

GREEN GENERATIONS

CROSS COUNTRY REPORT ON THE FOCUS GROUPS



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Introduction

Focus groups in each partner country are part of the Work Package 2. This report presents the exploratory study conducted by the European partners of the project in France, Greece, Cyprus, Bulgaria, and Romania. This preliminary work completes the research carried out in countries and coordinated and synthesized by Eutopique: the desk research and the quantitative survey.

The results of the focus group discussions will help us to develop a curriculum for the Work Package 3.

Questions like the following should be answered: What teachers find important about the topic, experiences they are having, personal competences in the field of intergenerational learning, climate change, and Youth Participation.

It should stimulate participants to discuss among each other and give us insights.

Methodological approach



Focus groups

online (France, Cyprus,)
and face-to-face (Romania,
Greece, Bulgaria)

Study field

February and
March 2023

90 minutes

For each Focus
group

Teachers

34 in total

Most of the focus groups in the GREEN GENERATION project were performed online and took place in all partner countries on the following dates:

Date of Focus group and country	Number of teachers
France (online): 17.02.2023	4
Cyprus (online): 20 & 22.02.2023	6
Romania (face to face): 24.02.2023	9
Bulgaria (face to face): 10.03.2023	5
Greece (face to face): 28.02.2023	10

In total 34 teachers were participating: teachers with multiple backgrounds, from both public and private schools, in both advantaged and disadvantaged neighborhoods, and with a wide range of students (social, ethnic and gender and students with disabilities).

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National reports

Summary of focus group - Cyprus

Overview

This focus group took place 20 and 22 February 2023, Online. 6 teachers (all female) and two Synthesis staff were present.

Age	39, 36, 36, 56, 38, 41
Gender	6 female
Seniority	26 years of service,
Type of pedagogy	project based, collaborative, traditional
Students' profile	mixed socio-economical background
Type of school	1 kindergarten, 4 primary schools, 1 high school, 2 rural and 4 urban schools

Spontaneous evocations and representations of Climate Change:

Climate change is still not a well-known term by teachers.

Some were more confident, others more reluctant to provide a definition. Based on the discussion, the following conclusions are derived:

- Both negative and positive connotations of the term: Images of disaster and destructions, abnormal phenomena, come to mind.
- However, it is also reported that climate change could be a natural phenomenon, resulting from the evolution of human kind.

Motivation, uses and approval of Climate Change in educational practices

Climate change is not yet part of the formal education curriculum.

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Climate change education requires interactive training for teachers.

Participants report that they have taught in the past on the topic of climate change, especially related to recycling. They find it important to address, even if they reported that there is no specific mention in the curriculum. Based on the discussion, the following conclusions are derived:

- Generally, there is limited hands-on learning, interactive training and lesson plans provided, or dedicated chapters addressing the matter in the curriculum of primary school, and secondary school. Reportedly by the participants, there is no specific chapter in the curricula of any level (pre-school, primary, secondary/highschool), which is dedicated to the topic of climate change, with the exception of 1-2 cases.
- There exists in kindergarten as a free-choice subject by the preschool teachers, some reference to it in primary school mostly to do with cultivating ecological conscience on our actions and environmental footprint.
- However, this is less evident in high school/secondary schools, due to the pressure to deliver the curriculum, does not leave room for much freedom to delve deeper into the topic
- It is derived that, as the level of education progresses, it is less likely to see this topic addressed extensively. Thus, it is only up to the teacher out of their own initiative to deliver a lesson on climate change, and connect it to the curricula or as a project.

Spontaneous evocations and representations of intergenerational learning

Intergenerational learning is an unfamiliar term by teachers.

The participants, almost in their totality, reported that they had never heard the term before, but could infer the meaning of the term by its etymology. They perceived that it is about knowledge sharing between generations.

Motivation, uses and approval of intergenerational learning in educational practices in educational practices

Intergenerational pedagogies are still not well known by teachers.

Teachers were reluctant to give examples of intergenerational pedagogies implemented in their daily practice.

They mentioned that it has probably happened occasionally, but did not seem as motivated to pursue it extensively. They did perceive that it could be meaningful to explore for climate change education.

Participant refers to the discussion on the changing seasons: "Older people lived through the 4 different seasons so that they can explain to younger students what the different seasons were like. And the students can explain how they experience the seasons now, for example how summers are extremely hot."

Opportunity for intergenerational learning

Intergenerational pedagogies are implemented by teachers even unaware.

Teachers did not mention specific examples of intergenerational learning, other than examples of grandchild and grandfather/grandmother.



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Conclusions

It was evident that:

- Teachers who are constrained by the time available and amount of content to teach.
- National curriculum priorities prevent teachers from working on additional projects.
- School still seems drifted apart from external players, like other stakeholders.
- Very limited knowledge of intergenerational knowledge and interaction/implementation at school.
- There is potential for climate change education and intergenerational learning, if:
 - proper training, hands on learning, interactive workshops
 - a facilitating school environment
 - incorporating it in the curriculum

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Summary of focus group - France

Overview

The focus group had been conducted online with four teachers who teach children between the ages of 9 and 11. Two men and two women, teaching in public and private establishments.

Teachers are between 35 and 45 years old and have more than 10 years of seniority. The schools concerned are in Paris and in suburb.

