

Seniors' education as an element of healthy lifestyle

Edukacja seniorów - element zdrowego stylu życia

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Introduction

- Part of healthy lifestyle of contemporary society is education where an important role is played by information technologies.
- Information technologies are also a must in personal and social life, they protect from social exclusion.
- Seniors can be endangered by a so-called digital gap due to their ignorance.
- A man is relatively young until being able to learn, tolerate new opinions and ideas, acquire new experience, and let them influence oneself.
- In the Czech Republic, there are several possibilities for seniors to get educated. The most widespread and quality are universities of the third age (U3A).

Concept of active ageing

- A good quality of senior life is offered by the concept of active ageing, which is also a preventive measure against social exclusion of seniors and strives for their integration into society at all levels.
- Being active means openness to new impulses, sensible use of free time, **health care**, keeping bright mind, and overcoming new challenges.
- There are four factors influencing a senior being active :
 - atmosphere in the society,
 - health condition of the senior,
 - his/her individuality,
 - offer of possibilities.

Healthy lifestyle of seniors

For healthy lifestyle of seniors are very important:

- health,
- contacts among coevals and young generation,
- lifelong education

Lifelong education

- University of Third Age (U3A) plays important role.
- organised at universities and their faculties. Every academic year, there is an increase in participants.
- can be attended by citizens aged 50+.

Offer:

- quality spending of leisure time,
- support of mental and physical freshness,
- activation,
- suitable form of new knowledge and skills.

