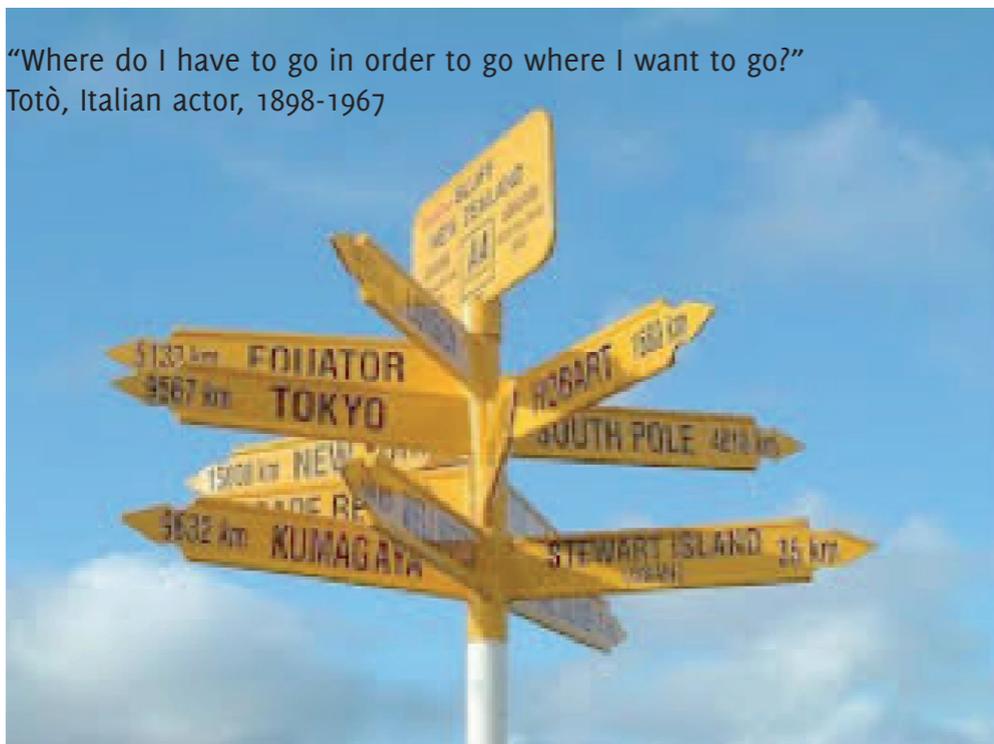




CHOOSE YOUR LEARNING CHOOSE YOUR LIFE

our experience with Learning to Learn
and Self-Directed Learning

“Where do I have to go in order to go where I want to go?”
Totò, Italian actor, 1898-1967



Introduction

The “CHOOSE*2” pedagogical outcomes is one of the results of the Grundtvig Learning Partnership Project “Choose*2: Choose your learning, choose your life” promoted by 4 organisations:

- Work in Progress (Italy),
- PameAmbro (Italy),
- Citizens of Europe e V. (Germany) ,
- Rökstólar Samvinnumiðstöð (Iceland)

The focus of our work within this 2-year project was on the educational approach SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING (which has been around for a while, although under different names).

Not surprisingly, you will find pedagogical outcomes in our booklet, but we also believe that this material will be a source of inspiration for YOU - adult educators - to pause for a bit in the haste of your everyday practice and maybe ponder over changes you would like to see within your working context. We strongly believe that facilitators of learning (in whatever context) are and will be learners too, and would like to offer this booklet as a potential source of learning and debate. Our outcomes are not static, some of them might change as the time passes by and we get to reflect and look at them again. And we think it’s OK like this. This is also one of the reasons why we encourage you to get in touch and let us hear your doubts, thoughts, and discoveries as you practice, implement and encounter this exciting methodology called Self-Directed Learning (SDL).

Learning to Learn is one of the 8 key competences for lifelong learning established by the European Parliament and by the Council in 2006. Competence is defined “as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. Key competences are those which all individuals need for personal fulfillment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment”. In particular, Learning to Learn is explained as:

“the ability to pursue and persist in learning, to organise one’s own learning. It includes effective management of time and information, both individually and in groups. This competence includes awareness of one’s learning process and needs, identifying available opportunities, and the ability to overcome obstacles in order to learn successfully. This competence means gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skills as well as seeking and making use of guidance. Learning to learn engages learners to build on prior learning and life experiences in order to use and apply knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts: at home, at work, in education and training. Motivation and confidence are crucial to an individual’s competence”

We consider Learning to Learn a meta competence - meaning that it provides keys for unlocking the doors to other competences. The speed and the complexity of our society and of the labor market require independent learners able to define what they need to learn, when, how they can do it, what resources they need, to plan it, to take an active role and the responsibility for this process; in other words they need to know themselves as learners and to (self) direct their learning. When we developed this project, we considered it as very important to share practices, methodologies, theories and new questions within the educators’ and trainers’ community in order to stimulate the reflection on educational approaches used and on tools we offer to our learners.

This is the aim and that is what is included in this booklet. So, here you can find some general information about the concept of Learning to Learn and Self-Directed Learning, the projects and the organizations involved, the activities realized, the methodologies we used, the impact it had on the promoters, some outcomes and some reflections. The material included represents the results of our practice and it might be very different from yours and we see it as a starting point for further reflections and analyses.

We really hope you’ll enjoy the reading and will even find some interesting and useful inputs!

Giulia Mastropirro
Work in Progress
Coordinating organisation

*RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC)

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The Partners

CENTER FOR IMPROVEMENT

RÖKSTÓLAR SAMVINNUMIÐSTÖÐ EHF.
www.rokstolar.com – Iceland

Or in other words, the Center for Improvement, is a small private company established in Iceland in 2010 that focuses on community development projects with a strong focus on learning and education. Through our work, we support individuals and communities on their paths to growth and development. Even-though we're a small company, our areas of specific expertise are quite diverse:

- Community development projects initiation and its facilitation
- Organisation of various educational activities such as trainings, workshop, seminars, etc.

carried out locally, nationally or on international level

- Environmental tourism and sustainability projects

Operating as an ltd., the following principles are crucial for us at our work:

- support honest business and cooperation,
- contribute to environment protection and development of individuals, as well as communities,
- respect nature and support sustainability,
- build partnerships with other organizations, businesses and local communities through facilitation of „same-eye-level“ encounters and interaction based on meaningful and open communication,
- seek authenticity and openness as qualities for learning and development.

Recently, we've been intensively involved in setting up and carrying out innovative edu-

cational activities (international trainings and seminars, educational visits, etc.) for educators and learners in the formal and non-formal sector. Through these, we support individuals and groups to find their potential and help them figure out available resources by themselves, helping them find the solution to their challenges, using innovative educational approaches as vital tools.

Important topics that we've been working on recently have been self-directed learning, development of learning to learn competences, participation, personal development, potential of conflicts and empowerment. Implementing this 2-year Grundtvig project was our first long-term educational project experience and we enjoyed the process very much.

Contact person for the project:
Lenka Uhrova lenka.uhrova@gmail.com



CITIZENS OF EUROPE E.V.
www.citizens-of-europe.eu

Citizens of Europe is a politically independent, non-governmental and non-profit oriented network of people from diverse backgrounds which is open for everybody who sees diversity as an opportunity.

We initiate and cooperate in a wide range of projects, as there is a lack of coordinated independent civil action in Europe, while many local initiatives in Europe could profit from sharing contacts, infrastructure and knowledge. We have a heterogeneous membership, with partners in several European and Neighbouring countries, who through the years cooperated with us. We support each in order to assure high quality standards in everything we are doing. We are active as we want to contribute to an active civil society in Europe and to learn and gain experience ourselves. Citizens of Europe has over 10 years of experience in international educational work.

Contact person for the project:
Rui Montez rui.montez@citizens-of-europe.eu

ASSOCIAZIONE WORK IN PROGRESS
www.workinprog.eu- Italy



Work in Progress is a NGO funded by the persons involved in adult education already for many years. They have brought to the organization a lot of knowledge, contacts, experiences and other resources that make it capable to implement high quality educational projects.

The aim of the organization is to provide mobility and training experiences in Europe, by developing safe learning environments that encourage youngsters and adults to be active. Education of adults and youngsters is its main focus, besides social inclusion and support of initiatives and active participation.

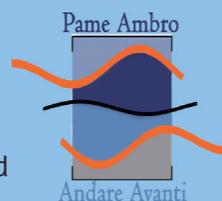
The organization and its staff has experience in the implementation of the EU educational program projects for adults and young people,

such as Youth in Action, Lifelong Learning and now Erasmus+. Through the projects' development, Work in Progress is very much involved in deepening the topics of learning, employability and their links.

Contact person for the project:
Giulia Mastropirro info@workinprog.eu

PAMEAMBRO

http://pa8499.wix.com/pameambro



PameAmbro has been involved since the beginning of its activities in 2005 in projects on as well local as on European level. One of the aims of PameAmbro is to make a connection between Calabria and Europe. The projects that PameAmbro takes part in in Calabria are aiming at social development and quality improvement in the area. PameAmbro sees it as their role to bring in a European dimension into these projects. Next to that

PameAmbro and its staff members take part in many projects within the framework of European educational programmes. These projects involve training and research activities with a special focus on the topic of learning and the different aspects related to that.

In the last years PameAmbro had a strong focus on the topic of 'learning' and 'learning to learn' and 'self-directed learning'. Three members of PameAmbro were involved in a 2 year European Grundtvig action research project which focussed on the learning to learn key-competence and the consequences of this key-competence for as well learners as facilitators. The outcomes

of this project are still a big inspiration for other projects that PameAmbro is involved in. As a follow up many training courses on different aspects of learning to learn were organised with the partners of the Learning to Learn project. PameAmbro and its' members are part of different kind of European networks in the educational field where they contribute to and learn from the numerous new developments and insights in and around education.

Contact person for the project:
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Self-directed Learning... What's that!?

It's self-directed...so... not directed by somebody else. In self-directed learning you are the one who chooses what to learn, how to learn and when you think you succeeded to learn what you wanted to learn. You are the one who is responsible for your own learning!

You might have heard about 'learning to learn' (L2L). It's one of the 8 key-competences for Life Long Learning introduced by the European Commission. 'Learning to learn' and 'self-directed learning' are pretty much the same concept, the same idea.

The definition that the European Commission gave for L2L:

'Learning to learn' is the ability to pursue and persist in learning, to organise one's own learning, including through effective management of time and information, both individually and in groups. This competence includes awareness of one's learning process and needs, identifying available opportunities, and the ability to overcome obstacles in order to learn successfully. This competence means gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skills as well as seeking and making use of guidance. Learning to learn engages learners to build on prior learning and life experiences in order to use and apply knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts: at home, at work, in education and training. Motivation and confidence are crucial to an individual's competence.'

To say it in very simple words: L2L is the ability to take the responsibility for and organise your own learning.

In the world we live in now it doesn't work any longer to do all your learning in your young days till your 18 or 25 and then assume that this will be enough for the rest of your life. To understand and deal with all the constant change we



need to learn life long. And we are not provided with a life long teacher. We have to do it ourselves! So... take your responsibility and do it! Or to say it in other words: Europe(or the world) needs life long self-directed learners.

There are at the same time educational reasons to embrace self-directed learning and L2L. Because isn't that what we want: learners that are responsible for their own learning and decide themselves about the what, how and when? Isn't that the best way to learn; the things you find important, in the way you prefer and at the moment you want it?

In this project we believe that very much. We think that learners know best what they need to learn and how they want to do that. We also know that people have different patterns, rhythms, and preferences to learn.

