



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

**The Creativity Workshop:
The Romanian Peasant Museum**

ROMANIA
Case Study Identity Card
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EAGLE CASE STUDY

ROMANIA

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

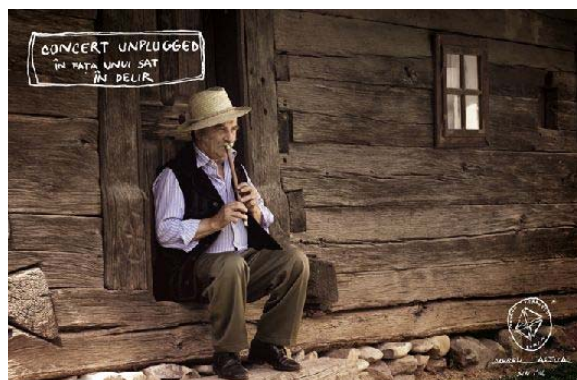
The Creativity Workshop is a project initiated by The Romanian Peasant Museum in Bucharest, in 2002 and it brings together children and young people interested to develop their knowledge about different popular arts and crafts and about the history of the traditional village life, with its people. Adults, popular artists and museum staff, work with children and youth and they together participate in intergenerational work to achieve their goals.

The project offers children and youth the opportunity to experience alternative education that is complementary to the formal education they receive in school; the activities in the project are based on active-participative methods through which children are helped to discover and experience folk art in a wide range of traditional crafts and traditional activities: ceramics, textile, embroidery, woodworking, music and musical instruments, drawing and painting, masks and puppets.

The museum staff involved in the project and the popular artists invited regularly as guests to work in the Museum, support learning activities that cover three main areas: (i) learning to value folk art and to recognise the features of traditional Romanian folk art, (ii) learning to speak about the Romanian village, its traditions and its people and (iii) learning to produce artefacts that are specific for traditional Romanian art through, i.e. learning the craft.

The intergenerational learning activities in the project are organised daily from October to May (mirroring the school year) and in the form of summer camps or summer workshops, during the summer vacation. During the school year children and youth generally work with museum staff and in summer folk artists are invited to work and to teach the children and youth that participate in the summer camps. In both cases the knowledge and learning flows downstream, from adults to children and the learning activities cover history and oral history, cultural heritage and arts.

The children and young people involved in the project develop their very practical competences and skills (most of the activities involve manual work and learning by doing), but, in addition to that, the intergeneration work is aimed at transmitting societal values and at complementing the experience young people have and which is to a great extent exclusively urban (not many children have direct connections with Romanian villages and the Romanian countryside anymore; many of them do not have family or relatives in the country side). Thus, the project adds value to the education of the young people through knowledge and experience of village life.



2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Title	The Creativity Workshop: The Romanian Peasant Museum
Country	Bucharest, Romania <u>Comments:</u> The activities of the project have been initiated and are organised by the Romanian Peasant Museum located in Bucharest; the Museum aims to cover rural traditions and the life of villages from all historical regions and areas of Romania.
Duration	Starting Year: 2002 End Year: n/a
Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Running <u>Comments:</u> The project has been initiated in 2002 and it has a cyclic structure: its activities are organised every week during the school year, and in compact periods, as summer camps, during the summer vacations.
Managing institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public organisation (i.e. Ministry of Culture) <u>Comments:</u> The Ministry of Culture manages and supports financially a wide network of museums that cover Romanian and universal history, culture, arts and traditions. The Romanian Peasant Museum, is part of the national network supported by the Ministry of Culture, but it is unique in Romania. It is an institution that contains both research and documentation units and units focused on public and community education.
Contact details	Last Name: GRIGORESCU First Name: Ruxandra Title: Ms Position/Role: Project Coordinator Institution: The Romanian Peasant Museum/Muzeul Taranului Roman Street: Bd. Kiseleff no 3, sect 1 Town: Bucharest Phone: 0040 21 317 9660 E-Mail: ateliermuzeu@yahoo.com URL: http://www.muzeultaranuluiroman.ro
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public ▪ Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) <u>Comments:</u> The Museum is funded by the Ministry of Culture (public funding) and through funds attracted from other public (for example National Radio or TV, state agencies, etc) and private companies (industry, media, other galleries). The activities developed under The Creativity Workshop are funded by the Museum through the above mentioned funds and in some cases the participants contribute to the funding (the parents of the participant children).
Partnership arrangement/organisational form	Bottom-up, grass root initiative
Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community based ▪ Local <u>Comments:</u> The activities of the project are organised by the Romanian Peasant Museum which is located in Bucharest, so, for practical reasons most of the participants (children & youth) are from Bucharest and around; this is especially true for the activities organised every week during the school year; however, when the activities of the project take the shape of summer courses or summer camps, artists and children from all over Romania are invited to participate.

