

Promoting
Third Age
Education



Slovenska univerza za tretje življenjsko obdobje



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

Country: Slovenia

Affiliation: Slovenian Third Age University

Reporters: Dušana Findeisen and Karina Sirk

Place and date: Ljubljana, February 2017

Survey on Older Adult Education Programmes, Methods and Characteristics of Older Students

Erasmus+ KA2 project

No.: 2016-1-LV01-KA204-02271

Ljubljana, 27th February 2017

Title: Survey on Older Adult Education, Programmes,
Methods and Characteristics of Older Students

Publisher: Slovenska univerza za tretje življenjsko obdobje,
združenje za izobraževanje in družbeno vključenost

Authors: Dušana Findeisen and Karina Sirk

©: Slovenska univerza za tretje življenjsko obdobje, združenje za izobraževanje in družbeno vključenost, Ljubljana 2017.

Without written permission the reproduction of this text is not permitted.

CIP

List of Graphs

Graph no 1	Older U3A students by age categories
Graph no 2	Older U3A students by type of household
Graph no 3	Older U3A students by level of formal education
Graph no 4	Older U3A students by place of living
Graph no 5	Older U3A students by ex professional status
Graph no 6	Older students' level of satisfaction with their ex job
Graph no 7	Older students' duration of retirement
Graph no 8	Older students' past participation in adult education
Graph no 9	Barriers experienced in the past adult education
Graph no 10	Motives for participating in adult education
Graph no 11	Older students' motives for participating in older adult education
Graph no 12	U3As' programmes attended by older students
Graph no 13	Older students' preferences as to adult education methods
Graph no 14	Weekly frequency of attendance of educational programmes
Graph no 15	Older students' and the received encouragement towards learning
Graph no 16	Older students' present attitude towards education
Graph no 17	Transformative impact of older adult education
Graph no 18	Older students' satisfaction before enrolling into older adult education
Graph no 19	Older students' other activities
Graph no 20	Older students' plans for the next year participation in education

Table of Contents

1. Significance of the study
2. Research problem
3. Purpose of the study
4. Research questions
5. Hypotheses
6. The list of variables
7. Methodology
 - 7.1. Sample and basic research multitude
 - 7.2. Basic research methods
 - 7.3. Collecting the data
 - 7.4. Treatment of the data
8. Analysis of the empirical study
9. Research results and interpretation
- Conclusion
- Literature and References
- Annexes

1. Significance of the Study

With European demographic developments, educational institutions need to come up with strategies to deal with the growing population of older people and retirees. In most countries and towns there is a local plethora of learning opportunities for older adult education committed to supporting the inclusion of older persons (aged 50+ or 60+) through their participation in older adult education, be in formal, non-formal or informal areas of learning.

The present and future prospects for later-life education in Slovenia seemed increasingly promising for several decades. In the times of the current “crisis” however, older adult education is endangered as a result of current economic conditions, elitism, gender bias, the urban-rural divide, the digital divide and third age ageism. In these times we need to know more about older adult education and older students’ characteristics dwelling upon the answers of those who are already involved in older adult education.

2. Research Problem

This research is devoted to older adult education programmes, their contents, methods as well as characteristics of older students participating in older adult education. We will be focusing on active participants. The research will be focusing on the motives leading older students to enrol into educational programmes, the barriers preventing them from enrolling, encouragement they get, the quality of their life before enrolling and the impact education might have on their lives.

3. The Purpose of the Study

This research will be simultaneously conducted within Erasmus+ K2 P3AE project by all partner organisations from Latvia, Lithuania, Spain and Slovenia.

Basically it will be conducted to obtain the results for the comparison with the results of the studies to be carried out in Spain, Latvia and Lithuania.

The partner organisations and their countries are quite different, the situation of older adult education is different as well in each of them but supposedly the position of older people is somehow similar. Older people are at the edge of society, often squeezed out of the labour market and the public sphere. The results of this research will be integrated in the educational modules for older people to be developed in this project.

Knowing older people, older learners, their social needs, their need for sharing values, their attitude towards adult and older adult education, their associated expectations, is needed for programming older adult education as well as delivering educational and training programmes.

It is necessary to identify the incentives older people get for learning and to know how education impacts older student's lives.

This study will examine the factors impacting older adults' participation in education provided by Slovenian U3As

We will investigate:

- who older students are, their gender, age, educational attainment, their employment status prior to retirement,
- the motives having led older students to take part in adult education during their professionally active years and the nature of their attitude towards adult education education in those days,
- the motives out of which the students enrolled in the educational programmes of their institution,
- past barriers preventing them from taking part in adult education,
- the incentive they get to study,
- the preferred programmes and learning methods of older adult education ,
- the transformative value of older adult education and the impact on older students' life quality.

4. Research Questions

The research questions are:

- Are there more older students involved in education among those who live with their partner or family, or those who live in nursery homes or alone, with the assumption that they are perhaps more lonely?
- What is the percentage of those from rural background as compared to the percentage of those who are from towns?
- Are there more university graduates than others involved?
- Does involvement in adult education during the professional period impact the educational involvement in the third age?
- Which programmes are preferred/attended?
- Which methods are preferred?
- Does the number of years spent in retirement impact the participation in older adult education? Is the number of the recently retired greater than that of those who got retired years ago? Do they enrol as to overcome the loss of the structured time?
- What is the proportion of those who enrolled in older adult education programmes and attended adult education during their active years, rarely, often or never? What were their motives for enrolling? Can it be deduced that those who were more often enrolled in adult education more easily enrol in older adult education or not? What is the proportion of those who used to enrol in adult education on to meet their work needs and now to meet their interests from the private sphere, or interests whom they could live out during their working time?
- What are the main motives for taking part in older adult education?
- Who encourages older students to enrol in educational programmes and what is their own attitude like?
- What are the learners' other free time activities? Do they in any way contribute to social development? What used to be the quality of their life

before enrolling in older adult education in comparison with the present situation? Are they more optimistic, more confident, has their communication with others bettered, do they accept their old age better. Is it easier for them to ask for help? Do they have more friends? Are they therefore less lonely? Has the quality of their life augmented?

- Will they continue attending educational programmes?

5. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been selected:

1. Most of the students will be female.
2. Most of the students will be in the age categories 60-64 and 65-69.
3. They will mostly live in a household with their partner.
4. They will be mostly tertiary graduates.
5. They will mostly live in towns.
6. Before they got retired they had mostly been professional workers.
7. The majority of them were satisfied with their work station.
8. They will have been retired from five to nine years on average.
9. Most of the students will have participated in adult education.
10. They will have participated in adult education mostly to obtain a diploma or certificate.
11. They will predominately participate in older adult education for both getting knowledge and socialising.
12. They will mostly attend foreign language programmes.
13. The preferred method will be discussion.
14. They will mostly attend educational programmes once a week.
15. Students will be mostly encouraged to study by their grandchildren and grown up children.
16. Most of the students will be satisfied with their later-life education.
17. The participants will most highly score their newly acquired ability to change and to adapt.
18. Students will have been satisfied with their life before enrolling into older adult

education programmes.

19. Students will mostly have leisure time activities corresponding to the prevailing social stereotypes about older people's leisure time.
20. Students will continue their studies the following year.

6. List of variables

- | | |
|-----|---|
| S1 | Gender |
| S2 | Age |
| S3 | Education |
| S4 | Place of living |
| S5 | Who they live with in a household |
| S6 | Employment status prior to retirement |
| S7 | Duration of retirement |
| S8 | Taking part in educational programmes |
| S9 | Satisfaction at work |
| S10 | Motivation for enrolling |
| S11 | Educational programmes attended |
| S12 | Methods preferred |
| S13 | Frequency of educational meetings |
| S14 | Barriers preventing from taking part in education |
| S15 | Stimulation for education |
| S16 | Attitude towards education now |
| S17 | Free time activities |
| S18 | Contributing towards the development of society |
| S19 | Satisfaction with life before enrolling |
| S20 | Renewal of enrolment next year |
| S21 | Loneliness |
| S22 | Number of friends |
| S23 | Better communication |
| S24 | Feeling optimism |
| S25 | Adapting to changes |

- S26 Making old age meaningful
- S27 Courage to ask for help
- S28 Political activity
- S30 Quality of life

7. Methodology

7.1. Sample and Basic Research Multitude

The basic multitude was hypothetical. The sample used in this study was selected at random from participants attending Third Age University in Ljubljana. They have been members of this university in the study year 2016/2017. The respondents are older people, retirees living in Ljubljana and its surroundings, but also students from other Slovenian U3As. The sample consisted of students who attend different study circles or study groups. Thus, the basic multitudes were active participants of Slovenian Third Age University, the network of 52 universities distributed all over Slovenia.

7.2. Basic Research Methods

In the study the descriptive method was used since the research was based on the description of the phenomena responding to the questions "what" and "how", and causal non-experimental method used while searching the connections among phenomena and consequently the essence of the phenomena.

7.3. Collecting the Data

As a research instrument for the collection of the data an anonymous survey questionnaire was used, built on the basis of research questions and hypotheses. The survey consists of closed questions, enabling the respondents to choose among the given answers with the exception of the questions where instead of the given answers respondents may choose "Other" and write down their own answer. The

data were collected between the 9th of February 2017 and the 17th of February 2017 (9 days).

The questionnaire was put on an online surveying tool [OneClickSurvey](#) which enabled us to reach as many students as possible in a very short time frame. A link to the online questionnaire was sent to a few hundred email addresses of the students of the Third Age University in Ljubljana and other third age universities throughout Slovenia. To this day 699 responses were recorder out of which 431 were suitable for further analysis (completed surveys).

7.4. Treatment of The Data

The online tool *OneClickSurvey* enabled us to analyse all of the gathered data online. The tool statistically analysed the data and exported graphs of the questions and answers.

8. Analysis of the Empirical Study

431 questionnaires were fully completed and were used for further statistical analysis. In the interpretation of the empirical study chapter the results associated with the set of hypotheses are interpreted.