By the way: self-directed learning doesn't mean that you are totally on your own in your learning; it's not a solo-job. We are very convinced about the social component of learning. Directing your own learning doesn't mean sitting on your own in a corner reading, writing and reflecting. Other people are a crucial element to support the individual learning. Others could be peers, mentors, trainers, teachers etcetera. And... maybe it's not always that easy. For most

of us it goes that we unlearned to take responsibility for our learning. In most cases others decided for us what, how and when to learn. And also these others decided in the end if you had done well. Taking up that responsibility can therefore be quite challenging. How do I do that? How do I know what I want to learn? Do I know how I prefer to learn? Can I decide when I've learnt enough? How do I find support from others in my learning?

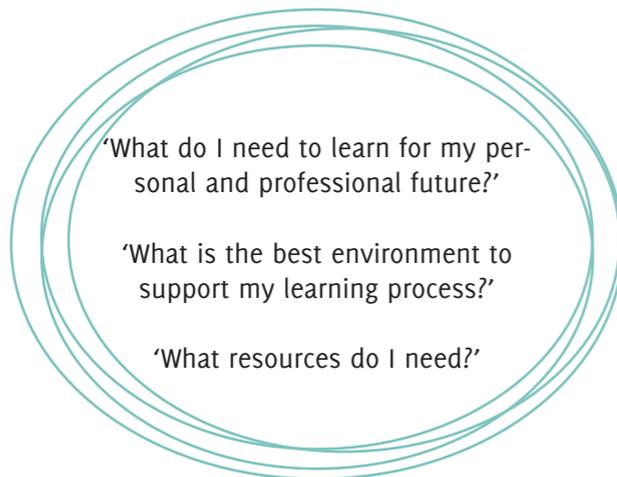
But also: how do I support learners in becoming self-directed learners? What does self-directed learning mean for the role of teachers, trainers, youth-workers, coaches and mentors?



The Project

Learning to learn (L2L) is considered as the most crucial key competence for lifelong learning and, therefore, educational staff need to acquire and develop more and more competences and methodologies that would support learners in developing this competence. Fast developments happening in our society and its ambiguity and uncertainty require independent learners able to assess their learning and to plan and realize their further learning. In other words, people need to take an active role and the responsibility for their learning process and to self-direct their learning (SDL). This concept is not what traditional formal education is based on. In formal education, we are often told what we have to learn, when and how and then we are told if we learnt well enough. The consequence is that the L2L competence is usually not trained during a scholastic curricula and that many people are very basic in it.

Adult education tends to overlook this important issue, too. Adults are offered a wide range of different courses with different methodologies (frontal lessons, outdoor, experiential learning), but these offers often imply that learners have already answered the following questions:



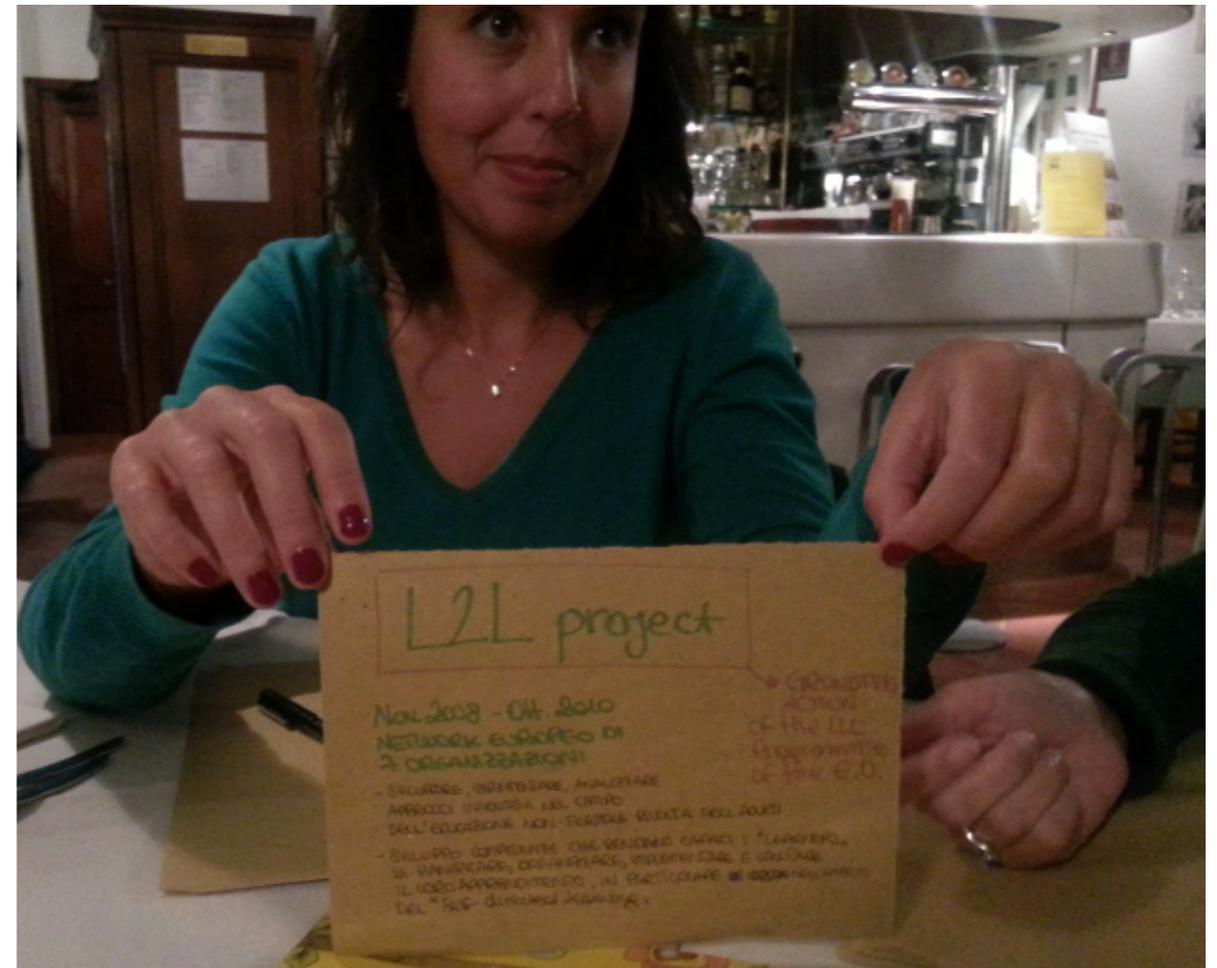
‘However, the reality often is that participants did not provide the answers, and the choice is made on the basis of social pressure, media suggestions and the reputation of the organizers or just because adults are obliged to attend it. Most of us, when thinking about our learning, will relate that to experiences we have in following lessons and courses, mostly in school. The problem is that many people who scored poor or badly in formal education draw from that a conclusion that they are bad or poor learners. For them the word learning has a negative connotation, something they are not good at and try to avoid as much as possible. This is a shame. The conclusion should never be that people are bad or poor learners. All human beings have the wonderful potential to learn, that’s what makes us unique.

The logical consequence is a vicious circle in which:

- people have low skills (about 80 million people have low or basic skills; by 2020, 16 million more jobs will require high qualifications, while the demand for low skills will drop by 12 million jobs)
- people avoid complexity and search for populist answers that easily lead to racism and xenophobia
- people tend to escape from their responsibilities, belittling the concept of citizenship.

In a society where more and more learning is an unavoidable condition of life, one must learn to learn. In a rapidly developing world in which the creation of knowledge increases exponentially, the crucial resource in ‘knowledge economies’ is the ability of people to respond flexibly and creatively to demands for new knowledge, skills and dispositions in continuously changing social and economic contexts. In this context, the development of a capability to learn new things, throughout life, becomes essential.

Choose*2 wanted to be a step towards the pro-



motion of this philosophy and its main goal was promoting learning to learn and self-directed learning as tools for independency. The concrete objectives were:

- To support a strategy for increasing the knowledge about and promote SDL and L2L among adult educators in non formal and formal education settings
- to improve the mentoring competences of the staff involved in the Partnership
- to increase the competence of a number of adult educators in facilitating the L2L and SDL, through specific training course and a mentoring process
- to provide learners some tools and space where they can try out their L2L and improve this

competence

- to set up an informal network - The Kitchen Table Group - composed by adult educators that aims to support the members, fosters the discussion on relevant topics, and where it is possible to share researches, opinions and information
- to invite and support adult educators in using ICT for learning
- to exchange good practices among the partners and to visit „alternative“ educational realities
- to realise an online platform usable by a large number of adult educators with documents, research and information about the L2L and where learners - who are not educators- can find interesting tools to get to know more about SDL.

The first part of the project, lasting until December 2013, was dedicated to exploring the relevant topics in each partner country by mentees supported by the mentors. This learning process was fostered by the local and international meetings and Learning mobilities to ensure the necessary exchange amongst all the partners, including the mentees. You can read more about the Learning Outcomes of all involved, mentees and mentors in the part about MENTORING of this booklet.

The second part of the project, lasting from January 2014 until the project end was focused on bringing the learning outcomes to the wide public, especially other adult educators and learners. Important part of this process was looking at formal education system and enabling those involved in it examine new and innovative ways of teaching and learning based on SDL concepts.

We wanted to make a bridge between methods used within formal and non-formal educational systems and investigate how much SDL concept could be used more widely, breaking down the division between the two systems as much as possible and finding ways how SDL methods and tools could be shared by both systems efficiently.

This was done by two Learning mobilities, one organized in Germany and one in Italy. Participants – mostly connected to formal education institutions - had a chance to visit schools that operate on concepts closely connected to SDL and use rather different teaching methods than traditional schools present in formal education scheme. It was very satisfying to see how teachers with long experience in formal education system with rather limited maneuvering space when it comes to implementing innovations saw new ways and realized new possibilities that they could use within their everyday work. It was captivating to watch the exchange when teachers from formal schools started admitting possibilities of implementing SDL within formal structures, which was something very hard to imagine at the beginning for them.

In order to reach the mentioned objectives, the main activities realized were:

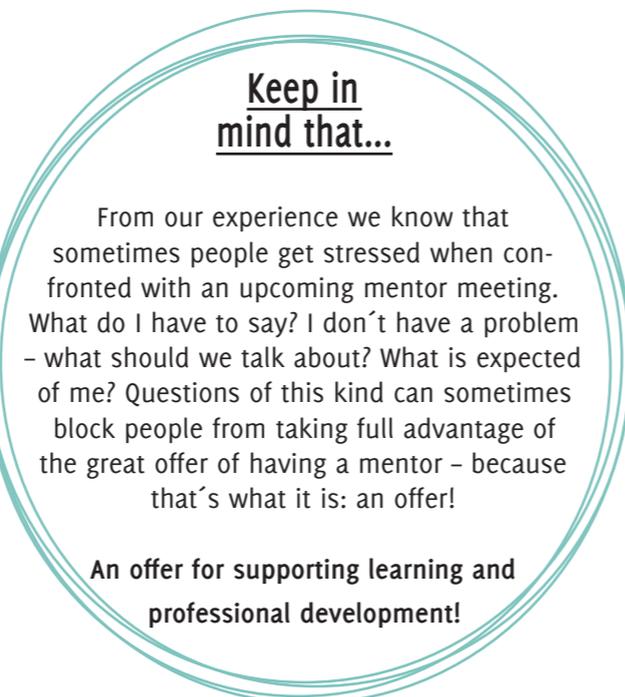
<u>Name of the activity</u>	<u>Timing</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Kick off meeting Activities of studies and research about L2L and SDL	November 2012	Staff meeting
Creation of the online platform www.chooselearning.ning.com	January 2013 – until now	At the beginning used only by the mentees, the mentors and the organizations in order to support the learning process. The platform is now open to everybody who is interested in getting to know more about SDL and L2L! There are documents, videos, reflections, tools to try out and it is targeted both to educators and learners;
Mentoring of a group of adult educators in each country for 8 months in order to support the reflection on their educational approach and on how L2L and SDL could be integrated in their job;	May 2013 - December 2013	
Learning mobility for mentors in Calabria	April 2013	Mobility for the mentors in order to dig in the mentoring topic and to create a common approach
Ongoing supervision of mentors	May 2013 – January 2013	
Learning mobility in Berlin	July 2013	Mobility for mentees to introduce the topic and have a direct experience on SDL by trying out several tools
Learning mobility in Venice	November 2013	Mobility for mentees to share their experiences so far, reflect and plan ahead
Two workshops realized by each group of mentees targeted to adults	Varied depending on the partner country	Through the workshops the mentees had the chance to experiment and try out what they had learnt and reflected on during the mentoring;
Learning mobility in Berlin	March 2014	Targeted at educators interested in schools and institutions that have a different concept and approach to learning from the traditional “formal education” (like for example a democratic school, a Steiner school etc.)
Learning mobility in Italy	May 2014	Targeted at educators interested in schools and institutions that have a different concept and approach to learning from the traditional “formal education” (SDL implemented at university level, small school located in the mountains etc.)
“SDL info-day” in each country	Varied depending on the partner country	To disseminate the project results and to increase the knowledge and the awareness about the topic
Evaluation meeting	July 2014	Staff meeting

Mentoring

In the project mentoring played an important role. How did we see mentoring?