History of the Czech U3A

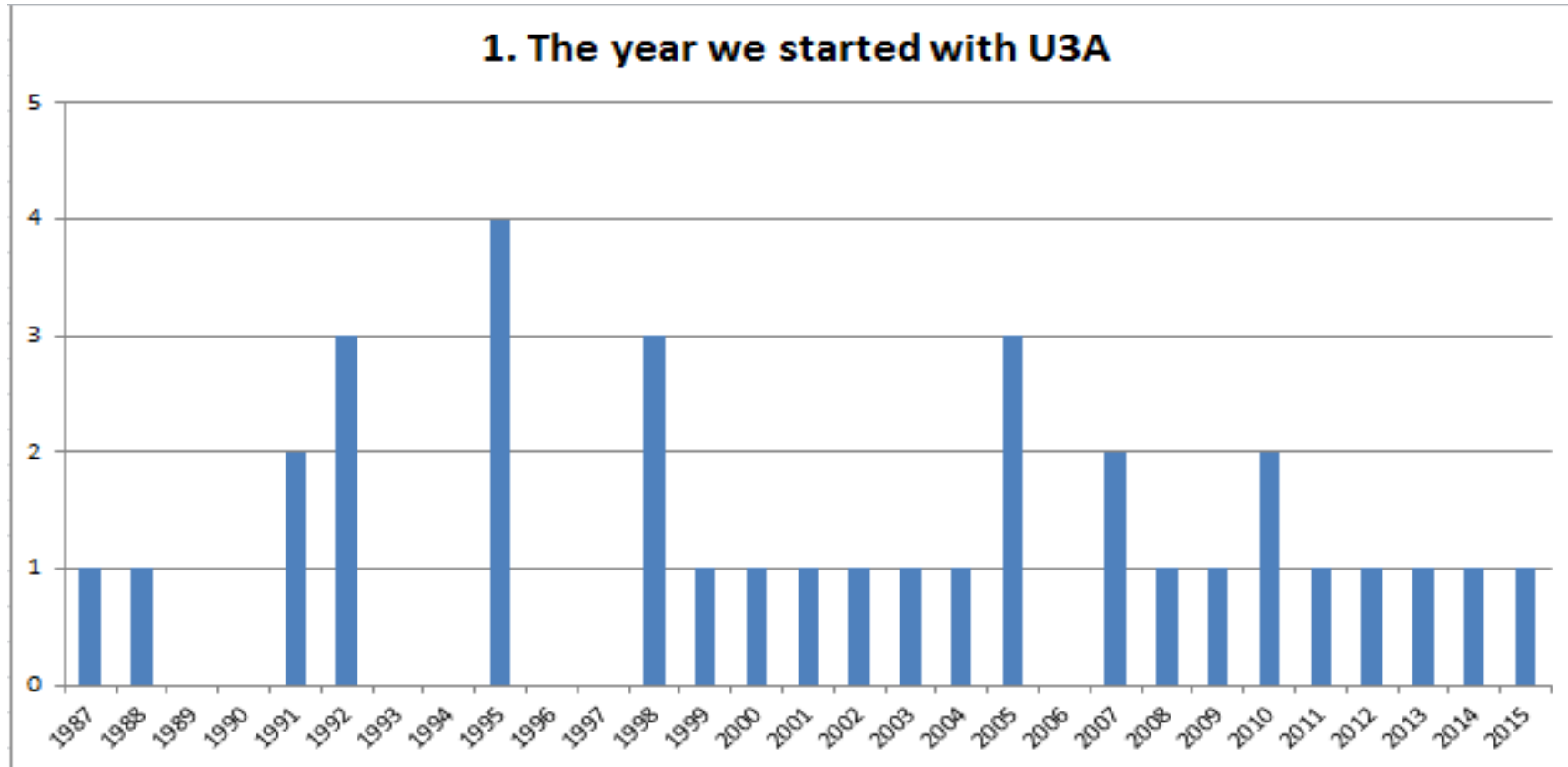
Stages of U3A development

- 1986 – 2000
- 2001 – 2006
- 2007 – until now
- History of the Czech U3A started in 1986 (former Czechoslovakia).
- Their constitution was connected to Czechoslovak Red Cross and Czechoslovak Gerontological Society.
- The first academic U3A was established in Prague at the First Medical Faculty of the Charles University. The courses were focused on healthy lifestyle, it means courses concentrated on medicine and nursing.

Research of U3A in the Czech Republic in 2017

- The research was oriented on evaluation of the current state of senior education at U3A.
- The questionnaire, which contained 11 questions, was filled in by 81% of respondents.

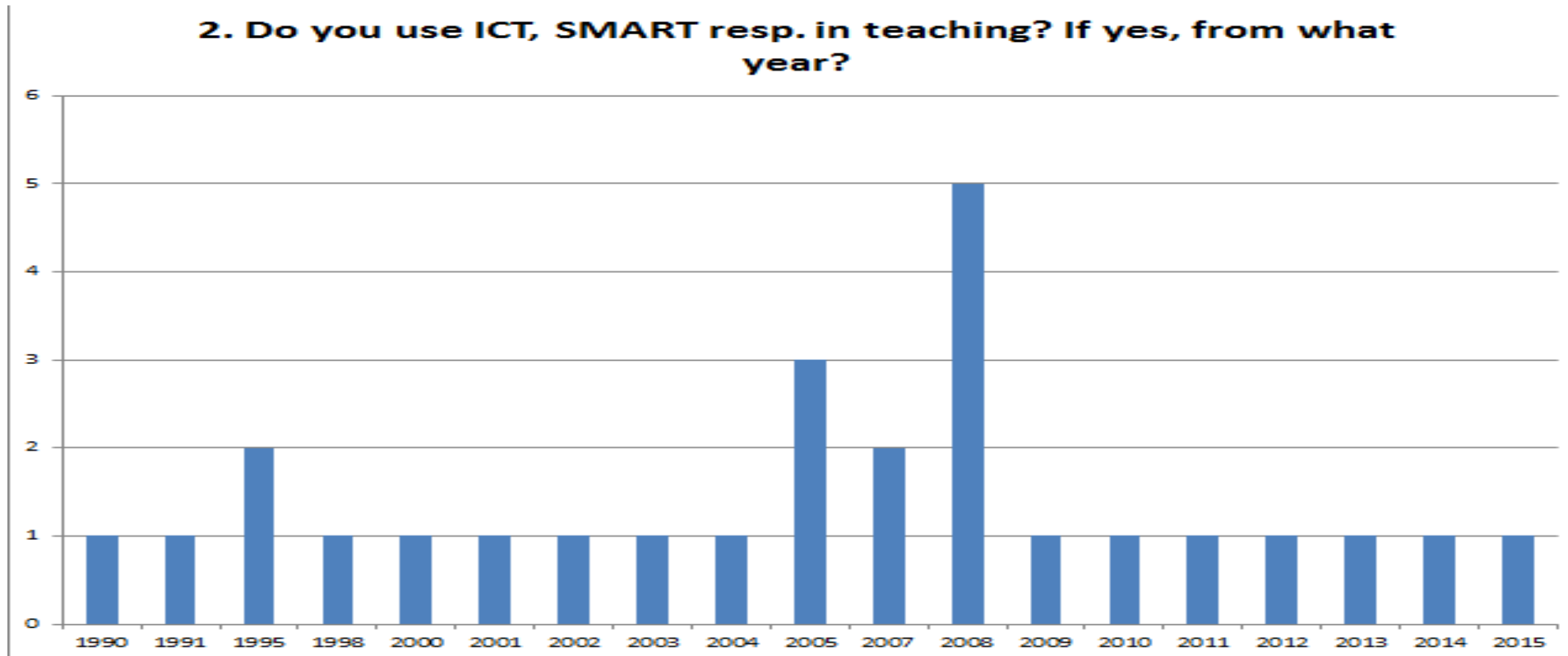
The year we started with U3A



Use of information technology

- The research showed that there are huge reserves in the use of information and SMART technologies.
- There are also unused possibilities of taking advantage of students, post-graduate students into U3A education, resulting in intergenerational social communication.