Hypothesis no 1. Most of the respondents will be female. Hyposthesis confirmed.

The sample consisted of 431 respondents out of which 14% were men and 86% were women.

20% to 25 % male respondents were expected, this would probably be the case, if the questionnaire were addressed to the participants of Ljubljana U3A to the exclusion of other universities in smaller towns and localities. It can be deduced that in smaller towns, men have more difficulties enrolling in older adult education than

in larger cities. One has to bear in mind that the socialisation processes of today's older men and women used to be quite distinct. The division of labour used to be more unequal than it is today.¹ Results are reflected in adult and older adult education as well.

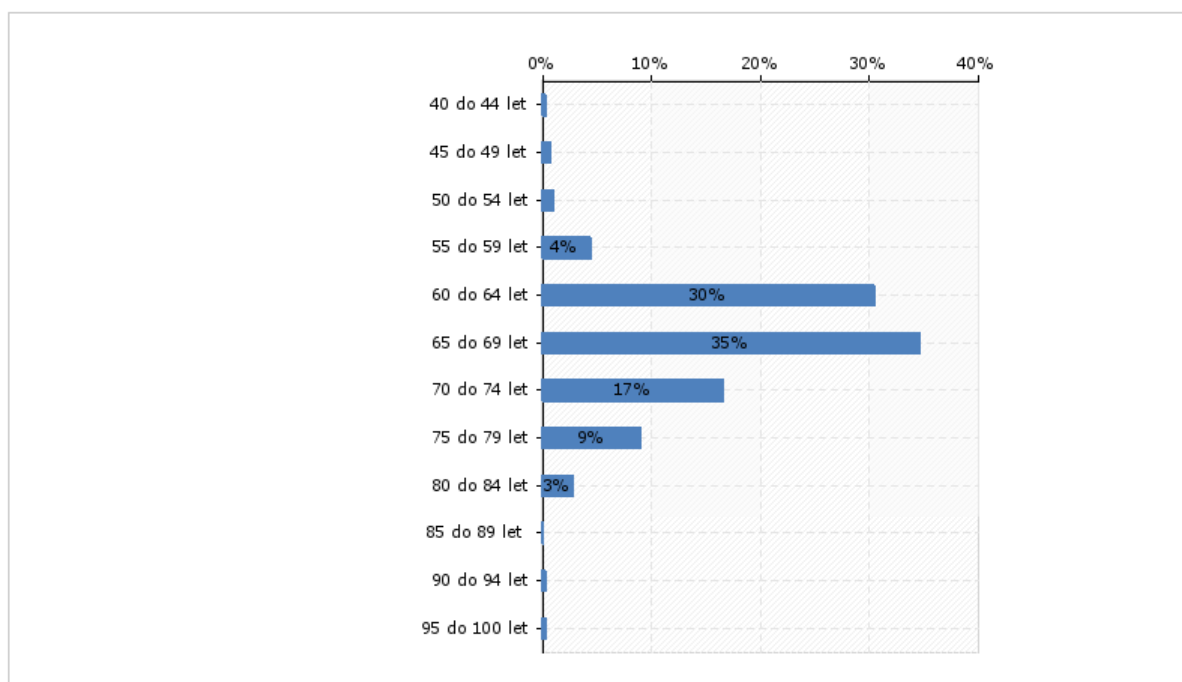
Another possible reason is that men have difficulties accepting older adult education as a way of living. Upon the completion of a study year they have a tendency to quit or they choose another activity. They prefer shorter cycles of education and are less inclined to cognitive learning than women. Moreover, in Slovenia the number of female students in general population has traditionally been higher than the number of male students. In the year 2013, according to the EUROSTAT data for instance, women were in a majority among tertiary students in Slovenia as well as in all EU Member States except in Greece and Germany.² This situation is reflected in today's older adult education as well.

Hypothesis no 2: Most of the students will be in the age categories 60-64 and 65-69 . The hypothesis has been confirmed.

¹ Kidd, J. Roby. *How Adults Learn*. Association Press, New York, 1959 and 1973.

² EUROSTAT: Number of tertiary education graduates, 2013 (thousands) ET15.png

V katero starostno skupino spadate:



Graph no 1 Older U3A students by age categories

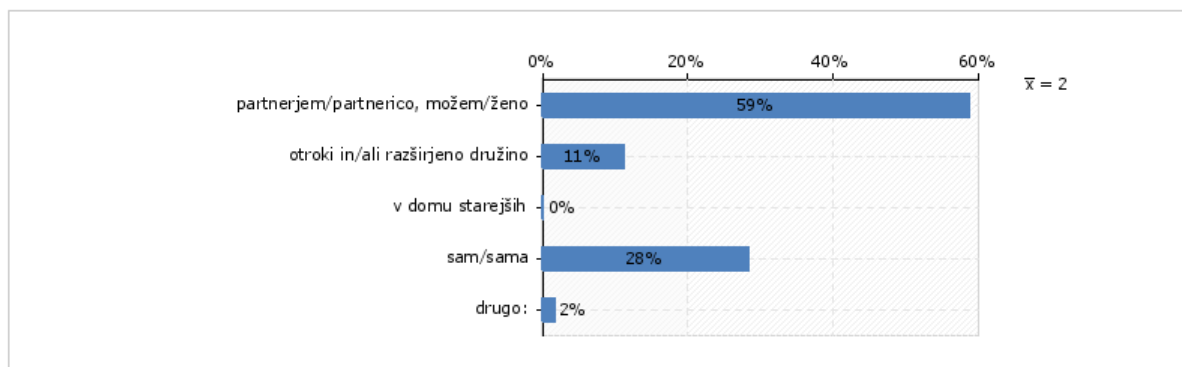
The majority of respondents (35%) are in the age category 65 to 69 years, followed by the category 60 to 64 years (30%) of the respondents which corresponds to our initial hypothesis. Current higher average age of our students in comparison with the average age three decades ago is mostly due to pension reforms and higher statutory retirement age.

There is an additional explanation possible. Students enrolled in the third age university programmes are rarely unemployed before retirement and therefore they did not belong to groups of older workers in the pre-retirement.

Hypothesis no 3. They will mostly live in a household with their partner.

The hypothesis has been confirmed.

Živim skupaj s/z:

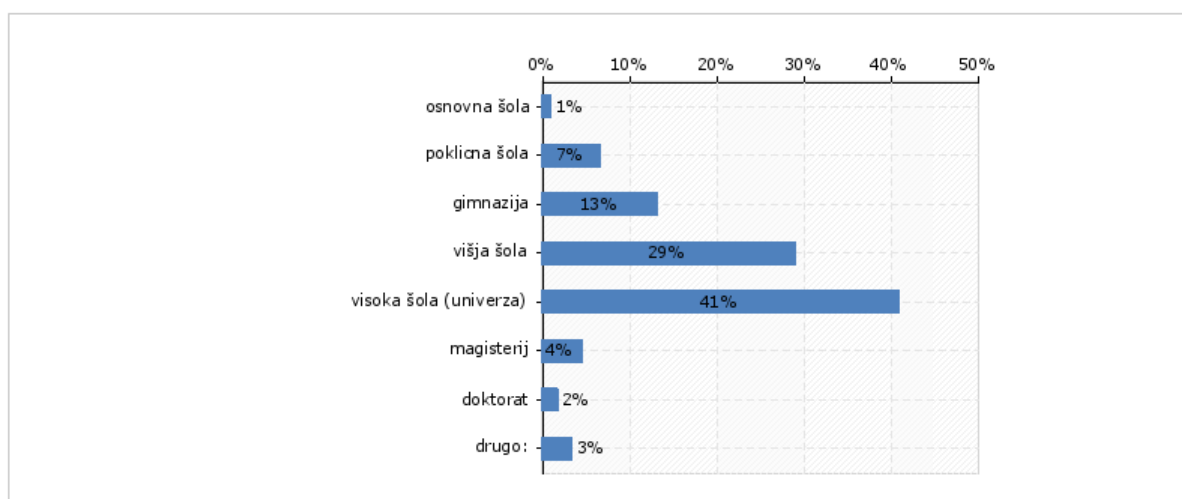


Graph no 2 Older U3A students by type of household

The respondents mostly live in a household with their partner/husband/wife (59%) which corresponds to our hypothesis. By contrast, the prevailing stereotype about older students is: they are females, they are very old, they want just to kill time and socialise, and they live alone.

Hypothesis no 4. They will be mostly tertiary graduates. The hypothesis has been confirmed.

Stopnja formalne izobrazbe:



Graph no 3 Older U3A students by level of formal education

They are university graduates (76%) , long and short cycle graduates and post graduate studies together. 29% of the respondents completed shorter cycle, two-year studies, and 41% of them four-year and more long university studies, masters degree (6 years of studies) was reached by 4% of our students and doctorate degree (8 years an more of post secondary studies) by 2% of respondents.

Hypothesis no 5. They will mostly live in towns. The hypothesis has been confirmed.

