Creative educators of digital arts & culture

(Creative Seniors)

Project number:

Funding programme: ERASMUS+ Key Action 2: Strategic Partnership for Adult education.

National report

RUTIS

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1. Introduction

1.1 Objective and scope of the research

The goal of the research is to better understand the reality and perspectives, both of seniors and educators/trainers, about their daily lives, about how they spend their time, what kind of activities and methodologies they like most and usually use, what topics they are most curious about, what skills they have in using new technologies and the internet, as well as understanding what changes the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the training and learning processes, among others.

Listening to and understanding the opinions of the project's target group will allow us to be more assertive in the construction of the training materials and methodologies, thus ensuring a greater probability of success in their use and general satisfaction of the target audience.

1.2 Methodology

Desk research:

The research was organized by the Network of Third Age Universities - *Associação Rede das Universidades da Terceira Idade* - (RUTIS), in close collaboration with two Master and PhD students, respectively, in the area of gerontology and lifelong learning, who developed the research by consulting several scientific documents, PhD thesis and some bibliographic references (in books and on the Internet), as well as by consulting the websites of official entities, duly recognized in Portugal, which provide statistical data.

Online survey:

The surveys were addressed to the educators and seniors of the Senior University of Fundão (a small Portuguese town in the interior of the country) and were translated into Portuguese language in order to be conveniently administered. Given the time limit to complete this process, 30 seniors and 19 educators responded to these questionnaires. The surveys were forwarded in digital format, but were printed to be distributed to the participants for manual completion.

Focus groups:

The focus group was made up of 5 volunteer teachers from the Senior University of Fundão. The conversations followed a guideline in order to capture possible ideas that would not be so easy to bring out through the previously applied questionnaires. The choice of people in this group was based on the diversity of study areas/ classes taught, as well as the "ease" of contact.

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However, and unfortunately, the results of the focus group slipped in terms of the expected deadlines because the Covid-19 pandemic situation continues to bring challenges and forced last minute internal changes in the University and, as such, people's availability could not be controlled.

However, and even with this delay, it is considered that the objectives were met, bringing more certainty and guidance to the work that will be developed in the project.

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?

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

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?

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

In Portugal, the first International University of the Third Age was founded in 1976, in Lisbon (Teixeira, 2017). However, it is after the 2000s that the Universities of the Third Age gain vitality and geographic dispersion, appearing in the country with different nomenclatures, such as Universities of Maturity and Academies of Culture and Cooperation, most of them being called Seniors Universities (US in the Portuguese acronym and SU in English acronym). The 2015 data reveals the reach of SU in the interior of the country, including small towns (Table 1).

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Table 1 -Location of Portugal's Senior Universities by District, 2015.

Districts	SU (N)
Santarém, Coimbra, Leiria e Castelo Branco	39
Lisboa	32
Beja, Évora, Setúbal e Portalegre	26
Aveiro, Viseu e Guarda	24
Porto	17
Viana do Castelo, Braga, Vila Real e Bragança	16
Faro, Ilhas e Estrangeiro	15

Source: RUTIS, 2016.

A large part of SU are not linked to formal educational institutions and are close to the self-help movement in education for the elderly (Páscoa & Gil, 2019). Thus, SU are created by non-governmental organizations and the third sector, which promote non-formal and informal education for adults and seniors. The entities perform innovative learning practices aligned with the cultural and social context in which they are inserted and configure themselves as transforming agents for social change of seniors facing community problems (Ricardo, 2016).

The SU in the Portuguese context are considered to be spaces that stimulate socialising, creativity and learning for seniors (Páscoa & Gil, 2019). They operate during working hours, during the week, following the school calendar (they open in September/October, close at Christmas, Carnival and Easter and close in June/July), with varied disciplines of arts activities, computer science, sports, social sciences and humanities, citizenship and among others. Most subjects are common to all universities, with the number varying depending on levels of depth, availability of volunteer educators, and types of materials available (RUTIS, 2016).

