FEASIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE DESIGNATION OF INTERGENERATIONAL CONTACT ZONES

The +CINTER project seeks to better understand the current situation in Andalusia (the most southern region in Spain) with regard to age segregation and ageism, and how to best intervene in this area. Its overall aim is to contribute to the creation in Andalusia of intergenerational settings (spaces, places, programs…) that are effective, innovative and validated, in order to reduce and revert age segregation and discrimination.

This document is intended just for the purpose of reporting to participating experts about the main output from the consensus-building process in which they were involved, in the framework of +CINTER, regarding the validation of some feasibility criteria for the designation of Intergenerational Contact Zones (ICZ). In this context, the concept of ICZ that has been applied follows:

> "Intergenerational Contact Zones serve as spatial focal points for different generations to meet, interact, build relationships (e.g., trust and friendships), and, if desired, work together to address issues of local concern. ICZ spaces can be found in all types of community settings, including schools, senior centers, retirement communities, parks, taverns, reading rooms, clubhouses, museums, community gardens, environmental education centers, and multi-service community centers" (Kaplan et al. 2020, p. 3).

Although ICZs are often described in spatial terms, i.e., as "spatial focal points" for intergenerational engagement, it is also important to tune into the contextual factors (social, psychological, political, institutional, etc.) that affect how community settings as environments are planned, designed, built, perceived, utilized and programmed with intergenerational engagement purposes in mind.

In all, eleven experts have been involved in a 2-round Delphi technique implemented in the period March-June 2023 that started out by circulating a first draft list of feasibility criteria based both on the available literature and from-the-field knowledge. With the aim of specifying which space(s) are considered more appropriate for housing intergenerational practices and programs, these initial criteria were about assessing the "fit" between potential/actual physical settings and the intergenerational practices and programs that will (or are being considered to) take place within them.

Feasibility criteria

Each criterion consists of a statement followed by a square-bracketed condensed expression of its distinctive principle. Please, find below the final list of 16 validated criteria.

#1. The space[1] receives and welcomes people of different generations [intentional/natural sense of welcome].

#2. The space has the equipment, resources[2] and infrastructure needed to facilitate and promote interaction between different generations [space is conducive to interaction].

#3. The space is flexible in that it allows the persons involved[3] to adapt the resources (moving them around if necessary), according to their needs and interests [adaptation to diversity].

#4. The space is conducive to the people involved choosing the extent to which they wish to engage in intergenerational activities, allowing them to make informed decisions on whether to enter or leave the space and how to do so [choice].

#5. The space allows and encourages intergenerational actions to take place over time [continuity].

#6. The space is conducive to interaction and exchange between the different generations involved [exchange, cooperation, reciprocity].

#7. The space provides opportunities for the people involved to form meaningful relationships [relationship focused].

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[1] When we speak of space, we do not refer to a kind of located container (e.g., a place in a territory), in which inert materials and living beings may coincide (e.g., the sidewalk of any street). Rather, we think of space as the experience that living beings have when we feel situated in a place with which we somehow enter into a relationship. Thus, a space can be physical or virtual, natural or constructed, but what it cannot fail to be is relational for it exists thanks to the interweaving of beings and (material and symbolic) objects. The physical/online meeting room where an age-diverse group of people involved in a common project or purpose meet on a weekly basis is an example of a space.

[2] Resources: any human, material, technical or financial elements that we may actually use to facilitate and promote integration between the different generations.

[3] Persons involved: persons who share the space and are committed to facilitating and promoting integration between the different generations.

#8. The space enables all age groups and generations to see each other and be seen, so that they can all feel like part of the same community[(4)] [identity and visibility].

#9. The space is connected to the traditions and cultural legacies, and the relevant values, of the surrounding community[(5)] [community connection].

#10. The space is open to the surrounding community and members of this community take part in planning activities and making use of the space [community involvement].

#11. The intergenerational practices and programs carried out in the space are made known to the community's families, young people, adults, etc., so that they are aware of the existence of this space and know how it can be accessed [community awareness of space].

#12. The space has sufficient[(6)] institutional support (e.g., financial and/or social support) to be sustainable as an intergenerational space [institutional support and interest].

#13.- The space has a team of specialized people[(7)] who promote and facilitate intergenerational relations [specialization].

#14. The space is conducive to intergenerational actions being designed and planned intentionally and in advance [planning].

#15. The space allows and encourages the different generations to interact in a spontaneous and informal manner [spontaneity].

#16. The space includes elements (e.g., photographs, posters, games…) that indicate what type of intergenerational interaction is considered pertinent[(8)] [environmental cues].

References

Kaplan, M., Thang, L. L., Sánchez, M., & Hoffman, J. (2020). *Intergenerational Contact Zones: Place-Based Strategies for Promoting Social Inclusion and Belonging*. Routledge.

How to cite this document

Hernández, A., Montero, I., Kaplan, M., Campos, C., Clyde, A., Cruz, A., García de Diego, J., López-López, R., Perandrés, A., & Sánchez, M. (2023). *Feasibility criteria for the designation of Intergenerational Contact Zones. An output from the +CINTER project*. Macrosad Chair in Intergenerational Studies, University of Granada.

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[4] Community: set of people connected by values, ideals, interests, who share a sense of identity.

[5] Surrounding community: the community located in the immediate area.

[6] Sufficient: it fulfils what is necessary to respond to the sustainability of the space.

[7] Specialized people: people with proven experience and specific dedication in the intergenerational field.

[8] Pertinent: adequate or congruent with the intended purposes, form and function of the Intergenerational Contact Zone.