

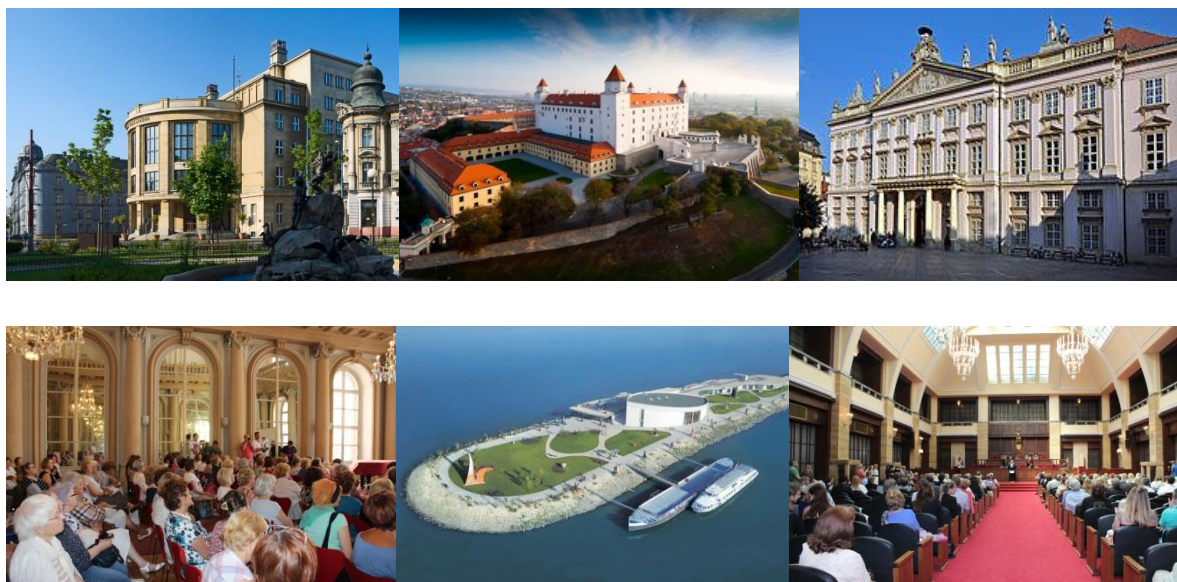


Université du Troisième Âge
ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES UNIVERSITES DU TROISIEME ÂGE
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE
ASOCIACION INTERNACIONAL DE LAS UNIVERSIDADES DE LA TERCERA EDAD
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG DER SENIOREN UNIVERSITÄTEN
ASSOCIAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE DELLE UNIVERSITA' DELLA TERZA ETA'
国际老年大学协会

AIUTA 100th Governing Board
International conference “Equal learning opportunities for the elderly”
Comenius University in Bratislava Slovakia, Centre for Continuing Education

18th – 20th May 2017

100
AIUTA
GOVERNING BOARD



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

EPALE
Electronic Platform
for Adult Learning in Europe



Conducted under the auspices of:

Peter Plavčan, Minister of education, research, science and sport,
Slovak republic

Karol Mičieta, Rector of Comenius University in Bratislava

Editor

PhDr. Nadežda Hrapková, PhD.

Reviewers

Prof. Francois Vellas, University of Toulouse, France

Prof. Marina Aldoshina Ivanovna, Orel State University, Russia



NÁRODNÝ ÚSTAV
CELOŽIVOTNÉHO VZDELÁVANIA

Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia
Centre for Continuing Education

This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.

© Edited by Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave, Slovakia, 2017

ISBN 978-80-223-4291-9

CONTENTS

Programme of the meeting	4
Introduction	8
<i>Nadežda HRAPKOVÁ</i>	
Opening speech	9
<i>François VELLAS</i>	
Welcome speech	11
<i>Janka CHLÁDECKÁ</i>	
Keynote speaker	14
<i>Monika KORKOŠOVÁ</i>	
Plenary speakers and panellists	17
<i>Carmen STADELHOFER</i>	17
<i>Xinli YUAN</i>	28
<i>Georgi STANKOV</i>	32
<i>Jasna ČURIN, Dijana BEBEK Miletić</i>	43
<i>Violeta PUSCASU</i>	49
<i>prof. Roland SCHÖNE</i>	55
<i>Lucia HREBEŇÁROVÁ</i>	57
<i>Malgorzata STANOWSKA, Iza KATO</i>	59
<i>Eva BRÁZDILOVÁ</i>	69
<i>Concepción BRU Ronda</i>	71
<i>Marcel HINAIN</i>	78
<i>Karin CARLSSON</i>	79
<i>Nadežda HRAPKOVÁ, Katarína GRUNWALD</i>	83
<i>Erik SELECKÝ</i>	93
Conclusions	99

PROGRAMME OF THE MEETING

Thursday 18th May 2017

AIUTA 100th GOVERNING BOARD

Comenius University, Šafárikovo námestie 6, Sieň Vedeckej rady, 1. floor

14h30 – 15h00 Registration

15h00 – 18h00 Agenda of the GB meeting

1. Welcome - Prof. Francois Vellas, AIUTA president, University
Toulouse, France
Prof. RNDr. Karol Mičieta, PhD., rector of Comenius
University in Bratislava, Slovakia
2. Special Addresses to AIUTA Governing Board -
PaedDr. Janka Chládecká, PhD., director of the Centre for
Continuing Education, Comenius University in Bratislava
Special addresses by the participants
3. Apologies, approval of the Agenda, Voting, Proxies -
Maria Chester, AIUTA General Secretary
4. Communication of Mr. Xinli Yuan, AIUTA first Vice president, 100th
anniversary of AIUTA Governing Board
5. Presentation “Activities of older students at UTA of Comenius
University in Bratislava” - PhDr. Nadežda Hrapková, PhD., head of
University of the Third Age, Centre for Continuing Education,
Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia
6. Minutes from 99th GB in Osaka, Japan - Maria Chester, UK, AIUTA
General Secretary
7. Presentation of new University of Third Age in Lebanon – Marcel
Hinain
8. Presentation Agreement on Summer University with University
Balears

9. Information about the new AIUTA members, proposals -
Maria Chester, UK, AIUTA General Secretary
 10. Financial report - Prof. Patrick Demouy, Reims, France, Treasurer
 11. Next AIUTA 101st Governing Board and conference in Bogota,
Colombia, other AIUTA events
 12. Miscellaneous
- 18h00 Visit of the Ceremony hall of Comenius University and
Hall of the rectors**
- 19h30 Dinner: Plzeň restaurant “Prazdroj”, Mostová 8, Bratislava**

Friday 19th May 2017

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

“Equal learning opportunities for the elderly”

Primate's Palace, Primaciálne námestie 1, Bratislava

9h30 – 16h30

8h30 Registration

Programme:

9h30 – 10h30

1. Opening of the conference, chairman Nadežda Hrapková
2. Welcome speech (Ministry of education, research, science and sport of Slovakia)
3. Welcome speech of the rector of Comenius University Prof. Karol MIČIETA
4. Speeches of other guests and officials
5. Opening speech of the AIUTA president Prof. Francois VELLAS

Keynote speaker:

Monika KORKOŠOVÁ (Ministry of education, research, science and sport of Slovakia)

10h30 – 11h00 Coffee Break

11h00 – 13h00

Chairman: Maria CHESTER, UK; Fabio PRADO, Foz do Iguazu, Brasil

Speakers:

- 11h00 Carmen STADELHOFER, University of Ulm, Germany
- 11h30 Xinli YUAN, Representative of China UTA Association, China
- 11h50 Georgi STANKOV, NUTA, Sofia, Bulgaria
- 12h00 Jasna ČURIN, Dijana BEBEK Miletić, Open University, Zagreb, Croatia
- 12h15 Violeta PUSCASU, Universitatea "Dunarea de Jos", U3A, Galati, Romania
- 12h30 Roland SCHÖNE, TU Chemnitz, Germany

Discussion

13h00 - 14h30

Official reception by the Mayor of Bratislava

Lunch

14h30 – 16h30

Chairman: Maria CHESTER, UK

Speakers:

- 14h30 Lucia HREBEŇÁROVÁ, Association of UTAs in Slovakia
- 14h45 Marisol RAPSO Brenes, Costa Rica
- 15h00 Malgorzata STANOWSKA, Lublin, Poland
- 15h15 Marcel HINAIN, Lebanon
- 15h25 Eva BRÁZDILOVÁ, EPALE platform, Bratislava, Slovakia

Discussion

Panel discussion “Inclusion of the elderly to the learning activities”

Chairman: Carlos SANTOS, Azores, Portugal
Malgorzata STANOWSKA, Lublin, Poland

Panellists:

- Conception BRU Ronda, Alicante, Spain
- Jose Ramón BELDA, Alicante, Spain
- Karin CARLSSON, Uppsala, Sweden

Sidi CAMARA, Senegal
Gustavo RODRIGUEZ, Colombia

16h30 Closure of the conference, Francois Vellas, AIUTA president

18h30 -21h00

Sightseeing of Bratislava historical centre

Dinner: Aplend city Hotel Perugia, Zelená ulica / street

Saturday 20th May 2017

CULTURAL PROGRAM

9h00 – 18h00

Guided bus tour

9h00 Bus tour to the Bratislava castle

10h30 Carpathian Wine Route – Pezinok

(Wine museum, winery-tasting of wine, City hall – official
reception by the Mayor of Pezinok)

Lunch included

Back to Bratislava at 15h00

16h00 Visit of Danubiana Gallery, Čunovo

Dinner

INTRODUCTION

Equal learning opportunities for the elderly is a main theme of the conference conducted in Bratislava under the auspices of Peter Plavčan, Minister of Education, Research, Science and Sport in the Slovak republic and Karol Mičieta, Rector of Comenius University in Bratislava. It is for the first time when AIUTA (International Association of the Universities of the Third Age) holds its conference and Governing Board meeting in Slovakia and its capital. It is very important to mention that in the cooperation with the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe - EPAL we can open space to many European universities and institutions focusing on adult education and learning of the elderly. There are 20 countries participating in this event and at the conference with 120 participants not only from Europe but also from Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Lebanon, Nigeria, Senegal and Tunisia.

Inclusion of the elderly to the learning activities as a theme of the panel discussion shows chance to present opinions of the panellists discussing the questions: How to inspire U3A students?, How to recognize the current needs and expectations of U3A students?, How to conduct effective campaigns concerning being active in retirement and share interesting examples of the use of the knowledge, wisdom and experience of older people in education, or organizational work of U3As?

Equal learning opportunities can be understood from many different points of view. We can focus on gender policy or how to ensure equal learning opportunities for minority, or for the elderly with disabilities and physical handicaps. We can discuss providing opportunities for adding the new knowledge and competences for seniors to avoid or decrease their barriers. Chances for advancement should be open to everybody interested so that they have “an equal chance to compete within the framework of goals and the structure of rules established”. The concept is applicable in areas of public life in which benefits are earned and received such as employment and education although it can apply to many other areas as well. The power and energy of the elderly may decline with age and their limits but society cannot afford to make use of all the knowledge and experience held by the entire population.

OPENNING SPEECH

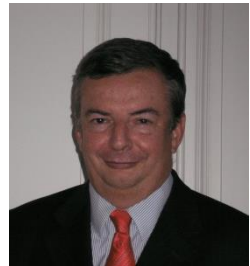


AIUTA – IAUTA

ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES UNIVERSITES DU TROISIEME AGE
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE
ASOCIACION INTERNACIONAL DE LAS UNIVERSIDADES DE LA TERCERA EDAD
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG DER SENIOREN UNIVERSITÄTEN
ASSOCIAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE DELLE UNIVERSITA' DELLA TERZA ETA'

Bratislava International conference “Equal learning opportunities for the elderly”

Professor François VELLAS



As president of AIUTA (The International Association of Universities of the Third Age), I would like to thank our friends from Comenius University in Bratislava and U3A, Janka Chládecká and Nadežda Hrapková who did the best for the success of this international conference here in Bratislava.

Equal learning opportunities is one of the main goal of our international association. We are proud to offer to all members and all seniors the possibility to reach education for all the life. As we say in AIUTA and U3A's "It is never late to start something new" and in French "Quand l'éducation avance, l'âge de la vieillesse recule". As you know, AIUTA brings together the universities of the third age from all the continents. For more than four decades AIUTA has been defending elderly people's cause through life-long education by means of university exchanges and, above all, innovations in the fields of education and scientific research in order for everyone to find their place in society.

Equal learning opportunities is what is our goals and accomplishments:

* In the field of Education, Equal learning possibilities means that all seniors could benefit from U3A access with academic reputation. Lecture and workshop rooms, facilities and materials are provided at lower costs and registration fees need to be as low as possible to guarantee senior affordability. U3A Pedagogical contents need to be open to the public in order to share with all those interested, in particular, of those pedagogical innovations regarding language courses, culture and, of course, pedagogical skills.

*In the field of Research, Equal learning possibilities means to set up a scientific activity program to develop several disciplines linked with seniors goals such as Medicine and Wellness as well as Economics, Law, Literary, Geography and History.

Dear friends of the Universities of Third Age, Equal learning possibilities is an ambitious program that requires the contribution of all of us in order for AIUTA to play a role that should be essential throughout the world. So again “Thanks” for Comenius University U3A in Bratislava and to all of AIUTA members and participants and Congratulation for the great work to be done during this International Conference.

WELCOME SPEECH

Janka CHLÁDECKÁ

Centre for Continuing Education Comenius University in Bratislava

Ladies and gentlemen,

welcome to Slovakia, welcome to Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, welcome to Comenius University in Bratislava.

Comenius University in Bratislava is the oldest and biggest university in the Slovak republic. It was established in 1919, the university drew on the tradition of Academia Istropolitana that was founded in 1465 in Bratislava by Matthias Corvinus, the King of Hungary. Since its founding, the university has ranked among the best educational institutions on the national level and it has become an internationally recognised centre of scientific study and research. Being the most comprehensive provider of classical university education in Slovakia, Comenius University has retained the status of the Slovak national university.

Comenius University in Bratislava has 13 faculties and 5 institutions, it has 28,000 students, nearly 1,800 foreign students from 80 countries and 1,300 study programmes.

The Centre of Continuing Education at Comenius University in Bratislava is one part of Comenius University in Bratislava and it was established in 2004 as a self-managed part of Comenius University. But the history of some of the centre's departments dates back to year 1960.

We educate adults and provide a broad portfolio of training programmes for improving knowledge, skills, and abilities of professional and personal development. Our programmes are provided by qualified professionals with years of experience in the field of lifelong learning within three self-directed institutes:

The first institute for lifelong learning provides continual, competency and career education. Here are study programmes for teachers, for public, for foreign nationals, for compatriots and the most important place has here UTA.

The second institute is for language and preparatory studies for foreigners and compatriots and it also provides foreign languages teaching.

The last institute of Centre of Continuing education is The Convention Centre in Modra Harmonia. It is a residential part and it gives the opportunity to enjoy educational programmes and relax in the beautiful area of the Small Carpathian Mountains.

Let me tell you a few words about our work. All our programmes are based on quality. They have low tuition fees, because we are a public university, we are not commercial educational institutions.

Our students can pay the tuition in instalments. Every year we have special offer and new programmes. We give free demonstration to our potential students. We do not offer results over night. Our students are learning at their own pace. Students of our programmes acquire knowledge, skills and they have an opportunity to develop their personalities. It is very interesting and important for their future career. Our teachers are professionals with years of experience. All of our programmes are scientifically proven and some of them have won an award. In 2016 we got European label of Languages award. If you are looking for new information, skills and want to learn, please, contact us.

Education is the best investment, it is a guarantee of successful state and its continuous prosperity. Professionals should not stop learning. It is our wish – to become a leader in continuing education in Slovakia.

Substantial part of Centre for Continuing education is UTA. It was founded in 1990 and opened its doors to first group of students in October the same year. Study programmes are prepared in collaboration with the faculties of Comenius University and other universities in Bratislava or Slovakia. Our UTA offers more than 35 study programmes for seniors. The teachers, who teach here, are scientific and academic professionals of our university and other participating university and guest lecturers from the specific fields. The study at UTA is non-formal. It takes 3 or 4 years. The first year is focused on general topics. Students obtain all information about study programmes in the information book, they receive a letter explaining how to learn at higher age. The second and third year they study in the selected study programmes. Education is every 14 days two academic hours. Study in UTA is open for persons at age about 50 years,

for those who have graduated from high school or universities. Today UTA has more than 1,900 students and our UTA has also UTA club which has about 250 members. After completing study programmes graduates receive their certificate in the Hall of Ceremony of Comenius University.

UTA mission statement is very difficult and specific. To offer new quality programmes for seniors, to give them free time activities, to help seniors in their new social position. UTA is a very good idea for overall seniors' health.

Slovakia is not only universities, education and seniors. When you say Slovakia, it includes also wise and good people, beautiful women, sheep cheese, interesting history, beautiful the High and Low Tatras, world famous athletes like tennis player Dominika Cibulková, cyclist Peter Sagan and race runner Matej Tóth.

I believe that the conference will achieve its objectives and Slovakia, Bratislava and Comenius University in Bratislava will remain forever in your memories.

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Janka Chládecká graduated from university majoring in pedagogy, Russian language, psychology and ethic. She worked as a head of Department for the methodology of learning at the Slovak Pedagogical Centre and as the head of Department of Education at the Municipality of town Žilina. Since 2013 she is the director of Centre for Continuing Education at Comenius University in Bratislava. She is a member of the committee for the accreditation of lifelong learning programmes and programmes for continuing education of teachers at Ministry of Education, Research, Science and Sport. More than 20 years she is active in the field of adult education, also as a lecturer. Since 2016 she is a member of AIUTA Governing Board.

Contact:

Centre for Continuing Education
Comenius University in Bratislava
Odbojárov 10/a, 831 04 Bratislava, Slovakia
Janka.Chladecka@cdv.uniba.sk

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Monika KORKOŠOVÁ

(Ministry of education, research, science and sport of Slovakia)

Improving the quality of educational programmes and developing existing opportunities for older people to actively take part in education is one of the priorities of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. An important national initiative in this area is the National Program for Active Aging for 2014-2020 and the ministry pays serious attention to tasks and goals, which are emerging from it. In it's section devoted to lifelong learning for seniors, focus is held primarily on improving digital literacy and financial literacy of our oldest citizens. Universities of the Third Age, in the Slovak context represented by the Association of Universities of the Third Age, are our important partners in the phase of implementation of these important tasks.

Our ministry works towards fulfilling these objectives with other governmental bodies. Cooperation is already underway with Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Family, as well as the National Bank of Slovakia (NBS). As a first step to improve the level of financial literacy in the target group of older adults has been identified a creation of methodology for training in this area. National Bank of Slovakia (NBS), based on their experience from complaints of citizens, prepared first draft of the topics that would constitute the methodology content elements.

