Creative educators of digital arts & culture

(Creative Seniors)

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National report

(template and guidelines)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Objective and scope of the research

Please, provide a short overall description of the research (referring to the project) and its objectives.

1.2 Methodology

Desk research:

Please, describe shortly how the desk research was done – which sources of information and methods did you use, when and how did you search for information (internet, phone calls, interviews, newspapers?), what type of data was crucial for you etc.

The research was conducted on the basis of information from the Czech Statistical Office, binding standards and regulations of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Czech Republic. It also used data from research conducted in 2008 and 2019 and information from the Association of Universities of 3rd Age. The data was mainly obtained from the Internet and research reports. Some of the information comes from internal materials of the University of Ostrava.

Online survey:

Please, describe shortly how the online survey was done – when did you do it? How many replies did you collect? How did you disseminate information about the survey (what sort of media / channels did you use? Which tools did you use?)

*Please, remember: the minimum is **50 replies from seniors and 20 from educators***

The online survey was carried out from June to August 2021. The survey was translated into Czech for the seniors, the teachers received its English version. Mostly seniors who attend U3A courses and teachers who are or have been involved in U3A teaching were contacted. Regarding the questionnaire for seniors, wider public was also addressed, both through personal contact and through social media. The teachers were contacted throughout the country, but these were teachers who had been involved in U3A education at the University of Ostrava. The questionnaire was distributed via a google questionnaire at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1VCvULtjCAHxd5VBoWMg6hEQ6qDvWDi2ZWazB00Qr3Iw/edit, or: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/132KaKPqX6L21KRgOXkOFXFSZjZlTEHnOmkyEivlGyhA/edit

We had a response from 65 seniors and 20 teachers.

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Focus groups:

Please, describe shortly how the focus groups were organized – how did you choose participants? When and where did it take place? Was it face to face or online? Did participants know each other before? How many people take part in it? How did you prepare for the interview – did you have scenario? How did you use information from the desk research and online survey?

Please, remember: ***the minimum is to organize one focus group meeting with at least 5 people (seniors and educators from small CSS sector****). However, you can also organize separate focus group interviews for seniors and educators.*

First, we formed a small group of 7 people, who we addressed by email and briefly introduced with the topics we planned to discuss. Then we met online via Teams and chatted, focusing on the set topics. There were no restrictions on the discussion, and the participants followed the topics sent in advance. It was mostly teachers who were selected as participants in the discussion, but we also included two senior women. The participants did not wish to be recorded, so we only took notes. After the meeting was over, we still addressed some questions to the participants by email, but this was very limited and more a matter of clarifying some of the answers. The participants were U3A teachers and seniors. Finally, we have organized face-to-face meeting with 5 people (4 teachers and 1 senior). After this face-to-face meeting we finalize our report.

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2. Desk Research Results

2.1 General situation in seniors' education

Present the results of the desk research that has been done. Make sure you answer the following questions:

Question 1: Law and structure: How is the general situation in seniors' education in your country? Is there an organized system of "third age" education? Which institutions / organizations usually provide seniors' education?

On 31 December 2020, the Czech Republic had 10 650 th. inhabitants, out of whom 2 130 th. are seniors aged 65+ (20 %).[1]

In the first half of the 21st century, the proportion of people aged 65 and over will roughly double according to all demographic scenarios. Their number is expected to peak at 3.2 million at the end of the 2050s, compared with present 2.13 million. Seniors will thus be the only part of the population that will grow in numbers. The average age of the Czech population will then increase from 41.3 years to 50.0 years. The old-age index will increase significantly in the future. It will peak on 1 January 2063, when there are expected to be 277 seniors per 100 children (2019: 113 seniors). The situation where there will be 2.5 times more seniors than children is expected to last throughout the second half of the century. At the end of the century, the population could be 13 to 42% lower than today. Up to a third of the population will be aged 65 and over. Population ageing must be seen as an inevitable process.

The issue of demographic ageing raises a wide range of problems that need to be prevented or minimised in time. Behavioural health is the current issue and for these, the preservation of basic knowledge and skills is essential. We believe that lifelong learning, including education for seniors, is inherent to the promotion of behavioural health. There is a number of organisations in the country that offer various educational activities for seniors. There is no comprehensive list of them. However, the most important platform for education of seniors are the Universities of the Third Age, and we have quite detailed information about their activities.

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

The Czech Government approved the "National Action Plan for Positive Ageing for the Period 2017-2025" (NAP), which states that although the Czech Republic has a well-established U3A system, the demand for the offered education still exceeds the offer. This type of senior education primarily focuses on interest education. Despite the fact that its outputs are not acceptable on the labour market, they have a positive benefit in personal development of seniors as well as increase their active participation in society. This NAP defined a strategic objective: Increasing the ratio of seniors engaged in interest education by means of U3A with respect to local accessibility. It also states: To

[1] Czech Statistical Office - Citizens

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update municipalities and regions on the benefits of U3A by dissemination and best-practice examples. Universities of the Third Age are united in the U3A Association. The general assembly of the U3A Association members approved the "Long-Term Strategic Plan for Senior Education Development at universities in the Czech Republic in the period 2021-2025"which takes grounds in the "Long-Term Strategic Plan for Educational, Scientific Research, Development and Innovative, Artistic and Other Creative Activities in the Area of Tertiary Education for the Period 2021-2025" and other documents of the Government Legislative Council for seniors and ageing population and from resolutions of the Government of the Czech Republic.

Objectives of the U3A Association:

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

Question 2: Strategies: Are there any national strategies / official documents or governmental funding for seniors' education?

National strategy comes out from these documents:

- National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic
- Long-Term Plan for Education and the Development of the Educational System of the CR
- Human Resources Development Strategy in the CR
- The Strategy of Lifelong Learning in the CR

For all seniors' educational activities there is crucial point that Czech government supports senior's education through funding Universities of third age that are united in U3A Association. This financial support covers majority of expenses and seniors pay only symbolic amount of money as a tuition.

Methodology of U3A Funding in the Czech Republic

U3A funding in the Czech Republic takes grounds in a document approved by the GA of the U3A Association on 10th September 2015 as a proposal to the 2nd Amendment to the Rules of granting benefits and subsidies to public universities the MEYS (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports), which specifies funding of programmes of senior lifelong learning. It contains 5 Articles: Article 1) Force of the Amendment. Article 2) Conditions on granting and using funds. Article 3) Application for granting funds. Article 4) Application assessment. Article 5) Legal force.

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

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application of K1 and K2 coefficients. It also takes into consideration the nature of education using study materials and the way of course completion for the respective period, namely by application of K3 and K4 coefficients.[2]

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

Conditions of using the funds from the budget of the CR

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

1) Law no. 111/1998 Coll., on universities and subsequent changes and amendments (law on universities), as amended;
2) Law no. 218/2000 Coll., on budget rules and changes of related laws (budget rules), as amended;
3) Regulation no. 52/2008 Coll., which defines principles and terms of financial settling of relations with the budget, state financial assets or the National fund;
4) Rules on granting provisions and subsidies to public universities by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, no. MŠMT-1325/2012-33 dated 17th January 2012;
5) Amendment no. 2 to the Rules for granting provisions and subsidies to public universities by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, specifying funding of programmes of senior lifelong education dated 10th September 2015;
6) Decision of the Ministry on granting the funds to a public university (for the respective year).

Application for granting the funds

The application for granting the funds follows Article 3) Amendment no.2 on Rules for granting provisions and subsidies to public universities by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, specifying funding of programmes of senior lifelong education. It must include: applicant's name, name list of U3A programmes/courses realised by the applicant in the respective period[3], data on each individual U3A programme/course realised by the applicant in the respective period, i.e. annotation of a U3A programme/course containing a brief description of the form, content, and extent of the studies and programme/course classes; information necessary to determine the value of coefficient K1[4], information necessary to determine the value of coefficient K2[5], information

[2] Explanation K1, K2, K3, K4 – see Appendix no. 1
[3] Programme means the smallest unit that can be taken by a participant and having participated, the participant receives a "Certificate on passing a lifelong educational programme out of regular study programmes ";
A course means the smallest (further not dividable) unit of U3A educational activity. A course last one semester.
[4] It is data on the form of the education in a programme/course (virtual, lecture, IT in computer laboratories, laboratory education in specialised laboratories, or education in exteriors); in the case of various forms of education, the number of hours realised in individual listed forms and a way of determination of the value of coefficient K1. Virtual form of education is not usually combined with other listed forms.
[5] Number and size of study groups in a U3A programme/course (whether a group has more than 130 participants, 81-130, 31-80 or less than 30); in the case of a changing number of participants during their studies

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necessary to determine the value of coefficient K3[6], information necessary to determine the value of coefficient K4[7], number of participants in the courses [8]. It must also contain: the total number of direct educations with a lecturer/teacher in the U3A programme/course, stating only the course with at least 12 hours of direct active classes; the number of hours in the virtual form of education is defined in the course annotation; the amount of participant's fee for the studies in a U3A course.

Analysis of senior educational programmes in the Czech Republic

The state of the educational programmes for U3A in the Czech Republic was analysed December 2019.

U3A of some subjects that took part in the research started their education in 1987. Their great boom was in years 1992, 1998, 2005, and the biggest in 1995. Information technologies have been used since 1990 by 27 subjects. The greatest increase in the use of information technologies was in 2019. The most used is a PC, followed by the Internet, notebook, tablet, smartphone, data projector, interactive board, smartboard, reader, and GPS.

Summary of analysis "expectations of seniors"

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

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

in a U3A programme/course, it is necessary to state the number of hours which were held for a given number of participants in the group.

[6] It concerns data on education and studies using study materials (if a programme/course uses education supported by study materials printed or in PowerPoint presentations, or supported by study texts, textbooks and internet technologies).

[7] Primarily on the way of programme/course completion, i.e. meeting the requirements in one of the following ways: test, colloquium or oral examination, or semester (two-semester) written paper or final paper.

[8] Non-virtual forms can include only those participants of a U3A programme/course which is organised by the university and who are registered based on a paid registering fee. These can be documented by a signature in attendance sheets (documents on holding a course, date and place with lecturer/teacher's signature) with at least 50% attendance out of the total number of hours of studies in a given course with the participation of a lecturer/teacher.

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

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

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

Question 3: Themes and methods: What is the current training / educational programmes and methodology of teaching seniors in your country? What is the place of arts and culture in those educational programmes?

In the Czech Republic there are 44 Universities of Third Age (U3A) united in Association. And there are lot of U3A and other educational institutions that offer educational programs for seniors (there is no evidence about them). Each U3A offers many semesterly courses from different areas like nature sciences, social sciences, medicine, technics, informatics, art, culture, etc. As an example of these programs, we can show list of courses from University of Ostrava:

- Memory training
- Philosophy of space
- Quest (not only) after great Czech composers
- Selected chapters from social pathology
- Czech poetry of the 20th century
- Jakub Jan Ryba – a remarkable personality of the Czech history, not only musical
- Food in the eyes of a chemists
- Practical dendrology
- Games to develop thinking
- Prague of Charles IV
- European music culture
- Graphology
- Silesia during WWII
- Jewish and Christian roots of our civilisation
- Women in the Middle Ages
- Bohuslav Martinů and his key to home
- Reasoning using formal logic
- Genealogy
- Criminology

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- Financial literacy for the third age
- Phenomenon of migration in contemporary European context
- History and present of nursing care
- 1000 years of the Middle-Age art
- Czech-Silesian relationships in history
- Age of cathedrals
- Digital photography
- Ethical issues of the present time
- Science around us
- And many others

As a method we prefer Inclusive educational environment

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

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

- Modification of lecturing rooms, including facilities, so that seniors with movement problems could easily take part in the education. University of Ostrava (UO) disposes of two lecture rooms reserved for the VirtU3A which are fully barrier-free. The rooms also have social facilities and space for refreshments.
- Modification of educational method to consider more frequent absence in the presence part of the education. This requirement is effectively solved by the virtual classroom. The virtual classroom contains all study materials for the seniors, including presence lecturers, as well as activities for the seniors to do at home. Those seniors who cannot take part in the presence part of the education due to their health condition can still be in contact with the teachers and classmates and they also have the possibility to study the subject matter from materials on the Internet – virtual classroom. All seniors attending the VirtU3A have access to the virtual classroom from their homes. We are helpful to solve possible technical issues in order to prevent information barrier.
- The fee for VirtU3A courses is symbolic, which means that there is no financial barrier. We can afford it due to the financial help of the MEYS, which subsidies U3A activities in the Czech Republic. The received subsidy enables to realise educational activities, thus the fee is really symbolic and it has rather a motivational role.
- The seniors appreciate communication with the surroundings. Of course, face-to-face communication is irreplaceable. However, there are situations when a senior cannot attend the school for a longer period. This is looked after by various discussion groups in the virtual classroom. The seniors can not only take part in existing groups, but they can also create new discussion topics. Sometimes, it is difficult to engage the seniors in discussions. It can be caused by their mentality, which hampers it. Thus, it is important to regularly address the seniors with news, updates, and to activate their attention. This is a task for the teachers as well as the organisers of the educational activities as well.
- Regular meetings at school serve to presence educational activities: lecturers, seminars, etc. Nevertheless, in order to remove communication and social barriers, it is necessary to organise informal meetings as well. At the UO, we organise joint meetings twice a year, usually with a short lecture followed by an informal discussion and a cultural programme.

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We have positive experience with outdoor education, which means a four-day excursion related to the topic of a selected course.

- The seniors like to meet young people. A system of regular joint activities of seniors and the youth is not, unfortunately, developed so we do not organise these activities regularly. Therefore, we promise that the ISEV project will help us partially eliminate this imperfection.

Question 4: City/rural: How does the situation differs in big cities and in the countryside?

The situation in big cities and villages is much different. Large cities with universities have Universities of the Third Age (U3A), which offer a wide range of educational programmes for seniors. The offerings are presented to the public in a clear way and seniors have enough information to decide whether they want to attend a U3A or which educational programme to choose. In villages and small towns, there are usually no such options, with occasional courses, mostly focusing on computer and financial literacy, or language courses. Thus, villagers have no choice but to commute to the city where the university is located for their education. Just to give you an idea, here is a list of towns with a university and, therefore, U3As: Prague, Brno, Ostrava, Opava, Karviná, Liberec, Hradec Králové, Ústí nad Labem, České Budějovice, Olomouc, Pardubice, Zlín, Jindřichův Hradec, Jihlava, Plzeň.

Only the U3As involved in the Association have systematic support from the MEYS CR. In order to improve the accessibility of educational activities for seniors from smaller towns and villages, many U3As have adapted their offer to include distance and combined courses. Some courses are offered online. For example, the University of Ostrava in the academic year 2020_2021 offered semester-long online courses focusing on history, art, music, SMART technologies and languages. The online instruction was supplemented with study materials and activities for seniors in a virtual classroom. The pandemic situation has forced many universities to adapt their courses and strengthen the role of distance education. The feedback we got from seniors was that they very much welcomed this change, the opportunity to attend distance courses was one of the few ways for them to socialise. Even after the end of the pandemic and the introduction of normal university regimes, interest in distance education has persisted. As already mentioned, this form minimises barriers and allows even those seniors who would not be able to attend full-time classes to be educated.

The question is how to improve the offer of education to seniors in smaller towns and villages. Here we have high hopes for the project.

2.2 Stakeholders

Please, fill in the table with at least 10 examples of initiatives in teaching seniors. Choose the most interesting ones that can be inspiring for our project

Education of seniors in the Czech Republic, as already mentioned above, is mainly dealt with by the Universities of the Third Age, which are part of almost all universities and colleges in the Czech Republic. These Third Age Universities are organised by the Association of Universities OF THE Third Age (www.aU3A.cz or https://www.facebook.com/people/Asociace-univerzit-t%C5%99et%C3%ADho-v%C4%9Bku/100063529358470/). Access to such education is available to all seniors in the Czech Republic according to the conditions of the individual organisations and is a very popular and sought-after form of education. The offerings of all of them are largely similar; we have selected three of them for the required overview.

