



INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

Keeping knowledge alive across generations



Co-funded by
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Why Are We Talking About This?



1

Rural areas are changing

Rural and remote areas are experiencing significant demographic, social, and economic changes that directly affect the conditions under which Intangible Cultural Heritage is practiced and transmitted. Changes such as population ageing, migration, and transformations in ways of life influence the continuity of cultural practices and the social environments in which heritage is traditionally created, maintained, and recreated.

2

Generations are drifting apart

Intangible Cultural Heritage is transmitted primarily through interaction between generations, within families and communities. As everyday opportunities for intergenerational contact decrease, the social mechanisms that enable the transmission of knowledge, skills, and practices are weakened. This can reduce the continuity of heritage and limit the participation of younger generations in its safeguarding.

3

Knowledge is at risk of disappearing

Intangible Cultural Heritage depends on continuous transmission and active participation to remain viable. When transmission is interrupted, elements of heritage may lose their social function, meaning, or relevance for communities. Safeguarding therefore requires creating opportunities for intergenerational learning that allow heritage to be practiced, adapted, and passed on in everyday life.

What Is Intergenerational Learning?

Intergenerational learning is the exchange of knowledge, skills, values, and experiences between different generations.

■ Knowledge & Skills

Intergenerational learning enables the sharing of practical skills, know-how, and everyday knowledge that are often learned through observation and practice rather than formal instruction.

■ Values & Meanings

Beyond skills, it transmits values, attitudes, memories, and ways of understanding the world, helping younger and older generations make sense of their place and identity.

■ Mutual Exchange

Intergenerational learning is not one-directional. All generations contribute and learn from each other, creating relationships based on respect, participation, and shared experience.



It Goes Both Ways

Intergenerational learning is a mutual process. It is not only about older generations passing traditions to younger ones, nor about preserving the past unchanged. Instead, it is a continuous exchange where all generations contribute, learn, and adapt together.

It is:

- **not only elders → youth**
- **not only tradition → past**
- **a shared and reciprocal process**

Examples:

- **Elders share memory, experience, skills, and local knowledge**
- **Youth share new tools, digital formats, creativity, and perspectives**



The Role of Intergenerational Learning in Safeguarding INCH



■ Transmission

Intergenerational learning creates the conditions for Intangible Cultural Heritage to be passed on through practice, observation, and shared experience. It allows knowledge, skills, and traditions to move from one generation to another in meaningful and living ways.

■ Continuity

When generations interact regularly, heritage remains relevant and adaptable. Intergenerational learning helps cultural practices evolve while maintaining their core meanings, ensuring continuity rather than fossilisation.

■ Participation

By involving people of different ages, intergenerational learning strengthens active participation in cultural life. Elders, adults, youth, and children all become contributors, not just receivers, reinforcing shared ownership of heritage.

■ Community Bonds

Intergenerational learning strengthens relationships within communities. It builds trust, mutual respect, and understanding between generations, reinforcing social cohesion and a shared sense of place.

Best Practice Example: Sweden

Summer Farming (Fäbod / Seter Culture)

What happens

- Families move livestock to summer farms
- Daily life becomes the learning space

How knowledge is shared

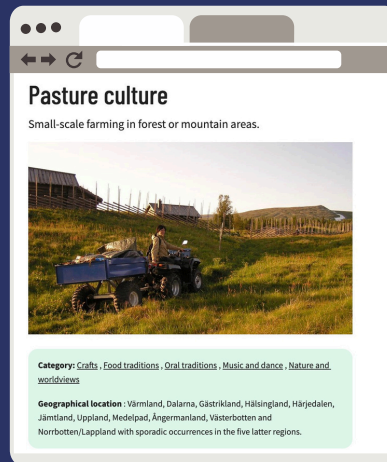
- Skills learned through doing
- Songs, stories, food, land practices

Intergenerational aspect

- Elders guide through practice
- Children learn by participation

Sense of place

- Each summer farm has its own traditions
- Strong attachment to landscape



Note for trainer:

“This UNESCO-recognised practice shows intergenerational learning as part of everyday life. Knowledge is not taught formally, but transmitted through shared work, seasonal rhythms, and living together. Each place adapts the tradition in its own way, reinforcing both cultural continuity and a strong sense of place.”

Link to use in order to share more info about the practice:

<https://www.isof.se/utforska/levande-traditioner/forslag/2024-10-04-fabodkultur>

Best Practice Example: SPAIN

Castells – Human Towers (Catalonia)

What happens

- Communities build human towers during festivals
- Weekly training sessions prepare performances

How knowledge is shared

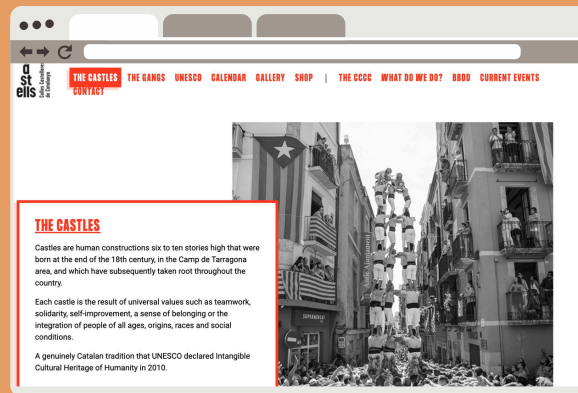
- Learning through repetition and practice
- Observation, trust, and teamwork

Intergenerational aspect

- Children, adults, and elders all have roles
- Knowledge passed on during training, not lessons

Sense of place

- Each colla castellera is rooted in a local community
- Strong link between tradition and local identity



Note for trainer:

link to use in order to share more info about the practice:

<https://castellscat.cat/ca/els-castells>

Best Practice Example: Romania

Piscu School - Craft Transmission

What happens

- Traditional crafts are practiced in workshops
- Community spaces become learning environments

How knowledge is shared

- Hands-on learning with tools and materials
- Learning by making, experimenting, and doing

Intergenerational aspect

- Elders act as mentors and knowledge holders
- Young people learn and later transmit skills

Sense of place

- Crafts linked to local history and identity
- Strong pride in village traditions



Note for trainer:

Link of the video: <https://youtu.be/J5Sm7U1rDl0>

From Best Practices to Your Place



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Intergenerational learning happens through everyday practice
- Cultural heritage lives in people and relationships
- All generations are knowledge holders
- Transmission needs shared spaces and interaction

Now we'll move from inspiration to action. In the next activity, you'll work with these ideas and apply them to your own place. Have in mind:

- Who holds knowledge in your place?
- Which generations are not connected?
- Where could intergenerational learning happen naturally?

Note for trainer: Use this slide to close the inspiration phase, not to start the activity

Briefly highlight 1–2 key takeaways only

Invite participants to keep the questions in mind, without answering yet

Avoid discussion at this stage

Transition clearly to the next activity with a short sentence like:

“Now we'll move from inspiration to action.”



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THANK YOU !



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