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Inclusive Senior Education Through Virtual U3A
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COMPARATIVE STUDY BASED ON ANALYSIS ON THE SENIOR EDUCATION

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ISEV - Inclusive Senior Education Through Virtual U3A

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1 Objectives of senior education

1.1 Czech Republic

On 31 December 2016, the Czech Republic had 10 579 th. inhabitants, out of whom 1 989 th. are seniors aged 65+ (18.8 %).

A university of the third age (hereinafter as U3A) is the most known and spread educational possibility/activity for the senior age group. The objective of U3A is to guarantee seniors their right for learning and education at current scientific level. It is a way of acquiring new findings, knowledge as well as experience. It is also a possibility to establish social contacts with their peers. During studies, seniors meet students and postgraduate students, there are inter-generational relations.

The Czech Government approved the “National Action Plan for Positive Aging for the Period 2013-2017” (NAP), which states that although the Czech Republic has a well-established U3A system, the demand for the offered education still exceeds the offer. This type of senior education primarily focuses on interest education. Despite the fact that its outputs are not acceptable on the labour market, they have a positive benefit in personal development of seniors as well as increase their active participation in society. (Action Plan, 2012, p. 11) This NAP defined a strategic objective: Increasing the ratio of seniors engaged in interest education by means of U3A with respect to local accessibility. It also states: To update municipalities and regions on the benefits of U3A by dissemination and best-practice examples. (Action Plan 2012, p. 15) Universities of the Third Age are united in the U3A Association. The general assembly of the U3A Association members approved the “Long-Term Strategic Plan for Senior Education Development at universities in the Czech Republic in the period 2016-2020” which takes grounds in the “Long-Term Strategic Plan for Educational, Scientific Research, Development and Innovative, Artistic and Other Creative Activities in the Area of Tertiary Education for the Period 2016-2020” and other documents of the Government Legislative Council for seniors and aging population and from resolutions of the Government of the Czech Republic.

Objectives of the U3V Association:

1. Guarantee of the offered university education at a U3A.
2. Observing the ethical part of education.
3. Strengthening of the U3A importance in public awareness.
4. Accessibility of senior education at universities.
5. Keeping high quality standards in all activities – requirements on knowledge, skills, competences, outputs.
6. Cooperation (internationalisation) with European U3A.

1.2 Italy

Similarly, to most advanced economies, an important aspect of the demographic situation in Italy is the ageing process of the population produced by declining fertility and by improvements of life expectancy.

As a consequence, the percentage of the seniors population is growing in the Italian society. This change will have a significant impact on families and individuals.

On the one hand, the percentage of active population is decreasing, on the other hand, always more people can not participate in the community's life. The retirement moment is in



fact experienced very often as a moment of exclusion from the society because the pensioner hardly finds spaces and places in which to use acquired skills and experience.

In this context, the education as lifelong process has a strategic role in the perspective of elderly people's relocation in the society in order to harness their skills and improve their autonomy and quality of life.

Compared to the rest of the world, Italy is one of the countries in which the ageing process is very significant (2° position after Japan).

Ten Countries with the most aged populations, 2000, 2015 and 2030

Rank	2000		2015		2030	
	Country or area	Percentage aged 60 years or over	Country or area	Percentage aged 60 years or over	Country or area	Percentage aged 60 years or over
1	Italy	24.1	Japan	33.1	Martinique	38.5
2	Japan	23.3	Italy	28.6	Japan	37.3
3	Germany	23.1	Germany	27.6	Italy	36.6
4	Greece	22.8	Finland	27.2	Germany	36.1
5	Sweden	22.2	Portugal	27.1	Portugal	34.7
6	Bulgaria	22.2	Greece	27.0	China, Hong Kong SAR	33.6
7	Belgium	22.0	Bulgaria	26.9	Spain	33.5
8	Croatia	21.8	Martinique	26.2	Greece	33.2
9	Portugal	21.7	Croatia	25.9	Slovenia	32.7
10	Spain	21.4	Latvia	25.7	Austria	32.4

1.2.1 Lifelong Learning against social exclusion

Dealing with the issue of seniors education, we must consider the topic of social exclusion, a condition more often experienced by seniors over 65 for economic reasons and/or the lack of social relationships. The changes on family structure and job mobility of young people during last decades have, in fact, their consequences on elder relationships.

According to the Italian Law n. 328/2000 establishing the Commission for the Investigation of Social Exclusion, social exclusion, from a normative point of view, means poverty combined with social marginalisation.

Therefore, citizens not more able to participate in the social life and to integrate themselves in the community, are excluded from society. As a consequence of this situation these persons don't have access to common resources.

Nevertheless, today we know that the fight against social exclusion requires the marginalised groups' active empowerment and participation, hence lifelong learning must be considered as a possibility of re-evaluation and social promotion.

In this sense, the educational activities are beneficial for senior citizens providing them with the skills to face the challenges of present society and to be more active and participative. It is therefore possible to improve the seniors' well-being and quality of life through education. Education can impact seniors' quality of life considering that social activities, keeping active and busy and meeting other people are important for retaining an interest in life, avoiding depression and, consequently, for well-being.

Moreover, seniors education promotes peer to peer exchanges in order to share experiences and competences; encourages the active participation in the society and consequently enhances seniors' self-esteem and identity.



For these reasons, over the last years, the students' number of Universities of the Third Age and the Popular Universities in Italy has increased a lot, together with the participation in other initiatives within the formal and non-formal educational offer.

1.2.2 The Legislative Framework

The Italian legislative landscape on Adult Education presents different characteristics at national and regional level.

At national level, the normative is characterized by the lack of a specific legislative framework. At the regional level, instead, we should highlight the effort to create a territorial system of orientation to the training.

In Italy, 1997 has been an important year for the Adult Education because the Law n.59 of 15th March and the Ministerial Order n. 455 have been enacted establishing the Permanent Territorial Centers for Adult Education (CTP).

During the year 2000 the State and the Regions signed an agreement concerning the reorganization and strengthening of adult permanent education. This document affirms that Adult Education is an integral part of the citizenship right and State and Regions have to work to create an integrated lifelong learning system in order to offer training opportunities to adults of all ages and conditions.

From this point of view, Adult Education has become an important resource for the local development and the recovery of the territory's social identity.

Nevertheless, after more than ten years, with a considerable delay compared to the European context, in Italy the recognition of the importance of lifelong learning is enshrined in the Law n.92/2012, the reform of the labour market.

The so-called Fornero reform recognizes the individual / universal right of the citizen to the recognition and validation of the learning outcomes acquired in formal, non formal and informal educational settings. Thus, it is claimed the paradigm of the learning throughout life, in a diachronic perspective (lifelong learning), in every place (lifewide learning) and the person has the right to the acquired skills' recognition and validation.

In this new framework, based on the Fornero reform, in 2012, there has been the reform of adult education in Italy regulated by the Decree of President of Republic n. 263 of 29th October, that marked the transition from the Permanent Territorial Centers for Adult Education (CTP) to Provincial Centers for Adult Education and Training (CPIA).

After a first starting phase, through several projects assisted by the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) from the 1st September 2014, fifty-six CPIA were activated in eight Italian Regions, and today there are 126 CPIA on a national scale.

The main innovation of this law, compared to the previous legislative system, is to have introduced the school autonomy with a head teacher and a director of general and administrative services. In this way the CPIA have become autonomous school institutions with their own staff and budget.

1.3 Portugal

The underlying policy for adult education in Portugal can be summed up by Article 73 of the 1976 Portuguese Constitution, which establishes that everyone should have free access to education. This law encouraged the establishment of various forms of education (including formal and non-formal) and aimed to contribute in overcoming economic, social and cultural inequalities, including the personal and social development of citizens. It also aimed to



promote a spirit of tolerance, mutual understanding, solidarity and responsibility. Over the last decades, Portugal has made a significant effort to increase the qualification level of the general adult population. However, the current reality is still far from the situation of many European Union and OECD countries as Portugal continues to have low qualification levels, particularly in the older generations and young people.

1.3.1 Politics and Law

In 2002, a structural governmental reform replaced the National Agency for Adult Education and Training with the Direcção-Geral de Formação Vocacional (Directorate General for Vocational Education and Training) as a central department of the Ministry of Education to carry out integrated policies and systems addressed to both adults and young people. Between 2002 and 2006, the Directorate General for Vocational Education and Training, a central department of the Ministry of Education, was responsible for managing and coordinating non higher adult learning and education (ALE) at a national level, which was shared with the Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training), a public institute of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity. In 2005 the government began the New Opportunities Initiative as a national strategy within the scope of the National Employment Plan to co-ordinate the accomplishment of the education and vocational training policies addressed to Portuguese young people and adults, as well as to ensure the development and management of the System for recognizing, validating and certifying competences. The Agência Nacional para a Qualificação (National Qualifications Agency) was created in 2006 as a public institute under the joint responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity. This was a result of restructuring the Directorate General for Vocational Education and Training and the end of the Instituto para a Qualidade na Formação (Institute for Quality in Training).

It is accepted that people gaining qualifications has an impact on economic growth, and on promoting social inclusion and sustainable employment. Skills have become the key drivers of individual well-being and economic success in the 21st century. The place of innovation, technological transformation, digitalization and globalization requires all people to engage in lifelong learning for upskilling, re-qualification or skills updating purposes. Nowadays, there are no jobs for life, therefore lifelong learning (LLL) is crucial for people to acquire the necessary skills to stay employable. More than ever, LLL is the key to face globalization and its challenges.

Portugal has made remarkable progress in recent years in addressing the significant deficit of qualifications among the adult population. And yet there is still much to be done:

- There are still 895.140 adults (in a total of about 10 million inhabitants) with no education level and almost 500.000 people are illiterate (2011 National Census);
- 55% of people aged 25 to 64 have not completed upper-secondary education (2015 Eurostat);
- These adults have significant problems in basic skills (literacy, numeracy and digital skills) and face obstacles to enter the labour market and to achieve full social integration in today's society of information and knowledge;
- The less well qualified tend not to participate in LLL activities;
- Targeting adult education and LLL towards the low skilled was identified as one of the challenges for Portugal (Diagnostic Report - 2015, OECD Skills Strategy) and the adult learning system is the focus of the Action Phase of this project (2017-2018).

The New Opportunities Initiative, launched in 2005, was a large governmental programme dedicated to upgrading the qualifications of the population (minimum upper-secondary education as reference objective). In 2010 Portugal implemented the Basic Skills Training Programme, targeted at adults aged 18 or over who do not hold literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Within the scope of the project for the implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning in 2017-2019, Portugal intends to implement a basic skills e-learning platform (in which materials in the three basic skills will be available).



Again, in March 2016 another governmental programme was launched - *the Qualifica programme* - an integrated strategy to foster the training and qualification of adults. The Programme targets less qualified adults, unemployed people and NEET and has the following objectives:

- Raise the qualification level of adults and their employability;
- Increase digital and functional literacy;
- Better align training provision with labour market needs;
- Facilitate tailored training pathways that lead to an increase in the qualification level of adults (by better combining Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning/VNFIL with adult education and training).

The Qualifica webportal aims at easing access to information, services and tools included in the Programme. Its main users are trainees, employers and adult education and training providers. It enables people to consult education and training opportunities, to update their Qualifica Passport and to find a Qualifica Center. These Centers, currently 303, act as the pathway to qualifications for adults. A relevant tool for the upskilling of adults is the Qualifica Passport, an online tool in which qualifications and skills acquired are recorded. It provides guidance to pathways that support adults in completing, or obtaining new, qualifications, taking into account the training already completed and the skills acquired. The Passport can be modified, updated and printed at any time, thus being a tool that accompanies the adult throughout his active life. In this sense it is an important lifelong guidance tool.

Investing in the qualification of the Portuguese population has been a common aim for various public policies, this is namely since Portugal began to benefit from structural funds aimed at supporting the adjustment path to the development of average standards in the European Union. The creation of a system to improve the qualification levels of the adult population required the mobilization, adaptation and reinforcement of the various opportunities available. Particular importance was given to the recognition, validation and certification of lifelong and life-wide competences, which are seen as the starting point for adult training, and occupational training for adults with low schooling levels. Since 2000, Portugal has developed the National System for Recognizing, Validating and Certifying Competences (RVCC), carried out in the National Network of Centers for Recognizing, Validating and Certifying Competences (now replaced by New Opportunities Centers) hosted in public or private local bodies which are strongly established in their own communities. With regard to the vocational education and training, usually aimed towards adults with low qualification levels, the emphasis is placed not only on rapid expansion and dissemination but also on the creation of conditions to enable working adults to attend.

2 State of art in the offer of educational/training programmes for seniors

2.1 Czech Republic

The present state of senior educational programmes was evaluated based on a research carried out in November and December 2017.

2.1.1 Research methodology

The state of the educational programmes for U3A in the Czech Republic was analysed as a quantitative research, questionnaire technique, which included 11 questions (4 dichotomic, 3



trichotomic, 2 enumerative, 2 open questions). The research was carried out in the period from 9 November 2017 to 5 December 2017.

