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SILVER CIVIC EDUCATION PROJECT

OPEN GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

Dear Educators,

We invite you all - *educators, teachers and animators who work with seniors and look for new tools, methods, good European practices and inspiration in their work with older people* to read our "**Silver Civic Education**" **Open Guide for Educators**. We also recommend the Guide to all those who are just starting to work with seniors or are just about to start.

At the beginning, a few words about the "Silver Civic Education" project (SCE) implemented by three partner organizations from Poland, Bulgaria and Portugal in 2017-2019 within which the Guide was written.

The aim of the project was to prepare tools for educators and trainers from three project participants' countries who will be involved in activation and education of people over 60 in an attractive and effective way, and preparation of a group of seniors-volunteers ready to organize activation activities in their age group – with support of educators - practitioners.

The basis of the SCE was the diagnosis that the most important reason for exclusion of the elderly is insufficient communication skills understood very broadly. This category also includes: difficulties in understanding media and official messages and documents, lack of ability to reach necessary information, lack of digital skills and the ability to use foreign languages and formulate messages tailored to the needs of the modern recipient.

Broad activation and educational opportunities, according to the project staff, give classes in civic journalism using the Internet and social media. They enable preparing an attractive educational program, involving the majority of basic skills, as well as cross-cutting, e.g. civic and digital competences, critical and creative thinking skills. In our opinion - work on the development of communicative competence of this age group requires educators with specific skills, experience and psychological qualifications (personality).

Exchange of experience and joint work of partners allowed to prepare the **Open Guide for Educators** containing relevant information, recommendations, opinions, observations developing their knowledge and conclusions learned from the exchange of European experiences. The guide is practical and open, so that it can be supplemented with the experience of other organizations and we hope it will become a compendium of knowledge useful for all European entities operating in the field of education of older people.

The participants of the SCE project, along with educators from partner organizations, were seniors who were actively involved in the process of examining the real educational needs of older people in their communities (we assumed that effective activation of seniors should be preceded by a diagnosis of their educational needs and we carried out such a diagnosis within the project) and in the educational part of the project.

36 people over 60 years of age from three countries took part in the preparation of the Guide along with educators from partner organizations. They participated in the preparation of survey questionnaires, conducting research on the educational needs of older people in their environment, and gave opinions and "tested" recommendations, tools and examples of activities to adapt them to the needs and capabilities of seniors and ensure an appropriate level of attractiveness and participation.

As part of mixed visits, they also participated in social journalism training, elements of sociology and research methodology, necessary to conduct surveys and interviews, the basics of old age psychology, social gerontology and psychological aspects of learning in the elderly. Together with the educators from the project staff, they worked on the conclusions from the research. Participation of older people from three different countries in the process was an opportunity to separate the local or national specificity from what may be universal. Thanks to this, the Guide can be used not only for educators from Poland, Portugal and Bulgaria, but also for teachers and trainers from other European countries.

In the **Guide**, we write about psychological aspects of senior education, the process of getting to know our students, a profile of the educator (as seniors see you), methodology used, along with examples of good practices and a set of tools for conducting activities for seniors.

Our **Guide** is a response to new social conditions and challenges. Demographic changes, the way they are reflected in society and their impact on education have a particular impact on this new situation. That is why new educational needs and challenges arise, mainly related to new technologies and the revolution in communication. All the world's resources are close at hand, the ease of communication between people and access to all information and opinions thanks to ICT is increasing. However, the question arises - are new technologies creating a wall or a bridge between generations? And what are the new educational needs for seniors?

We wish you pleasant reading and interesting inspirations.

The Silver Civic Education Project team ©

PART TWO: OPEN GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

Section 1 Psychological aspects and considerations for senior learning

1. Social Gerontology and Psychology of Aging

According to Rainer (2014), sociological theories take into account various dimensions of ageing: the biological age, psychic and social age, whereby ageing is to be viewed as an important dimension of social structures.

Gerontology is the study of the social, psychological, cognitive, and biological aspects of aging. Gerontologists include researchers and practitioners in a very wide range of fields, from biology, nursing, public health, and medicine, to economics, architecture, housing, and anthropology. Gerontology is distinguished from **geriatrics**, which is the branch of medicine that specialises in the treatment of existing disease in older adults.

Social gerontology is a multidisciplinary sub-field that specialises in studying or working with older adults. Social gerontologists may have degrees or training in social work, nursing, psychology, sociology, demography, or other social science disciplines. They are responsible for educating, researching, and advancing the broader causes of older people. *Social gerontology deals with advanced age and old people, who should be (regardless of age) active and productive, integrated into the life of the society, not as a supported group.*

Geropsychology is a field within psychology devoted to the study of aging and the provision of clinical services for older adults. As researchers, geropsychologists expand knowledge of the normal aging process and design and test psychological interventions that address problems that commonly arise as people age. As health care practitioners, *psychologists help older persons and their families overcome problems, enhance well-being, and achieve maximum potential during later life. In another words, the goal of aging psychology is to study patterns of behavioral change associated with advancing age, distinguishing those that are typical of old age from those that are shared by other ages.* Common beliefs about the aging process are often a consequence of negative stereotypes: simplified and biased opinions about the elderly.

But the main and fundamental question remains: **What is age?**

Different researchers emphasize on different perspectives (Fonseca, 2006; Rossell, Herrera and Rico, 2004):

- **Biological age** (excellent perspective that values the clinical domain of the human being in different systems, organs, etc.);
- **Chronological age** (an excellent perspective that values the human memory in the archive of events as if a schedule were posed);

- **Psychological age** (an excellent perspective that emphasizes the psychological capacities that individuals use to adapt to environmental changes, such as feelings, cognitions, motivations, memory, intelligence, and other skills that underpin personal control and self-esteem, all this in comparison with the other individuals with the same chronological age);
- **Sociocultural age** (an excellent perspective that values set of social roles that individuals adopt relative to other members of society and the culture to which they belong);
- **Functional age** (an excellent perspective that values the unification of the psychological age, social biological and chronological age, and that in its general competition the human being responds to what is expected as a functional being);
- Some authors even refer the **spiritual age**. But in what sense?

Most gerontologists assume the age of 60 or 65 as an indicator of the onset of “old age” (Stuart-Hamilton, 2000/2002).

Another important aspect considered by gerontologists is the frequent sharp chronological demarcation in the general group of aging individuals, establishing comparisons between “old-young”, aged 60-75, “old-aged”, aged between 75-85 years old, and “old-older” over 85-year-olds (Spar & La Rue, 2002/2005).

Despite this terminology, which allows us to visualize the phenomenon in different lenses or perspectives, again we underline the **fundamental question - what is an elder; old man; aged; ancient; old-aged person?**

For some researchers they are individuals so named in a given sociocultural context, because of the differences they exhibit in appearance, strength, functionality, productivity and performance of primary social roles compared to non-elderly adults. *Accepting this concept/ answer, where does this lead us?*

Structural phase-shift that becomes an important source of (negative) stereotyping for the elderly. For example, the increase in the number of elderly people in the population causes an increase in the costs of health services and social security, that working people in their active age have to support those increasing tax burden.

Other researchers emphasize aging as a process and in that sense they underline aging, or senescence, as an universal process, genetically determined for individuals of the species, which is why it is also called normal aging.

Again and accepting their perspective on where aging is focused as a natural process, another question that pops up is how this process develops or happens?

Not being our intention or purpose to make and present a review of the literature on the subject, however, very briefly, in the existence of a multiplicity of theories, they can be organized into three broad groups: theories biological and biomedical (e.g., biological theories of senescence, stress theories, neuropsychological theories); psychological theories (e.g., cognitive, psychosocial, daily competence); social and contemporary

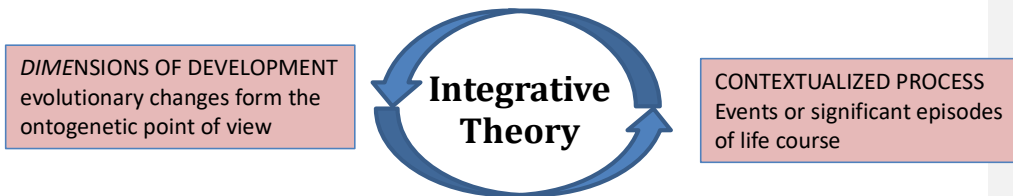
Perspective theories (eg, anthropological, constructivist, political-economic) (Cristofalo et al., 1999; Oliveira, 2005).

From this panoply of theories, we will only approach a theory according to the following groups of theories:

- Sociological Perspective - EVOLUTIONARY TASKS / ACTIVITY THEORY
- Psychological Perspective - PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY OF TRANSITION
- Contemporary Perspective (integrative) - THEORY OF BEHAVIORAL OR LEARNED DEPENDENCE

CONTEMPORARY THEORIES - Theory of behavioral or learned dependence, according to M. Baltes

Theory that belongs to the paradigm considers multiple levels and dimensions of development, seen as an interactive, dynamic and contextualized process. It integrates the notion of the existence of evolutionary changes of ontogenetic base of the paradigm of cycles of life with the ideas of the paradigms of course of life (unique phenomenon experienced individually).



Dependence is not exclusively a function of developmental circumstances from the ontogenetic point of view.

The dependence is mainly behavioral and it's learned because the behaviors involved have a strong probability of being reinforced socially, according to the rules that exist in the social microenvironment.

Behavioral plasticity is the central inspiration of the metatheory of selection, optimization and compensation. It was initially conceived to explain successful old age (Baltes & Baltes, 1990) and is now considered useful in explaining the adaptation of people of all ages. The focus of this metamodel is to know how individuals of all ages allocate and reallocate their internal and external resources in order to optimize resources and the compensation of losses. This paradigm considers multiple levels and dimensions of development, seen as an interactive, dynamic and contextualized process.

Integrates the notion of the existence of evolutionary changes of the ontogenetic basis of the life cycle paradigm with the ideas of life course paradigms. Reflecting the influence of the life course view, the lifelong development paradigm identifies three classes of developmental influences:

1. Influences graded by age, whose performance is stronger in childhood, when it is identified with maturation, and in aging or senescence.
2. Influences graded by history, those that characteristically affect individuals born in the same historical period.
3. Non-normative or idiosyncratic influences, whose time of occurrence is unpredictable, which is why they demand more resources to confront the individual and society.

The dynamic interaction between biological and cultural factors changes throughout life, and there is a different allocation of resources in childhood and old age. In the first, the emphasis is on growth, and on the latter, on maintaining capacity and regulating losses. In a seminal paper published in 1997, Baltes proposed three new general principles regarding the biology-culture dynamics involved in lifelong developmental trajectories.