Spontaneous evocations and representations of intergenerational learning

Awareness around the subject and elements of context:

Teachers and by extension French schools are not very aware of related subjects. Attached to the national education program, there is little or no training in environmental subjects: *“the question of the environment is almost non-existent, abstract, under construction but in the programs by contributions to the tools we are at the beginning, we are not trained for. A few publishers publish a few manuals on the subject, but it's very recent, and it's skimmed over, it's not central, these are the shortest chapters, we feel that for the moment it's not the concern of national education.”*

It is difficult to grasp the issue of intergenerational with the teaching staff. The French school is culturally perceived as a closed place where only skills and programs recognized by national education have their place:

“There is a problem in France, it is that the school must be a chapel, an enclosed place, at the base the school of the republic was to make black hussars of the republic, and it is always bad seen when the parents are brought in. Personally, it's a mistake, society has to reach the family and vice versa, especially for children who don't have that cultural capital, it's up to school to reach out to families and apart from the moments of transcriptions there is never any collaborative work on the projects. And families often don't come through the door too. I think it comes from the school which does not offer and suddenly the parents take the fold and do not return. It's cultural”

Interest in the subject :

When the subject is mentioned, there is a general lack of knowledge as to the contours that the term "intergenerational" can take. Nevertheless, the subject interests the teachers surveyed, who are campaigning for an opening of the school towards civil society.

“It seems essential to me to think of it like that, because otherwise there is a part of what children experience at school that stays at school and yet it is essential to share it.”

Obstacles noted:

The French teacher has a classical initial training. Once in post, the training offered responds little or not to their needs, desires, desire to anchor themselves in contemporary subjects (see OCCE feedback on the lack of meaning in learning). *“we are always offered very technical French math training”*

Time is a second constraint inherent in French education. A very full program, compulsory related activities which weigh down the schedule, leaving little room for external activities if they are not anticipated). *“We've been trying to create bridges with a cycle in common for a long time, but in practice it's not working. In elementary school, it must be a will and an initiative on the part of the teachers. »*

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The difficulty of bringing in a speaker from outside the circle of National Education, the preferred entry point remains the teacher; it is up to him or her to convince his or her management of the interest of the proposed project.

School is still a place that remains a sanctuary for families. Very few bridges to strengthen the bond between parents and teachers apart from the classic requests for school outings and other festive events. *"In France the school must be a chapel, an enclosed place, at the base the school of the republic was to make black hussars of the republic, and it is always frowned upon when we bring in the parents. Personally, it's a mistake, society has to reach the family and vice versa, especially for children who don't have that cultural capital, it's up to school to reach out to families and apart from the moments of transcriptions there is never any collaborative work on the projects. And families often don't come through the door too. I think it comes from the school, which does not offer, and suddenly the parents take the fold and do not return. It's cultural"*

Little communication between teachers, no culture of sharing in the teaching environment, which places them in a classic routine where the possibilities of cooperation are few or almost non-existent.

Levers addressed:

Integrate the projects into the temporality of the school projects in order to facilitate the anchoring of the interventions with all the teaching staff. "There are several parameters: changing the programs to put this subject back at the center, a national will via inspection and rectorate, including it in the school project. The school project is very important. There are different entries but it should be done in a global and collective way, and not over a year but anchored in time. »

Promote the dissemination of "project" proposals by the teacher who remains the most accessible ambassadors for entering the school

Respect the calendars well in advance to avoid over-solicitation of teachers during popular periods (swimming cycle, summer camp and other recurring projects)

Promote exchanges between teachers in a transversal way both for exchanges of practices but also for an opening of the global School

Promote distance training proposals (to overcome time problems) while maintaining a one-off format of meetings (to reinforce the spin-off and openness of teachers, and by extension, from the school to the families)

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Summary of focus group - Greece

Overview

Age	30-58 years old
Gender	5 female, 5 male
Students' profile	students of diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, students with mild additional educational needs (one teacher is supportive teacher of special education)
Type of school	Primary education in peri-urban area

Spontaneous evocations and representations of Climate Change Education:

Climate change education evoked different representations to teachers' minds. Some of them focused on the actions that we take to prevent climate change, while others emphasized on the repercussions of climate change through negative connotations. Special focus has to be paid on the use of the adjectives necessary and urgent as indicative of the emergency to tackle climate change consequences.

Key words and images referred to **climate-friendly actions - green practices**: *recycling, prevention of energy wasting, renewable energy sources, tree planting*

Key words and images referred to **negative connotations of climate change**: ozone hole, melting ice, exhaust gas, disaster, deforestation, planet at risk, absence of seasons, global warming

Spontaneous evocations and representations of Climate Change Education - Introducing Climate Change Education to students

Even if teachers have no experience in teaching climate change education in a systematic way (incorporated in the formal curriculum), they suggested the following approaches for introducing climate change education to someone, who has never heard of it. The teachers of the FG1 focused more on the definition-description of climate change education, while those of FG2 focused on the teaching approaches used to introduce students to this kind of education.

Definition of Climate Change Education (FG1)

1. They would characterize it as a systematic action or activity that "is implemented in formal (school) or non-formal settings, in order to develop for the target audience (e.g. students)

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- knowledge and skills on how to adapt to extreme climate events and adopt environmentally friendly behaviors that will contribute to the mitigation of climate change, like recycling, energy saving, etc.” (P1 of FG1). OR
2. As “a common effort so we can all contribute to reducing the rate of climate change.” (P2 of FG1).

Teaching approaches for introducing students to Climate Change Education (FG2)

1. Game-based learning: “I would try to present it through a game, like a puzzle or an interconnected nest of pictures, where one human action would lead to an environmental phenomenon and to its consequences for the environment” (P2 of FG2).
2. Use of videos: “videos, like documentaries, can act in the same way by presenting the process of how humans affected the global ecosystem, from flora to fauna and humans’ daily lives.” (P4 of FG2)
3. Exploratory teaching approach: “meaning that I would start with questions and answers, in order to encourage students to think critically before I will present them the facts themselves.” (P3 of FG2)

Motivation, uses and approval of Climate Change in educational practices.

