

Educational pathways between intergenerational dialogue and active citizenship

Rosita Deluigi

ABSTRACT ITALIANO

Il dialogo e la solidarietà intergenerazionale possono divenire leve dello sviluppo locale: condividere obiettivi comuni sostiene la motivazione all'apprendimento continuo, creando occasioni di scambio. A tal proposito, l'animazione sociale incentiva interazioni e promuove luoghi di fiducia e di partecipazione, avviando esperienze di cittadinanza attiva e intergenerazionale e orientandosi allo sviluppo di comunità competenti, che sappiano fronteggiare le sfide e le opportunità dell'invecchiamento attivo e della partecipazione democratica. Il progetto realizzato a livello nazionale "Giovani vs anziani: nuove relazioni tra generazioni e culture. Sperimentazioni di azioni territoriali a favore della solidarietà generazionale" restituisce prospettive di riflessione e d'intervento sugli ambienti cooperativi. Tempi e spazi intergenerazionali in cui consolidare un "noi" comunitario in cui aver cura l'uno dell'altro e in cui gettare le premesse per territori inclusivi. Il progetto rivela che, attraverso i legami interpersonali, le storie di vita si intrecciano e assumono nuovi significati per il singolo e per il gruppo, accrescendo il desiderio di riprogettarsi insieme e di consolidare il tessuto sociale, trama di scambi e identità plurali. Ripercorrere il progetto, dalla progettualità alla sua realizzazione, ci permetterà di mettere a fuoco i processi realizzati, di restituire voce all'esperienza educativa e di approfondire gli orientamenti pedagogici sviluppati.

ENGLISH ABSTRACT

Dialogue and solidarity between generations can become levers of local development: share common objectives supports the motivation to lifelong learning, creating opportunities for mutual exchange. In this regard, the social animation encourages interaction and promotes places of trust and participation. Promote experiences of active and intergenerational citizenship means focusing in the development of competent communities, who know how to deal with the challenges and opportunities for active ageing and democratic participation. The project implemented at the national level "Young vs elderly: new relationships between generations and cultures. Experimentations of territorial actions in favor of intergenerational solidarity" gave feedback about prospects of reflection and intervention on cooperative environments. We can build intergenerational time and space in which to consolidate a community where everyone takes care of each other and lay the foundations for inclusive territories. The project revealed that, through interpersonal ties, the life stories intertwine and take on new meaning for the individual and for the group, increasing the desire to re-design together and strengthen the social structure, as a plot of reciprocity and plural identities. Retrace the project, from planning to its realization, allows us to focus on the processes implemented, to rediscover the meaning of the educational experience and to deepen the pedagogical guidelines co-developed.

CARTELLA DI SINTESI IN ITALIANO

L'invecchiamento attivo e il dialogo intergenerazionale sono due delle sfide e delle occasioni di crescita sociale che approfondiremo in questo contributo che vede il dialogo tra giovani e anziani trasformarsi in progettualità comuni. Le complessità del contesto attuale ci richiedono di ripensare alle comunità locali come luoghi da ricostruire insieme e come tempi in cui offrire occasioni di incontro e di scambio in cui identità e differenze possano ri-trovarsi e riscoprirsi parte attiva del, per, nel contesto. La maggiore longevità e le trasformazioni demografiche della popolazione pongono diverse questioni su cui la pedagogia deve soffermarsi per co-costruire interventi educativi

e formativi incisivi, generando nuove strutture di prossimità e di solidarietà. Ridisegnare strategie politiche significa avviare esperienze congiunte tra le generazioni, a partire dai contesti di vita e dagli interessi in comune, orientandosi verso la costruzione di legami consistenti e non solo coesistenti.

L'esperienza di progetto "Giovani vs anziani: nuove relazioni tra generazioni e culture. Sperimentazioni di azioni territoriali a favore della solidarietà generazionale" propone alcune linee di orientamento e modelli di attuazione che puntano alla realizzazione di percorsi comuni di riflessione-azione tra giovani e anziani. La particella versus si è trasformata da opposizione a movimento relazionale, dando vita a nuove forme di alleanza intergenerazionale, a partire dal riconoscimento degli stereotipi reciproci, soffermandosi sulle esigenze e sulle risorse presenti nelle persone coinvolte, avviando esperienze di conoscenza di contatto diretto e cooperativo con gli altri. Quegli altri che spesso, sono percepiti come diversi e distanti e che percorrono gli stessi spazi/tempi del quotidiano in modo parallelo; ideare, promuovere, sviluppare momenti e modalità di relazione intergenerazionali, significa offrire occasioni in cui consolidare un "noi" comunitario, aperto e in dialogo, in cui aver cura l'uno dell'altro e in cui gettare le premesse per territori inclusivi.