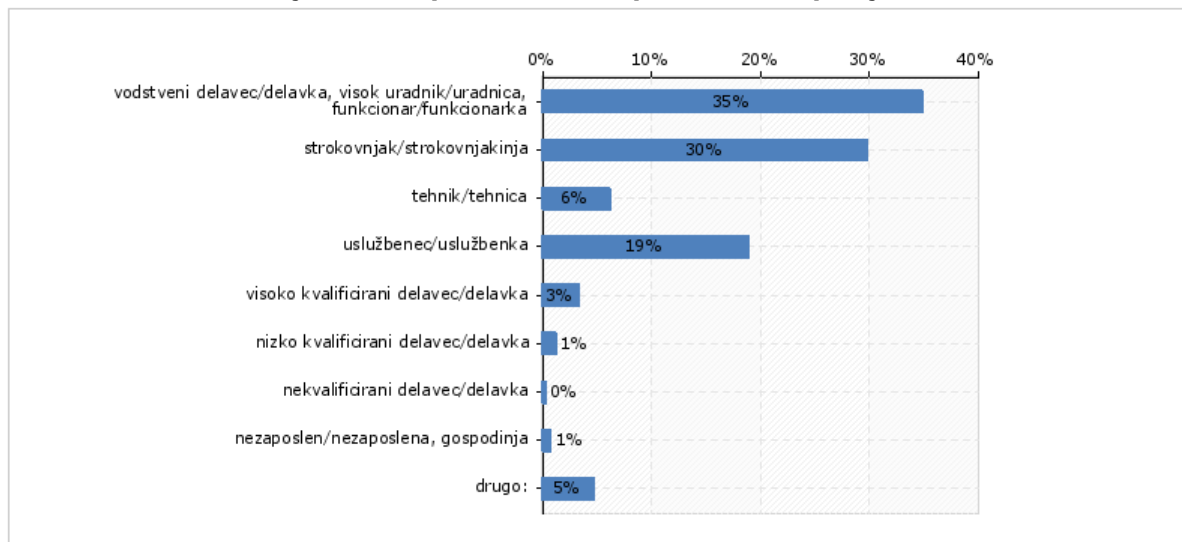


Graph no 4 Older U3A students by place of living

72% of the respondents live in town, while 28% live in the country. Our hypothesis was that the majority of respondents would live in urban areas. In the country the older people's activities are more connected with their natural environment than with organised long lasting educational activities. Moreover towns are more social as concerns meeting older people's needs. More needs can be met in towns, also more educational needs.

Hypothesis no 6. Before they got retired they had mostly been professional workers. The hypothesis has been rejected.

Kakšen je bil vaš zaposlitveni status preden ste se upokojili?

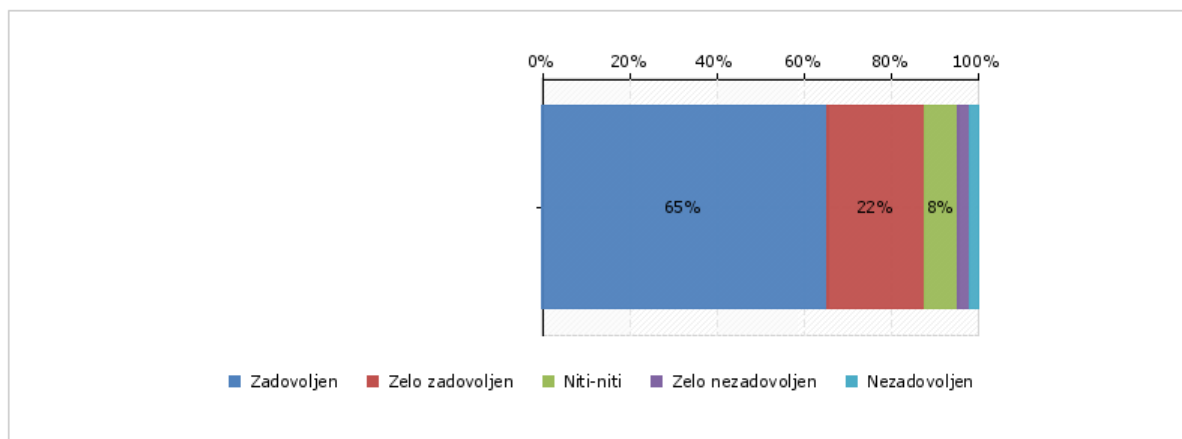


Graph no 5 Older U3A students by ex professional status

Before getting retired they were mostly employed as managers/high officials (35%), followed by professional workers (30%). In any case, the majority of U3A's students had a higher socio-economic status than average.

Hypothesis no 7. The majority of them were satisfied with their work station.

Ste bili zvečine zadovoljni na delovnem mestu? Prosimo ocenite na lestvici od 1 do 5.

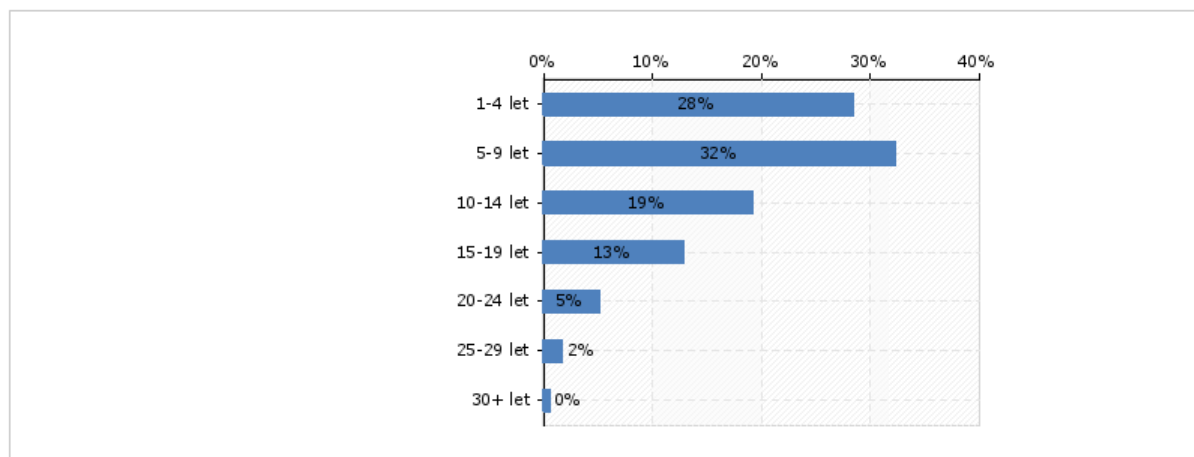


Graph no 6 Older students' level of satisfaction with their ex job

The majority of them were satisfied with their work station or position (65%). This datum shows that one starts a developmental activity when one is stable and able to set goals for the future.

Hypothesis no 8. They will have been retired for five-nine years on average. The hypothesis has been confirmed.

Koliko let ste že upokojeni?

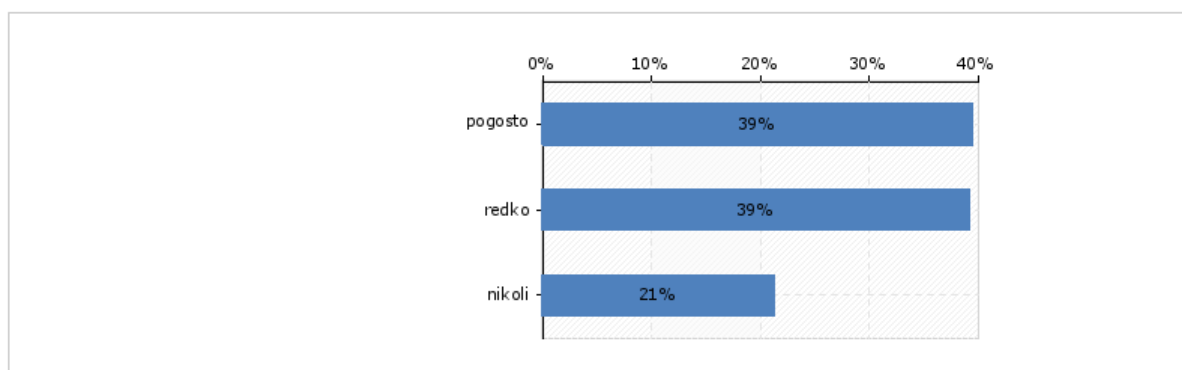


Graph no 7 Older students' duration of retirement

A bit more than one third of the respondents (32%) have been retired from 5 to 9 years, followed by those who have been retired from 1 to 4 years (28%).

Hypothesis no 9. Most of the respondents will have participated in adult education. Hypothesis has been confirmed.

Dokler sem bil poklicno aktiven/aktivna sem sodeloval/sodelovala v izobraževanju odraslih...



Graph no 8 Older students' past participation in adult education

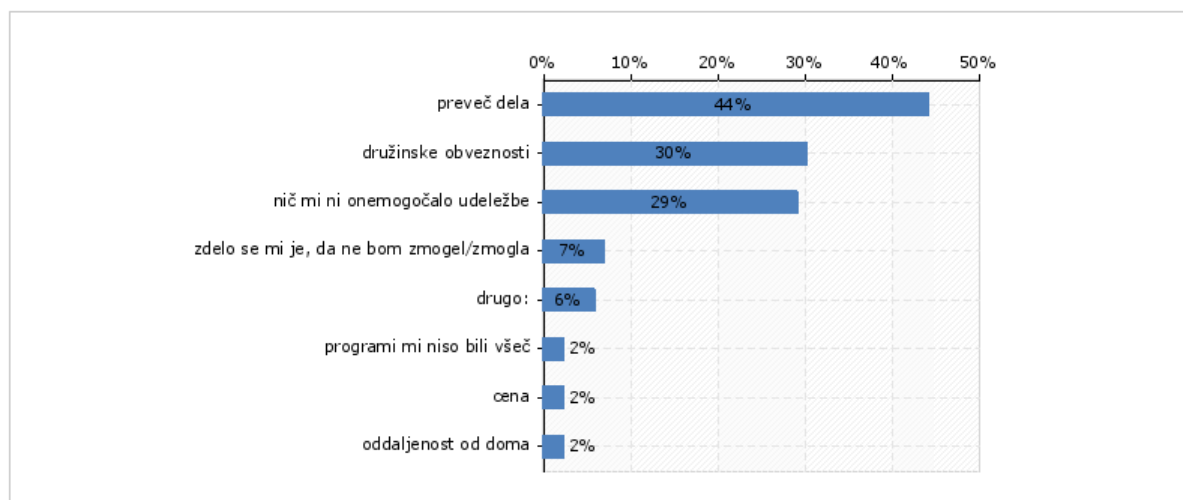
Most of the respondents participated in adult education prior to getting retired (39% often, 39% rarely and only) while 21% of them never participated in adult education. This following datum speaks in favour of the "raison d'être" of older adult education. 21% of our students discover older adult education in their third age.