In terms of our current cooperation with the Association of Universities of the Third Age in Slovakia, it is clearly framed by the aforementioned National Program for Active Aging 2014 - 2020. It is gratifying, that at present the Third Age Universities collaborate eagerly on a project of creating educational content and codes of practice for educational programmes of financial literacy. These courses are aimed at

two different age groups: for older adults above 45 years of age and for seniors over 62 years.

Active aging affects a number of factors entering into the lives of individuals and entire families. These include physical conditions, various social factors and the community, which senior is a part of. An indispensable tool capable of positively influencing the daily life of an elderly person and improving the quality of life is further education. Philosophy of Age friendly cities offers us a path and tools to systematically strengthen and consolidate the position of senior education. Naming important factors affecting the quality of life, which entitled philosophy covers, allow us to build an effective system based on evidence, experience and facts. This is also the path we are willing to follow in the near future.

There lies a clear and evident potential and importance of universities of the third age - to penetrate the minds and lives of older people, bring joy, hope, help and even more into their lives through acquiring new knowledge and through establishing new social relationships. At the same time, we really appreciate the efforts of all universities and educators who are able to allocate their time to this kind of educational activities. We believe that not only for their students-seniors, but also for themselves it constitutes a challenging and meaningful experience. It is thanks to them, that the status of the student of university of third age became for many learners essential part of their lifestyle, without which they can not imagine spending their free time any more.

Dear attendees,

finally, allow me to wish you for today's meeting pleasant working atmosphere and many interesting suggestions for your further work in this area.

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Monika Korkošová – director of Lifelong Learning Department Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. Currently she serves as a Director of the Lifelong Learning Department at the Ministry of Education in the Republic of Slovakia. She is a member of the Slovak Committee of UNESCO, representing the education sector in various international institutions such as the European Commission, OECD and UNESCO. She served as an executive director of Advertising Standards Council and was responsible for government relations at the American Chamber of Commerce. She also worked as an executive director of the Institute of Urban Development, as a general director of Junior Achievement Slovakia

Contact:

Monika.Korkosova@minedu.sk

PLENARY SPEAKERS AND PANELLISTS

CHANGING WORLD NEEDS CHANGING METHODS IN SENIORS' EDUCATION

Carmen STADELHOFFER

Institute for virtual and face-to-face learning in the area of
adult education at Ulm University

Keywords: Lifelong learning for older adults, social participation, intergenerational und intercultural dialogue, activating methods, learning through research, learning through travel, international cooperation and networking

Introduction

I thank the AIUTA board, especially Dr. Nadežda Hrapková from the U3A of Comenius University in Bratislava, for the invitation to speak in the frame of the conference *Equal Learning Opportunities for the Elderly* here in Bratislava.

As all of you know, the first University of the Third Age was founded by Prof. Pierre Vellas in Toulouse, France, in 1973. Soon the U3As spread all over Europe and then in other continents, many of them are allied in national networks, many of them are members of the AIUTA (Association Internationale des Universités du Troisième Age – International Association of Third Age Universities) founded in 1975. AIUTA encourages the initiation and the development of seniors' universities, the cultural and scientific contact between its members and the coordination of activities in the fields of education and research. Through the efforts of the present President Prof. Francois Vellas there are members worldwide in Europe, China, Africa, Asia, and America.

I am honoured to speak today to the people in charge and other stakeholders of U3As from 25 countries about *Changing World Needs Changing Methods in the Seniors' Education* and I hope to provide some inspiration for the common work.

1. Demographic and social developments as a challenge for the general continuing education for (older) adults.

We live in times characterized worldwide by enormous demographic changes and changes in technology, science and economy. These changes affect people's life style and conditions in a drastic way and changes society as a whole. Many current problems are global – e.g. population increase, world nutrition problems, pollution, climatic changes, unequal distribution of wealth between North and South as well as East and West etc. - and demand worldwide solutions. At this point the present developments can be merely briefly summarized. They should, however, make clear the dimensions of the changes and the related need for action in the field of general academic-based continuing education.

2. Seniors' education - a chance for social participation of older adults and for intergenerational and intercultural dialogue.

Social and developmental psychology research in the area of ageing start with the assumption that development and learning are lifelong processes, which do not stop in old age. As a result of improved health situation in old age and the better use of cognitive and psycho-social abilities, many older people are now able to pursue their interests' right into very old age and to tackle new challenges without any significant health and psychological disadvantages. The segment of the active elderly within the group of the older adults is steadily growing. They want to use actively the opportunities that ageing offers. The group of the so called *senior students* is in no way homogenous. The seniors differ in age, sex, educational backgrounds, national and cultural backgrounds, professional and life experiences as well as interests and target perspectives, which they connect with continuing education. Because of the wide age span, (between 40 and 85 years of age and more), several generations meet and work together within this group. The portion of women participants is everywhere 65 to

74 % or more. The demographic and social development becomes evident in the structure of the mix of the participants. However, all senior students, having a higher education or not, bring with them a large amount of experience gained through family, jobs and voluntary work. This presents new challenges for continuing education institutions, especially the U3As. A variety of educational offers should be strived for at the individual U3As. The offers can be age-specific, inter-generational or gender-specific. Through the implementation of good practices, teaching environment has to be created, which motivates people to take part in continuing education and with their competences contribute in social life. With all the existing differences in the educational practice of U3As, its concepts can currently help to foster social participation of older adults and the intergenerational and intercultural dialogue.

3. Innovative methods and examples for good practice

There are many examples of good practice realized in different European and worldwide seniors' universities, which are worth to be known and applied. In the context of this paper, I will give you some ideas about successful methods of good practice, which we realize in the framework of the seniors' education at Ulm University and in the frame of the education network Danube-Networkers.

3.1. Educational academic lectures and workshops

Academic continuing education for seniors will take on an even greater significance in the years to come. Aim is to give senior students the chance to participate in the debate concerning new research findings in different areas of science, politics, economic and social developments and hereby to discover, test or develop their personal abilities, knowledge and attitudes. Through participation in academic discussions, educational programs for older adults offer also new possibilities for orientation and social participation and for new fields of activity.

Academic lectures are a central point of the seniors' education, however, students are more consumers than active learners. At Ulm University we developed in 1990 an educational event in a compact form (from Monday to Friday, 10.00 to 16.00) with a mixture of academic lectures in the morning and activating workshops in the afternoon. This new format has

been successfully carried out twice a year since 1992 in the form of one week's Spring and Autumn Academies. It seems to suit the needs of the people in the third age who want to be in charge of their own time, as well as the time disposal of adults in the second age. The main science fields of Ulm University are medicine, natural sciences, and information technologies. For this reason the contents of the week's program cover above all themes of current social significance in these fields, such as: *man – society*, - *technology*, - *social change and change in science*, *future of medicine*. In the morning, lectures are given by prominent scientists, followed by discussions in the auditorium. In the afternoon, about 30 workshops with topics belonging to different central questions of science, politics, economy, social affairs and culture take place, giving the seniors the possibility to take part actively. From 12.00 to 14.00 there is a *market place* to inform the participants about educational opportunities for seniors and possibilities for social engagement, but also provides opportunity for relaxing. The large number of participants in the *Academy Weeks* (500 to 600 senior students per week) and the findings of a parallel social science research show that this methodical approach fosters the interest of seniors for central questions concerning future developments, making them open for social participation. More at:

<http://www.uni-ulm.de/einrichtungen/zawiw/angebote/akademiewochen/>

3.2. Learning by researching

The concept of learning through research in the seniors' education was created by Francois Vellas, the founder of AIUTA, with first excellent results made in France and Switzerland in the 70's and 80's. In Ulm we started with this activating method in 1995. It can be applied in individual work, work in independent project groups and work of the study groups in the framework of university research projects. Study groups of senior learners are moderated by an academic moderator. His/her task consists of accompanying the group from the initial search for a theme up to the final result. He/she also helps groups in issues concerning methods and processes and the organization of introductory courses concerning special professional methods. The method of learning through research makes it possible for older people to take up or to examine forgotten or

controversial research subjects or bring attention to facts, which have not been researched up to now. The views and the experience-knowledge of older people are taken into consideration in research issues and in the development of designs. Learning about age, aging and about social issues and at the same time learning how to research these subjects, older people can contribute to gaining new knowledge about aging and thus actively participate in resolving social issues and problems. The new information and communication technologies can reinforce self-determination and independent research of the learner. They are helpful instruments for getting and transmitting information, for communication, scientific research, self-presentation and for learning online. At Ulm University, there are now such senior groups in the areas of medicine, natural sciences, social sciences and history. Chosen themes are for example: *Industry Culture in Ulm*, *Older Women's' History in Ulm*, *History after the Second War in Ulm*, *Migrants in Ulm*. More at: <https://forschendes-lernen.de/>

3.3. Qualification for new roles and functions

The contribution of the U3As is seen not only in their offers of education with subjects in new socially relevant themes, but also in qualifying older (and younger) people to accept self-determined roles and functions in old and new professional, social, welfare and political fields of activity.

- Example: *Seniors help Pupils of Secondary Schools in the Transition to Professional Life*
- Example: *Time-Witnesses-Work as an Intergenerational Bridge*
- Example: *Seniors-Internet-Helpers. Opening New Information Technology for Seniors and Make them Accessible*
- Example: *Seniors as Ambassadors for Europe*

3.4 Exploring through traveling

Travel has become important activity for many older people, tourism for elderly has become a major economic factor. There are many opportunities for travel with all sorts of contents and aims: town tours, long distance, culture, event, holidays, adventure, sports etc. Especially the younger elderly, such as the members of U3As, are interested in travelling to

enlarge their horizons. Nearly all U3As in Europe offer study travels to other European countries and some of them also to other continents. Some travels promote encounters with other U3As or other groups of older people. However, until now, concepts which include active participation of senior students in preparing, implementing and evaluating the travels as a constitutive part of the travel, have not been paid enough attention to. The concept of *exploring through travel* builds on the competences and experiences of older people as well as their curiosity. All participants share their knowledge during the preparation and the voyage itself and become themselves occasional instructors. This procedure generates group knowledge and group dynamics, which foster motivation for learning and build upon existing or new knowledge as a resource. It also facilitates the creation of social relations in the group. Internet and its applications play an important role in this context. Through mailing lists and / or forums, contact between the participants can be established in advance. This way they can receive information about the travel destination or logistics from the tour guide as well as from the other participants. They refer to links, photo galleries and video clips. The preparation can also be done jointly. For example, a virtual project on the subject *Who are our Neighbours?*, implemented by the seniors themselves as a preparation for the common journey, can lead to a research about central issues of policy framework and social security in international comparison. During the travel, some participants give short presentations about a special subject, for example from the fields of botany (biodiversity), culture (food culture, tea ceremony), questions of energy generation, minorities, the role of women, Nobel Prize winners, peace groups - the fields can be as diverse as the groups themselves. These short presentations can be collected before departure and distributed to the participants in a small hand-out. Another option is to publish them on a website together with pictures from the voyage once it had taken place.

Another way of participating actively is the drafting of daily reports, the subjects of which can be chosen by the authors themselves according to their interests. After the voyage, the reports are published on the Internet and enable a deeper recall of the voyage and an interesting insight into the trip for those who could not participate.

The website can be created and designed by seniors with digital competence. During the voyage, experiences can be recorded in a personal or group weblog, a sort of collective travel diary.

An exploring voyage always includes encounters with people from the country of destination. These encounters can take place when visiting a U3A or another group of people, e.g. a peace project or a group promoting solar energy.

Voyages will become unforgettable if the host group prepares a programme for the guests. This can be a cultural programme giving insight into regional or national peculiarities, or one in which seniors become guides to their own city for a few hours, showing visitors their town from their perspective. Giving participants intercultural competence must thus be part of the concept and of the group's procedures.

3.5. International cooperation and networking

ZAWiW created in 1995 the online-based European network Learning in Later Life (LiLL) and realized in the following years many European projects and LiLL-Conferences. Many U3As and AIUTA members had been actively involved, contacts and cooperation to 21 European countries existed in 2007. Ascertaining that the South-East countries were missing from these contacts, ZAWiW and seniors of the group Europakontakte initiated the first contact inviting a senior group from each of the 10 Danube countries in the frame of the Danube Festival 2008 in Ulm/Neu-Ulm. Through this action, the association Danube-Networkers, as a civil society movement, mainly of older adults, was initiated. Its goal is to make it possible for people along the Danube to get to know each other, to work together as one and to promote united and peaceful Europe. This network meanwhile includes members from 12 countries, civil society organisations from the fields of education, culture, social work and ecology, as well as from universities and schools. I am pleased to say that some of the members of our network are present here at this conference, such as the U3A of Bratislava University, the Public University of Zagreb and U3A of Galati University.

The network received its current formal structure in 2014, when the international association Danube-Networkers for Europe (DANET) with its

seat in Ulm had been founded. The projects are funded by the European Commission, the State Ministry of Baden-Württemberg, the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung, the Heidehof Stiftung and numerous smaller sponsors as well as by many benefit events organised by our students.

More at: www.danube-networkers.eu

Since 2008, the association Danube-Networkers had carried out numerous educational European projects such as *DANET* (citizen's panels in 6 countries), *DALEC* (online-lectures with 5 universities and U3As), *TownStories*, etc. However, increasingly also European outreach pedagogy projects had been realized with the goal of strengthening through joint work the motivation for cooperation of many older and younger people in the Danube Region, with the aim of fostering European awareness and identity and fighting against prejudices by knowing each other.

2014 / 2015 the project *The Wanted Danube* was carried out, in which 6000 people of all ages, ethnic origins and social backgrounds from eight Danube countries took part and made a band of friendship 1.500 km long from 3.647 Danube-pieces (50x50cm. The impressive results were presented at the Danube Festival 2014. The partners received for this project the European Citizens' Prize 2015 of the European Parliament. (www.thewanteddanube.eu).

Because of the large success, the participating organisations wished to initiate a new project, this time on the subject *Tastes of Danube: Bread, Wine and Herbs*. It started in January 2016 after a pilot phase. *Bread* represents here the symbol of physical and spiritual fundamental needs, of the community, of sharing with others and the responsibility for enough food for all.

As in the previous projects, the method of the project is outreach pedagogy, it is intergenerational, intercultural and inclusive. Participants are social organisations, scientists, universities in the context of their seminars and schools in the context of their teaching. It is baked and it is researched about social, cultural and religious customs of yesterday and today concerning bread and wine. Recipes are translated from national languages into English, personal experiences are documented in word and image. Scientists present the results of their research work and support students in their research process. Through the common work, the network of regional

partners has been growing. This means that people from various organisations, ethnic origins, education and social backgrounds work together locally on the subjects of bread, wine and herbs. Tested with innovative methods is also voluntary work in new fields.

Central for reaching the goal of the project are the transnational activities, they are the central motivational factor for the project participants to consider themes such as: who are the other participants in the Danube countries, where do they live, how do they live. Important is the project website www.tastes-of-danube.eu. There the various project activities and actions of the partners are presented. The actions of *Danube Bread on Tour*, where primal bread dough is sent from Ulm to the Danube countries together with an invitation to the partners to bake *Danube Bread*, have joining character. This applies also to the digital photo competition, the publishing of an international anthology on the subject of *Bread*, the collecting and comparing of proverbs and bread customs. Through these actions, the participants experience the various cultures directly.

One of the past highlights was a meeting of the partners in Ulm in the context of the 10th International Danube Festival 2016, which took place from the 8th to the 10th of July. This meeting consisted of two main parts, the international conference *Tastes of Danube: Let's Taste It* and *The Danube Bridge Breakfast*. At the Conference on Friday, the 8th of July, representatives from partner groups introduced their interim results. The conference's experts provided scientific background in transnational comparison to the various thematic areas. The working groups dealt with methods. Considered had been potential future projects in the fields of lifelong learning, cultural heritage and culture education, sustainable tourism and social entrepreneurship. On Sunday, the 10th of July 2016, from 10.30-12.30, a public *Danube Bridge Breakfast* took place on the Herdbrücke in Ulm. The motto was *Share your Bread with the Danube Neighbours*. On the bridge, a long *citizens' table* consisted of a row of *sponsors' tables*. Here various social organisations from the region of Ulm/Neu-Ulm invited citizens of all ages and ethnic origins and the guests from the Danube countries to a snack with bread and to a talk about their daily life, what is different and what is the same in their cultures, interests, experiences. This action made clear that we want to get to know better our

neighbours living along the Danube and that we want to live with them in all their variety, unified in peaceful and tolerant Europe. More at: <http://conference.tastes-of-danube.eu>

The project continues now for further two years with *Bread Connects* as its central theme. There will be many activities in all Danube countries, but we would like to spread the idea of theme-focused cooperation concerning *Bread Connects* also to other countries and partners. You are cordially invited to join us!

In the frame of this project, on the 13th of July 2018 a large meeting of the partners and a conference about cultural heritage will take place in Ulm, with the aim of pointing out the idea of peaceful European community and European identity based on a wealth of common goods and respect for regional and national diversity, while respecting people in other parts of the word in a friendly and solidary way.

4. Conclusion

U3As and similar educational institutions play an important role in promoting lifelong learning, social engagement and social participation of older adults. However, to achieve these goals in today's society, new activating methods are needed.

Theme-focused learning and an appropriate combination of activating methods and learning settings can encourage many seniors with different educational and social backgrounds to take part. Providing IT competences is a must in this rapidly changing world. Through learning offers based on individual needs, competences and capacities, the learning process will increase theoretical and practical knowledge and promote critical thinking. The learners can discuss the learned amongst themselves and transfer it as mentors to other seniors, pupils, students, migrants. Seniors as time-witnesses can build a bridge between the past and the future. Special attention should be paid to older women who have not had the possibility for learning in their youth, but possess much experience knowledge. Local and regional projects can also be carried out on a European or worldwide level, should the U3As be interested. Networking, transnational cooperation projects and encounters are a powerful means to encourage

older people to become active agents in the changing society. There are many possibilities, where funds can be applied for. A qualification seminar for stakeholders in the frame of AIUTA would be helpful for this.

About the author:

Carmen Stadelhofer, Academic Director (ret). She is Pedagogist, Romanist and Germanist. She worked from 1984 until her retirement at the end of 2012 at Ulm University, since 1994 as the head of the Zentrum für Allgemeine Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung der Universität Ulm - ZAWiW (Centre for General Scientific Continuing Education at Ulm University). Her main task was the coordination of research projects (action research) on regional, national and international level. Research focus: lifelong learning for older adults, intergenerational learning, new media in general adult education.

In 1995 she initiated the international network Learning in Later Life - LiLL (www.lill-online.net) and in 2008 the education network Danube-Networkers. In this frame she was and is currently responsible for different educational projects in the Danube Region. In March 2014 she founded with colleagues from different Danube countries the international association Danube-Networkers for Europe - a Network for Learning in Later Life, Social Participation and Intergenerational Dialogue -DANET. (<http://danube-networkers.eu/>).