Sperimentare percorsi intergenerazionali ha significato mettere in atto processi partecipativi a sostegno dell'apprendimento continuo, soprattutto nell'esperienza, rinnovando il senso della cittadinanza attiva e sociale, sentita tale perché autenticamente partecipata. Le relazioni intergenerazionali possono ri-generare giovani e anziani come persone in continua crescita, come soggetti appartenenti a un contesto, come protagonisti di azioni pensate e realizzate insieme, per il gruppo e per la comunità. Una maggiore conoscenza di sé, degli altri e di sé-con gli altri permette di conoscere meglio la realtà in cui ci si colloca e di esserne pienamente attori sociali. L'educazione intergenerazionale può accrescere la fiducia tra le parti e facilitare la nascita di legami interpersonali; in questo modo, le storie di vita si intrecciano e assumono nuovi significati per il singolo e per il gruppo, accrescendo il desiderio di riprogettarsi insieme e di consolidare il tessuto sociale, trama di scambi e identità plurali.

Active Ageing: a social dynamic and a community resource

ENGLISH

One of the social challenges highlighted by the European Union is the promotion of dialogue and solidarity between generations which could create practical projects, supporting the dynamics of community and active citizenship.

The issues of ageing and the dialogue between generations are often treated as problems and challenges. We can argue that the situation in the world is constantly changing and that, according to demographic projections, between 1950 and 2050 the percentage of people over the age of 60 will have increased from 8% to 22%, with different distributions depending on otherwise developed areas. Europe has a high percentage of elderly people and it is expected that, in 2050, 35% of the population will be over 60 and, in some countries, it will be as much as 40%. In Italy, the over 60s constitute more than 25% of the national population, a number matched only by Germany and Japan (Department of Economic & Social Affairs, 2009, 2011; Eurostat, 2011).

These demographic changes affect quality of life, both of the elderly and the younger generations and require social strategies to cope with the new challenges of welfare, community and inclusion (Donati & Folgheraiter, 2009; Colozzi, 2012). We can not ignore population ageing and its trends because «the social and economic implications of this phenomenon are profound, extending far beyond the individual older person and the immediate family, touching broader society and the global community in unprecedented ways. On the positive side, population ageing has opened

up new markets and brought us more experienced workers, a growing cadre of custodians of culture, and caregivers of grandchildren. But it is also presenting major challenges, most notably ensuring the sustainability of pension funds and the ability of already overburdened health-care systems to serve much higher numbers of people» (UNFPA, 2012, p. 9).

To face the challenges and to enhance the opportunities of an ageing population, we need new socio-educative and economic policies and approaches focused on the inter-action and on inter-generational relationships. These possibilities must be envisaged and implemented through the combined intervention of Governments and other stakeholders. Considering simultaneously problems and opportunities we will be able to overcome the challenge of ageing to pursue the objectives of the Second World Assembly on Ageing of Madrid 2002 in which there were underlined three priority areas: development, health and well-being, and enabling and supportive environments (United Nations, 2002).

It is necessary to draw up renewed policies and measures to support the elderly and their families, to create dynamic proximity and to foster active citizenship and participation as a way of building communities. This means being willing to experiment with innovative perspectives, because we believe that, even at the micro-social level, it is possible to achieve virtuous actions aimed at understanding how to generate a better quality of life for everyone.

The participation of young people and the elderly in society becomes a lever for local development and a way to build closeness and cooperation: sharing common goals and interests supports a motivation for continuous and mutual learning, triggering opportunities for exchange and collaboration.

Pedagogical research and educational practice have to identify and build places in which solidarity and inclusive dynamics can be articulated, with a focus on intergenerational dialogue, so that it can become part of everyday life. It is important to give a voice to experiences, deepen reflective paths, feed educational and interpersonal skills fielded in all project experiences, and that can become a shared heritage (Milani, 2013; Mortari, 2008).