It can be further deduced that third age education is influential not only in their life but also, most probably, in the life of their family and grand children. They offer their grand children a different image of old age, more attractive and in tune with contemporary social developments.

Hypothesis no 10. There will be several reasons for non participation in older adult education. Hypothesis has been confirmed

Kaj vam je izobraževanje onemogočalo?

Možnih je več odgovorov



Graph no 9 Barriers experienced in the past adult education

44% of the respondents out of those who never participated in adult education argued that they had too much to do. In the industrious Slovenian inhabitants work has traditionally been an excuse or a reason for not participating in adult education. Nevertheless, it is true that adult learners are pragmatic learners and squeezed between their immediate obligations and the desire to learn in an organised way. This is especially true of female learners who have to attend to work requirements and household requirements as well as to the requirement to bring up children.

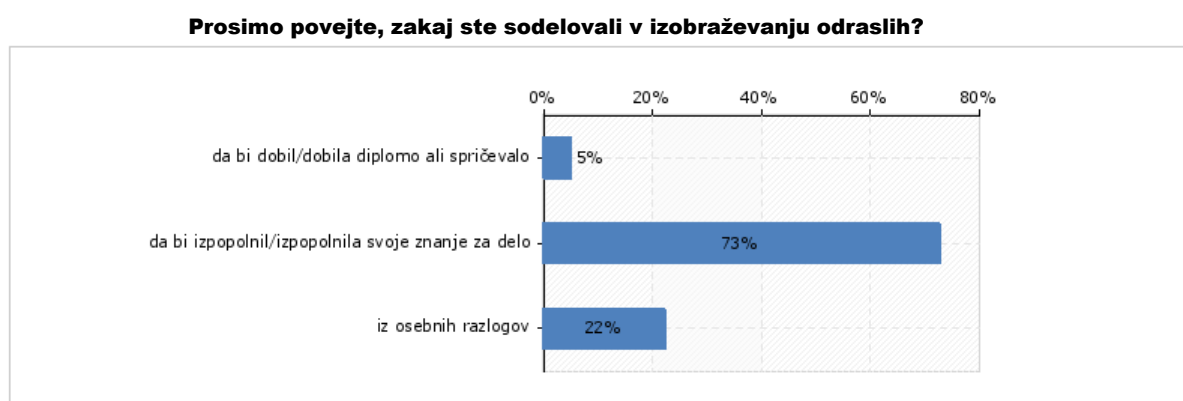
30% of the respondents, who were non-participants in adult education state, that they had too many obligations within their family. It is true that adults are overloaded with most different tasks, also family tasks, that education for them is not an easy choice.

29% of the respondents, however, were not prevented from attending programmes of adult education, 7% were convinced that they were not able to cope with the demands of educational programmes, 6% of them stated other reasons for not participating, 2% argued that they could not find appropriate programmes in Slovenia. Today, when adults' educational needs are so individual, requiring immediate and tailored attention, appropriate programmes are not easily found.

2% only were dissuaded by the price of education. This is an important datum for educational providers. Older people feel insecure and therefore they have a tendency to say that education is too expensive. In reality this is only rarely the reason why they do not participate in older adult education or why they quit it.

Moreover, 2% of the non-participants argue that that education took place far from their place of living. Even though the share if these answers is low, it should be taken into account that educational formats are to take place in students' natural environment. Generally, the more students are educated; the greeter is their intrinsic motivation, the more they are ready to travel to distant locations.

Hypothesis no 10. They will have participated in adult education mostly to obtain a diploma or certificate. Hypothesis has been rejected.



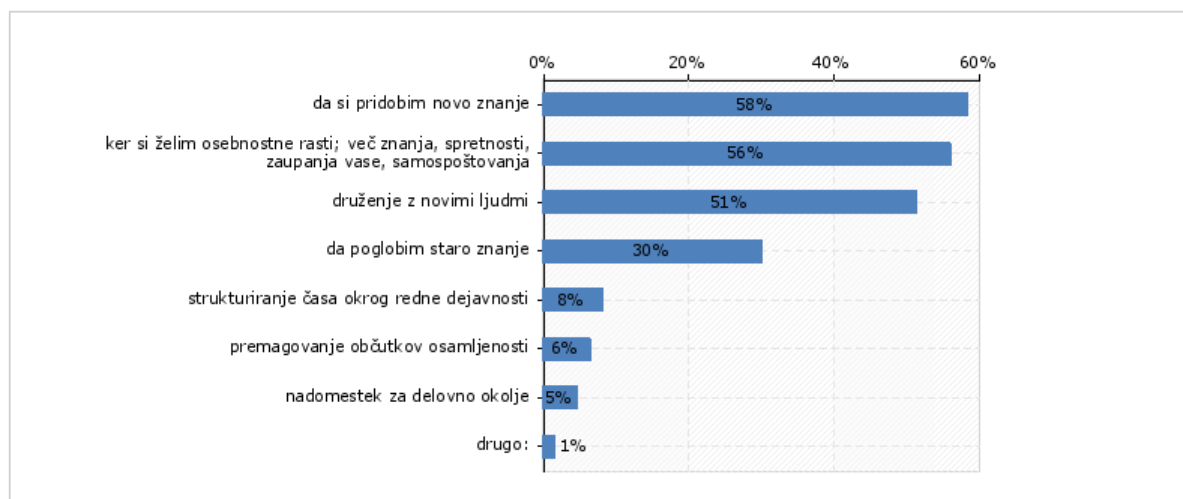
Graph no 10 Motives for participating in adult education

72 % of the respondents participated in adult education to update their knowledge for their job. 5% of them only participated to get a diploma or a certificate. And 22% used to participate driven by their personal interest. We were rather surprised by the high percentage of the answers "out of personal interest". Our experience tells us that out of personal interest learn mostly children in the pre-school period and older people in the third age. In the third age, however people learn for the reasons described as educational pillars: "to know, to be, to belong, to become".

Hypothesis no 11. They will predominately participate in older adult education for both getting knowledge and socialising. Hypothesis has been rejected.

Kakšni so razlogi, da se izobražujete zdaj, v tretjem življenjskem obdobju?

Možnih je več odgovorov



Graph no 11 Older students' motives for participating in older adult education

Gaining knowledge is the most urgent intrinsic motive for studying in old age. This is understandable since the world changes so quickly that not changing with it puts people, older people are no exception, at risk. Most risky is not to take the risk to learn. 58% of our students participate in education for getting new knowledge. Equally 56 % of them would like to get more knowledge, skills and gain confidence. 51% are looking forward to meet new people. 30% of them would like to validate old knowledge. 6% of them use education to structure their time.

It is clear that the stereotype "older people just kill time learning" does not reflect reality. Our students often argue that they have "to fill in their time" thus denigrating themselves as to be in tune with the prevailing stereotype.

Nevertheless, structuring one's time at least around one weekly activity is a basic psycho-social need older people have. It helps making meaning of the time they have at their disposal.

6% of the respondents only say that education helps them overcome loneliness. By contrast the social stereotype says that older people are lonely and they learn to overcome their feeling of loneliness. They would also go to internet for this only reason? While younger people are supposed to learn with the help of computer older people are denied this goal.

5% of the respondents answered that their organised learning is a substitute or their organised working environment they used to have. In the organised work a process earning one's living is less important than meeting a plethora of psycho-social needs, though most of the time we are not aware of this function of the organised work.

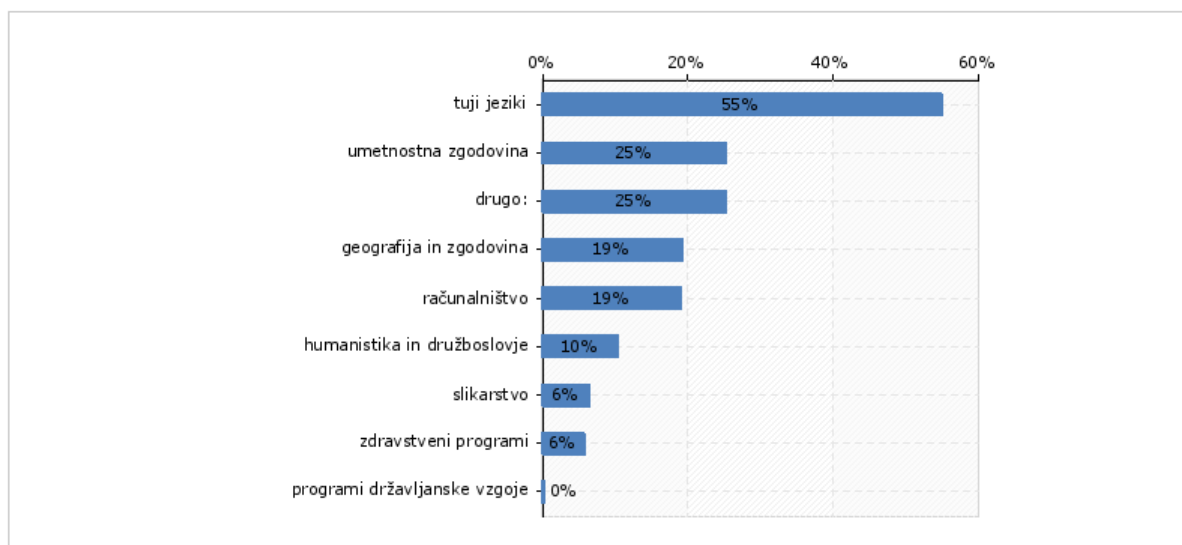
Less than 1% of the respondents say that they learn because learning is their leisure time activity, because they want their brain to function (stereotype!), to learn what they could not have learned in the past (compensation learning which corresponds to validating old knowledge).

Some students learn for fun which points out at the need that education in old age has to be also enjoyable.

Hypothesis no 12. They will mostly attend foreign language programmes.
Hypothesis has been confirmed.

Katere programe UTŽO obiskujete?