In the Czech Republic, there are 23 universities that joined the U3A. We had 42 subjects that replied because U3A is organised either centrally, e.g. Tomas Bata University in Zlín, or at faculties, e.g. Technical University of Ostrava, Charles University, or University of Ostrava. We addressed 42 faculties of universities in the Czech Republic and we had 34 subjects that replied, i.e. 81% (see Appendix 2), some of them replied only partially. U3A in the Czech Republic does not have a uniform organisation at universities.

The following graphs are evaluation of individual questions. If there is no graph, the question was open (see question no. 6 and 11).

2.1.2 Analysis of senior educational programmes in the Czech Republic

U3A of some subjects that took part in the research started their education in 1987. Their great boom was in years 1992, 1998, 2005, and the biggest in 1995. Information technologies have been used since 1990 by 27 subjects. The greatest increase in the use of information technologies was in 2008. The most used is a PC, followed by the Internet, notebook, tablet, smartphone, data projector, interactive board, smartboard, reader, and GPS.

Students are engaged in the education by 25 subjects (73%) as lecturers, assistants when necessary, advisors, or other roles: preparation of U3A excursions, workshop organisation, excursions co-organisers, organisational and administrative workers.

Postgraduate students are more engaged than students - as lecturers, assistants when necessary, advisors, or other roles. If students and postgraduate students are engaged in education, they are valued positively by their audience. In case that students and postgraduate students are engaged in U3A education, the following topics are favoured to them:

- Basics of work with a PC – computer literacy, internet, MS Office, computer graphics.
- Travelling – particularities of foreign countries.
- Legal literacy.
- Topics based on professional interest of the students and postgraduate students, i.e. they present the results of their seminar, bachelor projects. The topics also include postgraduate students' scientific research and which directly relate to and are the subject of the education in the course.
- Mobile applications, file management, tablets and other devices, the internet.
- News in the field, recent events.
- Experimental education.
- Health topics.
- Visual arts.

U3A students are engaged in education less than students or postgraduate students, primarily as volunteers or paid lecturers. If U3S students are lecturers, they all use information technologies. 14 out of 34 respondents (41%) answered that U3A students organise educational activities themselves, 5 (35.7%) regularly and 9 (64.3%) occasionally. Concerning meetings of U3A students in an association or club which offer further



educational activities, there are big reserves because 11 (32.4%) answered yes, 20 (58.8%) no, and 3 (8.8%) did not answer.

The open question asking about interesting or inspiring facts of a given institution for other subjects revealed, for example:

- Seniors are more grateful and attentive students than our regular students.
- Part of lectures on history of technology, personal management and UNESCO are visits of museums and conservation monuments.
- Possibility of studying the field of choir singing – seniors have already had lots of performances, positive feedback, great publicity.
- The participants actively engage in their free time – they search for topics, suggestions and information, which they then give to the lecturer, they personally promote the course and attract new students.
- The seniors take part in U3A webpage development, prepare presentations for a DOD, or help with testing of SW user interface for specific users.
- The seniors run their own journal on web pages – a blog of U3A students and graduates, they organise various events within the “club” – section of education, culture, outdoor.
- Summer school as a supplementary activity. Moodle is used in education, virtual classroom – seniors complete various study materials and assessment activities, they can communicate.

The research showed that there are big reserves in using information technologies and SMART technologies. It also revealed that there are unused possibilities in engaging students and postgraduate students in the U3A education, subsequently into intergenerational social communication. Engaging U3A students in creative activities within their education also bears possibilities that still unused.

2.1.3 Senior education at the University of Ostrava within the Virtual University of the Third Age

The Virtual University of the Third Age (hereinafter as VirtU3A) was established in 2008 as an output of project Gruntvig called SENIOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING INTERNET PLATFORM (Project number – 141981–LLP–1–2008–1–CZ–GRUNDTVIG–GMP). This project initialised a system of education, which was later developed and improved. It was financially supported by Development projects of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS). Every year it significantly grew (i.e. enlarging the offer of educational activities and increasing the number of interested seniors), but it primarily improved pedagogical and didactical methods.

These days, we are able to offer three forms of studies: presence, combined, and distance and 6-10 courses from various areas in one semester. Each semester included two courses of Information and Communication Technology and two courses of English with courses from other areas. Here is a list of some topics:

- Memory training
- Philosophy of space
- Quest (not only) after great Czech composers
- Selected chapters from social pathology
- Czech poetry of the 20th century
- Jakub Jan Ryba – a remarkable personality of the Czech history, not only musical
- Food in the eyes of a chemists



- Practical dendrology
- Games to develop thinking
- Prague of Charles IV
- European music culture
- Graphology
- Silesia during WWII
- Jewish and Christian roots of our civilisation
- Women in the Middle Ages
- Bohuslav Martinů and his key to home
- Reasoning using formal logic
- Genealogy
- Criminology
- Financial literacy for the third age
- Phenomenon of migration in contemporary European context
- History and present of nursing care
- 1000 years of the Middle-Age art
- Czech-Silesian relationships in history
- Age of cathedrals
- Digital photography
- Ethical issues of the present time
- Science around us
- And many others

Every year we organise outdoor education. It concerns a four-day excursion with lecturers and experts on a topic which is in the focus of the education.

The presence studies are held once a week 2-4 lessons according to the type of the course. Distance studies is solely organised in a form of eLearning. Combined studies represent 5 – 7 lectures of experts, primarily academics, which is then followed by studies in a virtual classroom. A virtual classroom contains the explanatory part supplied with literature and other sources as well as practicing and evaluation part and space for discussion. The explanatory part offers the seniors presentations from lectures, video records (we use the MediaSite technology), other educational materials prepared by the lecturers, links to recommended literature and others, primarily internet sources. The practicing and evaluation parts offer surveys, questionnaires, tests, assignments, databases, vocabularies, and other activities which the lecturer considers useful for the lesson. The discussion forum serves not only for the lecturers and organisers for regular updates on content, form and organisational matters, but primarily for informal communication both between the lecturer and seniors and between the seniors themselves.

The virtual classroom is available at <http://setip.osu.cz>.

Since 2008, we have offered 80 different semester courses. The courses are usually attended by 200 seniors. A high percentage of seniors register 5 or more courses. We have contracts with c. 50 lecturers. It primarily concerns academics from the University of Ostrava, but they also come from other Czech universities, Academy of Science, museums, galleries, archives, etc. the most active seniors are those with more than 50+ passed courses. The seniors are also engaged in active organisation of educational activities. They have founded a community interest society *University senior club* (<http://www.uks.estranky.cz>). Within the club, they organise lectures, excursions, and other activities.



2.1.4 Using information technologies, SMART technologies respectively. Situation in VirtU3A

Virtual U3A is based on using ICT. All seniors who take active part in the VirtU3A are trained in the basis of using ICT and the Internet, OS Windows and MS Office as well as Moodle, which is used for studying in the virtual classroom. The lecturers also have to be familiar with this system as a virtual classroom is used for studies in all courses. The lecturers are trained at activities which are enabled by role teacher, i.e. communication with students, grading activities as tests, assignments, etc., overview of students and their results as well as other activities for learning management. Most of lecturers also use a role of course creators, i.e. they can insert study materials and activities for students into the course. This is not a condition in case the lecturer does not want to create a course, but only use it for teaching. Those activities are then done by the course administrator. The seniors primarily use a virtual classroom for education, although communication between the senior is also very common, or between the seniors and the lecturer. A virtual classroom then serves as a discussion forum. Apart from such basic ICT knowledge, the seniors are regularly offered 2 – 3 semester courses focused on information and smart technologies. For instance, courses of video and photo editing, courses of work with multimedia data, geographic data, maps, courses of work with electronic sources, such as archives, registers, etc., work with programs for genealogy, social networks, etc. very favourite courses are those about the use of smartphones, navigations, and other mobile applications. The seniors are regularly updated on news which is in, i.e. specialised ICT and smart courses stemming from the needs and wishes of the seniors. This is the area where we see a great opportunity for intergenerational dialogue, i.e. engagement of the young generation, primarily students, into the education in a role of assistants. Some experiments were carried out within project Gruntvig. However, engaging students has not become a common practice.

2.1.5 Statistics of the U3A performance in the Czech Republic

Statistics of the U3A performance is a summary of performance of individual state public universities in the Czech Republic, it includes 23 universities.

Statistics of the U3A performance in 2010-2016

Academic year	Number of courses Total in CR	Number of active studying lessons	Number of participants	Converted performance
2010 - 2011	911	26 133	33 607	635 957.12
2011 - 2012	1 036	29 282	36 673	683 552.38
2012 - 2013	1 020	32 190	38 802	717 486.38
2013 - 2014	1 163	37 168	43 110	796 022.25
2014 - 2015	1 306	41 641	47 694	862 814.69
2015 - 2016	1 392	45 529	51 826	961 968.25



2.1.6 Analysis of senior educational programme at the University of Ostrava

Statistics of the U3A performance at the University of Ostrava in 2010-2016

Academic year	Number of courses Total in CR	Number of active studying lessons	Number of participants	Academic year	Share on the total performance
2010 - 2011	0	0	0	0	0
2011 - 2012	0	0	0	0	0
2012 - 2013	15	692	805	31 494.56	4.39%
2013 - 2014	17	734	885	29 818.08	3.746%
2014 - 2015	20	862	1 098	39 537.02	4.582%
2015 - 2016	26	759	1 325	32 716.45	3.401%

2.1.7 Measures leading to inclusive educational environment based on experience of a given institution

We consider an inclusive educational environment primarily in removing barriers of senior education caused by their age, health condition, social and economic situation. It also concerns, among others, architectural and information barriers, barriers given by the financial situation of seniors, their difficult possibility of commuting, lowered communication ability given by, for example, health disabilities, etc.

We consider the following as an effective tool for removing barriers:

1. Modification of lecturing rooms, including facilities, so that seniors with movement problems could easily take part in the education. The UO disposes of two lecture rooms reserved for the VirtU3A which are fully barrier-free. The rooms also have social facilities and space for refreshments.
2. Modification of educational method to consider more frequent absence in the presence part of the education. This requirement is effectively solved by the virtual classroom. The virtual classroom contains all study materials for the seniors, including presence lecturers, as well as activities for the seniors to do at home. Those seniors who cannot take part in the presence part of the education due to their health condition can still be in contact with the teachers and classmates and they also have the possibility to study the subject matter from materials on the Internet – virtual classroom. All seniors attending the VirtU3A have access to the virtual classroom from their homes. We are helpful to solve possible technical issues in order to prevent information barrier.
3. The fee for VirtU3A courses is symbolic, which means that there is no financial barrier. We can afford it due to the financial help of the MEYS, which subsidizes U3A activities in the Czech Republic. The received subsidy enables to realise educational activities, thus the fee is really symbolic and it has rather a motivational role.
4. The seniors appreciate communication with the surroundings. Of course, face-to-face communication is irreplaceable. However, there are situations when a senior cannot attend the school for a longer period. This is looked after by various discussion groups in the virtual classroom. The seniors can not only take part in existing groups, but they can also create new discussion topics. Sometimes, it is difficult to engage the



seniors in discussions. It can be caused by their mentality, which hampers it. Thus, it is important to regularly address the seniors with news, updates, and to activate their attention. This is a task for the teachers as well as the organisers of the educational activities as well.

5. Regular meetings at school serve to presence educational activities: lecturers, seminars, etc. Nevertheless, in order to remove communication and social barriers, it is necessary to organise informal meetings as well. At the UO, we organise joint meetings twice a year, usually with a short lecture followed by an informal discussion and a cultural programme. We have positive experience with outdoor education, which means a four-day excursion related to the topic of a selected course.
6. The seniors like to meet young people. A system of regular joint activities of seniors and the youth is not, unfortunately, developed so we do not organise these activities regularly. Therefore, we promise that the ISEV project will help us partially eliminate this imperfection.

2.2 Italy

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines “adult education” as the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the twofold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development. Adult education, however, must not be considered as an entity in itself, it is a subdivision, and an integral part of, a global scheme for lifelong education and learning.

Currently, Adult Education in Italy is developing and there is not yet an homogeneous educational offer at national level. Moreover, there are no educational models that are differentiated according to the ages so the category “adults” includes different generations.

2.2.1 The formal educational offer

Regarding the formal educational offer for adults, the Provincial Centers for Adult Education and Training (CPIA) have a central role.

CPIA are state schools established by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research. The school offers Italian and foreign citizens adult education services and activities, considered as an element to encourage the personal, cultural, social and economic growth of all citizens.

The centres are organised to establish a close link with local authorities, the business world and the regulated professions, and to provide education according to three learning levels:

1. Italian language and social integration courses for foreigners (Italian L2). These courses lead to a certificate stating at least A2 level mastery of the Italian language according to the common European framework for languages designed by the Council of Europe;
2. Programs aimed at acquiring a diploma at the end of the first cycle of education (a compulsory education certificate) and certification attesting basic skills related to compulsory education;
3. Second-level programmes, delivered by education institutions offering technical, vocational and artistic programmes, leading to an upper secondary education diploma: these may be technical schools, professional schools and artistic schools.