Currently she heads as volunteer the Institut für virtuelles und reales Lernen in der Erwachsenenbildung an der Universität Ulm (Institute for virtual and face-to-face learning in the area of adult education at Ulm University) ILEU e.V. (<https://ileu.net>) founded in 2002, she is President of DANET e.V. and a Member of the Board of the Danube Civil Society Forum - DSCF in the frame of the Danube-Strategy of the European Commission for the Danube Region - EUSDR (www.danube-region.eu).

Contacts:

Carmen Stadelhofer, ILEU e.V., Schweinemarkt 6, 89073 Ulm
Carmen.stadelhofer@uni-ulm.de
Mobil: 0049 (0) 171-1904099

CHINA'S THINKING AND SHANGHAI'S PRACTICE

Shanghai Normal University Elderly School

I. Development Plan for the Elderly Education 2016-2020: A New Chapter of the Undertaking

In October 2016, the State Council issued *the Development Plan for the Elderly Education 2016-2020*, setting forth the guidelines, targets, tasks, important projects and safeguard measures for the development of China's elderly education. The plan proves to be far-sighted in vision, clear in goals, and convenient to carry out, marking a new chapter for this cause. Among the basic principles of the plan, the first piece reads: "To guarantee equal rights for the elderly and try to make education accessible to elder people of various ages, education levels, incomes, and health conditions." Since the issue of this document, relevant agencies and elderly universities across the country have made earnest devotion to the study of the plan. Regional governments are working to make implementation measures; meanwhile, the Chinese Association of Universities of the Aged(CAUA) has organized nationwide activities to promote the cause.

The plan, an addition to China's institutions, signals that elderly education has become an element of China's modernization cause and heralds a bright future for its elderly education.

II. Elderly Education in Shanghai: Open and beneficial to all of its senior citizens

A fast aging mega-city, Shanghai has 4.35 million people over 60 years old according to latest data, constituting 30.2% of the total resident population. The Metropolis Government, with the aim of improving elder people's well-being and an emphasis on expanding educational resources, has striven continually for more decent conditions, wider channels, richer resources and innovative methods concerning elderly learning. So far, it has achieved the goal of "convenient, pleasant learning at venues nearby home" on the whole, with the formation of a four-tier education network that incorporates the city, districts, towns and villages. At present, 780,000 elder people attend universities for the aged, with another 560,000

participants of distant learning, taking up 30.8% of the total elderly population. That figure, by government projection, will rise to surpass 40% by 2020.

Located within the campus of a prestigious university, Shanghai Normal University Elderly School serves as the epitome of the mega-city's elderly education. The school promotes happy learning, solid friendship and elegant life, with more than 6000 students in over 200 classes, 97% coming from the society. Among the students are retired workers, farmers, merchants, etc; some are natives, some emigrants, and a number of foreigners also attend classes here. While many students are immediate retirees, some have reached their eighties or nineties. In 2016 the school was awarded the title of "National Model University for the Aged".

Shanghai, though a world-renowned metropolis, is beset by problems in elderly education, the most prominent being the huge gap between the fast increasing needs of the elderly population and the resources available for elderly education. Looking beyond, there are indeed a number of challenges facing the whole country which undermine the equal learning opportunities of the elderly, regardless of the huge achievement already achieved.

III. Inequalities in learning opportunities: symptoms and root causes

Generally speaking, Chinese universities for the aged are huge both in size and in quantity, yet still appears inadequate compared with the even larger elderly population. "No vacancy left" is one common problem haunting universities across the country.

"No vacancy left" means many would-be students cannot attain a place in an elderly university as the enrolment becomes too large; worse still, some places have no institutions for elderly learning at all. According to statistics released by CAUA in 2015, 510 of the 2793 counties across the country have yet to establish some sort of elderly universities.

The major problem lies in people's mindset and the economy.

Some people have failed to realize the importance of elderly education. The plan by the State Council states that "developing elderly education is an important approach to coping with the population aging, modernizing the educational system and constructing a learning society; it is also an

inseparable part in satisfying the various learning needs of the elderly, raising the quality of their life and fostering a harmonious society”. We need a deep understanding of this philosophy, and make it clear that equal learning opportunities is the legal rights of the elderly while equality in education is a corner stone of social equity.

Elderly education relies on economy. As such, the economic disparity has created huge gaps in elderly education between urban and rural areas as well as between developed and underdeveloped regions. In 2015, China had a total of 60,867 universities for the aged, with 59.6% of them in the east region, 11.9% in the north, 10.3% in the southwest, 8.6% in the south-central, 3.7% in the northeast, and a mere 0.8% in the northeast. Obviously, economically backward regions face a serious supply shortage in elderly education resources.

IV. Equal learning opportunities: Approaches and Measures

The Chinese government attaches great importance to elderly education. In the National Outline for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020), elderly education was incorporated in the national education enterprise. More importantly, the development plan issued in 2016 functions as a landmark in the course of this great undertaking. Targeting inequalities and supply shortages, the plan promotes an even development scenario where senior citizens enjoy equal opportunities.

1. Adjust the mindset

Governments at all levels and the whole society should understand that advancing elderly education is a national strategy to address the issue of population aging, a mandate of the Constitution to the government and a project aimed at meeting the spiritual and cultural needs of the elderly. The running of universities, at the same time, must be based on the principle of equality.

2. Enlarge resources

The development plan puts the expansion of supply at the forefront of the elderly education movement in the new stage, setting forth 8 measures to ensure the implementation. Among them, enhancing elderly learning in

communities and universities, where resources are plentiful, stand out as the top priorities.

In addition, elderly universities run by enterprises and government agencies, which admit their retirees only, should broaden their enrolment gradually to serve senior citizens from all walks of life. Such a transformation, across the landscape of China's elderly education, is taking place in a steady manner.

3. Innovate and broaden education models

It is necessary to explore new ways of learning, such as distant or online study. Activities in the form of reading, lecture, visits, performance, exchanges and volunteering should be fostered to enrich the learning experience. Besides, study groups with various focuses should be promoted as an effective way of learning and sharing.

Open universities and radio and television universities are supposed to play a leading role in the utilization of information technology. Besides, digital resources should be fostered and made accessible to elderly people in rural and remote areas.

4. Enhance the economy and increase the investment

The development of elderly education depends on economic growth, and a more balanced economic landscape would alleviate inequalities at source. China, for all its achievement over the years, remains a developing country and investment in elderly education needs to be promoted step by step.

Elder people are treasures of the whole society and elderly education represents an enterprise in the interest of the people. The Chinese government, as committed as ever, will strive for a balanced scenario where all of its elderly citizens enjoy equal and decent learning opportunities.

That is all. Thank you.

OVERCOMING AGEISM THROUGH EDUCATION FOR THE THIRD AGE

Georgi STANKOV

National University of the Third Age, Sofia, Bulgaria

Keywords: ageism, senior empowerment, senior participation

Abstract:

The paper explores various aspects of ageism, and the importance of confronting its manifestations in modern society. Education for seniors is identified as an essential benefit for all ages and as a fundamental tool for overcoming ageism. From this perspective, educational programs for the older generations can help them find a way to use their qualities, talents, and skills, and to find meaningful social roles. The author's view is that education can raise elderly citizens' awareness of their needs and rights, and might encourage their active participation in policy-making in all matters affecting them.

What Zuck says?

In his 2007 speech at the *Y Combinator Startup School* event at Stanford, the founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, said that “Young people are just smarter.”¹ He addressed the IT startups, stating youngsters’ ability to contribute for their success, and recommending to entrepreneurs to hire them instead of older persons. What Zuckerberg said back in 2007, is an example of ageism.

¹ Coker, Mark (2007). “Startup advice for entrepreneurs from Y Combinator”, in *Venture Beat*, March 27, 2007, available online at: <https://venturebeat.com/2007/03/26/start-up-advice-for-entrepreneurs-from-y-combinator-startup-school>.

Eventually, Zuckerberg's words proved to be a modern version of "Simon says." There is a growing age-related trend in staff selection in the Silicon valley and elsewhere. Most observers of this business sector claim that this advice is followed by the companies. The media describe the situation with expressions like: "no old people allowed"², "the brutal ageism of Tech"³, "the Silicon valley's obsession with youth."⁴ Data evidence about the age structure of the hi-tech sector proves this trend is not an illusion. The annual survey for 2015, made by the specialized site Stack Overflow in the IT sector, shows a significant lack of balance in the age structure of programmers.⁵ From 25 831 respondents, people of age between 40 and 50 are 7.6 percent of the cohort, and people over 50 are just 2.4 percent. Any possible explanations of this situation with the features of the environment and the business sector must be considered, as well the fact that Google settled the case *Reid v. Google Inc.* out of the court with conditions, that are not subject to disclosure. Richard Reid sued the company for age discrimination.⁶

² Medina, Daniel (2013). "Silicon Valley: No old people allowed?", in Mic, August 19, 2013, available online at: <https://mic.com/articles/60179/silicon-valley-no-old-people-allowed>.

³ Scheiber, Noam (2014). "The brutal ageism of Tech", in New Republic, March 24, 2014, available online at: <https://newrepublic.com/article/117088/silicons-valleys-brutal-ageism>.

⁴ Eadicicco, Lisa (2015). "Silicon Valley's obsession with youth, summed up in one chart", in Business Insider, April 13, 2015, available online at: <http://www.businessinsider.com/silicon-valley-age-programmer-2015-4>.

⁵ Stack Overflow, 2015 Developer Survey, available online at: <http://stackoverflow.com/insights/survey/2015#profile-age>.

⁶ California Supreme Court, decision on the case *Reid v. Google Inc.*, 2010, decided on August 5 2016, available online at:

What is Ageism?

The relationship between age and discrimination has been the subject of many social discussions and scientific studies. This relationship is not only an academic interest, but it also has many practical daily life implications. The term *ageism* was created by Robert N. Butler to describe the evaluative judgments toward an individual or a group only due to their advanced age.⁷ Butler identified ageism as one of the manifestations of bigotry, such as racism, sexism, and social class discrimination.

The vast majority of researchers (for instance, Zanna, Rempel, Haddock, Herzog, Jain,)^{8 9 10 11} agree that the complexity of phenomenon ageism can

<http://www.olender.pro/~fatuous/sites/default/files/Reid-v-google.pdf>.

⁷ Robert N. Butler, MD (1969); Age-Is: Another Form of Bigotry. *Gerontologist* 1969; 9 (4_Part_1): 243-246. doi: 10.1093/geront/9.4_Part_1.243.

⁸ Zanna, M.P. and Rempel, J.K. (1988) Attitudes: A New Look at an Old Concept. In: Bar-Tal, D. and Kruglanski, A.W., Eds., *The Social Psychology of Knowledge*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 315-334.

⁹ Geoffrey Haddock and Mark P. Zanna (1993) , "Predicting Prejudicial Attitudes: the Importance of Affect, Cognition, and the Feeling-Belief Dimension", in *NA - Advances in Consumer Research* Volume 20, eds. Leigh McAlister and Michael L. Rothschild, Provo, UT : Association for Consumer Research, pp. 315-318, available online at: <http://acrwebsite.org/volumes/7463/volumes/v20/NA-20>.

¹⁰ Herzog, S. (2017) Experimental Analysis of Attitudes: The Factorial-Survey Approach. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 5, 126-156. doi: 10.4236/jss.2017.51011, available online at: http://file.scirp.org/pdf/JSS_2017011615215956.pdf.

¹¹ Jain, Vishal (2014), 3D model of attitude. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences*, March

be best presented through the tripartite model, which proposes to study ageism as a constellation of three components:

- an affective component (feelings toward older individuals),
- a cognitive component (beliefs or stereotypes about older people),
- a behavioral component (behavior or behavioral intentions toward older people).¹²

Based on this, we can suggest that ageism is a set of attitudes, thoughts, and feelings towards elderly people, which result in practical behavioral interventions, violating their human and social rights.

Manifestations of ageism

While ageism has existed for centuries, Blau suggests that the major social changes in the industrial era contributed to the development of ageist societies. While in the agricultural societies seniors were perceived as an asset to the family and took part in the daily work, in the transmission of traditional knowledge and experience, in the intergenerational communication, and in the gender-role modelling of children, nowadays, in times of urbanization and industrialization, they are no longer included in all these roles. This completely changed the life and status of the elderly persons.¹³

It might seem to be a paradox that young people have negative stereotypes toward a group to which they will eventually belong.¹⁴ But this is a matter

2014; available online at:

<http://garph.co.uk/IJARMSS/Mar2014/1.pdf>.

¹² Kite, Mary E. and Lisa Smith Wagner (2002). Attitudes toward Older Adults, in Ageism. Stereotyping and Prejudice against Older Persons, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, p.132.

¹³ Blau, Zena Smith (1973). Old Age in a Changing Society, New Viewpoints, p.6.

¹⁴ Nelson, Todd (2002). In: Ageism. Stereotyping and Prejudice against Older Persons, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, p.ix.

of fact, and it happens in several dimensions. Despite the fact that ageism is declared illegal, regulations does not cease the ageist behaviour.

- *Problems with employment.* There are examples, that adult workers are not welcomed in certain professions, even if they have the necessary qualifications.
- *Mistreatment on the workplace.* Especially in teams with a majority of young people, there is a growing assumption, that older people do not "fit into the culture" of the companies, which leads to insults and mockeries.
- *Lack of intergenerational dialog.* The absence of communication and mutual understanding between people, belonging to different generations, increases the sense for "out of place and time" for the old people.
- *Social isolation.* Usually the elderly have limited physical space, and often their environment is not age-friendly, which make them withdraw from social life.
- *Declined social participation.* In old age are observed shrinking of social activities, reduced social networks, and decreased social capital. Generally, older persons' opinions are not taken in account.
- *Lack of educational programs for the elderly.* Most of the elderly people, even in the developed countries, do not have access to specially designed educational programs.
- *Abuse and neglect of older people.* In social care institutions seniors might be mistreated and harassed.

We could assume that in some cases, it is not a conscious ageism, but rather a lack of understanding for the specific needs of elderly, and the importance their constitutional rights to be executed in a way, which is relevant to their needs and abilities.

What education can do?

Senior education might provide numerous benefits not only for the third age, but for the society as a whole. According to developmental

psychologist Erik Erikson, in old age man questions his life purpose, and might regret failure to live his life as he wished. There is a risk of despair and a loss of sense of meaning, therefore it is crucial for elderly people's well-being to achieve, affirm, and confirm their ego integrity.¹⁵ Universities of the third age can provide the space and tools for the transition of people from active adulthood to active ageing, and to support them in the development of new roles for the later life.

The ultimate goal of the UTAs, as regards to ageism, should be to empower elderly and to stimulate senior participation on various levels and dimensions. In this perspective, education for the third age has the capacity to achieve the following goals:

- *To raise awareness of the Third age about their rights and needs.*

Involvement in educational activities already is a proactive behaviour. Seniors at most UTAs are able to directly contribute to the forming of their educational programme, lectures, and activities. The British model of UTAs even broadens this process, by creating possibility for elderly to teach each others and to reverse their roles of learners and educators. But there is more that could be done at a policy level. Roger Clough et al, in their fundamental report "The support older people want and the services they need" starts from the position that elderly care begins with taking into consideration their expressed needs.¹⁶ A team of University of Manitoba's Center of Aging had reviewed the literature on older adults' social participation, and summarized that it provides them with a wide range of health benefits, including: enhanced quality of life, longer survival,

¹⁵ Erikson, Erik H. (1950). *Childhood and Society*, 1987 edition by Paladin Grafton Books, pp. 241-242.

¹⁶ Clough, Roger; Jill Manthorpe; Bert Green; David Fox; Gwyn Raymond; Pam Wilson; Vicki Raymond; Keith Sumner; Les Bright; Jinny Hay (2007). *The support older people want and the services they need*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, available online at: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/1954-older-people-services.pdf>.

lower morbidity, better self-rated health, decreased risk of disability and functional and mobility decline, decreased likelihood of depression, decreased likelihood of generalized anxiety disorders, decreased risk of cognitive decline, and decreased risk of dementia.¹⁷

- *To create social networks, to increase social capital, and to build friendships.*

Social interaction and social bonds are related to the self-rated physical health. Cornwell and Waite inform that both social disconnectedness and self-perceived isolation among older adult are independently associated with lower levels of their self-evaluated physical health.¹⁸ Boulton-Lewis underlines importance of community - as a source for enjoyment and recreation, as well as a way for older people to adapt to changes within their environment in domains such as technology, lifestyle, finances and health.¹⁹

- *To provide opportunity for Lifelong learning, new skills and knowledge.*

Many people over 50 desire to gain new work skills, knowledge and opportunities to develop and express their talents. Research by Escuder-Molon et al discovered a relationship between the participation in Lifelong learning activities and the subjective perception of seniors' Quality of

¹⁷ Novek, Sheila; Verena Menec; Tanya Tran; Sheri Bell (2013) Exploring the Impacts of Senior Centres on Older Adults. Winnipeg, MB: Centre on Aging, May 2013.

¹⁸ Cornwell, Erin Y., Linda J. Waite (2009). Social Disconnectedness, Perceived Isolation, and Health among Older Adults. *J Health Soc Behav.* 2009 Mar; 50(1): 31–48. Manuscript is available online at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2756979/pdf/nihms-133647.pdf>.

¹⁹ Boulton-Lewis, Gillian M.(2012).Issues in Learning and Education for the Ageing. In: Active Ageing, Active Learning, Springer, p.22.

Life.²⁰ Avramov and Maskova's data about willingness to work among elderly workers and soon retired people about their preferences for full-time job, part-time job and unpaid voluntary job shows that this age group is not homogeneous and different subgroups have different priorities.²¹ UTAs can support all these groups: the people who wish to be active on the labour market by providing them with new qualifications, the people who choose a part-time engagement, and the people want to spend their spare time with no job and inclusion in new experiences and activities.

- *To develop a positive self-perception among senior citizens.*

Positive self-perception, related to ageing, can increase significantly seniors' health and life. A study by Levy and her colleagues from 2002 concluded, that among 600 individuals, tested 23 years earlier, those with positive self-perceptions of aging lived average 7.5 years longer than people with less positive self-perceptions of aging.²² Two recent studies discovered the relationship between self-perception and body condition. The first one found that negative attitudes regarding aging affect how minds and bodies function at the cellular level, and lead to physical and cognitive decline in older adults.²³ The second research found that elderly

²⁰ Escuder-Mollon, Pilar; Roger Esteller-Curto; Luis Ochoa; Massimo Bardus (2014). Impact on Senior Learners' Quality of Life through Lifelong Learning, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 131 (2014) pp.510 – 516, available online at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042814030675>.

²¹ Avramov, Dragana and Miroslava Maskova (2003). Active ageing in Europe Volume 1, Council of Europe Publishing, p.73.