Enhancing the message launched in 2012 by the European Union with the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity Between Generations (EY2012), means continuing to work on the guidelines already drawn up previously in Vienna in 1982, by the United Nations General Assembly which declared 1999 to be the International Year of Older Persons and the subsequent Madrid Assembly in 2002, which raised new incentives to “build a society for all ages” (United Nations, 2002; 2006).

The aims promoted by EY2012 were employment, participation in social life and autonomy. We have focused on the prospects of participation and solidarity, aware that they could also affect other issues and that we would be faced with different realities in which to try to continue to “build a society for all ages” that can become a community in which to develop experimental projects.

Hypothesising participative dynamics for the elderly allows us to imagine space and time for thinking and action in which, compared to a loss of other roles such as professional, the value of the person is not questioned but accepted and rediscovered, for the construction of significant growth opportunities. The contribution that older people can offer to society is not relegated only to formal and structured fields but appears through non-formal places to become a new cultural, social and relational capital (Woolcock, 2001), to be reinvested in a creative way.

We would like to emphasise some warnings that we have already reported (Deluigi, 2008; 2014) with respect to share capital and the balance between reciprocity and solidarity. We believe, in fact, that enabling participatory spaces, in which older people can invest their resources, means

enhancing the existential projects of individuals within networks of relationships and belonging. If participation in social life is imagined as a balance between solidarity and reciprocity, the needs and resources of all actors in society are intertwined. It will, therefore, be possible to build a fair and competent community with active citizenship (Caldarini, 2008; Rei, 2008).

Hypothesing paths of intergenerational citizenship means moving towards communitarian dynamics, in order to take into account personal and collective instances, providing tools of interpretation and understanding of the context which are valid for all the persons involved, beyond the age of reference. This means enhancing the resources and support for an authentic participation that assumes meaning for everyone, starting from common interests, to promote a higher level of sharing and cohesion (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2006; Pal, 2008; Tönshoff & Weida, 2008).

Active ageing is, therefore, also indicated in the aggregation of social spaces, part of people's everyday lives, in which (often different) generations coexist but are not interconnected. Potentially, in these places, we can build significant ties. It is in these spaces that we have articulated our reflections and, below, the implementation of the project, Youth vs Elderly: new relationships between generations and cultures. Experimentations in territorial actions in favour of intergenerational solidarity, to understand how to start and maintain intergenerational dialogue between people who have a place of belonging as the same reference point.

Being present in a place or having a common reference is not necessarily a guarantee of interaction and synergy between people. The design of the research started from this consideration, to understand how to stimulate intergenerational dialogue (young-elderly). We observed the reality in order to realize the possibilities of development, then we co-planned initiatives that would promote meetings, dialogue and comparisons for building opportunities for cooperation and collaboration towards a common goal.

In this way, spaces become significant for the bonds that have (themselves) the potential of generating and regenerating between people who can become an active part of the local community. The interaction with another person in a specific relationship and with others in the context of group dynamics (which often alternate and coexist in non-formal environments involved in the project) promotes participatory movement and moments, gives possibilities of discovering the differences, histories, languages??, going deep, and stimulating a greater degree of awareness of their own identity and the group identity. Constructing proximity practices makes "the other" near, visible and recognisable, and turns away the temptation to flee and to distance each one from the differences, which are actual or perceived as such because of a stereotype.

In this regard, social animation, which enhances the resources present in the context, first of all citizens, fosters interaction and builds places of trust and sharing, taking on various forms of expression, depending on the characteristics of the community and the people involved. The approach chosen to convey intergenerational practice is socio-cultural animation (Gillet, 2000; Deluigi, 2010), a method that can awaken and activate resources in the local context. This is done through a variety of proposals that allow all participants to express themselves and share paths of group and community. Activation of participation has allowed us to deepen and consolidate in practice the logic of active citizenship and shared responsibility, where the interactions between young and old have developed the potential of new forms of proximity and closeness.

In this sense, intergenerational relations regenerate the young and the old, opening up new perspectives and interpretations of the same reality, and develop a new generativity, due to significant simultaneous presence. It becomes meaningful for the individual, the group and the community. In this way, there is greater investment by individuals, who become an active part of the

construction of the “we-group” and “we care”. It can trigger a virtuous circle of participation, attention to each other, sharing perspectives, goals, objectives, discussion about issues of common interest, and projects designed to create a welcoming space of trust and belonging. It also reinforces a solidarity of vision that comes from the bottom up and direct encounter with others. At the same time, it is necessary to promote and support social policies that ensure justice and fairness, because solidarity is not enough.