1. Biological plasticity and genetic fidelity decline with age because nature privileges growth in the pre-reproductive and reproductive phases. By making natural selection in strictly biological terms, these processes favor the continuity of the species.
2. If development is to be extended to advanced ages, there is a need for more and more expressive progress in cultural evolution and the availability of cultural resources. The expansion of the life span, which is now almost at the maximum limit established by the human genome, has only been possible thanks to cultural investments in instruments, housing, technics and work equipment, hi-immunization, antibiotics and other resources to protect against environmental.
3. There are limits to the effectiveness of culture to promote development and rehabilitation of losses and decline associated with old age. Older people are less responsive to cultural resources, since their behavioral plasticity and biological resilience are lower.

Behavioral plasticity is the central inspiration of the metatheory of selection, optimization and compensation, one of the ramifications of the paradigm. It was initially conceived to explain successful old age (Baltes & Baltes, 1990) and is now considered useful in explaining the adaptation of people of all ages. The focus of this metamodel is to know how individuals of all ages allocate and reallocate their internal and external resources in order to optimize resources and compensate for losses.

Selection means the specification and the reduction of the range of alternatives allowed by individual plasticity. It is a requirement and a necessity when resources such as time, energy and capacity are limited. When oriented toward reorganizing the hierarchy and the number of goals, it involves adjusting the level of aspiration and developing new goals, compatible with available resources.

Optimization is associated with the acquisition, application, coordination and maintenance of internal and external resources, aiming at reaching higher levels of operation. It can be accomplished through education, systematic training and social support aimed at cognition, health, athletic ability and skills.

Compensation involves the adoption of alternatives to maintain the operation. Examples of compensation include the use of hearing aids and wheelchairs, the use of visual cues to compensate for spatial orientation problems, and the use of cues to aid verbal memory.

The three mechanisms or mediators are used in all ages, consciously or unconsciously, involving solitary action or carried out with the support of other people, artifacts or institutions.

In old age, the Baltes and Baltes (1990) model of selection, optimization and compensation can be used to explain the paradox of subjective well-being and continuity of functionality, even in the presence of biological and social risks and losses (Fig. 1).

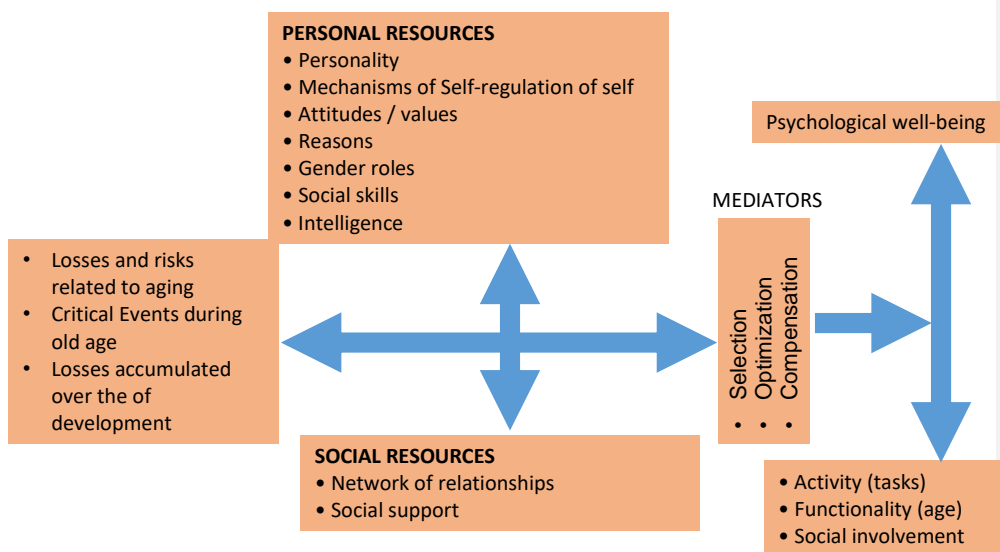


Figure 1. Aging successful. Selection processes, optimization and compensation as mediators of the relationships between losses, accumulated risks and losses, personal and social resources and the adaptation represented by psychological well-being, activity, functionality and social involvement

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecology of Human Development

Bronfenbrenner developed his ecological systems theory in an attempt to define and understand human development within the context of the system of relationships that form the person’s environment. His definition (1986) of the theory is as follows:

The ecology of human development is the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation throughout the life course between an active, growing human being and

the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives. [This] process is affected by the relations between these settings and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded (p. 188).

According to Bronfenbrenner’s initial theory (1989), the environment, is comprised of four layers of systems which interact in complex ways and can both affect and be affected by the person’s development. He later added a fifth dimension that comprises an element of time (Bronfenbrenner,1995). This theory can be extended to model the development of an organization as well.

Each of the four system layers are described below (Figure 2).

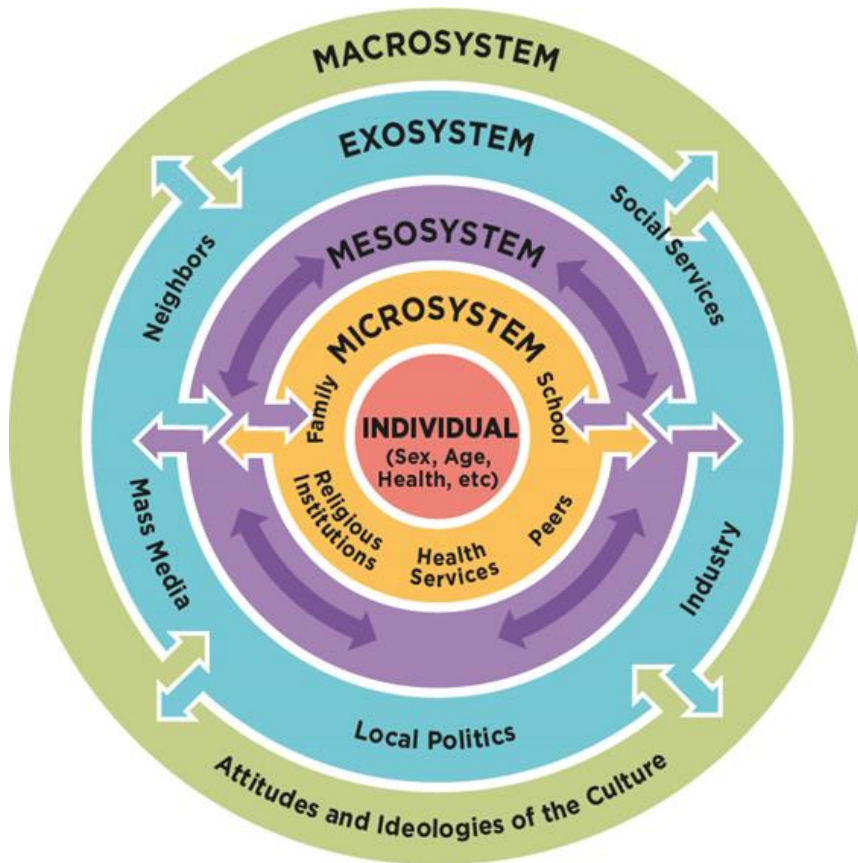


Figure 2. Bronfenbrenner’s initial four system layers

Microsystem

The microsystem is defined as the pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relationships experienced by a developing person in a particular setting with particular physical and material features and containing other persons with distinctive characteristics of temperament, personality, and systems of belief (Bronfenbrenner, 1995, p. 227). In other words, this layer forms a set of structures with which a person has direct contact, and the influences between the developing person and these structures are bidirectional.

The person influences and is influenced by the microsystem.

Mesosystem

The mesosystem, simply stated, comprises the linkages between microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1995, p. 227). Just as the direction of influence between the school/organization and each structure within the microsystem is bi-directional, the mesosystem involves bidirectional influences between these various structures. An example of the mesosystem of an individual school/ organization can be seen in the interactions and dynamics between two of its microsystems, students and parents or work superiors.

Exosystem

The exosystem represents the larger social system, and encompasses events, contingencies, decisions, and policies over which the developing person has no influence. The exosystem thus exerts a unidirectional influence that directly or indirectly impacts the developing person. The exosystem of an individual school might be comprised of such structures as, for example, state regulations, local economics, federal mandates, and local disasters.

Macrosystem

The macrosystem can be thought of as the “social blueprint” of a given culture, subculture, or broad social context and consists of the overarching pattern of values, belief systems, lifestyles, opportunities, customs, and resources embedded therein. This system is generally considered to exert a unidirectional influence upon not only the person but the micro-, meso-, and exosystems as well. The macrosystem of an individual school/organization is embodied not only in the cultural, political, social, and economic climate of the local community, but that of the nation as a whole.

Chronosystem

Although not one of the four system layers per se, the chronosystem represents a time-based dimension that influences the operation of all levels of the ecological systems. The chronosystem can refer to both short- and long-term time dimensions of the individual over the course of a lifespan, as well as the socio-historical time dimension of the macrosystem in which the individual lives.

Section 2 Getting to know your learner

In order to recognize the educational needs of older people, the addressees of our project, in the period February - May 2018, we conducted a *survey in partner countries*. It was used in the diagnostic survey method - a survey technique and a questionnaire, identical for all three countries participating in the project.

Seniors participating in the project were involved in carrying out the research. After appropriate training, a group of a dozen elderly people in each country received surveys, which they distributed in their environment. As part of the project, a total of 622 questionnaires were collected, of which 200 came from Bulgaria, 196 from Poland and 226 from Portugal.

All surveys were properly coded and subjected to a comparative statistical analysis. The calculations were made using the SPSS Statistics 22 program.

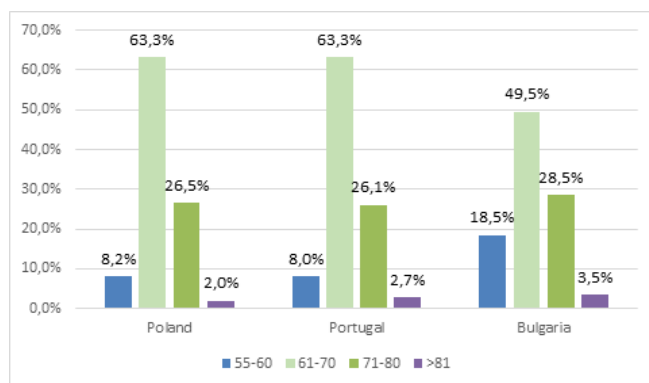
1. CHARACTERISTICS OF EXAMINED SENIORS

Gender

More than a half (55.1%) of the total number of respondents are women - the most represented in the Portuguese sample (65.9%), while men represent 44.9% of all respondents, most often they were represented in Poland (60.2%) . The largest group in each of the partner countries (Bulgaria - 49.5%, Poland - 63.3%, Portugal - 63.3%) were people aged 61-70. Every third respondent (27.0%) was in the 71-80 age range, and 11.4% of the total respondents were people aged 55-60 - most represented by the respondents from Bulgaria (18.5%). The oldest respondents, i.e. people aged 81 and more, accounted for 2.7% of the study participants (chart1).

