

SILVER LEARNERS



2016 - 2018

PROJECT-DOCUMENTATION

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Erasmus+ Programme
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WWW.PROJECT-SILVER-LEARNERS.EU



The Silver Learners project is a strategic partnership for the exchange of good practice between 10 partners from Great Britain (3), Netherlands (2), Poland (2), Hungary, Luxembourg and Germany. The project took place between 1st September 2016 and 31st October 2018 and was aimed at representatives of local education centres including the directors of these institutions and the teaching staff who give lessons to groups of learners aged 60+. The consortium has been structured to ensure that various local education facilities with a range of main strengths and focuses are involved, as well as trans-regionally active associations.

The objective of Silver Learners was to improve the programme offered by education centres, taking into account the challenges of demographic change as well as the associated altered circumstances and education practices of senior citizens. The older generation needs to be provided with educational support to enable them to remain active members of society and face the challenges of growing old independently for as long as possible. In this context, the fields of media competence (using ICT and new technical resources) and health are regarded as being particularly significant.

In addition, it is essential to reach poorly educated target groups. Elderly people with a migration background, for instance, rarely attend education institutions.

In the project all partner communicated tried-and-tested education models from the various countries for improving the learning situation of the elderly and also worked to jointly develop and implement ideas and concepts. New and-, innovative educational concepts for the older generation are to be developed on the basis of the different experiences. Since, at present, the adult education centres are primarily attended by the so-called middle classes, the current objective is to focus on people who have had fewer educational opportunities, including those with a migrant background.

Informations:
www.project-silver-learners.eu





The **city of Iserlohn** (Leadpartner), as a large district town, is a municipal corporation under public law. It is located in the middle of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and had at the end of 2014 a population of 94,615 people.

The city of Iserlohn is the sole sponsor of the VHS Iserlohn, a municipal institution of adult education, which is also legally and organisationally affiliated to the city of Iserlohn. The VHS Iserlohn is the largest adult education institution in Iserlohn and was founded in 1919. It is party political and ideologically independent and is open to any adult regardless of educational background, occupation and nationality. In the 6 program areas Politics-Society- Environment, Cultural Creation, Health, Foreign Language Integration, EDP Media Literacy and Basic Education. More than 900 seminars, courses and lectures with over 15,000 lessons are offered annually. Lt. Statistics, the average age of the average of 6,800 applications per semester is well over 60 years. 25% of course participants are in the age group of 50 - 65 years. 20% of the students are in the age group over 65 years. Of these, 1/3 are male and 2/3 are female. Important courses for older people can be found in all program areas. A focus is the health courses and the offers in the program area EDP which are visited to a large extent by seniors.

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Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) is committed to providing high quality, cost effective public services that reflect the views and wishes of the people of Cambridgeshire. Cambridgeshire remains an identified Government Growth Area, so CCC is continuing to improve services against a backdrop of growth in housing, employment and the economy – right across the county. Thier three strategic priorities are developing the local economy for the benefit of all, helping people to live independent and healthy lives, supporting and protecting vulnerable people. Adult Learning and Skills is a service within CCC which delivers a range of services around adult learning and careers information, advice and guidance. CCC deliver across the county either directly ourselves or sub-contract to other providers. The service offers Community Learning, adult skills learning focused around work skills and employment, Family Learning, learning for Adults with Difficulties and Disabilities (ALDD) and careers information, advice and guidance. Learning is delivered through a range of locations from libraries to village halls, bringing learning to isolated communities as well as the main conurbations.

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CHORZÓW

wprawia w ruch

The City of Chorzow is located in the southern Poland in industrial Silesia region. Amount of citizens of Chorzów is around 111000 people. Amount of citizens in age 60+ is over 22000. (27% of people are 65+ years old – in the region percentage is 19%). City council is focused on activation of various target groups, especially on the citizens 60+.

City of Chorzow is very open for the new partnerships, knowledge alliances, gathering and sharing of knowledge about senior policies.

Department of Social Activation is focused on the development of strong local society and also raising awareness about problem of ageing societies. City of Chorzow is also officially twin town with Iserlohn. Common project will strengthen this cooperation.