That is why we believe that animation, an approach that sees education as a policy, gives strength and consistency to the project, as it discovers and rediscovers the resources, skills and talents of every person, confident in continued educability. The group promotes dialogue and continually gives rise to new forms and an architecture of “we”, aimed at cohesion and openness. To facilitate these changes requires a relational style to discern and welcome messages and contributions from reality. Listening and considering the multiple points of view of people who took part in the project has increased the degree of uncertainty, but has allowed us to rediscover and appreciate the importance of space, time and listening to the social actors’ voices as bearers of experiences and knowledge. Everyone has shared life stories and personal projects that became part of a mutual understanding aimed at going deep to rediscover the value of people in continuous development.

Youth vs Elderly: participation and democracy perspectives

The project, Youth vs Elderly: new relationships between generations and cultures. Experimentations of territorial actions for intergenerational solidarity, was carried out in Italy and has generated perspectives of reflection and intervention for understanding which facilitate the construction of cooperative environments of learning and experience (Deluigi, 2014a, Baschiera, Deluigi, Luppi, 2014). There is time and space in which to consolidate a communitarian “we”, where there is mutual care for each other, and which lays the foundation for achieving socio-relational inclusive places. The project reveals that interpersonal ties can increase the desire for learning from experience and in experience, and the intergenerational approach redefines the prospect past-present-future, in memory, in the project narrated, shared and co-lived.

The project (funded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in relation to EY2012) took place from July 2013 to June 2014 with testing of “local actions” with strong roots in the urban context. The measures were designed to foster intergenerational solidarity, from a deeper knowledge among older people, including young people, and between young and old who have had the opportunity to meet, discuss, collaborate and plan together. It involved 19 sites belonging to the Salesian associations located in 17 Italian regions: Ancona, Brianza (PZ), Cagliari, Catania, Cuneo, Cisternino (BR), Genova, Napoli, Ortona (CH), Padova, Piedimonte Matese (CE), Prato, Reggio Calabria, Reggio Emilia, Roma, Santa Maria La Longa (UD), Sesto San Giovanni (MI), Terni e Vercelli¹.

The centers offer cultural, recreational, sporting, social, education and training activities, and are aimed primarily at young people, but showing a good presence of older people in specific areas. The main challenge was to get out, at least in part, of the already scheduled routine of actions and implement new strategies to promote inclusive intergenerational encounters. In the first place, this required a change of perspective in the local education teams who carried out the project. We conducted the scientific supervision and accompanied the process of designing local and national levels.

The first guidelines of the project were: intergenerational cooperation, mutual and continuous learning, and a renewed construction of the concept of active and social citizenship (Cesa Bianchi & Albanian, 2004; Luppi, 2008; Tramma, 2000). Reasoning in a cooperative approach means fo-

ocusing attention on the interactions between generations and, in the first place, implementing interventions to initiate them and understand what potential can emerge. Cooperation means working together to achieve a common goal. Often this means leaving certainties behind to venture into the discovery of mediation and the search for creative and innovative alternatives. It is necessary that the group knows which direction it is taking and what the goals to be achieved are, agreeing this together and verifying this on an ongoing basis.

In this way, the group becomes a place of experience and communication (Pollo, 1988) where people can experiment with their own selves with others and learn from each other in a logic of renewal and sharing of skills and knowledge. These are reviewed at the level of reflection and also put into play at the level of action. Continuous learning takes place in this synergy between thought and action, and it finds a sharing atmosphere in the group.

Similarly, the idea of ??rebuilding the concept of active and social citizenship comes to move people to participate and makes them direct protagonists of action, not only by the individual but also the local community. The project did not want to draw up a classification/definition of intergenerational dialogue, but to prepare a collection of thoughts, ideas, tools and actions designed to create an experience of citizenship in everyday life. The resulting image allows us to catch a glimpse of some of the dynamics that gave rise to significance, shape and strength in relational inclusive models.