- Mentoring is about one person (the mentor) helping another (the mentee) to achieve something
- It's about giving help and support in a way that will empower the mentee to move forward with confidence towards what he/she wants to achieve.
- Mentoring is creating an informal environment in which the mentee can feel encouraged to discuss their needs and circumstances openly and in confidence with another person who is in a position to be of positive help to them.

As 'learning mentors' in this project we saw ourselves neither as "experts" nor as "therapists" or "examiners"! As learning is a holistic process, the relationship gave time for both professional and private matters as they relate to the mentees learning during the project.



Keep in mind that...

From our experience we know that sometimes people get stressed when confronted with an upcoming mentor meeting. What do I have to say? I don't have a problem - what should we talk about? What is expected of me? Questions of this kind can sometimes block people from taking full advantage of the great offer of having a mentor - because that's what it is: an offer!

An offer for supporting learning and professional development!

Mentoring in practice is:

- a chance to reflect, discuss something which the mentee sees as important for his/her learning
- the possibility to analyse a specific situation in order understand better and to learn
- the chance to discuss an article, a document, a book
- the possibility for the mentee to ask for support when feeling challenged or blocked in his/her learning

PAUL KLOOSTERMAN
Freelance Trainer/Consultant

Living in Calabria, Italy, he started as a youth worker in the Netherlands and came in contact through international projects with the European Youth in Action programme. In the past 20 years he has been active as a trainer, author and expert in the field of European non-formal education.

Paul is an experienced mentor. In this phase of the project he was the support person for the three mentors and he had regular meetings with each of them.

Perspectives

ITALY

Gaia Serafini
Lucia Zinni
Francesca Cimino
Camilla Brandao

ICELAND

Valgerður H. Bjarnadóttir
Guðrún Pálína Guðmundsdóttir
Zane Brikovska
Þorbjörg Ásgeirsdóttir
Guðrún Hadda Bjarnadóttir

GERMANY

Slavena Korsun
Adrian Schwarzmüller
Christiane Bethke
Anna Gabai
Anneke Krueger

MENTORS

Rui Montez
Lenka Uhrova
Giulia Mastropirro

Mentees Perspective



Gaia Serafini - Italy - Educator

The L2L project has been a very interesting experience to me. It allowed me to participate in a European project and I had the opportunity to share thoughts, ideas and practices with other educators.

At the beginning I wasn't sure about what L2L really was. Then I realized it was something I was already doing in my work with my young adults.

So the most important „ahh moment“ was when I understood that the process core of L2L is the awareness. Before my attention was focused on „what can I do to create L2L activities?“ and then the question became „how can I improve my awareness about my learning process, my competences, my way to learn something“ and „what can I do to help others in this process“

I think that „kitchen table“ and mentor talk have been extremely useful to talk and think about some

Taking part to this project was not really “self-directed”, at least at the beginning: I answered “yes” to the proposal of a friend of mine, Camilla, because words “European project” sounded very cool. It seemed to me a good experience to live.

Even if the focus, the matter of the project is about “learning”, it's difficult for me to explore all things I learnt! When I first talked to my mentor I was “scared” about the necessity of reading and studying documents or books. Time after time I found it nice and enriched.

Thanks to the working in the group I learnt some useful techniques and also I reflected about my way of staying in a group. I learnt a lot from other people: I learnt to be curious of what they do and what they are, I analyzed how they approached to other participants and to the different activities, I could get in touch with different cultures. I could see things from a lot of different points of view.

About techniques: I had experience of different instruments... I mean, I had never thought that it was possible to create a learning contest around a restaurant table! In this way I received a lot of inputs: Choose aperitifs, the platform, kitchen table, buzzing groups, videos... no papers, no powerpoint!

I also (re)learnt to communicate in English, after such a long time. I didn't achieve perfection (sometimes I had some difficulties, because the exchange in group went faster than my thought - and translation), but I can say I have now a little experience... I mean, I have it in my suitcase and I can pick it out in the future.

I got then so enthusiastic about the role of the group in the learning process: at the beginning I thought about learning as a “solo” process, during which others may help, but they are not so essential. Then I had to change idea, and it's very funny if you think that, first as student of Education at University and then educator of children and adolescents, I knew about the

themes, that was interesting for all or one of us.

Moreover these „spaces“ of silence and self-reflection are really rare and important for social operators.. who usually don't have enough time to think!

These kind of European projects must be a part of lifelong learning process for all the social operators....so I hope to repeat the experience again, and again, and again!

I think that my name influenced all my life: I'm very close to the environment and I always try to see good things around me. I'm working (since 2002 more or less) as educator with young people and young adults. I love projects in which people act their choices and I just help them doing that. I'm always interested in cooperative learning, nonviolence, environmental issues and more sustainable lifestyle

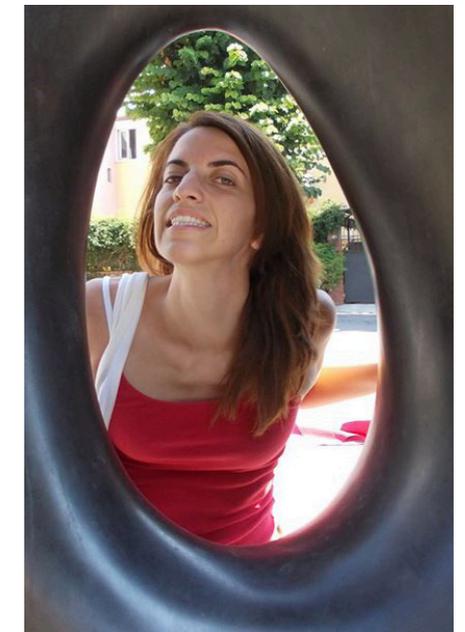
importance of the group and I used it as an instrument to work with guys (here it is a big “ahhhh moment”).

I found, during the project, a vision of the educator which is not so different from the theories I studied, but which is completely different from the real work, especially in schools. It seemed like I knew some things (learnt from books or personal experience), but I needed someone who explained them to me again, who let me have a real experience of them. This is another “ahhhh moment”, happening while I'm writing.

It often happens to me to link what I'm doing to the project... a month ago I had to study for a sort of exam to keep my job at university. I didn't have a great motivation... but then I got so involved in studying about dyslexia and disability (the matter of the “exam”), because it was something very close to my interest in education. And then I linked what I was studying to the matter of the project. And I could have a critical approach about the ways Italian school deals with dyslexia and disabilities, because I now have a new “framework”.

All this words to say.. I sometimes find myself saying: “This is a learning moment!”. I found that learning it's about all we live during the day, it's about feelings, about what we have more difficult to face of ourselves too. I think that having the opportunity to take part to this project, it gave to me a new pair of glasses to see not only learning in a new way, but my entire life.

I have a degree in Educational Sciences and in Management of Educational and Training Services. I worked as Youth Worker in my municipality for one year. Then I took part in projects of „afterschool“ with different associations in Padua. I'm now working at the University of Padua, in the Training and Human Resources Development Office where we project, plan and realize the training of the University workers.



Lucia Zinni - Italy - Educator and HR Officer



I read something about this SDL but it was not so clear to me and I needed to know more and to see how to use it in my everyday life and job. Thinking about the first mentorships, I couldn't understand what was going on because it seemed to me that what I was doing was not useful and my mentor kept asking questions to me, instead of teaching me things. I felt like I was not learning because nobody was explaining me new things. I trusted the project and my mentor and I went to Berlin, where I met the other people who did join the project from Iceland

Francesca Cimino - Italy- Educator

When I first heard about this project, I didn't know exactly what I was going to encounter and to do. I wanted to go deeper in adult education and this project offered a global experience about an approach usable in adult education, so I joined it.

and Germany. During that mobility I had an insight and I realized that I did have learn! I didn't know how but I learnt something during the mentorships and I was learning during the mobility even if the main part of the thinking and of the things said came from me or from the other participants.

After the summer break I started my last year of my second Master, in Lifelong learning. The funny thing was that one of the classes I attended was done with the SDL approach! The subject was "Organisational behavior" but the approach used by the professor to teach (or better: to facilitate the learning) was SDL. I really enjoy this class, the professor and the way to deal with SDL, and I tried to explain to my classmates that they were attending an exceptional class because it's not so common this kind of approach in the University, but most of them still think that the class wasn't so special.

I got the maximum at the examination and I decided to write my thesis with this professor. She put me in contact with an America professor, ex student of Mezirow and I'm actually start to write my final dissertation about a training path I will do using the approach of transformative learning (a very close approach to SDL). I'm sure I wouldn't have done it if I didn't participate in the project.

Another relevant result that came directly from my participation in the project was the foundation of a no-profit organization. I decided to do it with a colleague, to try to be protagonist of our work decisions. We just began few months ago, but we managed to work together for some projects and to try to submit some project in E+ programme. We are aware that we are just starting and we don't know where it will bring us. Last, but not least important outcome of my participation in this project was that in my everyday job (I work as educator in a shelter for victims of trafficking of human beings) we focused much more on the way of learning of our clients. Now we really make an individual program for each of our clients because we understood that each of them is different and learn in a different way.

Francesca Cimino, 28 years old, based in Padua (Italy) is an expert in migration and gender issues. She actually works in Adult Education field with women victims of domestic violence and victims of trafficking in human beings.

The experience has been really important above all because I had the possibility to feel the "meaning" of European Union. Indeed, to me, the most important moment in Choose Project has been the possibility to build up joint actions which are important not just for me, but also for educators that belong to different countries and realities. Therefore the training course in Berlin gave me the opportunity to discuss and confront various themes of mutual interests, discovering and becoming aware of different approaches to the same subject, developing new projects ideas related to the education' field.