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Federation FOSA is an association of 80 member organisations and social partners from the Warmia and Mazury. They operate in following areas - volunteer, palliative, the senior, Universities of the Third Age, assistance to victims of crime and new networks: therapy workshops and environmental self-help houses.

The two main directions of FOSA is to support organisations and social advocacy organisations and their audiences. There are four main areas: the elderly, disabled, voluntary and social organisations in social services.

Current activities are:

Seniors – Magazine Generation, Academy of Third Age of Warmia and Mazury, language and computer courses for more than 10 groups, support the victims of Nazism, initiate new solutions Volunteering - Volunteer support centres, implement international volunteering 50+ with partners from Spain and the Czech Republic, organise rallies volunteers etc.

Persons with disabilities - building networks Therapy Workshops and Environmental Self-Help Houses, completed the School of Social Animators working with people with disabilities;

Social services - support organisations (consulting, training, expert).

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Kilcooley Women's Centre (KWC), formed in 1995 works with socially disadvantaged women, children and families to help improve their life chances and high level outcomes. KWC is a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. KWC operate a multi project model, working in the fields of training, education and employability, engaging with employers to fill skills gaps, and addressing gender equality in all occupations. KWC provide childcare and early years programmes for women to support them whilst they study. KWC offer a comprehensive physical activity programme to encourage women to be more physically active and to improve their health. KWC promotes positive mental health and wellbeing programmes, positive community relations, and addressing long term unemployment or inactivity of young people not in education training or employment (NEET). KWC provide a wrap around support service to participants and beneficiaries and indirect support to the wider family. KWC work regionally across Northern Ireland through a series of Women's Support networks, to deliver good practice and exchange expertise. KWC provide services for victims of domestic violence, political conflict and those who have experienced trauma. KWC have been active in the delivery of peace and reconciliation focused programmes via the EU Peace Programme to build mutual respect and understanding of difference and the promotion of tolerance and understanding. KWC has worked with the long term unemployed and economically inactive people to help improve their employment prospects through one to one mentoring, group work, peer support, befriending and skills based training.

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Dutch Platform for
International Adult
Education

Learn for Life is a network of local, regional and national organisations active in the wide field of non-formal education. It does so from a national and international scope for innovation in social learning.

Learn for life provides a platform for sharing experiences and deepening of adult learning from the perspective of the European policy on lifelong learning. The foundation undertakes national and international developments in adult learning together. Learn for Life aims to make a significant contribution to further democratisation of society, to empower disadvantaged groups and to the promotion of social responsibility. Non-formal learning should be this framework widely recognized as an essential and indispensable part of the broad educational offerings.

From this starting point Learn for Life organises a variety of activities aimed at promoting encouraging lifelong learning, such as the national coordination of the annual Adults Learning Festival, the initiative of the Rural Academy, setting round table debates with experts in the field science and reflection, advocacy by participation in Europe networks as EAEA, EUNET, EBSN.

LEARN FOR LIFE
- Dutch platform for international adult learning
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The National Foundation for the Elderly (NFE), is a charity that promotes quality of life for older persons in the Netherlands. The primary focus of NFE is on preventing isolation, reflected by the Forget-Me-Not logo. NFE supports seniors through meaningful projects and services that: improve social inclusion, improve active and healthy ageing, improve safety and security.

The NFE has a large network of activity centres across the Netherlands that organises activities for seniors that are at risk of exclusion. These activities range from sports, shopping, summer days on the beach, Christmas dinners and knitting clubs, increasing social contacts in a concrete and simple manner. The NFE promotes actively senior rights and performs social research on important cases related to quality care, senior discrimination, elderly abuse and senior gay rights. It organises national campaigns and organises training and networking sessions between care professionals to raise awareness and interchange best practices. The NFE works as a trusted intermediary between private and public services and older persons, helping seniors to find the path towards support and care, creating an extensive knowledge base for research and innovation.

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The City of Nyíregyháza has about 120,000 inhabitants. It is the seat of the district Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg and u. a. responsible for the management of various educational institutions. The city also maintains a successful cooperation with various local educational institutions.

The city of Nyíregyháza has its own strategy for integrated urban development and uses it to implement national programs. From 2007 to 2013, Nyíregyháza participated in several cross-border cooperation projects, such as: Romania and Slovenia. The focus was on the development of cultural, tourist and economic cooperation with neighboring cities and countries. The city of Nyíregyháza has the necessary experience and capacity to further develop relations with partners in the region and to successfully implement projects with partners from other countries.

