



# LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME GRUNDTVIG LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS

## POLAND

**“I learn all my life:  
the joy of learning through experience”**

### 1. LEARNING BY TEACHING

**Lifelong learning:** learning over the entire life cycle, is a process of ongoing improvement of education, qualifications and skills, as well as continued intellectual, psychological and professional adaptation to the accelerated rhythm of changes which is characteristic of the modern civilization.

#### **Education and training services market in Poland**

- *Continuing Education Centres (CEC).*
- *Practical Training Centres (PTC).*
- *Schools for adults.*
- *Tertiary-level schools.*
- *Scientific institutions, research and development centres.*
- *Further training and vocational development centres, associations, foundations, joint-stock companies, civil partnerships and limited-liability companies, co-operatives and other entities. These institutions conduct adult training under the commercial regulations and operating principles. Some programmes have been offered under business activity law since 1996.*
- *Work establishments. Individual enterprises organize training programmes for staff development.*

#### **Survey of Adult Education Activity – BAED**

- Analysis shows that 35% of economically active persons aged 25–64 (5.1 million) participated in adult education, as defined above.
- Education activity is the most intense among persons aged 25–29.
- Women take part in education more often than men, particularly in the age group 40–49.

#### **Financing sources for adult education**

- Adult learning in out-of-school programmes was most often financed by employers;
- 54% of respondents declared that costs of recent training activities were covered by their employing company.

#### **Involvement of enterprises in adult education**

- The survey shows that 41.4% of the total number of businesses organised training for their staff.
- Training was organised mainly by large enterprises, while only 36.4% of small firms participated.

#### **Training time by gender and size of enterprise, 2004**

- The average time spent on training one employee was 28.5 hours per year.
- In large enterprises, the amount of time spent on training was similar for women and men.
- In small companies, however, training time was much shorter for women than for men.

## **Good Practices “Learning by teaching”**

### **Practical applications of solutions where teaching others leads to learning**

#### **“Computer: not only for grandchildren”**

**The main purposes of the “Computer? Not only for your grandchildren...” program comprise:**

- Mobilisation of the elderly
- Elimination for this group of the psychological barrier in using computers and other types of electronic equipment like cameras, overhead projectors
- Improvement of their computer literacy (including modern communication software like e-mail, messaging applications and the like)
- Improvement of their self-confidence and self-esteem,
- Augmenting their authority as the older generation
- Promotion of the lifelong learning model
- Cultivating solidarity between younger and older generations.

#### **To achieve this purpose we would like to:**

- Mobilize the older generation by promoting the usage of popular communication programs.
- Establish an internet cafe exclusively for persons 50 years old and older, open daily every day for 4 hours with a consultant at their disposal
- Conduct IT training with the use of active learning methods (20 hour per group)
- Conduct psychological training in order to:
  - improve their self-confidence, self-esteem;
  - to promote lifelong learning;
  - To provide fast learning techniques
- Emphasize practical activities: prepare presentations promoting the idea of learning IT skills and new technology in older life, presentation with the use of the overhead projector (conducted by participants)
- Promote the idea of Internet cafe and raising IT awareness in institutions such as Senior Clubs or Third Age Universities. Participants of this program would prepare presentations and perform them themselves in those institutions.
- Promote, throughout the participants of our program, the idea of learning IT skills, using consumer electronics equipment such as cameras and overhead projectors

- Participants of this program would prepare presentations and perform them themselves in schools.
  - shapes a positive image of the elderly among the younger generation
  - Promotion of the lifelong learning model
  - builds stronger inter-generational bonds

## 2. WORK LIFE BALANCE

One factor is common to all the countries surveyed. Both in the 20 European countries surveyed and in the USA, people generally put more effort into their jobs than their free time. In Western Europe work comes first for one in three. This also applies to four in ten respondents in Eastern Europe and in the USA almost one in two believe this to be the case. Portugal and Turkey top the list, with two in three respondents saying that most of their energy goes into work.

### Why is work life balance important?

- **Work life balance has influence on:**
  - More work activity of persons who look after young children;
  - **More intensive work activity of persons aged 50+** (according to research, in 2003 merely 26.9% of persons aged 55-64 were employed, whereas, at the same time, the EU average was 41% ([www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl)));
  - Retaining mental health;
  - Preventing „professional burnout” – the disease of the 21st Century, in order to extend our professional activity and help us not to withdraw from professional and social life;
  - **Lifelong learning.** Finding time not only for work but also for learning. Preserving the balance between work and the need for training;
  - Increased childbearing rates, preventing the ageing of the society. (The number of persons of mobile age (18-44 years) is gradually decreasing from 40% in 2002 to 31% in 2030).  
[www.epp.eurostat.ec.eu.int](http://www.epp.eurostat.ec.eu.int)