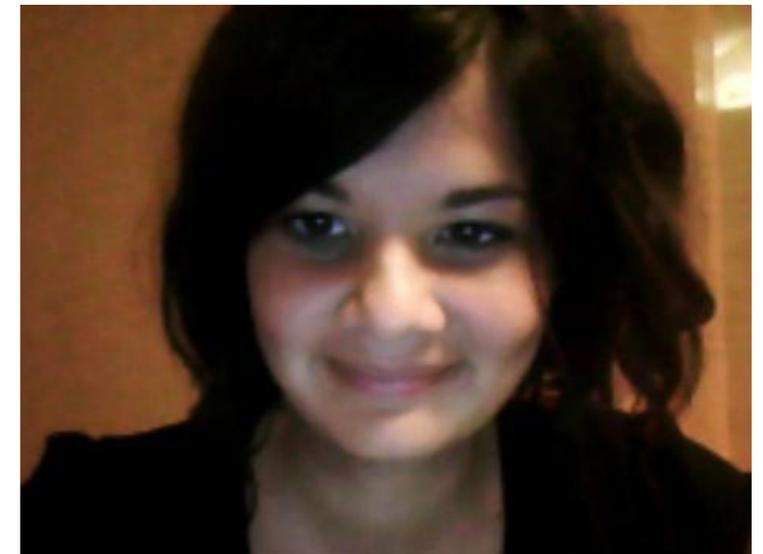
One of the most important part of the exchange was that we had also the possibility to learn about each other and to share our experiences in the field of education.

It has been truly inspiring the activities we took part in, where nobody told us what to do.. At the beginning was difficult because in our system we are trained to rely on another person whom "teach" us, what to do and above all, HOW, to do it. Thus, another way of teaching is astonishing if you are not used to.

For the same reason the mentoring talks were difficult for me. I thought also that they were unnecessary because anybody was teaching me something. After a while I got the point and I tried to follow the process. It has been surprising to realize that I was not feeling comfortable because of that reason and to "try" how the system had had an impact in my life, in my mindset and in my way of perceive the different roles between teachers and pupils.

So, thank you so much for this interesting possibility you gave me.

Camilla Brandao is a dedicated and highly skilled sociologist and social worker, who has specialist knowledge and practical skills allowing instant rapport and interaction with a diverse range of people from varying multicultural backgrounds. Specialized in cultural change and education issues. Particularly focused on integration and development policy related to different approaches to the education system.



Camilla Brandao - Italy - Sociologist and Social Worker



Iceland
Adult Educator
Valgerður H. Bjarnadóttir

find a way to do that within the frames of the project. I never got a clear vision of the main purpose of the project, which suddenly was no longer focused on adult education, since the last two mobilities focused on children's learning.

The mobility in Berlin in July 2013 was useful – working on the tasks there and getting to know the other people in the project. It would have been very useful to meet that same group of people more often which would have created continuation in both the dialogue and the work. I would have planned the session in such a way that the mentees got a chance to connect more actively and even create a base for some future collective work.

However, the Berlin mobility was inspiring and left me with new tools to work with (see below), and confirmed that I have used SDL as a way of working for many years in many different circumstances.

As a mentee I appreciated the support I got from the mentor and the questions from the mentor were useful and stimulating. In our conversations I could "map" my own way of working with SDL through the years, and mirror new ideas and changes that I made in my daily work inspired by the things I learned in the project. Examples of new ideas to use in a SDL context were "The Learning Interview" and exercises such as "The Learning River", which I have now used to some degree in my work.

My experience is that an SDL approach works well in informal adult education and in education where the participants feel strong in their general sense of being. Some groups feel very insecure when confronted with the chance to choose and decide their own learning path. I have always valued Grundtvig's (and his successor's) ideas on passion for learning and learning for life as a necessary approach for real learning. In the many contexts where

I have been working I try to create a secure frame/ground for the participants to find and realize their learning needs. One of these contexts was Learning Center in Akureyri (so called 'Menntasmiðjan'), where I worked for years with three of the other participants in the project. That fact of course coloured our participation in the project, and my expectations.

The Work-Shop created by the mentees in November 2013 was fun and gave me new insights into my work with foreign women. The "old Menntasmiðja-group" was responsible for planning that work-shop and facilitating it, so it naturally was designed in a way that we are used to in our work. However, we added some of the exercises that we got to know in Berlin, and this worked well. I have never before facilitated a work-shop with immigrants in Iceland, that was this open and had such a wide group of women. They came from four continents and some had lived in Iceland for decades, others only months. Through the exercises and in their discussions (kitchen table method) they connected and found both strengths and obstacles in themselves and the Icelandic surroundings that can help them to define what they need in order to become more active citizens (which was the purpose of the work-shop).

In my opinion it would have benefitted the project to keep a fixed group of individuals working on the project – not to take in new participants who were not fully participating (not taking part in the Kitchen Tables etc).

I am happy to have participated in the project, although I feel that next time I participate in an Adult Education project I would want to be in a situation to share my knowledge and work with people sharing their knowledge on a European level.

If I take part as a mentee and without any payments for my work, it will have to be in an area where I truly feel like a mentee learning

something valuable and new, from people with deep knowledge and experience in the subject.

It was good fun though, wonderful people, old and new friends! Thank you all!

Valgerður H. Bjarnadóttir, also called Valka, stands behind the project VANADÍS - our roots, dreams and power. She studied social work in Norway and has a BA in Integral Studies and a masters degree in Women's Spirituality, Philosophy and Religion from San Fransisco. She has worked since the 1980's on topics such as women's issues and gender equality and she has been developing innovative methods in adult education, with a special focus on self-empowerment of women and increased awareness of our connection to our roots and dreams and to Nature.

Valgerður's work through the years has consisted of: consultancy services for individuals and groups, project management and management of public institutions and departments, operation of her own company, teaching of teenagers and adults, governmental policies, theater, international projects, voluntary work, running a slow food book-café with a cultural program, and enjoying being a mother and a grandmother.





Iceland
Artist - Educator in
the Center for Visual Arts
Guðrún Pálína Guðmundsdóttir

When I joined the Grundtvig project 'Choose Your Learning, Choose your life', at the beginning of 2013, I was employed as an educator in the center of Visual Arts. As the project was evolving, I was granted a special stipendium from the local municipality to work on my artistic projects for the period of 01.10.2013 – 01.06.2014 (independently from my involvement in the Grundtvig project). This stipendium is so called 'Artist of the municipality' and it had rather big influence on my involvement in the Grundtvig project and as a result also at my learning outcomes, which are rather different from the rest of the mentees. The thing is that I did not get to share a common experience of preparing and carrying out a workshop for foreign women that other mentees ended up doing as a part of their experience with using SDL within educational context.

I can say that I was really excited about the project from the beginning and was really looking forward to creating something together with the other mentees and also on the international level. The learning mobility that took place in Berlin in July 2013 was useful and I was glad to meet the partners and their mentees. I read a

lot on our platform about SDL before the mobility, as I wanted to be well prepared and discovered already before the mobility that the topic of SDL has been close to me in my educational practice for a long time, just that we were not calling it Self-directed learning. I had a similar feeling in Berlin, as we were gradually introduced to the topic of SDL, that it was something that I've known for a long time and have been using to various extents in my practice, especially during the period when I was working with the other mentees at a Learning Center for adults. There, it was really important that the learners would be supported in figuring out and setting for themselves what was it that they really wanted to learn.

After we came back from the Berlin mobility, it was clear that I would have to lower my involvement in the Grundtvig Project due to the above mentioned stipendium that I was granted. In the end, I spent my stipendium time in Berlin and was rather out of the project from August 2013 to March 2014, yet being somewhat connected through emails and occasional visits to Iceland. When looking back, I was really motivated to try Self-directed learning on myself to see its pros and cons, from the very beginning of the project. So it happened, that I chose learning German as my personal learning commitment, implementing SDL method consciously as I would be learning. I set myself a clear goal, which was challenging enough, yet realistic and am really pleased about having it reached successfully. My stay in Berlin during the stipendium helped the whole process and I even ended up using peer learning. This was not planned, as I was hoping to learn the right pronunciation by being surrounded by German language, but in the end it was not enough. I coincidentally came across an advert where German woman wanted to learn Icelandic in the exchange for teaching German. This was the moment, when I realized that this is what I need in order to get my pronunciation right and it worked. When thinking of this now, it was not in my plan but the fact that I



was open to it, truly helped reaching my goal. In my case, learning a language requires hard and focused work and that's what I actually did. It's never too late to start to learn anything.

Platform as a tool and resource was a bit challenging at the beginning. I needed support to figure out the basics and that's why we agreed with my mentor to dedicate 15 minutes from each mentoring session to work on the platform. I also had some support from my peer mentor. I did not participate in the Apperitif, since I am not able to write fast enough in English to take part. Once I moved to Berlin thanks to stipendium, it was difficult to follow-up on things online, as I did not have my PC with me and it took a while to get the inet access to the place that I rented, so I lost the contact with the platform, as a resource.

Since I was living in Berlin, when the second Berlin learning mobility took place in March 2014, I joined 2 school visits and I found particularly interesting Waldorf school. It might be because we got to meet the pupils too. The teacher who introduced us to operations was really great and very enriching.

All, in all, in my opinion it would have benefited the project to keep a fixed amount of indivi-

duals working on the project – not to take new participants who were not fully participating (not taking part in the Kichen Tables etc).

Although being so critical I'm not regretful of being a participant in this project. I got to know some wonderful people, learned new things through SDL and made some good connections.

Guðrún Pálína Guðmundsdóttir is an Icelandic having lived for a long time abroad, both in Sweden and Netherlands, 9 years in each country. She obtained masters in linguistics at the University in Gotheborg. Later on, she studied arts in Netherlands and got her masters from Jan van Eyck Akademie in Maastricht. Pálína has been working a lot in language teaching (Icelandic for icelanders and Icelandic for foreigners) and art teaching. She works as an educator in the Center for visual arts and works as an artist too, having her own art gallery.





Iceland
Zane Brikovska
Project manager
International office of
Akureyri municipality - Educator

I enjoyed being together with the project group as well as having my first experience as a mentee. I appreciated your contribution Lenka as a mentor because it helped me to develop (to clear out and systemize) my project on educational activities for immigrants. Also I became familiar with a notion of SDL, met interesting people who use this method in their educational activities and had some inspiring time in Venice mobility.

The whole life is one big every day learning process taking place in many and diverse forms. I learned for myself that SDL could be used as one of possible learning methods either at educational institutions or just simply for educational activities within the family.

SDL is a technical construct therefore it created so often confusion and uncertainty among participants when they were asked to give a definition of what is SDL.

For whatever learning/educational process what counts the most is personality who possesses dignity for her/himself and others and passion for what she/he does. Very charming example of it was a teacher I met in Venice mobility.

I didn't enjoy the very passive attitude of facilitators during the group sessions in Venice since I didn't really understand their role and contribution. Also repetition of the same questions What is SDL for you? What are the important components of SDL ? during the project, created

frustration and feeling of getting nowhere.

Authority means advice, opinion, influence and invention and as such it has an important part within educational process.

Warm greetings and big thanks for the time together.

Zane Brikovska, originally from Latvia, living in the north of Iceland. Social worker with passion for the world of diversity. Art for adaption would be a new field to discover and develop both locally and internationally.

Iceland - Þorbjörg Ásgeirsdóttir - Educator
Coordinator in the Center for Visual Arts

My encounter with SDL during this project has been on a positive note. I found however that I would have liked more discussions about how to approach a diverse group of learners, (as became evident in our workshop) all having their own mindset when it comes to learning. According to my experience one has to have an individual approach to each learner, if this method is to be effective and benefit the learner. Some learners are not ready to take on the freedom that SDL offers and should be approached as such and this is where the role of the facilitator becomes a bit complicated, if he/she is truly dedicated to using SDL. There can be all kinds of reasons for someone, as a learner, not to embrace the SDL method and in my view it is important to investigate what those are with full respect for the learner – this means that the facilitator has to be very sensitive and understanding and ready to be a learner himself, in this situation.

The methods that my colleagues and I applied in the program at the Learning Center are according to this approach I have described. The biggest challenge for most of our students was to actually start to look at themselves as

learners and use their learning in a personal way (not facts from books). The main issue was self-empowerment, which affects everything in ones life. In my opinion the SDL method should take this (self-empowerment) more into consideration since it can be what makes or breaks an individual.

