



**European Approaches
to Inter-Generational
Lifelong Learning**

**Koiné
Learning in Communities of Practice**

**ITALY
Case Study Identity Card
2007**



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EAGLE CASE STUDY

ITALY

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

The project aim was to develop an action methodology to analyse the process of skills transfer from elder to younger workers in the work place. The model that was developed was validated in companies and has been considered as a good practice at regional level. In this respect, the work place is conceived as a community of practices.

The initiative focused on informal learning, the process, the activities, the aims, the instruments, the methods, the relationships among senior and junior workers, paying attention to the organisational contest

The activities comprised qualitative research (desk analysis, interviews) regarding models of practice analysis (training on the job, coaching, tutoring, mentoring), and the development and validation of the model.

The key results consisted in the model for analysing skill transfer processes in work places and, secondarily, the development of tools to analyse this process.

2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

<i>Title</i>	<p>Koiné: Learning in Communities of Practice. Transferring competences and knowledge from experienced workers to newly hired workers.</p> <p>(Koiné: Apprendere nella comunità di pratiche. Trasferimento delle competenze e dei saperi dai lavoratori esperti ai giovani neoassunti)</p>
<i>Country/ Countries of origin</i>	Italy
<i>Duration</i>	<p>Starting Year: 2002</p> <p>End Year: 2004</p>
<i>Status</i>	Finished
<i>Managing institution</i>	Private training organisation
<i>Contact de- tails</i>	<p>Last Name: Primavera</p> <p>First Name: Giovanni</p> <p>Title: Dr.</p> <p>Position/Role: Staff in R&D Departments, responsible for international projects</p> <p>Institution: IAL Emilia Romagna</p> <p>Street: via Amendola 2</p> <p>Town: Bologna Post Code: 40121</p> <p>Phone: +39 051 421 77 11 Fax: +39 051 25 14 40</p> <p>E-Mail: giovanniprimavera@ialemiliaromagna.it</p> <p>URL: www.ialemiliaromagna.it</p>
<i>Funding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public <p><u>Comments/Description:</u> ESF ob. 3 managed by the Emilia-Romagna Region and regional funds</p>
<i>Partnership arrange- ment/organis- ational form</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Top-down programme/project <p><u>Comments:</u> Non-formal partnership with ECIPAR CNA (small enterprises association consultant organisation), developed by R&D staff</p>
<i>Scale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional; <p><u>Comments:</u> Activities all over Emilia Romagna regional territory</p>



3 DESCRIPTION OF COLLABORATING GROUPS

<i>Collaborating Group I</i>	Researchers, project management staff
<i>Total number of Collaborating Group I</i>	10
<i>Age group(s) of Collaborating Group I</i>	<u>Minimum Age:</u> 28 <u>Maximum Age:</u> 54 <u>Age Distribution:</u> 25% below 45 years old; 75% above 45 years old
<i>Collaborating Group II</i>	Entrepreneurships, vocational trainers, companies trainers, companies seniors, companies juniors
<i>Total number of Collaborating Group II</i>	38
<i>Age group(s) of Collaborating Group II</i>	<u>Minimum Age:</u> 26 <u>Maximum Age:</u> 48 <u>Age Distribution:</u> 40% below 45 years old, 60% above 45 years old

4 DESCRIPTION OF INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING PRACTICES

The practice description of intergenerational learning practices serves a twofold purpose: i) a qualitative practice description of the case and ii) a quantitative assessment of additional case descriptors.

Description of Learning Arrangement & Learning Practice

The project aim was to study the skills transfer process from elder to younger workers in the work place, i.e. viewing the work place as a community of practices. The model that was developed was validated in companies and has been considered as a good practice at regional level. In this respect, the work place is conceived as a community of practices.

The initiative focused on informal learning, the process, the activities, the aims, the instruments, the methods, the relationships among senior and junior workers, paying attention to the organisational context

The activities comprised qualitative research (desk analysis, interviews) regarding models of Practices analysis (training on the job, coaching, tutoring, mentoring), and the development and validation of the model.

