



CROSS-Project - creating other study spaces

2019-2022



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Documentation

“CROSS - Creating other study spaces”

The transnational project CROSS, which dealt with the changing framework conditions in adult education, was carried out within the framework of ERASMUS+ as a Strategic Partnership for the Exchange of Good Practice and presented and exchanged „best practice“ examples implemented by various adult education providers. The project was also able to present new concepts for cooperation between public libraries and adult education institutions, focusing on the „third place“ approach (Ray Oldenburg). This approach aims to reach people who rarely use public libraries and/or adult education institutions to improve their knowledge or skills.

The project was implemented from September 2019 to August 2022 with a total of 7 European adult education institutions and libraries, of which Iserlohn was the coordinating partner.

From Iserlohn, the municipal library, the European Office and the VHS (leading) were involved. In addition to Iserlohn´s twin city Nyíregyháza in Hungary (www.nyiregyhaza.hu), other project partners from Romania (www.bjc.ro), Spain (www.caudete.es), Luxembourg (www.gero.lu/fr/), Slovenia (www.mkk.si) and the Netherlands (www.stichtingwerkenenleren.nl) were involved.

The aim of the project was to investigate the changed framework conditions for continuing education institutions and to develop new concepts. It aimed at the transnational transfer, development and implementation of innovations in the field of adult education, focusing on the concept of the „third place“ as a learning space.

As a result, a „Toolbox“ was developed with all project partners, which is presented in a separate publication on the project’s website.

More Information at cross-project.eu.

ISERLOHN, GERMANY


The VHS Iserlohn (Adult Education Centre) is the CROSS coordinating partner. The VHS was founded in 1919. The adult education centres organise and support the process of lifelong learning with its offers. VHS stand for the right to education, for equal opportunities and a comprehensive understanding of education. It is open to all people regardless of age, gender or origin, social status or educational level, religion or worldview.



The City Library exists since 1910; today with two locations in historical buildings in the city centre and a branch in Iserlohn-Letmathe. Both are open public spaces for everyone, meeting places for all generations and nationalities. Our scope of work:



- Lending to everyone - free of charge for recipients of social benefits
- Physical and online media offerings: books, CDs, films, games, newspapers, magazines, online-educational-courses
- Free access to information, internet, computers
- Events and library introductions for all ages

 Volkshochschule Iserlohn (VHS)
Website: www.vhs-iserlohn.de
E-mail: vhs@iserlohn.de

 Iserlohn City Library
Website: www.iserlohn.de/kultur/stadtbuecherei
E-mail: stadtbuecherei@iserlohn.de

CAUDETE, SPAIN

Since 2007 active in Erasmus+, Cultural Area of Caudete City Council, including Universidad Popular, Ana María Matute Public Library, and Pintor Rafael Requena Museum of Watercolour Painting aims to provide citizens with activities around art, long-life learning, socialization, and enhancement of cultural heritage, offering non formal adult education courses on a wide range of fields, a successful Reading Clubs project, and an International Biennial of Watercolour Painting gathering artists from all around the world.



 Ayuntamiento de Caudete
Website: www.biblioteca.caudete.org
E-mail: biblioteca@caudete.org

CLUJ, ROMANIA

“Octavian Goga” Cluj County Library is one of the biggest public libraries in Romania that has a new building perfectly adapted to the needs of its users. With the beginnings in 1921, the library plays a distinct role in the cultural life of Cluj city, due to its dynamic and proactive attitude and to its openness to new challenges. The library has a main building and four branches, offering modern services and facilities, updated to the present needs for information, reading and leisure activities.



„Octavian Goga” Cluj County Library
Website: www.bjc.ro
E-mail: bjc@bjc.ro

KRANJ, SLOVENIA

In 2011 the library moved to the new premises of 5.400 m², a previous shopping mall and the building became a cultural centre of Kranj. People use it as the meeting place, learning space, space for entertainment and culture. It is visited by 1.600 people every day. Beside the rich collection of library material, the library offers number of services for target groups of users, such as children, youth, elderly, and immigrants. Recently it has focused on digital and information literacy and reading promotion with 22 reading clubs. Free digital courses are attended by more than 6.000 people annually. We offer also individual help in using tablets,aptops or smart phones.