The city administration works together with a seniors' council on various issues. This advisory council is in close contact with the city council as an advisory body. The Senior Citizens' Council supports the city of Nyíregyháza in taking more account of the concerns of older residents. Seniors are also an individual target group for the digital offers, which can bring their suggestions.

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CENTER FIR
ALTERSFROEN

RBS-Center fir Altersfroen (national institute for ageing) is a non-profit organisation founded in 1989 as an initiative of the family ministry, to face the challenge of the ongoing demographic change of the population structure and its sociopolitical implications. Since then, RBS has been active in the field of working with the elderly and those who care for the elderly. The RBS's multi-disciplinary team offers a panoply of advisory services and event programs for professionals and management in the elderly care service sector. In addition, RBS's rich and varied Senior Academy program provides a wide range of activities and advice for persons aged 50+ years. Furthermore its Unit of Applied Research is actively involved in different European projects and applied psycho gerontological research in close collaboration with the University of Luxembourg and other research centres. Main goals: Professional training for management and staff in the elderly care service sector (out-patient care and residential care), National promotion of lifelong learning, active ageing and qualified volunteering for the elderly, Scientific knowledge production, dissemination and transmission of evidencebased best practice guidance, Provision of a platform for socially important, age-related questions.

RBS – Center fir Altersfroen
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STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Stockport Council is a medium sized municipality in the UK's north-west with around 300,000 residents. Within the Council the Adult Social Care Department aims to help older adults to continue to live as independently as possible within the community.

Stockport Council is responsible for caring for people with Dementia and have developed with a lot of partners some real expertise in training for people living with dementia and also training for carers. This training helps develop peoples skills and knowledge about living with and caring for people with Dementia and enables people to develop skills, knowledge and experience of what it is like to live well with dementia and also how it will change and develop.

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KICK-OFF EVENT IN ISERLOHN (GER), 19 - 21 OCTOBER 2016

Representatives of all project partners met at the Adult Education Centre (Volkshochschule - VHS) in Iserlohn between 19 and 21 October 2016 to attend the kick-off meeting of the "Silver Learners" project and exchange information and ideas for developing the project. The conference started with an excursion to the German Gerontology Association (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gerontotechnik - GGT). The GGT has been located in Iserlohn since 1993 and is a highly competent partner to industry, commerce and trade in the generation 50+ growth market. Following welcoming words by the head of the VHS, Rainer Danne, and department leader Frank Finkeldei, Lieselotte Berthold gave a talk on the subject of: „How do volunteers learn in Iserlohn?“ After that, the content and objectives of the project were presented. This was followed by a presentation of the individual educational facilities of the project partners from the participating countries.

In the afternoon, concrete plans for the project were discussed in the project steering group. The topics at the workshop included: project management and organisation, project structure and time schedule, budget and financing, as well as communication and reporting. The main focus was on the formation of transnational work groups including all the participating project partners whose job will be to prepare, implement and assess the following workshops during the project period up to 2018:

- Skills and learning abilities of elderly people and the resulting requirements on the range of education offered
- Communication for and with senior students: How can we best reach the target group? How can we boost the communication skills of elderly people who use a computer?
- Further education for our daily lives: How can we best support the older generation in their media-driven everyday lives? How can the new resources be made useful for seniors?

- Further education for health and hygiene: how can sport further health? How can one best deal with typical diseases among the elderly, such as dementia?

- Involvement of elderly people in providing and planning services, whether by supporting their colleagues with voluntary work, by participating in the digital world, or by working together with service providers.

The workshop day on 21 October was intended to make the participants more familiar with Iserlohn. It also provided further insights into the social-cultural structure in a medium-sized town in North Rhine-Westphalia against the background of demographic change. To illustrate this, a city guide took the attending project partners on an informative tour of Iserlohn and explained the historical development of the town to them. The historical accounts were supplemented by a presentation of the social-cultural environments in Iserlohn.



1. WORKSHOP IN NYÍREGYHÁZA (HUN), 22 - 24 MARCH 2017



Representatives of all the European project partners met in Nyíregyháza (Hungary) from 22 to 24 March 2017 to attend the first Workshop of the ERASMUS+ “Silver Learners” project.

