providing adult learners with new pathways to re-engage with learning and improve their knowledge and competences to consider making a transition into enterprise e.g. from unemployment or redundancy.

1st Workshop: Older Learners during Transitions: Identifying and Tackling Barriers and Positive Interventions for Engaging Older Learners - Spanish Perspective

The first workshop got underway in sunny and beautiful Granada on the 13th of December 2013!



It started with an initial ice-breaker and introduction session. There were 22 participants in total, both learners and staff, from all three participating countries. To kick off the workshop, each participant was asked to reflect on three key transitional moments in life, where two volunteers agreed to share their own.

This little exercise was a perfect starting point to better understand different insights and the transitional challenges of 50+ learners.

Finally, three main rotating Knowledge Cafés were set up, during which participants debated and discussed the following aspects:

- Analysis of the current situation
- Identification and tackling of barriers
- Collecting positive interventions for engaging older learners

Below are summaries of the results reached during the Knowledge Cafés.

➤ First Knowledge Café - Analysis of the current situation

The articles included in the 1st Newsletter which showed the situation of older people in the 3 partner countries (Spain, UK, and Germany) were used as inspiration to start the discussion. The main sentences that were used were:

UK:

The situation of the 50+ group could be considered more worrying. They often have higher family responsibilities that do not allow them simply to pack up and move elsewhere to find work; they also count on economic support from family which often softens the situation in the case of young people. Advances in technology also do not help the situation.

Spain:

Spanish workers over 45 years old have lower expectations of finding another job. Low expectations of finding a job leads to a decrease in active job searches by workers over the age of 45. Currently, the percentage of this type of search is at 7%, which is 4% less than in the same period under review in 2012.

Germany:

Reaching the official retirement age in employment is still an exception. Only 10% of all retired Germans can look back on a direct transition from employment to retirement.

A SWOT analysis (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was used to summarise the discussion.

Strengths:

- Good knowledge about the context in the United Kingdom, Spain, and Germany
- There are many organisations working in the field with expertise
- Addressed and on time interventions by governments (social policy)



Weaknesses:

- Lack of funding
- Bureaucracy
- Lack of coordination at EU level and between organisations working in the same field

Opportunities:

- Future uniformity (taxes, information provision to entrepreneurs) at EU level
- Crisis as an opportunity

Threats:

- Lack of flexibility of labour systems and regulations (Uniformity)
- Lack of coordination of public interventions

➤ Second Knowledge Café - Identifying and tackling barriers



During this second Learning Café, a brainstorming session occurred when trying to identify possible barriers that may or may not affect older individuals when trying to get back into employment. The following barriers were identified:

- Stereotypes: The old vs. the young
- Technology: Older people are frequently seen as being behind the times when it comes to IT and companies do not want to invest their resources when a younger person is willing to step in for less.
- Gender barriers: Women often have to take care of older members of the family and have greater barriers regarding mobility
- Motivation: Creating a business as last option after trying all the other options
- Barriers have a double meaning: They can either stop from doing or be a challenge, a hurdle to overcome.

The barriers were subsequently discussed and categorised into social, personal, and institutional barriers in both finding new employment and starting up in business.

If these barriers are acknowledged, it is the first step to further positive development, which can boost in psychological health. Older individuals should not allow barriers to block their mental ability in order not to enter a downward spiral of discouragement. Transitions are opportunities and only involve hurdles, not walls.

"Do not allow barriers to stop your potential!"

Third Knowledge Café - Positive interventions for engaging older learners



During the third and final Learning Café, all participants agreed on the fact that interventions must not only come from external sources, but also from internal changes within the individual as mentioned in the second Learning Café. When mentioning external sources, it was established that it included both corporate/organisational and

state/public levels.

Interventions should not only focus on Continuous Professional Development (CPD) but also support personal growth by opening new opportunities, choices, and perspectives.

The following positive interventions were introduced and discussed

- Learning from reference persons, such as role models
- (Intergenerational) Mentoring
- Coaching through peers and expert
- Psycho-social support for the activation of older long-term unemployed person
- Valorising existing resources, such as skills
- Modifying legal regulations and incentives
- Increasing flexible working conditions at the labour market
- Using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) at the work place and beyond
- Mainstreaming Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
- Changing the physical workspace and applying flexible workflow re-organisation
- In-company offers to increase health and well-being
- Supporting 'carers' for employees that are providing care for an older relative

The participants also discussed the effects caused by unstable policies: elections often change policy priorities and are often perceived as short-sightedness. As a consequence, sustainable funding of measures and programmes are often not guaranteed.

To conclude, two major sectoral tensions have been identified when collecting and analysing interventions to engage older learners:

- The trade-off between responsibility of the state and responsibility of the individual
- The trade-off between public interventions and volunteerism

▶ Closing the Workshop



Following the Knowledge Cafés, a presentation was given by Estela Albea Alberto, a representative of the CADE (Support Centre for Entrepreneurial Development) in Granada. She introduced the SENIOR project which they have been working on, which main objectives are:

- To provide mentoring services to young companies through senior business men and women
- To ensure that entrepreneur seniors living in Granada, with a great professional and business career, share their knowledge, skills, and experience to support young companies in the province
- To enhance business projects from young companies in Granada with the expertise, experience, contacts, and knowledge of the seniors involved

The seniors may receive up to 3000€ support for their services during 6 months. More information can be found on [Programa Seniors](#) website (in Spanish).

Our Second Workshop: "Mentoring and Coaching to Support Older Learners Through Transitions into Enterprise" will take place in July 2014, in Sheffield, United Kingdom.

Stay tuned and visit the TEAL website at www.teal-project.eu for the latest developments!



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