²² Levy, Becca R., Martin D. Slade, Suzanne R. Kunkel, Stanislav V. Kasl (2002). Longevity Increased by Positive Self-Perceptions of Aging. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2002, Vol. 83, No. 2, 261–270.

²³ Pietrzak, R. H.; Zhu, Y.; Slade, M. D.; Qi, Q.; Krystal, J. H.; Southwick, S. M., and Levy, B. R. (2016), Association Between Negative Age Stereotypes and Accelerated Cellular Aging: Evidence

people who experience negative age-stereotypes, have higher cortisol levels, compared to people with positive stereotypes about ageing.²⁴

- *To strengthen the intergenerational dialog.*

Since 2016, National university of the third age in Bulgaria develops a pilot initiative, aimed to improve the dialog between generations. NUTA collaborates with students from the Department of Public administration, who are asked to spend more time with their grandparents and to learn more about their lives.

- *To support purposeful ageing.*

In his research of the *Blue zones*, places around the world, where lifestyles lead to extended life expectancy, Dan Buettner states that the sense of purpose (the “why I wake up in the morning” thing), is positively correlated to centenarians’ longevity.²⁵ Boyle et al, state that a strong purpose in life can improve the pathologic changes in cognition at advanced age of patients with Alzheimer disease.²⁶

from Two Cohorts of Older Adults. *J Am Geriatr Soc*, 64: e228–e230. doi:10.1111/jgs.14452.

²⁴ Levy, Becca R.; Moffat, Scott; Resnick, Susan M.; Slade, Martin D.; Ferrucci, Luigi (2016), Positive Age Self-Stereotypes Predict Lower Cortisol across 30 Years. *GeroPsych: The Journal of Gerontopsychology and Geriatric Psychiatry*, Vol 29(3), 2016, 141-146.

²⁵ Buettner, Dan (2008). *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who've Lived the Longest*, National Geographic Society.

²⁶ Boyle, Patricia; Aron S. Buchman; Robert S. Wilson; Lei Yu; Julie A. Schneider; David A. Bennett (2012). Effect of Purpose in Life on the Relation Between Alzheimer Disease Pathologic Changes on Cognitive Function in Advanced Age, *Arch Gen Psychiatry*, 2012;69(5):499-506.

Furthermore, UTAs should not stay limited to the position of education providers. UTAs could operate as think-tanks, developing policies concerning seniors' areas of interest, such as social services and care, urban design and age-friendly public spaces, political participation, culture, silver economy, technology, and culture.

Conclusion

Two very different perceptions of ageing have shaped our society. The first one was expressed in popular phrases, like "I hope I die before I get old"²⁷, and "Live Fast Die Young"²⁸ from numerous books and movies. The second one was expressed by Rainer Maria Rilke:

***You have not grown old, and it is not too late
to dive into your increasing depths,
where life calmly gives out its own secret.***²⁹

The former presents a more pessimistic point of view, and the latter is more optimistic. Opposing to ageism, fighting ageist prejudices, and creating equal opportunities is not a matter of slogans, statements, legal acts, and declarations. It is about inspiring people to pursue their happiness. The mission of UTAs as providers of education for seniors, is to implement the words, often accredited to Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: "If you want to build

²⁷ Pete Townshend (1965). *My Generation*; In: *My Generation*, album by The Who, released in 1965.

²⁸ Motley, Willard (1947). *Knock on Any Door*; paraphrase of the often repeated quotation "Live fast, die young, and have a good-looking corpse". The phrase is used as a title for the 1958 movie "Live Fast, Die Young".

²⁹ Rilke, Rainer Maria (1905). *You see, I want a lot*, in: *Selected poems* (1981 edition), published by Harper Perennial, translated by Robert Bly

a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.”³⁰

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Georgi Stankov is a developmental and social psychologist, psychodrama therapist, and PhD student in Public administration at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria. Since 2014 he is a part-time lecturer at Sofia university. His interests and areas of research and practice cover topics such as: non-formal education, citizen participation, public advocacy, community organizing, policy networks. He is the Vice-President of the National University of the Third Age in Bulgaria, and author of the first Bulgarian academic publication on the UTA movement.

Contacts:

Institution: National University of the Third Age

Address: Bulgaria, 1407 Sofia, str. "Trepetlika" 5, floor 1

Phone: +359 886824918

E- mail: dunyata@gmail.com

³⁰ This famous passage is accredited to Saint-Exupéry, but is actually a paraphrase, derived from his book “Citadelle” (1948). More information is available online at <http://quoteinvestigator.com/2015/08/25/sea>.

TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF CONTINUOUS EDUCATION OF SENIORS IN CROATIA

Jasna ČURIN & Dijana BEBEK Miletić

University of the Third Age, Public Open University Zagreb

Croatia is one of the countries with the high number of older population, to be more precise 17.7% of our inhabitants are over 65 (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Through health and social policies as well as the national pension scheme the primary needs of our senior citizens are trying to be met (City of Zagreb, Social plan 2010-2014). On the other hand a lifelong learning (LLL hereinafter), that Croatia recognized as something of a great importance and in the same time adopted in the Law of adult education (Official Gazette, no. 17/2007) and Strategy of Education, Science and Technology (Official Gazette, no. 124/2014), mainly applies to adult education and education for the labour market. Prime role of education of seniors is to increase the quality of their life but unfortunately no great significance is given to it. Hence it's not surprising that in Croatia there are only 2 models of organised education for seniors i.e. University of the Third Age (hereinafter U3A), that act separately. One, more modest in number of programmes, acts within LLL Centre, University of Rijeka for 7 years now. Second acts in Zagreb from 1991 within the Public Open University Zagreb (hereinafter POUZ).

POUZ is a public organization for Education and Culture and as such is the largest one of this profile in Croatia and this year it celebrates 110 years of its existence. At POUZ we organize all kinds of formal and informal education for different age groups (from preschool to third age). Within POUZ, for the past 25 years U3A acts. Zagreb's U3A started as a cooperation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and POUZ and through different forms of programmes that cooperation is still present today. Zagreb's U3A is structured and we offer a whole range of lectures (educational and cultural) divided by levels of knowledge. They are aimed at senior citizens with wide spectrum of interest. A possibility to choose a

lecture according to the level of knowledge students have and wish to improve (in educational understanding) gives to this programme certain heaviness. This doesn't mean that this programme copies school system in fact it's quite opposite because programmes for seniors should be of open character meaning freedom of choice and learning without rigid rules and coercion, in order to meet all intrinsic motives of learning.

Main activity of Zagreb's U3A is education but in the same time a social dimension of programme is an important component. Around 1000 students attend Zagreb's U3A annually. Our programmes are not subsidised, but are paid through students' fees. We see this as one of the proofs that officials have still not recognized the importance of senior education.

Our programmes are divided in different programme cycles within which our students can:

- learn foreign languages from beginner to conversation (English, German, Italian, French, and Spanish)
- improve IT skills
- attend psychology, sociology, yoga, tai-chi, bridge and other health related programmes
- participate in creative workshops (art, literature, ceramics, horticulture...)
- or attend some of other programmes such as history, art history, music, religion, philosophy, archaeology...

Our school year is divided in two semesters, winter and summer and we also organize a summer school. Lectures are held between 9am to 3pm, once a week and one lecture last an hour and a half, overall 60 lessons a year (32 during winter semester and 28 during summer semester). We have approximately 84 different groups per semester with different number of students within group (number of students vary from 8 to 30).

Zagreb's U3A teachers are obliged to attend additional education that we organize for them twice a year. This education is in the field of psychology of old age as well as methods of working with seniors. All of our teachers and lecturers have long experience in teaching in schools and faculties. Some of our teachers are also in retirement; some used to be our students and then became our teachers. Some of our teachers are university

professors, some are retired university professors. Their age ranges from 26 to 82 years and some have been working at U3A in Zagreb for more than 10 years in continuity. We have also incorporated modern technologies in our lectures. In practice it means that we use Internet to show short video related to the topic, in language classes we show documentaries in languages students are learning subtitled in the language they are learning. Furthermore on our ICT classes students are introduced to using Facebook, making video clips, writing blogs and numerous other things. In order to provide our students with the best possible learning experience we give them as many different learning resources as we possibly can. This isn't only about the learning experience, but in the same time we find it to be the best way to accomplish learning goal. Sometimes faculty students come here as volunteers, they attend classes and write seminars as well as their bachelors' theses.

We also have a whole range of additional programmes meant for all students. These include open lectures, *Zrno mudrost* (Grain of Wisdom) and *Sova* (Owl). Lectures *Zrno mudrosti* are given by our students, and lectures *Sova* are given by prominent experts from different fields (e.g. architecture, politics, literature, medicine...). Also for our students we organize guided visits to all important exhibitions (such as Klimt, Rodin...) in Zagreb's museums. We also have our Film Club i.e. we organize film projections in the cinema only for our students, and before projection we have an introduction to the movie as well as a discussion afterword. Also in our premises at POUZ we organize concerts (beginning of the school year, Christmas, Valentine's Day...), literary evenings, exhibitions of the works of our students etc. From time to time we also organize one day trips for our students that are in connection with the lectures they attend at U3A. As of this school year we have e-newsletter *Treća mladost* (Third Youth). All above mentioned programmes are an addition to the programme that students already attend at U3A, and most of them are not charged extra. The main purpose of these programmes is a social component i.e. they are meant for those senior students who are more active and wish to expand their social contacts.

Within groups students choose *animator*. *Animator* is someone who makes sure that new students are welcomed properly and introduced with everything they need to know about U3A, they talk with the staff of U3A and tell the needs and suggestions of our students. We try to respect the principal of openness within the group so our students and teachers are treated as equals and this gives a chance to students to incorporate their own knowledge and experience in the programme. All of our students are highly motivated for learning and all of our groups are marked with very dynamic classes, high attendance rate and are long lasting.

As mentioned earlier every year we have around 1000 students per semester and around 10% of them are newly retired. Age of our students varies from 53 to 90 with the average age of 67. Concerning gender division, we have more female than male students 90% compared to 10% respectively and finally more than two thirds of our students hold a university degree. Around 30% of them live alone. Living alone is not seen as a problem as long as a person is still working. However once a person is in retirement and thus enters a third age, a lot of things change, among them, also social relations, meaning people are left with smaller number of social contacts. People are social creatures and they need other people to lead normal and fulfilled life. But with family living abroad and many friends still working this gap has to be fulfilled somehow. Coming to the U3A they meet new friends with same problems and same life situation as theirs and this leads to forming so called “personal communities”. Social cohesion that can be observed between group members and teachers creates emotional ties that can usually be noticed among primary group members (e.g. family). Main motive for enrolling into U3A is “a wish to learn something new”. Knowledge that students gain keeps on living because they learn on their own in order to get more insight into a specific topic they are interested in and also they transfer their knowledge to their family members and friends. More importantly active participation in programmes raises students’ self-awareness, they are satisfied with their life and their social life is also enriched. Attending U3A has become for our students a habit and an important part of their life. They have been coming here continuously year after year (some of them for more than 20

years now) choosing higher levels of the same programme or they learn something completely new. In conclusion we can say that U3A's students are only a part within the Zagreb's general population of retirees who have accepted a LLL as their life style and their way of active ageing (Čurin, J., *U zemlji znanja seniori doista žele učiti*, Andragoški glasnik, br.2, 2012, str. 143-152).

During last few years we have also participated in several EU projects through Grundtvig partnership and Erasmus+ programme (The Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes), Europe for Citizens and DANET (Danube Networkers, of which we are one of the cofounders). In those projects our students also participated and thus through learning they travelled and met new European friends. As of 2014 U3A Zagreb is a part of AIUTA.

key words: U3A, POUZ, education, senior students, teachers, animator, social cohesion, EU projects

Curriculum vitae of the authors:

Jasna Čurin is a Head of the Third Age University in Public Open University Zagreb and student supervisor of student trainees of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. She graduated Psychology at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. For the last 25 years she has been the Head of U3A programme, which includes educational and cultural programmes aimed at retired persons and older students with 1000-1200 students per year. She is responsible for finding new teachers, organizing lectures and managing the programme. Through 25 years of existence of U3A Zagreb she has developed a very good cooperation with U3A from other European countries, mostly with the ones from Slovenia and Germany. In several projects from Grundtvig, Erasmus+ and Europe for Citizens programmes she wrote applications but she also participated actively in all phases of the project since she has a lot of practical knowledge that was put in good use through projects. In last few years she is developing new methods in teaching senior students.

Dijana Bebek Miletić is a programme manager and teacher at the U3A, POUZ. She graduated at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, where she graduated History and Geography. She also holds a M.Sc. in conference interpreting. She worked as a high school teacher, interpreter and translator and for the past 5 years she has worked as a teacher at the Zagreb's U3A. Since September this year she is a programme manager at the U3A where she is working on improving foreign language classes and organizes some of extracurricular activities. She also participated in several U3A projects.

Contacts:

Čurin, Jasna – The head of U3A, POUZ, Croatia – jasna.curin@pou.hr

Bebek Miletić, Dijana – Teacher in U3A, POUZ, Croatia –
dijana.bebek_miletic@pou.hr

U3A IN ROMANIA – REDIVIVUS OR ABSOLUTE NOVELTY?

Violeta PUSCASU

University „Dunărea de Jos”, Galați, Romania

Keywords: Ana Aslan, Galați, Roman, university

The Popular University - the U3A's ancestor

It could seem quite natural to associate the third age university with the folk university. In Romania, we count almost 100 years of folk schools as the scientist Nicolae Iorga created the first one in Vălenii de Munte in 1908. It is almost certain that he took his inspiration from the French society whose intellectual atmosphere was familiar to him during his study years in Paris from 1890 to 1891. The first popular high schools are founded here at the end of the 19th century, even if the Scandinavian initiatives in terms of folk education are prior to the French ones. In 1844, in Denmark, the bishop Nikolai Grundtvig was creating a folk high school for adult education. And in 1868 the first folk high schools were created in Sweden.

As for the folk universities, the context is meaningful – the Dreyfuss affair in full progress, the sketching of a humanist intellectual left wing and a change in the socio-demographic structure. Paris is a town that will house its first *université populaire* the Superior School of Journalism in 1899. This initiative was going to put together the bourgeois in tail coat, concerned about some of the people needs and the worker in overalls, curious to understand the world and the changing century (Lenoir, 2014). Clearly, there is a political dimension in this mechanism as the folk high schools, at their beginnings, were mainly based on the disponibility of the educated people that wanted to enlighten the uneducated people and not as much as on the real demand coming from the working class (Pujol, 1981).

It is proper to add some other aspects of the context of foundation of folk high schools. The 19th century is rich in preoccupations for the vulgarisation of education, expressed in the form of public libraries, conferences and meetings organized under the sponsorship of the church or simply in the form of courses for adults. This is the age of utopian ideals, of egalitarianism and of crystallization of democracies.

Later on, after the WWII, many of the purposes and the operating elements of popular universities will be found in the third age universities and as for these last ones, France is the undisputed pioneer.

None of the first data of the idea started by professor Pierre Vellas announced the dimension of the phenomenon. Taking into account the European context, the creation of an university of the third age in Romania of the 80's, shouldn't probably surprise anyone. Or maybe it should, just because this type represented a practice of western inspiration and this was rather disliked in the centralized communist system. But whatever the approach of this phenomenon may be, there is a certain aspect – the Romanian formula of the an university of the third age doesn't rely on the same demographic conditions as those of the western U3A. Romania of those times wasn't at all running the risk of demographic ageing as the pronatalist policy started in 1966 has already had visible effects in the structure of the population and the rate of the people over 65 years old was about 8% ! But, given the reputation of Ana Aslan, as the highly representative of Romanian geriatrics in the world, and against a background of an ideological system that claimed the care for the people, the initiative of a third age took shape. Surprisingly, it was not in a big university town, but in Roman, a small town situated in the historical province of Moldavia.

Inaugurated on October, the 3rd in 1986, the first institution of this type in our country, as announced by the programme leaflet, was created „in close co-operation with the National Institute of Gerontology and Geriatrics, the Union Cultural Center and the Municipal Committee of the “Red Cross” from Roman as well as with the support of some medical and social-cultural institutions from Bucharest, Roman and Iași and from some other towns such as Piatra Neamț, Cluj-Napoca, Ploiești, Pitești, Târgu-Mureș

(the programme leaflet, 1986). From this enumeration of actors-contributors emerges the first feature that describes the creation of the U3A of Roman – the creation of the „university” is the result of several actors, among which we can't clearly identify a founder, as the authorship disappears in a collective/collectivist mass. However, thanks to its notoriety, the name of Ana Aslan has been associated, as president, recognized as a pioneer of social medicine.

Secondly, it has the ingredients of a hybrid U3A because, on the one hand, its mission is based on educational and social goals and medical tasks according to the French model, but analysing the institutional affiliation, it is completely non-academic. But on the other hand, in order to induce the idea of academism, there were four „faculties” in the structure of the University of the Third Age of Roman: The Social-Political Faculty, The Humanistic Faculty, The Faculty of Gerontology and Geriatry, the Faculty of Hobbies and Occupational Therapy.

The U3A of Roman had a clear political component and the proof is the fact that the „dean” of the Social-Political Faculty was an activist of the municipal committee of Roman and that the first speech was called „From the political, philosophical, economic and social thinking of the General Secretary of the Communist Party, comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu and his contribution to the enrichment of the revolutionary theory and practice” !!! while the „dean” of the Faculty of Hobbies and Occupational Therapy was the president of the Retirement Mutual Fund and of the Retirement Club of Roman.

The structure of Roman functions as a mix of influences and practices deriving from the contradiction that although it is called the University of Third Age, its programme says „It is mainly meant for the retired people but it is widely opened to all ages, to all those who want to get information about the gerontologic-geriatric issues or to take part, in a way or another, to solving the complex problems of the third age and of their relations with the other ages of the society”. This aspect links it clearly to one of the branches that the U3A had already developed in France in the form of „université de temps libre – UTL” but also to our own Romanian history of the folk schools. As a matter of fact, this reality is confirmed by the auto-

definition that we find in the same leaflet programme: „The university of the third age was created as an authority for spreading the culture, the scientific and technical knowledge, as a tribune to advance the creative, progressive ideas, widely opened to all generations”. Somehow, this text resembles to what Iorga intended to do at Vălenii de Munte – „I opened these summer courses with a double purpose: to awake the Romanian soul from everywhere and, by means of this soul, to change the forms of government, and to spread as much light and good knowledge”.

The University of the Third Age from Roman existed for only two years but traces of its activity are still found in a few recollections and individual memoirs that I have discovered in my own family.