### Good practices:

#### Telework – a chance for young mothers?

- According to most employees – independently of sex or age – telework is a very good opportunity for young mothers to continue their work.
- Telework provides an opportunity for the employment rate to increase in Poland – according to more than 70% of employers and employees.
- The attitudes to telework as an opportunity to improve the situation of young mothers are especially positive – almost 80% of entrepreneurs and workers think that it may be a good solution as a form of employment for the first period of motherhood.
- Although employers have a quite positive picture of telework only a little more than 50% of businessmen think that telework becomes a popular form of work in Poland in the next 10 years.
- More than 50% of employees think that telework is much less stressful than being at a workplace, at the office, although not necessarily more efficient.
- According to every 4th employee the low-level development of telecommunication infrastructure in the country is a serious obstacle in propagating telework.
- Two of every three employees think that only certain types of jobs are suitable for teleworking.
- *Increased training participation of persons performing care-giving functions in families, whether on parental leave or flexibly employed as they try to combine household and professional duties*
  - Promotion of a *partnership* family model and co-responsibility for upbringing of children,

- Introduction of a new solution – *obligatory partial paternity leave taken by the male partner, at least for the period of 3 months* within the entire parental leave period
- *Better availability of kindergartens*
  - Today in Poland only 16% of families make use of the public childcare system

### **General practices applied in Poland:**

Source: the project of PSZK (Polish Association of HR Management) „Working Mamma” 2006

- Awards granted to employees for coming back to work earlier than after the period within which the employee is entitled to parental benefits;
- Part-time employment;
- Application of flexible working hours;
- Granting paid parental leaves;
- Offering employees the possibility of working at home, teleworking;
- Offering health insurance covering all family members of the employee.

### 3. LEARNING THROUGH ACTION

The role of action has been strongly emphasized, not only in cognitive research on learning and problem solving, but also in education and instructional psychology. The Constructivism tradition has long asserted that action plays a crucial role for learners in constructing their own knowledge.

In an educational context, active engagement entails students examining their own ideas, considering alternative explanations for newly taught concepts, and evaluating competing perspectives. Some theorists (e.g., Anzai & Simon, 1979) propose that these processes are found when *learning is by doing*.

#### **Should Action be Awarded a Special Status in Learning?**

- Many believe that without actively engaging with a to-be-learned task we cannot fully learn the essentials of it. This claim seems to be particularly popular in explaining the effectiveness of the acquisition of highly practiced behaviours (e.g., car driving, operating electrical devices – e.g. mp3 players, mobile phones, DVD/video recorders, camcorders) in which a sequence of behaviours is needed to reach a specific outcome.

#### **Ideas Into Action:**

- Make the learning relevant;
- Provide opportunities for learning through action;

#### **Make the learning relevant.**

- The more tailored you can make the learning, the higher the value. Broad academic or off-the-shelf programs can be very interesting, but people often find it difficult to transfer the learning to their every day work. We have seen a big improvement in application when the experience is relevant to the work of the participants.

#### **Provide opportunities for learning through action.**

Research shows that people learn best when they take action and discover the learning for themselves. No one can ever become good at a sport just by *listening* to a description of how to play. They actually have to try and discover for themselves what works and what doesn't. That is why well-designed simulations are such powerful teaching vehicles.

#### **Learning through action vs. teamwork**

- Increased awareness of individual and team strengths, motivations and values.
- Increased understanding, respect and alignment with other team member's coping skills, communication styles, viewpoints and perspectives.
- Developed skills, tools, systems and strategies for moving the team forward from their current condition to an agreed upon ideal state of a high functioning and creative team.
- Increased trust of other team members and a strong motivation for exploring collaborative efforts and building a more dynamically synergistic culture.
- Team Norms identification, modification and change implementation.

#### **Why is action important in learning?**

- Several lines of research have proposed that learning-through-doing (i.e. procedural learning) is essential to the acquisition of knowledge.
- These include implicit perceptual-motor sequence learning, memory, causal structure learning and developmental, educational and instructional psychology.

## **Good practices**

- The CPK Foundation „Computer not only for the grandchild“, „Eco-friendly internet surfers“
- Computer as a tool for preparation of a bigger project – presentations at schools
- Emphasize practical activities: prepare presentations promoting the idea of learning IT skills and new technology in older life, presentation with the use of the overhead projector (conducted by participants)
- Promote the idea of Internet cafe and raising IT awareness in institutions such as Senior Clubs or Third Age Universities. Participants of this program would prepare presentations and perform them themselves in those institutions.
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## 4. ACTIVISATION AND EDUCATION FORMS FOR PERSONS AGED 50+

**Andragogy** consists of learning strategies focused on teaching adults. It is often interpreted as the process of engaging adult learners in the structure of the learning experience. The term, which was originally used in the 19th Century, was developed into a theory of adult education by the American educator, Malcolm Knowles (1913 - 1997). Knowles held that andragogy (from the Greek words meaning "man-leading") should be distinguished from the more commonly used *pedagogy*.