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In addition to the U3A, various senior clubs and organisations are also involved in education, but these are primarily focused more on interest and leisure activities for seniors. Again, we give an example of three organisations. These are not-for-profit organisations.

Senior organisations are associated in the Council of Senior Citizens of the Czech Republic, which is a confederation of 21 organisations with national scope, 16 organisations with regional scope, 213 senior clubs and 24 City Councils of Senior Citizens. Through this organisation, seniors also have the opportunity to influence local and national policy (commenting on draft laws, cooperating with political parties represented in parliament, negotiating conditions for the operation of senior organisations in cities and regions, etc.

Name of an expert / institution dealing with seniors' education	**Contact data (a website address / contact person)**	**Offering (what can they deliver – trainings? Articles? Applications? Etc.)**	**Target group(s) – to whom do they focus on?**	**Other comments / additional information**
Janáčkova akademie múzických umění	https://hf.jamu.cz/verejnost/univerzita-tretiho-veku-czv	Lecture series (especially music and theatre history and personalities), thematic excursions	Seniors aged 60+, mostly with secondary and higher education	
Slezská univerzita v Opavě	https://czv.slu.cz/oblast/4?do=changeKategorie	Lecture series in the social sciences (art, history, literature), memory training courses, language courses, IT skills courses	Seniors aged 60+, educational attainment is not a determinant	
Technická univerzita v Liberci	https://cdv.tul.cz/univerzita-tretiho-veku	Lecture series in social and natural sciences, thematic excursions, language courses, computer courses, art courses, movement courses, possibility of participation in a choir	Seniors aged 50+, at least secondary education is a prerequisite	
Spravedlivý mezi seniory, community centre	https://www.mezi-seniory.cz	Organisation of trips, educational courses, lectures and talks with interesting personalities, creative activities and physical activities	Seniors aged 60+	
ELPIDA o.p.s.	https://www.elpida.cz	Running an educational and cultural centre for the elderly with a wide range of language, computer, craft and movement courses	General senior citizens	
ŽIVOT 90, civic association	https://www.zivot90.cz	Publishing the Vital magazine	General senior citizens	
Rada seniorů České republiky	http://www.rscr.cz		General senior citizens	

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2.3 Conclusion

An overall view and conclusions from the desk research

Desk research has shown that Universities of the Third Age (U3A) play a key role in the education of seniors in the Czech Republic. U3As are mostly established and operate at public universities; their exact number is unknown. The general organisation for U3As is the Association of U3A. The membership in the Association is not compulsory, but it brings benefits. The advantages are mainly that registered U3As receive funding from the Ministry of Education for their operation. There are 44 U3As in the Czech Republic associated with the Association. Only these U3As have comprehensive information on both the study programmes offered and the method of funding. Other organisations providing education for the elderly are not mapped in any way and we learn about their activities only occasionally. These organisations are: senior clubs, libraries, charities, other primary and secondary schools, private colleges, etc.

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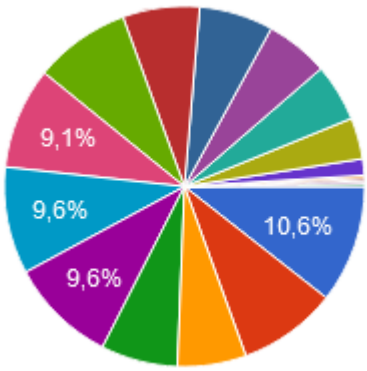
3. Online survey results

3.1. Survey among senior citizens

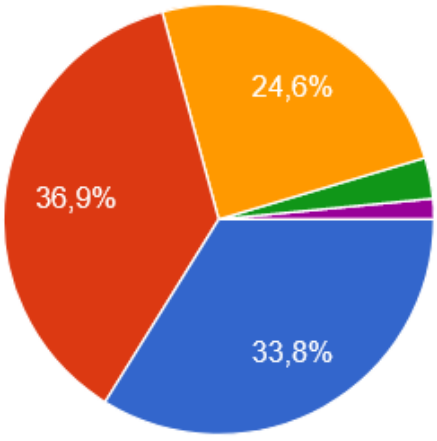
1. How do you usually spend your free time?



- I surf the Internet
- I meet my friends
- I develop my hobbies
- I learn new things
- I take care of my house
- I attend lessons/courses
- I read books
- I spend time with my family
- I watch TV
- I take care of the garden
- I go to the theatre
- I go shopping
- I do sport
- I go to the church

The way seniors spend their free time is very diverse. Seniors take care of their homes, flats, or gardens, they spend time with family, meet friends, read, do hobbies, go to the theatre. 11.6% said they surf the internet and 9.6% attend educational events. 6.9% learn new things whether or not it is education.

2. The Covid-19 situation has changed the way you spend your free time?



Agree · Neither agree nor disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Strongly agree

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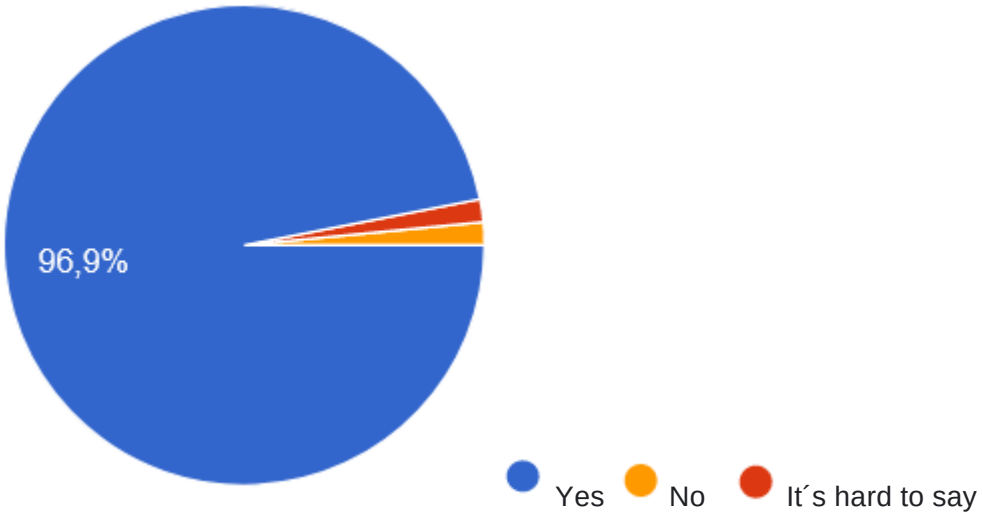
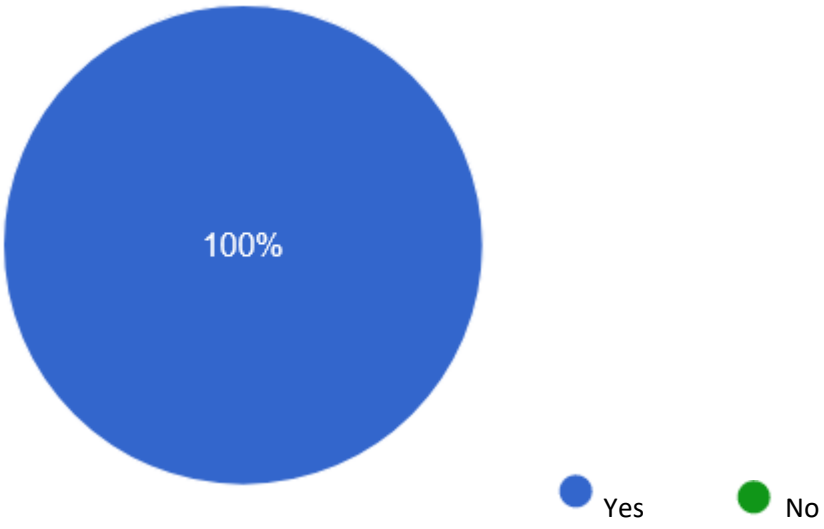
Government restrictions and regulations associated with COVID-19 have changed the way for approximately 35% of seniors, while less than 30% have not. 37% of seniors were unable to assess the change.

3. Have you ever participated in activities/classes dedicated especially for seniors?



4. Do you have the possibility to take part in classes dedicated especially for seniors in the place you live in?



5. Do you have a PC or laptop on your own?

	YES	NO	I have to share it with another member of my family

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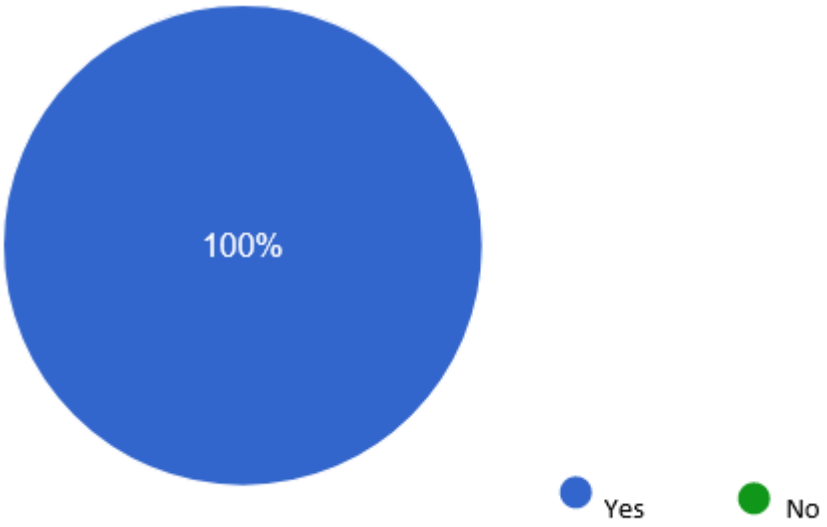
Number of response	60	1	4

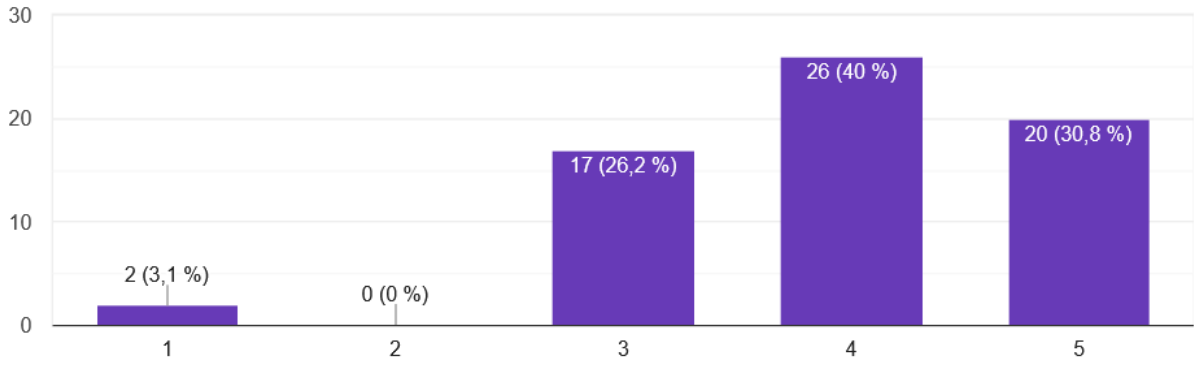
6. Do you have access to the Internet at your living place?



Almost 97% of seniors participate or have ever participated in activities organised exclusively for this group, all of them answered that they have the opportunity to participate in them, including online, considering the fact that 98.5% of seniors have their own computer or share it with a family member and all of them have access to the Internet.

7. How good are you at: Evaluate your level of competences from 1 to 5, where 1 = can't do it, 5 = very good?

Surfing the Internet – 65 responses



Using apps to communicate with friends – 65 responses

Erasmus+

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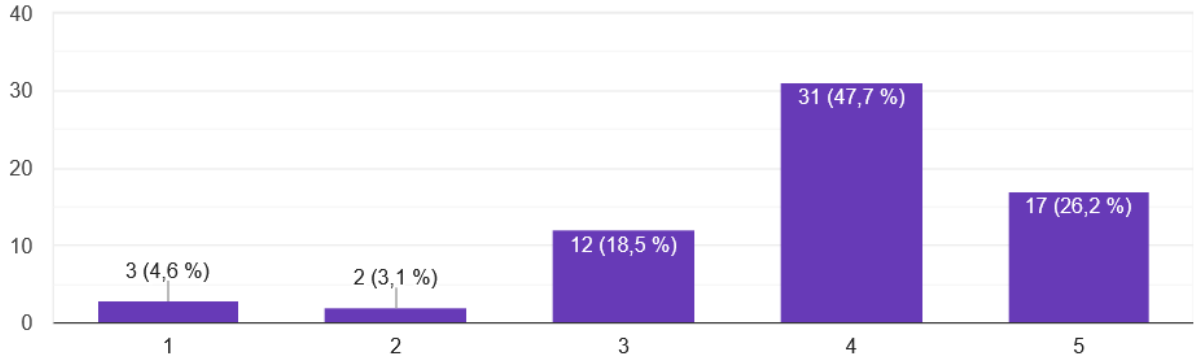
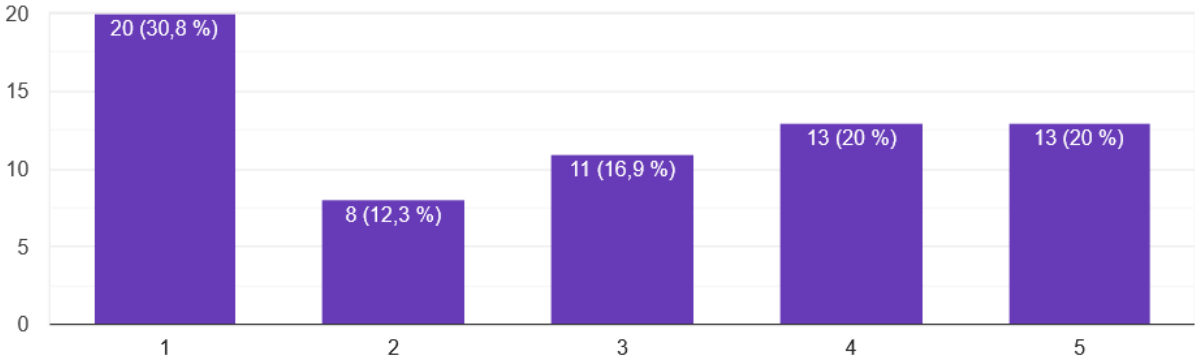
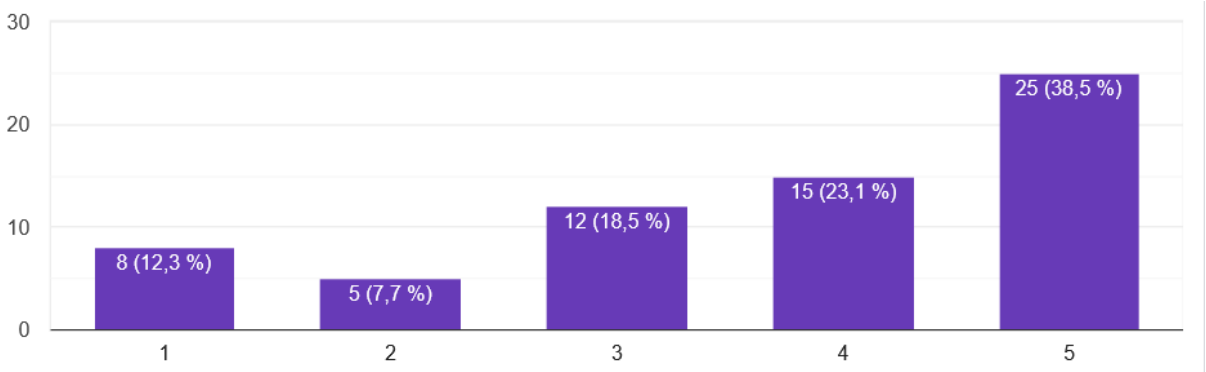