Regarding the requirements for participants:

1. The Italian language courses for foreigners admits adults over 18 years old with non Italian citizenship and also with an educational title obtained in their countries of origin;
2. The first level education courses admits adults over 18 years old who have not obtained the middle school certificate;
3. The second level education courses admits adults over 18 years old who have the middle school certificate, or young people over 16 who have the middle school certificate and can demonstrate that they cannot attend a daily course because of the job.

In the light of the above, it is clear that the formal educational offer for adults does not provide specific training opportunities for seniors, who must therefore turn to the non-formal educational offer that will be analyze below.

2.2.2 The non- formal educational offer

Popular Universities and Universities of the Third Age

Popular Universities have begun to develop since the Second World War, promoted by no-profit associations and social movements. In the 70s, the orientations on adult education and lifelong learning have progressively developed and the Popular Universities have been gaining in importance.

At the same time, the attention to the senior lifestyle and quality of life has increased, by both public actors and social organizations and movements. Alongside senior clubs and Popular Universities are born the Universities of the Third Age, destined to be developed over time.

Since the 80s, these Universities have been an opportunity for the seniors to participate in courses on different topics form general culture to more specific topics.

Nowadays, the Popular Universities and the Universities of the Third Age are spread all over the Italian Regions and those who call themselves "Popular" are open also to young people. Moreover, over time, new courses have been activated on all the possible areas of interest, from archaeology to bridge without excluding traditional topics.

From the first experiences, today there is an organic structure at the national level that has led to the confederation of most of these Universities. At the moment, in Italy there are about 1000 among Popular Universities, Universities of the Third Age, the Free Age, almost all of them confederate within the three National Confederations Fipec, Federuni and Unitre.

No-profit associations and Senior centers

The Associations in Italy have always considered the non-formal education as fundamental tool in order to improve population's quality of life and to promote the cultural growth. The majority of the associations' projects aims at preparing people for their role as an active and aware citizen.

In general, most of the association's activities are held in the areas of education and training because their action represents an adult learning path divided into two moments of both informative and educational nature.

The associations' crucial role in the field of non formal education has been rarely recognized by Italian institutions until the Agreement subscribed by the State-Regions Conference on March 2, 2000.



Nowadays, there are a lot of associations that work in the field of non formal education with seniors, such as Arci, Acli, Legambiente, Aidea, Unla, Cesvot, Cofir, Cnupi and Auser.

The Association for Active Ageing (Auser) is the more active organization from the point of view of lifelong learning to fight against social exclusion and to promote the practice of active citizenship.

Moreover, from the 70s, there are a lot of auto-organised experiences denominated seniors centers. In these places seniors can attend a lot of training courses on ICT, theatre, artisan, cooking, etc. Over the years, these places have become very important for the seniors education.

2.2.3 The Experience of Fondazione Mondo Digitale

Since 2002 FMD has been working in the field on intergenerational solidarity and social inclusion elders through the use of ICT.

The Foundation started out with confidence in the winning role that could be played by the young in fighting the social alienation of the seniors over 65 and built an alliance between schools and social centers for the elderly. The first official agreement between the *Ministry of Innovation and Technologies* and the *Municipality of Rome* reached in 2002 opened the door to the *Grandparents on the Internet* project. The validity of the training programs in the schools was then acknowledged. FMD took action to oppose recurrent illiteracy, improved the quality of life of seniors, and helped young people already familiar with digital technology assume responsibility.

Today, the inter-generational learning method is a model of national and transnational intervention. In 14 editions in 20 Italian Regions and 11 European Countries, FMD has succeeded in involving:

- 30,000 senior participants
- 21,000 students as tutors
- 2,100 coordinators/teachers

FMD offers people over 65 years old the generational exchange formula: school students teach pc, Internet and technologies to the elderly under the supervision of expert teachers in an authentic school of social welfare.

The model is based on collaborative, cooperative, and personalized teaching methods in which the young tutor is allowed to personalize the training provided to the individual needs of the adult learner. The difference between the entry levels of the participants no longer creates problems but instead enriches teaching processes and stimulates the search for new solutions.

The model is useful to promote social values and the development of life skills such as patience, communication skills, cooperation and active participation in the community and solidarity and dialogue between generations.

This type of intergenerational experience can help seniors to understand how they can actively participate in society and increases their self-awareness and motivation. Learning basic ICT skills and use of social media not represent the only learning outcome for seniors in the initiatives which focus on ICT. Seniors can also learn about young people's lives and how to communicate with them. The contact with young people positively influences their self-esteem, improves their social and mentoring competences and their general health and wellbeing. Seniors feel valued and feel that their role in society is recognized. Depending on the specific focus of the initiative, seniors can also learn about many different areas, such as nature, cooking, arts, theatre, storytelling and so forth.



On the other hand, students can understand the importance of intergenerational exchange and they benefit from intergenerational activities by improving their social and communication skills and discovering older people's worlds. In several case studies, young people also learn about teaching methods and test their skills in a context which is more similar to a work environment than a school one.

They have the opportunity to discover and build on their talents and to learn from seniors about traditional values, professions, techniques and folklore. During the implementation of activities, young people are required to demonstrate punctuality, flexibility and empathy.

In conclusion, the model is a winning one especially in the training area and includes the transmission of values, dialogue, and the sense of belonging to a community among their objectives. In tune with this method choice, also the training kit provides different instructions for use for the different parties involved: *Guidelines for Grandparents*, *Guidelines for tutors*, *Guidelines for teachers*). The project also strengthens all the fundamental skills for 21st century education.

Today there are different project implementation models with different local partners in different Italian Regions which have all been inspired by the initial model: the teachers are young students supervised by expert teachers who have time and training to mentor them.

The Italian media defined the Grandparents on the Internet model a "export format" project for two reasons: it can be replicated in any territorial context, from areas devastated by earthquake to tiny rural villages near Liege, Belgium, and because it is formulated in complete turnkey version supported by the coding of the knowledge required for its implementation (manuals, questionnaires, evaluation tests, guides, and training workshops, etc.).

Conclusions

This analysis has focused on the state of the senior education in Italy and seniors' expectations regarding their participation in training activities.

Nowadays, senior education is related to the concept of a learning society to ensure equal learning opportunities for all, regardless of the age. Since the 70s, senior education has become integral part of the lifelong learning concept, and it is not more limited to providing higher skills, retraining or upgrading older. It offers a second or third chance, ensures continuous improvement and self-improvement of the individual.

In Italy senior education and lifelong learning has become an established reality, a pathway to continually adapt to the requirements and face the challenges of changing society. The role of no-profit associations, seniors centers and Universities of the Third Age have been constantly increased in this respect and the intergenerational learning model has become always more used across the whole country.

2.3 Portugal

2.3.1 Use of information technology, SMART technology in Portugal

Portugal is a forerunner within ICT and has a long tradition of IT engineering. The country is among the top three countries with highest FTTH coverage in Europe and shows almost complete fixed broadband coverage to Portuguese households (99.8 %). National players such as Portugal Telecom (Altice group), NOS, SIBS and Via Verde, have all a stated footprint globally.

Portugal has since many years, focused on being an attractive outsourcing and nearshoring location in Europe. The country shows a well-developed IT-infrastructure, technical work



force quality at affordable cost, advanced linguistic abilities, relatively low rents compared to other EU countries as well as high quality of life. During the latest years, the country has as well gained recognition being a tech hub for global ICT players, such as Vodafone Group and Altran. Recent establishment of Mercedes first global digital competence centre in Lisbon 2017, creating technology within connected cars and autonomous driving, shows an investment climate similar to Barcelona, London and Berlin.

2.3.2 Lisbon – a rising tech hub in Europe

In 2016, Lisbon gained recognition as a new tech hub in Europe as a result of the relocation of the Web Summit conference, as well as Portugal presenting a vivid start-up ecosystem, not to mention their first unicorn – Farfetch. The Portuguese capital is also offering an attractive business climate with governmental incentives for investors, which has generated a continuous flow of foreign company investments and business establishment.

2.3.3 The AMBESP Experience in ICT

During the sessions of involvement with ICT classes it was observed that the seniors have continuous difficulties: manipulating the mouse and perceiving their action on the monitor; making the distinction between keys (spacebar and delete key; caps lock key); use double keys to place punctuation and accentuation; initiating activities in Microsoft Office Word; selecting the search information in search engines; perceiving the clickable areas; lacking confidence in effect actions; fear to start new activities, fear of making mistakes memorizing email addresses and passwords; and giving continuity to tasks. When using email services, seniors consider important to obtain a response to the messages sent, and to respond to all received messages, expressing great satisfaction when receiving messages from relatives and/or friends. The difficulty identified when using the email, was that seniors rarely write the subject of the messages. The active participation of seniors in the development of services revealed to be possible but also necessary to adapt the methods used: the process should be iterative; need to avoid formal language; need to clarify the goal of the activity, let seniors think aloud and give them time to perform the activity; keep them focused and do not drive them in the tasks. These observations since 2009, suggest that in the most part of the group the physical domain of quality of life had a significant increase. The senior students who expressed greater satisfaction when using ICT present a more positive perspective on the psychological maturity and less loneliness and dissatisfaction. Now they use the Facebook, and even tablets and smart phones with facility, and the ones who had phones where impulse to acquire digital ones.

2.3.4 Measures resulting in inclusive education

In Portugal inclusion is recognized as a complex process, involving several spheres of personal and of institutional lives. An inclusive society is defined as a society where everyone shares fully the condition of citizenship and is offered opportunities for social participation and access to continuous learning, as a way of fostering individual development, social progress and a more democratic society. Participation is considered a keystone for driving the change of attitudes in society, to ensure equal opportunities and rights. For persons with special needs, it is about achieving equal status to the other members of the community. In order to achieve that aim Inclusive Education is enshrined in law seeking educational equity, in terms of both access and outcomes. In Portugal inclusive education refers, thus, to the process of fostering participation of all children, supporting not only those with disabilities or developmental delays, but also all groups of vulnerable and marginalized children, namely because of their cultural and social backgrounds.

So the civil society had to organize itself to create a way to involved adult learns, even if they are informal learners, in this way have appeared the Senior Universities, who the main



objective is fight the social isolation, by integrating persons who are in need of socialization. For that were created the Seniors Universities or adult learning in regular Universities.

2.3.5 The AMBESP Experience

The AMBESP started the inclusive Education of Seniors with the creation of the senior University, the project was born from the reality found in Ferreira do Zêzere, relative to the number of seniors living alone, isolated and without defined life projects. The main goal is reducing the isolation and loneliness of older people, reducing costs in terms of health and social services and ensure living environments that seek to create new social habits, non-formal education, stimulate skills and rebuild social and affective networks through participation in the various courses that the University offer like:

- Informatics;
- English;
- French
- Portuguese
- Portuguese for foreigners;
- Crafts;
- Citizenship and Portuguese Constitution;
- History;
- Psychology
- Music
- Instruments
- Theater
- Yoga

Integrated in the various classes, the Teachers with seniors prepare visit study's in Portugal and above.

2.3.6 Engagement of youth in Senior Education in Portugal

The challenges posed by ageing population are changing the relations between the generations, either in the communities or in the field of education and learning. The importance of new technologies in a global world and of solidarity between generations represents an opportunity to contribute to a new view on education and learning for strengthened intergenerational relation. Recognizing the need to call world-wide attention to the social changes that take place due to ageing population besetting a growing portion of the populations of the world, European community promote the development of initiatives and programs to face these issues, such as European Year 2012 - 'European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations'. The year was intended to raise awareness of the contribution that older people make to society. It seeks to encourage policymakers and relevant stakeholders at all levels to take action with the aim of creating better opportunities for active ageing and strengthening solidarity between generations. Active ageing means growing old in good health and as a full member of society, feeling more fulfilled in a job, more independent in daily life and more involved in citizenship. European Year 2012 seeks to promote active ageing in three areas: employment, participation in society and independent living. In the context of the economic and social crisis, increased by demographic change, the coalition of stakeholders for the European Year 2012 to launch the 'Manifesto for an Age-Friendly European Union by 2020'. It means fostering solidarity between generations and enabling the active participation and involvement of all age groups in society while providing them with adequate support and protection. This Manifesto identifies ten aspects that will benefit every age. All aspects are important but we emphasize the access to lifelong and intergenerational learning to acquire new skills and knowledge at any age. In your technology-dependent societies, all citizens need to be able to use



technology. The development of ICT skills is crucial for elderly people's participation and contribution in society. Lifelong and intergenerational learning with ICT can be seen as a key for the older people digital inclusion and provide a new European society based on greater solidarity, equity and cooperation between and within generations. But, how can intergenerational learning with ICT help to strengthen intergenerational solidarity? Intergenerational learning is a continuous and ongoing process involving the assimilation of information, ideas and values, constantly building and updating of knowledge, skills and competences. It is intrinsic, taking place anywhere, any time and at different levels: personal, familiar and communitarian, societal, national, international or global. Intergenerational learning is when learning takes place across generations and is bidirectional. Intergenerational learning is one form of lifelong learning involving the transfer of tacit knowledge across generations. It is informal, mostly unplanned and self-directed learning. It is situational and experiential learning through personal conversations and activities. Intergenerational learning provides a context that can improve both learning the specific learning topics and the tacit knowledge and life experiences relating to them. In this way, the learning situation also enriches the general understanding between generations. Intergenerational learning may provide many types of positive effects, as studies have shown that young people who learn with older people have more positive and realistic attitudes to the older generation. To confirm all of these scientific issues, the ISEV project aims to promote intergenerational learning through ICT; cooperation between youth and seniors in the digital skills, sharing experiences and knowledge; and contribute to digital inclusion and participation of the senior population in the community and knowledge society which is also referred to 'learning society'.