Age

Chart 1. The respondents age



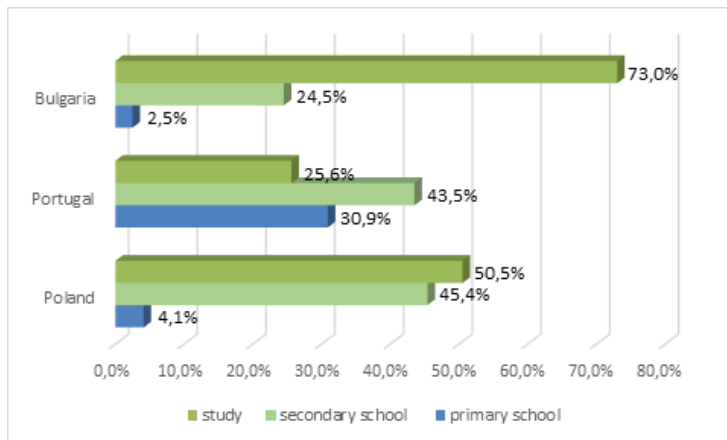
Source: own study.

Education

Almost half of the respondents (48.6%) were people with higher education, 37.8% completed high school or vocational education, while the remaining respondents completed their education at the basic level (chart 2).

Taking into account the specificity of partner countries, it should be emphasized that the highest level of education was represented by people from Bulgaria (73%), then from Poland (50.5%) and from Portugal (25.6%). Attention is also drawn to the fact that among surveyed from Portugal nearly 1/3 were people with primary education.

Chart 2. The respondents level of education



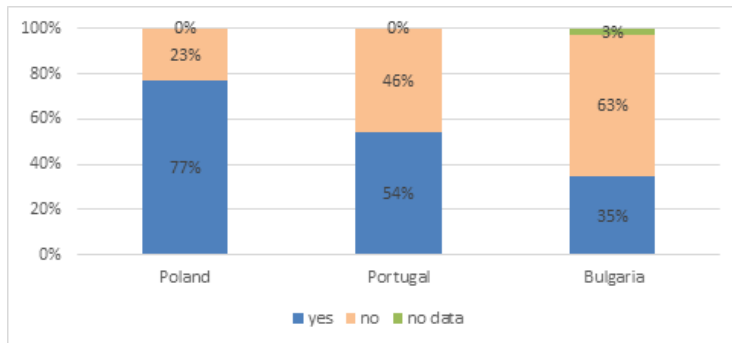
Source: own study.

2. SOURCES AND AREAS OF EDUCATIONAL SENIOR INTERESTS

Participation in educational activities

Starting to diagnose the educational needs of older people, we began by recognizing the participation of older people in the activities addressed to them. As it turned out, over half (55.1%) of all respondents indicated that they are participating and / or have ever participated in such activities. The analysis of the data contained in Chart 3 will help in capturing the specificity of the situation in individual Member States (chart 3).

Chart 3. Taking part in educational activities for seniors



Source: own study

The highest level of seniors involvement in educational activities was recorded in Poland, where over 77% of respondents indicated that they participate / participated in educational activities addressed to them, while the least frequently was answered by respondents from Bulgaria (35.0%).

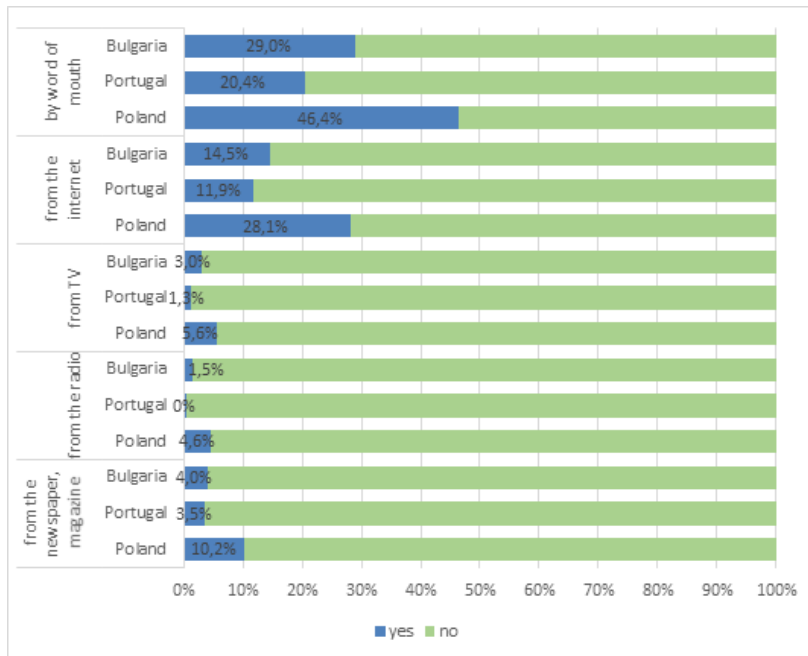
In Portugal, the distribution of commitment to education by seniors and lack of it is similar, i.e. 54% of people participate in educational activities; other people (46%) do not show such involvement ($p < 0.001$).

The resulting distribution of answers is puzzling, especially for seniors from Bulgaria. However, if we recall that among the surveyed Bulgarians, 73.0% had higher education, the presented facts surprised to a lesser extent. In addition, the reason for the low level of educational activity of seniors from Bulgaria may be their age - every fifth respondent in this country is a person aged 55-60. Perhaps these respondents did not yet have the opportunity to take advantage of the educational offer addressed to older people. Perhaps they do not yet fall into this social category.

Information sources about educational activities

The next, identified by us area corresponding to the previous one were sources of information on educational activities addressed to the elderly (chart 4).

Chart 4. Sources of information about educational activities for seniors



Source: own study

The survey showed that the most common source of such information for seniors are their friends (by word of mouth). In turn, the second frequently indicated by the respondents as the information channel was the Internet. These responses were most often marked by Polish seniors, as they were the highest (compared to Portugal and Bulgaria) percentage of people attending education classes addressed to seniors. In addition, 10% of respondents from Poland learned about the educational offer addressed to them from press; 5.6% from TV, and 4.6% from radio. According to research, it is easiest to reach the oldest people by people from their environment, their close relatives and trusted ones. In turn, the high frequency of indications referring to the Internet as a source of information obtained is proof that we are dealing with a new generation of seniors, a generation familiar with new media and a generation that is very heterogeneous in many respects. Therefore, it is reasonable to ask a question about the issues of classes and other educational activities that would be attractive to seniors. This thread was raised during our research (chart 5).

Potential areas of interest for seniors

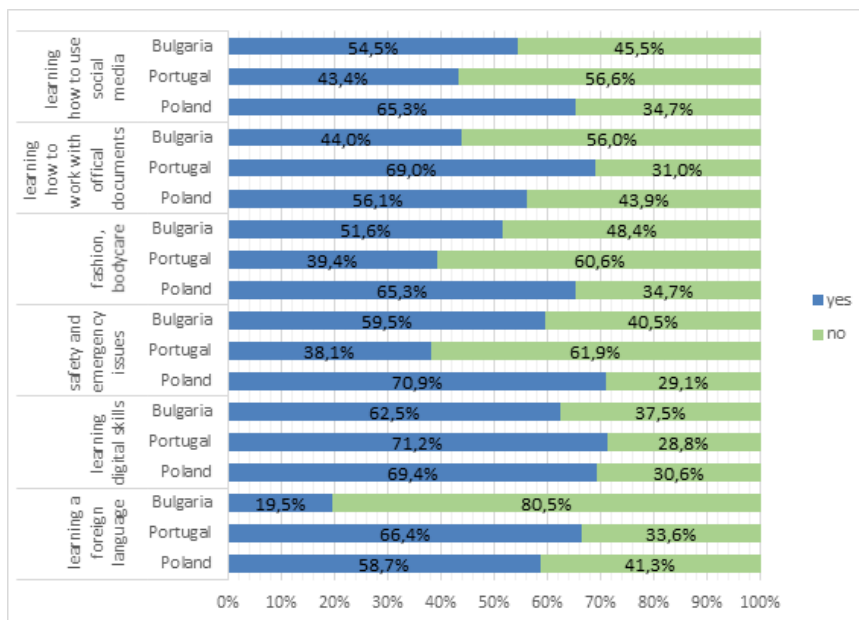
It can be said that the seniors participating in the study are aware of the challenges that the functioning in the information society generates.

Frequently chosen (67.8% of the total number of respondents) area of issues that they would like to learn and / or develop during learning activities was learning digital skills. In each of the three countries this answer was given most often, although this issue seems to be more important for Portuguese (71.2%) and Polish (69.4%) seniors than seniors from Bulgaria (62.5%) (p <0.001).

"Observations and specialists reports reveal, that amount of seniors using information technology is still not satisfactory " (Napora, 2013, p. 62). Good information is therefore that the surveyed seniors seem to be interested in raising qualifications in this area.

And this need should be responded by providing access to appropriate classes or training.

Chart 5. Interest of topics/activities undertaken during education for seniors



Source: own study

The second important area that older people are interested in was learning how to fill out (understand) official documents, eg bank, legal agreements, etc., which was pointed by 56.9% of all seniors.

Analyzing the indications regarding this issue in individual countries, we note that gaining the ability to fill official documents was more often the need of seniors from Portugal (69.0%) and Poland (56.1%) than from Bulgaria (44.0%) ($p < 0.001$).

The third most frequent issue for senior citizens, which would interest them in the educational context, was to broaden their knowledge in the field of security and protection, e. g how to avoid fraud, what is domestic violence, etc. It was mentioned by slightly more than half of the respondents (55,3 %).

This issue was most often indicated by seniors from Poland (70.9%), and the least frequently by respondents from Portugal (38.1%) ($p < 0.001$).

It can be assumed that the interest of Polish seniors in the issue of security may be a consequence of current social campaigns in Poland initiated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy or by the police. They take up the issue of domestic violence or other forms of abuse against seniors. Public discussion on these issues, on the one hand, makes them aware of their existence, but on the other - it can be a source of new questions and doubts (Halicka, Halicki, Kramkowska, Szafranek, 2018). Perhaps this is the reason why the need of taking up this issue as part of educational classes reported by Polish seniors.

Ability to use social media and blogs (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) marked by 53.8% of all respondents, was more often indicated by seniors from Poland (65.3%), then from Bulgaria (54.5%) and from Portugal (43.4%). In contemporary informative society, the use of social media is very important, as our respondents are also aware of. Over half of the respondents (51.6%) would like to consider fashion and broaden their knowledge of how to take care of their body as part of educational activities - Polish (65.3%) and Bulgarian (51.6%) seniors more often pointed to this ($p < 0.001$).