Facebook (posting, sending pictures, sharing posts) - 65 responses



Doing online shopping and paying online - 65 responses



Taking care of official matters using internet (taxes, health issues sending applications, sending mails etc.) – 65 responses

Erasmus+

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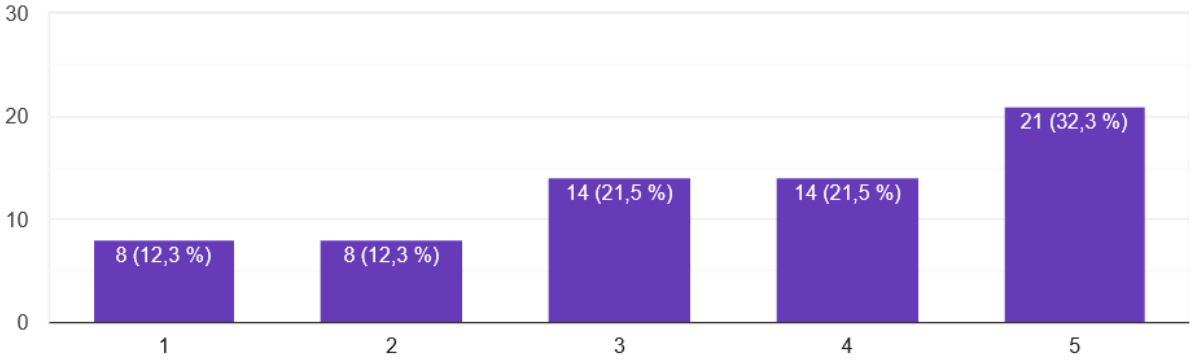
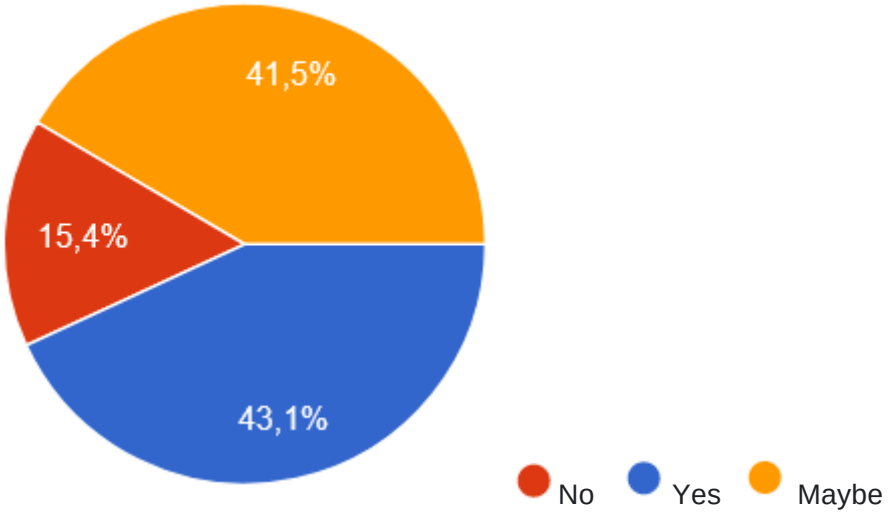


8. **Would you be interested in a training course on digital arts and creativity i.e. would you like to discover arts available on the internet and learn how to create your own art with internet tools?**



Seniors' interest in education in the field of "digital creativity" is quite high.

9. **Do you think on-line tools could help you to develop your creativity?**

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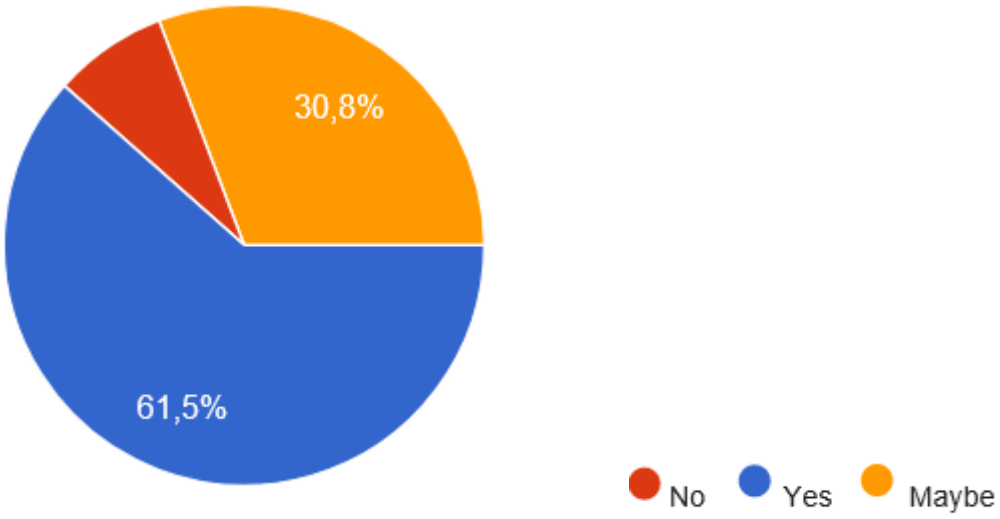
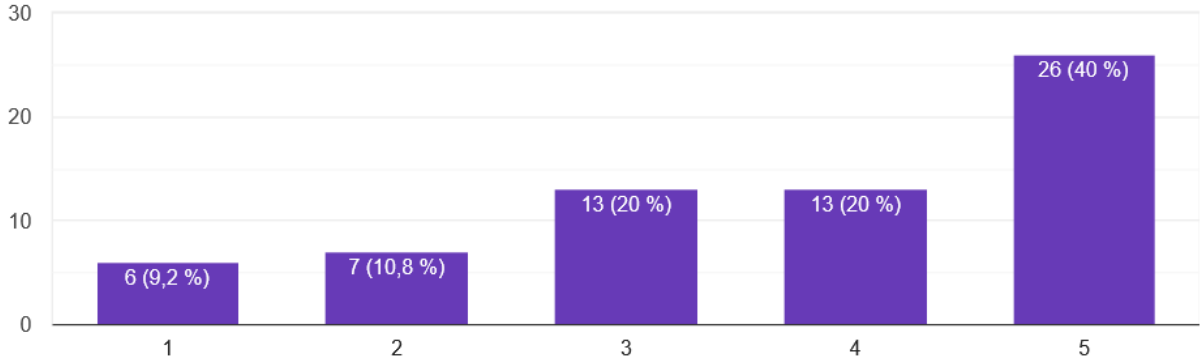


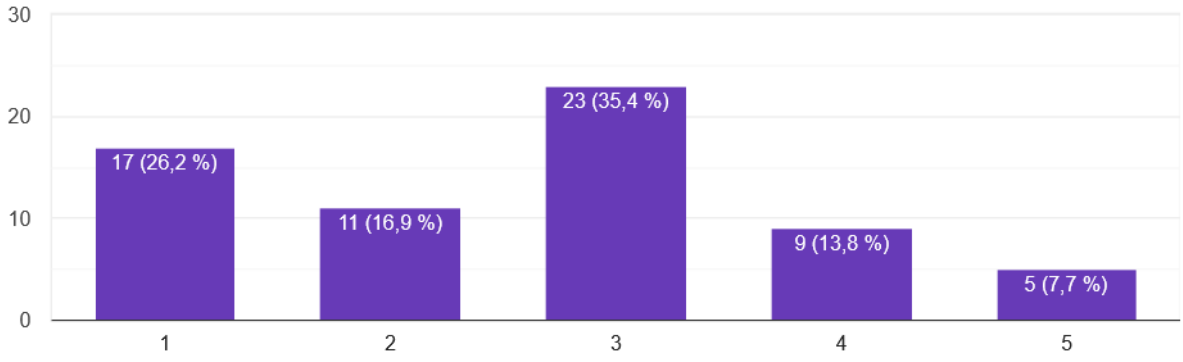
Most seniors find online tools useful in acquiring and improving their "digital" skills

10. Which kind of topic would you like to deepen during the training course? Evaluate from 1 to 5, where 1 = not at all 5 = very much

Computing – 65 responses



Handicraft - 65 responses



Paiting – 65 responses

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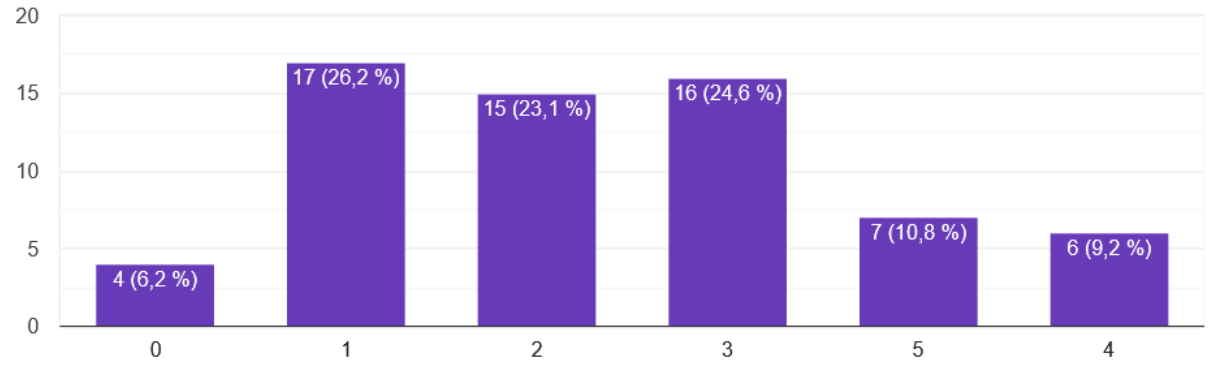
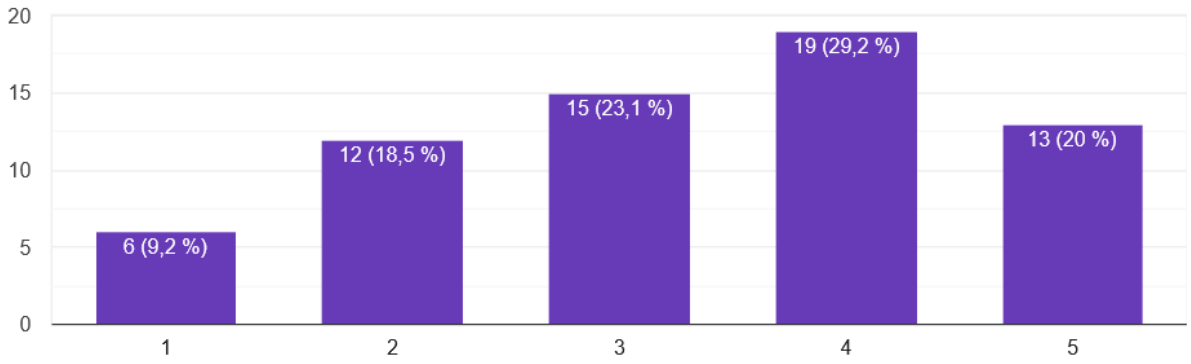
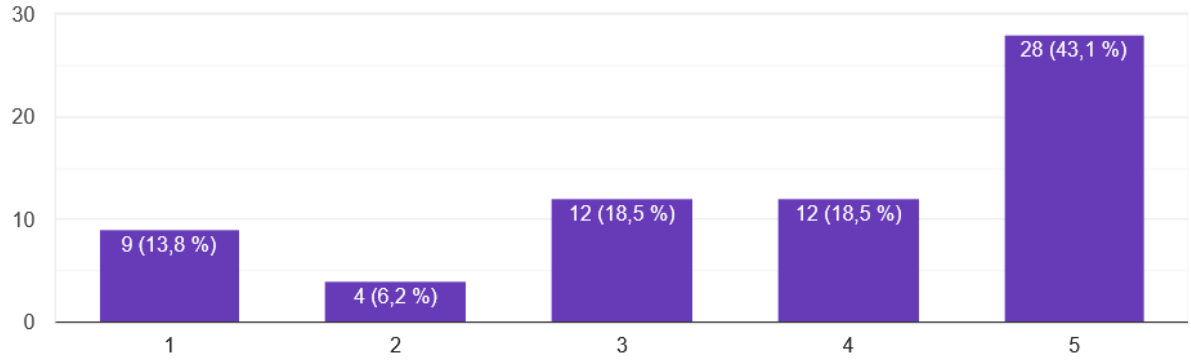


Music – 65 responses



Photography – 65 responses



Cooking – 65 responses

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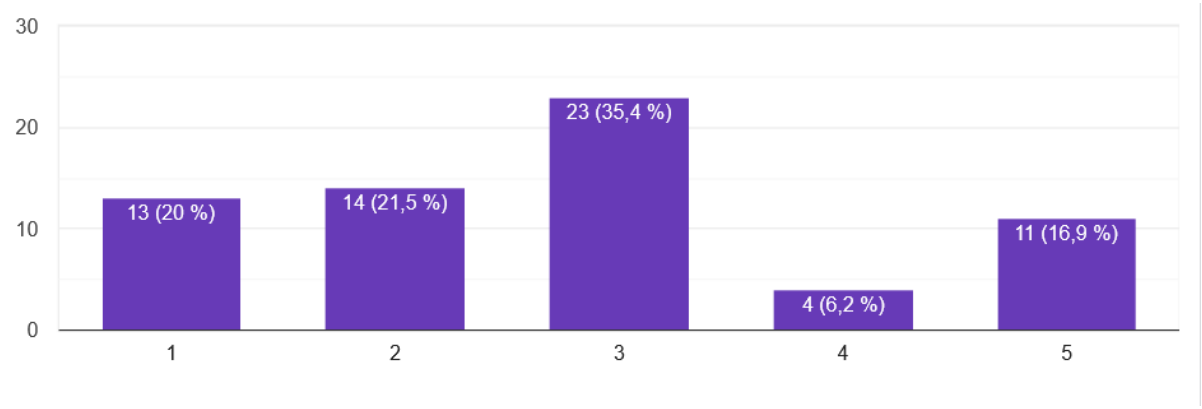
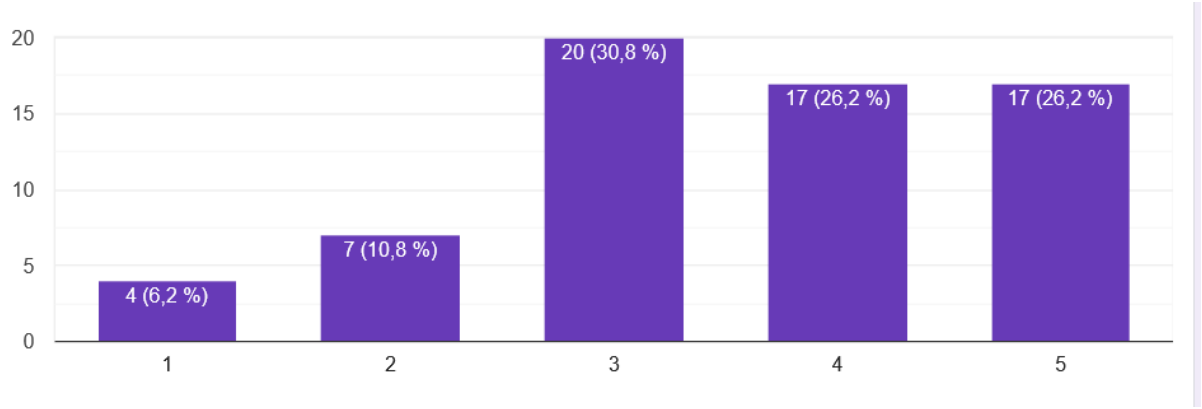
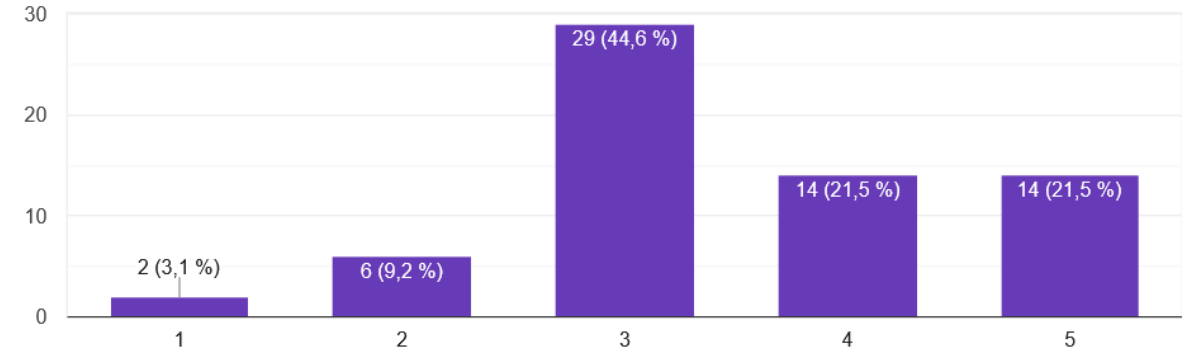