Možnih je več odgovorov



Graph no 12 U3As' programmes attended by older students

55% of the participants in the survey attend programmes of foreign language which could be expected. Learning a foreign language in small groups means communicating, meeting people, getting familiar with a new culture and ways of living. 25% attend art history programmes. The need to experience beauty seems to be one of the basic needs in educated older students. 25% attend a plethora of other programmes (for example ceramics, gardening etc.). 19% attend geography and history courses and the same percentage (19%) attend computer classes.

Classes in the field of humanities and arts and social sciences courses are chosen by 10% of the respondents.

The choice of the educational topic and subject partly depends on what is "in" in society, what is generally considered as valuable, what older students feel they lack. By contrast, more non cognitive programmes and short cycle programmes would probably attract men but they are less often offered in our universities because of their high costs.

5% are enrolled in painting classes and 5% also health programmes. The reason can be looked for in the fact that painting classes are highly individualised that there is a need to attend the programme for a long time and it requires to live as a painter....which is much more than learning painting.

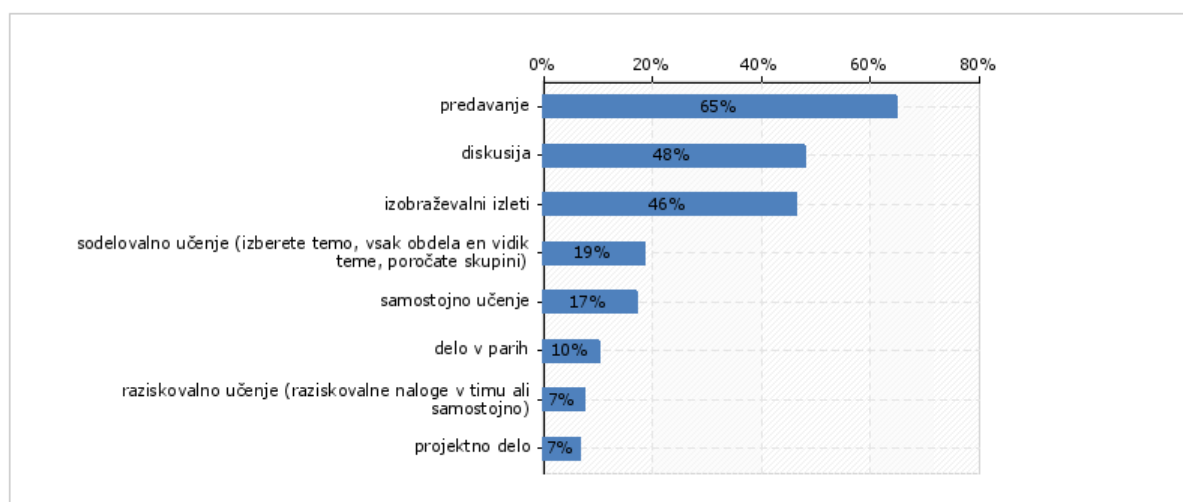
It is amazing that nobody said that they attend programmes of civic education. There is a possibility that such programmes are not being offered, or that the category is not totally understood by the respondents.

29% of the students attend other programmes like creative writing, architecture, horticulture, history, botanic, computer classes (universities are not all equipped with computer rooms), psychology, herbs, music, the culture of living at home, , the magic of gardens, ceramics, getting to know Slovenia, astronomy, working with wood, ethnology, genealogy, natural gardening retouring objects, calligraphy literature, ceramics and mosaic, communication, theatre, story-telling, story writing, writing, feng shui,, urbanism art history...

Hypothesis no 13. The preferred method will be discussion. The hypothesis has been rejected.

Katere metode v programih, ki jih obiskujete, imate najraje?

Možnih je več odgovorov



Graph no 13 Older students' preferences as to adult education methods

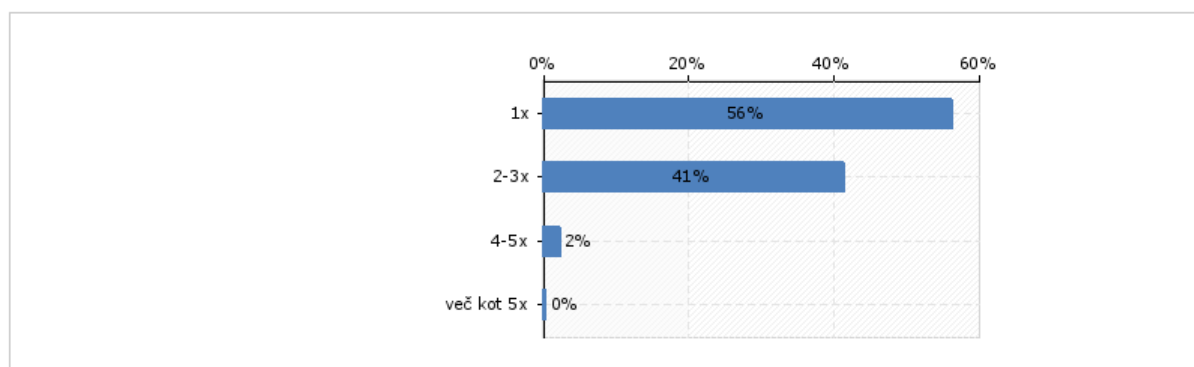
Discussion is the method of choice in adult education where adults' silent knowledge counts. Adult and older adults know without knowing that they know, and their knowledge has to be brought to light to be used by the educators and peers.

Discussion further demonstrates what older students know, what they have learned and how they have learned. However, the respondents prefer attending lectures (65%) of them, whereas 45% of them prefer discussion as a method over other methods in study groups. Very popular is educational tourism with 46% of the respondent rate. This can be explained by older people preferring emotional learning and the importance of emotions as well as the importance of beauty in their lives. Excursions offer a lot.

19% prefer of the respondents argue that they prefer collaborative learning, 17% are in favour of autonomous learning. Working in pairs does not seem to be that popular. Only 10% of the respondents prefer it. The same goes for project work (7%) and exploratory learning (research work) 7%.

Hypothesis no 14. They will mostly attend educational programmes once a week. Hypothesis has been confirmed.

Kolikokrat tedensko obiskujete različne programe?



Graph no 14 Weekly frequency of attendance of educational programmes

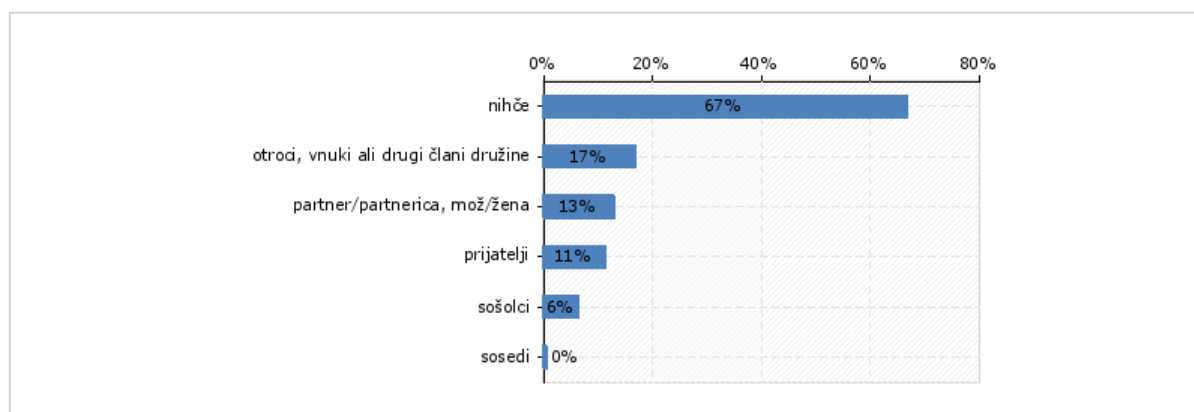
The majority of participants (56%) attend different programmes once a week, 41% of them attend programmes 2 to 3 times weekly and only 2% of them attend programmes from 4 to 5 times weekly. None of the respondents attend programmes more often.

Education of older people is intensive, related to life and current events in the environment. Between educational sessions there are a lot of possibilities for students either to work together or to attain certain activity goals related to learning.

Hypothesis no 15. Students will be mostly encouraged to study by their grandchildren and grown up children. Hypothesis has been rejected.

Kdo vas najbolj spodbuja k učenju?

Možnih je več odgovorov

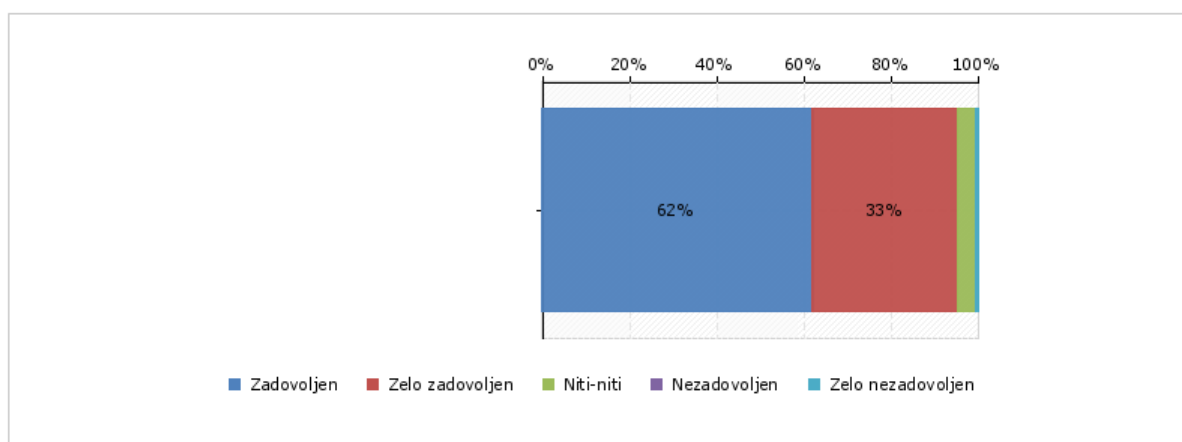


Graph no 15 Older students' and the received encouragement towards learning

Nobody encourages the majority of the respondents to study (67%) 17% are encouraged by their children and other family members, 13% are encouraged by their partner, and 11% enjoy the encouragement of their friends, 3% of them, however, are encouraged by their "schoolmates". Neighbours do not offer encouragement to older students' learning

Hypothesis no 16. Most of the students will be satisfied with their later-life education. Hypothesis has been confirmed.