Use of information technology



Statistics of the U3A performance in the Czech Republic

Academic year	Number of courses Total in CR	Number of active studying lessons	Number of participants
2010 - 2011	911	26 133	33 607
2011 - 2012	1 036	29 282	36 673
2012 - 2013	1 020	32 190	38 802
2013 - 2014	1 163	37 168	43 110
2014 - 2015	1 306	41 641	47 694
2015 - 2016	1 388	45 500	51 826

Funding of U3AV in the Czech Republic

- U3A funding in the Czech Republic takes grounds in a document approved by the GA of the U3A Association on 10th September 2015 as a proposal to the 2nd Amendment to the Rules of granting benefits and subsidies to public universities by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS), which specifies funding of programmes of senior lifelong learning. It contains 5 Articles:
 - 1) Force of the Amendment. Article
 - 2) Conditions on granting and using funds.
 - 3) Application for granting funds.
 - 4) Application assessment.
 - 5) Legal force.

Participants of U3A

- Concerning sex, the participants are mostly women (86 %).
- Most of the participants are aged:
 - 70-75 (41 %),
 - 75-80 (26 %),
 - 65-70 (21 %).

The age borderline of the U3A participants is related to the retirement age. Some participants, primarily intellectually working, work as retired even over the age of 70.

Participants of U3A

- Most are secondary-school respondents (63 %).
- Followed by university ones (31%).
- There are no respondents with basic education.
- Respondents/participants of U3A primarily live in big cities (72%), then in towns with less than 100 thousand inhabitants (17 %), the fewest live in a village (11 %).
- More than 50% of the respondents stated that „they do not miss anything“. The question if they have a feeling of being excluded from the society was answered by only a few that they miss contact with the young. 94% answered that „they do not miss anything“.

Reasons to study at U3A

The most frequent reasons to acquire new knowledge are:

- Interest in the selected topic,
- Improvement of memory,
- Acquisition of new knowledge,
- Being in touch with people,
- Making new friends.

Reasons to study at U3A

Among the stated reasons to study at U3A prevail:

- social reasons – meeting new people,
- interest in information technology, which can be caused by the pressure of this period as some respondents stated the reason to „be modern“,
- „possibility of intergenerational dialogue“.

Conclusion

- The development of information technologies has brought numerous changes in the life of an individual, which people frequently do not realise. However, they are important for the quality of life and lifestyle in contemporary society in order to be equipped and ready for life in a society which is characterised by an emphasis on information and constant changes.
- Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman called it a liquid modernity.
- Senior education will be topical in the future as well and it will be part of active lifestyle as people strive for new information due to their natural curiousness.

U3A – ISEV, 2017-1-CZ01-KA204-035438

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Number and share of inhabitants in senior age, 1987–2017 (to December 31st)

Věková skupina	1987	1997	2007	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Počet obyvatel seniorského věku podle věkových skupin (tis.)									
65–69	425,8	472,6	473,8	635,9	657,3	671,1	693,0	691,4	684,5
70–74	296,2	413,2	363,0	423,6	452,8	482,0	495,2	532,7	569,7
75–79	301,2	268,2	327,5	302,0	303,5	308,6	323,7	340,1	358,6
80–84	159,8	133,4	223,6	238,0	237,2	236,6	232,0	229,2	226,6
85–89	60,6	87,4	96,6	126,1	128,2	131,3	135,0	138,7	141,8
90–94	13,2	22,8	21,9	36,9	42,0	45,4	47,1	49,0	49,9
95+	2,0	4,2	6,5	5,1	4,6	5,5	6,4	8,0	9,1
Podíl věkových skupin na počtu obyvatel ve věku 65+ let (%)									
65–69	33,8	33,7	31,3	36,0	36,0	35,7	35,9	34,8	33,6
70–74	23,5	29,5	24,0	24,0	24,8	25,6	25,6	26,8	27,9
75–79	23,9	19,1	21,7	17,1	16,6	16,4	16,8	17,1	17,6
80–84	12,7	9,5	14,8	13,5	13,0	12,6	12,0	11,5	11,1
85–89	4,8	6,2	6,4	7,1	7,0	7,0	7,0	7,0	7,0
90–94	1,0	1,6	1,4	2,1	2,3	2,4	2,4	2	2,4
95+	0,2	0,3	0,4	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,4	0,4
Podíl 65+ na celkové populaci	12,2	13,6	14,6	16,8	17,4	17,8	18,3	18,8	19,2