Literature and poems – 65 responses



Creativity in daily life – 65 responses



Brain training – 65 responses

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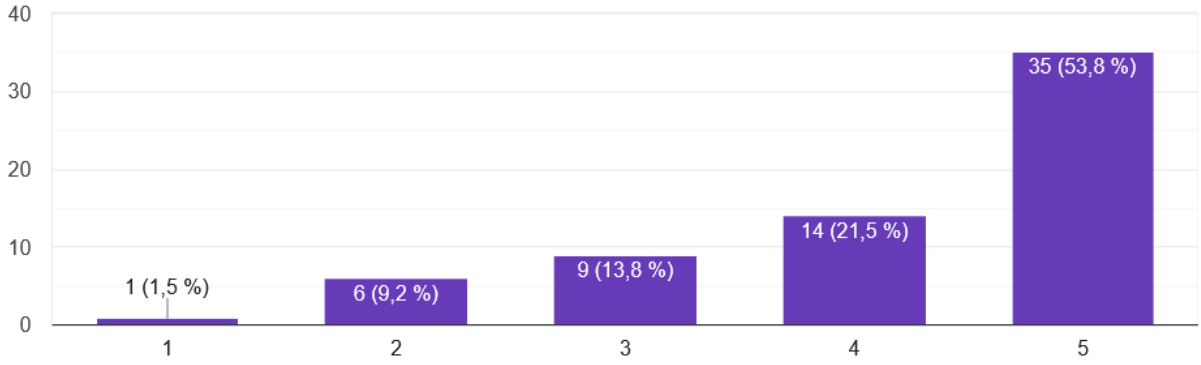
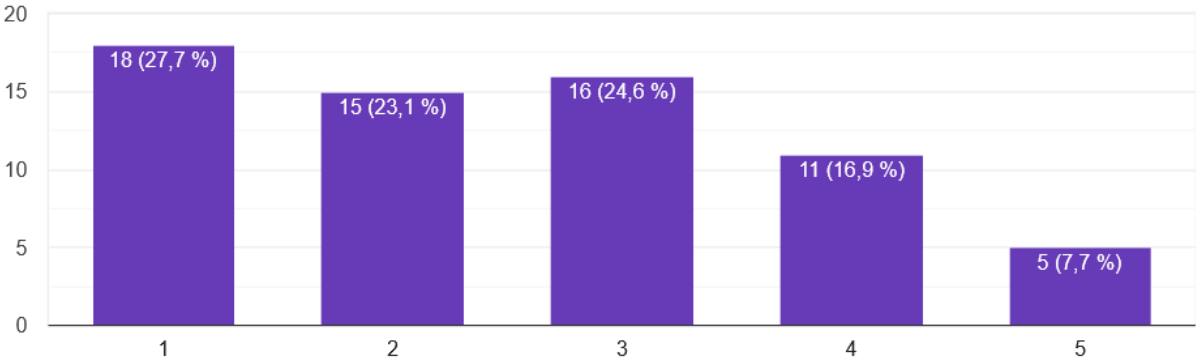
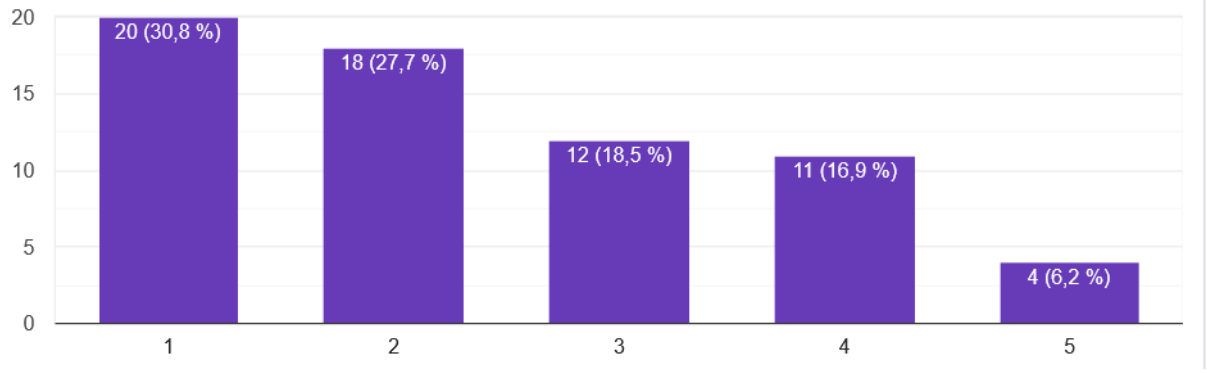


Sport – 65 responses



Dancing – 65 responses



Art history – 65 responses

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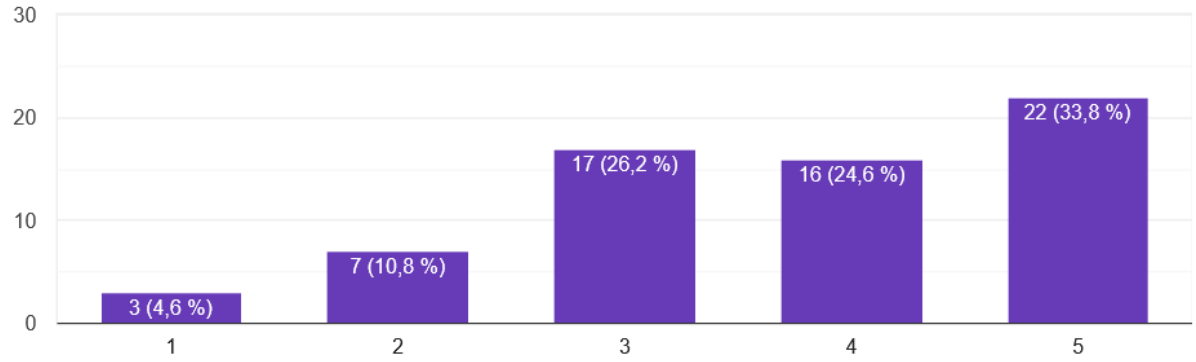
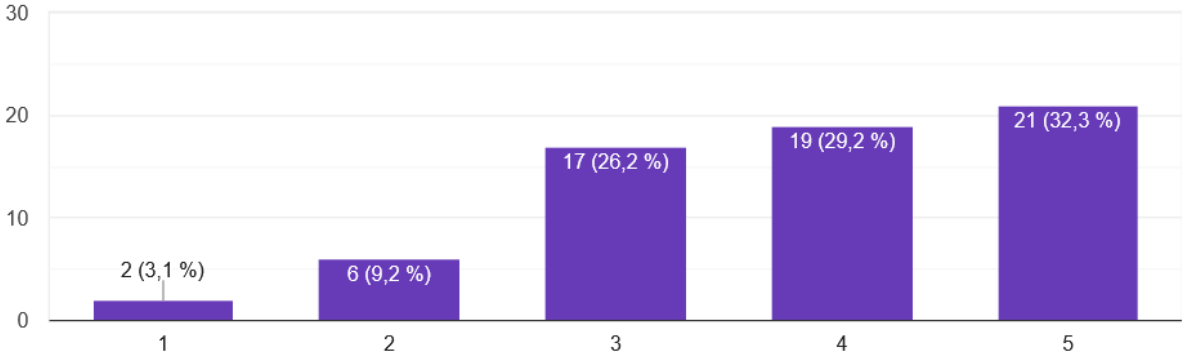
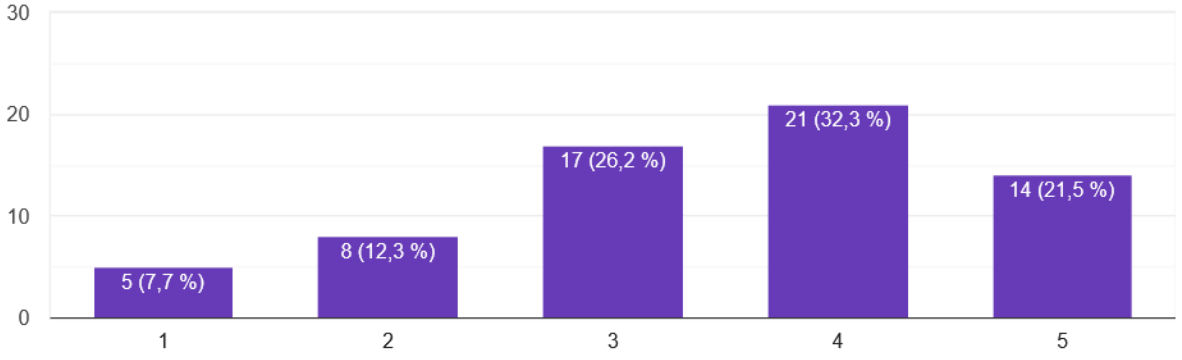


Theater – 65 responses



Storytelling – 65 responses



Singing – 65 responses

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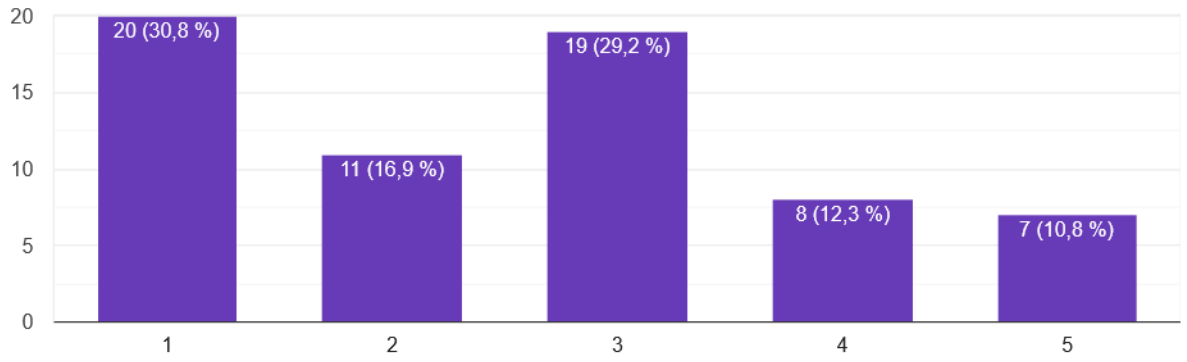
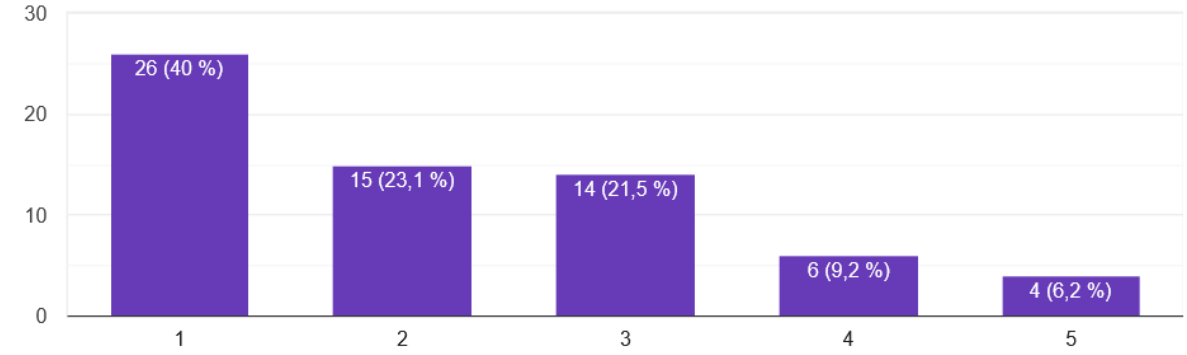
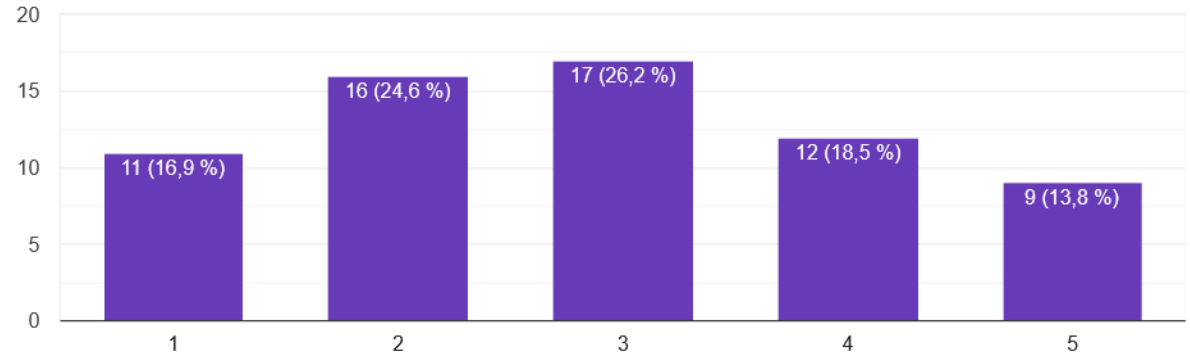


Sculpture – 65 responses



Cinematography – 65 responses



Soft skills (communication, motivation, self-management….) – 65 responses

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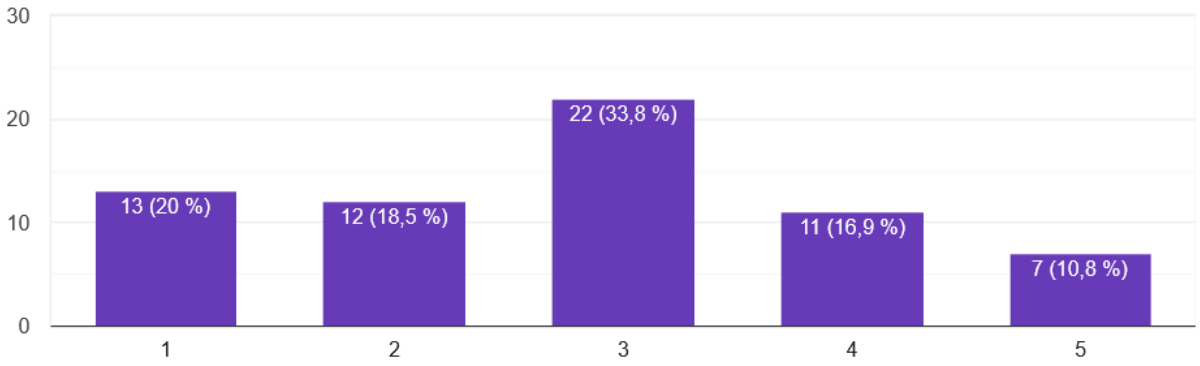
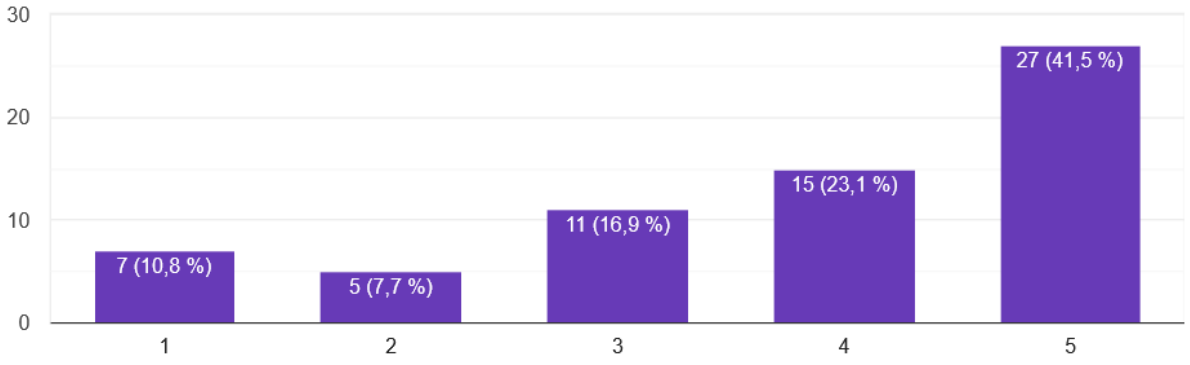


The seniors are mostly interested in courses on computers, photography and subsequent processing of digital photography. Courses on memory training are also of great importance.