In turn, for seniors from Portugal (66.4%) and a little less from Poland (58.7%), a very important educational area in which they would like to develop their competences was learning a foreign language. Among the Bulgarians only 19.5% indicated this answer ($p < 0.001$).

Reasons for involvement in educational activities

When describing seniors who are interested in participating in educational activities addressed to them, it is also worth presenting the reasons they indicate for involvement in this type of activity.

Well, 34.2% of all respondents are motivated by the desire to acquire new skills - this response was more often given by respondents from Bulgaria (40.0%) and Poland (39.8%) than from Portugal (24.3%). More than a quarter of seniors participate in adult education because they want to develop (most often this answer was given by the Portuguese (35.0%), the least often - Poles (17.4%)) and 21.5% want to spend time with other people (Poland: 23.5%, Bulgaria: 21.5%, Portugal: 19.9%).

It seems that the social and cultural diversity of individual partner countries determines the motives that guide seniors engaging in educational activities.

Section 3 The profile of the educator (how seniors see you)

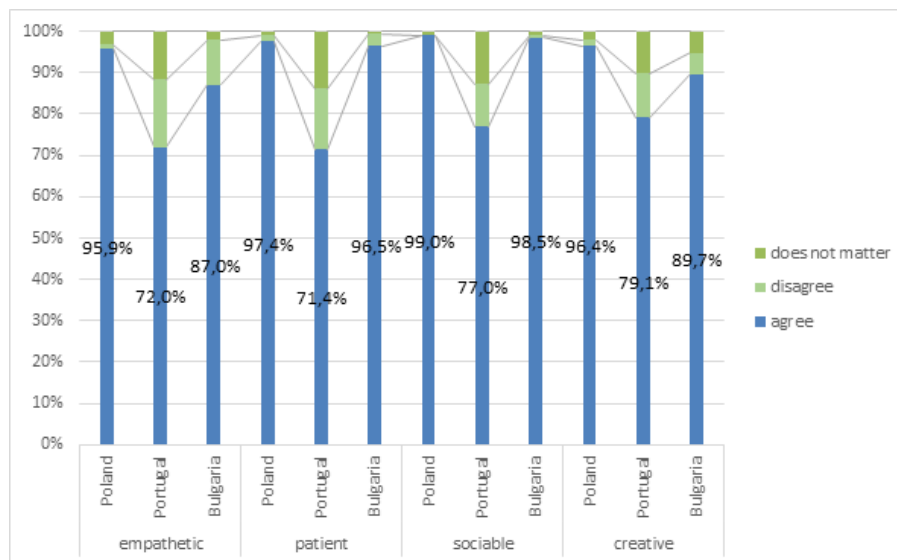
In the education of seniors, in addition to the appropriate teaching offer, the teacher who conducts activities for the elderly is very important. Therefore, in our research we asked respondents to indicate the characteristics of teachers, which in their opinion are the most valuable from the perspective of the relationship between the person conducting educational activities and the recipients.

These features were then divided into two groups, which were distinguished on the basis of teacher competence classifications. It is a group of features focused on ways of influencing, including communication skills, establishing contacts.

A teacher with such traits is an adviser, a guide, and his actions are focused on individual and relational. The second group consists of features based on didactic and methodological competences, concerning the teacher's working technique, including methods and techniques of work, especially activating (chart 6).

Educators' personality

Chart 6. The importance of teachers' personal features



Source: own study

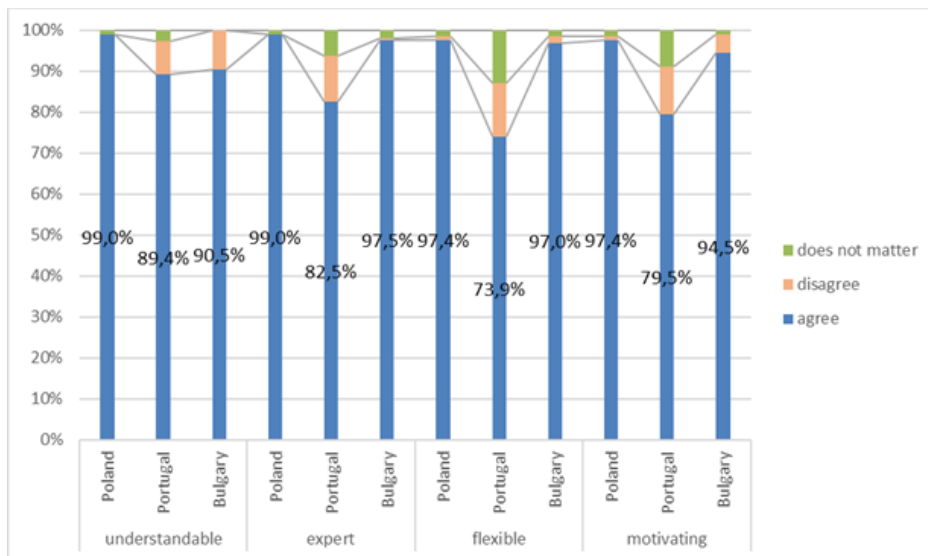
The vast majority of respondents perceive that their teacher should have such general qualities as empathy, patience, sociability and creativity.

In the case of seniors from Poland and Bulgaria, over 90% of respondents see this need. The most consistent here are seniors from Poland who, unanimously (respectively for individual characteristics, 95.9%, 97.4%, 99% and 96.4%) confirm that the personality factors of people conducting educational activities are significant.

In each case, the correlation is statistically significant at the level of $p < 0.001$. In turn, for almost 30% of respondents from Portugal, the teacher's characteristics focused on relationships (empathy, patience, sociability) are irrelevant from the perspective of the course and the efficiency of the classes. Perhaps the answers of seniors from Portugal point to the propagation of a completely different direction of educational work with seniors - a direction based on reciprocity, cooperation and perceiving the potential of "new seniors".

Educators' professional background

Chart 7. The importance of teachers' professional features



Source: own study

The analysis of data from Chart 7, which contains the features identified as didactic and methodological leads to similar conclusions.

The vast majority of the surveyed seniors notices that the person conducting educational activities addressed to the elderly should present such features as: communicativeness,

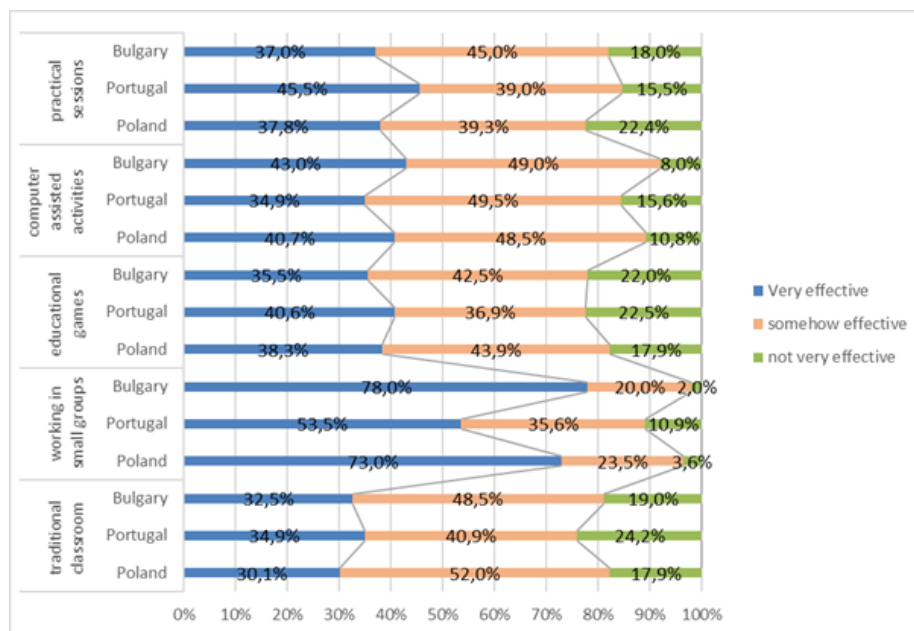
knowledge of the field in which classes are conducted, flexibility and the ability to motivate to learn.

In the comparative context, it can be stated again that the largest group of respondents from Portugal (for the listed characteristics: 10.6%, 17.5%, 26.1% and 20.5% respectively) notes that didactic and methodological features of persons conducting educational activities for seniors are not significant ($p < 0.001$).

Collected data also showed that for 91.1% of respondents gender of the teacher is irrelevant, and 69.1% of the surveyed seniors answered that his age also does not differentiate anything.

And two more opinions about the effectiveness of individual learning methods (chart 8).

Chart 8. The effectiveness of training methods



Source: own study

Respondents likewise assess the effectiveness of such methods as: the use of educational games, computer-assisted work and practical classes. In these cases, almost 40% of seniors from Poland, Portugal and Bulgaria emphasize the importance and validity of using them in educational initiatives addressed to the elderly. Interestingly, the largest number of respondents from each country, i.e. 73% of Poles, 53.5% of Portuguese and

as much as 78% of Bulgarians, indicate that the most effective from the perspective of educational activities for seniors is working in small groups.

Over 1/3 of the surveyed seniors from individual countries reject traditional methods of work (the teacher says, the rest listen and record) expecting work based on unitary relations, the implementation of which is more possible in small groups.

Section 4 Two examples of how our methodology works (examples of good practice): Podlaski Senior, Poland and Senior University of Gondomar, Portugal

(1) PODLASKI SENIOR - HISTORY of PODLASKISENIOR.PL PORTAL

In 2014, the Association Akademia plus 50 from Białystok received a grant for activating seniors. The project involved, among other things, training a group of 80 seniors in the field of computer using and new technologies, and the most active of them - in the field of journalism and setting up a website that would serve as a medium presenting the interests of this age group, and present the activity of seniors. Such topics very rarely appear in the professional media which are edited mostly by young people using a specific style and language, not always suited to seniors.



The workshops were conducted by former professional journalists in the senior (or similar) age with great experience in conducting this type of activities in other age groups, including academic ones. Teachers, above all, paid attention to the diversity of writing for a wide audience from writing for school, family or even literary creativity.

The workshops included the principles of journalistic text building: structure, order of information, sentence construction and vocabulary. They also included techniques for gathering information and methods for verifying sources. From the beginning of 2015 the site of Senior Białystok (senior.bialystok.pl) was launched. It was created on the basis of a free format and a simple construction. The publications were divided into several sections: "Good to know", "Share idea," "Recreation and Health", "Our work and reviews", "Senior Policy", "It's worth going there", "About us."

Short journalistic workshops could not cause a significant increase in the quality of published materials, nevertheless they aroused the interest of the participants. After the end of the project, a group of a dozen or so seniors from various environments and senior organizations in the city expressed their wish to continue the editorial work.