The mobility in Berlin in July 2013, that I participated in, was useful – working on the tasks there and getting to know the other people in the project. It would have been very useful to meet that same group of people more often, which would have created continuation in both the dialogue and the work. I did not get a feeling of belonging to this European group whereas my mentor made herself available and we developed a strong connection. One of the things we worked on in Berlin stands out as a learning experience for me, personally. That was the “Learning Interview” – where I, as a learner, had to analyse the way I learn in a very broad sense. I found this to be useful because I found myself thinking about learning and being a learner in a new way.

The approach of the mentor was in this project very open and flexible and I ask myself if there was too much flexibility– some of us are not

used to total freedom in a context like this and when that is the case the mentor has to react in such a way that guides the mentee, gives support yet lets the mentee direct himself. The questions from the mentor were most often useful and stimulating. The mentor and the mentee were able to discuss things as equals – for some it was difficult to figure out what to do – what was “allowed” or what could count as their SDL-project.

Some of the things done suited me better than others – I participated in one of the Aperitifs which was interesting but the discussion there was not very helpful in regards to understanding SDL better.

In my opinion it would have benefitted the project to keep a fixed amount of individuals working on the project – not to take new participants who were not fully participating (not taking part in the Kitchen Tables etc.).

I did not take on a personal SDL-project since it was not clear to me until late in the project that this was an option and I felt that there was nothing to be gained from introducing that (lessons in Spanish) as my special SDL-project.

My understanding in the beginning of the project was that there would be a group of people from Iceland (and the other countries) working on this project, doing the mobilities, which would be focused on adult learners. My feeling is that this later changed into a focus on schools for children and new people taking part in the project – only in the mobilities – not in the Kitchen table etc. This made me confused and I was not sure about what this project was all about.

The framework of this project would have needed to be more clear and better planned – dates of mobilities and focus introduced earlier and schedules kept.

I realize I need a firmer direction in general.

Although being so critical am not regretful of being a participant in this project. I met some good people, learned new things through SDL and made some good connections.

Þorbjörg lives in the north of Iceland and has been working as an educator and a coordinator in the Center for Visual Arts. Wanting to apply new methods at her work, she decided to participate in this project and ended up using SDL when groups of students came to see exhibitions.



Iceland
Freelance Educator - Artist
Guðrún Hadda Bjarnadóttir

in my practice. Confusion for me lied for some time in thinking that I had to use SDL within the school context where I was teaching. I needed to realize that SDL project could simply be related to me as an educator and as a learner in general. Now it makes perfect sense, as one learns in order to be able to change something in his/her practice so that the further teaching can be better.

Gradually and together with the support of the mentor, I realized that my SDL project could be something that I've been passionate about for quite some time. I've been very interested in working with topics that connect us to our roots and our cultural heritage, because I feel that we're losing that precious connection. My SDL project was related to work on the oldest cultural piece I found in the area where I live. It was a woven altar piece from the 16th century that inspired me to create a following project:

Creation of a set of educational activities based on SDL principles for the locals living in the area interested both, in the topic of cultural heritage and also arts. The desired target group was to be as mixed as possible, agewise and gender-wise. The idea was to learn about the piece together, get to know it really well and from that create usable art, while the participants would get the necessary support from me in terms of the various crafts techniques. On top of this, the participants would have total freedom in choosing what kind of craft piece they would like to create, while getting the necessary support from me on methods and techniques to be used.

The final works would be exhibited in spring of 2015. By now, the working group has been created and consists of the locals ranging from teenage age up to people in their eighties. We have been meeting regularly and will carry on as planned, organizing the exhibition in 2015. Many of them are afraid of drawing and that's why I must use creative yet supportive methods to help them raise self-esteem and trust

When I joined the project I was working as a part-time teacher at the University and was also involved in designing own courses in Arts and Crafts for various target groups. As the project was evolving, I soon discovered that the principles of SDL have been close to me in my educational practice for a long time, just that I was not calling it this way. As the result of this, my journey as a mentee was different, as I was ready to implement SDL at my work, really fast. However, I also realized soon that short courses for beginners in arts and crafts where I teach art techniques are rather fixed. Since it's about the technique itself there is not much space for SDL implementation there. There's quite some space within longer courses, but they were not likely to happen during the mentoring period of the project.

And this is where the confusion started, I think. As a mentee I was given complete freedom when choosing the way of implementing SDL

in themselves that they can actually create real arts and crafts pieces.

When thinking back to the mentoring support I got in this process, I see now that it would have benefited me more to be reminded about the available resources, especially the platform. I must say that since it's difficult for me to write in English I did not take part in online Aperitifs to discuss SDL with the international partners. But as the result of this, I simply forgot about the platform as a tool where lots of other resources are stored and where I could add resources from me. On top of this, I did not have a need to reach out for the platform as a resource since I've not been teaching that intensively.

I'm very aware that I need deadlines and that's why we agreed with the mentor that I would set deadlines for myself and the mentor would help me check up on them. This worked out well and helped the whole process of my SDL cultural

heritage project described above, which is up and running.

Learning mobility in Berlin in July 2013 was useful - working on the tasks there and getting to know the other people in the project. It would have been very useful to meet that same group of people more often which would have created continuation in both the dialogue and the work. I was surprised and positively pleased about the fact how many participants were involved in other European projects. I see it as a great asset, as these international connections contribute not only to work exchanges but also to peace in this world.

In Berlin, where SDL was introduced in details, I felt reassured that I've been using the right approach that works for me as an educator and for my learners too for a really long time. Otherwise, I did not feel I was learning much new. Although, it was great to see how many SDL based educational activities already exist and



how much they're spread and used. During the workshop that we created with the other mentees for foreign women based on SDL, I tried using one simple method at the beginning and at the end of the workshop. It was letting all the participants draw a portrait of themselves in a limited time (max. 60 seconds). At the very end of the workshop, the same task was given. When participants come shy and insecure, not knowing how things work, and are allowed to draw a portrait in a short time, the portraits reflect really well how people feel. It is also easier to talk about the picture rather than about oneself in the introduction round.

Thanks to the workshop we organized I was reassured, once and again, that foreigners can just as much teach us as we teach them. I'd like to enable them to teach us further and pass on their resources to us. I'm very interested and motivated in creating methods and activities for foreign women, focusing on sharing of Icelandic culture and 'their' culture. How can 'their' culture enrich us and Iceland.

During one of the mentoring sessions, when reflecting on my use of SDL in the past practice, we've concluded the following about my natural way of implementing SDL:

Me as a facilitator, I started with some guiding during the first part and at the same time, participants were already encouraged and inspired at that stage to think about what is it that they want to do/work on. From the moment when they were clear on what they wanted to do, I acted as a support and was sharing the necessary knowledge mostly related to the techniques. However, there were many participants present and I could not attend to all, as needed. Very naturally, I invited the participants who knew the methods to teach and support others. Like this, natural peer support happened, where some learners had to practice asking for help and some learners would naturally share their

knowledge supporting the others. So the process was also about giving and receiving and self-empowering.

I also took part in the Learning mobility taking place in May 2014 in Venice and was very pleased with the participation. It was really nice to meet the others belonging to the project who I got to know during the first mobility in Berlin 2013.

Since many of us already knew each other, it was very smooth and easy to start our work together, which confirms my thoughts that it would have been more beneficial when it comes to learning if the same group of the mentees got to participate at each Learning mobility throughout the project.

I think that such arrangement would enable better understanding for all, participants would get connected more strongly and it's more likely that participants would also implement what they learnt and experienced within their work.

Looking at my involvement in this Grundtvig project, I am not regretful of being a participant, although I clearly see drawbacks too. I got to know some wonderful people, I learned new things through SDL and made some good connections.

Guðrún Hadda Bjarnadóttir, also called Hadda, is an artist from Iceland. She graduated as a therapist for mentally disabled and had worked in that field before she studied art and art teaching.

Since then, Hadda has been working as an adult educator, teaching arts and crafts. On top of this, she has been running her own artistic workshop and a gallery.



Personal Benefits:

- mentoring! having somebody on your side is important in any process and so was it during my self-directed learning exploration. I am very grateful to Rui, who was supporting me when I was planning my training courses.
- networking! the group selection was done in a good way, so I can clearly imagine cooperation with participants of the project and work together on the SDL in the future!
- best practices! the part of the programme when we had a chance to go Italy and meet with professionals in the educational sphere was very fruitful. It is worth to talk to real person who does SDL in practice rather than investigate tonnes theoretical materials.

What I Learned: it is much more difficult to facilitate self-directed learning process in the group rather than to have structured and overplanned approach.

Personal Results:

- I started to give classes to students at the university where I am teaching. my topics are: data visualization, ideas management, creativity, entrepreneurship and personal branding.
- having international meetings with colleagues from Italy and Iceland I got a strong feeling, that giving responsibility to the group works and bring good results in the education and learning process. so I put even more flexibility on my training agenda and let the process to be in the flow. Results: participants of my training courses learned material "by doing", developed questions they really interested in and were concentrated on the core information.

Reward From Students: effective learning, very good outcomes and further interest in the topic.

Slavena Korsun is a trainer, coach and educator. Her main topics of work include Design Thinking, Ideas Management, Data Visualization, Creativity and Entrepreneurship. More info: <http://www.slavenakorsun.de>



Germany
Slavena Korsun
Teacher – Educator – Coach



Germany
Adrian Schwarzmüller
Coaching – Training – Beratung

The workshop I made in autumn 2013 helped me to work out a topic that lay a long time untouched in my cupboard. This was the perfect time and situation to prepare, design and test it during this project. It gave me an extra input in how selfdirected learning works, thank you for the possibility, Rui.

The fact, that the project included the international meetings in Berlin and Venice helped me very much to get out of the every-day-life feeling. In my opinion this also fosters the European feeling of belonging together and in the same time it gives you a kind of wake-up-call, that there are different social, political and personal situations outside of your own little world, wonderful.

As I am more the practical one, the national meetings gave me new learning impulses, when other participants gave intense input about science and research articles out of books from specialists, astonishing for me.

I learned, that selfdirected learning and learning to learn are topics that are very important for everyone of us to get further in life much more efficient. In my point of view the opinions about SDL can be discussed philosophical, because there is always the possibility to dive into the topic deeper and deeper, when you have once started to think about it. This is the reason for taking care of this topics in my future and don't loose them out of sight.

Thank you very much for the possibility to join this project, I hope there will follow some more such interesting projects.

„Adrian Schwarzmüller is a personal coach and freelance trainer for communication and soft skills with more than ten years experience in adult education. He started his trainer career in the professional training department of the airport Frankfurt a.M. and moved into self-employment with graduating as training supervisor

and systemic coach. His main topics of work include train the trainer seminars, self- and time-management, learning to learn, conflict management and team building. Furthermore he is interested in sustainable gardening and green building practices.“

The project “Learning to Learn” gave me an insight in the different aspects of selfdirected learning. It was important for me to reflect about new ideas of selfdirected learning and to experience different methods how to provide learners with skills to improve their learning process.

As a teacher for adult education (German as a foreign language) it is essential for me to deal with this subject. It is not only the question what I can do in class to enhance the learning process but it is also very important to support and guide learners in their selfdirected learning. Especially the non-formal learning environment is an excellent way to improve language skills.

Part of the project was also to reflect on how, what and when you learn. To experience this myself created an awareness that is very helpful for my work. For example did I learn about the fact that it is better to decide freely about what and when you learn as it has a much more lasting effect and corresponds to the needs of the learner. I also got more information about methods to help monitor this process and implement this knowledge.