11. Please, evaluate which of the listed topics would be the most useful for you in a Training programme: Culture & creativity in the digital world? (scale from 1 up to 5 where 1 means very useless and 5 very useful)

Communication and collaboration (sending e-mails, running FB, surfing the Internet) – 65 responses



Useful applications to communicate with other people – 65 responses

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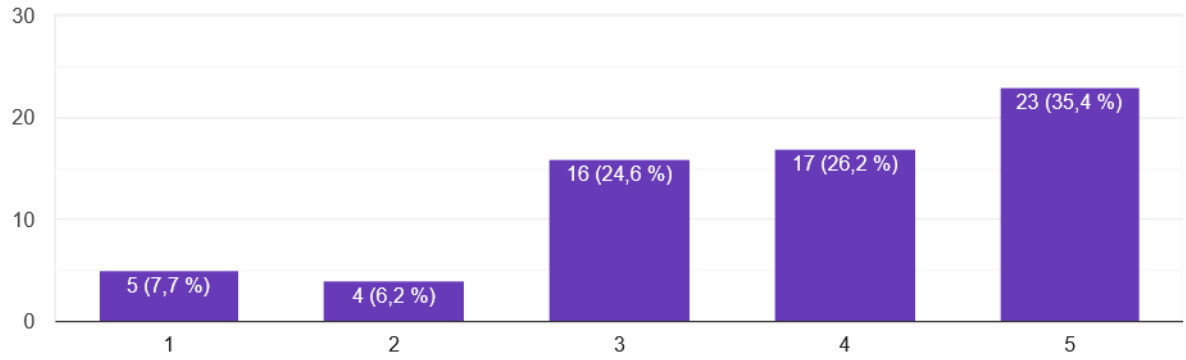
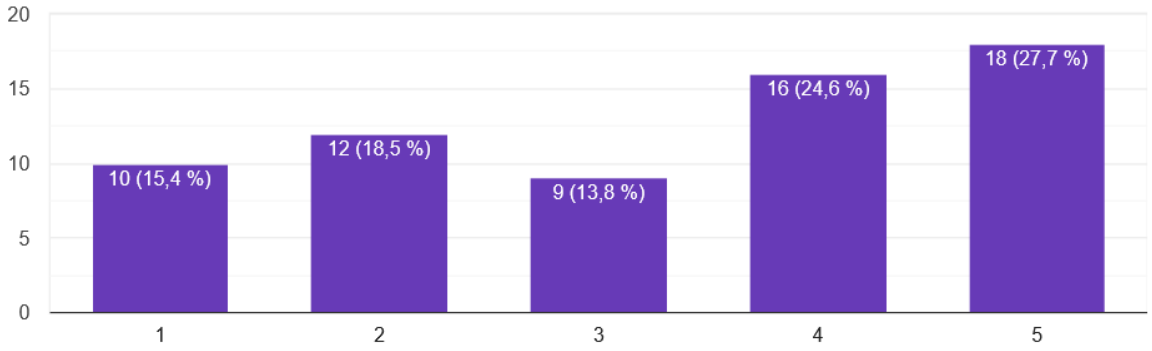
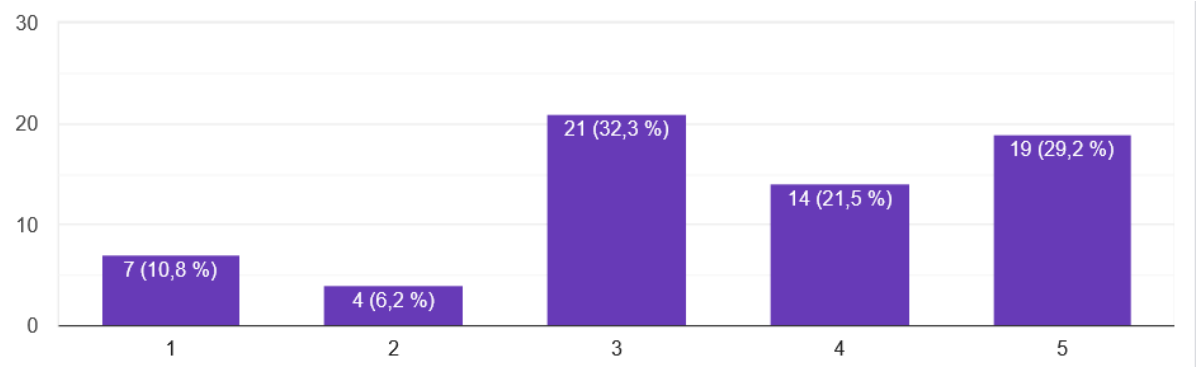
Applications for a daily use – 65 responses



Sharing experience on-line – 65 responses



Creativity in solving problems – 65 responses



Digital drawing/ painting – 65 responses

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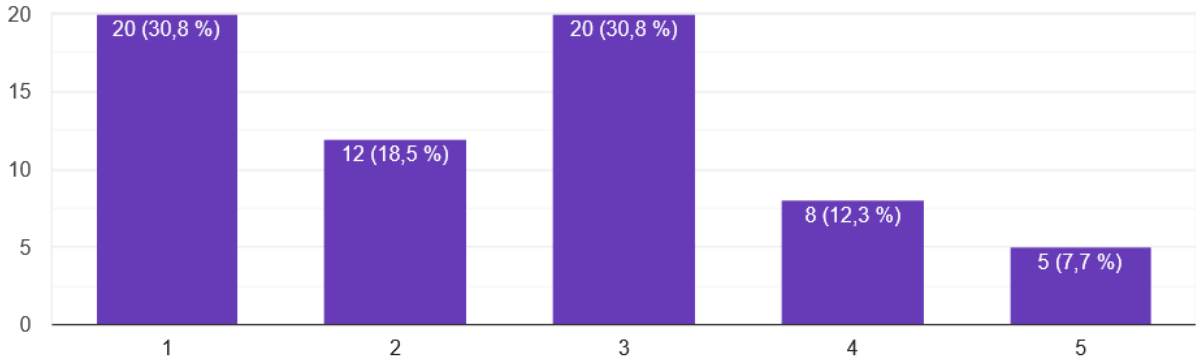
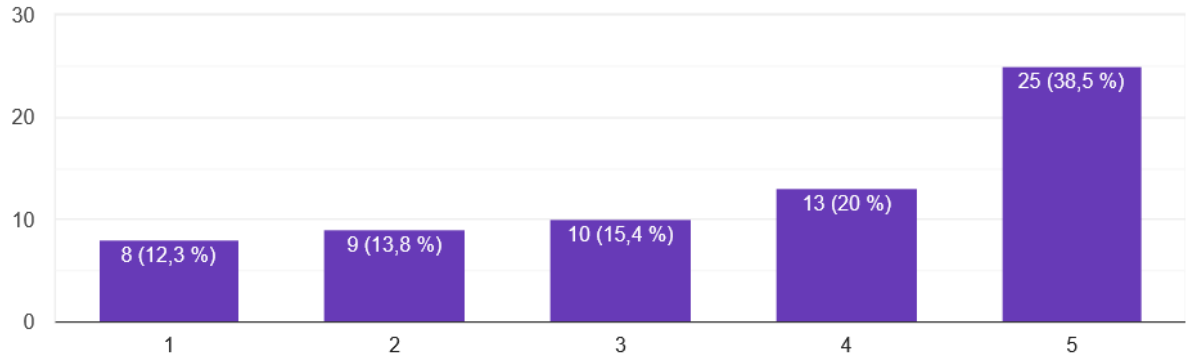
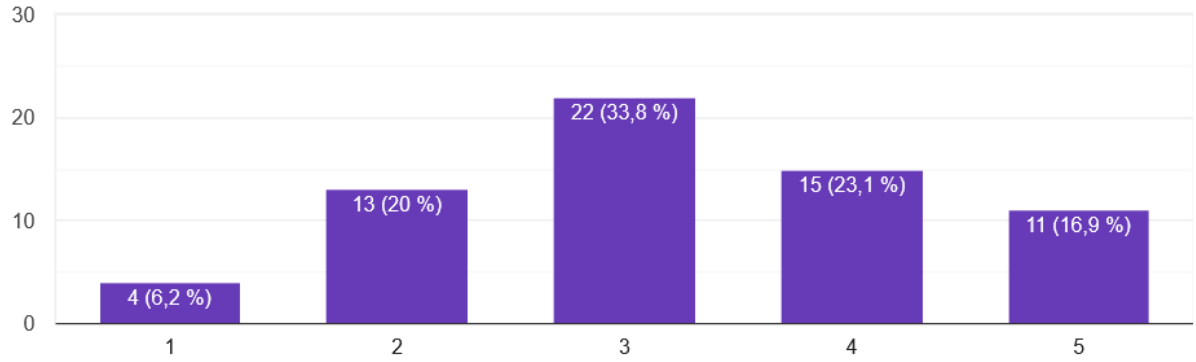


Photo edition – 65 responses



Sharing opinions and information (citizens´ engagement) – 65 responses



Amateur production of digital content (prosumers, i.e. consumers of digital culture expressing relationship to it via content of own making) – 65 responses

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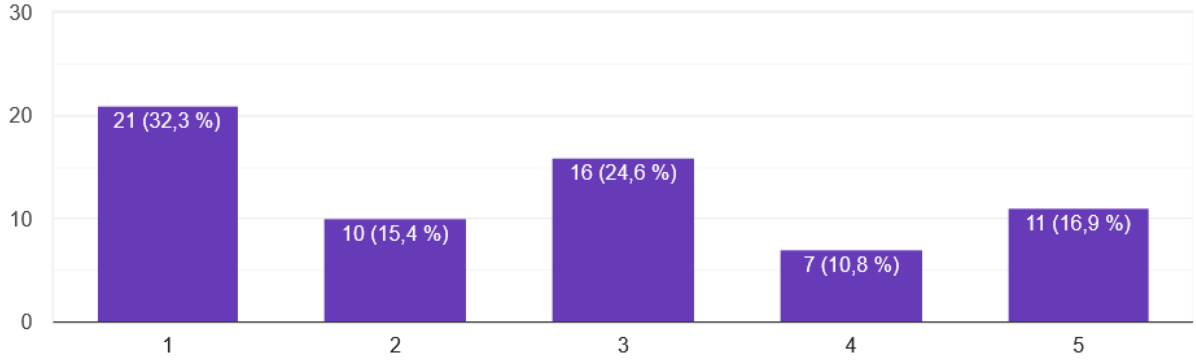
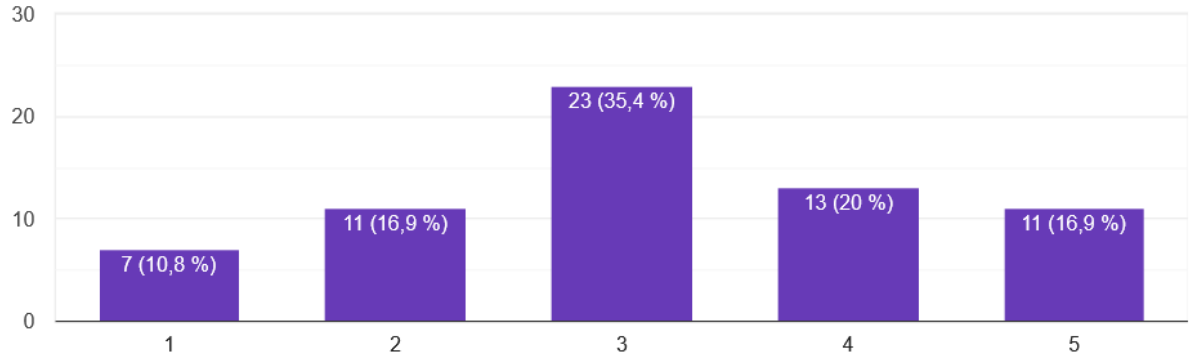
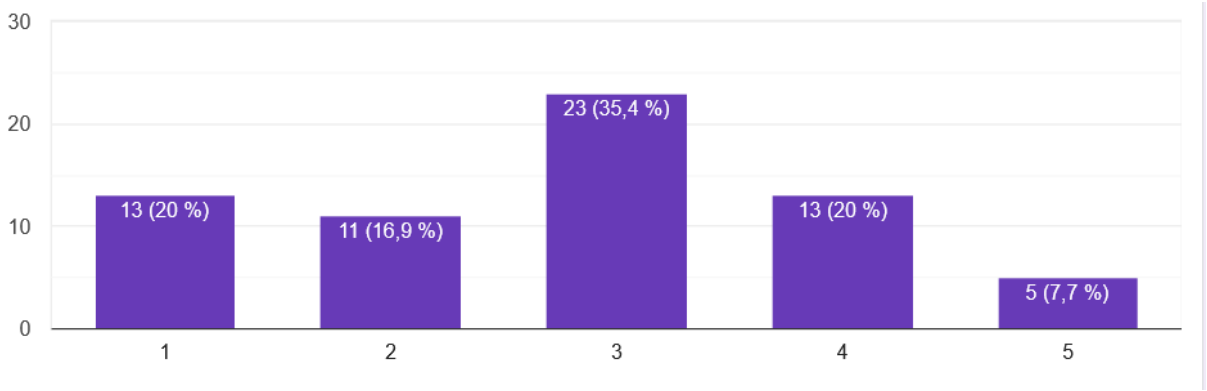


Use of internet for purposes related to cultural heritage – 65 responses



Soft skills workshop (expressing opinion, Nonviolent communication – NVC, assertiveness etc.) – 65 responses



In the case of the possibility of participating in a digital creativity training programme, seniors would currently be most interested in communication via social networks, whether using PCs or smartphones.