Meetings were held once a week under the guidance of the editor-in-chief. During these meetings plans for future texts, interesting topics were discussed, and work on developing journalistic skills was conducted.

At the beginning a serious problem appeared. Website administration, including the publication of materials, was run by young people (volunteers) who did not participate in the regular work of the editorial team. It resulted from the conviction that IT issues are too

complicated for older people and that they need external support.

However, young IT specialists did not feel like members of the team: they delayed the publication of texts on the site, they ignored the requests for amendments, etc. Nevertheless, the editorial team met regularly: the participants took part in workshops with experienced journalists, they were still working on creating the internal editorial structure and team relations. The search for new ideas and undertakings continued to attract readers' interest and involve them in cooperation with the editorial staff.

One of the effects of these meetings was the literary competition for authors aged 50+ ("Silver not gold") announced by the editorial team. The project received small financial support from the regional authorities. In 2015, the first edition was issued. The competition drew attention to the Senior Bialystok website (senior.bialystok.pl) and also became a source of new collaborators interested in publishing their texts.



In 2016, the *In Search of Poland Association*, which constantly coordinates the editorial team, received a grant for the development of the portal. The project provided for additional journalistic, communication and participatory trainings, creation of new editorial teams in 5 other cities as well as IT and graphic development of the website. Past experience had shown that the greatest achievement of Bialystok Senior is not the journalistic production itself, but a well-coordinated and involved team of seniors-journalists. And work on its improvement and development is the most important from the point of view of the future of the portal.

Z komentarzem [x1]:



In five cities of the Podlaskie voivodship (districts), trainings in the field of interpersonal communication and teamwork were carried out. These included the principles of active listening, discussion, assertiveness and empathy. Methods of revealing the talents and skills of editorial staff and using them for the benefit of the portal

have been developed. It often happens that active seniors are not interested in writing texts, they do not have adequate ambitions and skills. This is often due to the nature of activities performed throughout life. However, this should not be an obstacle for the editorial staff if we treat it as a team. Editorial members can deal with photography, organizational matters, creating databases, receiving and selecting correspondence, as well as administering the portal.



The website changed its name to Podlaski Senior (podlaskisenior.pl) because it created editorial offices in 5 other cities of the Podlasie Voivodeship. Its administration, as well as the creation of IT tools, was taken up by one of the members of the editorial team (60+), thanks to which the team obtained technical independence. The portal has been expanded. The new structure was created on the participatory path. The team was divided into two groups, each of which prepared its concept based on two years of experience. Then, two projects were merged into one by discussion. The comments of newly created field editorials were also taken into account. The following sections were created: "Senior Policy", "Culture", "Health", "Creativity", "Silver not Gold", "Variety", "It's worth going there". Television TVS publishing video materials was also created. The portal was built on the free Word Press platform.

The Podlasie Senior's email address went to databases of all offices, public institutions, cultural institutions and senior NGOs. Since then, the editorial staff has been receiving press materials and invitations on a par with professional media. Members of the editorial team received press IDs, which opens the way for them to participate in many social and cultural events in the city and region, and significantly increases their self-esteem and self-confidence. The texts published on the portal are an inspiration for other media; they are also read and analyzed by local authorities responsible for the policy towards the elderly.

Podlaski Senior has prepared a photo competition for seniors "Podlaskie ślady". The portal publishes mostly from own photographs, supplementing them with illustrations from free databases. However, the level of own photography is not perfect yet. The availability of better and better cameras in smartphones, however, does not affect the better quality of photography, and especially their usefulness to illustrate the published texts.

Podlaski Senior started the training of volunteer editors in the field of press photography. The workshop is run by a professional who teaches framing, composition and so-called photo edition, that is, choosing the right photos for the text.

The texts written by the authors go to the email of several editors who, after checking and making possible corrections, publish them on the website. This is a very important editorial stage: largely decisive for the quality of the entire medium.

The editor's work requires specific skills, experience, linguistic intuition as well as authority in the editorial team. The editor has to correct the texts, and sometimes - send it back to the author. This inevitably results in dissatisfaction and may even cause

conflicts. Such work requires empathy and individual approach. It is a difficult task for the editor. Every suggested change in the submitted text is explained and consulted with the author. We treat this as individual support for senior journalists. It should be done in such a way that they do not feel criticized and do not get discouraged from further work. This should stimulate further development of journalistic skills. However, without competent editors there can be no question of raising the level of the medium. Retired journalists are well suited to this role. There must also be a detailed set of rules governing the construction of texts: the principle of creating titles and subtitles, lids, spelling of abbreviations, rules for signing photographs, using bolds and italics.

Podlaski Senior is preparing to publish paid materials: advertisements and promotional items. The editors received an offer to sign a contract from one of the Polish advertising brokers. It is also possible for paid activities as part of Google Ads. Advertising activity will not bring much money. It can, however, support the budget of the portal. In addition, the Podlaski Senior will look like a professional medium, which may increase the motivation of the authors to work more actively, and increase the sense of satisfaction with the achievements so far.

(2) SENIOR UNIVERSITY OF GONDOMAR

The Senior University of Gondomar is an informal education project that aims to provide a social and cultural response, seeking to dynamize and regularly organize cultural, recreational and social activities for people 50 years of age or older.

This project is based on the Diagnosis of Needs of the Local Council of Social Action of the Municipality of Gondomar. According to the report of the Social Development Plan of the Gondomar Social Network, in which, at the time, of the municipalities of the Great Metropolitan Area of Porto, the Municipality of Gondomar, in relation to the aging index, was the second place where the increase was more pronounced (between 2001 and 2007).

It is in this context that new forms of social exclusion were signaled by the Social Commission of the Local Authority of Gondomar (S. Cosme), which motivated the Local Authority to propose this project to promote active aging in the community, reducing such forms of exclusion and stigmatization, in which the Municipal Social Network from the beginning accepted and supported this project.

It began on March 15, 2006 with 55 students. The Senior University of Gondomar is part of the Network of Third Age Universities and currently, almost 10 years after its founding, it has 350 students, where they are taught more than 60 disciplines guided by 51 teachers in a voluntary system.

It is a project that is aimed at all young people aged 50 and over who are physically and mentally robust and who feel motivated to learn constantly in various theoretical and practical subjects and who seek the well-being, the satisfaction of living, exchanges of experiences, motivations and affections.

In exceptional cases, when the need to rehabilitate a person through the attendance of activities promoted by the Senior University of Gondomar is proven, students under the age of 50 may be admitted.

The specific objectives of the Senior University of Gondomar are as follows:

- Encourage the participation and organization of seniors in cultural, citizenship, teaching and leisure activities;
- be a center for information and dissemination of services, duties and rights of seniors;
- disseminate history, sciences, traditions, solidarity, the arts, tolerance, places and other sociocultural phenomena among seniors;
- Encourage and support social volunteering, and;
- Develop interpersonal and social relations between the different generations.

In the following table, we present the disciplines or themes addressed at the Senior University of Gondomar and in which students can enroll (Table 2).

Table 2. Disciplines or themes addressed in the Senior University of Gondomar

| DISCIPLINES OR THEMES | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| English Initiation | Cavaquinho Initiation |
| English I | Bandolim |
| English Conversation | Cavaquinho I |
| French Initiation | Guitar Initiation |
| French I | Guitar I |
| Spanish Initiation | Initiation Portuguese Guitar Initiation |
| Spanish I | Physical and Motor Expression |
| German Initiation | Boccia Senior |
| Portuguese Language and Literature | Taekwondo |
| History, Portugal and the World | Laughter Yoga |
| History of Civilizations | Tai Chi |
| History of Ancient Art | Pilates |
| History of Oporto | Folk music and dance Initiation |
| Legends and Traditions of Oporto | Folk music and dance I |
| Filigree - History and Technique | Zumba |
| Oenology, Vine and Wine History | Afro Latin Rhythms |
| Citizenship and Current World | Digital Photography |
| Psychology | Analog Photography |

| | |
|--|---|
| Law and Community | Initiation to ICT |
| Thinking Games | ICT I |
| Preventive medicine | Internet and E-mail |
| Rotating Knowledge and Recycle with Art | Video Editing and Mounting |
| Learn to live | Arraiolos, Tricot, Crochet and "Cross Stitch" |
| Atelier Cutting and Sewing | Bricolage |
| Atelier Decorative and Floral Arts | Accordion |
| Music Training | Organ |
| Musical Mathematics | |
| FREE DISCIPLINES OR THEMES | |
| Group of Violas and Cavaquinhos | Tones and Sounds Grupo |
| Coral Group | Theater group |
| Tuna | Folk Dance |
| Orchestra of Accordion | Dançata and Tocata |
| Journalism (new from the Silver Civic Education project) | Hydroginastic |

Some Snapshots of the performance of the students of the Senior University of Gondomar



Group of Violas and "Cavaquinhos"



Theater Group



Coral Group



Group of senior students who participated in the Recipe for International Creative Dialogue project in Gołdap, Poland, by the LLP Sub-Program

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APPENDIX 1

TOOLKIT “ACTIVITIES FOR SENIORS”

In the following section you will find ready-to-use activities for working with seniors. These are examples of activities Silver Civic Education Partners have designed and used successfully in their training.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE – PODLASKI SENIOR

General Workshop Set-Up

When we start working with a new group of people who are supposed to be the creators for the first time and not the recipients of journalistic content, *we usually start by carrying out three very important cycles of workshops: basics of journalism, participation and partnership, communication.*

Typically, these are cycles lasting a minimum of 16 hours each. It is important, especially when working with older people, to adapt the pace of introducing new knowledge for them, let them work together (working in groups, discussion, exercises in pairs) and practice examples of real situations rather than giving bare facts (lecture).

Therefore, each workshop should be enriched with interesting, engaging exercises, e.g based on the participants' life experiences, on local realities, the law or problems to be solved.

And remember!

This requires the trainer conducting the workshop a lot of flexibility, mindfulness and knowledge of the environment of the trainees.

The use of the workshop formula in each of these cycles gives us, in effect, an additional value. Based on the participants' experience from participation in the training, we can (in the summary of the entire program) work together to develop the **team work rules - obligations and responsibility**. Not everyone is responsible for everything, only for individual parts of the editorial work - based on experience, talents, skills and interests. We are not responsible for everything, but we have influence through participation in the process. Our goal here is to encourage seniors to observe, draw their own conclusions and speak out loud on bothering topics and without worries - both regarding editorial work as well as problems in the surrounding reality.

And remember!

"None of us can as much as we can all together" - the principle of synergy of teamwork, preparation for creating an editorial team.

EXAMPLE 1: BASICS OF JOURNALISM WORKSHOP (preliminary rules for constructing texts)

Why social journalism can be an effective method of civic and intellectual activation of seniors?