The U3A in Galați city

The author of this article hit upon the idea of creation of a U3A in Galați after an Erasmus academic mission at Liege. Getting acquainted with the largest structure of this type in Europe was the moment of linking the demographic theory to the punctual reality. After she returned home, during a collegial discussion with the dean Florin Tudor, the starting question just came out: what if we create in Galați an university for the older people ?” There followed several months of research, working and information visits in Toulouse, Mets and Paris, locally-developed questionnaires, settling the activities and finally the opening on October the 10th 2016, in the Aula Magna of the University “Lower Danube” of Galați. Beneath the personal reason and the visionary character or the availability for involvement in a social-charitable approach of the founders, the creation of an university for the older people in the academic environment in Galați could be explained by means of the sum of elements that characterize the urban environment of the region.

There is 160 senior students enrolled in the U3A. Typologically, U3A of Galați belongs to the French pattern – gratuitousness and academism. In point of organization, as the establishment is concerned, there are two structures. In order of creation and assignment of competences, the first one aims at the scientific dimension. In this regard, with the Decision no. 135/June 28, 2016, the Senate of the University „Lower Danube” approved

the creation of a research laboratory called U3A, within the Research Center for Law, Administrative, Social and Political Studies. This center deals with the research on the aspects related to the demographic aging, the associated social policies, case studies regarding the groups of students, the effects of learning for third age, etc. The choice of courses and subjects devolves upon the second structure, the Department of Continuous Training and Technology Transfer (DCTTT) within the same university. This one has a strictly educational competence – the choice of courses and subjects – as well as the administrative aspects, namely the registration of learners, the procession of files and the management of the current activity (schedule, communication with the older learners and with the lecturers, organizing events, etc). The activity of the DCTTT is regulated by a specific methodology and it is in accordance with the provisions of the Law 1/2011 regarding the continuous education and lifelong learning. Within the DCTTT, the U3A functions as a short term study program (one academic year), coordinated by a director of the program, at this time, one and the same director of the Research Center that houses the U3A laboratory.

The University of the Third Age of Galați is a member of the International Association of Universities of the Third Age, which provides the connectivity to a great amount of events and information about similar activities from other countries of the world.

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Violeta Pușcașu is currently full professor at the University "Dunarea de Jos" from Galați, Romania. She graduated Geography in 1988 at the University of Bucarest and the PhD in Geography in 1999. Since 1990 she is working at the University "Dunărea de Jos" of Galați. For many years she participated in the academic leadership (vice-dean for research and international cooperation and director of the chair programme of Geography of Tourism). Her field of expertise is very large, including demography, landscape change, regional development strategy, land use planning, tourism, spatial perceptions and spatial (regional) identities. Her

research includes over 200 papers in various journals and conferences. As she is Bachelor and MSc in Theology, since 2012, the areas of interest include also pilgrimages, cultural heritage and spiritual landscapes. Since the beginning of her academic career, she has taught more than 20 courses from the bachelor to doctoral level at the University of Galați, as well as at the other universities from Romania or abroad. As a guest-professor she was giving lectures in France (Creteil-Paris, Le Havre, Amiens, Toulouse), Belgium (Liege) and Finland (Helsinki). She has been mentor in more than sixty masters and one doctoral thesis (co-director). She is the member of a number of international and national scientific organization and has been the member of scientific committees of a great number of national and international conferences, as well as the initiator and chair of the local organizing and scientific committees. She is also engaged in popular activities (volunteering, TV and radio interviews, public lectures). In 2016, she created the first Romanian University of Third Age operating within a state University.

Contacts:

Violeta Pușcașu

University „Dunărea de Jos”, Galați, Romania

violeta.puscasu@ugal.ro

EQUAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ELDERLY - EXPERIENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM GERMANY

Roland SCHÖNE

Chemnitz University of Technology, Chemnitz (Germany)

The analyze of Learning opportunities for the Elderly shows a lot of deficits and we must optimize the frame condition, especial in rural areas in Germany.

The presentation gives a survey about the contribution of University of 3rd Age (U3A) for the education, health, empowerment and citizenship of elderly people in an older society in Germany especially in East-Germany. With examples of good practice in the education for the Elderly and also in intergenerational education of elderly peoples with children, pupils and international students we show the contribution for the education and social cohesion in Germany and Europa.

Finally we give some recommendation for better equal learning opportunities for the politician in Europa and Germany but also for international cooperation in this field..

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Prof. Dr. Roland Schöne studied engineering and pedagogics at Leipzig University. He received his PhD. in 1970 in the field of civil engineering Dr.-Ing. in Leipzig and in 1980 qualified as a professor in the field of higher education pedagogy at the Technical University of Dresden. From 1970 to 1993, he managed international interdisciplinary research projects at the University of Leipzig in the fields Programmed teaching and learning, simulation games, media and university education.

In 1993 he accepted an appointment as "Professor of adult education and corporate training" at the Technical University of Chemnitz and founded the "Seniors College" at the TU Chemnitz. The Seniors College cooperates with many university partner in Germany, Europe USA, China and Japan.

He advises domestic and foreign doctoral student Master's and research, held a large number of presentations at conferences at home and abroad, and has published numerous publications and media.

From 2008 to 2010 he was head of the newly formed Advanced Study and Research of the TU Bergakademie Freiberg for over 500 students from Germany and abroad. The TU Bergakademie Freiberg was awarded the "Innovation Award Training 2010" the Saxon State Ministry of Education. Since 1993 he has been the director of the private sector "Institute for Education, Culture and Organizational Development Association" in Chemnitz and Magdeburg.

Professor Roland Schöne worked as an expert for the European Commission, the German Bundestag, the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research, the Standing Conference, the Saxon parliament and Saxon State Ministries "Demographic change expert commission" and other state governments.

Contacts:

Prof. Dr. Dr. Roland SCHÖNE

Chemnitz University of Technology, Chemnitz (Germany)

roland.schoene@gmx.net

www.tu-chemnitz.de/seniorenkolleg

CHALLENGES FOR SENIOR EDUCATION IN SLOVAKIA

Lucia HREBEŇÁROVÁ

The Association of Universities of the Third Age of Slovakia

Keywords:

Senior, University of Third Age, learning content, networking, age-friendly communities

The benefit of learning content combining the needs of elderly people participating in senior education and the needs of society, effective teaching methods bringing new knowledge to individual and people (students, lecturers and organizers of education) entering the individual phases of the learning process are key factors for successful development of education at the Universities of third age in Slovakia. The aim of the presentation is describe current situation, possibilities of development, opportunities, obstacles, attitudes and perceptions toward to strengthen the position of the Third Age Universities at their Alma mater and communities, too. It describes the several tools, activities, new partnerships and point of views of the Association and its members to motivate more elderly people participate in them, spread knowledges and build commonly age-friendly communities.

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Ing. Lucia Hrebeňárová, PhD. has been the Director of the Institute of Continuing Education at the University of Žilina in Slovakia since 2006. She has a backround in the marketing of services focused on continuing education; since 2000 she has been working in the field of university continuing education in organisational and programme development and the development of projects and their implementation. Focus of current areas of activity: development of innovative LLL programmes for and in

cooperation with various partners of the university, building new partnerships and networks at regional and national level within the university and at national level; national and EU Projects. She is a representative University of Žilina in EUCEN, she is a president of The Association of Universities of the Third Age of Slovakia and member of executive committee of Slovak Academic Association for Lifelong Learning.

Contacts:

The Association of Universities of the Third Age of Slovakia
Univerzitná 8215/1
010 26 Žilina
Slovakia
e-mail: asutvsk@gmail.com; lucia.hrebenarova@uniza.sk

INCLUSION OF THE ELDERLY TO THE LEARNING ACTIVITIES - POLISH EXPERIENCE

Malgorzata STANOWSKA & Iza KATO

The University of Third Age in Lublin

Demographic challenges in European countries are becoming more and more apparent because better health and longer lifespan, combined with lower fertility are gradually changing the age balance in our societies. The impact of demographic aging is likely to be of major significance in Europe in the coming decades. The European population is growing older. Europe, but not only, should adopt age-friendly policies ensuring the social inclusion of older people through enhanced participation in society and inclusion in the community.

The world's population is changing in ways that could barely be imagined a generation ago, and at a pace that is faster than any in recorded history. A recent United Nations World Population Ageing report cites that between 2015 and 2030, the number of people in the world aged 60 years or over is projected to grow by 56%, from 901 million to 1.4 billion.

How can we manage the change and embrace the opportunities presented by shifting demographics? These generations are fully capable and willing to share their experience and knowledge to contribute to the progress and productivity of society. The big challenge of our times is a holistic support of personal development of adults, through teaching them how to effectively use cognitive resources and lead a healthy and active life in the modern world.

Also in Poland there is an ongoing process of population aging caused by longer life expectancy and low birth rate. At the end of 2015 the population of Poland counted 38.4 million, of which over 8.8 million were people aged 60 years and older. What is more, demographic data indicate a process called double aging of the Polish society – mainly, the prognosis says that from 2026 a dynamic growth of people aged 80 is going to take place.

However, not only age is the problem of aging societies. It is often accompanied by other unfavorable phenomena, of which the most important are: **feminization** of old age and **single-person households**. In the population of older people, there are 142 women for every 100 men. And most of them live in single-person households.

The lifestyle of the elderly in Poland can be described as **passive**. The most popular ways of spending free time are: watching TV, going to church, socializing with acquaintances and friends, as well as reading books, magazines, newspapers and listening to the radio. As many as 98% of the survey respondents indicated watching TV or going to church as their main activities. As for the active forms of spending free time, walking and hiking were mentioned in the first place, followed by gardening³¹. Participation in any forms of learning was declared only by 19.5% of respondents aged 60-69.³²

Alongside with the development of social activity of older people, the process of increasing the educational activity of this group should follow. This type of activity makes it possible to not only to broaden knowledge and acquire new skills and competencies, but also to update the skills and knowledge already possessed.

Educational activity plays also an important role in creating social bonds, and thus is crucial to a successful, active and happy life in the old age. The activity of the Polish population in the area of education has recorded an upward trend, but the situation looks much different when this type of activity is analyzed according to age groups. As it turns out, the older a person is, the less likely they participate in improving / changing education.

31

<http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/zapisy8.nsf/0/E7E3CDB8656135A3C12580C8004BB5EE/%24File/0151808.pdf>

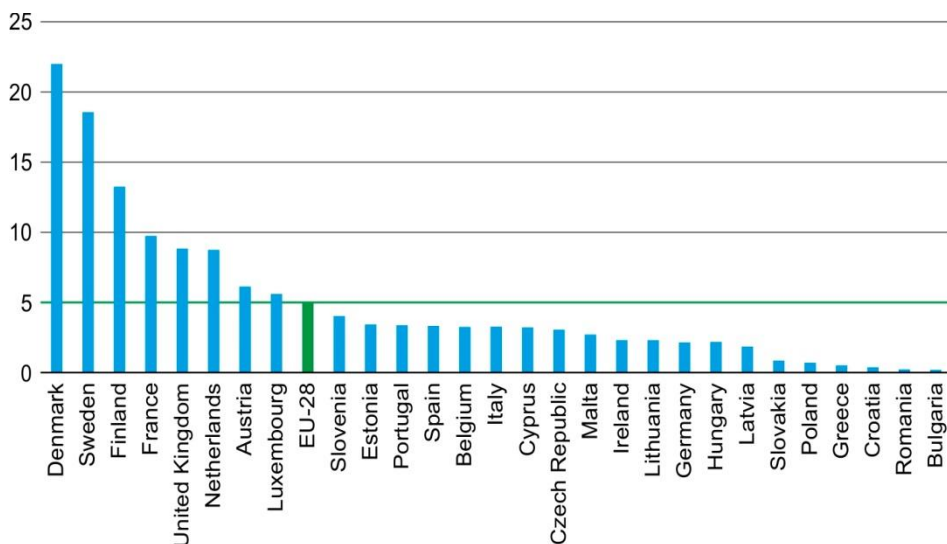
³² Information about the situation of older adults in Poland In the year 2015.

Warszawa, Oct.2016. Accessed on:

<http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/Druki8ka.nsf/0/E05B7B2CF60D006DC125807D0037D118/%24File/1102.pdf>

In Poland the level of participation of older adults (55–74 years old) in education and training is **one of the lowest in UE**³³. It amounts to 0.6% and is almost 10 times smaller than the UE average (4.8%) and 36 times smaller than in Denmark (22.0%)³⁴.

Graph 1. Participation of people aged 55–74 in education or training during the 4 weeks prior to the survey in 2015 (in%).



Source: Labour Force Survey, Eurostat, 2015.

The dynamic development of the Universities of the Third Age Poland is a phenomenon at a European scale. At present there are about 500 registered U3As in Poland. The first ones were founded already in the 1970s. What is nowadays the role of U3As in the process of lifelong education? To what challenges of the aging society do they answer with their educational offer?

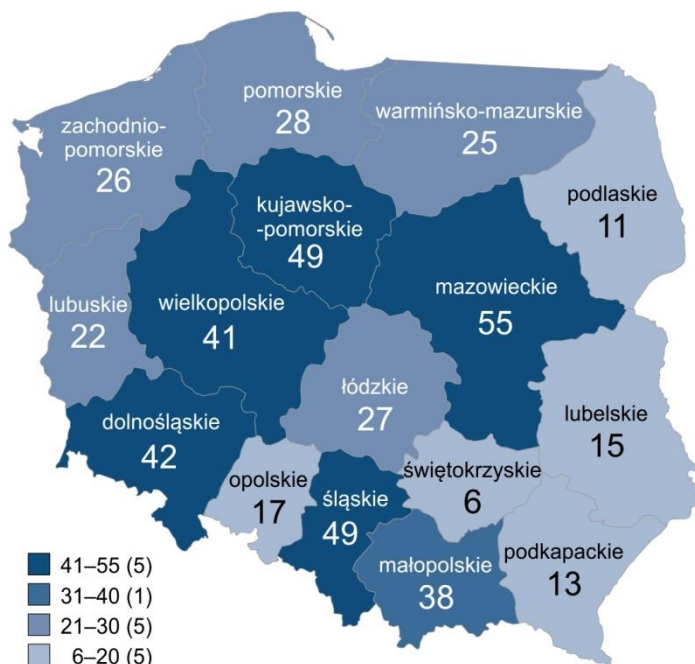
³³Eurostat from 2015

³⁴Information about the situation of older adults in Poland In the year 2015.

Warszawa, Oct.2016; p. 94. Accessed on

<http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/Druki8ka.nsf/0/E05B7B2CF60D006DC125807D0037D118/%24File/1102.pdf>

Graph 2. The number of U3As in Poland participating in the survey according to regions:³⁵



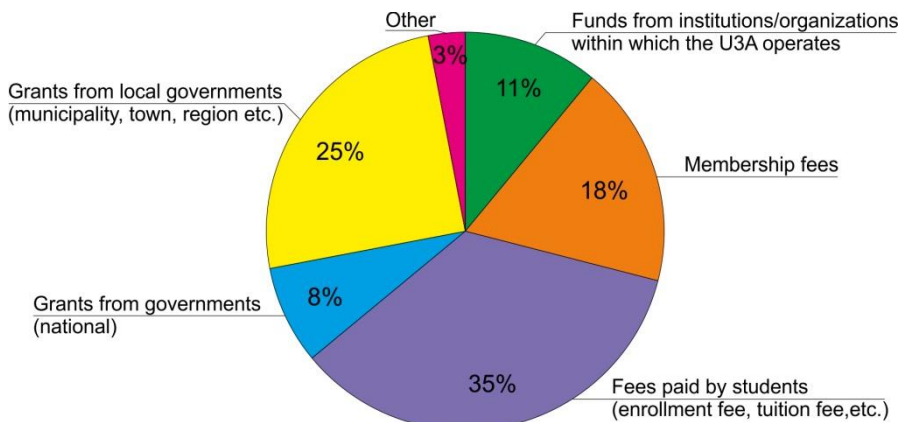
Source: Universities of the Third Age in the academic year 2014/15; Central Statistical Office, September 2016

The first university of the third age was established in Poland in 1975, only two years after the first U3A in the world was founded in France. Most of them work within the framework of associations and foundations (57%)³⁶. Others are run by community centres and public libraries or within the scope of social security institutions. The activity of U3As is financed from various sources. Mostly from students' fees.

³⁵stat.gov.pl/.../11/1/1/universytety_trzeciego_wieku_w_roku_akademickim_2014-2015; str. 5. Dostęp: 16.12.2016

³⁶Ibidem

Graph 3. Main sources of U3As financing:



Source: Universities of the Third Age in the academic year 2014/15; Central Statistical Office, September 2016

About 12 thousand people are involved in organizing activities for universities of the third age. They are mainly teachers, instructors and trainers (64%). Whereas organization, management and assistance in organizing activities and events are usually executed on a voluntary basis³⁷. Among the most common problems encountered by organizers of U3A the following are mentioned:

- insufficient financial resources (49%),
- too low income of the students (40%),
- staff shortages,
- limited access to halls and rooms,
- lack of equipment,
- too few volunteers.

EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL ACTIVITY OF U3As

Most universities of the third age mention the development of students'

37

stat.gov.pl/.../11/1/1/uniwersytety_trzeciego_wieku_w_roku_akademickim_2014-2015; p. 9. Accessed on: 6.01.2017

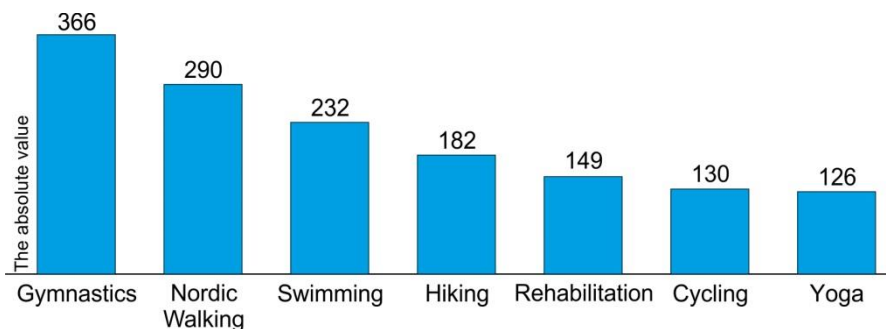
interests, expanding their knowledge and education among their main objectives. Among the U3As surveyed in 2015 most of them declared:

- creating opportunities for students of active leisure time spending (94%),
- promoting a healthy lifestyle (91%),
- creating opportunities to establish or maintaining social contacts (82%),
- updating the skills necessary for an active life in the modern world (79%)³⁸.

Lectures and seminars were organized by 97% of U3A respondents. Most concerned medicine and health (91%), tourism and geography (70%), psychology (62%) and history (57%), law (57%) and literature (58%). The least popular lectures regarded science, including mathematics, physics and chemistry (15%) and technology (9%)³⁹.

The most popular types of activities include sports and activities and language courses. IT courses allowing for active participation in the modern world were declared by 73% of U3As.