Teachers’ motivation come mainly from the need to provide students with stimuli towards environmental-friendly behaviors and satisfy students’ curiosity for meaningful learning environments that address today’s environmental challenges. As P4 of FG2 highlights: “...I observe that students are more curious to learn and discuss things that affect their daily life instead of trite information that have no application to today’s environmental challenges.”

3 out of 10 teachers stated that their motivation stems from the need to make students adaptable to the repercussions of climate change, in order to get prepared on how to face them the upcoming decades. As P4 of FG1 highlights: “I want the students to be prepared for their future on the planet Earth and also be able to face challenging situations. “.

4 out of 10 teachers find it motivating and challenging to introduce Climate Change Education to the formal curricula - even to seemingly relevant courses, such as History. As P1 of FG2 mentions: “P1: I will add something to what P4 said. I find it also challenging and motivating for me - as a teacher - to insert a new topic to my teaching, without it being an integral part of the formal curriculum.”. And P6 of FG1 supplements “If it can’t be reversed, at least we can mitigate its effects and adapt ourselves to its consequences.”.

9 out of 10 teachers have already worked on climate change in class. P6 of FG1 highlighted the interdisciplinarity in delivering climate change education through different subjects. More specifically, “For example, we have dealt with climate change in the course of social and political education for the responsibility of citizens, the state and other organizations regarding.. environment and dealing with fires..”. In addition, P1 of FG2 mentioned that “I am reluctant in applying for such projects outside school, because the bureaucracy is extensive and the time is limited for such activities according to the curriculum.”

1 out of 10 teachers worked on climate change only through the subjects and respective chapters of the formal curriculum (e.g. Geography). P3 of FG2 highlighted that “Except for the subjects that

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have chapters focused on climate change phenomena, like Modern Language and Geography, I haven't delved deeper into the topic."

Teachers' experiences from introducing Climate Change Education into the curriculum

Teachers rated their experience working on climate change as positive. This "feeling" was mainly connected with students' increased interest and curiosity, and willing to take action towards exploring sustainable solutions.

One teacher (P5 of FG1) referred to the fact that the majority of students were already informed from their parents about climate change; therefore, the activity was easier to be implemented. In this context, the teacher stressed **the role of parents in shaping children's personality and the potential collaboration between the school and students' parents** for increasing the impact of the activity-project.

Examples of activities focused on Climate Change

1. Painting, making posters-puzzles, creating invitations, watching short videos, dramatizing fairy tales - e.g. The tree that gave
2. Experiential experiences, such as nature excursions, planting-watering
3. Recycling of paper and bottle caps

Teachers highlighted the importance of connecting climate change education with students' daily lives, in order for them to see a tangible result and perceive the process of climate change consequences from local to global level.

Challenges in introducing Climate Change Education into the curriculum

Among the most prevailing responses were the following:

1. **Time-constrained curriculum:** *"Limited time was one of the barriers that I face"* (P1 of FG1).
2. **Number of students in class.** *"Also, surely things would be easier with a smaller number of children in the class"* mentioned P1 of FG1
3. **Exams-centered curriculum.** The introduction of climate change education is more challenging for teachers, since they have to handle an extensive curriculum and intensive exams periods. As P2 of FG1 stresses: *"I suppose that this issue is even more challenging for teachers of secondary education that have to count many tests during the school year."*
4. **Bureaucratic processes:** *"...the bureaucratic procedures of the Greek educational systems that makes it difficult to implement projects outside of the school or involve external stakeholders...Everything needs additional paperwork, even for one individual, except for the school staff or parents, to enter the classroom."* (P1 of FG2).
5. **Lack of teachers' knowledge and training:** *"...it goes without saying that at some point you need support or ideas for implementing further activities."* (P2 of FG2).
6. **Lack of ready-to-use activities:** *"...we need guidelines on how to implement projects or insert projects to the existing curriculum..."* (P4 of FG2).
7. **No previous knowledge of students from their homes.** In some cases, the perceptions and knowledge of the students' parents are incomplete or completely absent. *"As a consequence, there are things or connotations that have to be taught from scratch to some students, which results in delay in combination with the time-constrained curriculum."* (P3 of FG1).

Actors to promote Climate Change Education in Greek schools

Teachers mainly proposed a multi-stakeholder approach with the active engagement of the following actors:

local authorities & youth councils Cross-school collaboration, eco-activists & volunteers, NGOs, parents

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Pedagogical approaches for delivering Climate Change in schools

- **Experiential learning** contributes to make climate change more comprehensible and tangible for students. *“They can go out and observe these consequences, in order to understand how ecosystems and human lives are directly or indirectly affected by specific phenomena.”* (P2 of FG2). P6 of FG2 suggested the combination of **experiential learning with teamwork** supporting that *“...the combination of experiential learning with teamwork can accelerate students’ learning benefits and outcomes by bringing in practice the model of the whole-community approach starting from the school community and its members (students and teachers).”*
- **Guided investigation.** *“This approach will enable students to think critically about climate change and human actions’ footprint, while it will also develop students’ 21st century skills, like creativity, in an effort to address climate change challenges”* (P1 of FG1). Along with this approach, the **exploratory learning** *“can help students develop critical thinking and make interconnections between causes and effects of climate change.”* (P3 of FG2).
- **Use of digital tools, such as videos**
- **Game-based learning**
- **Project-Based Learning** inside the class or at an EU level through EU projects
- **Eco-activism** (P3 of FG1) through participating in activist projects or getting inspiration from eco-activists.
- **Interdisciplinary and cooperative teaching** *“can enable the cooperation among teachers and students allowing them to incorporate climate change education in the existing formal curricula. This approach will be also easily adaptable to the time-constrained timetable.”* (P2 of FG2).