2.3.7 The intergenerational projects in AMBESP

The new intergenerational learning paradigm can help to address this by emphasizing the importance of the intergroup contact between generations where each group can learn from and teach the other.

In the school year of 2015/2016 the students from the Senior University made a project along with the Grouping of schools of Ferreira do Zêzere and in the Portuguese Class, they prepare various texts aimed at the kindergarten students, and once a week they went to the school and read the texts to the students, the project was called "Grandma stories".

In the school year of 2016/2017 the students from the Senior University made another project along with the Grouping of schools of Ferreira do Zêzere, in this case the students from the 9.º grade also in the Portuguese Class, they made a meeting with the students and from the range of books that were advised by the Ministry of Education, they all together choose one, all of them read the book and in the end they join together to see the differences of reading with different lens, different ages, different experiences, different knowledge, the project was called "What you read".

In the school year of 2017/2018 the students from the Senior University made another project along with the Grouping of schools of Ferreira do Zêzere, in this case the students from the 12.º grade, but this time gathering all the professors. After a Study visit to the major factory of egg producers in Portugal, we decided to make a book with recipes that have eggs, and invited the students to make the drawings for the book, the project is called "Letters and eggs".

2.3.8 Active role of seniors in Senior Education in Portugal

Despite the difficulties of involving older adults in mainstream policies of lifelong learning, the offer of educational programs for older students has increased dramatically in the last three decades. These learning opportunities have arisen in different settings and are sponsored by different institutions, including universities, senior centers and self-organized courses. The main concern is not to acquire work-oriented skills or qualifications, but for participants to



socialize and remain active and to promote their personal development. Universities have been particularly active in sponsoring non-formal courses for older people, the best examples being the Universities of the Third Age (in Europe) or the Institutes for Learning in Retirement (in the United States). In Portugal seven higher education institutions already offer formal education programs for senior students, an offer with a tendency to grow in Portugal.

RUTIS President Luis Jacob underlined the great diversity of the various existing programs, an "enriching" experience that began to emerge in Portugal eight years ago and that the approximately 190 Third Age Universities existing in the country could benefit. In that sense, Luis Jacob announced that RUTIS will formally invite those institutions to become their associates as "observer members".

Emphasizing that, in Portugal, "won the English model", an informal teaching response, without certification and practically free of charge for the population over 50 years old, Luis Jacob highlighted the fact that, from 2006 onwards, projects began to emerge at university level, along the lines of the French model.

"They are not competitors, they are projects that complement each other," said Luís Jacob, stressing that the tendency is for this type of supply to continue to grow, both because universities seek financing, and because the senior population is tendentially "cultured".

2.3.9 From universities to polytechnics

There are programs at the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (IPL), the Technical University of Lisbon, the Faculty of Arts of the University of Porto, the University of Évora, the Catholic University of Porto, the Lisbon Academy of Sciences and the University of the Azores.

But, soon there will be more institutions offering for the elderly. RUTIS will start this year, in partnership with ISLA, a postgraduate course on "Active Citizenship" for people over 50; and the School of Education of Santarém is preparing a formal training to offer for this population.

The projects vary from an offer that allows senior students, with initial training from 1st cycle to higher, to attend the normal classes of the various degree courses of the IPL, complemented by a set of parallel activities, to the very near experience of the ICU, of the University of Évora. In this case, the Popular School of the University of Évora opened its training offer to all ages and to all levels of schooling, in a totally free model based on volunteering by teachers and in partnership with institutions and local authorities.

With proposals that are admittedly different from those of the ICUs, the Technical University of Lisbon, Porto and Católica do Porto impose a minimum level of education equivalent to the 12th year, having created programs that count on contributions from the various faculties and making it possible to obtain evaluation and certification.

In the case of the Lisbon Academy of Sciences, since 2010 a "high-quality higher education" program has been offered, in which "those who want to know more, have the possibility of accompanying scientific and technological advances and the cultural changes".

2.3.10 The experience of U3I - AMBESP

The Senior Universities in Portugal, at least the ones who belong to the RUTIS net, don't have any defined programs for the various classes or classes defined. The themes of the different classes are organized together in the beginning of the school year between the teachers and students.

Also in our University we have teachers who are students of other teachers.



3 Funding

3.1 Czech Republic

3.1.1 U3A funding in the CR

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 MEYS, which specifies funding of programmes of senior lifelong learning. It contains 5 Articles: Article 1) Force of the Amendment. Article 2) Conditions on granting and using funds. Article 3) Application for granting funds. Article 4) Application assessment. Article 5) Legal force.

This document sets rules for granting funds from the state budget of the Czech Republic through the MEYS CR concerning programmes of lifelong learning focused on senior education at so-called Universities of the Third Age, including their preparation and development of new programmes (incl. expenses on their material-technical as well as educational provisions). The funds are granted based on an application of the university. Public universities do not have any legal entitlements to be granted funds for U3A operation. The amount of funds is granted based on performance quantification of a given university when realising U3A programmes/courses in the respective period, which stems from the number of hours multiplied by the number of participants in given courses (so-called student-hours). Currently, granting the amount of funds for U3A operation takes into consideration the nature of education derived from the type of the used educational premises and the number of participant in given U3A study groups for the respective period, namely by application of K1 and K2 coefficients. As a pilot test, it will also take into consideration the nature of education using study materials and the way of course completion for the respective period, namely by application of K3 and K4 coefficients.

Converted performance of a U3A is defined by the formula: number of student-hours x K1 x K2 x (1+K3 + K4).

3.1.2 Conditions of using the funds from the budget of the CR

A public university which receives the funds for the U3A operation (by using it) is obliged to comply with the duties of the state budget funds receiver. It is also obliged to keep internal records on U3A programme realisation. Its part is data identifying the participants in the programmes/courses (processed with a prior written informed consent of the participant), attendance sheets or other documents proving their attendance at individual presence educational activities realised within the U3A programme. Such documents must be archived by the university for the purposes of an inspection on the use of funds for at least three years after the end of the calendar year for which the public university was granted the funds by the Ministry's Decision. Condition of using the funds (incl. funds on U3A operation) and its financial settling follow legal provisions:

1. Law no. 111/1998 Coll., on universities and subsequent changes and amendments (law on universities), as amended;
2. Law no. 218/2000 Coll., on budget rules and changes of related laws (budget rules), as amended;



3. Regulation no. 52/2008 Coll., which defines principles and terms of financial settling of relations with the budget, state financial assets or the National fund;
4. Rules on granting provisions and subsidies to public universities by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, no. MŠMT-1325/2012-33 dated 17th January 2012;
5. Amendment no. 2 to the Rules for granting provisions and subsidies to public universities by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, specifying funding of programmes of senior lifelong education dated 10th September 2015;
6. Decision of the Ministry on granting the funds to a public university (for the respective year).

3.1.3 Application for granting the funds

The application for granting the funds follows Article 3) Amendment no.2 on Rules for granting provisions and subsidies to public universities by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, specifying funding of programmes of senior lifelong education dated 10th September 2015. It must include: applicant's name, name list of U3A programmes/courses realised by the applicant in the respective period, data on each individual U3A programme/course realised by the applicant in the respective period, i.e. annotation of a U3A programme/course containing a brief description of the form, content, and extent of the studies and programme/course classes; information necessary to determine the value of coefficient K1, information necessary to determine the value of coefficient K2, information necessary to determine the value of coefficient K3, information necessary to determine the value of coefficient K4, number of participants in the courses. It must also contain: the total number of direct education with a lecturer/teacher in the U3A programme/course, stating only the course with at least 12 hours of direct active classes; the number of hours in the virtual form of education is defined in the course annotation; the amount of participant's fee for the studies in a U3A course.

3.2 Italy

In Italy, national institutions, ministries and governmental agencies are not directly involved in supporting and funding educational activities for seniors.

These activities are mainly funded at a local level, decentralised, by regional and local authorities (Regioni, Province, Città). Through the emissions of calls and proposals, local authorities support specific projects of "voluntary sector" organisations (no-profit associations, seniors centers and Universities of the Third Age) experienced in the education field.

Depending on the donor and project many educational opportunities are free for elders (like the ones FMD proposed with the "Grandparents on the Internet" project). Still, some Universities of the third Age for example propose a wide palette of activities where some of them need a small contribution. Other organisation might just ask for annual membership as a form a contribution to be able to participate for free at the activities.

3.3 Portugal

Regarding to non formal education there are several programs along the year, that are funded for governmental authorities or for private enterprises. Through the emissions of calls and proposals, national authorities and private enterprises support specific projects of "social sector" organisations (no-profit associations, seniors centers and Universities of the Third Age) experienced in the education field. The most part of the calls for non formal education of Seniors are addressed to ICT literacy. The other projects who are addressed to seniors



are in most part for social sector, like seniors health, social inclusion of seniors who are excluded from society etc.

All of the projects who are financed by the government or by some private donor have to have the participation of seniors free of fees.

The most part of Senior Universities in Portugal 52% depend from associations and non-profit associations and are not supported for any governmental body. So the students have to pay in the most cases less than 15,00€ per month to assist to the courses of their interest. The most part of them let the students assist all classes for less than 15,00€ per month, others make the payment for courses, but never more than 10,00€ per course, per month.

4 Expectations of seniors

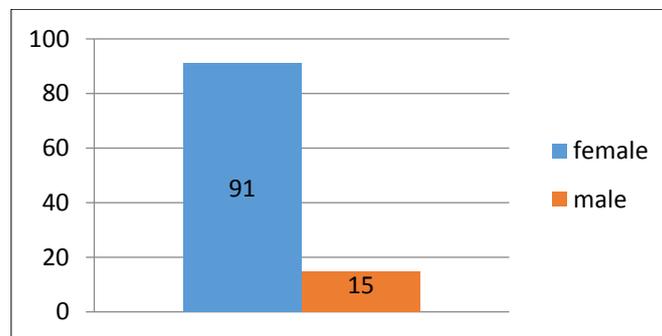
4.1 Czech Republic

4.1.1 Summary of analysis “expectations of seniors”

We are focusing on a summary of analysis “expectations of seniors” and active role (organisers, lecturers, etc.) of seniors in senior education.

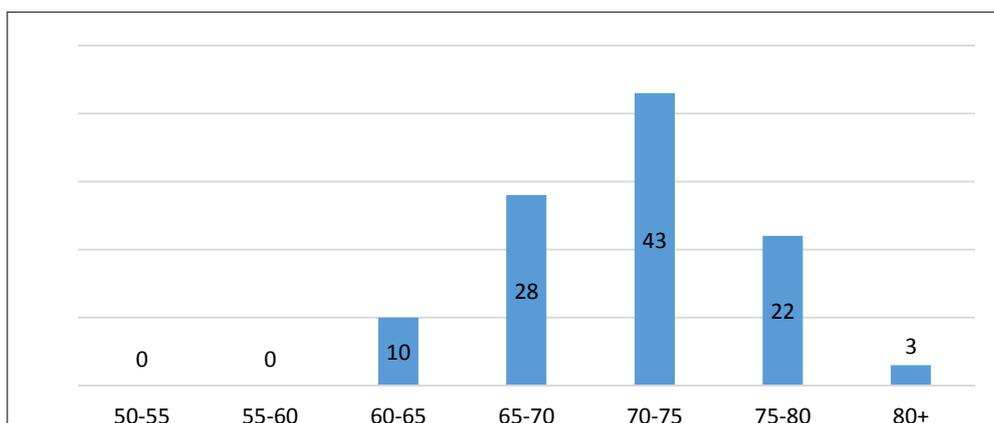
Concerning sex, the participants are mostly women (91 %).

Gender



Most of the participants are aged 70-75 (43 %), followed by aged 65-70 (28 %), and aged 75-80 (22 %). 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.

What age are you?