The workshop was organised by the City-Administration of Nyíregyháza. The main focus was:

„Skills and learning abilities of elderly people and the resulting requirements on the range of education offered.“

After welcoming words and an introduction of the workshop programme, the Council of Elders from Nyíregyháza, gave an advisory board, presented their work. Prof. Imre Semsei, Dean of University of Debrecen, Faculty of Health, introduced the Academy of the Elderly in Eastern Hungary which is organized each year by the University. He also gave an overall view of gerontology and of the way the University tries to support senior citizens.

On the second day, Nyíregyháza presented the Sociological research about the city. After that, representatives from Cambridgeshire and Luxembourg introduced good-practice-examples of competence and learning in later life and shared their previous experiences. A transnational working group from the participating project partners from Netherlands, Hungary and Germany assessed the workshop with a theoretical background about competences and learning in later life with the following topics:

- Theoretical background for learning in later life (different learning types)
- Competences of seniors
- Competences of teachers/tutors
- Examples of good practice

The third day was intended to make the participants more familiar with Nyíregyháza. The hosts also provided further insights into the social-cultural structure against the background of demographic change. To clarify this, a city guide took the attending project partners on an informative tour of Nyíregyháza and explained the historical development of the town to them.



2. WORKSHOP IN LUXEMBURG (LUX), 28 - 30 JUNE 2017



CENTER FIR
ALTERSFROEN

The second Erasmus+ Silver Learners project meeting was hosted by the RBS-Center fir Altersfroen from June 28th- 30th in Luxemburg.

In total 25 project representatives from all six partner countries met at the Coque Conference Center in Luxemburg/ Kirchberg. The main focus was:

„Communication for and with senior students: How can we best reach the target group? How can we boost the communication skills of elderly people?“

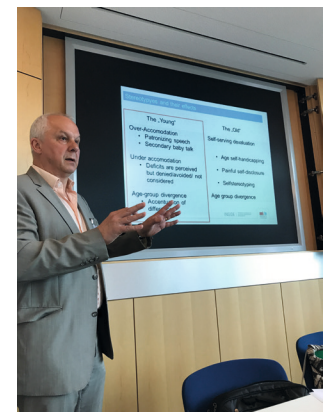
After a warm welcome to all participants, the representative of the Ministry of Family and Integration, underlined the importance of good accessible low threshold education offers for elderly citizens. A special emphasis is placed on tackling the challenges of cultural diversity and language barriers of elderly migrants in Luxembourg. RBS presented the concept and development of the Seniors Study programme at the University of Luxembourg that was initiated in 2011 in collaboration with RBS-Center fir Altersfroen. The programme aims at giving seniors an opportunity to either gain or refresh their academic knowledge on certain topics. Subsequently, the director of the adult education department, presented their service, which exists for 25 years. Their work is similar to the work of a “Volkshochschule” in Germany promoting life-long learning, but here it is on a national level. The manager of the EPALE-platform for Luxembourg presented the “Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe”.

The first day of the meeting ended with an introduction to the workshop from RBS-Center fir Altersfroen, and “facts and figures” about demographic and socio-cultural specificities and their implications for reaching and teaching senior citizens in Luxembourg. The RBS – Center fir Altersfroen, presented a video about her pilot filed project in Esch-sur-Alzette “the intercultural walking group”. The project focuses on bringing together elderly people with different social and cultural backgrounds to participate in an activity with the aim to promote diversity, social cohesion and open-minded exchange.

The second day started with a keynote lecture given by Professor Dr. Dieter Ferring – Professor for developmental psychology and psychogerontology from the University of Luxembourg - who outlined basic concepts of communication and associated age-related changes over the lifespan. A special emphasis was put on the predicament and possible pitfalls of age stereotypes in social interactions: Based on a theoretical framework he explained how stereotyped expectations may change behaviour towards elderly in ways we may not notice and correct. Another focal point of the keynote was set on the challenges, chances and concerns of the increasing digitalisation (“digital divide”) in the context of ageing.