Kakšen je danes vaš odnos do vašega izobraževanja? Ocenite prosim z oceno od 1 do 5.

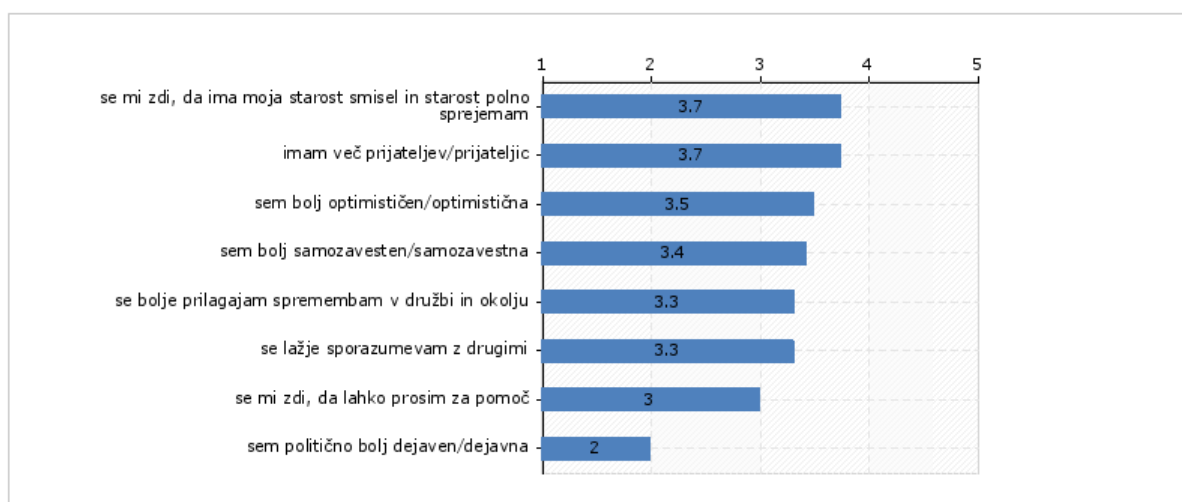


Graph no 16 Older students' present attitude towards education

62% of the respondents are satisfied with their education today and 33% are very satisfied while only 5% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the programmes they attend. Such high percentage of those who are satisfied is probably due to the fact that education at Slovenian third age university takes place in small study circles based on relationships and interaction developing into primary social groups. Education in later life is meant for students to know to be, to belong, to become and to participate in society. It has, and should have, transformative value. This makes participants more satisfied than it is usually the case in other formats of adult education.

Hypothesis no 17. The participants will most highly score their newly acquired ability to change and to adapt. Hypothesis has been rejected.

Ker sem vključen v izobraževanje starejših ... Prosimo, ocenite spodnje trditve na lestvici od 1 do 5



Graph no 17 Transformative impact of older adult education

In assessing the validity of the statements concerning the impact of participating in older adult education the respondents achieved the following mean values on the scale from 1 to 5. The highest has been scored the statement that due to education old age is now meaningful and fully acceptable (3.7). The highest score proves that education is one of the rare activities where older people are considered as having developmental potential. The lowest score has been achieved by the statement concerning older students' political engagement. (2.0)

I feel my old age is meaningful and I fully accept it – 3.7

I have more friends – 3.7

I am more optimistic – 3.5

I feel more confident, important – 3.4

I better adapt to changes (in society, environment) – 3.3

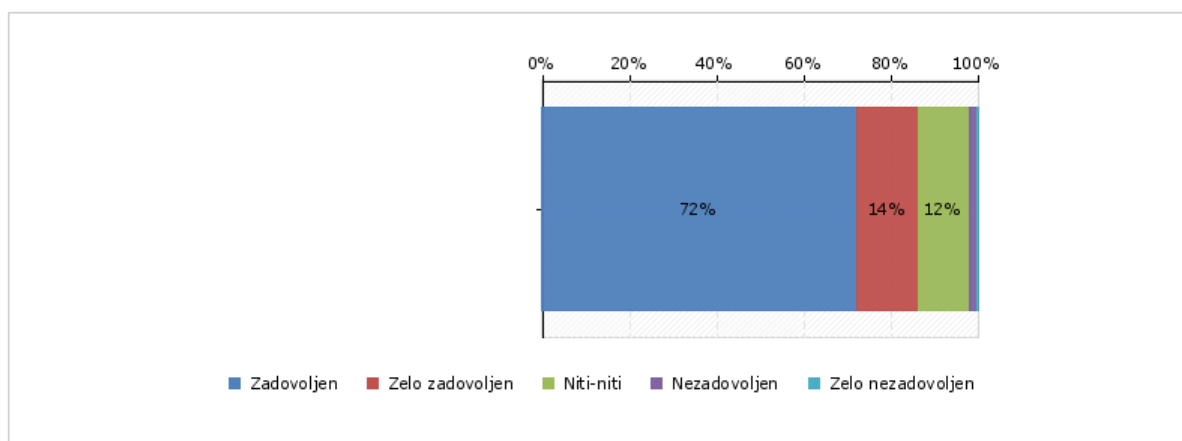
It is easier for me to communicate with others – 3.3

I feel I can ask for help when needed – 3.0

I am politically more active – 2.0

Hypothesis no 18. Students will have been satisfied with their life before enrolling into older adult education programmes. Hypothesis has been confirmed.

Kako ste bili z življenjem zadovoljni pred vpisom v izobraževanje starejših? Ocenite prosim, na lestvici od 1 do 5.

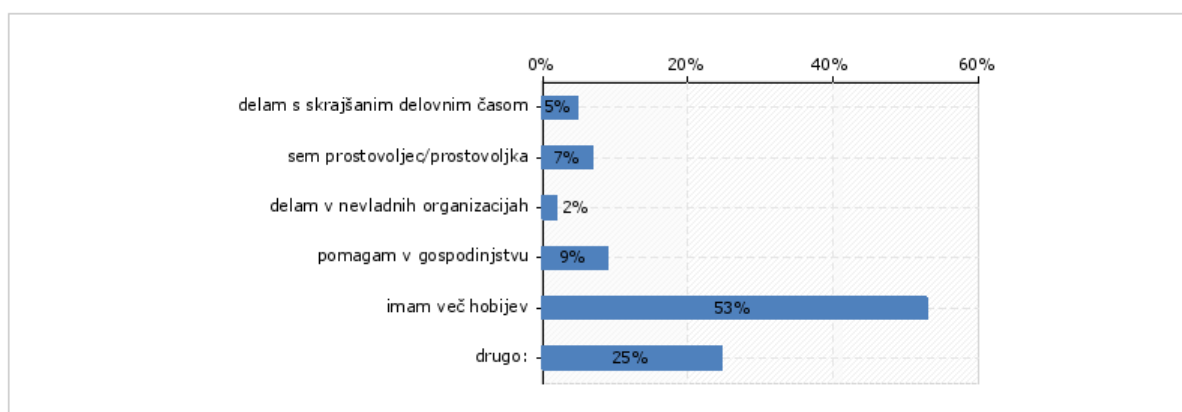


Graph no 18 Older students' satisfaction before enrolling into older adult education

Concerning satisfaction with life prior to getting enrolled in older adult education programmes, 72% of the respondents were satisfied, 24% very satisfied, 12% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Namely, it is much easier to set one's goals for the future (and older adult education is turned towards the goals of both the present and the future) if there is the feeling of satisfaction.

Hypothesis no 19. Students will mostly have leisure time activities corresponding to the prevailing social stereotypes about older people's leisure time. Hypothesis has been confirmed.

Kaj so (poleg izobraževanja) vaše druge aktivnosti?



Graph no 19 Older students' other activities

When asked about their free time activities in the post professional period 5% of the respondents answered that they work part time, 7% of them do the volunteering, 2% of them work in NGOs, 9% provide household help, 53% have several hobbies and 25% are engaged in other activities (among the hobbies they enumerated are: caring for grandchildren, babysitting, yoga, gardening, occasional offering translation service. Slovenia being a mountainous country, many of them go hiking, it is also amazing that caring for close family members is perceived as a free time activity etc. In their free time older students offer help to others, they write stories, they do physical activities, work on professional projects, from time to time they they go skiing, they take care of domestic animals, they write articles, they do the footing etc. they also give lectures.

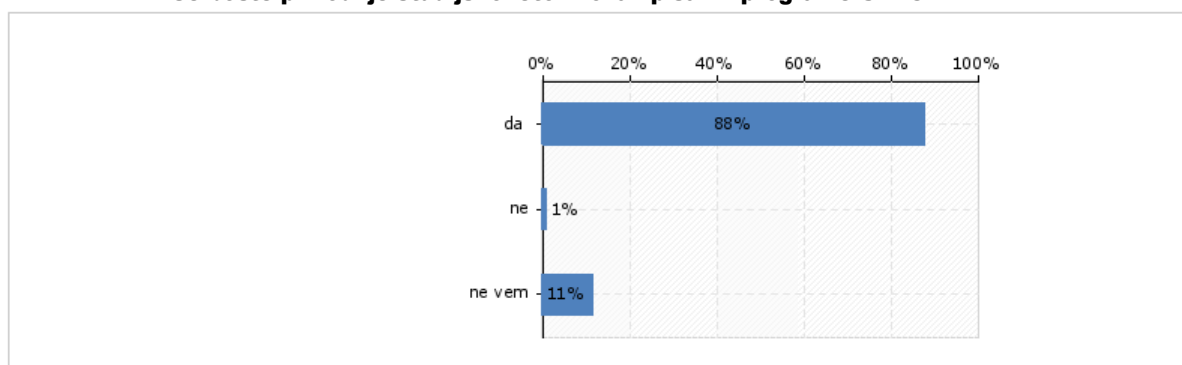
It is difficult to say what free time activity is. According to Joffre Dumazdier free time is the time for freely chosen activities that are not necessary for surviving.³ The percentage of those who participate in volunteering activities is rather low. By contrast volunteering would best take advantage of the acquired knowledge and would best create social ties older people need.