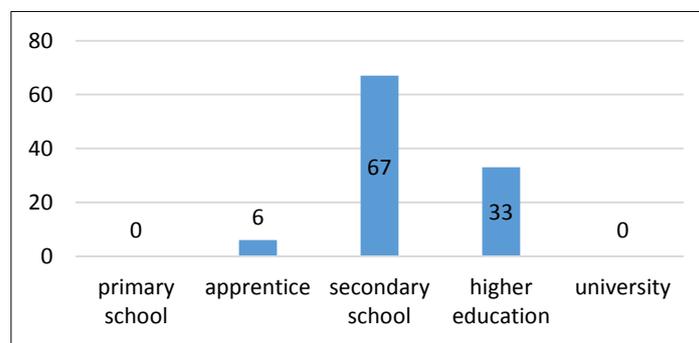




In 2009, we carried out research “Quality of life of seniors”, where we were finding out the offer of the U3A and the age of the U3A students. Compared to this research, we can state that the age of U3A students has risen. In 2009, the most numerous group was aged 60-65, almost a half of the students – 48.98 %. It was the group of retiring people. The second most numerous group was age 65-70. Their reasons were apparently the same as of the former one. The third most numerous group was aged over 75. Those were students who did not have the possibility of being involved in the working process although they still wanted to be socially active and learn something. They did not have to look after their grandchildren either. A very numerous group was aged 50-60, which represented a transition between the active age and the retirement age. The least numerous group was aged 50-55. It concerned mostly actively working people.

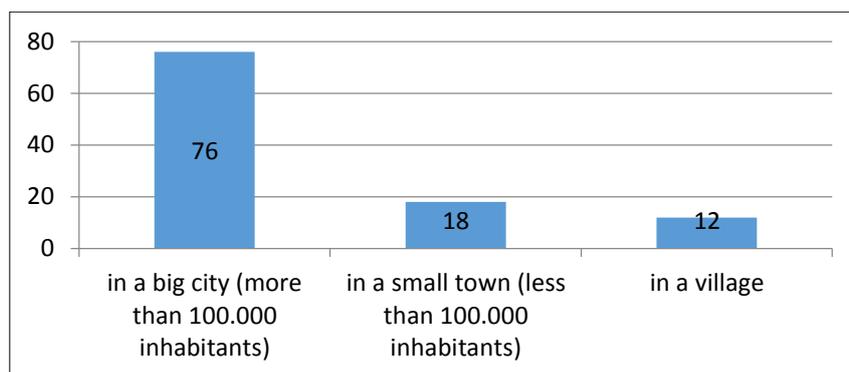
Most of the respondents fall into the group of secondary-school graduates (67 %) followed by university graduates (33 %).

What is your education



Secondary-school respondents broaden their knowledge and interests frequently conditioned by the fact that they could not study at a university their field of interest or at all during the past regime. U3A respondents/students mostly live in big cities (76 %) followed by towns up to 100 th. inhabitants (18 %), the smallest group lives in villages (12 %).

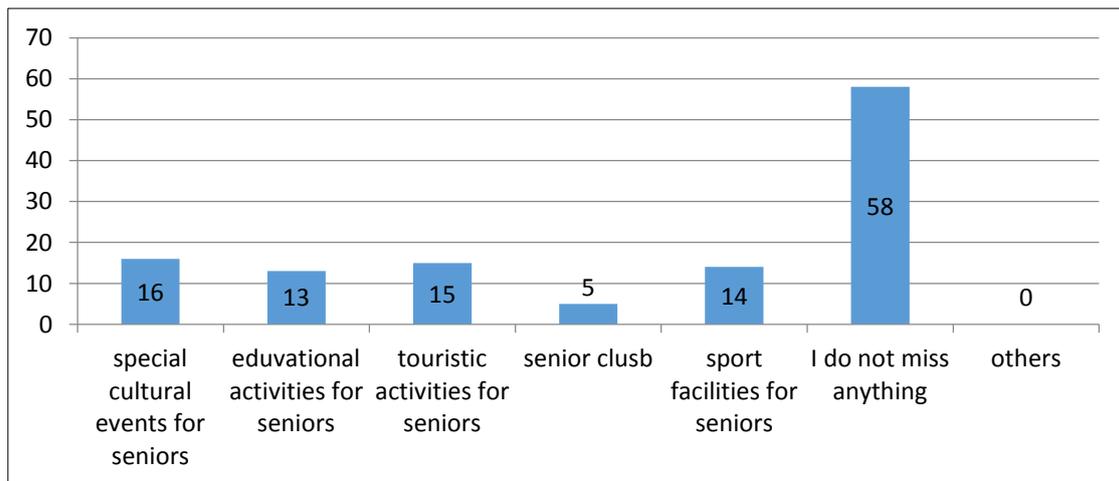
Where do you live?



The question about the possibility of meeting other seniors outside U3A lecturers was answered by 97% of the respondents/students “yes”. More than 50 % of the seniors replied that they miss “nothing”.

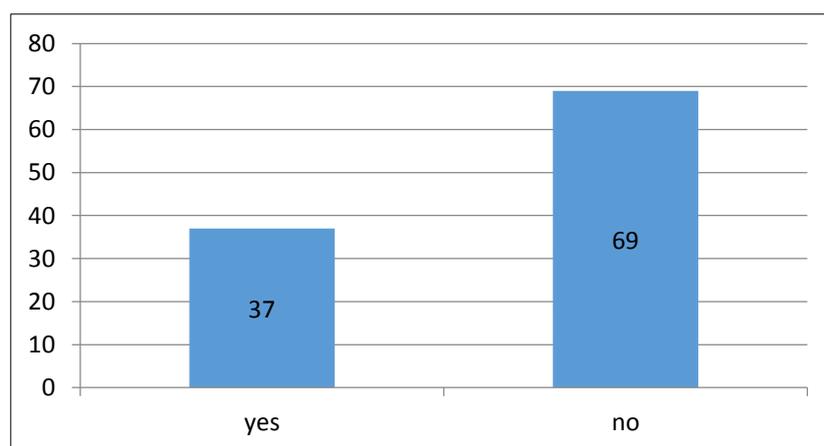


What type of activities do you miss?



The question if U3A respondents/students feel excluded from the society, only few answered that they miss contact with young people. 94 % answered that they miss “nothing”. 35 % of respondents have experience with the help of students. Students were helpful, for example, in courses of computers, health, history, or art. 69 % of U3A participants do not have any experience with students.

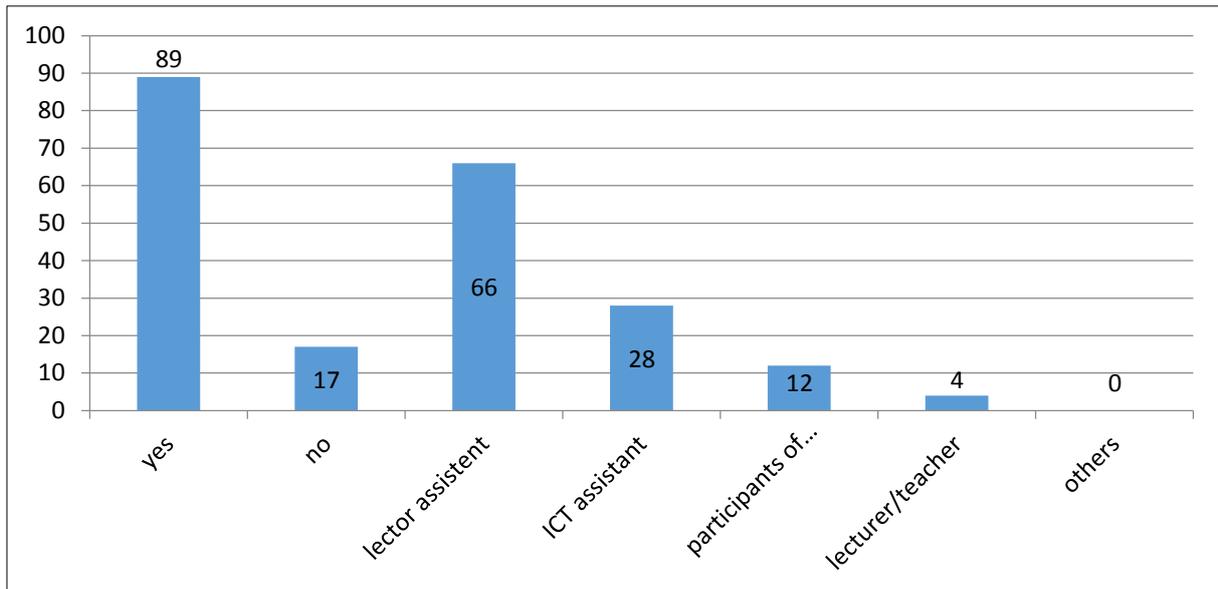
Have you ever attended course/s where students assisted you?



We can see here big reserves and possibilities for intergenerational exchange. According to the U3A participants/students' opinions, students could be engaged as lecturers, teachers, participants of intergenerational dialogue, or help with information technology. Only a small part of the respondents (17 %) cannot imagine their active participation the education.

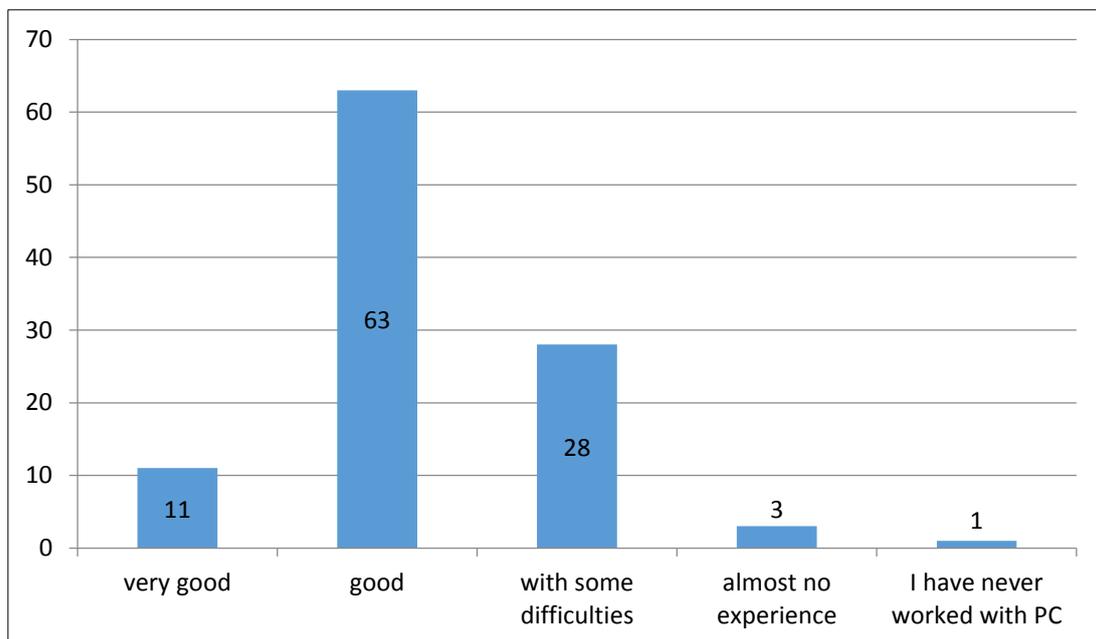


Would you like to have the youth involved in the classes? If yes, which role should they have?



Work with the Internet and a PC is mastered well by 74 % of the respondents, 36 % with difficulties or not at all. The question about their interest in improving their work with the Internet and a PC, 75 % of the U3A respondents/students answered positively, 25 % negatively.

How do you feel with a PC and the Internet?



They would like to improve (according to the order on the answer scale) in: work with photographs, everything, work with videos, creation and editing web pages, work with multimedia, presentations, work with e-mail, creation of tables, work with maps, work with the Internet, and work with Word in general.

According to the scale, the participants are most interested in courses (based on experience from their past courses):

- natural and cultural monuments with excursion,
- geography,



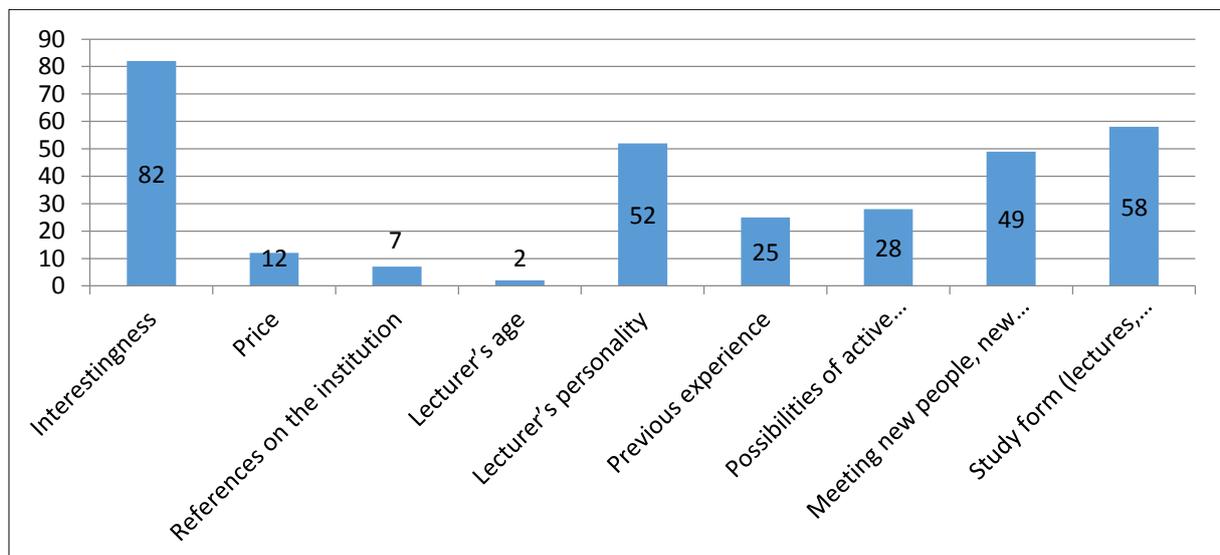
- medicine – health – security,
- economy – finances,
- physics – mathematics – natural sciences,
- psychology – sociology – other social sciences,
- visual art – music – artistic profession,
- history – philosophy,
- information technology: computers – internet – smartphones,
- media – communication,
- sports, games, recreation, dance,
- theatre, film,
- politics, law,
- languages,
- environment,
- agriculture – gardening – animal care,
- memory practicing,
- others: tourism, textile production, lectures of doctors.