I have also benefited from the different backgrounds of our group members that go from an academic approach to coaching and train the trainer. It helped reconsider what is part of the learning process and how it can be influenced. It was also relevant to analyse the different perspectives on the subject.

During the project I became also aware of what it actually means to be a facilitator in

learning. For me as a teacher it implies to give responsibility to the learner, too. I recognised that I could implement that much more in my teaching. I also learned that it is not only significant to create a pleasant learning environment, but that it is also crucial to make the whole learning process more transparent and give in general more liberty to the learner.

As learning to learn is a fundamental step to lifelong learning and therefore more and more important, it is a major question how to make sure that the learning process is successful. Especially in my area the learning is very result-oriented and language skills are tested in the known way. Therefore it is so important to show different ways to achieve this goal, especially the advantages of non-formal learning.

Christiane Bethke studied German and English philology. She then became a teacher for German as a foreign language for children and adults with focus on learning techniques, self-directed learning and new forms of communicative learning in or outside the classroom. Other areas of interest are linguistics, history and cross-cultural competence.



Germany
Christiane Bethke
German Language Teacher



Germany
Anna Gabai
Student – Educator

ning. This is a very important point for ongoing pedagogist, as my self. It is extremely interesting and important to reflect about our own way of acquiring new contents, in order to recognize the different learners in our groups and give them the right inputs and hints.

During the project we reflected a lot about the role of the facilitator. For me, a facilitator is a teacher, who has some more skills. The facilitator knows the topics and the contents, but he/she is also able to recognize when to step back and leave space for the pupils to express their own knowledge. Moreover, the facilitator is very able to know the questions that will rise up and offers plenty of instruments to keep the curiosity and the motivation of his pupils high.

During the project we had the chance to have a Mentor, who met with us four times during the year. I perceived the mentoring as a further moment of self reflection, since I could go over the topics again and discuss them with the project initiator, Rui. This helped me to see my experience in a bigger context and to focus on my own interests in the vast field of Self Directed Learning.

Self Directed Learning and Learning to Learn opened me a new perspective about the way I am learning and the way I want to be as a teacher. Moreover, the opportunity to exchange my thoughts with people from other European countries and of different ages made this project even more special for me.

Anna Gabai lives in Berlin. She works as a reading educator with children and is studying Life Long Learning. Her main interests are Comics, Visual Education, Non formal Education, Education policy of the European Union and the dialogue with the Arab world.

Learning is my main occupation of the last 26 years. It's what I love to do and what I cannot stop doing. I know the routine of schools and what it is necessary for getting a good grade. Now I am studying Life Long Learning at the university, because I believe that we cannot give up on adults and that I am not the only one who loves and lives for learning. Thanks to this Master I would like to understand better what motivates adults to learn and which method is better to bring them to learn.

There is a big „But“ : universities are very formal institutions and their approach to learning is based on a strict and formalized method. This method is not suitable for everybody as well as universities are not accessible for everybody. So a question arose in me: how can we approach learning from another perspective?

As soon as I found out about this Grundtvig offer about „Self Directed Learning and Learning to Learn“ I contacted the trainers and was very excited about their project ! This project opened with many questions about my way of lear-

During my participation in the project “Choose Your Learning – Choose Your Life” I got to know interesting people from different generations, professional and national backgrounds who all came together in order to explore more about the chances and challenges of self-directed learning.

The critical approach towards traditional teaching methods (considered as mostly externally directed) brought us to reflect on our own learning experiences and the educational systems of our countries. It was very interesting for me to get to know more about the specifics of the different systems and the alternatives

which grew out of them. We gathered sometimes very different perspectives and positions on our topics “self-directed learning” and “learning to learn”.

I think that being confronted with these different opinions on learning showed us one more time that any learner is individual and has his/her own preferences towards learning. What I take with me are a broader view on education, much inspiration and a network of great people / educators.

Germany
Anneke Krueger
Student – Educator

Mentors Perspective

GIULIA MASTROPIRRO
Freelance Trainer
Student in Gestalt Counselling



Free-lance trainer based between Padova and Venice (Italy) and active in European projects related to non formal education and adult education. She is the President of Work in Progress that she founded in 2010 together with some friends. Her main interests are Learning, Emo-

tions, Self-Development and the connections among these three main pillars. She is now also a student in a “Gestalt Counselling” master.

Being a mentor was, in the beginning, a bit frightening me! I was scared to say something wrong or not to ask a useful questions and not to be able to satisfy my mentees' expectations. I remember that I was so tired at the end of the first day in which I had two mentors talks! So, I asked myself where this fear came from and during the mentoring and the supervision process I developed some reflections I would like to share; I think they can be very useful in any educational relation and have a lot to do with SDL.

The first reflection has to do with the issue of relationship in itself. I think a learning process can happen only within a safe and trustable relation, that is something more than say the right or wrong thing in a certain moment. It is about empathy, authenticity and transparency and with these words I mean also revealing myself as a person, real and imperfect as I am, in my relationship with another. I think that was very important because if I - as a mentor - have not all the answers and all the proper questi-

ons, You – as a mentee – are allowed to do the same! This was in some cases a turning point for the relation: the mentoring was not anymore a place where to exchange information and became a dynamic space where to reflect together on questions, doubts, difficulties, imperfections, feelings, researches, learning and much more. In that moment I have started learning from my mentees too and the relations became mutual.

This leads to the second reflection about the concept of responsibility. What are my responsibilities as a mentor? I realized that all the tension and the fear I had were connected to the assumption that I was somehow responsible for my mentees' learning: so if I am a good mentor they learn, if I am a bad mentor they do not learn. Despite doing a project on SDL and have worked a lot on it both as a learner and as a trainer, there was still a part of me that tended to take the responsibility of their learning process. To give it fully away, I tried to understand why that part was still there and what was it connected to and I realized that I was the one having some expectations on their learning outcomes! This awareness supported me in stepping back and fully respect their objectives, whatever they were. I have to admit that I was not always able to do it; it was very helpful reading Carl Rogers' words in "On becoming a person":

"...But experience drove home the fact that to act consistently acceptant, for example, if in fact I was feeling annoyed or skeptical or some other non-acceptant feeling, was certain in the long run to be perceived as inconsistent or untrustworthy. I have come to recognize that being trustworthy does not demand that I be rigidly consistent but that I be dependably real"

The mentoring was a great learning experience for me: I feel more confident to work in a one-to-one relation, I have digested more and more the concept of SDL, I could work on my way of relating to the others and on the concept of responsibility.

LENKA UHROVA
Freelance Trainer
Educator



Originally from Slovakia, living in the north of Iceland, she's been involved in various educational projects since 2004 with the majority of them connected to the European Youth in Action Programme, not only on regional but also international level. Lenka has been very interested in finding ways to empower people to use their creativity and potential to the full so that they can contribute to the well-being of their community. Thus community development projects is something that truly drives her.

My experience as a mentor in this project is two-fold. I was acting as a coordinating body of the project on the Icelandic side and at the same time was a mentor of 7 mentees. Both positions were very new to me, as I have never coordinated such a long-term project before, nor have I mentored learning experiences in such a structured way of so many mentees at the same time.

Not surprisingly, there was a great deal of learning going on and still is, as we're in the closing part of the project.

The following text is about my experience and learning outcomes as a mentor in this project:

In April 2013, I got my mentor's training within this project and to make this reflection really authentic, I recall the memories as they come without looking into my notes in the first round of writing. During the training, I realized that mentoring Self-directed learning process, where Self-directed learning is also a topic of discovery and learning would be very challenging. On one hand it meant allowing mentees necessary space and time to figure out the way they would like to use to explore the topic, and on the other hand providing resources and inspiration, whenever I felt it would be useful to support their learning processes. And this is where tricky and fine line lies in mentor's work supporting SDL processes. I particularly liked encouragement of our trainer during the training: 'It's OK to be critical and it's OK to express your opinion during mentoring sessions – what is really important is the way criticism and personal opinion of the mentor is expressed.' Another great thing to be reminded about was a learning process of me as a mentor. I was in a learning process just as much as my mentees during the mentoring and I was also very open and honest about this.

I love asking questions and practicing my active listening skills. On top of that I've been interested in the topic of SDL for the past 4 years really intensively, so I was very excited about the mentoring process, being aware that most of my mentees have had much longer experience in adult education than me.

As a mentor, I used the strategy of total freedom at the beginning, explaining the necessities and letting my mentees figure out their way to explore SDL processes by themselves. Not rushing anything, I let space and time for the processes to evolve. The stress would be on the agenda that mentees bring themselves to our sessions. Here, I must admit that I could

have brought more inputs as an inspiration, especially to some mentees and particularly at the beginning of the process, where confusion and feeling of being lost occurred naturally.

Another thing that I've learnt and would do differently next time is a clarity in having at least 1 session per month, and not leave it up to the mentees completely. Even-though, the pre-set frequency was 1 per month, I kept on stressing that it should not be forced and mentees should decide themselves whether they need a session or not. Now, looking back, the sessions should simply be offered as set and a next date always pre-agreed at the finished session.

Of course, each mentee can cancel, in case something comes up, but now I can see that misunderstandings that a few mentees encountered in the process, especially in terms of their role and aims of the project could have been prevented by regular mentoring sessions.

Towards the end of the mentoring process, I decided to use Appreciative Inquiry interview method with each and every mentee, as I wanted to be sure about the biggest impact the project has had on them. It proved to be very efficient and useful and allowed me to see what is really sticking out for each and every as a success during their project involvement, which I otherwise would not be able to figure out from the previous sessions.

Last but not least, during the project, 2 mentees ended up stepping away completely. One of them was diagnosed with a serious disease during the first period of the project, which influenced not only his involvement but also the involvement of his partner, as they run their activities together. There was a period, when they were still willing to carry on with the adjusted involvement, so it meant a few mentoring sessions, where I was giving support and allowing space and time to help them figure out reasonable work involvement in line with new

life challenges that they were facing. It was positive that all the other mentees understood the need and gave a green light for the extra time. I'm really glad that I dedicated the extra time and extra support that was needed while things were unclear and uncertain.

Our mentoring sessions would evolve a lot about what's been happening on personal level in their lives and also its influence on the project work. One could say that some sessions were falling into coaching, however, I would always check the need at the beginning and direct the session the way that my mentees requested.

To conclude, self-directed learning processes are very unique for each and every individual and are closely connected with everyday life and challenges it brings. That is why I find it important, as a facilitator and a mentor, to embrace them in that way – both, when supporting others and also when reflecting on my own learning within this precious process.

RUI MONTEZ
Project Manager
Freelance Trainer



Rui Montez is a Berlin based freelance trainer and project manager in the youth and civic education area.

His main topics of work include Non Formal Education, learning facilitation, creativity, self development, employability, environmental issues and sustainability.

He is interested in urban gardening, as well as the Degrowth and Transition Towns movements.

Looking back at my experience as a mentor during this project I can say there was a great deal of learning taking place. The initial challenge was defining what a mentor is and what his role is. People have different associations and definitions of the word mentor. Furthermore the specificity of the topic (learning to learn and self-directed learning) makes it even more confusing.

For me a mentor is not an expert, but rather a friendly listener, who through questioning and probing supports the mentees understanding themselves better and taking decisions towards future personal development on the topic in question. In practice it means building trust based on active listening skills allowing for a judgment-free conversation and reflection to take place.

However the mentees can expect something else. Like guidance, inspiration or even answers from the mentor. And in other cases it might just happen that the mentor feels a strong urge to express an opinion or critical view on the topic shared.

This fine equilibrium game between active listening to the other and engaging in a dialogue is what made mentoring what it was in this project. The ultimate objective was supporting personal development - in this case in the field of L2L and SDL - based on mentees departing questions, ideas, doubts, etc...