Representatives from Stockport, Iserlohn and Luxembourg presented their good-practice examples and shared their experiences related to specificities in communication and learning in the ageing context. After that, two interactive workshops started:

“New digital technologies” and “Silver Sharing Initiative”. Main goals of the workshops were to reflect on the “heterogeneity” of elderly learners by taking into account sociocultural and socioeconomic differences as well as technological innovations in different domains, which may impact social interaction, lifelong learning and mutual understanding in later life.



On the third day the project representatives visited the RBS-Center fir Altersfroe in Itzig where collaborators of two different departments presented their specific fields of action, where project leaders in the RBS-Publications Department, presented the work they do in the area of biographical research and publishing.

They accompany and advise a group of senior citizens who write down their own memories and interview their contemporaries. These writings are edited, combined with photos and other historical documents, and then published in book form and on the specialised website www.memories.lu, set up by RBS for this purpose.

Afterwards participants visited the neurofeedback laboratory at RBS-Cellule de Recherche (www.cellulederecherche.lu). Neurofeedback is a technique of a self-regulation in which current parameters of EEG brain activity recorded from the subject's head are presented to a subject through real-time visual and auditory modality while the subject is supposed to alter these parameters to reach a more efficient mode of brain functioning.

Martine Hoffmann, head of research and neurofeedback therapist, explained the fundamentals of neurotherapy, its possible training/therapeutic goals (e.g. optimise brain fitness, attention, emotional balance, stress-reduction) and illustrated the proceeding with a live demonstration in the lab.



3. WORKSHOP IN MIDDELBURG (NETHERLANDS), 2 - 3 NOVEMBER 2017

Representatives of the European project partners met in Middelburg (Netherlands) from 2 to 3 November 2017 to attend the third Workshop of the ERASMUS+ “Silver Learners” project. The workshop was organised by NFE in cooperation with the stichting werken en leren. The main focus was:

„Further education for our daily lives: How can we best support the older generation in their media-driven everyday lives? How can the new resources be made useful for seniors?“

After welcoming words and an introduction of the workshop programme, all project partners presented knowledge with the output of the last two workshops. One aim of the project is to learn from each other and to adapt new initiatives. Accordingly the programme offered several opportunities to learn from partners and their experiences. The second day started with welcoming words from the Alderman of the city of Middelburg, Mrs. S. Szarafinski. More than 100 people participated on the workshop, which was moderated by Arend Roos. Keynote speakers from the University of Utrecht gave an overall view of learning in the elderly and the effect of music on people with late stage dementia.

Information about different local projects follows: „Socialcare“, „virtual and mixed reality“, „elderly and digital skills“, „Lets get digital“, „Jobgroup” presented by project managers and shared their previous experiences. A transnational working group from the participating project partners from Poland and Northern Ireland assessed three workshops and gave a survey of the results in the afternoon:

- What new technology in every day life of seniors us or want?
- What kind of competences do teachers need?
- What do we miss to reach and teach seniors digital skills? What need for the future?

In the evening, a city guide took the attending project partners on an informative tour of Middelburg and explained the historical development of the town and the light event “waterlight” by the artist Daan Roosegaarde.



4. WORKSHOP IN STOCKPORT (GB), 14 - 16 MARCH 2018



Representatives of the European project partners met in Stockport (GB) from 14 to 16 March 2018 to attend the fourth Workshop of the ERASMUS+ "Silver Learners" project.

The workshop was organized by Stockport City Council. The main focus was:

„Further education for health and hygiene: How can sport further health? How can one best deal with typical diseases among the elderly, such as dementia?“

Following a welcome and introduction to Stockport covering both its history and background in European Cooperation, four of the project partners presented examples of best practice from their organisations around health & dementia.

The second day of the conference started off with a presentation from the telecare team at Stockport Council outlining the technology used with older people but specifically those living with dementia in the community. This gave a picture of the resources available for people living with dementia in Stockport and to allow for a discussion on different approaches in different countries. The main focus of the day was a workshop delivered by the local Educate group, a group of people living with dementia in the community and their carers. EDUCATE are a Stockport based group of people living with dementia, who raise awareness about dementia who meet regularly to share their experience of managing the difficulties dementia can cause. Their aim is to inspire others to live well with dementia, and to involve people with dementia in the life of their communities. EDUCATE receives support from Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust and Stockport Council. They are also part the Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project (DEEP), a network of Involvement groups for people with dementia. As people with dementia, they believe it is possible to overcome the isolation and stigma many people with dementia still experience. They believe their own experience puts them in a position to explain to others that it is possible to continue to live



well and do this by delivering living well with dementia talks to organisations, community and faith groups.