3 DESCRIPTION OF COLLABORATING GROUPS

<i>Collaborating Group I</i>	<p>Adults who are experienced in popular art and village traditions, either as practitioners or as theoreticians and educators. There are three members of the staff that are permanently involved in The Creativity Workshop intergenerational learning activities; they have a strong theoretical background in ethnography, cultural history and popular art and they also have the necessary pedagogic competences that enable them to design and implement the activities.</p> <p>Occasionally, popular artists are invited to work with the groups of young people and children during the summer camps or in the regular activities of The Creativity Workshop. These artists are practitioners who live and work in villages in different regions of Romania and who are recognised for their competences and skills in a certain traditional craft or profession.</p>
<i>Total number of Collaborating Group I</i>	<p>3 +</p> <p><u>Comments:</u> There are three permanent museum staff that are involved in the intergenerational learning activities. The number of popular artists invited to work with the children and youth is variable each year, depending on the amount of funding the Museum has.</p>
<i>Age group(s) of Collaborating Group I</i>	<p>Adults</p>
<i>Collaborating Group II</i>	<p>Children in primary and secondary education who are study in schools belonging in artistic and non-artistic formal education.</p> <p>There are groups of children and young people who come from disadvantaged backgrounds or from social care institutions. Positive action is in place to attract and motivate these marginalised and at-risk groups to participate in the intergenerational work that is part of the project.</p>
<i>Total number of Collaborating Group II</i>	<p>No fixed number</p> <p><u>Comments:</u> During the school year children are enrolled for each activity of the project. The same is true for the compact period of learning that takes place during the summer vacation.</p>
<i>Age group(s) of Collaborating Group II</i>	<p><u>Minimum Age:</u> 6 <u>Maximum Age:</u> 18</p>

4 DESCRIPTION OF INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING PRACTICES

Description of Learning Arrangement & Learning Practice

The learning practices aim to contribute to the preservation of knowledge and traditions of the Romanian village and its main actor, the peasant. Through the intergenerational learning activities children and adult experienced popular artists are offered the opportunity to work together: to teach children skills specific for traditional occupations on one hand, and to activate the popular artists and re-insert them into the social and educational circuit on the other hand; the activities are organised in such a way as to valorise and exploit the collections and the traditional objects of the Museum which in many cases re-create the traditional village environment.

The learning practices at the centre of the project activities address at least two types of needs: societal ones (preservation and transmission of knowledge and traditions of the Romanian village) and personal, individual ones (of the children and of the popular artists); children need to spend their free time actively and they want to learn to do manual practical things in the field of art; experienced artists who are still active in traditional occupations and arts want to share/transmit their know how and skills, directly, to younger generations.

Children are able to experience a unique environment that partially re-creates the atmosphere of the Romanian village and they are able to access rich and unique resources: the popular artists and the experts working with them and the objects and the collections of the museum. Experienced artists are able to address groups of children and young people and to work with them, benefiting from the support of the Museum – premises, promotions, resources.

Children work on a weekly basis during the school year and in this case intergenerational learning involves museum staff who are specialists in history, ethnography and art; alternatively, on special occasions and during the summer vacation, intergenerational learning involves popular artists, who have learnt the traditional occupations and skills from their parents and grandparents and who are active in their rural community.

Adults, museum staff and/or popular artists, help children observe and describe different popular art and traditional objects (including tools, clothes, houses) and they talk about these or include them in story telling activities. Stories are told and listened to by adults and by children. The receptive activities are complemented with hands on activities in which adults teach children to approach different traditional occupations and to produce traditional objects (paintings, embroidery, pottery, woodwork); learning activities can focus on playing traditional musical instruments. The methods used in staging these intergenerational learning activities are active –participative; children produce knowledge, they produce objects, but, on the other hand they learn to critically view the objects and to reflect on traditional activities.