If we compare this offer with the above-mentioned research in 2009, the offer has been narrowed, the preferences have changed. In 2009, the first place was taken by work with a computer, informatics, use of the Internet, mobile phones, new banking, mail services, and communication. There were also topics that are now gone: detergents for households, nuclear power stations and their safety, biotechnology. Topics which can be found in our research from 2017/2018 remain in long term. The interest in health topics is new.

The choice of a course is influenced by (according to the order stated by the participants):

- course interestingness,
- study form (lecturers, studies over the Internet, excursions),
- lecturer's personality,
- meeting new people – new social contacts,
- possibility of active participation in the U3A,
- previous experience,
- price,
- references on the lecturer.

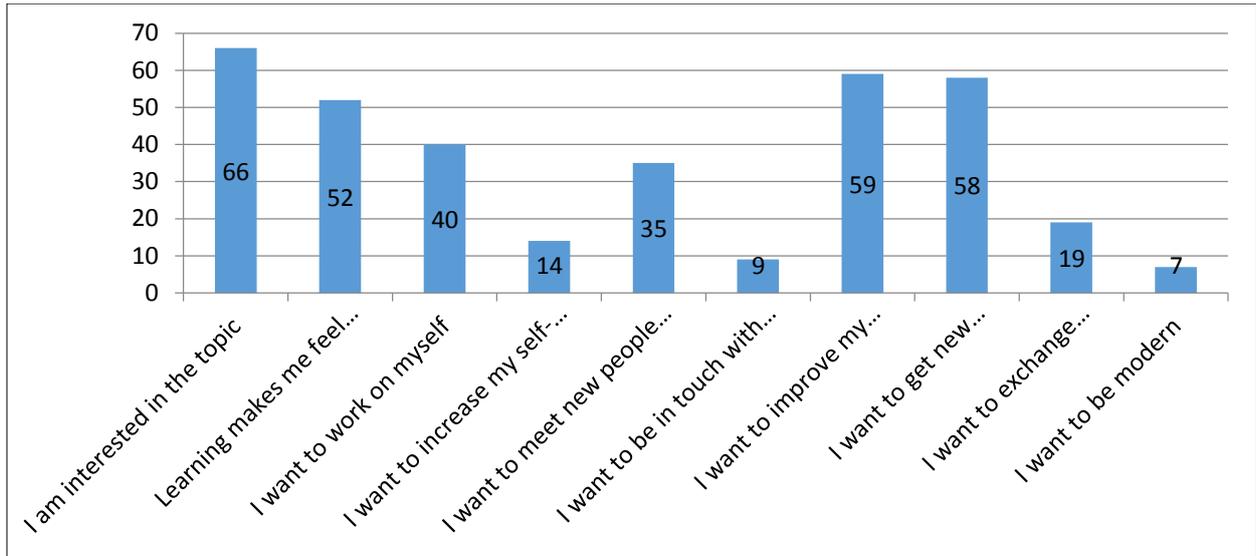
What is important for you when choosing a U3A course?





The most common reasons for acquiring new knowledge are: interest in the selected topic, better memory, acquisition of new findings, being in contact with people, making new friends. The stated reasons for U3A studies primarily include social reasons – meeting new people, interest in information technology, which might be fuelled by the pressure of this time to be “modern”, the “possibility of intergenerational dialogue” placed among the first as well. The interest in the “possibility of having a thought about the history of family and own biographic story” was only average. We reckon that numerous respondents either know their family identity from previous courses or they are not aware of the importance of fulfilling the meaning of life.

What are the reasons that you want to learn something new?

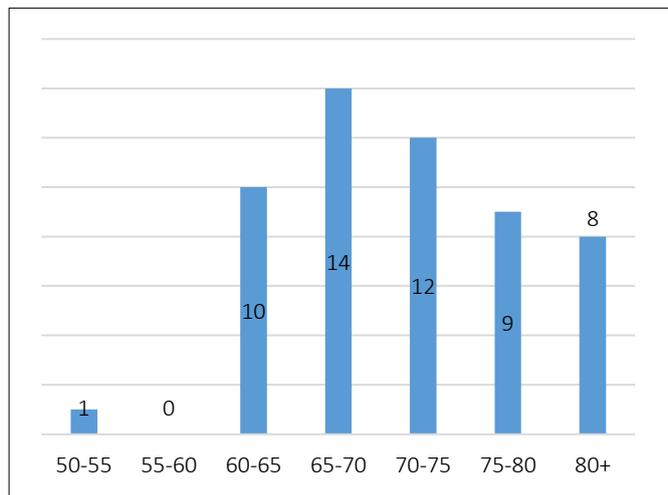


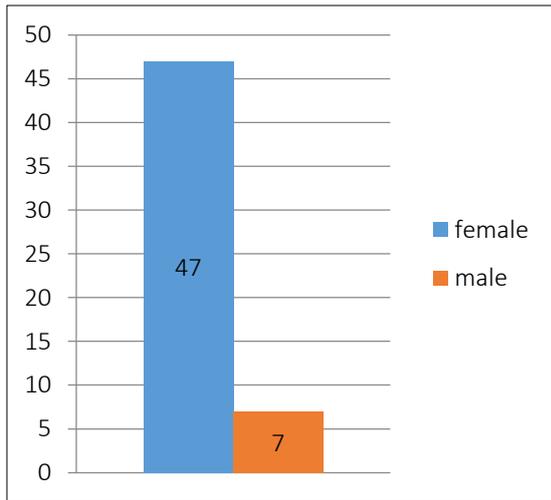
4.2 Italy

This paragraph presents the results of the questionnaires filled out by sixty seniors. The questionnaire on the Senior Education in Italy aimed to collect seniors expectations on the ISEV training course.

In the first two questions, participants were asked to provide information on their gender and age.

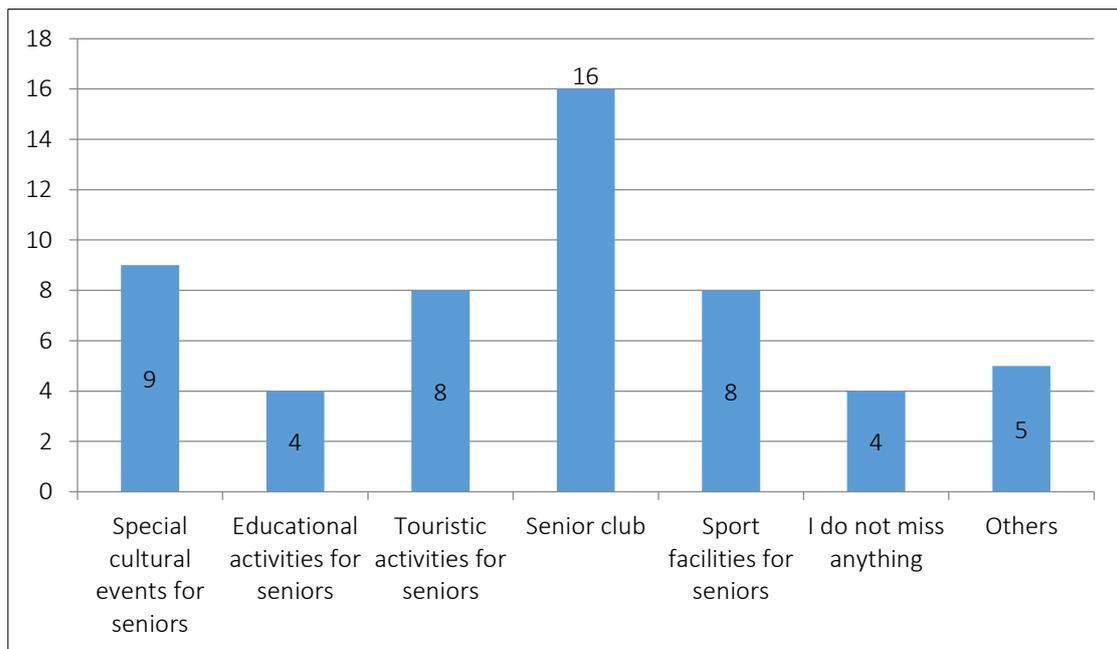
Gender & Age





The next question was about the type of activities they miss. Here, 16 seniors answered “seniors club”.

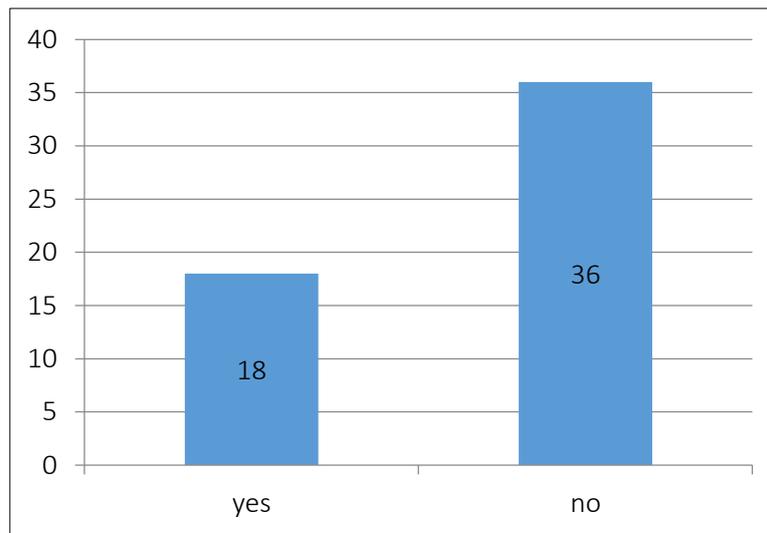
What type of activities do you miss?



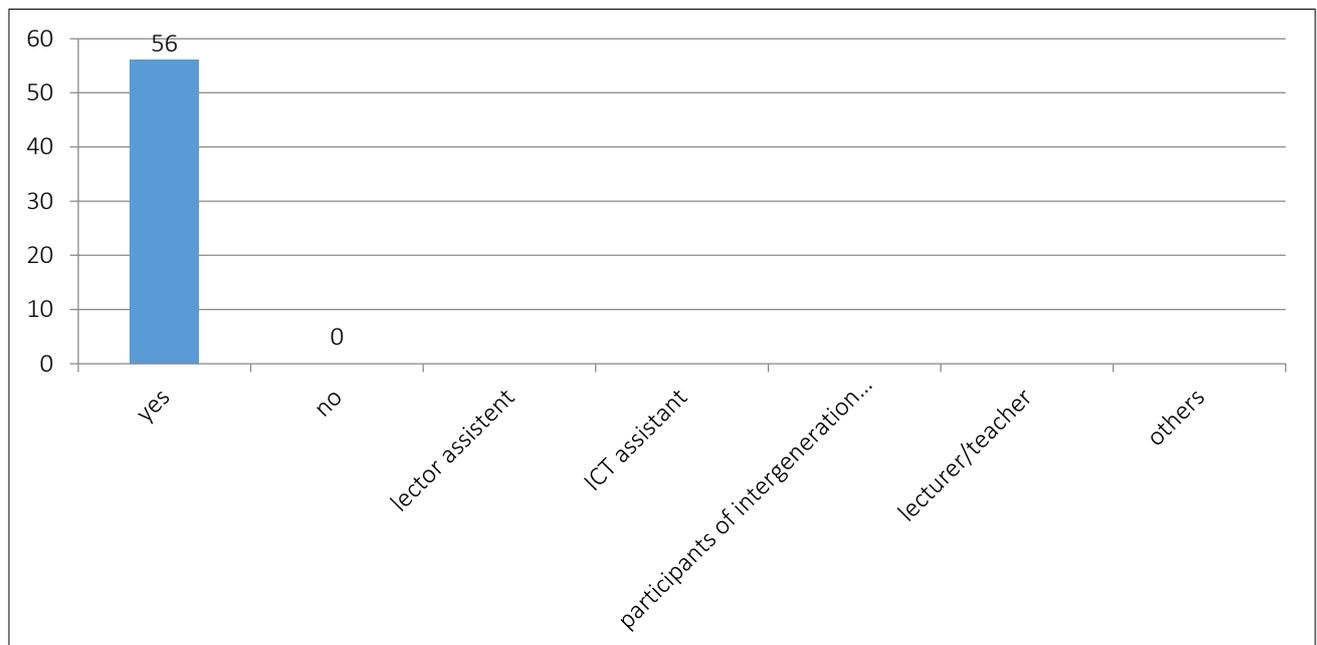
Subsequently, participants were asked if they ever attended courses where students assisted them and if they like to have the youth involved in the classes.