First of all, it is worth asking yourself: what journalism differs from typical writing workshops or other forms that use text creation (e.g. Story telling) for intellectual stimulation. Poetry and literature are writing for themselves. The authors create their world based on their own memories and experiences and present it to potential readers. If the readers do not take and do not accept our vision, there is no problem, the condition of activation has already been met. What counts is the intellectual effort of the authors themselves.

In the case of journalism, the basis is to reach the modern, unknown recipient with the message, and the basic condition for success to understand its content. This puts completely different demands on the process of organizing and managing senior editorial teams.

Basic aspects of editorial work among seniors

1. We create for the reader. We need to adapt to his needs: take into account his interests and psychological possibilities of receiving media messages. The product of our work must be understandable to the general public.

2. Selection of topics. Topics of our materials must be chosen for the readers' interest. This means that they should be up to date. This imposes an obligation to follow current events and phenomena at the local and regional level and to refer to them in the texts. This basically excludes the publication of memories, unless they serve to explain the present day. The choice of topics is the most important element of collegial planning.

3. Collecting materials. The sources of information and opinions necessary to create texts are: conversations with people, reading materials and source and databases, and personal participation in events. Active collection of materials is extremely important: it must replace the typical tendency of older people, the tendency to rely only on their own memory. We are not talking about telling the story of our own life, but about an active attitude towards reality: responding to events, getting to know new people, following the press and the Internet. This is even more important than writing. In addition, conversations with people enrich our vocabulary, which has a great influence on the level of texts.

4. Team work. Creating editorial teams, discussion, planning, evaluation of work results - these are the basic elements of our undertaking. Everything else is the result of teamwork. Team work consists of the following elements:

- a. Recruitment: we are looking for people interested in the world and active people. Writing experience is not required.
- b. Training in the field of internal communication: a culture of discussion, active listening, empathy, assertiveness. Creating links between team members.
- c. Creativity training: recognizing talents and interests.
- d. Planning new texts.
- e. Evaluation of completed texts.

And remember!

We create for the reader, not for ourselves. It is a condition of participation in social life. Our message should be understandable for a wide audience and consistent with the psychological rules of receipt formulated by the so-called classic journalism.

1. The text (especially the information) should answer the six basic questions:

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

How?

Why?

If the answer to any of these questions is unknown, this should be clarified.

2. The most important to start with. At the beginning of reading the text, the reader should be familiarized with the main information or idea contained in it, even in the most general way. The rest of the text should develop and refine the issue indicated at the beginning.

3. The text should be based on unified thematically stylistically consistent paragraphs. The length of the paragraphs should be different. And their length should not exceed 10 rows.

4. The first sentence of each paragraph is called Topic sentence. The rest of the paragraph is used to develop, justify, explain the thesis contained in it or the information it points out.

5. The length of sentences should not exceed 18 words.

6. Write as you say, i.e. We use specific words rather than general words; specific than abstract.

We use image language, that is, we build sentences so that the most important place will be occupied by specific words that mark people, animals, objects and everything that can be drawn, photographed, heard, felt - experienced with the help of the senses. In addition, we try to describe and not state.



Journalism workshop methodology

Constructing a journalistic text

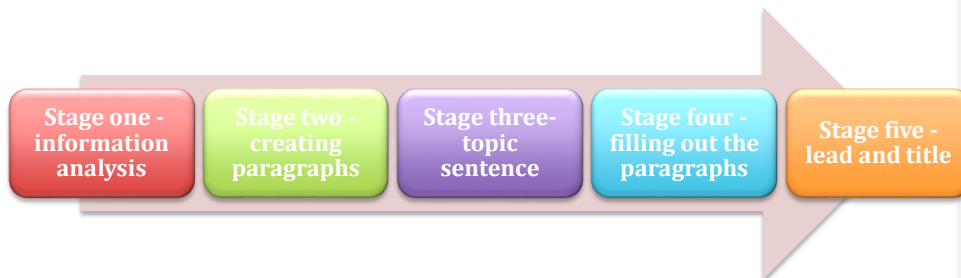
One of the most important challenges for beginning journalists (regardless of age) is getting rid of bad habits and false ideas about writing media texts. The most common mistake is the so-called intuitive (or spontaneous) writing, consisting in joining a job without detailed plans: without a specified order of information being passed, without a fixed division of text into smaller elements (paragraphs) playing a specific role in the article. The author immediately proceeds to write next sentences (one after the other) without thinking about the structure of the text and how the average reader will understand his message. The result is a chaotic, unintelligible material, devoid of a clearly defined message.

Objective: Preparation of journalism adepts for the construction of media texts based on paragraphs and so-called topic sentence. Building the structure of journalistic texts. Analysis of collected information before placing them in the text.

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The course of the workshop:

paragraph structure. They must use all information provided in the text through the following process:



Stage one - information analysis: Participants under the guidance of the teacher analyze the information provided. They try to make a coherent story of them; divide information into one-piece parts, determine their order so that the reader can understand the problem.

Stage two - creating paragraphs: Participants - through a discussion under the chairmanship of the teacher - create paragraphs using the thematic parts separated in the previous stage. Specify the number of paragraphs, their contents and role in the text structure.

Stage three - topic sentence: Participants write the first sentence of each paragraph. This should be an introductory sentence: signaling the topic of the paragraph. The remaining sentences in the paragraph should be its development, justification, illustration.

Stage four - filling out the paragraphs: Participants write the remaining sentences in each paragraph, so that each of them is homogeneous thematically.

Stage five - lead and title: Participants form the lead. Work on the lead is preceded by a discussion about what is most important in the text from the reader's point of view (the most interesting, the most up-to-date). Each participant prepares his lead. Proposals are discussed in the group. Various variants of leads are possible. The title is created in the same way.

Note: The above exercise is very difficult for novice journalists, mainly because it is very different from intuitive writing. It requires a total change of approach to the topic described. It seems unnatural and "technical". However, this is a professional approach: taking into account the psychological rules of communication. Is oriented to the reader / recipient of the media message.

The exercise should be repeated several times, taking into account different types of stories. . Otherwise, the texts discussing the problem are built, in other words texts about the event with a chronological structure. Individual work gives the best results.

EXAMPLE 2: PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKSHOP

What is civic participation?

- **participation** - this is a way to actively participate in events that concern us. Ability to speak, participate in activities and decisions.
- **civic** - that is, regarding us as citizens. It is a kind of participation that is based on communication with the authorities. It focuses on mutual support of the authorities and citizens in joint decision-making.

PARTICIPATING FORMS, also known as "a ladder of participation".

1. Information is the simplest form of participation that engages citizens to the smallest extent. The authorities' actions are limited to informing citizens about their decisions. There is no place for any active influence of people on the shape of actions undertaken by the authorities, it only reduces them to the role of passive recipients.

2. Consultation is another "step" on the participatory ladder due to the increased participation of citizens in the conducted activities. In addition to informing, the authorities give citizens the opportunity to comment on the planned activities. People participating in consultations appear in a role of "advisers" who are asked for opinions in a specific case. The votes of citizens are therefore considered, although there is no guarantee that they will be taken into account. Currently, due to f.e. legal regulations, this is one of the most popular forms of civic participation in Poland.

3. Codecision is the highest degree of civic participation because of the full partnership between the authorities and citizens, which consists in transferring to citizens the part of their competences (and thus their responsibility) regarding the actions and decisions taken. In a sense, the introduction by the authorities of a simple (though very difficult in reality) assumption that "people know better what they need". Thus, citizens have a real influence on planned (directly or indirectly) planned activities.

BENEFITS FROM PARTICIPATION

1. Residents know and understand the intentions of local authorities - legitimization
2. There is a better diagnosis of local needs
3. Live response to emerging problems and efficient communication
4. Residents engage in the process of creating a solution / strategy as well as a part of the solution
5. Increased trust in local authorities - effective communication
6. Real and potential local resources are used to solve problems - extensive use of various competences, skills of people and institutions
7. Residents are not a passive recipient of services but an active subject of change
8. A culture of dialogue and creativity is created
9. Prevent potential conflicts in future in particular on sensitive issues.

PARTNERSHIP

Awareness that social initiatives can be implemented, and better results are achieved through cooperation rather than disputes, motivates for hard work and taking challenges. Therefore, the key task at the local level is to encourage local partners to act together and show them the benefits that result from it.

The partnership can be based on mutual information and creation of a certain information system - for example through a website that can be treated as a type of electronic newspaper. Partners should first be obtained and invited for cooperation, the benefits of mutual cooperation, the paths of communication, etc. should be shown,

Who can be a partner of seniors in creating and obtaining information?

- public administration - authorities, state offices, spokespersons;
- cultural institutions,
- health and social care institutions;
- non-governmental organizations,
- local business;
- local leaders - people of public trust, opinion leaders from various areas.

The principles of effective partner cooperation in the editorial team

Successful building of partnership involves the need to comply with certain rules, without which it will not be possible to effectively operate the partnership. It is worth creating together the **partnership rules** (signed by all members of the editorial office) and save in a visible place for everyone.

These principles may include:

- *equality of all partners towards each other* (involving all participants at every stage of the activities and making joint decisions.) Each participant must "feel" that he has the same decision-making possibilities and propose his own solutions, it is also important to respect each participant and take into account actions of its possibilities and willingness to engage;
- *joint planning and decision making followed by their joint implementation* (This is the principle of consensus directly linking to the principle of equality, all participants should be involved in the partnership and all participants should be able to participate in the planning and decision-making process.

This has an impact on the 'well-being' of the partners and makes them feel that they are an important element of the activities undertaken. (Of course - "nothing by force");

- *innovation and comprehensiveness of undertaken activities* (Comprehensiveness manifests itself through the involvement of all partners who can get benefits from partnership and take all necessary actions to achieve the desired effect).

Innovation is about finding new solutions, that's why you need to practice creativity;

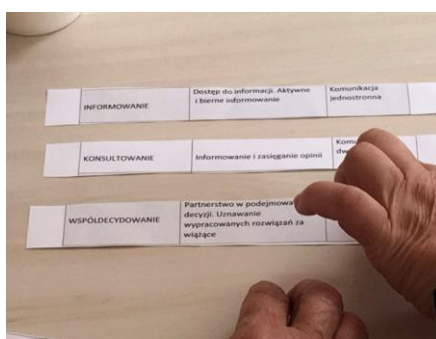
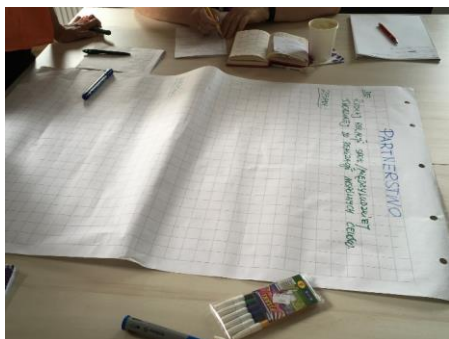
- *trust, openness and transparency of actions* (All participants should speak openly about their expectations, all decisions, actions implemented within the partnership should be public and justified and all members of the partnership should trust each other);
- *mitigating conflicts* ("Consent builds, discord ruins." It is important that individual members of the partnership see each other not as competitors, but partners.

