**Grundtvig Learning Partnership 2012-2014**

**Art-Age, Art based learning and active ageing**

Baseline. JSKD, Slovenia

Festival of the Third Age (F3ŽO) is a unique event for older people in Slovenia and one of the

biggest of its kind in Europe. It is a combination of a fair exhibition, different lectures,

workshops, round tables and other discussions in the educational and professional

programme, a rich cultural programme with different cultural events as well as performances

on the open stage and a varied accompanying programme.

It is a place of connecting, creating and exchanging ideas, dedicated to active ageing,

improving the quality of life of older people and achieving solidarity between generations.

At the Festival, everyone can find interesting content and different ways to express their

opinion, as well as new ways to improve the lives of the older generation and ways to

encourage others to act towards this goal.

**1 THE FESTIVAL'S BEGINNINGS**

**The United Nations organization has decided to observe the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons**. The government of the Republic of Slovenia appointed the Preparatory Committee forobserving the International Year, which included the central civil-societal and state institutions. The

Preparatory Committee has prepared a concept of an event, which included fields pertaining to older

persons, social gerontology and intergenerational cooperation. The event was named Festival of the

Third Age (F3ŽO) and since the year 2000 it traditionally takes place every year at the end of September or at the beginning of October in the Ivan Cankar Cultural and Congress Centre in Ljubljana. It is one of the first initiatives for stimulating intergenerational cooperation in Europe.

**In twelve years, the Festival developed into a major societal event, which provides means of**

**cooperation between generations, civil society, voluntary organizations, as well as economic,**

**academic and political spheres. Its multifacetedness, openness and breadth are expressed through thevariegated professional and cultural programme with international participation and well-considered presentations of civil, professional, economic and state offers. Its basic guiding principle has been from the very beginning the creation of a society for all generations.**

**The Festival's success can be expressed also in numbers:**

• 12 years, 12 festivals and numerous events that follow suit in different segments of society.

• More than 200 expert events.

• More than 300 promotional events.

• More than 1,000 creative and re-creative cultural events.

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• More than 15,000 performers in cultural programmes.

• More than 1,300 independent exhibitors in the fair exhibition.

• The Festival is visited by approximately 5 % of the entire population of older people in Slovenia,

and also by increasing numbers of people from other generations.

**2 OPPORTUNITIES**

**The twelve initiatives for publics** which are promoted by Festival of the Third Age:

***Developing:***

• environments for creating networks of intergenerational cooperation,

• entrepreneurial environments for business integration of the older generation,

• entrepreneurial, social, societal and other models for equal inclusion of older people into the

developing and global society.

***Forming:***

• different models of services and products for quality, healthy and creative life of older people,

• modern organizational approaches to connect different factors, public and private, which can

influence and provide better quality of life for the older generation,

• new projects of intergenerational integration and cooperation.

***Encouraging:***

• cooperation between public and private sphere to provide better quality of life for the older

generation and its active participation in modern societal flows,

• interest of the wider public for activities and organizations of the older population, primarily its

active participation in various fields of life,

• activities, values, respect and education about active old age among all generations of the

population.

***Providing:***

• supporting environments for better life in the third age and for intergenerational cooperation,

• mobility, learning about modern technologies and their inclusion into everyday life of the older

generation,

• efficient infrastructure for intergenerational integration.

By organizing the EURAG Congress in 2005, the Festival opened also internationally. We established

excellent cooperation with professional, civil, state and economic subjects from Italy, Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Romania – this constantly strengthens the programme and encourages international cooperation.

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**3 KEY PROGRAMME MODULES**

**The entire programme of the Festival was divided into the following programme modules:**

• **Professional programme:** The professional programme comprised professional discussions,

round tables and presentations of good practices in the field of active aging and

intergenerational cooperation and solidarity, discussing the very topical issues mentioned in

the previous point.

In addition, the professional programme in 2012 included a special one-day conference

under the title “*Leading a Quite Normal Life with Diabetes*”, which was prepared by the

*Slovenian Diabetes Association*.