Have you ever attended course/s where students assisted you?

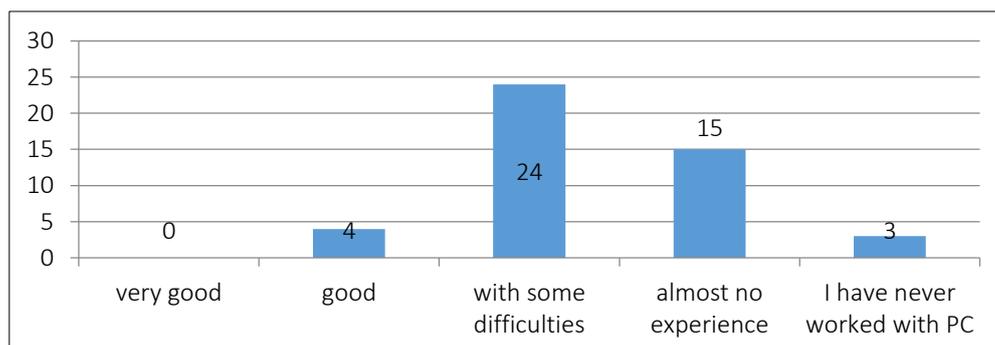


Would you like to have the youth involved in the classes? If yes, which role should they have?



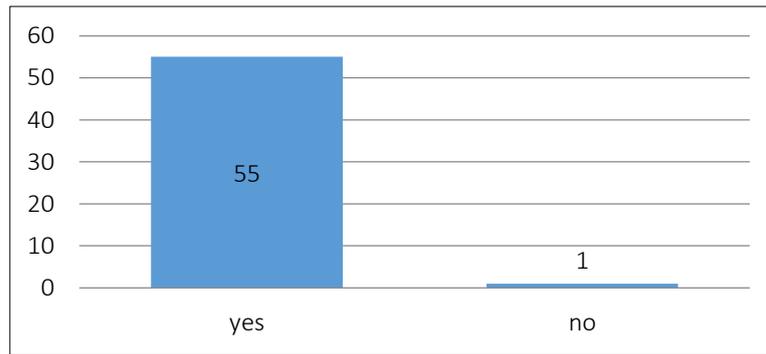
The next questions regarded their confidence with PC and Internet and the desire to improve their competences in this field.

How do you feel with a PC and the Internet?





Would you like to improve your work with a PC and the Internet?

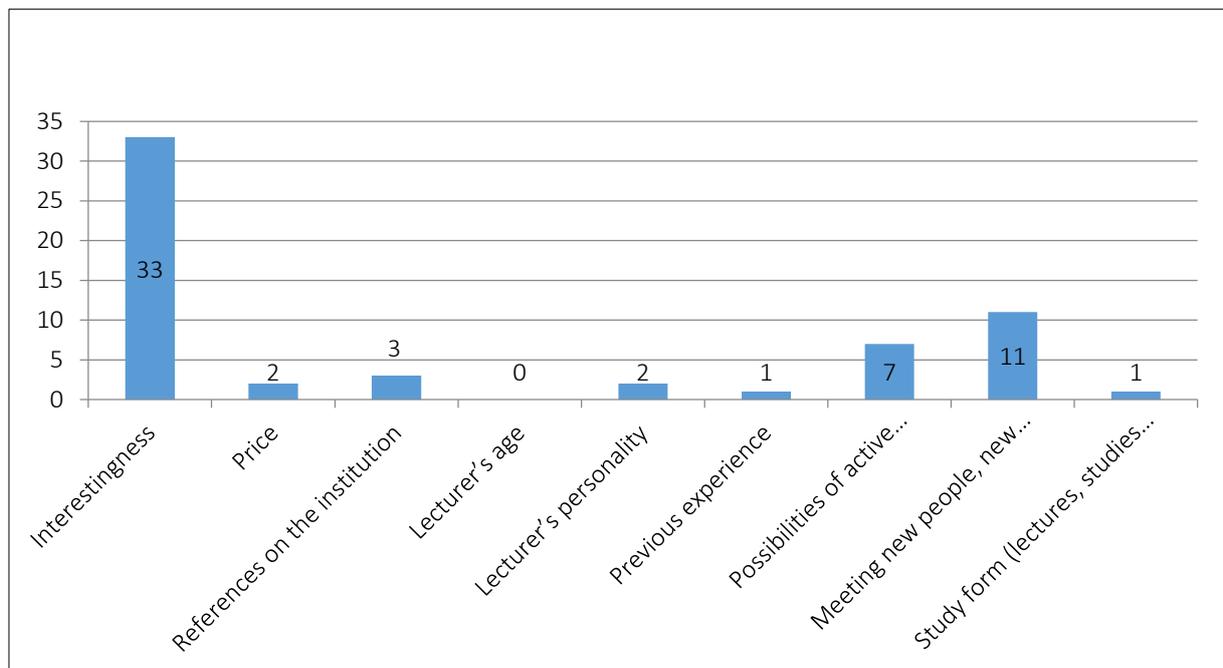


Regarding the topics, the more interesting are:

- Natural and cultural monuments with excursion
- Geography
- Literature
- Medicine, health, security
- Psychology, sociology and other social sciences
- History and Philosophy
- Media and Communication
- Sport, games, recreation, dance
- Politics and law
- Languages

Regarding the question “What is important for you when choosing a U3A course, the majority of participants answered “Interestingness”.

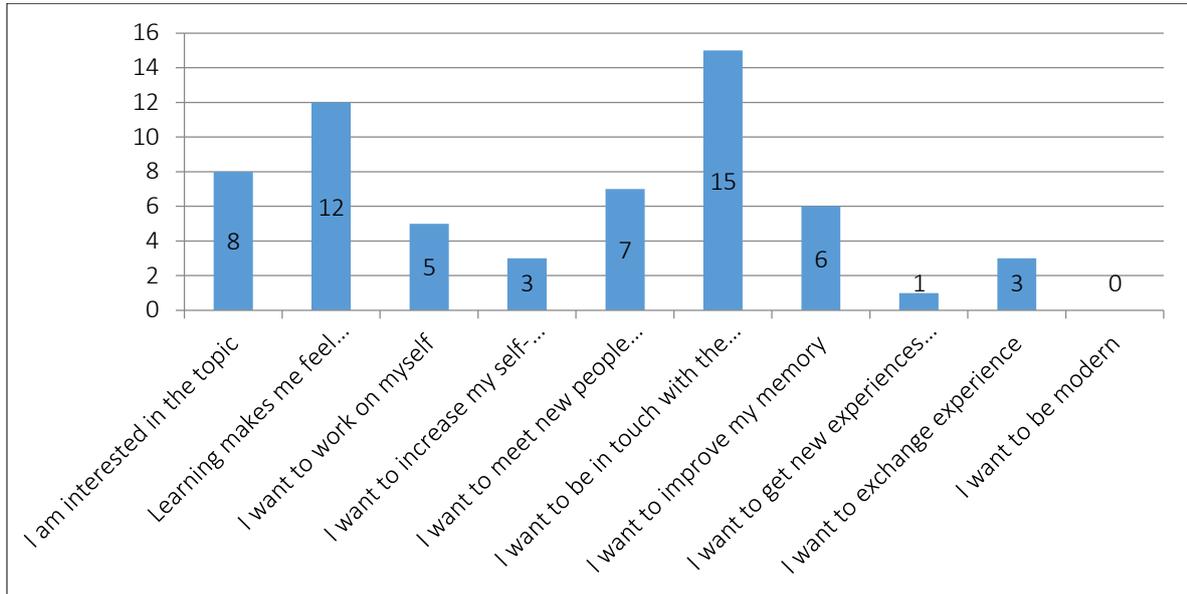
What is important for you when choosing a U3A course?



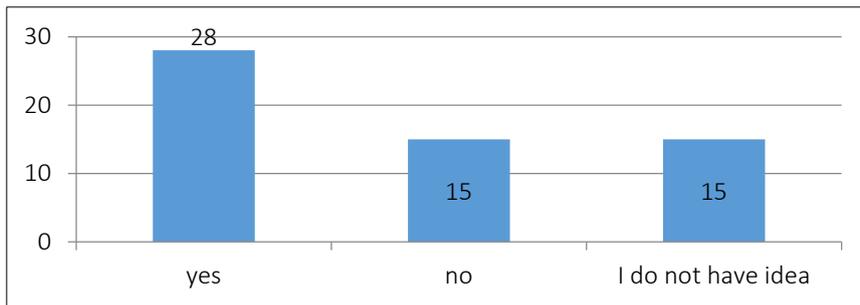
As concern the reasons for what they want to learn something new, the majority of answers were: “I want to be in touch with the young generation” and “Learning makes me feel satisfied”.



What are the reasons that you want to learn something new?



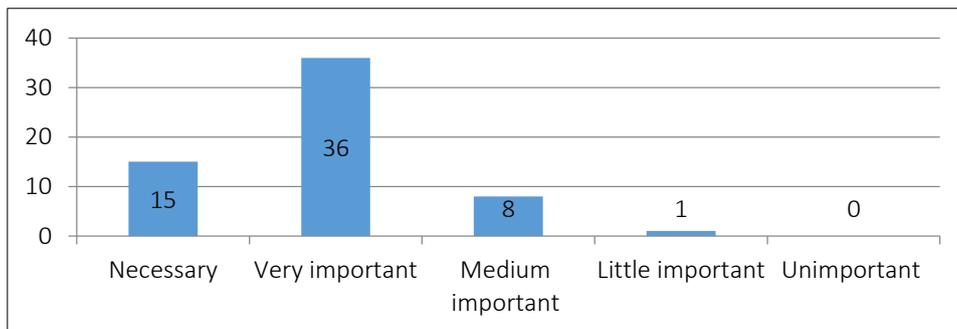
*Can you imagine that you would actively participate in education?
(create/plan/organise/teach own courses)?*



Participants were also asked to describe their best motivation to education in U3A and the answers more popular were: “Meeting new people”, “Possibility of intergeneration dialogue with young people” and “Possibility of thinking about the history of our family and my own biography story”.

The last question of the questionnaire was “How do you evaluate the possibility to study in U3A for your quality of life?” and the majority of participants answered “Very important”.

How do you evaluate the possibility to study in U3A for your quality of life?

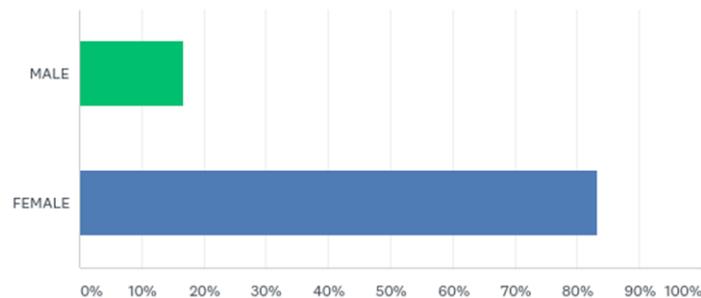




4.3 Portugal

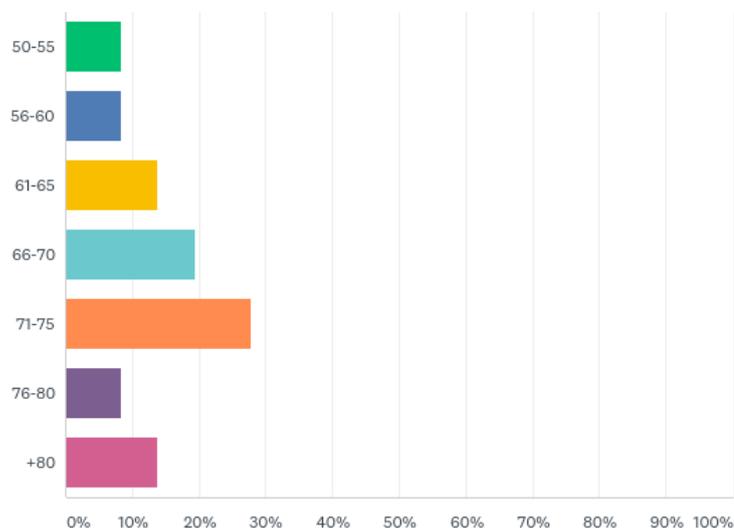
The methods we used for initial data collecting were surveys, informal interviews and observation. These research methods are qualitative and intended to explore interesting topics for these research and advance a holistic understanding of the participant. Surveys were used with older people; informal interviews for the younger group; observations of both groups were registered during the intergenerational learning activities. Surveys were applied prior to the courses, when the older participants made their registration in the project, and were used for assemble personal data, levels of technology practice and the importance of intergenerational activities for them. The interviews were conducted in order to gather information regarding attitudes, opinions and feelings related to ICT, intergenerational learning and solidarity and active ageing. In the informal interviews we try to guide it to get to know what they think about intergenerational learning and solidarity. In the Surveys we try to identify the motivation and importance to use ICT in everyday situations; identify approaches that facilitate intergenerational learning with ICT; Identify attitudes that can be improved through active ageing and solidarity between generations and identify preferences concerning to subjects to be learned. The observation during the sessions enabled to distinguish behaviors and attitudes of participants regarding intergenerational learning with ICT. Findings Surveys Through the personal data we found that female participants are in majority (83%).