Although I had my insecurities regarding my



role as a mentor in the beginning throughout the process I had the chance to develop several skills and attitudes that culminated in an improvement of my mentoring competence.

Looking back I am happy to say that throughout this process I got many new impulses and reflected together with my mentees on several topics related to self-directed learning. Coming from a very enthusiastic point of view regarding self-directed learning facilitation I grew towards a more critical approach to it. Through the mentoring sessions with my five mentees it got clearer to me how broad this topic can be understood, where its limitations and weaknesses are, but also what its potentials are.

I am now aware that self-directed learning is not the ultimate goal in any learning facilitation, but rather one approach that can - and should - be used depending on the contexts. In a way it is like an ingredient for a recipe: without it the final dish is not so interesting, but the ingredient on its own gets boring after some time. It needs embellishment, contact with the other ingredients in order to let loose all its flavour. Its goal is to foster independence, freedom, responsibility and motivation for (individual) learning processes and outcomes. However it is also now clear to me that every facilitation process has

elements of „foreign“ directed learning; be it because of the framework, the system, resources or... due to the simple fact that someone is facilitating it.

I think it is very important for self-directed learning facilitators to be aware of it: they, as individuals, cannot perform as a tabula rasa of facilitation. They also bring former experiences, concepts, fears, wishes, etc with them. And that is not a problem. Those are actually part of the resources and should be consciously made use of.

Furthermore it is essential to stress out that learning does not work with „one measure fits all“. If we use the metaphor of a vegetable garden, where learners are plants it is very clear that some need more attention than others, some will dry if not watered, others get along just fine. Last year I had several bean plants on my vegetable garden. Some did better than others. And the conditions were the same; they were planted at the same time in the same garden.

This illustrates how learning facilitation should take place: plant the seed, care for the conditions, but let it grow – supporting when needed and in accordance to the situation.

Tools

Kitchen Table
Getting to know each other better
Peopleteque
Mandala of Learning
The adventure of my learning
Learning Interview

Shaun the sheep - Off the Baa!!
Learning Plan
Learning to learn in my work
My learning river as a foreigner
Body Poster
Timeline

Kitchen Table

Time

Group work 20-30 minutes

Context

This activity was carried out as a part of 6-hour workshop dedicated to exploring Self-directed learning in the context of intercultural learning. It was offered towards the end of the programme as a sum up and reflection time.

Objectives

- To realize what is it that I've learnt today generally and about myself
- To visualize what I learnt today
- To evaluate the workshop in general
 - what was useful for me and what was not
 - how did I work with the tools offered and what came out of it

Methodology step-by-step & timing

1. Pax are asked to sit randomly around 3 working tables, forming 3 working groups.
2. They're asked to discuss their learning of today (about themselves and in general) in a way that fits all in the group and each group is provided with a set of guiding questions that they might / or might not use:

What have I learnt about myself?
What did I find interesting, fun or useful and what not?
How did I work with the cards, the learning river and the dice .. and what did I learn from it?
Any new ideas about my learning processes here in this workshop environment / Iceland (ideas for new ways how to sense better our strengths, selfrespect and purpose in this society)
3. Pax are encouraged to visualize their thoughts as they discuss so that they're able to share it with the rest in the plenary.
4. Each group presents their outcomes and then a discussion in the plenary follows.

Materials required

- Big papers
- Colourful pencils and crayons and drawing necessities
- Pens and post its

Preparation

3 working tables with the relevant materials and with 4 chairs around each table

Getting to know each other better

Time

Group work 30min

Context

This activity was carried out as a part of 6-hour workshop dedicated to exploring Self-directed learning in the context of intercultural learning. It was offered at the beginning as a part of getting to know each other activities.

Objectives

- To introduce interesting facts about pax in the plenary
- To let pax get to know at least one person in the group a bit better
- To make a first step into the topic of learning

Methodology

step-by-step & timing

1. Pax are asked to pair up and use a working sheet to exchange the answers to the following questions:
 - What is my name, where does it come from and what does it mean to me?
 - Where do I come from and what do I remember from my childhood which gives me a feeling of joy and pride?
 - What am I learning about myself these days?
 - What do I want to learn more about in the near future (about myself)?
2. After sharing the answers in pairs, pairs come to plenary where always one in the pair introduces a few interesting points about the other one.

Materials required

- Ready task sheets

Preparation

It's good to have space arranged in a way that enables pairs to spread where they can feel comfortable and not disturbed by others.

Peopleteque

Time

30 minutes

Context

Individual reflection on learning. It was offered during one of the Workshop run by the mentees to adult people that were interested in getting to know more about themselves as learners.

Objectives

- to reflect on your own learning
- to find patterns in your learning

Methodology step-by-step & timing

Think about the persons that have been significant in your learning process, the ones who really thought you something and/or plays a central role in one of your insight moment.
What are their main characteristics? Do they have something in common?
Represent each main characteristics you have found with a symbol and at the end you will have a nice landscape!

Materials

Paper and writing and drawing material; you can also offer some clay to be modelled.

Preparation

People need a quiet place to do this exercise

Mandala of Learning

Time

Initial 60 minutes – then regularly 15 minutes during the course of the activity

Objectives

- defining and clarifying personal/individual learning interests and afterwards transfer them into learning achievements
- getting ready for my own learning
- recognition, identifying and documenting of my own learning
- collecting learning achievements

Context

In the beginning of an educational activity to help participants to think about their learning objectives

Methodology step-by-step & timing

1. Create a nice, special, calm and inspiring atmosphere
2. Explain that this is an individual task - invite learners to sit down where they feel comfortable and a good place/space for an individual exercise
3. Ask the learners to identify what they are interested to learn. Why is this topic interesting for me? What do I expect out of this event? (What do I want to happen to make this event a success? What is important for me to feel comfortable during the event?) Make the participants aware of that they are “the learners” in the centre of their mandala surrounded by different learning interests.
4. Invite the learners to draw their own Learning Mandala or for those who are not into drawing provide blank Mandalas which they can use. Each learning interest is linked to one element of a Mandala. The level of importance of the learning interest determines the size of each Mandala's element. The more important this learning interest is, the bigger the element in

the mandala will be. The learners should shortly name and describe their learning interests. They are supposed to draw only the outlines of the Mandala - without colouring the spaces - and associating the learning interest to the spaces by drawing inside the keywords. Give a short example of how a Mandala of learners could look like on the flip chart.

5. After the individual task (around 30 min.) – when the learners have their Mandalas ready - invite them to go into small groups of 3 people to share their learning interests (20 min.).

6. After the small group exercise invite them to have a quick look at the Learning Mandalas in the whole group e.g. put them in a circle on the floor and invite them to go around. Then invite the participants to keep them. Mention that Learning Mandalas are not static; invite them to add more interests during the training if they want so. You can include time for that in the programme on fixed moments.

7. In the follow-up of the activity participants can colour those parts in their mandala which they have made learning progress in.

Materials required

- colours, coloured pencils, oil pastels etc. for painting, drawing the mandala
- round empty sheets of paper (ca. A4)
- blank Mandalas cut out round (ca. A4)
- a big round paper (2-4 flip charts) for the group learning mandala (list of learning achievements)
- cutter, scissors
- glue, tape

Preparation

For those participants who are not into drawing or painting: collect different Mandalas which have different shapes, smaller and bigger elements and copy them several times

The adventure of my learning

Time

At least 30 minutes should be allowed, but it can be longer – depending on individuals

Context

This activity was carried out as a part of 6-hour workshop dedicated to exploring Self-directed learning in the context of intercultural learning.

Methodology step-by-step & timing

There was a short meditative session preceding this one, leading pax through their journey of having been foreign in a country, which is not a country of their origin, and helping them see what are the most powerful moments that stick out in their minds on this journey.

1. There's a set of special adventure cards (StoryWorld by John and Caitlín Matthews) and a task sheet ready on the table.
2. All pax have their own learning diaries or special notebooks.
3. Participants choose 5-6 cards from the deck that help them remember their learning adventure on their journey of having been a foreigner.
4. Pax are encouraged to use ideas from the world of adventure (represented by cards) to create an adventure about themselves.
5. Pax are invited to write down or draw any associations or important notes that this exercise has brought to them.
6. Once notes writing and visualizing is finished, participants choose another person from the group to discuss about their learning adventure as they discovered it through the cards.

Preparation

It's good to have enough spaces in the room where pax can sit both, individually for reflection but also be in pairs, while doing the sharing.

Objectives

- Help pax reflect on their learning moments during their intercultural experience from the moment they came to a new country through adventure cards
- Let pax share their learning moments so that they can recognize and understand better what learning was present and what it means for them.
- Help pax explore Self-directed learning in the context of intercultural learning

Materials required

- A deck of cards (preferably StoryWorld or some kind of picture deck, tarot or other. You can also create cards)
- Learning diaries or notebooks of pax
- Task sheet

Learning Interview

Time

At least 90 minutes should be allowed, but it can be longer – depending on individuals

Context

This activity was carried out as a part of 6-hour workshop dedicated to exploring Self-directed learning in the context of intercultural learning.

Objectives

Help pax reflect on their learning moments generally in life and look at their learning from new perspectives

Methodology step-by-step & timing

There was a short meditative session preceding this one, leading pax through their journey of having been foreign in a country, which is not a country of their origin, and helping them see what are the most powerful moments that stick out in their minds on this journey.

1. The exercise is done in small groups of 3
2. There's a set of interview questions ready on a task sheet:

English version:

Do you see yourself as a learner?
Do you consciously learn in life? How?
Can you recall moments where you felt you were learning something important?
Can you describe these moments?
How do you know you have learned something new?
What do you need to learn?
Do you learn in communication with others? /
Do you learn when you are alone, in peace? /
When you are doing something? / When you are solving problems? / When you make mistakes? etc.

Icelandic version:

Lítur u á sjálfa íg sem námsmanneskju "í lífinu"?
Velur u me vita a læra af lífinu? Hvernig?
Manstu eftir stundum egar ú fannst a ú varst a læra eitthva mikilvægt?
Getur u lýst essum stundum? Hva einkennir ær?
Hvernig veistu a ú hafir lært eitthva nýtt?
Hva a a stæ ur urfa a vera til sta ar til a ú lærir?
Lærir u í samskiptum vi a ra? / Lærir u egar ú ert ein í ró me sjálfri ér? / egar ú ert a gera eitthva ?/ egar ú ver ur a leysa erfi verkefni? / egar ú gerir mistök? o.s.f.

3. There are three roles: the person being interviewed, the interviewer and the observer who writes a report of the interview. In the groups of three everybody takes in turn all roles.

4. Once the interview is finished, participants choose another person from the group to share their discoveries about their learning.

Preparation

It's good to have enough spaces in the room where pax can sit both, individually for reflection but also be in pairs or trios, while doing the sharing.

Materials required

- Personal notebooks that pax created at the beginning
- Drawing and writing material

Shaun the sheep – Off the Baa!!