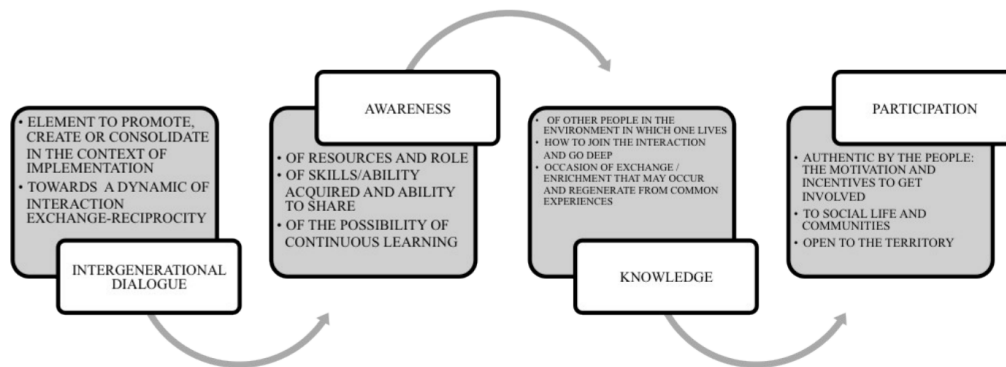
The experimentation of educational strategies has been directed towards promoting:

- greater intergenerational communication in non-formal contexts;
- increase in the relationships between people, with the opportunity to get involved and to make contacts;
- recognition of the skills and knowledge of those who have accepted the proposal, in view of a greater knowledge and sharing and of new forms of human/social/relational capital;
- improving quality of life, contrasting situations of isolation, loneliness or closing in the past or in routine (especially for the elderly) and fostering a greater willingness and openness in questioning stereotypes (for both young people and the elderly);
- more awareness of citizenship because of the discovery/development/use of (human) resources of the individual and the group, and the realisation of participatory and decision-making experiences.

The project was experienced in non-formal contexts with the participation of 475 people, of which 285 were adolescents/young people between the ages of 16 and 25 (also belonging to vulnerable groups in a condition of marginality and exclusion) and 190 elderly people between the ages of 65 and 75.

The first hypothesised educational process provided for an increase in intergenerational dialogue through three main steps: awareness, knowledge and participation (Fig. 1).

Figure 1 - The process of intergenerational participation



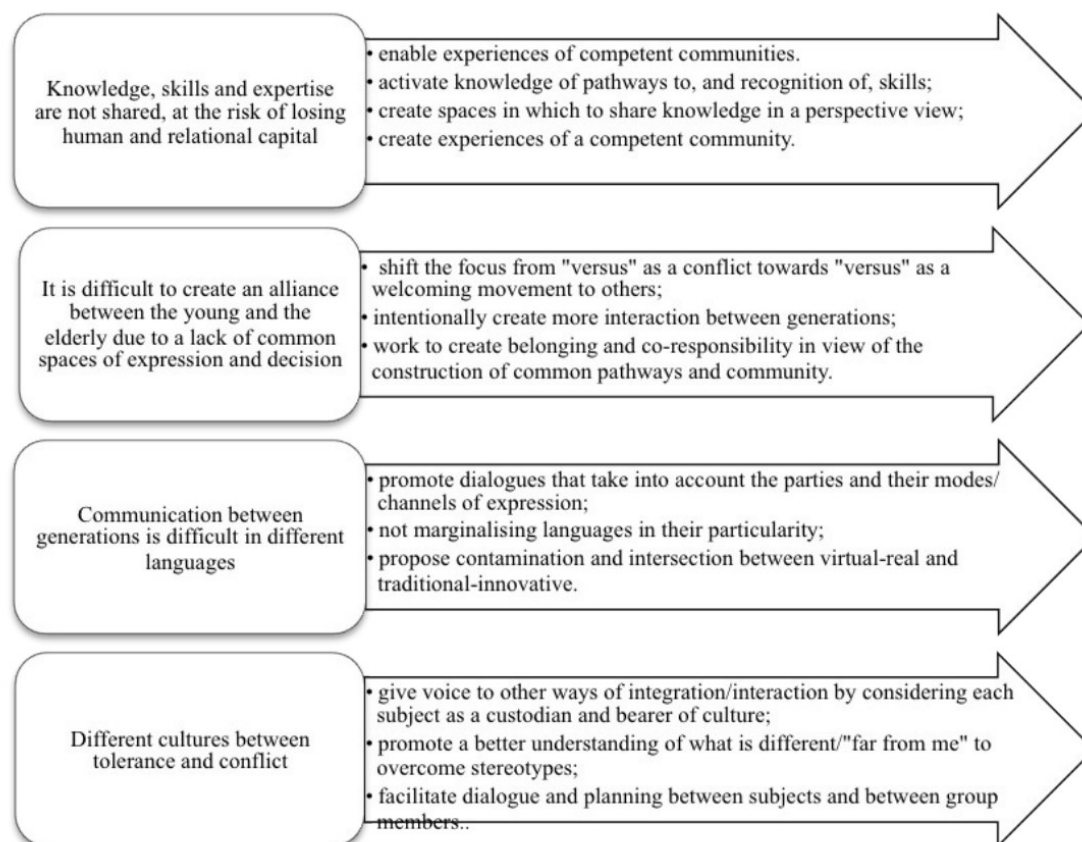
Promoting protagonism at the level of social design allows us to power a bottom up logic, in which search strategies, experiments and methodology converge and interact from the context, moving towards shared goals. It is already at this level that we can compare ideas and proposals to be evaluated together, share responsibility for common decisions, decide how to evaluate if results have been achieved, etc. Above all, it is also at this level that the motivation and personal investment in the hypotheses of the project can grow, giving shape to a renewed dynamic of restless reality, open to the new, able to receive proposals, and to compare points of view. These perspectives can contribute to the growth of a sense of community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Martini & Ripamonti, 2000; Ripamonti, 2005a; 2005b) and willingness to take care.