Graph 4. Number of U3As offering sports and physical activities considering the most popular ones:



Source: Universities of the Third Age in the academic year 2014/15; Central Statistical Office, September 2016

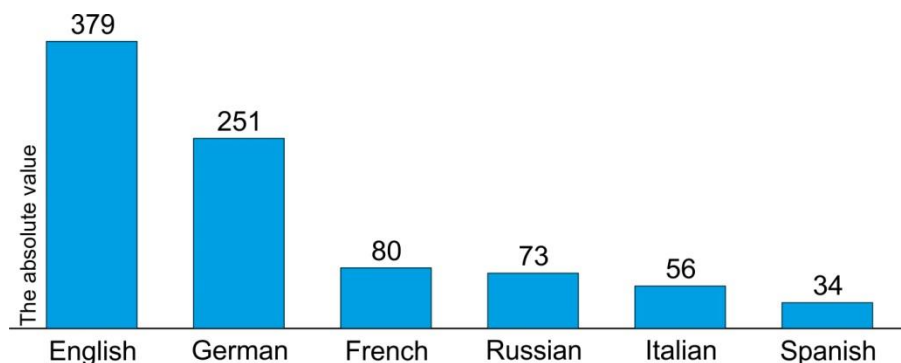
³⁸

stat.gov.pl/.../11/1/1/uniwersytety_trzeciego_wieku_w_roku_akademickim_2014-2015; p. 23. Accessed on: 6.02.2017

³⁹

stat.gov.pl/.../11/1/1/uniwersytety_trzeciego_wieku_w_roku_akademickim_2014-2015; p. 12. Accessed on: 6.01.2017

Graph 5. Number of U3As offering language courses, considering the most popular ones:



Source: Universities of the Third Age in the academic year 2014/15; Central Statistical Office, September 2016

The Lublin University of the Third Age (LUTW) was founded in 1985. In the 32 year of the university's work the number of its students amounts to 800 in Lublin and 1800 in the branches.

Forms of activity of the Lublin University of the Third Age:

Educational activity:

- lectures for large audience (3 per week),
- education teams,
- workshops,
- physical activity groups,
- foreign language classes,
- holiday encounters of LUTW members (lectures) – from July to September,
- Sightseeing in Lublin with the Student Council (excursions).

Seniors' volunteer activity:

- Centre for Activation of Seniors,
- Multi-generation Volunteer Club,
- Super Grandma Club.

Editorial and publishing activity:

- Bulletin „The Life of LUTW” (published quarterly),

- Guide-books for LUTW members (published yearly),
- Occasional and conference publications and books.

Education in late adulthood as a form of social participation of older people is a social experience responding to the needs and challenges of the rapidly changing world. At the moment, education is more and more often perceived as an exceptionally important area not only to children and youth or people in the productive period but also to those in the postproductive age. Rapid civilization growth which is characterized by e.g. development of new technologies forces individuals and entire societies to continuously acquire and expand their knowledge and skills. Continuing education provided by e.g. Third Age Universities prevents such situations as well as giving the elderly a chance to take part in the social and cultural life.

Educational goals of older people in U3A:

- Sharing lifelong learning interests, talents and experiences and knowledge with each other,
- Promoting personal development, skill sharing, creative expression and intellectual interests via mutual support and respect,
- Encouraging intergenerational learning and solidarity.

New challenges that need to be undertaken by U3As:

- Promoting active preparation for the latter part of life and for retirement, so as making the most and best use of the possibilities that may lie ahead.
- Seeking active forms of work with students , increasing the number of activities aimed at self-study , using workshop methods.
- International cooperation (e.g. within the frames of twin cities).
- The search for alternative channels to reach seniors who cannot participate in the Third Age (e.g. TV broadcasts, broadcasts and transmissions ON - LINE).
- Intergenerational activities: creating bonds between young students and U3As students, involving young people in the activities of the Third Age (e.g. internship, volunteering).
- Preparing students for the period of old age (so-called fourth age) , when going out of the house constitutes a problem.

Universities of the Third Age should promote the necessity of an early preparation for retirement, even in the age group 50+. Among the tasks facing modern U3As the following can be mentioned:

- Awareness raising on the value and importance of the third age directed towards the society and the individuals themselves. It has to be directed towards the general public, since this is fundamental to promoting a change in the perception of the value of the third age and creating social awareness about the benefits of active ageing through lifelong learning. However, the specific target group is the middle-aged population, and more precisely those aged 50+. This group is especially sensitive, since they find themselves at a stage when they have to start getting ready for retirement and for the latter part of their lives. **This is why one of the main objectives is to offer strategies on how to stay active during this new stage of life.**
- Individuals approaching and entering the third age should look at themselves and their situation and ask how they want to spend the latter part of their lives. Examine their desires and dreams and search for opportunities to fulfil those dreams. What are the obstacles, can they be overcome, what are their strengths, what risks would they be ready to take: a sort of a personal SWOT analysis. **There is a need to develop a package of courses that take into account the different needs of the people in these age groups, both weaker and stronger individuals.**

The Lublin University of the Third Age, together with partners from Spain and Iceland implemented the Erasmus+ Project BALL, which ended with the publication of guidelines on how to prepare to retirement (<http://www.ball-project.eu>).

It is the general public, people from different generations that we should make conscious of the advantages of active ageing through lifelong learning. At present permanent education becomes a must do not a luxury. It is an indispensable condition to use the knowledge and competence of older people as a potential of the developing society. To be able to function well in the world surrounding us requires constant gaining of new skills and knowledge. Universities of the Third Age provide the most popular

form of educational activities for the elderly, meeting the needs of seniors such as: self-education, learning about their environment, enlarging their knowledge and skills, performing socially useful activities, keeping busy in their free time, maintaining social ties, mental and physical stimulation, and sometimes giving them the possibility of fulfilling their dreams from long ago. The idea of learning throughout life is an idea implemented by the Universities of the Third Age, which must be continuously improved, taking into account the needs of seniors in the 21st century.

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Malgorzata Stanowska (Poland)

Director of the University of the Third Age in Lublin. Specialist in the field of education of elderly people . Coordinator of educational programs for seniors in Lublin. President of the Social Council of Elders of the Lublin City (2011–2015). Member of the Commission of Experts for Elderly People at the Human Rights Defender. Coordinator of many projects concerning the activation of elderly people. One of her main research interests focuses on university education for older people and lifelong learning. Co-editor of the research work “Getting Old with Dignity”, editor of the yearly „Guide for U3A Students” (from 2007 till now), co-editor of “Towards a Dynamic Third Age – Guidelines and Recommendations of the Erasmus+ BALL Project”.

EPALE: ELECTRONIC PLATFORM FOR ADULT LEARNING IN EUROPE

Eva BRÁZDILOVÁ
EPALE Slovakia



EPALE, funded under the Erasmus+ programme, is growing into the main reference point for adult learning professionals in Europe. It offers a place to meet and discuss important adult learning topics, as well as to exchange ideas and materials to support professional practice. This type of community platform is the first of its kind for the sector of adult learning.

EPALE is a multilingual open membership community for teachers, trainers, researchers, academics, policy makers and anyone else with a professional role in adult learning across Europe.

EPALE is an initiative of the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the European Commission. It is set up around the sharing of content related to adult learning, including news, blog posts, resources, and events.

Members of the community can engage with adult learning colleagues across Europe through the site's features, including the forums and by commenting under blogs. Every registered user can add up his own content to News, Blogs, Events or Sources on EPALE. They are also able to rate content by clicking on the 'thumb' icon, comment directly on blog posts and initiate and take part in discussions.

EPALE has a strong editorial policy that also centres on the adult learning community. We want all of our users to feel welcome on the site, and to trust the information that is presented on this platform.

On a day-to-day basis EPALE is managed by a Central Support Team with the help of 36 National Support Teams across Europe. These are committed to involving users throughout the development of EPALE, so that it meets their expectations and gives all what they need to stay up-to-date with developments in adult learning across Europe.

Do you want to become part of communities of practice on EPALE or set up a new one yourself ?

Communities of practice are online groups where people with similar interests from the adult learning sector can get together. Join a community to meet like-minded EPALE members from across Europe and exchange ideas, resources and good practices.

Registered professionals can set up a new community of practice on EPALE and invite their peers.

Do you search for partners for your project or project activities?

Search for organisations on EPALE. Individuals can look for ideas to discuss, exchange good practices and find partners for funded projects.

Joining EPALE is a way how to become part of Europe's biggest adult learning community!

info.epale@nuczv.sk

ec.europa.eu/EPALE

[Twitter@EPALE_SK](#) 

[Facebook EPALE Slovensko](#) 

[EPALE](#) 

BEST PRACTICES AND EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION FOR INCLUSION OF THE OLDER PEOPLE TO THE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Concepción BRU Ronda

Permanent University of the University of Alicante

President Association of University Programmes for Older Adults

Key words: Learning activities, Older People, Best Practices, Educational Innovation, Technological inclusion, Peer to peer support, ICTs volunteering, active ageing.

1. Introduction and context

The University of Alicante hosts the ‘Incubator of Values,’ an initiative of over-50 students enrolled in the Diploma Senior of the Permanent University, and interested in lifelong learning and personal development, who have long been involved in EU projects.

In addition to receiving training at Permanent University, at the same time, they wished to dedicate part of their time to help other seniors and share both their accumulated and their newly-acquired knowledge with other seniors in these times of economic crisis and lack of values, which have resulted in many citizens needing the support of these UPUA volunteers. Based on this approach, a wide variety of initiatives have been set in motion since 2005, including volunteering actions to promote active and healthy ageing, technological volunteering, cultural volunteering (collaborative conversation-based language; study of literature and poetry groups; theatre groups); and social-research-oriented volunteering (Observatory of Seniors and Mass Media). Along the same lines, the initiative more veteran it is “EuCoNet Club”.

The University of Alicante –through the Permanent University Programme – joined European NICT learning projects for seniors in 2005. Before the challenge of providing Internet access to most Europeans stood a reality where a considerable number of European senior citizens risked being left out of this technological development. Age was an evident exclusion factor

at the end of the past century. EuCoNet (European Computer Network) was born in 2004-05 with this specific objective. It was a project sponsored by the European Community within the framework of the Socrates-Grundtvig Programme and created to facilitate access to the Internet, especially for older adults.

This project involved older adult students coming from the universities of Ulm (Germany), Brno and Prague (Czech Republic), Glasgow (Scotland/UK), Vicenza (Italy), Bratislava (Slovakia) and Alicante (Spain), and had as its goal to help solve this problem. The aforesaid EuCoNet project served to undertake numerous research studies, as well as to develop methodological analyses along with didactic experiments for the purpose of designing not only materials, tools, learning systems and best practices but also courses specifically designed for senior citizens interested in learning to use the new technologies. This has allowed seniors to exchange their basic knowledge regardless of time- and space-related circumstances, and within the framework of NICTs. Multimedia systems, blended learning, virtual classrooms and authorised learning projects have been key aspects of EuCoNet.

A direct outcome of this project was the innovative initiative — the EuCoNet Club— set in motion during the 2004-05 academic year thanks to the efforts of a group of voluntary students of the Permanent University of the University of Alicante who belonged to the EuCoNet international work and research group, the objective of which was to help UPUA students to become familiar with computer use. The practical results of the project were highly valued by the European Union as a best practice example in a report released in 2007.

The main objective consisted in providing assistance to other students interested in approaching New Technologies and, above all, the project was oriented to all students who wished to start working with computers as well as to those who wanted to solve specific problems, and more importantly, to overcome their fear of computers. And this was launched in the framework of the Incubator of values. The peer to peer support and technological volunteering have been key in the, active aging and inclusion of the Older People to the ITCs learning activities, to avoid technological exclusion.

2. EuCoNet Club Objectives

The EuCoNet Club primarily sought to support students interested in learning to use New Technologies. Its efforts also focused on the familiarisation of older adult students with computers and on providing solutions to specific problems, as well as on overcoming the fear of computers.

The efforts thus revolved around meeting the specific objectives made explicit in the document that proposed the creation of this Club, which in turn arose from the research group's reflections within the framework of the EuCoNet Project.

- Developing and normalising the *Campus Virtual* [Virtual Campus] platform both as a means of contact with UA and as a working environment for students. This is why emphasis has been placed on training courses and also on the continuous tutoring of the training received.
- Promoting contacts amongst UPUA students interested in the use of NICTs.
- Developing a 'voluntary service' culture through the creation of a small group of cyber-volunteers who collaborate with the Club.
- Establishing a training exchange and collaboration forum in contexts where NTs are used.
- Consolidating a Learning and Guided Self-Learning Project with materials, tools and support groups, oriented to all those students who wish to take their first steps in the field of new technologies and, above all, to leave behind their fear of computers and/or of the university.

3. EuCoNet Club Methodology

The Club is formed by: Academic Coordinators, Tutors-Students (F1), and Participants-Students.

The collaboration of the Permanent University with the Senior Diploma lecturers and with the Computer and Space Management Services of the

University of Alicante resulted in the availability of NT-equipped classrooms for this initiative, along with the implementation of a support and monitoring system for the EuCoNet Club, which focused on tasks of maintenance, content update and upgrading of the software and hardware required.

At the beginning of each academic year and once the Senior Diploma students have enrolled in the Permanent University programme, those who show an interest in joining the Club are summoned to an informative meeting where registrations are made and the following aspects are established:

- The work schedule
- The Club's timetables
- The distribution of tutors and students into groups
- The 'general' sessions in which specialists and academic coordinators will deal with specific issues and topics of common interest

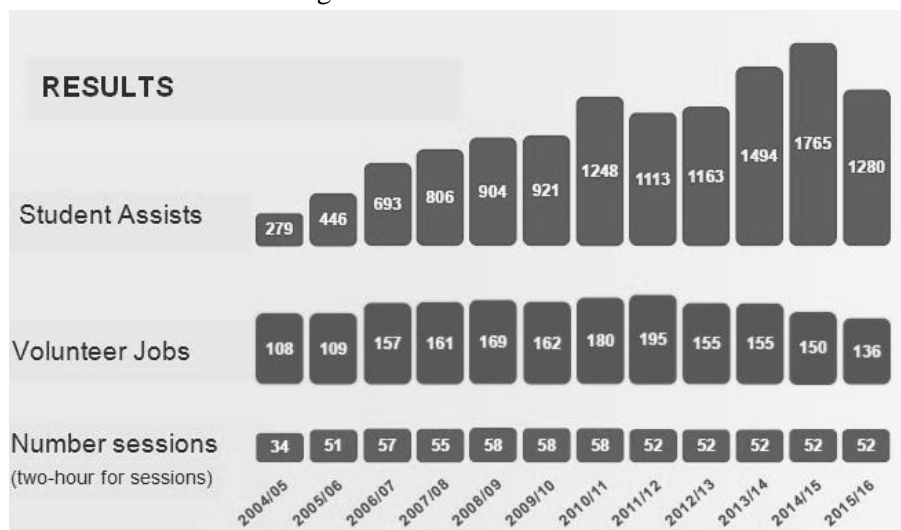
Enrolment is free but, as a *conditio sine qua non*, students must have registered for the Permanent University programme in the current academic year, i.e. they must be enrolled in any of UPUA programme subjects and follow the general regulations concerning enrolment and functioning.

4. Best Practices EuCoNet Club: results and impact

The activities resulting from the EuCoNet Club have largely increased in terms of frequency as well as intensity during the last few years. In this way, the initiative has managed to reduce the fears and reservations which used to prevent the European senior population from taking advantage of the multiple applications offered by computers. Likewise, an effort was carried out to make people with limited mobility aware of the great possibilities to overcome their difficulties to move around and, therefore, to remain up to date in terms of training, education, and communication, and also to avoid the growing isolation suffered by aged and disabled people in modern society.

Club EuCoNet has succeeded in connecting senior citizens both virtually and in real life, so that they can communicate with one another by themselves using new technologies. And in a broader sense, the project has served as a bridge between the different generations through the achievement of such goals.

Other longer-term objectives include the development of research works, together with the organisation of encounters, debates, seminars and workshops and the establishment of contacts with other study and self-learning groups, as the EuCoNet Club has progressively strengthened its structure and attracted a significant number of members.



5. Conclusions and remarkable facts

This best practice has been collected in a Facebook group called “Club EuCoNet” which seeks to give a boost to the use of new technologies amongst older adults.

The great success achieved by this initiative made it necessary to increase the number of hours and classrooms dedicated to this best practice, as well as the number of tutors.

A special emphasis is currently placed on the strong impact of current issues such as “the use of smartphones” or “social networks.”

Peer to peer training brings significant advantages, both for the addressees, who find themselves at a more agreeable environment, and for those who altruistically impart training as volunteers and feel rewarded with the recognition that they are given. This represents a stimulus for both groups when it comes to the promotion of active ageing through training in ICTs.

Trainers carry out an evaluation of the activities implemented each year and collect perceptions, needs and problems with the aim of devising proposal for improvements in the following academic years.

We appreciate the high degree of involvement shown by peers, whose contribution to this project was very generous, with full dedication, as well as a strong self-commitment.

Thanks to this best practice, we have optimised the opportunities for seniors' active ageing, learning involvement, opportunities for older people and your technological inclusion.

EuCoNet Club are a strong impact on the social and community environment of the older adult citizens' who have been given peer training. On the part of PEERS, a high sense of efficacy, usefulness of the older volunteers who perform this activity. Satisfaction with the effectiveness perceived as well as the proven outcome reflected in other seniors, ability to imitate those peers are determining facts which help consolidate such an dynamics and best practices and educational innovation, for active ageing

Bibliographic references

1. THOITS, P. A., & HEWITT, L. N. (2001). Volunteer work and well-being. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 42(2), 115-31. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/201663945?accountid=17192>
2. BRU RONDA, C et alter (2007); *ICT use standardisation at the UPUA as an instrument favouring seniors' social integration and active participation*. University of Alicante, Spain) "web4seniors". *European Conference - Learning in Later Life*. Ulm University, Germany. October 2007. *Proceedings of the European Conference - Learning in Later Life*. Edit Ulm University, pp. 103-109.
3. RUIZ ARMERO, N; LOPEZ BLANES, A; BRU RONDA, C (2008); *Standardisierung der IKT-Verwendug an der UPUA als Mittel zur sozialen Integration und aktiven Beteiligung von Senioren*. A bulletin of

the European cooperation project. E-Learning in Later Life-Elil.2006-2008. Digitale Kompetenz für ältere Erwachsene. Edit Zawiw. Universität Ulm, 2008. Pp. 46-50.