Location of the learning activity

Formal settings i.e. museum

Description: The learning activities are organised on the premises of the museum, in the workshops or in the courtyard which is structured as an open air museum, with traditional peasant houses, wooden churches and objects traditionally used in the households of peasants from different regions of Romania.

Learning activities (related to policy objectives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social inclusion/participation, active citizenship ▪ Arts incl. culture, theatre, play, music ▪ Travel, excursions & leisure time <p><u>Comments:</u> The children involved in the project are interested to spend their leisure time actively while developing some practical skills in the area of popular art. They participate in artistic activities, but at the same time they become aware of the history and the traditions of the Romanian villages, and thus they are more likely to understand social life actively. The popular artists that are involved in the project can talk about their art and they can share their know how and experience with the younger generation.</p>
Fields of Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual competence development ▪ Development and continuity of societal values;
Knowledge & Learning Exchange/Flow between the target group(s)	Predominantly 'downstream' i.e. older to younger
Interactions between the target group(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ one-to-one ▪ one-to-many ▪ physical/offline interaction;
Categories of the learning activity	Informal
OECD/DeSeCo Competences	<p>1 = Competence Category 1: Using Tools Interactively</p> <p>1.1 = The ability to use language, symbols and text interactively</p> <p>2 = Competence Category 2: Interacting in Heterogeneous Groups</p> <p>2.1 = The ability to relate well to others</p> <p>2.2 = The ability to cooperate</p> <p>3 = Competence Category 3: Acting Autonomously</p> <p>3.1 = The ability to act within the big picture</p> <p>3.3 = The ability to assert rights, interests, limits and needs</p>
EC Key Competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication in the mother tongue ▪ Learning-to-learn ▪ Interpersonal and civic competences ▪ Cultural awareness
Success factors and barriers	<p>The resources of the museum are very rich, there are a wide number of objects and collections that are unique and which the participants in the project can use as support for their learning activities. Thus, the project offers a unique opportunity for the participants to see these collections and objects and to learn about them. Children and young people are motivated to remain in the project once they have tried it once, due to the fact that their learning leads to palpable, material results (objects, paintings, booklets) besides the skills they acquire.</p> <p>The initiators of the project structure the learning activities as a mixture of contemporary and traditional: even if the content of the activities refer to history, traditions or to activities that seem remote from the everyday life of the children and youth involved, the structure</p>

of the events and the means and resources used have a modern and contemporary dimension. On the other hand, the skills and competences the youngsters acquire are transferable to different areas of their everyday life.

Due to re-branding of the initiator of the project (The Romanian Peasant Museum) and to the very creative nature of the activities in the project, the interest of the private sector to sustain the project has increased, and thus, some of the financial difficulties of organising the activities in the project may be overcome in the long term.

The main barriers in organising the exchange between generations within the project are connected to raising the interest of children and young people for the activities of the project (to attract, not to maintain them in the project) and to being able to organise the administrative details (travel, accommodation and work needs) of the popular artists invited to work with the children; these artists live and work in villages and regions that are sometimes remote from Bucharest and from urban areas, and it is difficult to bring them for the activities planned weekly. That is why the specialised staff of the museum have taken the responsibility to sustain intergenerational learning activities on a more regular basis.

Results

The results of the learning activities in the project are very palpable: after participating in different practical and documentary activities children acquire skills specific for one or more traditional occupations (textiles, ceramics, naive painting, woodwork, musical instruments) and they also produce different objects that are displayed in the museum at the end of each cycle of learning. The Museum also publishes work that documents what children work as part of The Creativity Workshop (e.g. in 2006 four series of booklets realised by children in the project have been published by the Museum and these were launched in a public event).

There is no formal recognition or accreditation of the results and activity of the participants in the learning activities and the learning outcomes are evaluated only directly (observation and direct feedback) by the adults who work with the children.

Children participating in the learning activities are able to transfer the knowledge, the competences and the skills acquired during the project activities: to engage with language, texts and images critically and reflectively, to participate in physical and manual activity and to open towards the traditional and artistic dimension of everyday life.