### Specificity of learning in the case of persons 50+. SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to develop</li> <li>• Wisdom</li> <li>• Rich experience</li> <li>• Ability to self-develop</li> <li>• Ability to self-educate</li> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Internal motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passivity</li> <li>• Reluctance to change</li> <li>• Reluctance to experiment</li> <li>• Reluctance to being evaluated</li> <li>• Daily routine</li> <li>• Conservative lifestyle</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variety of educational offer</li> <li>• Variety of forms of educational</li> <li>• Different levels of education forms</li> <li>• Openness of the educational system</li> <li>• External motivation: employment opportunities, promotion, better salary, financial and other rewards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstacles from employers</li> <li>• Lack of understanding and acceptance on the part of the loved ones</li> <li>• High cost of training</li> <li>• Inadequate quality of certain forms of education</li> </ul>

### Characteristics of learning 50+

#### Educating adults differs from educating children in several ways:

- Adults have accumulated knowledge and experience that can add to or hinder the learning experience.
- Most adult education is voluntary, therefore, the participants are generally better motivated.
- Adults frequently apply their knowledge in a practical fashion to learn effectively. They must have a reasonable expectation that the knowledge recently gained will help them further their goals. One example, common in the 1990s, was the proliferation of computer training courses in which adults (not children or adolescents), most of whom were office workers, could enroll. These courses would teach basic use of the operating system or specific application software. Because the abstractions governing the user's interactions with a PC were so new, many people who had been working white-collar jobs for ten years or more eventually took such training courses,

either at their own whim (to gain computer skills and thus earn higher pay) or at the behest of their managers.

### **Good practices:**

- **“Computer: not only for grandchildren”**
- **“Precious Pearls”**
- **“EKO surfers”**

#### **“Precious Pearls”**

The main purposes of the **“Precious Pearls”** program comprise:

- Mobilisation of the women 50+ and help them to find the job compare to their competens, qualifications and experience;
- Improve qualifications to use the computer and modern IT technology;
- Improve their self-confidence and self-esteem;
- Improves desirability on the labour market.

#### **“Computer: not only for grandchildren”**

##### **“The computer and the internet?- overcoming inter-generational barriers”**

- Creating innovative IT-related training models for the elderly.
- The ability to use the computer and the modern IT technology helps improve the self-esteem level,
- builds stronger inter-generational bonds,
- shapes a positive image of the elderly among the younger generation,
- improves desirability on the labour market.

## 5. COMPUTER AND THE INTERNET?- OVERCOMING INTER-GENERATIONAL BARRIERS”

### How to teach seniors:

- In senior-only groups;
- Create learning – friendly atmosphere, addressing one another directly (first-name terms);
- Application of „superlearning” techniques: music, relaxation, all senses interaction, acknowledging success – „comparing against oneself not against others”;
- Breaks every 30 - 45 minutes;
- Tremendous patience on the part of instructors / trainers – „non IT staff” are better teachers;
- Immediate practical application of the theoretical knowledge;

### Benefits for seniors:

- Practical skills useful in life: Skype (low-cost connections), email – communication with family and friends, shopping, useful information on the internet;
- Reducing the generation gap – better understanding of the young generation's e-world;
- Improvement of self-confidence, learning new things;
- Breaking out of daily routine;
- Making new friends at the computer course.

**7 per cent of Poland's seniors use the internet (2007).**

### Good practices:

#### Silver Internet 2 – seniors teach seniors

- The objective of the Silver Internet 2 project is occupational and social mobilisation of persons aged over 50.
- „Silver Internet 2 – seniors teach seniors” – the organiser is Stowarzyszenie Społeczeństwa Wiedzy [Knowledge Society Association].
- The project will be conducted by a team of trained trainers-seniors who will share their newly acquired knowledge with seniors - course participants.
- The program of the course comprised: search for information on web pages, sending e-mails, communication through internet messaging software .Source: [www.srebrnyinternet.pl](http://www.srebrnyinternet.pl) 2008-08-28

#### E-SENIOR ACADEMY

- e-Senior Academy UPC is a special program teaching seniors how to use computers and the internet.
- Massive interest in the course organised by UPC Polska: there were around 9 applicants per one slot on the course.
- The program of the course comprised: search for information on web pages, sending e-mails, communication through internet messaging software.

#### Academy of Internet Business -ABI Senior

Educational project targeted at elderly persons.

The workshop program comprises the following topics:

- How to do shopping without leaving the house and in a secure way;
- Making new friends;
- Taking advantage of new means of communication – the internet.

### **Methodology of learning - Good practices**

Silver Internet 2 – seniors teach seniors

- The project will be conducted by a team of trained trainers-seniors who will share their newly acquired knowledge with seniors - course participants.
- Internet cafe „50 plus” CPK Foundation - “Computer? Not only for your grandchildren...”

### **LEARNING THROUGH ACTION**

- The CPK Foundation „Computer not only for the grandchild”, „Eco-friendly internet surfers”
- Computer as a tool for preparation of a bigger project – presentations at schools