³ Dumazedier, J. Sociology of Leisure (English and French Edition) Hardcover – October, 1974

Hypothesis no 20. Students will continue their studies the following year.

Hypothesis has been confirmed.

Se boste prihodnje študijsko leto znova vpisali v programe UTŽO?



Graph no 20 Older students' plans for the next year participation in education

88% of the respondents included in the survey intend to enrol in educational programmes next study year as well. 1% will stop attending and 11% are hesitant.

9. Research results and interpretation

Older students living in a household with their partner are more numerous than those living with their family, or those living in nursery homes or alone, who are supposedly lonely and supposedly utilize education exclusively to create social ties. Older people are often, though indirectly, stimulated by the presence of their relatives to enrol in older adult education. It happens that they react to their partner and family, and want "to get rid" of the need to be all the time available for them. Living with others may create problems older people want to solve in education. Living with others is also about wanting to help them, to assume social roles uniting them to their relatives (grandfather, grandmother, carer, brother, sister, etc.) They want to have competencies for playing these roles.

Naturally, the share of students living in town is greater than the share of those from the rural background. By and large towns are more social, meeting more psycho - social needs, among which the cognitive needs, social needs, the needs for sharing values that can all be met by participating in education.

Education in later life attracts educated older people. The more they are educated the greater is their wish to participate. Attracting less educated older people would require different methods of animation, delivery and learning methods, a different choice of topics. Cognitive contents should be replaced by contents where doing is focused on.

Involvement in adult education during the professional period impacts involvement in the third age, but surprisingly it has been found that a high percentage (21%) of older people who had never participated in adult education willingly enrol may enrol because they need to belong, because their relatives want them to, because they want to find a replacement for their working environment, because they believe that they have to occupy their days, to go out and meet people.

Preferred are programmes stimulating communication and getting familiar with alternative modes of living in different cultures: foreign languages, art history, etc. Foreign language programmes and art history are thus most appreciated. But with the use of the appropriate methods, communication can and should be stimulated in all small study groups. Communication takes place when programmes meet older learners' needs and expectations when their needs are taken into account.

Passive methods are preferred to those requiring productive skills which probably corresponds to the passive position of older people in society, who squeezed out to the edge of society. When years ago a medical doctor started her lectures by asking the students; "What is your definition of health?" students protested saying; "Why does she ask us. She is the doctor. She should know".

The share of young retirees in the age category 65-69 is the greatest. With considerable changes in statutory retirement this age category corresponds to the past age category 50-54, Moreover the today's young retirees are more educated and more used to adult education, more demanding as concerns education.

Only a small number of students enrol to structure their time. They mostly enrol to get new knowledge, construct new knowledge or validate the knowledge they already have.

Those who were more often enrolled in adult education more easily enrol into older adult education programmes. They enrol to satisfy their personal interest. There is also a lot of compensation learning, which this questionnaire does not show, since relevant questions were not included.

Older learners basically have the motive to get new knowledge and in the second place the motive to create new social ties, to socialise. The second motive is often looked down by other people, but it is quite legitimate. Generations in the middle for instance are saturated with social ties and social events, in the case of older people they are replaced by education. It is necessary to have enough structures as to "catch" the disappearing human and cultural capital of older people and bring it back into social but also economic development. Society has different generations. No generation should be squeezed out of the development for the sake of the whole society.

Who encourages older students to enrol in educational programmes and what is their own attitude like? Older students are autonomous learners. The more they are educated, the less they feel and need support from their relatives, friends etc.

Decades ago, older students came to enrol in pair with friends and also neighbours. Nowadays, neighbours have lost their importance, the geographical distance or closeness have lost their importance and the respondents report that neighbours never encourage them to study.

Older students have free time activities that mostly correspond to the stereotypes with the exception of writing, translating etc. They occasionally offer services within their family, by taking care of grand children. Very rarely they work as volunteers and they are practically inactive politically. It can be deduced that they rarely and with difficulty step out into public sphere and educational providers should

empower them to do it by connecting their educational programmes, their learning targets with activity targets, with other institutions and events in the public sphere. Older adult education is by no means a simple educational provision; it is a way of living in both private and public sphere.

As a result of education older students feel more stable, optimistic, their life has gained meaning and they have entirely accepted their old age. Nevertheless, they are not often able to ask for help which demonstrates their perception of adulthood. Personal growth would be also being able to adapt to old age losses and being able to selectively ask for help when needed, be it emotional, informational or material, the kind of help that can be offered by study circles. The quality of older students' life has enhanced.

The majority of the students intend to continue their education next year which proves that education is for them a way of living.

Conclusion

The research is basically an investigation into the programmes and methods of Slovenian U3A, the motives leading older students to choosing different programmes, as well as characteristics of older students changing with the changing social circumstances.

U3As constitute important social capital maintaining and developing older people's knowledge and skills for their own benefit and the benefit of society. Besides being a measure of economic and social development, social capital created by older education providers, is influential in the building of social ties and relationships. Social capital of Slovenian U3As are social relationships, intangible heritage, knowledge, skills, culture of both students (and mentors) active in study circles, small primary social groups. The U3As enable older people of similar status to study together and interact, getting their peers' support and encouragement. Studying better older students' quality of life and has a transformative impact on old age.

Literature and References

Bračun Sova, R. (ur.) *Slovenska univerza za tretje življenjsko obdobje in muzeji z roko v roki; Izobraževanje za razumevanje in uvajanje prakse starejših prostovoljnih kulturnih mediatorjev*. Ljubljana: Društvo za ITŽO. 2009.

Dumazedier, J. *Sociology of Leisure*. October, 1974.

Findeisen, D. *Univerza za tretje življenjsko obdobje v Ljubljani: stvaritev meščanov in vez med njimi*. Ljubljana: Društvo za ITŽO. 2010.

Findeisen, D. *Koraki v prostovoljstvo: naredimo jih skupaj na Univerzi za tretje življenjsko obdobje v Ljubljani*. Ljubljana: Društvo za tretje življenjsko obdobje, 2012.

Kidd, J. Roby. *How Adults Learn*. Association Press, New York, 1959 and 1973.

Knežević, S. *Izobraževanje starejših na Univerzi za tretje življenjsko obdobje za osebno rast in njihovo sodelovanje v družbi*, diplomsko delo, Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za pedagogiko in andragogiko, 2007.

Findeisen, D.(ur) *Posebnosti izobraževanja starejših. Characteristics of older adult education*. Ljubljana, *Sizobraževanja starejših = Characteristics of older adult education*. 2. dopolnjena izd. Ljubljana: Društvo za izobraževanje za tretje življenjsko obdobje, 2013

Krajnc, A. (ur.) *Kako smo snovali Slovensko univerzo za tretje življenjsko obdobje*. Ljubljana: Društvo za izobraževanje za tretje življenjsko obdobje, 1992.

Krajnc, A. »Older Adults as a Special Learning Audience« . *Andragoška spoznanja*, 18, št. 3, str. 10 – 25, 2012.

Krajnc, A. »Mentorji in mentorstvo«. V: *Posebnosti izobraževanja starejših*, Ljubljana: SUTŽO, str. 7 – 33, 61 – 90, 2013.

Kresnik, D., Kump, S. 2008. Udeleženci Univerze za tretje življenjsko obdobje in njihove izobraževalne značilnosti. Primer Univerze za tretje življenjsko obdobje Celje. Ljubljana: FF.

Annexes

Annex 1 Questionnaire in English

Annex 2 Questionnaire in Slovene

Annex 1. Questionnaire in English



Erasmus+ KA2 project
No.: 2016-1-LV01-KA204-02271

Dear students,

We do hope you will decide to take part in this anonymous survey. If you do, you will help us gather research results for Slovenia. Once your answers gathered, we will compare them with those obtained by our project partners in Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia. You will need 5-10 minutes to fill in this survey questionnaire.

Thank you so much for your trust and cooperation.

Yours Dušana Findeisen and Karina Sirk

Done in Ljubljana, the 9th of February 2017.

Survey on Older Adult Education Programmes, Methods and Characteristics of Older Students

Please strike/encircle your answers

1. How old are you? Please strike the appropriate age category box.

- ☐ 40-44
- ☐ 45-49
- ☐ 50-54
- ☐ 55-59
- ☐ 60-64
- ☐ 65-69
- ☐ 70-74
- ☐ 75-79
- ☐ 80-84

☐ 85-89

☐ 90-94

95-100

2. Sex: ☐ M ☐ F

3. I live in a household with:

- a) my partner/husband/wife
- b) children and/or extended family
- c) nursery home for older people
- d) alone
- f) other

4. Level of completed formal education studies

- a) Elementary school
- b) Secondary vocational school
- c) Grammar school
- d) two years of tertiary studies
- e) Four and more years tertiary studies (university)
- f) Master degree
- h) Doctorate studies
- g) other

5. Where do you live?

- a) In a town
- b) In the country

6. What was your employment status prior to getting retired

- a) manager/ high official
- b) professional worker
- c) technical agent
- d) employee
- e) highly skilled worker
- f) low skilled worker
- g) unskilled worker
- h) unemployed/ housewife
- i) other

7. Were you mostly satisfied at your work place?

Assess from 1. Very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied

1 2 3 4 5

8. I have been retired for

- ☐ 1-4 years
- ☐ 5-9 years
- ☐ 10-14 years
- ☐ 15-19 years
- ☐ 20-24 years
- ☐ 25-29 years
- ☐ 30+ years

9. During my professionally active years I participated in adult education

- a) Often
- b) Rarely
- c) Never

10. If you participated in adult education in the past, what were your reasons to participate? Several answers are possible,

- a) to get a degree or certificate
- b) To upgrade my knowledge. to be better trained for work
- c) personal interest

11. If you did not participate in education in the past, what were the reasons for not participating? Several answers are possible.