4. BRU RONDA, C (2010): "Models of University Training in ICT in Spanish PUM". update, challenges and proposals for the future ". Technical Seminar on "ICT and University Programs for Seniors" – Barcelona 11 and 12 november 2010. Faculty Of Social Education And Social Work Pere Tarrés- Ramón Llull University. http://www.aepumayores.org/sites/default/files/3_LAS_TIC_EN_LOS_PUPMS.pdf
5. CASAL, J. L. and CASTEJÓN, F (2016): *Peer-to-peer training and active ageing: Becoming familiar with new technologies at the UPUA within a collaborative learning atmosphere.* Alicante (Spain) Senior Students and Peers EFOS News No. 1 2016, pp. 19-22 <http://www.efos-europa.eu/fileadmin/efos/downloads/efosnews20161en.pdf>
6. BRU RONDA, C and LOPEZ BLANES, A (2014); National study of the use of ICT at the University Programmes for Older People. University of Alicante, Spain. pp 44 <http://hdl.handle.net/10045/41720>
7. EUCONET CLUB web site:
<http://www.universidadpermanente.com/iniciativas/en/euconet>
Since the EuCoNet Club started functioning, a number of workshops and seminars have been organised with the participation of teachers and, above all, students. Their results can be found below as EuCoNet Club materials at the service of other older adult students.
<http://www.universidadpermanente.com/iniciativas/en/content/materials>
<http://www.universidadpermanente.com/iniciativas/en/content/links>

Contacts:

Concepción Bru Ronda - PhD in Geography

Director of the Permanent University of the University of Alicante

President Association of University Programmes for Older Adults, Spain

upua.direccion@ua.es

LAUNCHING THE UNIVERSITY FOR THE THIRD AGE IN LEBANON AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Marcel HINAIN

American University of Technology in Lebanon

The presentation will show steps taken to spread awareness of the new IAUTA program offered at AUT and the contacts made to secure enrollment and launch the program through a public relations event.

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Marcel Hinain is currently Vice-President for External Relations and Development at American University of Technology in Lebanon and a member of its Board of Trustees.

He holds of a BA in Economics and an MBA from the American University of Beirut. He developed the external program with SUNY Empire State College, USA in 1997 and concluded many exchange and other joint programs with universities in Europe and the USA. He also developed the tripod model of interaction that links the University with public authorities, the industry and partner universities for specific majors. He was instrumental in forming the University Advisory Board made up of industry specialists and recognized authorities and his department takes care of editing and/or writing most AUT texts for publication (catalog, admission and department brochures) and the web (www.aut.edu) and handles relations with most external stakeholders including the media.

Marcel Hinain is married, has 3 children and resides in Lebanon

Contact:

American University of Technology, Fidar, Lebanon
00961478231 ext 107, Cell phone: 009613242892

Marcel.hinain@aut.edu
mhinain@hotmail.com

INCLUDING ELDERLY IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Karin Carlsson

Uppsala Senioruniversitet (Uppsala U3A), Sweden

Keywords: Inspiration, Expectations, Promotion, Volunteers, Support

Members' inspiration

1. How to inspire and motivate U3A students to manage consciously and effectively their free time.

Uppsala U3A has 3 825 members (Autumn 2016.) The age range is from 58 to 93 years. Uppsala U3A offers about 150 study circles and 50 lecture series per year. In addition, a single lecture on a subject of current interest is given every fortnight as well as about 20 trips and travels each year. Most of the study circles are in languages, mainly French, Italian, Spanish and German, but also Russian, Chinese, Latin, Classical Greek and Arabic (new) are represented. Other circles offered are in Art and Literature, Politics and Philosophy.

According to a new survey of our members done in the framework of the Erasmus+ project Edu-Sen-Net (of which Uppsala U3A is one of the partners) the conclusion is drawn that most members are motivated to gain new knowledge and insights in order to further personal development as seniors. The majority attended their first educational activity at the Uppsala U3A two to nine years ago and quite a few have been active for a long period after retirement. People who have started to study at the Uppsala U3A often seem to continue, and the fact that many new members have joined the Uppsala U3A in the last few years must be looked upon as a positive assessment of our activities. An interesting circumstance is that Uppsala U3A is in a fortunate position with many inspiring and well-known lecturers available in most subjects, some of them attracting quite large audiences.

Considering the fact that Uppsala U3A has a rather homogeneous mixture of members two projects have been initiated in order to reach out to new

groups. To inspire members who are disabled to take part in lectures as well as new members who live at a long distance from Uppsala, a film project has been started in order to enable members to follow some of the lectures at home or together in residential homes. Within this project 22 lectures given by Uppsala U3A in 2016 were filmed. It is too early to evaluate if the filming will attract new members who live at a long distance from Uppsala. One idea is to cooperate with other U3As. Many smaller Senior Universities in other parts of Sweden have difficulties in recruiting good lecturers whereas Uppsala with two universities can offer a good education to their members. A future cooperation with distribution of filmed lectures to these smaller U3As might be considered.

Another project in order to recruit people with varying cultural backgrounds has started. After several initial difficulties Uppsala U3A is now preparing a series of lectures entitled "Music from all over the world". In six different lectures music from one country per lecture will be played with the participation of lecturers originating from the country in question. The lecturers will have to be familiar with the music theoretically as well as having the skills to play different instruments and perform themselves. At the moment Uppsala U3A plans to offer music from Asia, Africa, South America and Europe. It is hoped that this programme will engage a great variety of people whose mixed cultural backgrounds will create interesting meetings.

From an earlier survey of non-members (February 2016) Uppsala U3A it has been clear that many persons living outside Uppsala do not feel at home with an organization labeled "University". At the same time there are a number of study organizations with a long tradition of arranging educational activities all over Sweden, which attracts many people and with which they are familiar.

Members' expectations

2. How to recognize the current needs and expectations of U3A students?

From the above-mentioned survey (EU project Erasmus+) we know quite well our member's preferences as well as their degree of satisfaction. Thus

topics of most interest are Literature, Art and Music followed by Social Sciences and Religion. There is also a fairly great interest in Natural Sciences, Technical Sciences and Medicine. Further, quite a few members have an interest in learning Modern or Classic Languages. Finally our members prefer lectures and seminars in daytime and on weekdays. Encouraging is that as many as 88 per cent of the respondents are of the opinion that the attended educational activities have completely, or to a relatively high degree, matched their expectations. Furthermore our U3A seems to have a quite good understanding of our members' interests looking at the number of applicants for the different activities.

Promoting members

3. What is the experience in promoting the idea of lifelong learning?

To promote our activities, Uppsala U3A publishes a journal, which is distributed free of charge to all of the members. Activities are also published on our web site. The journal is distributed by five numbers per year and contains the complete list of activities twice a year.

The web site is regularly updated.

According to the survey mentioned above most respondents got their first contact with Uppsala U3A through family or friends, which seems to be logic as Uppsala U3A, founded in 1979, is rather well known. At least this is true when it comes to senior people living in the city of Uppsala. Public awareness outside the urban centre is probably less widely spread.

To promote seniors from U3A: s "non core group" e.g. seniors outside the urban center as well as disabled people and people with various cultural backgrounds see description about the Film project etc. above.

Volunteers' experiences

4. Which is the use of their knowledge, wisdom and experiences of the volunteers in the educational and organisational work at Uppsala U3A.

The 90 volunteers at Uppsala U3A have a wide range of experience from their former professional life e.g. professors, administrators, town planners, engineers, marketing people, doctors, musicians, technicians etc. The volunteers are organized in nine working groups and a secretariat. Uppsala U3A assumes that this wide range of experienced and wise people share their wisdom and experience in education and organizational work.

Support from other organizations

5. How to conduct effective campaigns with partner organizations?

Uppsala U3A is only one part of a wide senior's organization in Uppsala with a seat on their umbrella board. There are about ten adult education organizers in Uppsala apart from our U3A. Many of them are ideology-based and some of them are exclusively open to senior citizens. The courses offered are of a general as well as of a hobby character.

Moreover Sweden as a country has a long tradition of adult education. Teaching to adults has been carried out by political organizations, trade unions and religious communities as well as by the temperance movement for over 100 years. This liberal education is mostly organised in study circles, which was seen as a democratic way of teaching and learning.

Short CV and contacts:

Karin Carlsson, U3A, member of the AIUTA Board, BSc of Arts, former Director of Communication at Uppsala University and Luleå University of Technology

karin-e.carlsson@telia.com

SURVEY AMONG THE OLDER STUDENTS REALISED IN THE PROJECT ERASMUS+ “EduSenNet” IN BRATISLAVA

Nadežda HRAPKOVÁ & Katarína GRUNWALD
Comenius University in Bratislava, CCE, Slovakia

The University of the Third Age (UTA) under the auspices of Comenius University was established in 1990 as the first institution of this kind in the Slovak Republic. UTA is located at the Centre for Continuing Education of Comenius University, as one of the centre's department. UTA organizes courses mainly for retired people, for medically retired (physically handicapped) and for people before retirement generally for people over 50. It offers the students a 3year study programmes in about 39 study branches in 4 cities (Bratislava, Nitra; Martin and Námestovo (central and North of Slovakia)).

The study plan of each year provides for 14 three-hour lectures to be presented each fortnight. During the first year the students are offered basic lectures from each of the offered disciplines. Their second and third year is devoted to the study of optional disciplines and students enrol in the study of specialised branches. The interest in this form of study constantly increases. Yearly almost 2000 elderly students enrol in 68 study groups. After completing their study, students are ceremonially given certificates. The pedagogical process at the UTA is complemented by other educational and social forms. Along with lectures and seminars, we organise excursions, panel discussions, visits to other universities, informal meetings and conceptualised trips. Topics, which are the same or similar to those in undergraduate courses, are given by university lecturers either from our faculties or from partner ones. There are about 300 lecturers at our UTA altogether.

In our survey realised in the content of the project Erasmus+ “Educational Senior Network” we have contacted some of our students from many different groups and places of learning, group totalled 329 respondents. From them 90% of respondents have their place of living in the town and

only 10% in the village. Along with Bratislava (86%), there are from other regions 14% (from Trenčín, Trnava, Senec -South-west of Slovakia and in the central part of Slovakia from Žilina and Banská Bystrica).

UTA has yearly about 89% of female and 11% of male registered in its learning activities. The survey includes fewer men (9%) and more women (91%) than are usual in our study programmes. The scale of the respondent's age includes 11% of those at ages 50-60; 65% of the respondents are at age 61-70; 22% of the respondents at age 71-80 and the rest of respondents 2% are the respondents over 80.

The elderly who want to study at UTA of Comenius University have to graduate from the secondary school and be over 50. Therefore we have not included in our survey the respondents with the primary educational level. Group of the respondents with university academic level consists of 11% which shows high interest of the retired experts in continuing education. The respondents with secondary education are in 39% and the respondents with level of tertiary education and university graduates are in 50%. This scale corresponds with the general educational scale of the UTA students. The concrete opinions, wishes, interests and experience of the respondents from Comenius University are described in the results which follow.

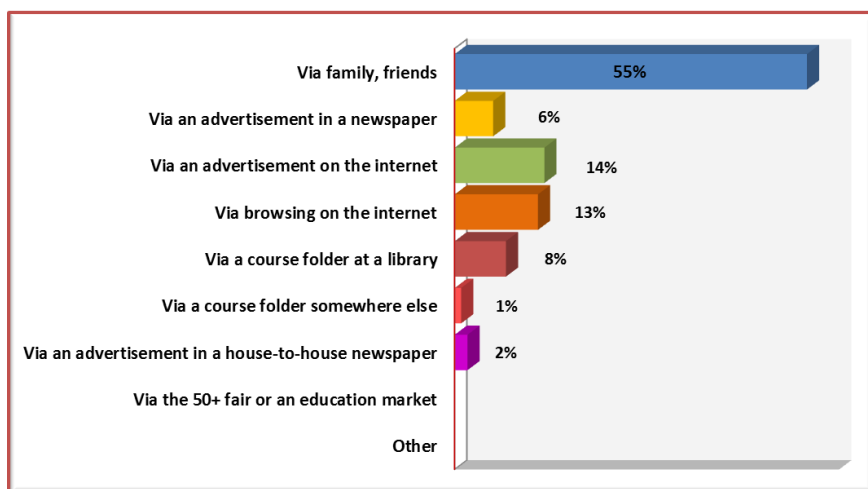


Figure 1: How did you get into contact with UTA?

Our UTA is very well known in the public and in society. Since we started in 1990 we have now second generation of the students who already have knowledge about UTA from their friends and relatives (55%). Other students have information from the Internet advertisements in 14% and from the websites in 13%. What is for us important to know, that advertisements have 20% of the success. Concrete results are documented in the Figure 1.

In the questions given to the contacted students we focused on many subjects. Senior students have a large scale of interests. Division of their activities in spare time is shown in the Figure 2.

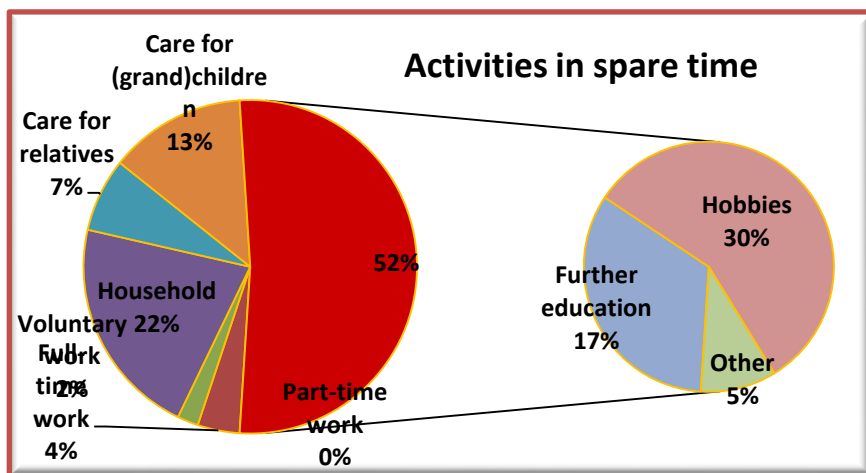


Figure 2: Interests in spare time activities

UTA yearly offers PC courses for 100 students to improve digital literacy of the elderly. There is also possibility to enrol in the subject of the financial learning where are the computers regularly used during the lectures. We found out, that from 329 respondents there are 128 (41%) who have a computer and use it regularly for email and occasional browsing on the internet. Other 106 respondents (34%) answered “I have a computer, a tablet and a smartphone and can work with all three of them unassisted”. The 23 group of students (7%) who have a computer, a tablet and a smartphone need regularly assistance. We can say that we have 82% of those who use the technical equipment and modern ICT technologies daily

or regularly. The rest of our respondents 50 (16%) are those who have normal mobile phone and do not use a tablet or those 4 (1%) who seldom use a computer and do not have a mobile phone nor a tablet. In our age scale we can see, that 24% of the respondents are over 71, which also can influence the results described below and 17% of the respondents who need to improve their digital literacy. Next question focused on the motivation for study at UTA (Figure 3).

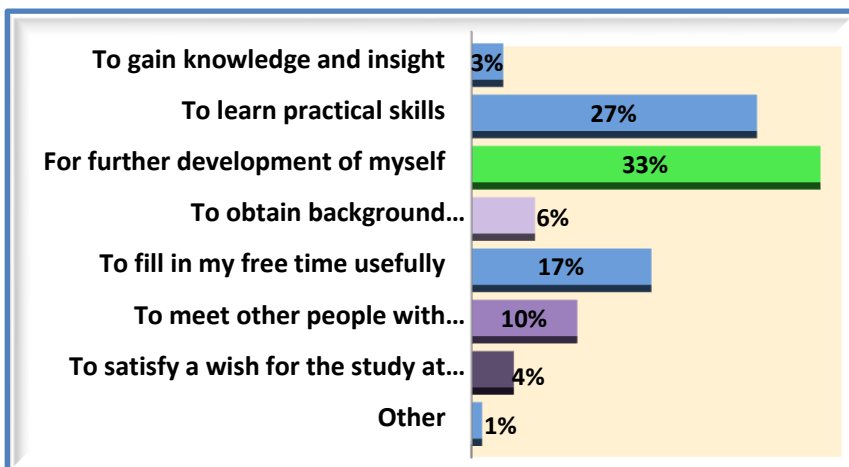


Figure 3: Motivation for educational activities

The results show us changing of the senior's motivation. In the past (15 years ago) there was on the top the interest to get knowledge. Now are the interests more practical shown in the categories of personal development and practical skills. From the group of respondents there are many of them who attend UTA for more than 10 years (13%) and other 24% attend our courses for more than 5 years. It means that after graduation in one course they enrol in new study subjects and do study circles again. We can see high satisfaction with the educational process, activities and the level of teaching at our UTA. We regularly update the study offer according to the interests of the elderly students and the teaching level is managed on a high level by the lecturers from the faculties of Comenius University and the specialists from the scientific university centres. All students included in the survey agreed with the statement: *"The attended educational activities have been up to my expectations"*.

The situation described above brought us to the interest to know how many courses the respondents have attended since they started their study at our university. In our survey we contacted from 322 respondents (100%) 66% of them (212) who attend first or second study subject. The rest of 110 respondents (34%) are those who attend third or have attended several subjects (Details in the Figure 4)

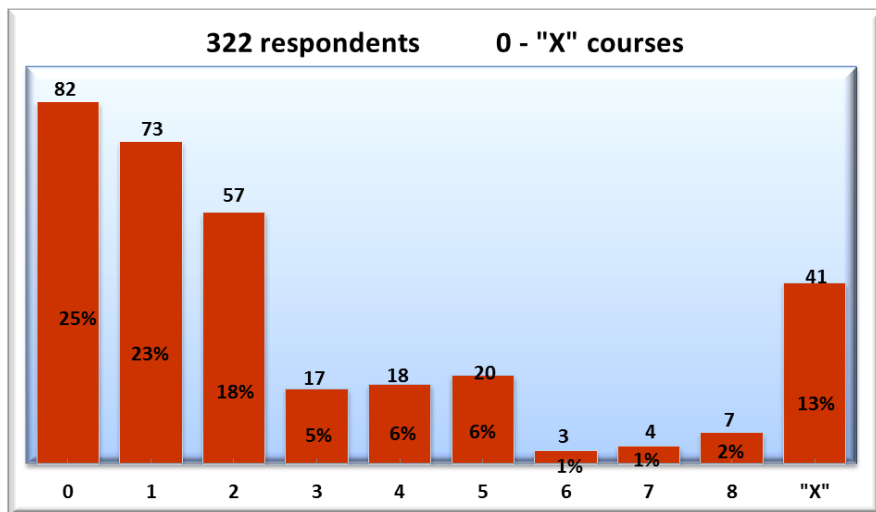


Figure 4: How many courses have you attended so far?

For the managers and organisers of the study programmes it is very important to know if the students or graduates have further interests to attend study and offered activities in a coming year or in future. On the other hand it is very useful to know the reason why the students did not attend educational activities.

There are many older students at Comenius University who frequently enrol in new study subject after finishing the previous one. Therefore we could see many students who attended more than one study subject and are planning to continue in the next year. There are 303 respondents (95%), who already decided to continue, other 13 (4%) are not definitely decided and only 1% (4 respondents) do not have interest to continue. The reasons not to attend our UTA are as follows: lack of time, lack of money, health reasons and personal circumstances. The figures show that the interest in

the study is permanent and many of contacted students attend our studies regularly and periodically.