Kranj City Library
Website: www.visitkranj.com/en/kranj-city-library
E-mail: mkk@mkk.si

NYÍREGYHÁZA, HUNGARY

Nyíregyháza is the 7th biggest city in Hungary, with nearly 120.000 inhabitants. The Municipality of Nyíregyháza City with County Rank is one of the associated partners in the Erasmus+ project: CROSS – Creating other study spaces. The main responsibilities of the Municipality are to exercise public authority powers and to provide public services to its citizens such as ensuring public education, health and social services, cultural initiatives, etc. The Municipality - within the scope of the legal framework and its competences - acts independently in local public affairs.



Nyíregyháza, Tabula Pláza Foundation.
A community funded open space. 'Volunteers and mugs for the community.'
Website: <https://tabulaplaza.hu/labor-cafe/>
E-mail: tabulaplaza@gmail.com

LUXEMBOURG

Considered being a think-tank for innovative solutions related to ageing in a multicultural society, Gero is addressing a heterogeneous spectrum of age(ing)-related topics on all socio-economic levels encompassing: Policy consultancy, applied research, advanced training offers for care professionals (anchored in the realm of care practice in Luxembourg), lifelong learning offers for seniors, coordination/guidance of clubs for seniors across the country, intercultural integration/dealing with diversity issues in migrant seniors.



Gero disposes of preliminary experiences - on a practical and conceptual level - that show parallels to CROSS and could contribute to the exchange of good practices. Besides this, Gero maintains solid collaborations on a national level with learning facilities such as the University of Luxembourg and its associated brand new Learning Centre – offering open and innovative spaces intended to support and inspire users to reach their goals, as well as with community-based learning facilities (seniors' clubs).

GERO – Competence Center for Ageing, Luxembourg
Website: www.gero.lu
E-mail: info@gero.lu

MIDDELBURG/OOSTERSCHELDE, THE NETHERLANDS

The Stichting “Werken en Leren” (SWL, Foundation Working and Learning) main goal is to develop activities, projects, learning space and innovation in the field of adult education. Our target groups are (young) adults, elderly and unemployed, all engaged in lifelong learning. The CROSS project goals and the goals of the Foundation are overlapping, especially in creating concepts for learning in Third Places.



SWL works closely together with the local library as a partner in the CROSS project. The library is an important partner, in creating Third Place learning, especially because they are wondering what kind of educational activity can be executed in the local society.



Stichting Werken en Leren
Website: www.stichtingwerkenenleren.nl
E-mail: info@stichtingwerkenenleren.nl

Bibliotheek Oosterschelde
Website: www.bibliotheekoosterschelde.nl/leren/taalhuis/taalcafe.html
E-mail: taalhuisosr@bibliotheekoosterschelde.nl

Kick-Off Meeting - Iserlohn (Germany) 4 to 6 September 2019

From 4 to 6 September, representatives of the institutions met at the kick-off event at the VHS Iserlohn.

Dr. Jan-Pieter Barbian, Director of City Library Duisburg, reported on the introduction in a lecture entitled „Rivals or best friends? Shapes of Cooperation between the Public Library and the Adult Education Centre in Duisburg“ on his experiences in the interplay between the City Library and the VHS.

In the subsequent World Cafe procedure, the partners get to know each other personally and the specific local situations well. On the second day, the individual partners present their previous and planned activities. This results in exciting discussions, which lead to the expectation of a result-oriented and instructive project.

In the further course the participants prepare further project meetings and work plans.



Partner Meeting - Kranj (Slovenia) 11 to 13 December 2019

The partner meeting was opened by Director of MKK Breda Karun (Kranj City Library) and Matthias Quaschnik, representing the coordinating partner Iserlohn. He also gave an insight on Ray Oldenburg’s “Third Places concept” and its sociological basics. Further Matthias Quaschnik pointed out features of third places as a proposal for a common basis of CROSS (based on the Funding program „Third places“ by the Ministry of Culture and Science North-Rhine Westphalia, 2019):