We can now focus on human resources and the interweaving between them that can generate a dynamic context and be able to respond, in creative and innovative ways, to issues that are often reproduced over time and in need of new solutions to create welcoming places. Recreating social capital also means starting again from contextual elements, with careful analysis, and tracing possible ways of interaction between formal and informal social structures (Donati, 2003; Folgheraiter, 2004). This requires the recognition of all the social partners who can be involved (institution, formal and non-formal agency, association, citizens, etc.) for realising and co-designing social enterprises.

We are discussing the construction of relational goods, those intangible goods that can facilitate the development of communities and broaden prospects for sustainability. Social structures will be able to incentivise relational networks of citizenship, in smarter, more active and more supportive cities.

In our experience, the project was important to understand the needs and resources of specific contexts to expand the initial project guidelines and to enable participatory and change processes. It was clear, therefore, that the operating path would result in multi-dimensional orientations summarized below (Fig. 2).

Figure 2 - From demands to processes



Taking into account general needs (national level) and local peculiarities (specific local level), the objectives of the project, shared by the local teams (composed of an educator-coordinator and some volunteers), allowed us to work in different directions:

Fostering communication and dialogue between younger and older people through the development of welcoming and regenerative places and relational contexts, in which young people and the elderly can learn, share and use their own and others' skills and abilities, also with a view to the objectives of common development. The educational teams facilitated relations between the participants, moving away from stereotypes and converting initial energies into the real presence of people, to the talents and riches that everyone was able to contribute, and the dynamics of alliance and mutual esteem that, over time, were consolidated. A regeneration of people, groups and context was launched, which may, in the future, also become a stimulus for the local and wider community's reality. The territory has already been involved in several locations, creating a greater resonance and opening up to new possibilities.

Encouraging the identification, recognition and sharing of the knowledge and personal skills of young people and the elderly from those they already possess, but is often tacit. The centres have carried out a process of personal awareness, dialogue and discussion between homogeneous and heterogeneous generations. This meant they got involved and developed cooperative approaches. The capacity to network and create community patrimony has emerged in the groups.

Increasing the development of an intergenerational pact, through the implementation of collaborative experiences and mutual support between the young and the elderly. The interplay between

reflexivity and action was successful in creating the dynamics of proximity between the parties and, in many cases, has also led to the deepening of relationships aimed at mutual support. In this sense, we can say that we have supported alliances between generations, who shared a path in which relationships were significant enough to continue the experience.

Developing processes for community care and active citizenship, oriented primarily by a sense of personal improvement and social inclusion; the meeting of older and younger will be able to build a fertile ground for democracy in which to share thoughts and actions, with the participation of all. The attention to, and care of, the person has been the central focus for developing interventions, in close relationship with the Salesian logic, to support the integral development of individuals through the interactions and climate of the group. The enhancement of the subjects/people passed through the unconditional acceptance of singularity, the relational plots and the construction of collaborative and inclusive contexts.