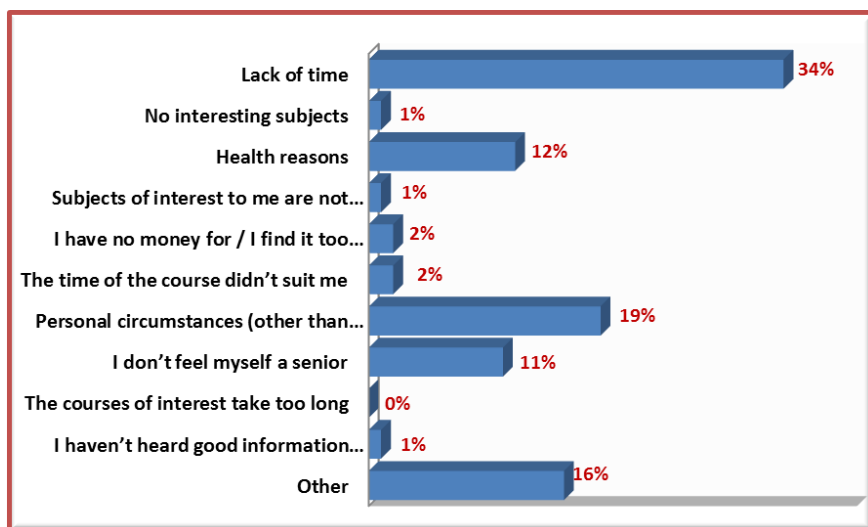


Figure 5: When you did not attend educational activities, can you state why? (tick max. 2)

When we asked our respondents how many courses they attended per year or in this study year, we found out that in our group there are 221 (68%) of those who enrolled in and study one subject, two subjects are attended by 59 students (18%) and the rest of them 44 (14%) attend three or more than three subjects.

Comenius University in Bratislava has 13 faculties and 12 of them are involved in the study programmes for UTA. Besides we have half of the students (around 1000) who are enrolled at the Faculty of Arts. Therefore we can see in this survey 58% of the respondents interested in the study subjects belonging to this faculty (Figure 6).

Other opinions correspond with the subjects at the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Natural sciences or Faculty of Theology. We noticed the transformation in the study subjects concerning PC courses (15 years ago about 150, now fewer students – only 60 students yearly enrol in the PC courses).

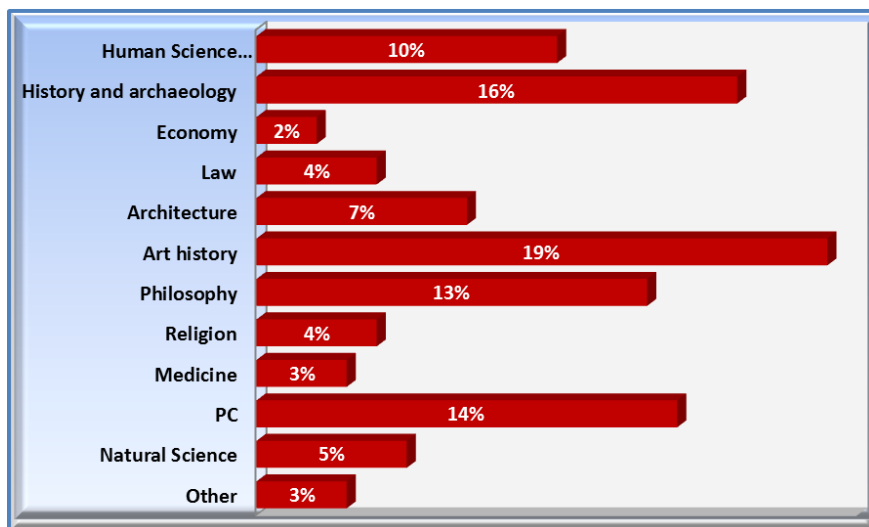


Figure 6: Which of the following subjects interests you most? (tick max.3)

Other questions in our survey focused on the period of the day, days in the week devoted to learning, length of the courses. Location of the educational activities as well as the general conditions for study and requirements of the students.

In further questions we asked our students (329 respondents) which period they preferred to attend a course and if they were interested in attending courses in the evenings or during the weekend.

Respondents	Before noon	Afternoons	Anytime	Do not know	No answer
329	155 (47%)	44 (13%)	6 (1,8%)	64 (19%)	60 (19%)

Table 1: Which period do you prefer to attend a course

Respondents	Only weekdays	Evenings and weekends	Evening	Weekend	Do not know
329	290 (88%)	6 (1,8%)	8 (2,5%)	12 (3,7%)	13 (4%)

Table 2: Are you interested in attending courses in the evenings or during weekends?

The learning activities as lectures and seminars are usually organised during the work days. Seniors don't like to participate in the activities in the evenings. They prefer daily hours because they are mostly already retired. We have only 5% of the students who are still at a professional age (age group 50 – 60). During weekends we usually organise study excursions, if not on workdays. Next question focused on the opinion about the length for a course.

Respondents	Less than 5 lectures	5-8 lectures	More than 8 lectures	No preference	Planned length suits me	No answer
329	4 (1%)	28 (8,5%)	40 (12%)	39 (12%)	210 (64%)	8 (2,5%)

Table 3: What is your preferred length for a course?

The study programme consists of 14 lectures in one academic year. The opinions of the respondents show us that the system of study suits them. Therefore the satisfaction of the respondents shown in the previous questions is very high.

Last questions of our survey focused on the course location and the opinions of the respondents for the choice of course concerning the most important conditions and their preferences for their personal decision. 24% of the respondents have preference in the venue of the study courses. Therefore all 39 study subjects are organised in the city centre (Figure 7)

.

In the Figure 8, we can see that the highest occurrence of responses in each option is considered relevant value. We can see that the subject is most important category for the students (T: 318 respondents). On the second position are the requests on the lecturers which means that seniors prefer high quality of the education.

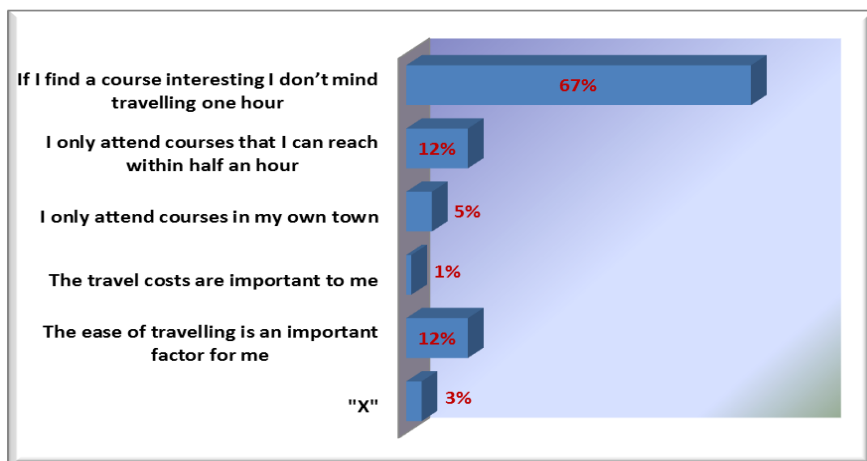


Figure 7: Which course location has your preferences?

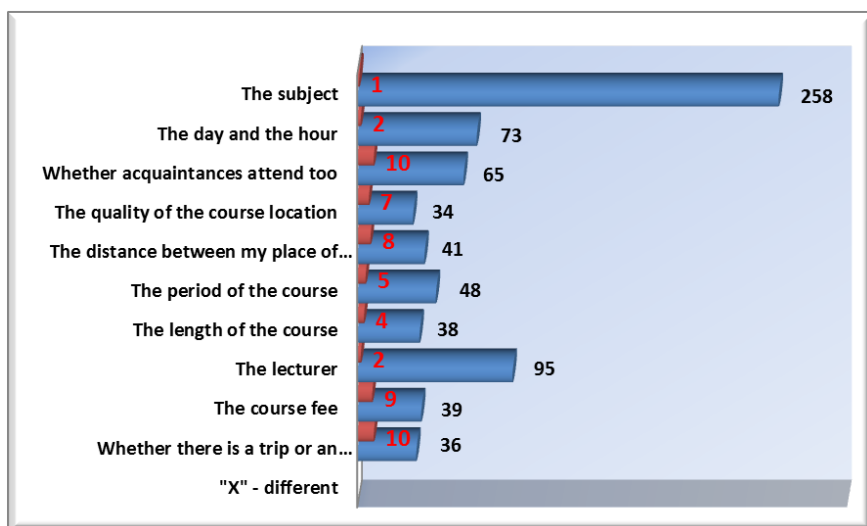


Figure 8: In which sequence of importance would you place the following options for the choice of a course?

Qualitative assessment: New trends and experience after 20 years show us the increase of gender difference (from 78% to 91% of women); students come with better educational level when enrol in courses of University of the Third Age (change from 1/5 to 1/2 of university graduates). It also influences the motivation of the students for study at UTA. We mentioned

already in the part about motivation in study, that the motivation and interests of the elderly are also changing according to the changes in society and life needs. We can say conclusion, that seniors and the older students, especially, are more good at specifying their needs, have higher expectations, educational needs with higher personal involvement and investment.

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Nadežda Hrapková has been Head of the University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava for 25 years. She graduated from Andragogy at Comenius University, Faculty of Art and so she did in her postgraduate study. As a main organiser of UTA programmes she was one of the founders of the Slovak Association of UTAs (in 1994), became a member of EFOS board (European Federation of Older Students in Universities) in 1994 and since 2003 she has been in position of EFOS president. In 2000 she became a member of AIUTA Governing Board and since 2011 (General Secretary 2011 - 2016) she has been a member of AIUTA Executive Board. Through 25 years she has developed a very good cooperation with other European universities in Vienna, Ulm, Wroclaw, Uppsala, Brno, Magdeburg, Alicante, etc. She was included in several European projects from Socrates, Grundtvig and Erasmus+ focusing on senior's education as the coordinator. She participated in the projects of DANET Association (Danube Networkers for Europe) and its European programmes. She wrote many articles and did research on senior's education topics and actively participated in many conferences abroad.

Contacts of the authors:

Centre for Continuing Education, University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

Nadezda.Hrapkova@rec.uniba.sk

katarinagrunwald@gmail.com

HOW SOCIAL NETWORKS HELP IN THE MARKETING OF THE UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE

Erik SELECKÝ

Technical University in Zvolen, Slovakia

Keywords: Marketing, Senior Education, Social Networks,

1. MARKETING

Marketing – product promotion is a part of senior education as well. We must use various marketing tools in order to promote our operation, activity or success. Website of a firm, institution, non-profit organisation, citizens association is an example of one of them.

1.1 Website

As all common users we like browsing active websites, full of new events, new actions, and new products. Running a website is a way of promotion appropriate also for the work with our clients – students of the University of the Third Age (U3A) keeping them up to date with knowledge of activities. We can recommend following design of the website:

1/ Introduction

2/ News

3/ Main activities (U3A, Courses, Conferences, Seminars, etc.)

4/ Projects

5/ Photo gallery

6/ Video gallery

7/ References

8/ Calendar of events

9/ Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

10/ Contacts

Introduction (quotation, mission, main activities, main business) includes information such as the mission, main business and main activities. All of them might be described in more detail in order to make clear and to inform the website visitor click-by-click. Basic information can be supported by an interesting quotation that can be changed regularly.

News - is the most important part of a website. The great advantage of social networking sites is data update and completion. This fact we must keep in mind and update the website content. We recommend mentioning not only new products, services or activities but also some trivialities carried out by organisation. Our website should be updated on daily basis or at least every two days.

Main activities - this part includes main activity; it means the University of the Third Age, various courses or further educational activities. Each activity will be described in more detail on individual webpage (contents, timetable, application form, etc).

Projects - each organisation associated with education should participate in national or international projects. We do not speak about great projects with great finance project arrangement. It can be only small grants programme or funding scheme which are often aimed at improving education.

Photo Gallery

Clients – students participating in educational activities like watching photos and downloading them. Moreover, it offers further great advantage in terms of control and promotion. In case of national or international projects, photo gallery is an inevitable part of continuous control or final report. On the other hand, it is a way to promote carried out activities and to attract attention of our future clients.

Video gallery is very time consuming task on our website. On the other hand, it shows the activities in real terms and introduces the organisation from the other angle. Smartphone became more sophisticated photo and video editing tool that can be used also for processing videos publicized on our website. We recommend embedding not only videos but also different links and messages associated with cooperation with partner universities into website. Surely, it must be in video formats.

References - can be understood from different points of view. Firstly, our aim is to make public the links, documents, and published articles that appeared in various magazines or papers. Secondly, and in our opinion indeed very important aim is to share the opinion of students who have already attended the courses of the U3A and references of cooperating organisations. Student feedback questionnaire, satisfaction survey can be involved in the item.

Calendar of events serves as an excellent reminder for upcoming events and activities. Calendar visualisation shows the days first grouped by day of the week running down the page and then by week to month and for a full year going vertically across the page from left to right. Colour intensity scales can be used to differentiate between the levels of importance of individual days in terms of activities (social, cultural, educational).

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) is commonly used abbreviation not only on English websites. Frequently asked questions can help website visitors to be informed better about organised activities especially about way of applying. We recommend that only the most frequent questions can be publicized in order to make the management of educational activities easier.

Contacts should be placed at the end of menu. All other positions – in the centre or as the second item are not well arranged. Most advanced companies and their websites use the strategy of location of contacts as the last in menu. Facts given there are clear (address, staff contact details – email address, phone number). In an attempt to complete information, we add photos of individual employees, mobile phone numbers, details like organisation identification number, tax identification number, account number with IBAN, SWIFT, address of the bank. GPS coordinates or the map including the exact latitude and longitude of the place are considered very helpful by website visitors and make the transition to the organisation much easier.

2. SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

2.1 Facebook

In order to describe Facebook in more detail plenty of pages could be filled, but we focus on essential characteristics relating to its application. We try to describe the way how to implement Facebook in the education and further activities. The answer to fundamental question – whether to get engaged or not on Facebook, can be found instantly. It is clear – yes, certainly. But we need to take into account that its implementing and keeping it up-to-date will be very time-consuming activity. On the other hand, there is a question: How much time do we spend to prepare promo materials and printed items for our marketing campaign, to submit them and impress the target audience? There is the only answer – a lot. Facebook is a new tool and we need to learn how Facebook can help grow our business. Moreover, I am sure we will see immediate positive effect. Facebook vs. senior education is also a topic that can be discussed. Following the experience we can state that students of the U3A are more computer literate year by year. Therefore, Facebook is, in our opinion, appropriate marketing as well as educational tool for this age group.

When using Facebook we should keep in mind:

1/ Keeping our Facebook Profile Updated with new Information on a Regular Basis. Updating on daily basis is the best way, but do we have enough info to post it every day? We recommend posting not only new info but also references, links, photo galleries, videos that are attractive and viewed by our students. Facebook must be vital and regular posting is an essential factor contributing to profile attractiveness.

2/ Status Creation

Status can be understood as an event or calendar of events on our website. If there are specific activities that are planned exactly on the date, it is very appropriate to post them together with photos on Facebook.

3/ Comments

The fact that we have a profile on Facebook updated regularly is not a sign of vital profile. We should react to comments of our clients and, moreover, they should feel impressed enough to join our activities on other websites too. Our slogan should be: We must be visible then they will see us.

4/ Statistics Monitoring

Statistic figures reflect the interest in our institution, the success of our activities (posts, links, photos, videos). Facebook is a perfect tool that can help us to evaluate and monitor data in order to find the right direction in our work.

2.2 YouTube

YouTube is another interesting tool that can be used for promotion of our work. YouTube is the Internet database of films, especially short videos. It is a video-sharing website that allows users to upload, view, rate, share, add to favourites, report and comment on videos, and it makes use of WebM, and Adobe Flash Video technology to display a wide variety of user-generated and corporate media videos. Moreover, this tool is not money consuming for the Universities of the Third Age. When speaking about the U3A we think about short semi-professional videos generated by the management or students of the U3A. Firstly, it is necessary to create a new YouTube channel. Short videos can be divided into categories as follows:

1/ Promotional Videos Relating to the Study Programmes at U3A.

At the present time, students, also senior students, are highly computer literate. It means, besides the offer of study programmes, they can find plenty of further information on the Internet. One of them is also a short video (max 1.5 min.) introducing curriculum of the study programme. It contains a comment of a lecturer for visualisation and his/her speech can be supported by photos. This way of study programme introduction is very popular among our students, and students have a chance to see the lecturer before the real lectures start. Following our research we can state that there is no substitute for visualisation in the process of promotion of educational product.

2/ Videos of Students

As we mentioned before, the students are highly computer literate. They need to feel engaged and supported. We can offer them a space to display their videos. YouTube channel is an ideal space not only for promotion of the U3A but also for displaying interesting activities, excursions as well as

funny situations of our students and moreover, it shows the skills of the students to prepare material for their colleagues.

3/ Opening and Closing Ceremonies

If opening ceremony of the academic year (matriculation) or closing ceremony (graduation) are organised by the University of the Third Age we recommend displaying the full-length video of these events. It is very impressive and one of the most watched event not only by students but also by their relatives.

4/ Other Activities

Various national or international projects the University participates in can be displayed here. Furthermore, videos of excursions, workshops, sports events can be shown in this file too. In order to make the site well-arranged, it is very helpful to design folders and files relating to various activities of the University. Thus, the site is good to work with not only from the point of view of students but from the point of view of visitors of YouTube as well.

Curriculum vitae of the author:

Ing. Erik Selecký, PhD.

2017-2007 Director of the Center of Continuing Education at the Technical
University in Zvolen, Slovakia

2003-2007 Manager of CCE

2017-2011 President of Slovak Academic Association for Lifelong
Learning

Contacts:

University of the Third Age

Technical University in Zvolen, Slovakia

erik.selecky@tuzvo.sk

CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

The presentations of the conference „Equal learning opportunities for the elderly“ promote the importance of the adult education as well as learning of the elderly in the university framework, in communities and global society all over the world.

Recommendations set out messages for the movement, promoting and developing seniors' education. It is necessary to ensure:

- active aging by free access to information, knowledge and learning;
- integrative and consistent approach to adult learning;
- inclusive and equal education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;
- liberal, popular and community education during whole life without the age limit;
- developing and promoting special skills, educational needs and key competences for daily life of older generation in general;
- usage of knowledge potential of the elderly for the benefit of other generations and whole society;
- further strengthening of international cooperation in seniors' education as part of lifelong learning.

PhDr. Nadežda Hrapková, PhD.

Editor of the Conference booklet

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

International conference “Equal learning opportunities for the elderly”

Bratislava 18th – 20th May 2017



Edited by Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave, Slovakia, 2017

ISBN 978-80-223-4291-9