- Physical permanent location
- Good accessibility (village centre)
- Low threshold (no entry) and barrier-free
- Opening times in the evening and at the weekend
- Welcoming atmosphere (gastronomy possible)
- Cultural offers, networking of different uses
 - at least two actors are united (education and encounter)
 - Incorporation of civic initiatives (Volunteers should be responsible)
- Sustainable responsibility structure (Financing and personnel)
- Technical basic equipment (WIFI, presentation technology, etc.)
- Participation process, (involve different user groups) – allow new ideas!
- Involvement in urban/regional development (Orientation to local business concepts)

In parallel workshops the participants representing all partners worked intensively on different aspects of demographic challenges and Third Places for seniors

- goals and intentions (moderation: Kranj)
- content and topics (moderation: Caudete)
- methods and ways (moderation: Iserlohn)
- media and tools (moderation: Nyíregyháza)

As results the participants agreed on what we expect as minimum set of goals and intentions as well as content and topics. Further nice to have goals and topics were evaluated. Based on the partners’ experiences of successful – in previous projects/times – methods, tools and media were evaluated and selected to be part of the future toolbox. Lejla Fajji? (Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia) reported on demographic challenges in long-living society in the case of Slovenia, also in comparison to the other European states. In-depth presentation from partners Nyíregyháza, Caudete, Kranj, Oosterschelde gave a deeper insight of different as well as comparable demographic situations and the ways to deal with these situations as public libraries and adult education centres from a theoretical and practical view.

Finally the participants collected best practice ideas, what Third Places should characterise, and best practice examples of existing Third Places run or known by the partners.



Partner Meeting - Cluj (Romania) 1 to 3 September 2021

From 1 to 3 September, representatives of the partner institutions met in Cluj-Napoca, at the headquarters of the „Octavian Goga“ Cluj County Library, to discuss and analyse changes in adult learning and the impact of the current epidemiological situation on learning in the „Third Place“.

During the two days in Cluj, participants from partner countries discussed the importance of individualising adult education, creating innovative learning spaces, accessible also to people from disadvantaged groups.

The 6 thinking hats method was used to analyse this topic, which made an inventory of the information already known on the subject, highlighted the advantages and positive aspects of such spaces and identified possible challenges that could arise in working with disadvantaged groups. The various problems and emotions that might arise from participating in activities in these innovative spaces were discussed and possible alternative solutions identified.

Some conclusions form the “Yellow hat” (= optimistic view):

A 3rd place is:

- free
- noncommercial place to spend time
- contributes to the reduction of inequalities
- contributes to social cohesion
- give the individual the opportunity to learn at a personal tempo, to feel free to choose when, how, what to learn
- accessible for disadvantaged populations

From creating a 3rd place benefits:

- the institution itself and its staff (good for reputation & position, in fundraising activities, argument for the authorities and politicians)
- the people who are using the services of this third place
- the whole community / the entire society

In CROSS we shall go for “4 L spaces” (Local Living Lab Libraries)!

Another topic discussed during these days was the challenges of the pandemic period and how each partner managed to overcome the difficulties encountered. Two special guests attended the meeting: Ms Ioana Crihan, Executive Director of ANBPR, who presented ANBPR’s latest Erasmus+ projects in the field of adult education, and Mr Victor Miron, a partner and constant collaborator of the library, who presented his own initiatives to promote reading and the creation of new learning places.



Partner Meeting - Nyíregyháza (Ungary) 10 to 12 November 2021

Nyíregyháza was the venue of the fourth international partner meeting. The main topic of the partner meeting was the digitalisation of third learning places and the importance of digital skills for both staff and clients. Representatives met - in a partly hybrid meeting - to discuss the third learning places. This concept refers to the sharing of knowledge, where participants learn new skills informally in alternative settings, rather than at home, at work or through formal education. The project participants met at the Móríc Zsigmond Library, Nyíregyháza, Hungary.

In his welcome speech, the Deputy Mayor of Nyíregyháza Menyhért Jászai presented the experiences of the past months and the ways in which digitalisation has been able to help greatly during the pandemic in Nyíregyháza. For example, the city launched a special green number for those whose families were unable to help them with shopping or medication during the crackdown. In addition, a Nyíregyháza Application has been developed, through which it is possible to manage different issues or make a report in a few minutes.