Evolution of Climate Change Education in the school environment

Half of the teachers were not as optimistic for the evolution and incorporation of climate change education as part of the formal curriculum. Even though they acknowledge that there is a shift towards incorporating green skills - along with digital ones - through the Skills Laboratories that are implemented the last few years, some preventing factors hinder the systematic incorporation of climate change education in schools.

1. There is no obligatory or predetermined framework for delivering climate change education in schools. More specifically, as P2 of FG2 highlights *“Of course, it is up to the teacher to get prepared on how to introduce climate change education in the formal curriculum”*.
2. Lack of resources provided to teachers. As P4 of FG2 stresses, *“teachers, again, have to undertake the workload of finding resources or getting informed on the topic by themselves”*.

On the other hand, the other half of the teachers sees a positive evolution in the introduction of climate change education in schools, since they notice a general sensitivity on this topic during the last years. This perspective is mainly based on two parameters:

1. Students are applying green practices inside and outside school. Indicatively, P2 of FG1 mentions, *“students...don't throw trash, try to pass the message of tackling climate change on to family and friends.”* And P6 of FG1 complements that *“students collect plastic caps, recycle batteries and throw them in special bins provided by the school. They keep the courtyard clean and take care of the garden plants.”* Finally, P5 of FG1 stresses, *“Planting trees and recycling*

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are among the practices that have been sustained by students, which indicates a consistent and positive progress towards adopting and transferring green attitudes to their daily routines.”

2. Gradually increased participation of schools in national and EU educational projects focused on sustainability. In that way, both students and teachers are educated in green and sustainable practices, which they will transfer in their daily lives affecting also their families.

Spontaneous evocations and representations of Intergenerational Learning

“Generation gap” was the first thing that came up in teachers’ minds when they heard about intergenerational learning. And, then, **“culture, tradition, culture”** were among the most common responses among the teachers.

“Generations, values, knowledge, age, old, young, experienced, inexperienced” (P1 of FG1)

“Young, age difference, communication gap, interest, then-now.” (P6 of FG1)

“The first thing is the generation gap, and then, customs, tradition, culture.” (P2 of FG2)

“Generation gap, knowledge and attitudes transfer from generation to generation I would say.” (P4 of FG2)

Introducing Intergenerational Learning: Teachers focused on how to explain intergenerational learning rather in teaching approaches for introduce intergenerational learning.

“I would simply say that intergenerational learning is knowledge that is transferred from the older generations to the younger ones.” (P4 of FG1)

“Presenting customs, pictures, and organizing collaboration groups between members of different ages.” (P5 of FG1)

“Organization of educational seminars, parents' training, implementation of actions among different age groups.” (P6 of FG1)

Intergenerational Learning and Climate Change Education

“The mixing of more traditional and more progressive ways of tackling climate change may result in a very powerful collaboration.” (P3 of FG2)

“I agree with my colleagues; intergenerational learning can promote cooperation and collaboration between generations, leading to joint efforts to address climate change.” (P1 of FG2)

Motivation, uses and approval of intergenerational learning in educational practices

Only 3 teachers have implemented projects based on the intergenerational approach mainly focused on culture and tradition, but not in a systematic way. 1 teacher has involved only some parents in a project due to their willingness. The rest of the teachers have no relevant experience.

“Yes, I implemented an intra-school program - not related to climate change education - on the subject of the tradition of our country with the 2nd Grade.” (P1 of FG1)

“We have implemented some projects, but not systematically.” (P4 of FG1)

“I have implemented a project, where with other colleagues; we engaged parents and grandparents in activities for promoting our local customs aiming to spark students’ interest for tradition and culture.” (P3 of FG2)

Positive aspects of intergenerational learning

Collaboration and Interaction between different generations *“It was very interesting to see how older and younger generations can collaborate and create projects that combine traditional and modern elements.”* (P3 of FG2)

Creation of sustainable learning and impact on the ecosystem *“I find intergenerational learning very useful for creating sustainable learning and impact on the ecosystem, since older generations can pass*

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on to the younger ones knowledge and practices that have worked in the past; in their turn, younger generations will enrich those practices with new information and up-to-date approaches." (P4 of FG1).

Knowledge exchange "...younger generations that have immediate access to digital information, can help older generations to find easy ways to get informed and apply sustainability practices using technology." (P1 of FG2)

Connection between school and the wider community: "So, the involvement of adults helps them to see outside of the school, and try to create impact for the wider local community." (P4 of FG2)

Motivation, uses and approval of intergenerational learning in educational practices

Barriers/Obstacles when implementing intergenerational projects

Limited time: "Regarding the intergenerational project that I mentioned earlier, the limited time was an obstacle, but the result justified our effort." (P1 of FG1)

Level of adults' engagement "Although I have not implemented such projects, I have encountered this barrier while implementing other projects with adults." (P3 of FG1)

Collaboration between students and parents: "Although it was a very interesting experience, at the beginning it was difficult to set boundaries between parents and students, from both sides." (P3 of FG2)

Bureaucratic workload for engaging community members: "We have to be prepared for the bureaucratic workload for their participating in the respective activities." (P2 of FG2)

Motivation, uses and approval of intergenerational learning in educational practices

Tips to take into account while implementing intergenerational projects

Lesson planning: "...the learning objectives, the duration, the interests of my students, the collaborations in general, are among the most important elements that we should take into account while designing and implementing an intergenerational project on climate change." (P1 of FG1)

Arrangement of the logistics: "Without having experience of the specific approach, as a beginner let's say, I would say that we need to start by selecting participants, arranging the place, if the activity will take place inside or outside school, which will indicate to us what bureaucratic procedures we will have to follow." (P2 of FG2)

Participants' preparation: "...very good clarification of concepts, training of educational staff, keeping informed parents and students, detailed presentation of the structure and actions of the program, and ensuring the necessary logistical infrastructure.... (P6 of FG1)