Gender



Older adults are in the age group between 66 and 75 years of age, the average age being 63,69 years.

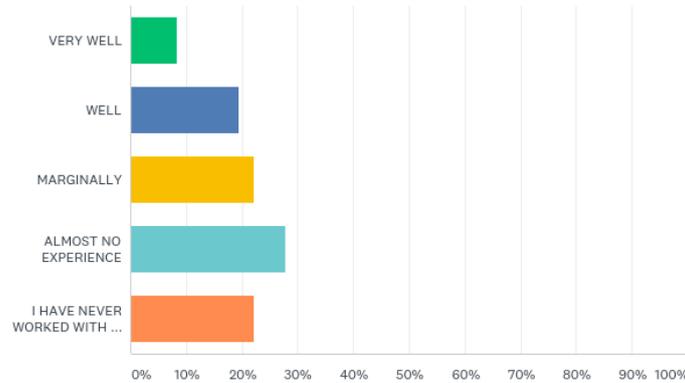
Age





100% participants are retired. Concerning the main reason that led them to participate in this project, everybody said: learn to use ICT and share experiences and knowledge. Nevertheless, they all valued the importance of active ageing, socialize and engage with different generations. In the group of questions about ICT, we found that 46% have computer equipment with Internet connection at home but the frequency of ICT use (less than once a week) is low, because they don't have almost no experience in ICT (29%).

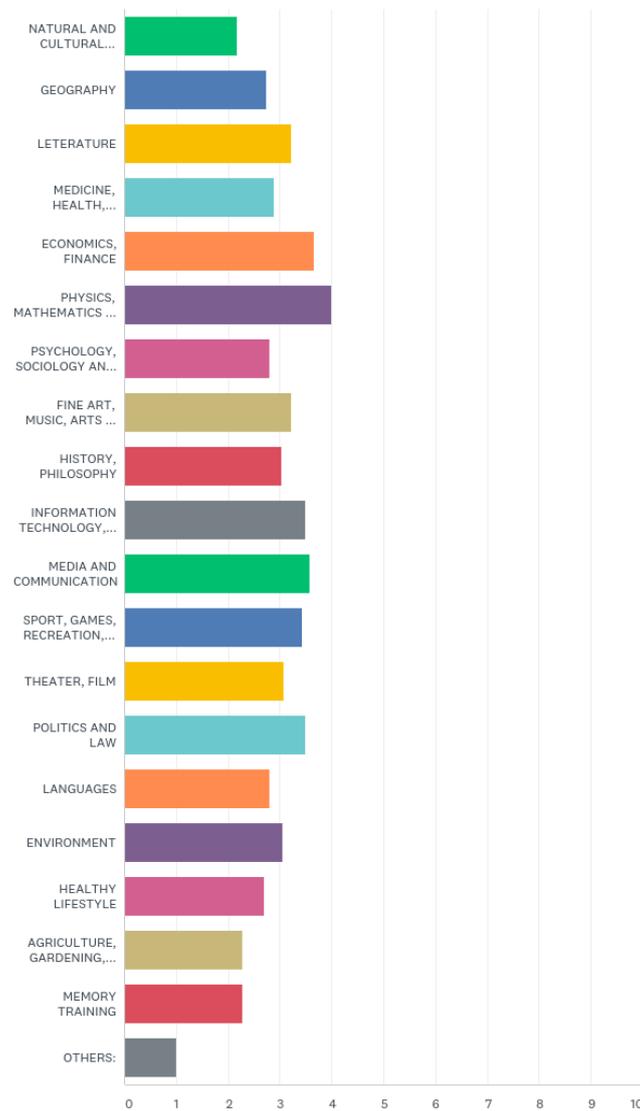
Do you master work with a PC and the Internet?



Older adults that want to improve training in ICT represent 48% and 52% don't think they need to improve their training in ICT, the most important issues are Physics, Mathematics, Politics, Environment and art.



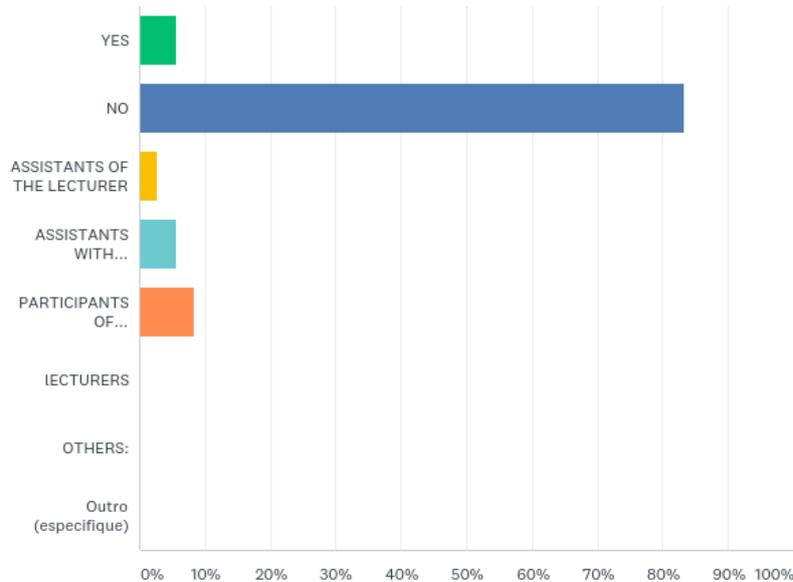
Which topic is interesting for you



Concerning to the engagement of youth, 85% think that young's shouldn't be involved, and when involved less than 10% think they could act as participants.

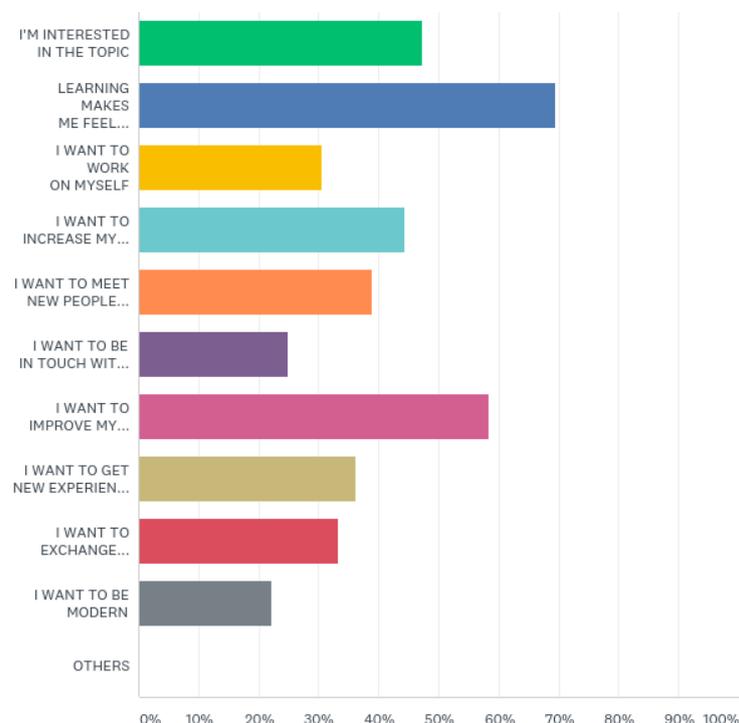


Would you prefer a course where students would be engaged? If yes, which role should they have?



When asked what is important when chose a course the main important is meeting new people more or less aside with the interestingness of the subject. The main reasons to learn something new are more than 70% (learning makes me feel good) and more than 50% won't to improve their knowledge.

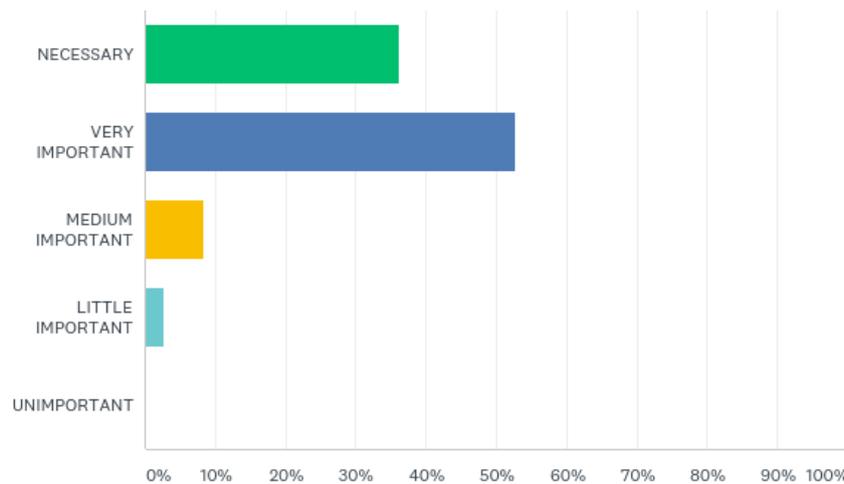
What are the reasons that you want to learn something new?



More than 75% don't imagine actively involved in participate, create, planning or organizing anything related to adult education, so, more than 90% don't miss that possibility. Most part of the persons describe the deepening of knowledge as what describes best the reason for them to participate in adult education. More than 50% consider that is very important the attendance of Senior University for their quality of life, and 40% think that is really necessary.



How do you evaluate the possibility to study in U3A for your quality of life



Observation According to the analysis and data interpretation of observation results, we identified relevant inferences to understand learning stimuli, learning modes, learning interests, learning barriers and intergenerational learning process. About learning interests, older people would like to acquire competences in online communications (email and chat), Internet (navigation and information research), reading online newspapers and news rather than watching videos, seeing photos, social networking, play computer games, use word processing and presentations. Non-formal learning environment is promising to different modes of learning. It means that older people learn at their own time according to their interests and needs, with the help of young or starting to discover themselves asking whenever they need young help. Although motivation and willingness to learn, we recognized some barriers that difficult ICT learning, such as, the need for technology to adapt to older rather than older adapting to technology. Some older are not assiduous because of health problems or family obligations and it is necessary to repeat the same activity many times. However, not having a computer with an Internet connection for practice at home, is the principal reason; nevertheless, older participants continue motivated to learn. Lifelong learning can be a solution for it Innovative approaches and policies aimed at encouraging intergenerational solidarity Cooperation among generations contribute to cohesive and sustainable societies. Despite the opinions of older people who don't won't young people in the class helping them, unless they are the teacher. Intergenerational learning process is very positive.

Conclusion

Education provides an opportunity for older people to continue learning and to share their knowledge and experience, while also offering the opportunity to engage with other generations. This study illustrates how non-formal learning opportunities by intergenerational activities can contribute to outcome measures of wellbeing, to help assess life experiences and skills, increase comprehension between generations and have an impact positively on intergenerational relationships. Intergenerational programs constitute social vehicles that create purposeful and ongoing exchange of resources and learning among older and younger generations. In a nutshell, it is about 'intergenerational engagement' – the full range of ways in which young people and older adults. Its interact, support, and provide care for one another.

So, it is necessary to foster the necessary conditions so that all people, throughout their existence, can embark on learning paths that allow them to permanently develop their physical, cognitive and social skills and abilities. Those who attend senior universities perceive aging in a more positive and optimistic way, are aware of their "weaknesses" (especially physical), but also of their potentialities. According to Martín (2007: 67),



"education should serve to make the transition to this new state or situation easier", that is, the natural process of aging can be successful through the learning paths adopted throughout life. In this sense, professionals who exercise (directly or indirectly) their activity among seniors should value their well-being (physical, cognitive, social, among other aspects) and the positive occupation of free time, looking at them as active individuals, with constant goals and lifelong projects. Nonetheless, is it possible for the senior population to discover different ways of occupying time and contact with new experiences, not only through senior universities, but also of other entities, such as the so-called "old age" homes or day centers? Will the activities and learning acquired at senior universities not be able to align with the day care centers' competencies (for example), creating and empowering institutions that meet the expectations, interests and needs of the entire senior population, regardless of your educational level and / or economic and social condition?