12. Which method of delivery do you prefer in a training?

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	Face to face sessions	Online webinars	Self-directed learning	Blended learning (combination of webinars and face to face sessions)
Number of response	30	15	6	38

When it comes to education, the most seniors prefer a combination of full-time and online study. Less than 10% of seniors prefer self-study via the internet.

13. If you participate in the training course, how often would you like the sessions to take place?

	Twice per week	Once per week	Once per two weeks	Once per month
Number of response	3	29	27	6

Seniors prefer education – participation at education – 1 x week or 1 x per two weeks.

14. During the project we are going to develop Senior tube – a channel where seniors can share their video recording. What would you like to see there?

	Seniors´ performances (music, dance)	Lifehacks	Tutorials	Videos recorded by seniors	Sharing seniors´ passions	Other
Number of response	17	32	15	13	34	3

More than 50% of seniors prefer sharing hobbies and posting various "gadgets". There is also interest in recordings of senior performances, concerts, etc. and videos made by seniors themselves. 20% of seniors are interested in education on this channel.

3.2 Survey among trainers / educators of seniors

Present the results of the questionnaires – how many people replied? ***Each question*** *from the questionnaire should be presented with a simple graphic / table and a short comment about the result.*

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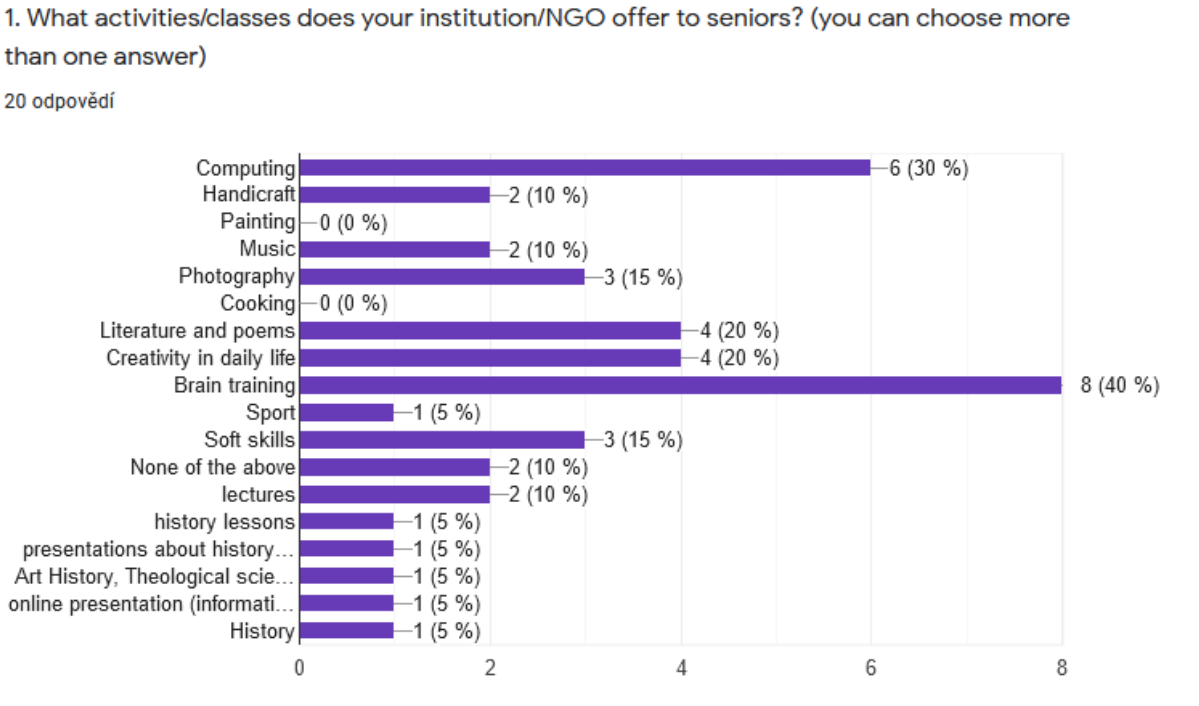
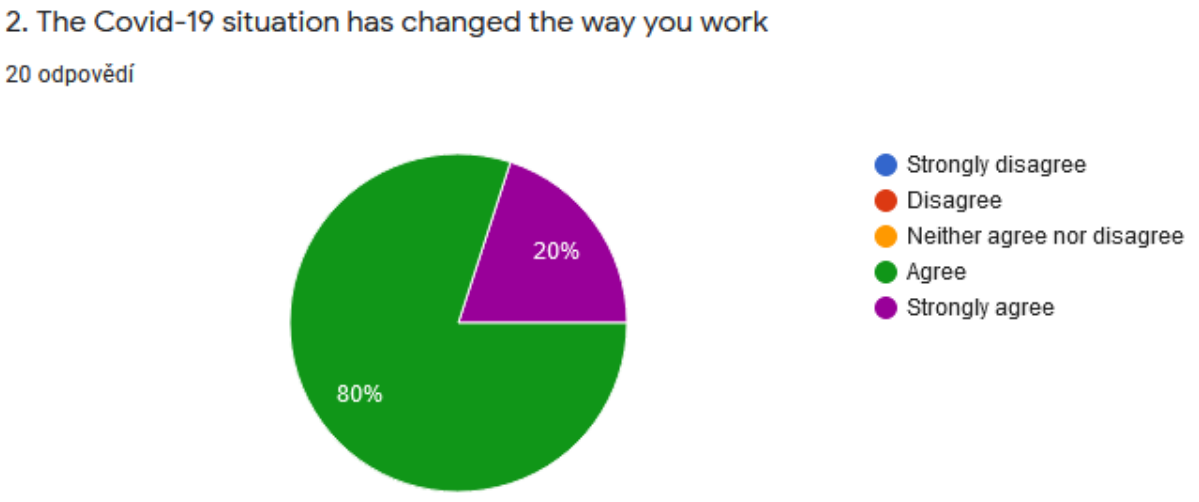


As mentioned above, the questionnaire was administered to teachers who work or have worked within the U3A at the University of Ostrava. These are academics and practitioners who also work at other U3As in the Czech Republic. The University of Ostrava offers various activities to seniors within the framework of the University of the Third Age. Lecture series by erudite experts, especially in the field of social sciences, and combined courses (lectures and activities in the so-called virtual classroom - on-line study) are very popular among seniors. To do this, seniors need to have basic PC skills. This is also a very popular area of senior education at the University of Ostrava.



The education of seniors, which is a key activity for the University of Ostrava, had to be completely reorganised into its online version. No other solution was possible with respect to the government regulations.

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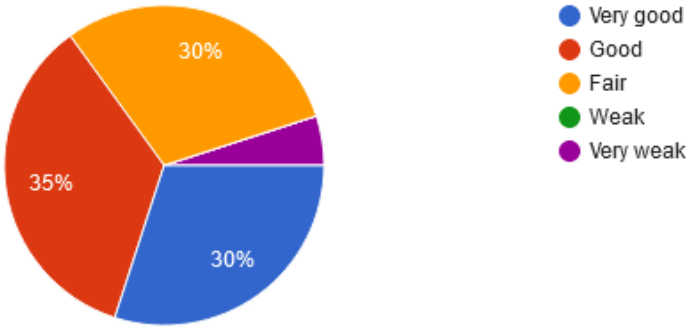
3. What is your level of competences providing online classes (i.e. using Zoom, GoogleMeet or other tools)?

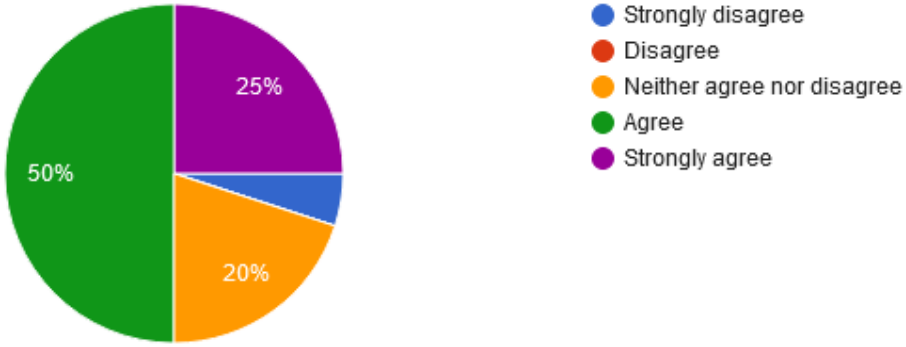
20 odpovědí



Computer literacy of individual lecturers – teachers – vary according to the area they focus on.

4. Local seniors are eager to take part in activities offered by our institution/NGO

20 odpovědí



The courses and lectures at the University of Ostrava are still sought after.

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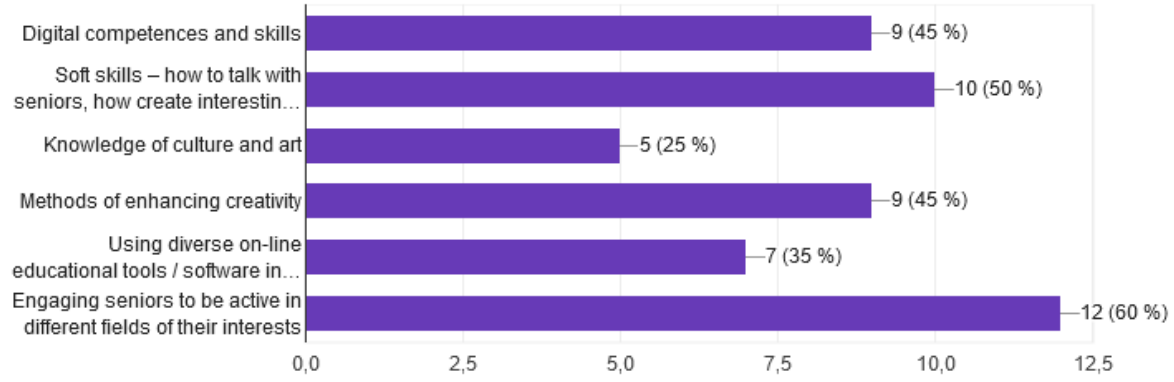
5. What kind of skills would you like to develop as an educator? Choose 3 the most important answers.

20 odpovědí



According to most teachers, it is necessary to involve seniors as actively as possible in their field of interest, e.g. through interactive courses; of course, this implies the need to increase their ICT competences.

6. What would be the most useful topic for a lesson targeted to seniors?

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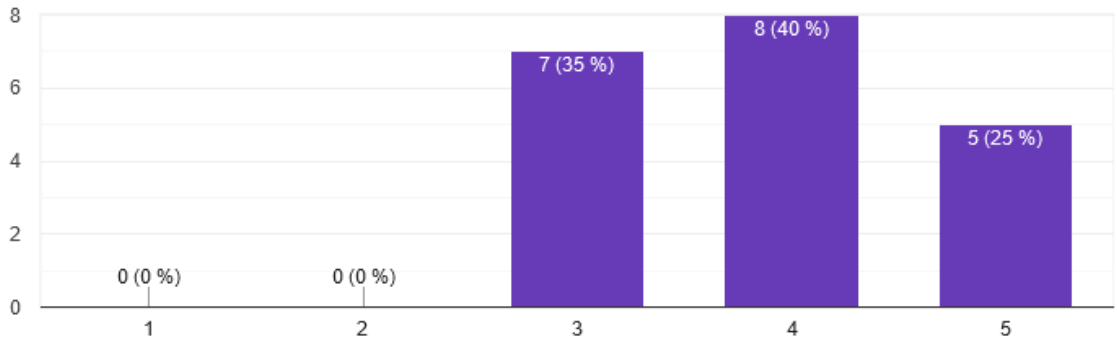
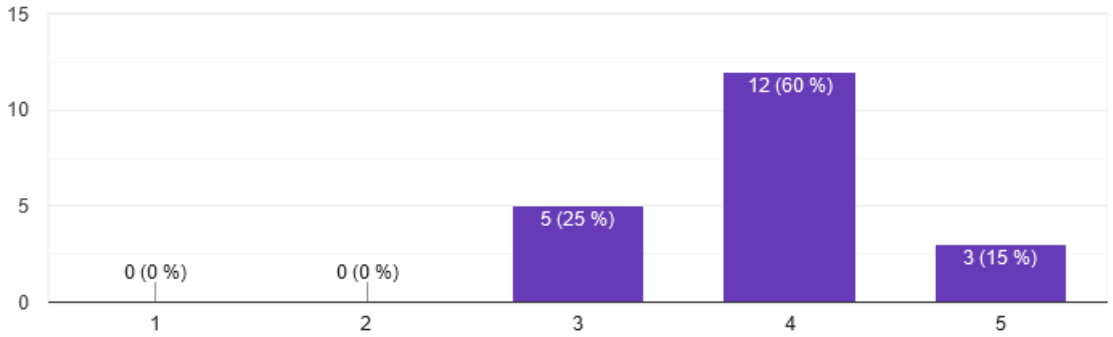
Communication and collaboration (sending Emails, running FB, surfing the Internet)

20 odpovědí



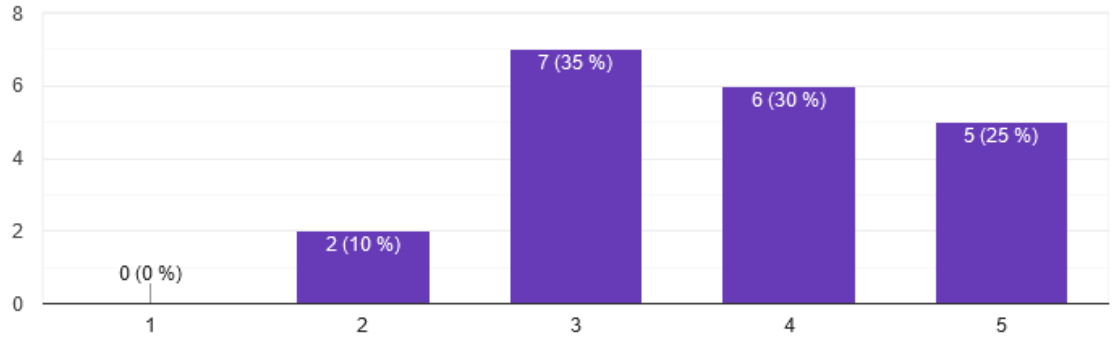
Useful applications to communicate with other people

20 odpovědí



Application for a daily use

20 odpovědí



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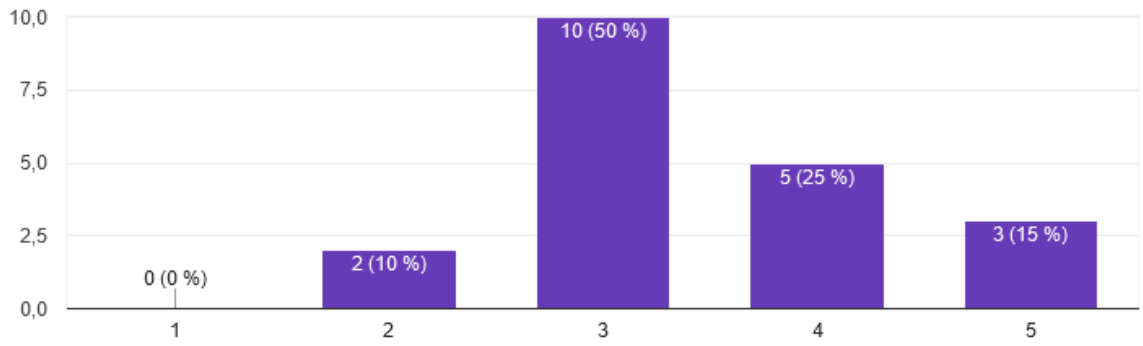
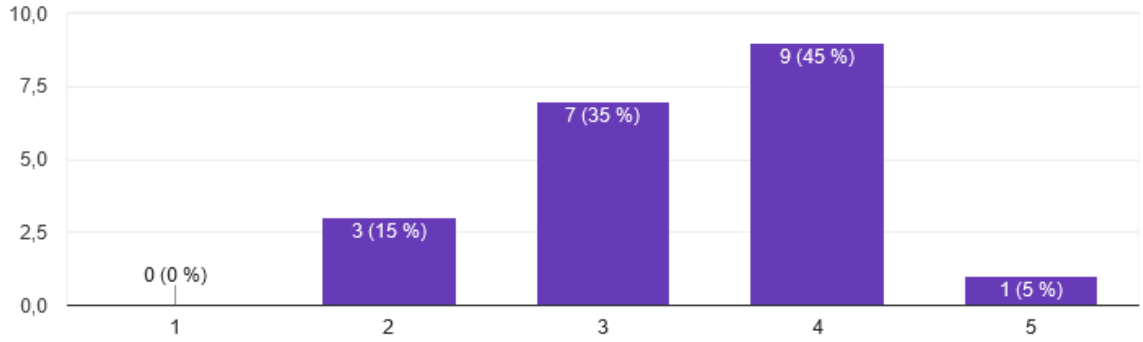
Sharing experience online