Creation of a common vision: "Creating a common vision so that all ages strive equally, away from disagreements and conflicts is also another decisive factor for the successful implementation of an intergenerational project." (P2 of FG1)

Parents' active engagement: "...in order to fully engage parents, I would inform the association of parents and guardians and I would ask for their support and active involvement." (P4 of FG1)

Application of a bottom-up approach: "I believe that we should apply a bottom-up approach to involve community members from different backgrounds, like local authorities, parents, people working in NGOs, volunteers, eco-activists, seniors, etc." (P4 of FG2)

Teachers' interdisciplinary collaboration: "...we may need to ask help from other colleagues that are interested or more proficient to join the activity." (P3 of FG2)

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Motivation, uses and approval of intergenerational learning in educational practices

Considerations on Intergenerational Learning and Climate Change Education

Dissemination of the school projects to the local community: *“These actions can be shared on the school's website, at local newspapers, in order to keep the local community informed about the actions organized by the school and - hopefully - increase community members' participation.”* (P6 of FG1)

“I will agree with P3, that it is considered necessary to have an incentive-stimulus that will create a sense of reward in the community.” (P2 of FG1).

“I think that it's important to communicate the expected impact of the activity or the project, and bring out the results for each specific target group.” (P4 of FG2)

Teachers' support through resources and guidelines: *“The truth is that our workload is already heavy and designing whole-community projects requires time and resources.”* (P4 of FG1)

Teachers' support from the school authorities: *“Finally, the support of the school headmaster and the local authorities (e.g. municipalities) is also very important.”* (P5 of FG1)

Complementarity of the intergenerational projects: *“We need to bring out the complementarity of the intergenerational project to the actions of the participating groups, for example of the local authorities (through a local campaign for the environment) or of the activities that the NGOs are implementing.”* (P1 of FG2)

Conclusions

It was evident that:

- 4 out of 10 teachers find it motivating and challenging to introduce Climate Change Education to the formal curricula - even to seemingly relevant courses, such as History.
- Time-constrained curricula, lack of teachers' training, lack of ready-to-use resources, and bureaucratic processes are among the main challenges for introducing Climate Change education into the curriculum.
- Teachers mainly proposed a multi-stakeholder approach with the active engagement of parents, local community members, NGOs, eco-activists, local authorities, etc. for the promotion of Climate Change Education.
- Among the main barriers for implementing intergenerational projects are the time-constrained curriculum, level of adults' engagement, collaboration between students and parents, and bureaucratic workload for engaging community members.
- Complementarity of the intergenerational projects implemented by the school with community projects is key for achieving expanded impact and dissemination.

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Summary of focus group - Romania

Overview

- The focus group involved 9 teachers, 6 female and 3 male, all over 40 years old, all with more than 20 years of teaching experience.
- They teach different subjects 2 teachers of Geography, 1 teacher of Civics, Social Science and History, 1 teacher of Physics, 1 teacher of Robotics, 1 teacher of Technical subjects and 1 teacher in primary education.
- All the teachers teach in urban school, 5 of them works with gifted students or students from advantaged families who can afford to support their children, 4 of them works with disadvantaged students, from poor families or from foster homes.
- 6 teachers teach students from 9th to 12th grades (15-18 years old), 2 teachers teach students from 5th to 8th grades (11-14 years old) and 1 teacher teach primary education (6-10 years old).

Climate change education

- All the teachers are familiar with climate change education.
- All the teachers were involved in projects related to climate change education
- Romanian teachers have mandatory national curricula, which does not include climate change education except for some chapter in the Geography curriculum.
- Most of the projects related to climate change education are organised as non-formal activities.
- They agree that climate change education is very important and that should involve not only teachers and students, but all the community and accept that during the last years the Ministry of Education made some progress in promoting climate change education in schools.

Intergenerational learning

- Teachers can define intergenerational learning and understand and can explain its goals.
- Only two teachers were involved in project related to intergenerational learning, also they understand how important it is for different generations to learn from each other.
- Both teachers declared that they had difficulties in finding the right target group and choosing the right activities.
- All the teachers consider as difficult in such a project:
- Finding a target group willing to spend time on these projects.
- Identifying older people who would be willing to participate in the project and who could contribute their experience and knowledge.
- Creating a safe and comfortable environment for interaction between people of different generations.

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- Identify and plan activities to encourage active participation and involvement of learners in the learning process.

The most important problems identified were:

- Lack of training for teachers
- Lack of time, resources, suitable spaces for activities.
- Lack of support from the school management (in some cases)
- Preconceptions and stereotypes related to learning.
- Romanian teachers are aware of the importance of the intergenerational learning.
- Romanian teachers have a mandatory national curricula which not include Environmental Education or Climate change education (except for some subjects)
- They know that they are allowed to teach Climate change education as an optional course but they need to be trained and to have some set courses, lesson outlines and electronic platforms.
- They would like to know more about this issue and to be involved in this kind of projects.
- All the Romanian teachers would like to involve students in projects related to intergenerational learning and climate change education and in activities to raise awareness and promote environmental citizenship in our community as we live in one of the most polluted city of the country.
- There are not many examples of good practices in teaching intergenerational learning
- Lack of interest, time and appropriate resources could be a problem in implementing such projects.
- They consider this kind of projects extremely beneficial for all the parts involved: teachers, students, parents, community as a whole.



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- “Thanks to the intergenerational approach and the exchange of experiences between older and younger people, older people will have a reduction in the feeling of isolation and exclusion, as they will share their past experiences with a younger generation”
- “It can sometimes be difficult to work with adults if you don't have a background in adult learning. It is important how you choose the group of adults, their experience. “
- “It is important to identify older people who would be willing to participate in the project and who could contribute their experience and knowledge, to create a safe and comfortable environment for interaction between people of different generations, to identify and plan activities to encourage active participation and involvement of learners in the learning process and to integrate new technologies and teaching methods to ensure effective and engaging learning for all.”