- a) too much work
- b) family obligations
- c) I did not like the programmes
- d) cost of education
- a) distance from my home
- b) I thought, I would not be able
- c) nothing prevented me
- d) Other.....

12. What are your reasons now, in later life, to participate in older adult education? Several answers are possible

- a) to get new knowledge
- b) to deepen old knowledge
- c) Personal growth -more knowledge, skills, confidence, self-esteem etc.
- d) socialising with new people
- e) to overcome my feeling of loneliness
- f) to structure my time around a regular activity
- g) to compensate for the loss of the working environment
- h) Other.....

13. Which programmes offered by your older adult education institution are you attending? Several answers are possible.

- a) foreign languages
- b) computer programmes
- c) art history
- d) painting
- e) civic programmes
- f) health programmes
- g) Other.....

14. Which methods used in the programmes you attend do you prefer?

- a) Discussion
- b) Lecture
- c) Pair works
- d) Collaborative learning (use a topic, each of you deals with one aspect of the topic then you report to the group)
- e) Autonomous learning
- f) Educational excursions
- g) Project work
- h) Exploratory learning (research work)

15. How many times weekly do you attend different programmes?

- e) 1x
- b) 2x-3x
- c) 4x-5x
- d) More than 5x

16. Who most encourages you to study? Several answers are possible

- a) partner, husband, wife
- b) children and other family members
- d) friends
- e) school mates
- f) neighbours
- g) nobody

17. How do you feel about your current education?

Assess from 1. Very unsatisfied to 5. Very satisfied

1 2 3 4 5

18. At each statement, please circle the number that suits you

Assess from 1- I entirely don't agree to 6. I entirely agree

I feel more confident, important	1	2	3	4	5
I am better integrated in society	1	2	3	4	5
I am less lonely	1	2	3	4	5
I have more friends	1	2	3	4	5
It is easier for me to communicate with others	1	2	3	4	5
I am more optimistic	1	2	3	4	5
I better adapt to changes (in society, environment)	1	2	3	4	5
I feel my old age is meaningful and I fully accept it	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I can ask for help when needed	1	2	3	4	5
I am politically more active	1	2	3	4	5

19. How were you satisfied with your life before you enrolled in the programmes of older adult education?

Assess from 1. very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied

1 2 3 4 5

20. Besides the educational programmes you attend, what are your free time activities?

- 1) I work part time
- 2) I am a volunteer
- 3) I am involved in the work of different non-governmental organizations
- 4) I offer household help
- 5) I have several hobbies
- 6) Other.....

21. Will you enrol next year as well?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not know

Annex 2. Questionnaire in Slovene



*Projekt Erasmus+ KA2
Št.: 2016-1-LV01-KA204-02271*

Spoštovane študentke in študenti

Veseli bomo, če se boste odločili sodelovati in izpolniti ta anonimen vprašalnik. Pomagali nam boste pridobiti nekaj raziskovalnih rezultatov za Slovenijo. Te bomo primerjali z rezultati, ki jih bodo pridobili v Latviji, Litvi in Španiji pri projektnih partnerjih SUTŽO. Za izpolnjevanje vprašalnika boste potrebovali od 5-10 minut.

Iskrena hvala za trud in zaupanje.

Dušana Findeisen in Karina Sirk

V Ljubljani, 9. februar 2017

Vprašalnik o izobraževalnih programih, metodah in značilnostih starejših študentov

Prosimo izpolnite / obkrožite odgovore

1. Koliko ste stari? Prosimo izberite eno naslednjih starostnih kategorij.

- ☐ 40-44
- ☐ 45-49
- ☐ 50-54
- ☐ 55-59
- ☐ 60-64
- ☐ 65-69
- ☐ 70-74

- ☐ 75-79
- ☐ 80-84
- ☐ 85-89
- ☐ 90-94
- ☐ 95-100

2. **Spol** ☐ M ☐ Ž

3. Živim skupaj s/z:

- a) partnerjem/ partnerico/ možem/ženo
- b) otroki/ in/ ali razširjeno družino
- c) v domu starejših
- d) sam/sama
- e) drugo

4. Stopnja formalne izobrazbe

- a) osnovna šola
- b) poklicna šola
- c) gimnazija
- d) višja šola
- e) visoka šola (univerza)
- f) magisterij,
- h) doktorat
- g) drugo

5. Kje živite?

- a) v mestu
- b) na deželi

6. Kakšen je bil vaš zaposlitveni status preden ste se upokojili?

- j) vodstveni delavec/delavka/ visok/a uradnik/ca/ funkcionar/ka
- k) strokovnjak/strokovnjakinja
- l) tehnik/tehnica
- m) uslužbenec/ka
- n) visoko kvalificirani/na delavec/ka
- o) nizko kvalificirani/a delavec/ka
- p) nekvalificirani/a delavec/ka
- q) nezaposlen/a /, gospodinja
- r) drugo

7. Ste bili zvečine zadovoljni na delovnem mestu?

Ocenite, prosimo, oc 1 zelo nezadovoljen/a do 5 zelo zadovoljen/a

1 2 3 4 5

8. V pokoju sem

- ☐ 1-4 let
- ☐ 5-9 let
- ☐ 10-14 let
- ☐ 15-19 let
- ☐ 20-24 let
- ☐ 25-29 let
- ☐ 30+ let

9. Dokler sem bil/ poklicno aktiven/a sem sodeloval/a v izobraževanju odraslih

- a) pogosto
- b) redko
- c) nikoli

10. Če ste sodelovali v izobraževanju odraslih, prosimo, povejte, zakaj? Možnih je več odgovorov.

- d) da bi dobil/a diplomo ali spričevalo
- b) da bi izpopolnil/a svoje znanje za delo
- c) iz osebnih razlogov

11. Če se niste udeleževali izobraževanja odraslih v preteklosti, kaj vam je izobraževanje onemogočalo? Možnih je več odgovorov.

- h) preveč dela
- i) družinske obveznosti
- j) programi mi niso bili všeč
- d) cena
- f) oddaljenost od doma
- g) se mi je zdelo, da ne bom zmogel/a
- h) nič mi ni preprečevalo udeležbo
- i) drugo

12. Kakšni so razlogi, da se izobražujete zdaj, v tretjem življenjskem obdobju? Možnih je več odgovorov

- i) da si pridobim novo znanje
- j) da poglobim staro znanje
- k) ker si želim osebnostne rasti; več znanja, spretnosti, zaupanja vase. samospoštovanja itd.
- l) druženje z novimi ljudmi
- m) premagovanje občutkov osamljenosti
- n) strukturiranje časa okrog redne dejavnosti

- o) nadomestek za delovno okolje
- p) drugo

13. Katere programe UTŽO obiskujete ? Možnih je več odgovorov

- h) tuji jeziki
- i) računalništvo
- j) umetnostna zgodovina
- k) slikarstvo
- l) programi državlanske vzgoje
- m) zdravstveni programi
- n) drugo

14. Katere metode v programih, ki jih obiskujete, imate najraje? Možnih je več odgovorov

- a.) diskusija
- b.) predavanje
- c.) delo v parih
- d.) sodelovalno učenje (izberete temo, vsak obdela en vidik teme, poročate skupini)
- e.) samostojno učenje
- f.) izobraževalni izleti
- g.) projektno delo
- h.) raziskovalno učenje (raziskovalne naloge v timu ali samostojno)

15. Kolikokrat tedensko obiskujete različne programe ?

- j) 1x
- b) 2x-3x
- c) 4x-5x
- d) več kot 5x

16. Kdo vas najbolj spodbuja k učenju? Možnih je več odgovorov

- c) partner/ca, /mož/žena
- d) otroci, vnuki ali drugi člani družine
- k) prijatelji
- l) sošolci
- m) sosedi
- n) nihče

17. Kakšen je danes vaš odnos do vašega izobraževanja?

Ocenite, prosimo, od 1 zelo nezadovoljen/a do 5 zelo zadovoljen/a

1 2 3 4 5

18. Ob vsaki trditivi, prosimo, obkrožite številko, ki vam ustreza
 Ocenite, od 1 zelo nezadovoljen/a do 5 zelo zadovoljen/a

sem bolj samozavesten/a	1	2	3	4	5
sem bolje vključen/a v družbo	1	2	3	4	5
sem manj osamljen/a	1	2	3	4	5
imam več prijateljev/ic	1	2	3	4	5
laže se sporazumevam z drugimi	1	2	3	4	5
sem bolj optimističen/a	1	2	3	4	5
se bolje prilagajam spremembam v družbi in okolju	1	2	3	4	5
zdi se mi, da ima moja starost smisel in starost polno sprejemam	1	2	3	4	5
se mi zdi, da lahko prosim za pomoč	1	2	3	4	5
politično sem bolj dejaven/a	1	2	3	4	5

19. Kako ste bili z življenjem zadovoljni pred vpisom v izobraževanje starejših?

Ocenite, prosimo, od 1 zelo nezadovoljen/a do 5 zelo zadovoljen/a

1 2 3 4 5

20. Poleg izobraževanja, kaj so vaše druge dejavnosti?

- a) delam s skrajšanim delovnim časom
- b) sem prostovoljec/ka
- c) delam v nevladnih organizacijah
- d) pomagam v gospodinjstvu
- e) imam več hobijev
- f) drugo

21. Se boste naslednje leto znova vpisali ?

- a) da
- b) ne
- c) ne vem