20 odpovědí



Creativity in solving problems

20 odpovědí



Digital drawing / painting

20 odpovědí

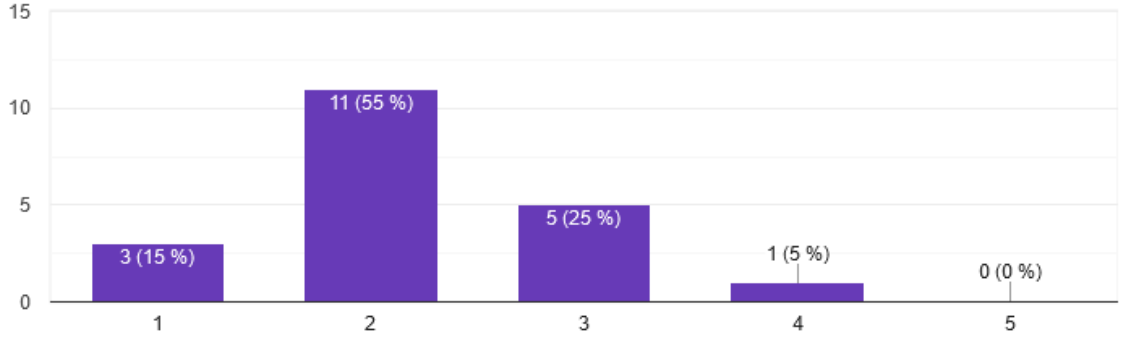


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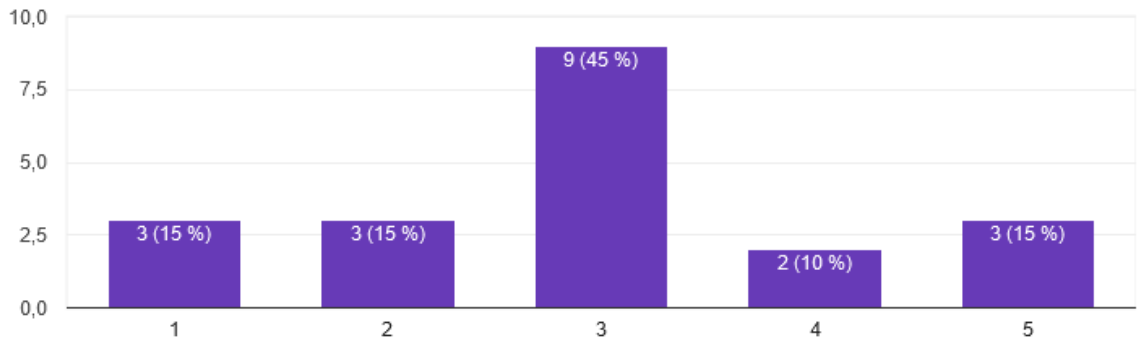
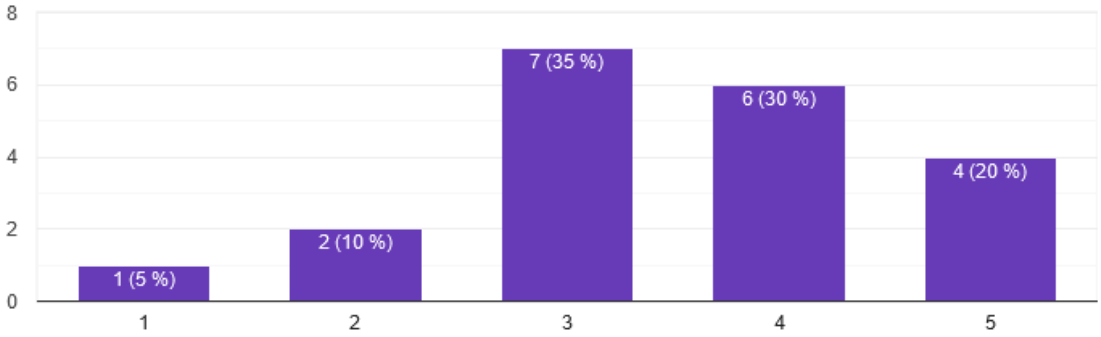
Photo edition

20 odpovědí



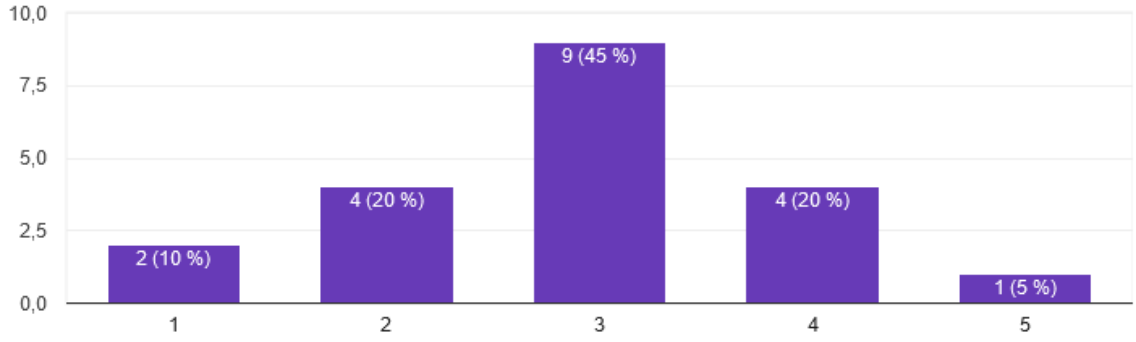
Sharing opinions and information (citizens' engagement)

20 odpovědí



Amateur production of digital content (prosumers, i.e. consumers of digital culture expressing relationship to it via content of own making)

20 odpovědí



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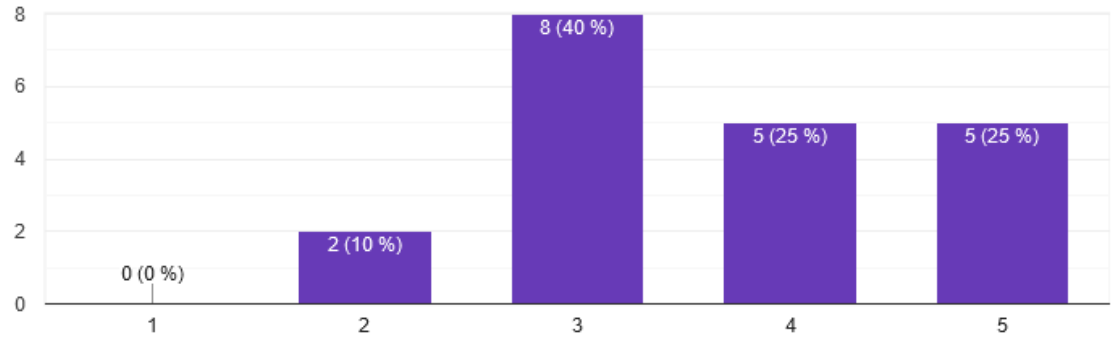
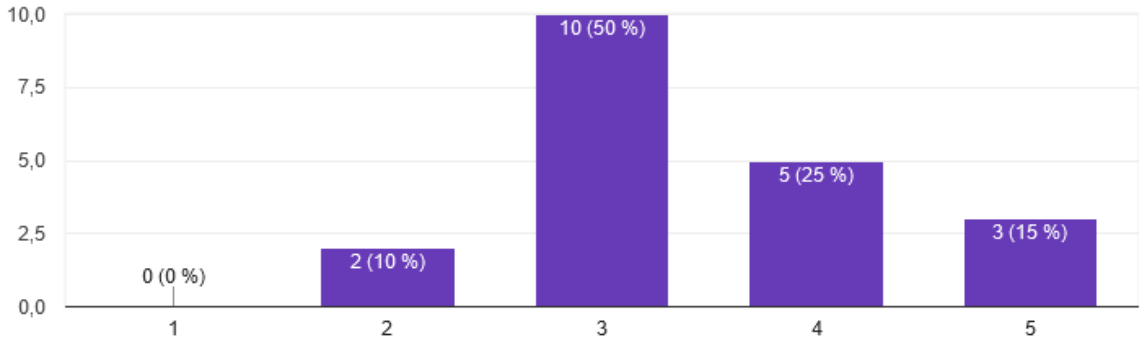
Use of the internet for purposes related to cultural heritage

20 odpovědí



Soft skills workshop (expressing opinion, Nonviolent communication (NVC), assertiveness etc.)

20 odpovědí



The most important topic of the training seems to be the use of communication applications in smartphones and teaching the possibilities of communication on social networks. These are the means which help seniors share their experiences, experiences, participate in solving various problems, discuss, etc. without direct contact. It is also important for them to improve their Internet skills in general.

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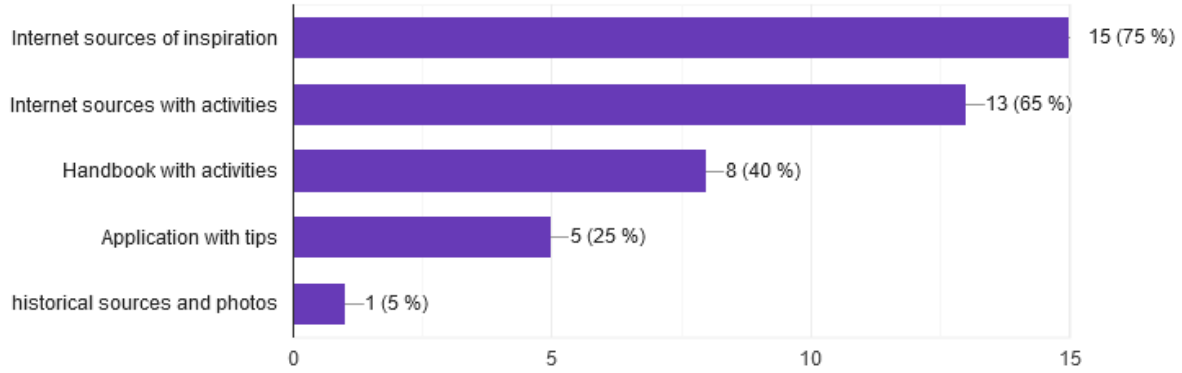
7. What kind of tools do you need while working with seniors? (you can choose more than one answer)

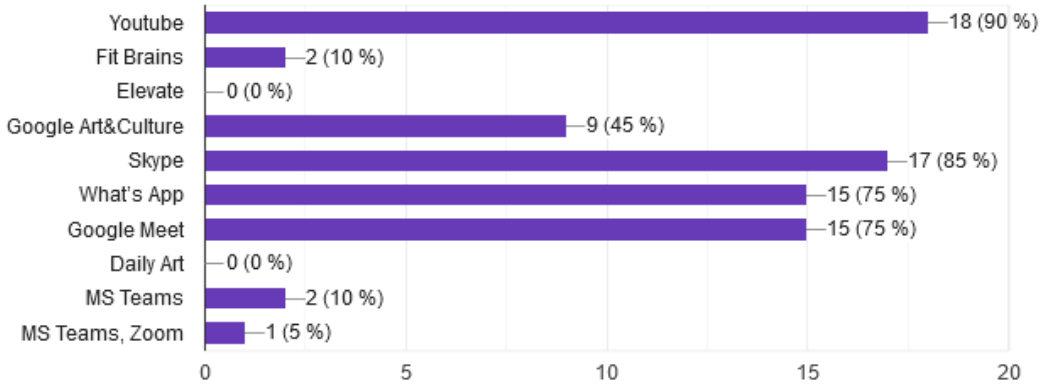
20 odpovědí



Teachers - lecturers mostly use internet resources for working with seniors as a target group.

8. What applications/digital tools have you ever heard of? (you can choose more than one answer)

20 odpovědí



The most known tools are YouTube, Skype, What´s App.

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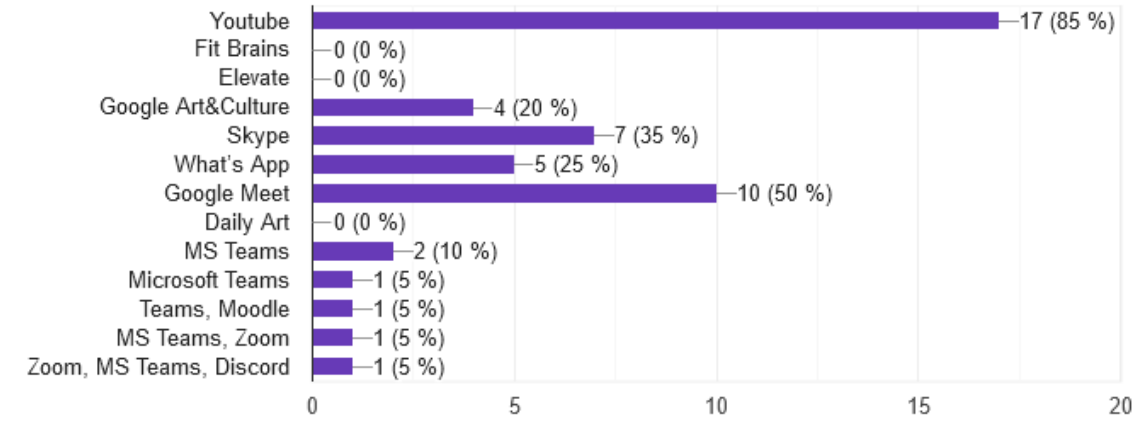
9. What applications/tools do you use during running activities? (you can choose more than one answer)

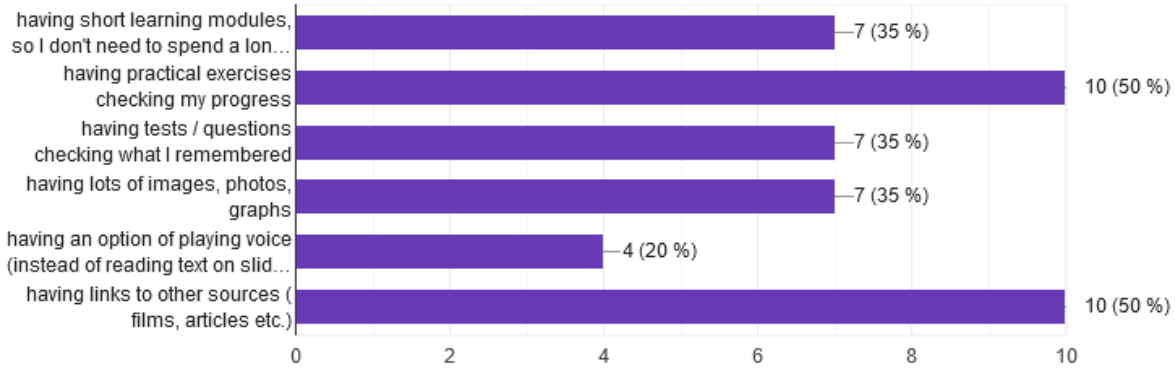
20 odpovědí



The most used tools are YouTube and Google Meet.