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Summary of focus group - Bulgaria

Overview

Age	35-55
Gender	5 female
Seniority	10-20 years of teaching experience
Type of pedagogy	traditional, participatory, reverse, project based learning
Students' profile	mixed socio-economic background
Type of school	3 primary schools, 2 high schools

Climate change education – spontaneous evocations

As the climate change education is not a part of the school curriculum in Bulgaria and the topic is not directly addressed in the educational textbooks, the participants in the focus group highlighted the following points:

"If we truly believe that the future is in the hands of today's students, we need to encourage children to really look for solutions to the challenges of the future".

"Learning about climate change, the ideas they embed and the opportunity for students themselves to get involved in tackling climate change, we will be taking a step towards having more empowered, active and responsible citizens tomorrow."

"The purpose of climate education is to develop a thorough understanding of the climate and biodiversity crises, their root causes and consequences; to help find sustainable solutions to these crises; and to empower students to actively engage in creating a truly just and sustainable society ."

"The ongoing climate and biodiversity crises are a multifaceted scientific, social and ethical problem and their mitigation requires a comprehensive understanding of causes and consequences."

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"Through mandatory specialized training and long-term professional development, we teachers must be equipped with the knowledge and tools be able them to integrate climate education into each subject."

Climate change education – motivation, uses in the Bulgarian educational system

It was envisaged climate change education to be incorporated into the school curriculum in the autumn of 2022. So far, specific materials and in particular a handbook with specific teaching materials, ready-made lessons and ideas for project-based learning on ecology and climate change is available to all schools and teachers in Bulgaria. The handbook is suitable for students in grades 5-12. It can be used in class, in interest clubs that have a connection with ecology or based on the subject area with adaptation. The handbook is especially valuable for schools that have equipped STEM classrooms or those with specialized profiles such as agricultural high schools, vocational high schools of transport.

Climate change education – needs for training

All of the participants agreed that effective climate change education requires well-prepared and well-supported teachers who have the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to engage students in learning about this critical issue.

Climate change education – difficulties in teaching about climate change

Teaching climate change in schools can present a number of challenges for teachers. Here are some of the difficulties that teachers face when teaching climate change in Bulgaria:

- **Controversy and Polarization:** Climate change is a highly politicized and controversial issue, and sometimes we face resistance from students, parents, or colleagues who hold differing views on the subject.
- **Lack of Resources and Materials:** is the main challenge that teachers face - high-quality resources and materials to use in their climate change lessons.
- **Lack of Training/Support:** teachers are not adequate trained or supported to teach climate change effectively.
- **Time Constraints:** as climate change education is not included in the curriculum, teachers need to adjust some classes in order to devote some time to climate change education in classes.

Intergenerational learning – spontaneous evocations

While not all teachers may be familiar with the term "intergenerational learning," many are likely to have experience with it in some form. Here are some of the things that teachers shared about intergenerational learning:

- "Intergenerational learning can benefit learners of all ages, including children, youth, adults, and seniors. Younger learners can benefit from the wisdom and experience of older learners, while older learners can benefit from the fresh perspectives and energy of younger learners."
- "Intergenerational learning can promote connection and understanding between different age groups. It can help to break down stereotypes and promote mutual respect and appreciation."

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- "Intergenerational learning can create more diverse learning environments, where learners of different ages, backgrounds, and experiences can learn from one another."

Intergenerational learning – motivation, uses in educational practices

- Intergenerational learning is not a well-known practice in the Bulgarian educational system.
- Teachers do not apply the intergenerational learning into regular school activities.
- On several occasions, some activities were organized that brought together different age groups to learn and collaborate:
- Reading programs that involve students reading to and with seniors in local nursing homes or retirement communities.
- Interviews with older generations where students interview seniors in their community about their life experiences and histories.
- Gardening activities that involve students and seniors working together to plant and maintain school gardens.

"By creating opportunities for students and seniors to work together, schools can promote a culture of lifelong learning and community engagement."

Conclusion

Climate change education is still not a priority in the Bulgarian educational practices.

During a current school year, a step forward was taken for the incorporation of climate change in school education.

There is a dedicated handbook on climate change education; however, teachers need to be trained on how to apply it in different classes.

Some of the difficulties that teachers face in teaching climate change include:

- lack of resources and materials that are engaging for students;
- lack of interactive training activities for teachers;
- time constraints, as currently teachers need to devote a specific time from classes to address the topic of climate change.

Intergenerational learning can be a valuable approach in educational practices; however, teachers do not often apply it in their practices in education.

Most of the educators are not aware of the benefits of intergenerational learning, or have not experienced it in their own education or teaching practices.

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C. All countries summary

Awareness around the subject and elements of context:

For France, Cyprus and Bulgaria: Climate change is still not a well-known term by teachers is not yet part of the formal education curriculum and requires interactive training for teachers.

Intergenerational Learning is an unfamiliar term by teachers « *I have never heard this term before, but in context she understood its meaning* »

For Romania and Greece, all the teachers are familiar with climate change education. « *The ministry of education made some progress in promoting climate change education in schools* ». They can define too intergenerational Learning, understand and can explain its goals (but encounter difficulties in setting up activities).

For Greece, there is greater awareness and investment on the part of the teaching staff, but the methodologies still seem inconclusive : « *I have implemented projects with student exchanges, experiential and interdisciplinary activities, but none of them had a systematic involvement of parents or diverse age groups.* »

Interest in the topic:

When the subject is mentioned, there is a general lack of knowledge as to the contours that the term "intergenerational" can take. Nevertheless, the subject interests the teachers surveyed, who are campaigning for an opening of the school towards civil society.