During the operation of the partnership very often conflicts of interest are revealed. Therefore, partners should understand the formula of cooperation based on joint action);

- *broadening the partner circle* (eg gaining new members of the organization and new institutions for cooperation).

Conditions of effective partner cooperation

- Common definition of problems
- Common definition of goals and action plan
- Finding possible solutions
- Determining the desired and possible effects and consequences of the planned activities.





EXAMPLE 3: COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP

Good communication is a key skill, without which good cooperation with others is impossible. Communication is also worth attaching to mindfulness. Being attentive is being aware, listening and hearing the other person who understands their feelings.

Effective, correct, understandable, positive communication between people is one of the most important skills in today's world. It allows you

- to be understood, heard, treated well.
- to understand, listen to and treat others well.
- if we discover our own communication potential, we will realize our own style, how we talk / listen and we like to talk / listen with others and barriers that may disturb us.
- if we learn to let ourselves be free to express ourselves, call our emotions, take care of ourselves ...
- if we learn to allow others to express themselves, to name their emotions and to take care of themselves

Well, the art of communicating with others is popular, but it is not simple.

Analysis of own resources

- Strengths (talents)
- Skills
- Achievements

Nonverbal Communication

Most of the message that reaches the recipient is coded non-verbal channel! Words are important, but not only **what** and **how**, but the coherence of these two channels is the value of the message.

- *Voice*: tone of voice, its intensity, tempo of speech, modulation or lack thereof, melody, rhythm and intonation.

- *Gestures*: emphasize important aspects of the expression, as most desirable, but without exaggeration !!!
- *Mimicry*: attention to face grimacing that we are unaware of !!!
- *Eye contact*: we do not look away, but we do not look too intense !!! And we are constantly monitoring what is happening in the room.
- *Laying the body*: freedom, but moderate !!!
- *The dress and our facial features* affect our conclusions about the person before we can start a conversation with her. How they see you, that's how they perceive you.
- *Interpersonal distance*: the distance between the interlocutors gives information about the type of relations that connect them. It is bigger in official and business situations, smaller in private. The comfort zone is very individualized, and cultural differences overlap.

Non-Verbal Communication - Space

Communication is also our different zones associated with the body, to which we can allow specific people. They are called distance zones that stand out in relation to the other person. Each of us is different in the sense of sensing and allowing various people to be physically close around us.

- Personal area (46 - 120 cm). This is a typical distance kept during social contacts - e.g. in the office - or socializing.
- Social zone (120 - 360 cm). This is the distance that we keep for people unknown to us.
- The public zone (over 360 cm), is the distance we try to keep in relation to the rest of the people.

Communication barriers: These are obstacles that do not allow us to listen really, actively. The most important of them are:

- *comparison*: during the conversation you try to assess who is smarter, more knowledgeable, who's better.
- *determination*: You know better what the interlocutor wants to say, the person starts talking and you talk.
- *preparing answers*: in your thoughts you prepare the answer, you are already preparing for it.
- *filtering*: you listen selectively, especially bypassing critical statements.
- *personality*: when you negatively evaluate a person at first, you will not be interested in what he has to say.

Careful and active listening

OPEN or CLOSED QUESTIONS ?

- The *open question* begins with the words: **how, what, what, who, who, when, where.**

They give the interlocutor unlimited freedom of response as well as the context in which he talks. Such questions foster the climate of openness, trust and security, and above all provide more information about / from the interlocutor.

- *Closed questions* are the kind of questions that can only be answered **yes** or **no**. Questions suggesting these questions contain the expected answer.

And remember!

Open questions are not always the best. In situations where a quick decision is required, no time, closed questions are necessary. The art of asking questions is their adjustment to a given situation.

Paraphrase

Benefits of paraphrase:

- sympathy and respect of the sender (a signal that we are listening),
- prevents anger, relieves crises (calms down emotions, gives time to think),
- prevents misunderstandings (organizes the recipient's understanding and the sender's thinking),
- helps you remember information,
- eliminates or reduces barriers to careful listening.

Communication is ineffective when:

- listens only to what you want to hear (focusing only on "catching" certain information),
- someone's speech is interrupted (it is a sign of bad education and annoys the interlocutor),
- ends with someone's opinion (if you would like to say "I know what you mean, I can say it faster and better"), thus demonstrating impatience,
- focuses mainly on oneself and on what is said in a moment,
- is primarily interested in your own point of view,
- open questions are not asked but closed, with "yes" or "no" answers
- you do not give your partner a chance to get to know yourself better,
- it is often assessed by issuing a sentence, instead of emphasizing that it is only my opinion and I can be wrong.

Feedback

This is a basic skill in interpersonal communication, because it is a message about how the behavior of the recipient affects the sender of the message. It is talking about your own reactions, feelings, thoughts and experiences in relation to a person. To build feedback it is recommended to use the message "I" because it: does not contain grades, is specific, because it is based on facts, is personal, so it increases the level of trust and mutual openness.

Feedback should be: forwarded in a positive intention, supportive, based on facts, specific behaviors, not general, important for the listener, direct, honest, positive and negative, directed to the person, if negative - expressed in 1 to 1 relationship, positive - it can be expressed in a wider forum.

Message "I"

Speak about yourself, so in the first person.

The goal is to shape the ability to express your own opinions through "I" messages. The trainer explains that in everyday life we most often use "You" messages, which express an assessment, and therefore are difficult to accept and often raise objections. Starting with "I", we only express our opinion, which is easier to accept than the rating.

Then s/he instructs the participants to write three sentences in which the words "I", "my" and "mine" would be found, starting from the simple ones (e.g "I'm good", "I feel sorry for you", "I like it", "thank you that you helped me") and ending with more complex ones (eg: "I felt sorry when you said that", "I did not know what to do when you started shouting at me", "I was furious when you turned your back ", " I feel horrible when you look at me like that ", etc.).

After reading them, one should proceed with writing out examples of "TY" type messages. To more concrete character of the task, you can suggest that these are the ones that touched them the most, or the ones they most often hear in the environment of friends or colleagues, or at home, from children.

Sample statements:

- "Do not act like this. Either you stop or you'll finally say what's going on. "
- "What you did was just stupid."
- "Do not interfere in other matters."
- "Do not talk so much!"
- "You act like a preschooler"





EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE: SENIOR UNIVERSITY OF GONDOMAR

EXAMPLE 1 PROJÉT SENIOR PROGRAM IN ACTION

This project aims to be translated by an initiative that promotes Active Aging. Therefore, it includes regular sports activities and some punctual activities, such as walking, visiting and participating in various sports and social events.

Project Background

In Portugal, there are very few gyms / places specialized for Senior Gymnastics, and the existing places groups are in day centers, social centers and in senior residences. The Project Senior Program in action is a project that was born to promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences and to counteract the lack of physical activity of the elderly. The practice of Physical Activity is beneficial to health in all ages, increasing the possibilities of socialization, social networking and psychological well-being (according to WHO).

Project Benefits

Promotion of active aging through physical activity for the elderly, combating cardiovascular diseases, increasing quality of life and preventing obesity and above all loneliness.

Some Snapshots of the participants from the Project Senior Program in action



Project Objectives

The specific objectives of this project are as follows::

- Increased social interaction;
- Decreased loneliness;
- Increased levels of independence and autonomy;
- Occupation of leisure time;
- Promotion of well-being (healthy living habits);
- Prevention of falls and osteoporosis.

Description of Activities and weekly schedule planned

Classes / sessions administered by a sports professional are free and are intended for young people 50 years or plus and will be held twice a week, each lasting 45 minutes (according to Table 5).

One / two classes were created by area of the territory with a maximum number of 25 students.

Regular sports activities such as Functional Gymnastics and some punctual activities such as walking, visits and participation in various sports and social events are included in the Project.

Table 5. Project Senior Program in action - Planned weekly schedule

| Area | Classroom Location | Day of the Week | Time |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--------------|
| Valbom | Firefighters Volunteers of Valbom | 2. ^a e 4. ^a | 11H00 –12H00 |
| | Center of Conviviality of Valbom | 2. ^a , 3. ^a e 6. ^a | 15H00 –17H00 |
| Jovim | Jovim Church facilities | 5. ^a | 15H00 –16H00 |
| | Leões Cabanenses Association | 3. ^a | 10H00- 11H00 |
| Gondomar (S. Cosme) | Senior University of Gondomar | 6. ^a | 9H30 – 10H30 |

Applied Methodology

All participants in this project are the target of an initial physical assessment (conducted under the Rikli and Jones Protocol, which is included in the English and Portuguese versions and other managed evaluation tools).

Periodic evaluations will also be carried out to assess the progress of all participants. As far as class is concerned, it is divided into 3 parts:

Initial part: aims at activating the body to practice the exercise (5min).

Fundamental part: aerobic exercises are performed (adapted), resistance, flexibility and muscular Strength (35min).

Final part: return to calm stage (5min). Aerobics (adapted) - It is an activity that seeks to improve physical fitness in general and cardio-respiratory and circulatory skills in particular. It is carried out in group where it is intended to promote motor coordination, spatio-temporal notion, rhythm and motor memory. It should also be mentioned here that it is important to adapt the exercises to the way of working of each age group. Objectives of the lesson: Just as a lesson can be divided into parts, it can and should be prepared according to objectives, which can be:

- **Physical goals:** Joint mobility; Stretching; Resistance; Force; Reaction speed; Coordination; Balance; Breath; Relaxation.
- **Psychic objectives:** Attention; Memory; Ability to learn.
- **Sensory objectives:** Body awareness; Senses; Vision; Hearing; Smell; Touch.
- **Socio-affective objectives:** Relationship and communication; Expression and creativity.

Logistical and human resources

For the implementation of the project it was necessary to find strategic locations to teach Gym classes in order to cover the whole territory (example: gym / large room in each area).

For each classroom, we must have: 1 sound system, chairs, free weights, elastic bands, mattresses, among other usual fitness materials. And in terms of Human Resources it is necessary 1 or 2 specialized Physical Education Teachers.

Project partners

Since it is a program that we wanted to implement in three different places in order to cover the entire area of the administrative territory of the Local Authority of Gondomar (S. Cosme), Valbom and Jovim, agreements were made with local institutions to Local classes in different areas of the territory, highlighting the following institutions: a) Leões Cabanenses Association; b) Firefighters Volunteers of Valbom, and; c) Jovim Church.