Improving the welcoming and listening solutions of cohabitation and meaningful relationships, through knowledge and recognition of cultures in a dialogic approach. Interpreting the differences as a richness, to enhance the common aspects, and to strengthen the bonds between generations and cultures. This objective has opened up discussions about the possibility of designing, from the point of view of education and training, actions that would open borders and break down barriers, to ensure that the different senses of cultural belonging could interconnect and enrich each other. The differences, seen at first with fear and suspicion, have become opportunities to share resources and to discover, learn and share. The consolidation of ties took place in view of the prefix “inter-” that has accompanied the entire project, which calls to mind reciprocity of exchange, and solidarity and generosity of meeting.

The participatory methodologies and cooperatives envisaged by the project have allowed local venues to implement specific interventions, with a greater use of tools and techniques that enabled the achievement of the objectives described above. The educational and training process followed was: recognising the skills of the people involved; encouraging group dynamics; individual and collective empowerment; the exchange of experiences between generations, and the facilitation of social participation, with an opening out also to the broader context of reference.

The project, which lasted 12 months, was divided into five phases, as summarized below.

The first phase (months 1–12) was of 12 months and it was divided into three activities: the operational preparedness of the project, in which the central coordinating team has agreed the guidelines to follow, taking in analyzing the goals and assuming a clear pattern of reference to discuss to the sites of realization; the opening of a blog project (<http://giovanivsanzianni.wordpress.com/>), as an additional tool fitting and connection between participants, exchange of information, news and experiences; the step by step and the final evaluation involved the recognition of many aspects concerning: the context, activities, difficulties or successes encountered, the approval of the proposals by the young and the elderly. The instruments used are quantitative and qualitative with an ex ante and post evaluation by the local teams; a tool for periodic update on the progress of the project and evaluation forms related to all the activities and submitted to the participants.

The second phase (months 1–3) lasted three months and allowed to highlight the needs identified and to realize the initial training with the leaders of the centers involved. The local teams have made micro qualitative semi-structured interviews addressed to the target population. This has allowed us to create a first contact between the teams, the young and the elderly, and has highlighted some issues related to the topics of the project, to outline two “portraits” of young people and older people (starting from the stereotypes), collecting observations and useful proposals to

start the educational process. During the training with the heads of the centers we have analyzed in depth the project, its intent and its lines of action, taking into exam all phases of implementation and testing tools and methods of facilitation of group dynamics and cooperation. Finally, in this second phase, each operational site has advertised the project with various tools of communication, in relation to particular proposals that, from time to time, have been implemented.

The phase 3 (months 4–6) took three months and was divided into two activities. The first one was the Laboratory of skills and performances, in which the young and the elderly discover their skills and ideas of active ageing (185 elderly people and 266 young people split into homogeneous groups). Each group has made four thematic meetings for discussion, bringing out different points of view and outlining the early reflections and possible actions about the project's topics. The elders have told and have revealed their experiences and skills and youth have outlined a hypothetical profile of ageing. The second activity was the Laboratory for the exchange of experiences, in which the young and the elderly get to know each other better, share common interests, and interact in a cooperative way (180 elderly people and 259 young people in mixed groups). Intergenerational groups (mixed group composed by young and elderly involved in the previous phase) attended at this workshop and we observed the first truly revolutionary step of the project which has promoted a strong interweaving between the different age, stimulating dialogue, discussion, openness, sharing, cooperation. It was essential to initiate the process starting with issues of importance to both generations, giving rise to debates and new perspectives. During the six meetings held, communication and appreciation of each other's experiences have increased. In this way, the initials prejudices and stereotypes were reduced and the participants have started to think about joint initiatives, diffusion and territorial opening, which could have a positive influence on the environment of shared life.

The phase 4 (months 7–11) lasted five months and was divided into two activities that required the implementation of participated and shared projects. In particular, the first activity, Laboratory of citizenship, involved 183 elderly and 250 young people. In each center, the intergenerational group, formed previously, has promoted experiences of active citizenship related to the local community and the social dimension. After a period of reflection and discussion, each group chose to pursue certain objectives by undertaking practices that had an influence on the environment and that they could testify to the covenant made between young and old. The proposals were of various types: discovery and development of territory, memory, traditions; computer courses and traditional dances; cineforum and debates open to the public; sports competitions; meetings and conferences of memory and testimony, etc. The second activity of social integration has created aggregation moments where people, not just those involved in the project, they had the opportunity to meet in a convivial way and to consolidate existing relationships, strengthening the new ones and generating prospects of community-care, aimed at bringing more attention to the other.