Juhász Gerg (JátékosLét, Hungary) gave a deep insight into the “Digital Success Programme” which aims in empowering Hungarian citizens in the world of digitalisation. Following, in two groups, participants were assessing the minimal digital requirements of Third Places answering the questions:

- What digital infrastructure a third place must have?
- Why are they needed?
- Are they enough?
- Do we use the full potential of the tools?
- What equipment are missing?
- What tools can boost the efficiency

On the second day the Caudete Team presented their impressive work with TIKTOK to attract young people for books, reading and visiting the library. The colleagues from the Oosterschelde Library impressed the other participants with their well-developed system of internal media coaching and how they cope with a rapidly digital developing society. Afterwards, the participants could enhance their own skills, by creating the project’s own advertisements on digitalisation in the Zsigmond Móríc library’s green screen room.

During two parallel field trips the groups collected and discussed impressions on the question: What should be the role of Third Places in developing digital skills? While visiting

1. „Labor Café” a community funded café as a third place
2. „Digitális Közösségi Alkotóm?hely” (Digital Community-based Workshop) and getting involved a creative digital process





Partner Meeting - Caudete (Spain) 27 to 29 April 2022

From April 27th to 29th, 2022, Caudete (Spain) hosted the 5th transnational meeting of the CROSS Erasmusplus project "CROSS-Creating Other Learning Environments". Three days of intense work on the topic of immigration and how to make Third Places, such as, Libraries, Adult Education and Cultural Centres, meeting places for teaching and informal learning for migrants.

On the first day the project partners had a warm welcome by the Mayor of Caudete Moisés López Martínez and the First Deputy Mayor of Caudete Felipe Bañón Graciá. The meeting started with a speech „Libraries for all“ by Alicia Sellés, Librarian and President of FESABID (Spanish Federation of Societies of Archivistics, Library Science, Documentation and Museums) which gave the project partners a good overview of good practices in Spanish libraries and showed examples of what excellent approaches can look like.

The participants proceeded with information on the situation of migration in different EU states and saw presentations of good practices by the VHS Iserlohn (Germany), the Adult Centre GERO (Luxembourg), the Library of Oosterschelde (The Netherlands) and the project of the Library of Caudete called Welcome Library.

In workshops all project partners discussed and collected further practical information for the toolbox which we will present at our next and final meeting in Luxembourg. The participants worked on

- tools for the development, establishing and running of Third Places and relating adult education concepts,
- analogue and digital tools for communication, cooperation, coordination and collaboration, and
- the characteristics of Third Places to be attractive for Migrants" with the Aronson Puzzle method

Further the project partners also attended a performance of Spanish dance by the dance teacher of the Caudete Universidad Popular, had visits to the Exhibition Hall, Library, Classrooms of the Universidad Popular, Auditorium, Plenary Hall and Youth Centre to learn more about the Third Place approach of Caudete.



Partner Meeting - Luxemburg 29 June to 1 July 2022

For the final meeting the project partner met in Luxembourg from June 29th to July 1st, 2022, hosted by GERO - Kompetenzzentrum für den Alter.

The focus of the meeting was on the exchange of the newly gained individual knowledge and future possibilities of use of each partner of the compiled tools (see below toolbox), but also on the common insights and experiences.

Furthermore, all partner exchanged where we still lack (thematic and methodological) knowledge and considered which of these topics could be addressed in a future Erasmus+ project.

- With the final meeting the project partners also set up
- a draft of a toolbox to develop, establish and run Third Place adult education-concepts (which will be published on this website and
 - a letter to Europe for Creating other study spaces:

„We believe that Europe needs low-threshold meeting and educational opportunities for people of all backgrounds, ages and cultures more than ever. We call these places – in the sense of Ray Oldenburg – Third Places.

We believe that it is a crucial task of public services to create such places. For this purpose, it is a good idea for a start to use well-known existing places such as libraries, adult education centres, but also private initiatives in cafés, parks and clubs.

With our project we have shown how this can work for people of different age groups, different origins and different levels of education.

We therefore call on all those responsible in Europe to do more in the future for the creation and establishing of such places and spaces, so that access to education is possible at a low-threshold level and our society enables lifelong learning for all.

With our toolbox we show many ways how such offers can be created analogue and digitally at different places in and outside buildings and how all people can be addressed.“

More Information at cross-project.eu.

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