EXAMPLE 2 APROXIMAR VOLUNTEER GROUP

The Aproximar Volunteer Group is a project that translates a group of people who support the execution of a set of activities planned by this Local Authority. It is a project that involves the selection of people, training and organizes volunteers around the local community in order to support our mission, promoting the positive development of those members of our community who are in situations of risk and exclusion social.

Project Background

Given the high number of people still of working age who were retired and due to the lack of occupation, sought from the Social Action Service and Community Intervention an opportunity to express themselves in the community for your help for the general community to which they belong, although age *per si* is an inclusion criterion.

Project Benefits

With the creation of a support group for the Social Action and Community Intervention Service, it was possible to highlight the following benefits of the volunteer project:

- A better and a greater social sensitivity to the surrounding reality;
- It allowed the community involved in the project to confront the social reality, reflecting on the expectations and limitations of the activity developed by the Local Authority;
- Facilitated the “Lifelong Learning” for all Volunteers as a fully active citizenship development policy;
- It generated greater institutional and social cooperation;
- It generated a greater capacity of response to social problems on the part of this autarchy.

Project Objectives

Since its inception, the following concrete objectives have been:

- Support and complement the actions promoted by the Local Authority;
- Disseminate volunteering activities in the administrative territory, in order to promote active citizenship among its residents;
- Increase citizen participation, through volunteering, in responding to the needs of the territory;
- Raise awareness and support the community for their problems.

Description of Activities and weekly schedule planned

The volunteer activity in the Local Authority is governed by the direct support to the following activities administered by the autarchy and which are the following:

- School Book Bank (runs from July to September inclusive): From 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.;
- Food Bank Against Hunger: 1 share per month from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.;
- Social Canteen: Every Tuesday
- Participation in the organization and dynamization of social events of fund raising and support for the Unit of Social Action and Community Intervention;
- Participation in visits, scheduled according to the availability of the beneficiary and the volunteer to the elderly and / or patients in bed or in loneliness;
- Follow-up of users / beneficiaries of the Social Action Unit for medical consultations, medical examinations and other actions that require follow-up, guidance and supervision;
- Support in the activities carried out with the beneficiaries of the project “O Outro Lado da Rua” – “The Other Side of the Street” (project distinguished from the members of the community considered homeless).

Applied Methodology

The methodology for selecting people who are members of the Volunteer Group at this Local Authority goes through the following steps:

- Interview / Test - Psychological Assessment Tool;
- Training in the area of Volunteering, Conflict Management and other areas of interest to carry out the assigned tasks;
- Management of Logistics resources and events.

Project Results

Better management of the activities planned and developed by the Local Authority of Gondomar (S. Cosme), Valbom and Jovim. The performance of this group is recognized by the entire community that serves.

Logistical and human resources

In addition to the volunteers, the following local authority professionals are:

- 1 Social Educator
- 1 Psychologist
- 2 General Service Auxiliaries
- 1 Technical Assistant

Constraints / restrictions

The project is sought by many young people who are unemployed and inactive, which prove to be an asset in terms of work and social intervention, but what they are really looking for is a job, often using volunteering As an attempt to gain access to a job. It is thus confused by the current economic situation of the country, voluntary work with other issues related to access to a work activity.

The project is also sought by many citizens who claim to aim to be volunteers, because they are unemployed, in psychological depression, in the face of inactivity and economic situation, confusing "Volunteering" as some type of remedy for psychological diseases. It is not always easy or understandable not to accept these inscriptions for the Project in the face of the lack of knowledge and perception about the true meaning and function of the Volunteer.

Some Snapshots of the Volunteering Activities



4. Senior Gym

EXAMPLE THREE: SENIOR GYM

The Senior Gym is an initiative that aims to be an action of awareness and information on senior health in order to be a point of diffusion promoting the importance of senior physical activity in particular.

Project Background

SÉNIORGYM - Initiative for Gymnastics, Health and Active Life, was designed and structured for the promotion and development of physical activity for the elderly (+55 years) and is developed and promoted by the Federation of Gymnastics of Portugal. The program is held annually and is organized around four areas: Annual Festival; Scientific Forum; Technical Program and an Education Course.



Portugal has increased the number of participants in Senior Gymnastics, which is a good indicator that people recognize the sport as a healthy way to have a better quality of life not only physical but also social and psychological. With the implementation of this program, which is characterized by being punctual, it is intended to give impetus to the implementation of the SENIORGYM measures at a local level and contribute to the expansion of the national philosophy of regular physical activity through Gymnastics for all clubs and Institutions that promote sport at local level.

Project Benefits

Promotion of physical activity for people over 55 years as a preventive measure for a higher quality of physical, social and psychological life.

Project Objectives

Concrete objectives for the present initiative are as follows:

- Increase the collective consciousness of seniors of the importance of the benefits inherent to the practice of regular physical activity;
- Increase the number of elderly people in the events of the Portuguese Federation;
- Increase the number of clubs associated with the program;
- Improve participants' quality of life, and;
- Increase the rate of regular physical activity in seniors.

Description of Activities and weekly schedule planned

The program is carried out annually (dates and place to be confirmed) and is structured around these axes:

- Annual Festival;
- Scientific Forum- This forum is the opportunity for training for all (institutions, trainers and practitioners) who are dedicated to the practice of physical activity for seniors. An opportunity to deepen knowledge, exchange experiences and prepare for the activity with the senior population. This forum is intended for all those who intervene or intend to intervene with this age group at the level of physical activity and particularly in gymnastics;
- Technical Program and Education Course.

The organization provides a set of workshops in which participants can register, as it follows:

- **Dance fusion** - It's the most fun way to join Fitness with Dance, using a variety of styles. Each student can dance and express themselves freely with very simple, innovative and super fun choreographies created by the Instructor.

- **Tennis** – It is a sport that can be played individually against another opponent or between two teams of two players. Tennis is an olympic sport that is played at various competitive and recreational levels by players of all ages.
- **Latin Dance** – The dances are divided into 2 groups: Latin and Classical. This workshop approaches some of the Latin dances in a rhythmic and fun way, posing interesting challenges to the participants.
- **Snag Golf** – It is a fun and simplified form of golfing for all ages and levels. With adapted equipment the Snag Golf allows to play in different places.
- **Tai chi chuan** - The tai chi chuan has its roots in China, and is now an art practiced all over the world. It is appreciated in the West especially for its relation to meditation (tao yin) and the promotion of health, offering its practitioners tranquility and spiritual balance.

Results of Local Authority participation in this Project initiative

In 2015, the Local Authority of Gondomar (S. Cosme), Valbom and Jovim participated with a record of 110 athletes at the event. We were the "club" that took more participants.

2015 Participation Results Snapshots¹



Applied Methodology

¹ To see more go to the site: https://www.facebook.com/pg/Uni%C3%A3o-das-Freguesias-Gondomar-S-Cosme-Valbom-e-Iovim-532945826823412/photos/?tab=album&album_id=781485375302788

Annual meeting of senior fitness groups, with the aim of promoting the importance of physical activity and the creation of positive social contexts. Each gym group present at the event prepares a small demonstration (3min) to act.

Logistical and human resources

Logistics Resources: Transportation for gymnasts. Human Resources: Physical Educational Teacher.

EXAMPLE 4: NOW WE MOVE

Now We Move Week is an annual European-wide event and part of the NowWeMOVE campaign. The NowWeMOVE campaign and the MOVE Week hinge event are coordinated by the International Sports and Culture Association (ISCA) in collaboration with the European Cyclists Federation (ECF), with the support of the European Union. NowWeMOVE is Europe's largest campaign to promote sport and physical activity. Its vision is to get "100 million Europeans more active in sport and physical activity by 2020"².

Project Background

Two-thirds of Europe's adult population does not meet the levels of physical activity recommended for their health and well-being (WHO, European Union, 2008). That is why the International Sports and Culture Association (ISCA) has launched the Now We MOVE campaign in 2012 with the aim of bringing sport to all sectors to combat the epidemic of physical inactivity across Europe. ISCA has defined Move Week as its main event³.

Project Benefits

To contribute locally to the effort to bring sport to all, thus reducing the sedentary lifestyle of all Europe from the administrative territory of the Local Authority of Gondomar (S. Cosme), Valbom and Jovim.

Project Objectives

The general objectives of the campaign are as follows:

- Raising European citizens' awareness of the benefits of sport and physical activity;

² <http://www.nowwemove.com/about-nowwemove/>

³ <http://www.nowwemove.com/about-nowwemove/>

- Promote opportunities for the practice of sports and physical activities;
- And enable sustainable and innovative capacity building for physical activity initiatives providers through open source solutions and advocacy.

Description of the activities and their planning

MOVE Week is an annual European-wide event and part of the NowWeMOVE campaign as we have already stated. Several sports and physical activity promoters (the so-called MOVE Agent) are the coordinators of local events, new or existing, open to the community during the week that is most appropriate for the population over 55 years of age⁴.

Applied Methodology

When the NowWeMOVE campaign began in 2012, it established MOVE Week as its premier event promoting the benefits of physical activity for citizens across Europe. However, to be a part of this campaign, you need to register to become MOVE Agents. These are the real stars of MOVE WEEK. They are the ones that will make MOVE WEEK really happen.

A MOVE Agent can be a sports organization for everyone, a club, a school, a university, a company, a volunteer group, a municipality or an individual person organizing an activity during MOVE Week.

In addition to Move Week, NOW WE MOVE also promotes other initiatives, namely:

- MOVE CONGRESS- conferences on recreational sports;
- NOWWEBIKE- bicycle tours;
- NO ELEVATORS DAY- Day without elevators;
- FLASH MOVE- Choreographed groups spontaneously perform a dance in the center of their city;
- EUROPEAN FITNESS DAY.

The Local Authority of Gondomar (S. Cosme), Valbom and Jovim has become a Movement Agent since 2014, year that we submit the application to the European program as Agent Movement. The institution was responsible for coordinating free sports events for the entire local population.

Results

In Portugal, in 2015, it was possible to hold 350 events throughout the country, with the participation of over 10,000 participants from 64 cities.

It is also important to note that in the 38 European countries involved in 2015 in this campaign more than 7000 events were held, reaching 1.4 million people physically

⁴ <http://blog.nowwemove.com/portugal-will-have-an-elderly-move-week-flash-mob/>

active.

The contribution by the Local Authority of Gondomar (S. Cosme), Valbom and Jovim hosts an event with about 100 seniors from the Senior in Motion program, having been one of the biggest flash mobs in Portugal for MOVE Week in 2014⁵.

In 2014, this Local Authority was recognized for its commitment as an agent of NowWeMOVE (Figure 12, on the next page).

APPENDIX 2 PROJECT VIDEO CHANNEL

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XdqTzi-sups>
<http://blog.nowwemove.com/portugal-will-have-an-elderly-move-week-flash-mob/>

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