The last phase (month 12) took a month and ended the project through two tools of sharing and communication. The first one was the National Conference (Rome, 05/10/2014) with the presence of the presidents of the associations involved, the coordination team and the leaders of local team. Then, it was written a final publication by the scientific supervisor, with the participation of local teams, of the project, entitled: *Processi di dialogo intergenerazionale alla prova dell'esperienza*. There were also other activities of dissemination of the project with additional presentations at conferences, contributions in books and articles on national and international scientific journals.

The alliance between generations: new itineraries toward “we care”

The outcomes of the project, reported with qualitative and quantitative tools for monitoring, were matched to the initial indicators, as proposed in Table 1. This process allows us to carry out an evaluation to ascertain results and open spaces in new intergenerational projects.

Project Indicators	Performance	Open Perspectives
Increase awareness of their own knowledge, meaningful experiences of their own abilities/resources and the possibility of sharing them with others and how they can be reused across the board in everyday life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater personal awareness of the elderly and young people (from the first group activity) through greater self-knowledge and recognition of their skills and abilities. • greater mutual sharing and joint activities have revealed the potential of each subject and the synergies that can be activated in the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue the deepening of knowledge of self and others, in order to bring out talents and potential to share for the common good. • both generations inclined towards practical activities and shared interests and common issues.
Develop the capacity for dialogue between generations,	• the realisation of joint meetings and the development	• the intergenerational groups started will continue thanks to
particularly among individuals in the centres.	of shared projects have allowed a convergence of generations.	the support of the forms of self-organisation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the young and the elderly want to involve other people and age groups, building community events.
Expand the ability to compare beyond stereotypes about ageing and culture as two rigid predefined categories.	• generations and cultures have come in contact, feeding less stereotyped views of the other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meetings between the young and the elderly first stimulated the approach of animation, and will continue in an informal way, thanks to links between the generations. • the interactions between the young and the elderly will implement new personal and common projects, from experiences carried forward.
Increase the ability to create alliances of mutual support between the young and the elderly from the needs identified.	• direct dialogue between the young and the elderly has created greater acknowledgement, reciprocity and proximity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it will be possible to promote a more inclusive approach, based on the alliances that were generated. • it will be possible to develop a “multiplier effect” for ideas and a catalyst for new energies to promote active citizenship and community care.
Develop the ability to work together (the young and the elderly), valuing each other’s resources for actions for the benefit of the local/territorial community.	• an aspect that manifested itself especially in the final phase design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • young people and the elderly have experienced shared creation and design, from concept to realisation. • the model tested may give rise to the expansion of the experience and self-promotion thereof, even by those involved.

Develop a sense of belonging and active participation in the life of their local community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the participatory dimension has emerged in the course of the project and, in particular, in the last phase, with active and proactive attitudes displayed by the different generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the cohesion experienced during the design process can give rise to new forms of intergenerational dialogue and social and relational cooperative models.
Increase skills of dialogue, listening and openness towards others and towards other cultures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an element often pointed out by the participants and noted in the various assessment tools through less stereotyped and more personalised visions, with direct references to lived experiences and people they know during the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dialogue, listening and openness created a positive atmosphere and support for the project and can be further developed to generate authentic encounters with the other, even in the intergenerational sense.
Set up and activate, at each local venue, a network of informal facilitation in enhancing the resources and skills available, facilitating the exchange of knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> informal networks were activated in different ways depending on the specific nature of the centres' projects, involving the young and the elderly on several fronts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the exchange of knowledge and reflective and operational skills can be further developed through continuous dialogue.
Activate concrete paths of interaction between the young	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the elderly and young people have interacted and dealt with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in view of increasingly active citizenship and ever more
and the elderly in the management of space, time, issues and common projects.	issues related to the context of belonging, difference, memory, and new possible projects.	inclusive environments, it is possible to promote experiences similar to the one realised to enhance emerged skills (individual and group).

Table 1 – Indicators, performance and perspectives

Life stories intertwine and take on new meanings, increasing the desire to redesign themselves together. Therefore, it is possible to consolidate the social context, the network of interactions and identities. It is necessary, then, to make visible the educational strategies implemented with the elderly and young people, starting from reflexivity of educators and facilitators who promote intergenerational dialogue, to reconstruct the processes that improve the quality of life, thanks to continuous learning together, experiencing active citizenship and belonging to a community.

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