Having lived through the shock of a dementia diagnosis themselves they believe a timely diagnosis can help people adjust to their new situation. They work alongside health professionals to support others who are newly diagnosed, to help overcome their initial anxieties and help them face the future in a positive frame of mind. Lastly they believe that those involved in the support of people with dementia should be given the training and education they need, so they use their lived experience of dementia to help deliver training courses alongside health and social care professionals.

For the session in Stockport Educate delivered three mini sessions which covered the following topics:

- Our values – ‘The Person comes first’
- The role of people with dementia and their care partners in delivering training programmes’
- ‘Raising public awareness and changing the culture of Dementia’ – a presentation by member of EDUCATE

Following the lunch break there was a performance by an intergenerational choir made up of members from Educate and children from a local school which was both inspiring and moving.

The final presentation of the day was on the „Smile-project“, a low impact exercise concept for older people which also included the work Stockport does around falls prevention. In the evening delegates were taken on a tour of the historic sites around the town centre of Stockport including the Stockport’s famous Hat Works museum and other heritage assets.

On the final day in Stockport two more partners gave good practice presentations on the work they were doing around health & dementia in their organisations.



5. WORKSHOP IN CAMBRIDGE (GB), 20 - 22 JUNE 2018



Project partners met in Cambridge (UK) from the 20th to 22nd June to attend the fifth workshop and a conference organised by the Cambridgeshire partners (Adult Learning & Skills, Cambridgeshire County Council) and co-hosted by Cambridge City Council. The main focus was:

„Involvement of elderly people in providing and planning services, whether by supporting their colleagues with voluntary work, by participating in the digital world, or by working together with service providers.“

The Mayor of Cambridge, Councillor Nigel Gawthrop, welcomed visitors and guests to the City and was followed by a presentation by the City Council on how they are working to eliminate the digital divide within the city which particularly affects the elderly and those with lower incomes.

Francesca Coleman, Head of Digital Inclusion for The Good Things Foundation talked about the national digital inclusion picture and the work the Foundation has been doing over the last decade and more to increase digital participation.

There was then a presentation on the work Cambridgeshire County Council is doing to promote Active Communities: an asset based community development approach which encourages communities to recognise the strengths and skills they have and use these to support others. In the afternoon there were presentations on projects happening within Cambridgeshire that engage older people in both volunteering, empowering communities to help themselves and planning and supporting service delivery.

The projects that were presented included

- Digital Champions – older people with the City of Cambridge who volunteer to engage and support other older people getting online

- Cambridge Online – an organisation that supports digital participation
- Linkages – an intergenerational housing project supported by the CHSA Group which places students in flats within sheltered housing accommodation
- SENS Plus – RBS Luxembourg reported on their follow up work on an older people's project
- Time Banking and time credits – work supported by the County Council
- Brampton Community Connectors – a large community engagement and support network based in a village in Cambridgeshire



The final day saw presentations by:

- Care Network – presented their Community Navigators project which uses volunteers to support older people in their communities. The project provides information and help so that older people can get to activities and services which they would enjoy or find useful
- Cambridgeshire Library Service presented how they work with over 900 volunteers to deliver aspects of the library service, particularly around services for older users.



FINAL CONFERENCE IN OLSZTYN (POLAND), 26 - 28 SEPTEMBER 2018



Representatives of the European project partners met in Olsztyn (Poland) from 26 to 28 September 2018 to attend the final conference of the ERASMUS+ "Silver Learners" project.