The key results consisted in the model for analysing skill transfer processes in work places and, secondarily, the development of tools to analyse this process.

Based on the analysis of good practices of professional intergenerational learning in companies (e.g. in-company training; inception training paths; work-based training, etc.), Koiné has developed a set of tools comprising:

- The competence profile of the senior, experienced worker
- The methodology for the transfer of competences and knowledge within the company. Based on an anthropological view of organisations, the Koiné methodology assumes the inception process experienced by the newly hired worker as an 'initialisation ritual' occurring within the organisation as a social environment and learning context. During this 'ritual' competences and knowledge are transferred from seniors to juniors, whereby both groups share the same vision and goals within the same organisation. The social theory of learning inspires the whole approach, highlighting the role of social interaction and communities (of practice) in the learning and transfer processes.
- The model for supporting learning processes, allowing for the elicitation of tacit knowledge 'encapsulated' in work practices and the formalisation of organisational explicit knowledge and competences (greatly depending on organisational conditions).
- The toolkit for supporting such transfer processes and the design of the key features that accompanying services have to present.

Location of the learning activity

- Work based

Comments: Koiné was a research project, there was no training activity.

<i>Learning activities (related to policy objectives)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mentoring i.e. intergenerational support, services and consultancy ▪ Social inclusion/participation, active citizenship. <p><u>Comments:</u> Within the developed action methodology, the model is aimed at supporting the transfer of competences and knowledge from older (and skilled) workers to younger (and inexperienced) newly hired workers. In this respect, the model allows both elderly and younger workers to define their new professional identity, supporting an idea of inclusion and active participation in the company which is conceived as a 'learning setting'. Furthermore, a specific mentoring service has been designed and validated.</p>
<i>Fields of Learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual competence development (professional purposes)
<i>Knowledge & Learning Exchange/Flow between the target group(s)</i>	Predominantly 'downstream' i.e. older to younger
<i>Interactions between the target group(s)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ one-to-one ▪ one-to-many
<i>Categories of the learning activity</i>	Non-formal i.e. takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training and does not typically lead to formalised certificates
<i>OECD/DeSeCo Competences addressed by the CS</i>	2 = Competence Category 2: Interacting in Heterogeneous Groups 2.1 = The ability to relate well to others; the ability to cooperate
<i>EC Key Competences addressed by the CS</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learning-to-learn
<i>Success factors and barriers of the CS</i>	<p>One important success factors was the close cooperation between IAL (Koiné contractor and coordinator) and ECIPAR (contractor and coordinator of the 'twin project' Entreprise Lieu Savant. In this respect the joint activity developed by the two projects staff, both able to establish a 'community of practices' working together, sharing information, experiences, knowledge (e.g. the project's final conference was held jointly). This helped the staff of the two organisations to develop tools and models to analyse the transfer process and the companies contest.</p> <p>Furthermore, the institutional support provided by the Emilia Romagna Region also represented an important success factor, legitimising the action and supporting awareness raising in companies.</p> <p>The main critical incident consisted in the difficulty to find good practices in companies to be analysed and transferred, as the 'internal training culture' is not so developed. Training (even the informal one) is often considered more a cost than investment. This means that it was difficult to involve companies in our activity.</p>

Results of the CS

The main output was mainly the development of a model of analysis focused on skills transfer in the work places. In addition, the development of tools to analyse transfer processes also represented an important output.

Another relevant output was a shared working method and analysis tools. The benefits were mainly internal to IAL and ECIPAR, even if the outcomes were disseminated using focus groups, internal and external seminars and a final conference.

It can be said that the involved staff 'learned' a common working method, helpful for forthcoming new activities. Since Koiné was only a research project and there wasn't training activity it is not possible to identify other benefits for the participants, as the activity involved mainly the staff and only few entrepreneurs, vocational trainers, companies trainers, companies seniors, companies juniors.