"It seems essential to me to think of it like that, because otherwise there is a part of what children experience at school that stays at school and yet it is essential to share it."

"Changing habits with regards to climate change affects people's daily lives irrespective of their age. Therefore, older and younger generations can collaborate to tackle climate change challenges from individual to local level. "

All the teachers interviewed seem convinced of the interest of the subject, even if for some the establishment of this cooperation between various actors seems complicated, the common desire to bring generations into school makes sense.

"Intergenerational learning is an important part of Lifelong Learning, where generations work in a shared environment to develop skills, values and knowledge; in this context, climate change education is an ongoing learning process and, thus, it can become a field of creative dialogue and cooperation among different age groups. "

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Obstacles noted:

- Teacher has a classical initial training. Once in post, the training offered responds little or not to their needs, desires, desire to anchor themselves in contemporary subjects (see OCCE feedback on the lack of meaning in learning).
"We are always offered very technical French math training"
Most of the educators are not aware of the benefits of intergenerational learning, or have not experienced it in their own education or teaching practices.
- Time is a second constraint inherent in French education. A very full program, compulsory related activities that weigh down the schedule, leaving little room for external activities if they are not anticipated). *"We've been trying to create bridges with a cycle in common for a long time, but in practice it's not working. In elementary school, it must be a will and an initiative on the part of the teachers. »*
- The difficulty of bringing in a speaker from outside the circle of National Education, the preferred entry point remains the teacher; it is up to him or her to convince his or her management of the interest of the proposed project.
- School is still a place that remains a sanctuary for families. Very few bridges to strengthen the bond between parents and teachers apart from the classic requests for school outings and other festive events. *"In France the school must be a chapel, an enclosed place, at the base the school of the republic was to make black hussars of the republic, and it is always frowned upon when we bring in the parents. Personally, it's a mistake, society has to reach the family and vice versa, especially for children who don't have that cultural capital, it's up to school to reach out to families and apart from the moments of transcriptions there is never any collaborative work on the projects. And families often don't come through the door too. I think it comes from the school, which does not offer, and suddenly the parents take the fold and do not return. It's cultural"*
- Little communication between teachers, no culture of sharing in the teaching environment, which places them in a classic routine where the possibilities of cooperation are few or almost non-existent

Levers addressed:

- Integrate the projects into the temporality of the school projects in order to facilitate the anchoring of the interventions with all the teaching staff. *"There are several parameters: changing the programs to put this subject back at the center, a national will via inspection and rectorate, including it in the school project. The school project is very important. There are different entries but it should be done in a global and collective way, and not over a year but anchored in time.»*
- Promote the dissemination of "project" proposals by the teacher who remains the most accessible ambassadors for entering the school: *« The mandatory participation of all members involved is of utmost importance for creating a team willing to achieve meaningful learning*

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outcomes and achieve learning goals on climate change. However, I don't know how we can achieve this kind of "mandatory" participation, since climate change education is not an obligatory subject of the formal curriculum; only through incorporating it into the main curriculum; again it will be difficult. I guess that we should also count on building trust among the team members. »

- Respect the calendars well in advance to avoid over-solicitation of teachers during popular periods (swimming cycle, summer camp and other recurring projects)
- Promote exchanges between teachers in a transversal way: both for exchanges of practices but also for an opening of the global School
- Promote distance training proposals (to overcome time problems) while maintaining a one-off format of meetings (to reinforce the spin-off and openness of teachers, and by extension, from the school to the families) *»From my experience from the everyday teaching practice, teachers also need support for implementing such projects, I mean ready-to-use activities, step-by step guidelines, etc. The truth is that our workload is already heavy and designing whole-community projects requires time and resources. »*

D. Global conclusion

This report discusses the opinions of teachers from five different countries (Cyprus, Greece, Bulgaria, France, and Romania) on the topics of climate change education and intergenerational learning. The teachers were interviewed regarding their understanding of these subjects, their experiences in teaching them, and their views on the significance of these issues in the education of young people. The research has shown us that teachers in all countries are personally aware of the topic of climate change in households and at school. The interviewed persons mainly see a relevant context to climate change. The results show that most teachers consider climate change education to be a crucial concern for the youth, but there are significant differences in how they approach teaching this subject based on their country of origin. For example, teachers in Cyprus and Bulgaria tend to focus on the environmental consequences of climate change, while teachers in France and Romania emphasize the social and political aspects of the issue. Furthermore, teachers in Romania are the most inclined to incorporate intergenerational learning into their teaching on climate change. These findings underscore the importance of considering cultural and educational differences in developing effective and contextually appropriate climate change education programs.

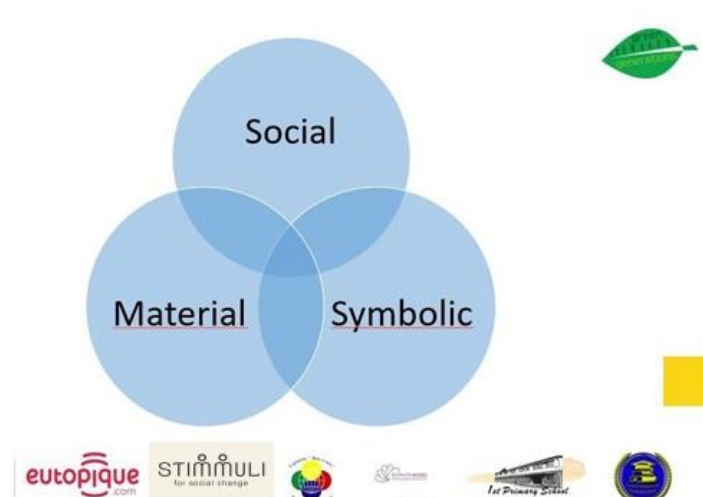
Here are the conclusions that highlight what has been learned, the barriers, and the opportunities for intergenerational learning projects:

1. In Greece, some teachers find it motivating to introduce climate change education, but time constraints, lack of training and resources, and bureaucratic processes are major challenges. Different representations of climate change emerged, with some teachers focusing on prevention and others highlighting the negative consequences. Keywords associated with climate-friendly actions included recycling, energy conservation, renewable energy, and tree planting. Challenges in implementing climate change education included limited time, large class sizes, and lack of resources. However, teachers reported positive experiences with students' increased interest. To develop and promote climate change education, teachers suggested involving local authorities, NGOs, and parents, and using pedagogical approaches like experiential learning and digital tools. Regarding intergenerational learning, teachers emphasized the generation gap, culture, and knowledge transfer. Some teachers implemented intergenerational projects with positive outcomes. Despite barriers, teachers observed a positive shift towards green practices and student engagement in sustainability projects.
2. In France, the interviewed teachers express concerns about the lack of comprehensive climate change education in the school curriculum. They acknowledge that the question of the environment is often neglected and receives little attention within the national education context. They also highlight the difficulty of implementing intergenerational learning projects due to the traditional perception of school in France as a closed space where only skills and programs recognized by national education have a place. However, the teachers express an interest in opening up schools to civil society and emphasize the importance of sharing experiences lived at school with the community. For France, integrating intergenerational learning projects into the school curriculum and promoting teacher-led dissemination are recommended. Respect for teacher calendars, exchanges between teachers, and distance-training proposals are suggested.
3. The teachers interviewed in Cyprus understand the importance of climate change education. They are aware of the environmental consequences of climate change and the need to raise awareness among younger generations about these issues. However, they emphasize that climate change education is not

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yet fully integrated into the school curriculum. They believe that additional efforts should be made to provide teachers with the tools and resources necessary to effectively address this topic in the classroom. In Cyprus, teachers face time constraints and national curriculum priorities that prevent them from working on additional projects. There is limited knowledge of intergenerational learning and interaction, but potential exists if proper training, hands-on learning, interactive workshops, and incorporation into the curriculum are implemented.

4. In Romania, the interviewed teachers are aware of the importance of intergenerational learning. They understand the goals of intergenerational learning and recognize its significance for different generations to learn from each other. However, they report challenges in finding the appropriate target group and selecting suitable activities. They consider finding a target group willing to participate, identifying older people willing to contribute their experience and knowledge, creating a safe and comfortable environment for interaction between different generations, and planning activities to encourage active participation as difficult aspects of such projects. Despite these obstacles, Romanian teachers are supportive of integrating intergenerational learning into their teaching and express a desire to learn more about this approach. Finally, even if in Romania, teachers are aware of the importance of intergenerational learning but face mandatory national curricula that do not include climate change education. They would like more information and training, and involve students in projects related to intergenerational learning and climate change education.
5. In Bulgaria, the interviewed teachers also recognize the importance of climate change education. They have participated in projects related to this subject and are aware of its impact on the environment and society. However, they note that climate change education is often approached in isolation, without direct connections to other subjects. They emphasize the importance of integrating this topic cross-curricular into the school curriculum to enhance its relevance and effectiveness. In Bulgaria, climate change education is not a priority, but a handbook on the topic exists. Teachers face challenges such as lack of engaging resources and materials, and limited interactive training activities. Intergenerational learning is not often applied in educational practices, but it could be valuable if educators were aware of its benefits.



Three spheres of constraints must be taken into account when developing the training program.

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Physical, factual constraints:

- for teaching conditions: available time (and even more so for non-curricular instruction).
- knowledge and training of teachers of the subject
- knowledge and training of teachers to learn a new form of learning
- sustainability of learning over time (cost/benefit ratio of time invested)

Social constraints:

- the subject of climate change may seem to some populations (parents, educational staff) less essential than basic knowledge and less promising in terms of training.
- the populations to be involved in the intergenerational process whose skills/training on the subject of sustainable skills are not known.
- the need to involve several stakeholders but a school often 'sanctuary', cut off from its community and therefore difficult to involve the right actors.

Symbolic constraints:

- the subject of climate change is very divisive in terms of image (positive side: opportunity for change, negative side: catastrophe and climate anxiety),
- Intergenerational learning is generally unknown with very basic representations: older people talking to younger people. The symbolism of knowledge that is taught at school by teachers and often in a traditional, top-down way.

In conclusion, the findings from the five countries examined provide valuable insights into the opportunity to develop intergenerational learning programs on climate change. The urgency and significance of addressing this topic are evident in the perspectives of the participating teachers. They recognize the pressing need to educate students about climate change and foster sustainable behaviors.

However, several constraints exist within each country that hinder the implementation of such programs. Organizational challenges, including limited time and resources, pose barriers to effectively integrating climate change education into the curriculum. Furthermore, differences in educational programs, political choices, and cultural contexts affect the extent to which climate change is prioritized in schools.

Despite these challenges, there are encouraging signs of progress. Teachers reported increased student interest and engagement when climate change education was incorporated into their teaching practices. Intergenerational projects were also highlighted as successful approaches, bridging the generation gap and facilitating knowledge transfer.

To advance climate change education in these countries, it is crucial to address the identified constraints. Collaboration with local authorities, non-governmental organizations, and parents can provide essential support



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and resources. Additionally, adopting pedagogical approaches like experiential learning and utilizing digital tools can enhance the effectiveness of teaching climate change.

Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of integrating intergenerational learning programs on climate change into educational systems. By overcoming the challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities, these countries can empower students to become environmentally conscious citizens, fostering a sustainable future for generations to come.