The conference was organised by FOSA Federation in Olsztyn. Following a welcome and introduction to Olsztyn, all project partners presented their project results, best practice and experience on local level. The day ended with an optional visiting of the Olsztyn planetarium. On the second day the „Silver Learners” Project was part of the 11th regional conference on the occasion of the international day of older persons, „European trends in the senior politics. Silver Learners - European network acting for improvement of the standards of working with seniors in Europe” Conference opening: Bartłomiej Głuszak, president of the FOSA Federation and Gustaw Marek Brzezina, Marshal of the Warmia and Mazury Voivodship

Lecture 1

„European trends in the senior politics. Silver Learners - European network acting for improvement of the standards of work with seniors in Europe”
Frank Finkeldei (City Hall - VHS Iserlohn, Germany), Matthias Quaschnick (Iserlohn City Hall, Germany)

Lecture 2

„Between passivity and activity. Transformations in the approach to the senior politics”
PhD Katarzyna Białobrzaska (Faculty of Social Sciences, Social Pedagogy Unit UWM in Olsztyn, director of the Social and Educational Studies Institute of FOSA)

Panel 1

„Let's get digital! New technologies and trends in work with seniors”
Introduction/moderation: Joanna Szymańska (FOSA Federation) Panel participants: Niek Kaag (Lern for Life, Netherlands), Rebecca Morgan (Cambridgeshire County

Council, Great Britain), Krzysztof Marusiński (leader of the Network in favour of Seniors, Poland)

Panel 2

„Dementia - a 21st century challenge. Overcoming stereotypes. Good practices in working with dementia patients”
Introduction/moderation: Joanna Szymańska (FOSA Federation)

Panel participants: Simon Gross (RBS Center fir Altersfreen, Luxembourg), Gill Owen-John (Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Great Britain), Manon van Dijk (National Ouderen Founds, Netherlands), Stanisław Brzozowski (Ombudsman for Seniors in Warmia and Mazury Voivodship)



Panel 3

„Cross-sectoral cooperation acting for improvement of the quality of seniors’ life”

Introducion/moderation: Joanna Szymańska (FOSa Federation) Panel participant Zoltan Szenes (Nyiregyhaza City Hall, Hungary), Łukasz Żółciak (Chorzów City Hall, Poland), Alison Blayney (Kilcooley Women’s Centre, Northern Ireland), Frank Finkeldei (City Hall - VHS Iserlohn, Germany)

The third day of the conference started with a presentation “Senior, NGO and local Policy in Varmia and Masuria County” in the city hall of Olsztyn.

After that the steering group talked about the final organisational contents and project conclusion.

The conference ended with an city walk that gave participants the opportunity to discover the most beautiful sights of Olsztyn city center and old town.




At all the conferences, the project partners had the opportunity to discuss a number of different concepts, approaches, ideas and local activities; to exchange information on a professional level, to meet new colleagues and were able to take lots of ideas home with them. All the practical examples can be divided into 5 categories - local structures, communication & competences, new media, education at the Silver Campus, active & healthy.

Examples that should be mentioned here include: voluntary support at the district community centres, biography studies, computer courses with Skype to establish contact to children and grandchildren, blended learning concepts for rural regions, education for dementia patients, or the integration of educational opportunities at libraries or other institutions as well as sports, exercise and health offers. All the concepts and local activities are intended to support the older generation in being active members of society for as long as possible and able to independently face the challenges of growing older. However, the group of senior citizens is extremely heterogeneous. During the project we could conclude that the living circumstances and biographies are very diverse and that the “younger” old people have different interests than persons between 60 and 65 or other seniors of a very high age. According to neurological and learning psychological research findings, elderly people are both capable of and interested in learning. Their performance, learning skills and interests can be preserved right into old age, although the significance of education in the relevant living conditions plays a major role, as does the background in which the individual person is rooted. This also includes the learning experiences the persons have made, e.g.

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. during their working lives, which, at an advanced age, could have a positive or negative effect on their attendance at educational measures. Frequently though, such experiences can be newly interpreted. As people grow older, their living and learning habits become more consolidated. They learn in particular things that have a stabilising effect on them as individuals or that are necessary in their specific living situation.

Each and every adult education institute is thus faced with the challenge of addressing very heterogeneous groups of seniors and drawing up the appropriate education concepts. The central aspect in this case is definitely Tartler's activity theory (1961), according to which there is a positive correlation between social activities and/or learning, and life satisfaction. Accordingly, the loss of a role or function will lead to isolation and withdrawal, thus having a negative impact on life satisfaction. Learning at an adult age usually happens in an informal, self-directed and involuntary way. The offers at educational institutes could combine this with their formal proposals.

All the results of the workshops, the conference materials and the speeches can be retrieved from the homepage www.project-silver-learners.eu.

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