Time	60 minutes
Context	The connection between learning and competences
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To provide an aid to identify competences in general •To help participants to relate competences to learning outcomes •To support the participants in transferring experience from their lives into learning outcomes.
Methodology step-by-step & timing	<p>First part - 8 minutes: Facilitator shows a movie about Shaun the sheep, broadcasted on YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMFV8AKGnBM</p> <p>Second part: Work groups – each group works on the competences a specific character from the movie has developed in the scene. Participants are asked to draw, write a text, or other things to show what a competence is. They have 15 minutes.</p> <p>Working groups: - Group 1- works on Shaun the sheep - Group 2 – rest of the sheep - Group 3 – the dog - Group 4 – pigs</p> <p>Presentation of the working groups – 15 minutes Debriefing – 15 minutes</p>
Materials	Shaun the sheep movie, beamer, sound

Learning Plan

Time	Individual timing	step-by-step & timing	life and why. Try to be as more detailed as possible. Focus both on the actions that you can take and on the persons that could help you in the learning process or/and support you to keep your motivation high. Set a realistic date and some check points.
Context	When planning your learning. It was offered during one of the Workshop run by the mentees to adult people that were interested in getting to know more about themselves as learners.	Materials required	Paper and pencils
Objectives	to plan learning in time, in methods and support	Preparation	You can provide the learning plan table or leave the construction of it to the learners
Methodology	Ask yourself what would you like to learn in this moment of your		

Example of a learning plan:

Date	08/04/14	With whom?	Francesca!
What do I want to learn? (Objective)	I want to learn more about EU funds and how to write better application forms	By when?	31/12/14
Why? (Motivation)	To make my job more sustainable and to improve my competence	Check point 1	30/07/14: Have you searched in internet? How many new EU funds do you know now?
Actions	Search for a training course Search on the website	Check point 2	30/10/14: Have you found a good training course? Did you apply for it?

Learning to learn in my work

Time

From 60 to 90 minutes

Context

This exercise was proposed by one of the mentee during the „kitchen table“ meeting, a space where the mentees met to reflect on different aspects of L2L and SDL. The main idea was to support the group in being more aware about how to include L2L in their everyday work. This specific activity was proposed since for some people it can be hard to find a practical link between the theory and the practice. It was tried out with people who work in the educational field and have already some knowledge about the topic. We suggest to play it in a small group (from 4 to 8 participants) to make the sharing and the debriefing more intense and deep.

Objectives

- to reflect on the meaning of L2L
- to think about how L2L can be included in my daily work
- to think about concrete steps I can do in order to apply L2L in my work environment

Methodology step-by-step & timing

1. Ask the participants to fulfill “My role” card;
2. The moderator (one person that is not playing) plays the set cards one after the other in this order: meaning – action – change – tool – team. After each card, the moderator gives the proper time to the players to answer to the questions associated to each card.
3. When all the 5 cards are played by the moderator, each player shares the answers with the others
4. After sharing, the moderator is invited to debrief the activity. Some questions for the debriefing: did you find some common elements in the definition of L2L? Was there any difficult questions to answer? Why was it? Did you hear something interesting you want to know more about? What will you do tomorrow to reinforce the L2L dimension in your work?

Materials required

Pens and papers

Preparation

Print one „My role“ card for each participant and one set card per group.

„My Role“ card

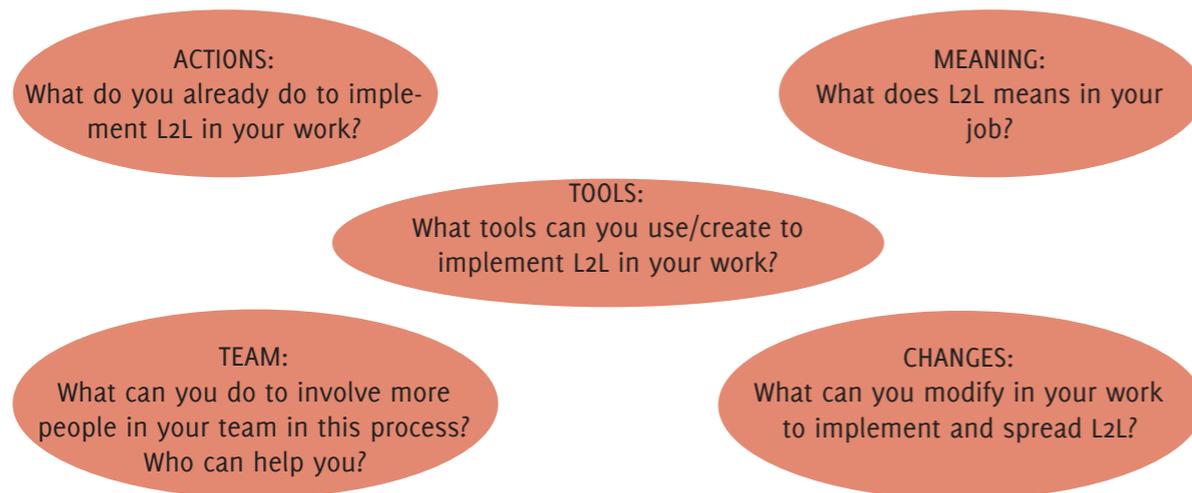
NAME: _____	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> Draw your picture here </div>
SURNAME: _____	
Where have you heard the first time about L2L?	

What is your typical working day?	

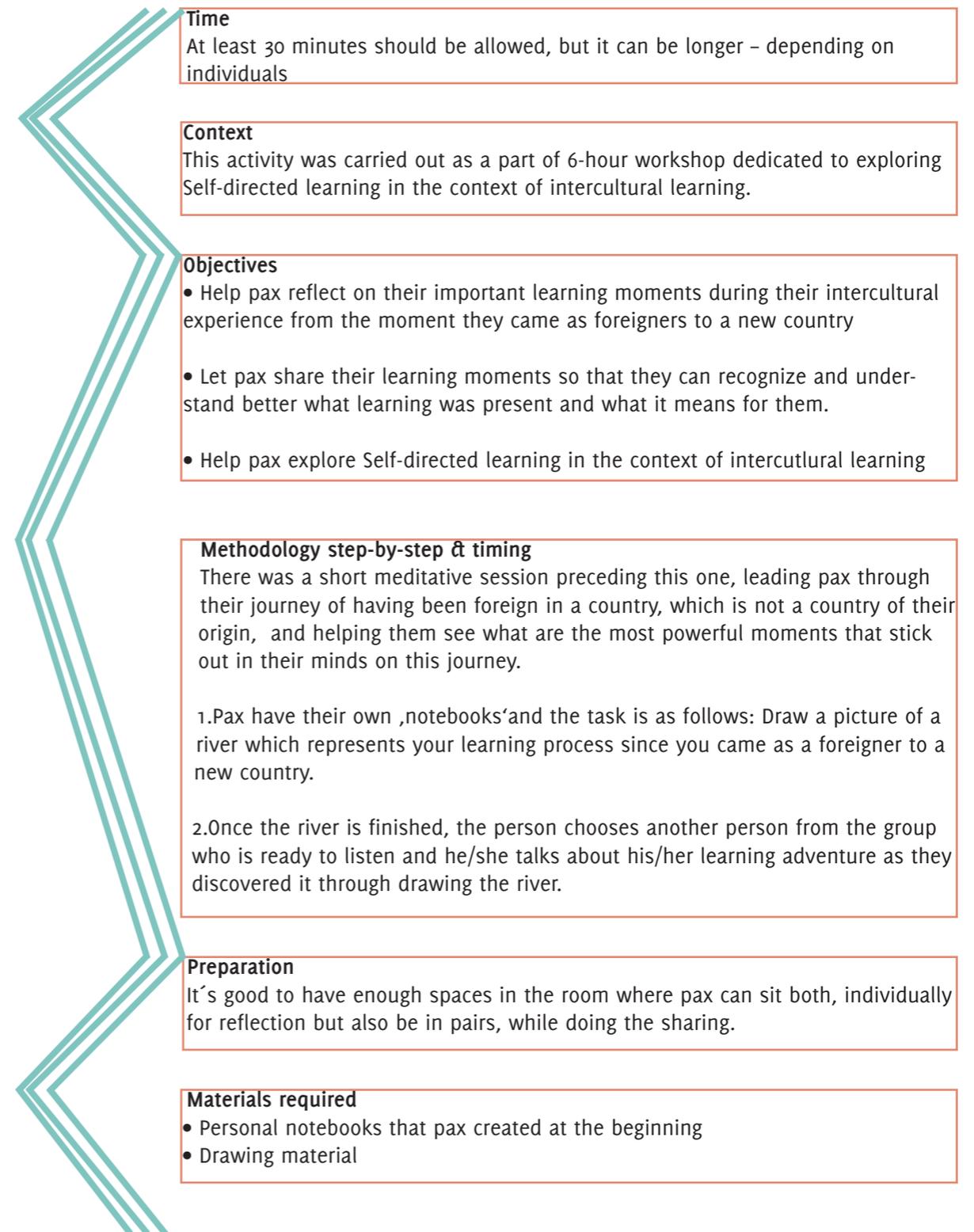
What are the things you like more and less in your work?	

What values are present in your work?	

The set cards



My learning river as a foreigner



Body Poster

Time 1 hour	Context Individual reflection
Objectives To reflect about yourself and to create a space with enough room visual representation for everybody to work	Preparation You need an empty space with enough room for everybody to work

Materials required	
Big papers	Brushes
Pencils	Scissors
Crayons	Tape
Paint	Markers

Methodology step-by-step & timing

As a first step, we suggest you to find a comfortable place and position and to think about your professional life:

- Why do I do this job? Why do I study what I study?
- What are the elements of satisfaction?
- What would I change?
- What am I interested in?
- What feedback am I given from my colleagues? And from my clients/trainees/youngsters/pupils?
- What did I think when I heard about this project?
- Why did I decide to get involved in this project? What are my expectations?
- What is the last event in my professional life I am very proud of? Why?
- What are the strong values that are dear to me?
- What the "important" others (Family, friends etc) have said about my personality, qualities, what I am good at. What am I appreciated for by the others?

Conjure up an image of how you'd like to see yourself leaving this meeting and going back into your job/study with refreshed motivation. Ask a buddy to draw around yourself lying on the poster in the position you want – at least the head, 2 hands and 2 feet are visible.

As many creative materials as possible are provided. Take your time to "decorate" your poster with the following guidelines:

For your left hand

Images / symbols for how you'd like to see yourself at the end of the project ("what are you reaching for?")

For your heart

The energy / motivation that brings you to your profession (and the energy that being in this professional field gives back to your life...)

On your left foot

Symbolise issues / values that you're prepared to "stand for" / defend

On your head

What "knowledge" are you bringing with you about the "education and learning world?" (What themes do you "know" about? / Have information about? / Know how to do?which could be a resource to yourself and others during this project and beyond? What questions are stimulating your interest?

For your right hand

Symbolise "qualities you bring with you..." – what kind of trainer / educator/person you are... The positive things other people say they see in you (family / friends / partners etc.) – what do they complement you about?

For your right arm

Things in your life that are "feeding" your energy at the moment (recent important learning, work or life experiences that have brought some special strength to you which is now at your disposal)

On your right foot

Symbolise what or who helps you stay grounded / keeps your "feet on the ground" (special person or people in your life / an activity / a place / a relaxation technique / a sport etc.)

Timeline

Time
1-2 hours

Context

The timeline is a method to support a person in taking a decision

Objectives

To support learners in reflecting on different options

Methodology step-by-step & timing

Everybody chooses a person to work with. Then participants are asked individually to define a question/doubt that they want and answer to. They have to try to figure out 4/5 possible answers/solutions and to write each of them in one A4 paper.

The next step is to find a place together with the partner where you feel comfortable. Put the papers on the floor in the order you prefer, as they were the beginning of different paths. Step into the first option and explore how do you feel. What emotions do you have being there? Is your body communicating something to you? If you feel like, take another step into that path. How do you imagine your life there? What positive and/or negative might happen?

You can decide to go further on that path or, if you feel uncomfortable and unsatisfied, to change path and start a new process. The role of the other person is to support the "traveller" by making questions and recording what he/she says so that it can be read if needed.

The objective is to have a realistic imagination and feeling of what can happen if I take a step into a specific situation. So don't be stressed, it is not about finding THE solution but more about getting in touch with your feelings, emotions, fears, motivation etc.

Materials required

Papers, pens and markers

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