The professional programme was carried out very successfully, as the events were attended

by approximately 900 individuals, who actively participated in the discussions.

• **Educational programme:** The educational programme included numerous interesting and

useful lectures, workshops, presentations and discussions, covering a wide spectrum of topics

which were interesting for all generations – from the care of one's health, healthy nutrition, the

yoga of laughter, training memory, to intergenerational cooperation at workplace,

establishment of an intergenerational centre in local environment, traffic safety of the elderly

etc. A special place in the programme was given to the so-called *Intergenerational Corner*

and the *Computer Classroom.*

The *Intergenerational Corner* offered interesting creative and other workshops intended for

cooperation and socialising of generations at the Festival, as well as the exchange of

knowledge.

The *Computer Classroom* throughout the Festival offered workshops intended for familiarising

the elderly with IT technologies and training of the elderly for their use, as Slovenia is facing

exceptionally high rates of computer illiteracy in the elderly – as much as 90 % of the

population above 65 years of age have never used a computer or Internet, which is

considerably above the EU average.

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More than 2,500 visitors participated in the Festival's educational programme.

• **Cultural programme:** The cultural programme is one of the stronger points of the Festival, as it

is every year prepared and attended by no less than 3,000 individuals. In 2012 the cultural

programme took place on *the Open Stage*, special events and thematic evenings were held

in *the Linhart Hall*, while literature was covered by a special event – the so-called *Day of*

*Literature.*

Different societies of pensioners, cultural, art and tourist societies in which the elderly are

active, different schools and kindergartens presented themselves on *the Open Stage* with

music, singing, dance and theatre shows. In line with the European Year 2012, a large part of

the stage performances was of intergenerational nature, so the shows were prepared jointly

by the elderly, children and youths.

One of the peaks of the Festival's cultural programme was the Festival's opening ceremony at

which appeared renowned Slovenian musicians of different generations accompanied by an

orchestra, it was prepared by *the Public Fund of the Republic of Slovenia for Cultural Activities*

– an exceptional cultural network, whose programmes encourage cultural creativity and

provide professional and organisational support to amateur cultural activities all over Slovenia

and in the neighbouring countries.

The special thematic evenings were prepared also by *the Slovenian Federation of Pensioners,*

*e.g. the 4th Evening of Song and Dance*, in which the performing groups presented various

traditional Slovenian customs, Slovenian folk songs and dances. Besides this, there was the *37th*

*Choirs' Meeting of the Slovenian Federation of Pensioners*, at which were presented the

winning choirs of regional choir shows and Slovenian choirs from across the border.

*The Day of Literature* was intended for literature and poetry lovers. The programme presented

elderly men and women of letters, associated in *the Literary Club of Pensioners of Slovenia*,

and other individuals and groups which write poetry and literature or dedicate their time to

researching the works of other literary artists. A special part was intended for presentations of

intergenerational literary creativity and presentations of quality children's and youth books.

• **Accompanying programme:** The Festival's accompanying programme took place already a

couple of months before the Festival, as five five different competitions were organised (a fine

art competition for children, a literary competition for children and the elderly, an

intergenerational cooperation competition and a photography competition) on the theme of

intergenerational cooperation. The response was huge and the best works were selected and

published in a special miscellany.

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An accompanying programme was provided also by the *City Municipality of Ljubljana*, whose

cultural institutions were during the Festival admission free for the Festival's visitors. The

Municipality also prepared free guided tours of Ljubljana's tourist attractions and organised

special events both at the Festival and at different locations in Ljubljana.

• **Fair exhibition:** The fair exhibition offered and presented the visitors the exceptional selection

of products and services which improve the quality of life of the elderly and encourage them

to lead active lives and socialise with peers and also with younger generations.

The Fair presented more than 200 organisations – numerous public institutions, nongovernmental

organisations, scientific, educational and cultural institutions, as well as

companies with their offer. The presentations were organised in 12 thematic parks.