10. What is important for you when you participate in an e-learning course (choose 3 the most important ones):

20 odpovědí



Teachers - lecturers mostly use internet resources for working with seniors as a target group.

3.3 Conclusion

At the end of the chapter, add a short paragraph resuming the main conclusions.

65 seniors, 57 women and 8 men, responded to the questions in Chapter 3.1. 55.4% are aged between 65 and 75 years and 43.1% are over 75 years. These seniors live in large cities, which also affects their opportunities to participate actively in activities organised for seniors (better transport accessibility, better internet access, etc.). There are some barriers to education for seniors in smaller towns and villages, as the range of educational activities on offer is essentially sporadic. Therefore, it is important that U3As also offer distance learning or directly online courses. While this is not a

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substitute for face-to-face activities, it can make a significant contribution to the quality and accessibility of educational activities for older people. The evaluation of the questionnaires confirmed the experience that the University of Ostrava has long had with seniors' preferences in the area of active leisure and education:

The way seniors spend their free time is very diverse. Seniors take care of their homes, gardens, spend time with family, meet friends, read, and engage in hobbies. 11.6% answered that they browse the internet and 9.6% attend educational events. Seniors in the Czech Republic participate in activities exclusively organised for this group, in the vast majority of cases they have the opportunity to participate in them, including online, given that 98.5% of seniors have their own computer or share it with a family member and almost everyone has access to the Internet. Most seniors find online tools useful for learning and communicating with their peers and welcome the opportunity to participate in computer and smartphone courses. Seniors like to use social networking sites, work with digital photographs, shoot videos and are keen to educate themselves in this area. The vast majority prefer blended learning - face-to-face meetings with online elements.

20 respondents took part in the questionnaire survey in Chapter 3.2. These are professionals with many years of experience in the field of education, 80% of them have been working with seniors for 10 years or more, especially in the larger cities of the Czech Republic.

For the questionnaire survey among teachers, we approached mainly erudite and experienced academics and practitioners. Lecture series by erudite experts, especially in the field of social sciences, and combined courses (lectures and activities in the so-called virtual classroom - online learning) are very popular among seniors. To do this, seniors need to have basic PC skills. According to most teachers, it is necessary to involve seniors as actively as possible in their field of interest, e.g. through interactive courses. It is important to have practical exercises to check the knowledge acquired and to have access to sources of further information expanding the topic. For working with seniors as a target group, teachers - lecturers most often use Internet resources. The most used tools are YouTube and Google Meet.

4. Focus groups results

4.1 Interviewees presentation

Briefly present the interviewees, their backgrounds, experiences and expertise

AA	Name	Profession	Organization	Additional information (age, big city / countryside, etc.)
	Kateřina Sládková	University teacher	Charles University, Prague	39, big city
	Vladimíra Sehnalová	senior, former teacher		65, countryside
	Martin Žáček	University teacher	University of Ostrava	40, small city
	Jiřina Slívová	senior		80, countryside
	Ondřej Faktor	Teacher, expert	National gallery Prague, Charles	45, big city

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			University Prague	

4.2 Topics discussed

Describe the collected results per question and at the end write a short summary with conclusions. You are free to add more questions if you feel they will help us to understand needs and barriers of seniors and seniors' educators from small CCS sector.
***Remember:** a focus group interview should be a discussion, not a "face to face survey". Allow people to talk, to start new topics and thoughts. It's useful to record the interview.*

Topic 1: **General overview** What is your general view of educational programmes for seniors? Are they needed? Are they tailored for seniors' needs? How has the COVID-19 pandemic changed the situation?
Summary of the discussion: This question has been unanimously agreed on. Educational programmes for seniors are needed and the teachers as well as organisers endeavour to tailor the programmes for them. There are frequent surveys on seniors' expectations related to the course content and focus. **Kateřina:** "It is an educational activity welcome and sought after by students-seniors. Their motivation plays a vital role in the whole process. Another benefit of the programmes is their social potential, possibility to socialise, chat (either about the educational content or just about anything else)." **Vladimíra:** "As a senior, I started monitoring the possibility to educate myself at various courses or at U3As. Some are really adapted to seniors, therefore, they should bring them new experience and knowledge to be used in their life. I have taken part, for instance, in a course on how to work with a mobile device." COVID-19 has changed the situation in senior education in a fundamental way. Seniors had to acquire additional skills without which they could not participate in educational activities. All learning moved to virtual classrooms with study materials and activities, such as tests, assignments, etc. All of this had already been used before COVID-19 as well, however, during the pandemic it became apparent that this was the only way to continue. All face-to-face lectures were conducted online. The platform for all activities was and is Moodle (http://setip.osu.cz) **Martin:** "The epidemic situation made teaching very difficult. On the other hand, I have to say that the seniors were great and skilful. Yes, there were some technical difficulties, but we managed everything together."
Topic 2: **Education themes** What should seniors learn? What do they want to learn? Why? What is the place of arts and culture in educational programmes?
Summary of the discussion: Seniors are interested in many topics of educational activities. The key area seems to be the acquisition of knowledge and especially skills in the use of SMART technologies. However, seniors are interested in many other areas. Concerning culture and art, seniors are mostly interested in lectures by renowned speakers, and the interest is mainly influenced by the expertise of the lecturer. However, the form of the educational activity is also important. For example, a combination of online teaching and face-to-face lectures, or only online lectures, outdoor trips and other forms of field education, etc. Our seniors do not have much experience with their own creative activities. Concerning their active approach, seniors mainly work with photos or videos,

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they create various texts and essays, some create eLearning courses. We also have seniors who are active in music, members of senior choirs.
Martin: "Seniors would like to be able to use a computer and the related stuff properly so that they are not dependent on their family (who mostly have no time)."
Jiřina: "In general, I think that culture and art are sufficiently represented in the offer, as it is an area with a relatively large "lecturer base" and a huge variety of topics to offer. These courses are also relatively undemanding on equipment - usually a laptop, a projector and a microphone are enough for a lecture."
Kateřina: "The topics of the senior programmes can cover almost all areas. There are programs based on lectures in various fields, practical programs in IT competences, as well as various types of practical or artistic activities.
For all areas, I see that having basic computer skills and the ability to communicate via email is a great advantage. At Charles University, under the influence of covid, Online Agenda programmes for seniors and its use on mobile devices have been included.
The arts and culture on offer in educational programmes do not need to be theoretical. Among seniors, outdoor trips are very popular and welcome."
Vladimíra: "The cultural area belongs to the areas of high interest. In Ostrava, it is possible to use the offer of various facilities for the public. There are offers of the University of the Third Age in the field of art and culture, for example, the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre organises a series of lectures of the Academy of the Third Age, in the morning, with a discounted admission for seniors."

Question 3: Methods of education
What are methods that are currently used to teach seniors? Are they efficient? Why yes or why not? Would you be interested in learning new methods?

Summary of the discussion:
The following educational methods are mostly used with seniors:

- Frontal education, i.e. a lecture by renowned experts
- Face-to-face learning supported by a virtual classroom, where the seniors can access study materials, other resources and activites, such as tests, questionnaires, surveys, tasks, discussion forums, etc. the platform used is Moodle. The UO has a Moodle instance for seniors at http://setip.osu.cz
- Online lectures were used mainly in the covid period. However, they are also used now when the seniors can attend lectures in person as they are still interested in online lectures. Thus, we offer at least one semester cycle online. This is mostly appreciated by less mobile seniors.
- Seminars with active participation of seniors – primarily language courses and SMART technologies
- Outdoor education in a form of excursions with experts from practice and a lecturer as the main guide and the mentor.

Different forms of training are suitable for different types of courses and the composition of the target group. Combining these forms results in achieving educational effectiveness. Of course, the teachers would be very happy to learn about other teaching methods. They are open to anything new.
Kateřina: "I use lectures with projections, lectures with invited guests-experts, excursions (to cultural, heritage and monument institutions, guided walks), discussions. All these methods have proved to be successful for me. In the case of excursions, I have to make sure that the itinerary is well organised and adapted to the possibilities and size of the group."
Vladimíra: "I would like to learn a new method if it had a more lasting benefit for the trainees."

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Question 4: Seniors' educators

Who is a great seniors' educator? Why? Which competences should such educator have? What support is needed for educators (especially in small CSS sector)? What should we take into account while preparing a training programme for them?

Summary of the discussion:

Teachers should be ready to teach seniors. They should know the basics of gerontology, primarily social gerontology and psychology of ageing. As any pedagogue, even a teacher of seniors should think over how to motivate, demonstrate the topic, engage the students into activities, prepare an interesting, interactive and unusual lesson. Creativity is also important. If the teacher likes to teach, students like to learn. We can illustrate it by the following slogan: "Don't do what you don't like doing!"

The questions above received quite interesting answers, such as:

Martin: "Above all, he should be empathic and patient, full of positive energy because that is the most important thing for seniors.
Since teaching seniors is very exhausting, the educational institution should keep this in mind. It's completely different from teaching at school at all levels (primary, secondary, tertiary)."
Kateřina: "The best teacher should have communication and organisational competencies in addition to content and professional competencies. They should have good rhetorical skills (also due to the possible limitations of the senior group), be able to listen patiently, be interested in the group and lead it.
The essence of a good teacher is their enthusiasm. If it is clear that the teacher enjoys the work, they will find it much easier to attract the audience."
Vladimíra: "I don't think there is a category for a good senior teacher. If a trainer is a good teacher in general, they will be a good teacher for seniors. They must have the expertise, the ability to convey this knowledge in a clear and systematic way, empathy and understanding for the target group."
Jiřina: "Support from the management of an educational institution is crucial for teachers. Senior education is still on the periphery of the mainstream educational institutions, although its importance has increased significantly over the last decade. Support should consist of willingness to contribute partly to the financing of educational activities for seniors as well as to enable teaching in appropriate facilities, taking into account possible physical barriers, especially architectural barriers."
Ondřej: "The support from the educational institution can be purely practical, providing the teacher with suitable lecture halls with the necessary equipment. The timetable of the senior programme is also very important, ideally Monday-Thursday in the afternoon (not in the evening)."

Question 5: Seniors' needs

What do you think are seniors' educational needs (especially in small cities and countryside)? Can we reach them through arts and culture? What sort of barriers should we take into account?

Summary of the discussion:

According to our opinion, educational needs of seniors are:

- Slowing ageing with appropriate study practices
- Memory training (not only through various techniques, but through learning itself)
- Keeping up with the trends and the rest of the population
- Maintaining social contact
- Avoiding exclusion, including digital exclusion
- Creating a state of joy and satisfaction

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- Satisfaction with the learning progress

Meeting the needs listed above can be achieved through education in a variety of areas and topics, not excluding culture and the arts. In the case of arts and culture, learning outside the classroom, e.g. in galleries, museums, theatres, concert halls, cultural and historical sites, etc., is particularly suitable. Therefore, it is not exceptional that these institutions also organise a U3V, i.e. offer specific activities for seniors such as guided concerts, dramaturgical introductions to theatre performances, guided tours, etc.

Kateřina, Ondřej: We see the educational needs of seniors in the theoretical area of learning, where they gain knowledge, understanding of relations and context, but also in the practical area (e.g. through artistic activities), where they create and develop their skills.
It is important for seniors to be able to spend time with their age group and share both the content of the lessons and their lives with their classmates. Courses have the potential to create or nurture friendships that can reach beyond the classroom.
Art and culture bring beauty to people's lives. They should play an important role in programs for seniors.
A barrier to appreciating art is its subjectivity; what one person likes may be disliked by another. In the case of seniors, we rely on historically proven themes that do not provoke controversy (such as some forms of contemporary art) and are, therefore, already part of the art-cultural canon.

Question 6: Senior tube

We're planning to create a senior tube – an international web portal for seniors within the project. What do you think it should contain? What should we think about when designing it?

Summary of the discussion:

This question was probably the most difficult for the participants. To be able to answer, they would need more information about this activity. They could not imagine the strategy, structure, or practical implementation. The content seemed to them very vague and not well specified. However, in general terms, we can present Ms. Jiřina's comment.

Jiřina: I think that such a portal would certainly be useful. Seniors like to discover the culture of other countries through the Internet, especially if they cannot travel themselves any more or are not sufficiently linguistically equipped. This linguistic 'accessibility' could be a potential problem for the portal if the material is not translated into national languages. Not all seniors are fluent at English. If it also contained various interactive elements, forums, useful links, etc., it would certainly find its supporters. And it could certainly be used in education. In any case, it would also help to increase the possibilities of seniors to communicate with each other."

To serve seniors across countries, the portal should have a clear structure, clearly defined functionalities, structured topics of interest. For instance, *historical monuments* in each country, filtering by several criteria, focus on educational activities at these monuments, environment for communication and the possibility to insert own suggestions. Or *music* in individual countries, active participation of seniors in musical productions, practical demonstrations, etc.

However, I think that the greatest benefit would be concrete results of the work of the seniors. What they create can serve others. Maybe just for inspiration and awareness: I can do it, too.

Question 7: Surprising results

Question of your choice: Choose at least one result of the online survey among seniors and/or educators that surprised you and ask your interviewees what they think about it, why respondents answered this way.

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Summary of the discussion:

Having carefully studied the results of the questionnaire survey, I was surprised by the following fact: We asked a total of 65 seniors whether they had an Internet connection. All of them, i.e. 100%, answered YES. What do you think?
Vladimíra: "Connecting households to the Internet is now common in the Czech Republic, even in small towns and villages."
Kateřina: "The addressed seniors are mostly U3V participants at the University of Ostrava. The University of Ostrava is both a regional and national leader in distance education, including distance education for seniors. Seniors have got used to studying via Moodle, they simply need the internet at home."
Martin: "The systematic education of seniors in SMART technologies for about 10 years has meant that seniors can no longer imagine their lives without SMART technologies and the Internet."
Jiřina: "When I started attending the U3V at the University of Ostrava, I was systematically prepared for the fact that without the Internet it would be impossible. I bought the technology, internet connection and I use everything every day. I think that all my classmates feel the same."
Ondřej: "Whatever topic we offer to study, the Internet always helps us with resources, materials, communication, and interactivity. Seniors know this, they take it for granted."

4.3 Conclusions

Please, provide a short paragraph concluding the results of the focus group interview. How did the interview broaden your knowledge about the situation? What new information has it revealed compared to the online survey?

The interview was organised in 3 phases: email communication, online meeting, and face-to-face meeting. 2 seniors and 3 teachers participated in the whole process, i.e. until the face-to-face meeting. First of all, we realised where our strengths and weaknesses are. The strengths are in the seniors' readiness to use SMART technologies in education (and not only in education), including the Internet. Furthermore, we have a large number of highly erudite trainers who are prepared both professionally, pedagogically, and technically. We have established facilities that allow us to offer full-time, distance and combined study programs for seniors. We have tailor-made courses or courses based on the expectations of seniors.

We see weaknesses mainly in the fact that we still offer a small number of activities aimed at the seniors' creativity. The majority of the courses in the area of culture and arts tend to focus on history and passive participation in cultural and artistic events. We would like to expand our offer with courses focused on active activities such as: painting, drawing, arts and crafts, singing, music, dancing, etc. However, we are aware that this will not be easy and will take several years of effort. Hopefully, this project will help us start the whole process.

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