The coordination of courses and free courses in SU are organized by volunteer members, maintained by the non-governmental organizations in partnership with other public and private institutions, such as city councils, regional and local entities, associations, foundations, universities, research centers, private social solidarity institutions (*IPSS*), and companies - as shown in Table 2.

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Table 2 - Type of bond of the Senior Universities in Portugal in the years 2002 to 2012.

Type of Bond	2002 (n=51)	2005 (n=66)	2008 (n=102)	2011 (n=172)	2012 (n=189)
SU associated with another institution	70%	75%	80%	90%	93%
Autonomous SU	30%	25%	20%	10%	7%

Source: RUTIS, 2016.

Such partnerships help with administrative maintenance, content for dissemination and expansion of the workshops, as well as recognition of the educational actions promoted by SUs. Although most are integrated into a structure, it does not mean that seniors do not actively participate in the management and organization of activities (RUTIS, 2016).

In addition to the disciplines, SU develops several parallel activities, such as cultural outings, editing magazines, books, and regular publications. Therefore, the educational spaces foster a new social perspective for older people, who are now seen by society as 'subjects of action', beyond the welfare approaches (Pocinho, Lacerda, & Santos, 2015. p.5).

In 2005, the Association Network of Universities of the Third Age (RUTIS) was officially created to promote, unite and represent senior universities. The creation of this network is for the existing universities a focus of agglutination and technical support, as well as providing a series of activities for their students. The most important function at that time was to go to potential promoters (associations, municipalities and informal groups of seniors) who wanted to create new senior universities and provide them with the technical and motivational support they needed for that purpose.

Generally speaking, SU has various purposes and operates in five areas:

1. Social: SU provides its participants with a larger network of social contacts; it contributes to seniors having a reason to "get out of the house" and reduces the feeling of isolation and loneliness;
2. Psychological: SU increases the self-esteem of seniors, reduces the sense of uselessness they may develop and helps prevent the onset or worsening of some diseases.
3. Educational: SU provides new knowledge to its students; enables them to share theirs with other people and in other places; enhances seniors' personal skills; contributes to digital inclusion and improves their literacy.

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4. Health: SU significantly improves the physical and mental health of its users; it reduces the consumption of medicines; promotes physical activity; improves overall health knowledge and reduces rates of depression and anxiety.
5. Cultural: SU increases the consumption of cultural goods and services by seniors; promotes and disseminates artistic creation; raises cultural knowledge and encourages the use of cultural spaces and services.

According to RUTIS, 249 Academies and Senior Universities served more than 35,000 Portuguese students aged 50 and over in 2015, with the offer of 4,300 subjects taught mainly by volunteer teachers (92%) (RUTIS, 2016). Recent data signal the total of 368 SU enrolled in RUTIS with, approximately, 61,000 students enrolled and more than 7,200 volunteer teachers (Jacob, 2020).

The increase in the number of participants observed in these educational programmes accompanies the demographic transition. It is noteworthy that in the countries of the European Union, people aged 65 and over in 2018 represented one fifth of the total population (19.7%), with 101.1 million elderly people. Demographic projections indicate that the elderly will represent 28.5% in 2050, reaching 149.2 million people in the European Union. In Portugal, 3,738,808 people are aged 55 or over, equivalent to 36.3% of the total population of 10,298,252 inhabitants (08 October 2021, PORDATA). Statistical projections signal that this population group will total 47.1% of the total Portuguese population (Eurostat, 2019).

The political support to the activities developed in the SU occurred in 2016, with the publication of the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 76/2016 (Diário da República, 29 November, 1st series, No. 229). By this Resolution, US's are recognised as environments that directly impact on the improvement of the quality of life, well-being and social insertion of people aged 50 years and over, both from an individual and collective point of view, as "the stimuli to the capacity of learning and participation can contribute to society distancing itself from some stereotypes and negative images attributed to ageing and old age" (Council of Ministers Resolution no 76, 2016). In its text, this Resolution states:

> 1 — Recognise the importance of the academies known as "senior universities" as socio-educational responses aimed at creating and regularly promoting activities in the social, cultural, knowledge, and social areas for people aged 50 and over, run by public or private entities, whether profit-making or not.
>
> 2 — To determine that, in the pursuit of that objective, the member of the Government responsible for the area of solidarity and social security

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recognizes and supports the development of activities of the senior universities that aim to: a) Create opportunities that provide for active and healthy aging; b) Provide regular social, social, knowledge, sports, cultural, leisure and scientific activities; c) Encourage lifelong learning and stimulate the exchange of knowledge; d) Promote social inclusion, civic participation and cooperation; e) Prevent isolation, developing social participation.
3 — To support senior universities that provide their users with the following services: a) Theoretical and practical initiatives in various areas of knowledge and expertise; b) Seminars and multidisciplinary courses; c) Cultural outings and trips; d) Recreational and artistic groups; e) Dissemination and information services for seniors; f) Socio-cultural activities in accordance with the users' interests.
4 — Determining that the Association Network of Universities of the Third Age is the entity that frames the senior universities and is a partner for the development of active ageing and social economy policies.
5 — Establishing that the approval of the regulatory norms is made by normative dispatch of the member of the Government responsible for the area of solidarity and social security Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

Several studies have demonstrated the benefits in the lives of the participants who attend US (Mackowicz & Wnek-Gozdek, 2016). After attending educational programs, participants experience greater socialization and perception of a more active life, which suggests benefits for the quality of aging (Teixeira, 2017). In addition, the participation in the PEDs generates impacts in other areas, such as social relationships, the learning process, and the promotion of a more active life (Santos, Lopes, and Lobão, 2018). Other studies highlight an improvement in the physical and mental health status, a decrease in feelings of loneliness and depression, and a reduction in the consumption of medication for anxiety (Jacob, Lisa, & Pocinho, 2019; Ricardo, 2016).

Gradually, an increase in the development of online activities by Portuguese SU has been observed, mainly, during the Covid-19 pandemic period. According to the data released by RUTIS (2021a), from the total of 127 Senior Universities investigated, 72% of them developed some kind of online activity. However, senior student participation was around 20% to 30%. This low percentage of senior involvement with virtual learning activities can be explained by the difficulty of students to access digital media and the Internet network, as well as by unfamiliarity or lack of interest in handling digital equipment (RUTIS, 2021b).

Easter and Gil (2017) report that the difficulty in using digital resources causes digital exclusion, even if the elderly population already has contact with different digital tools. The authors point out that the current technological challenges "presuppose a permanent and coordinated action of the education systems, ensuring lifelong learning actions" (p.35), and that the Senior Universities in Portugal have played a positive role in this training over the years, in the face-to-face modality.

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A research developed by Barros et al (2020) pointed out that the main motivations of 67 seniors in attending digital technology courses are related to image and video applications (48%), with the most referenced being Google Photos; social networks (46%), with emphasis on the preference for WhatsApp and Facebook; and applications for the creation of content (33%), especially Word. The authors indicate that the fluency and immersion of seniors regarding the type of technological resource adopted must be considered when evaluating the use of technologies by this audience, going beyond the factor related to age.

Portuguese policies reinforce the need for greater investment in digital skills of the population. The government proposal of "National Initiative in Digital Skills in 2030, Portugal INCoDe.2030" seeks to mobilize efforts of the government and civil society in a joint action of (re) qualification of the human potential, to respond to the training demands of modern society. According to Páscoa and Gil (2017), in the scope of this policy, digital competence is understood as the ability to access digital media and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in order to understand and critically evaluate digitally available content.

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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

The educational proposals for seniors in Portugal take place mostly in SUs, which develop a series of activities that seek to respond to the expectations and educational needs of seniors in the process of lifelong learning.

In addition to these activities, RUTIS and other spaces have developed projects that seek to promote the encounter of seniors with art and culture, through technological resources in the learning proposals to seniors.

However, there are also other initiatives, from other entities that can serve as inspiration. Table 3 demonstrates some examples of these initiatives.

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Table 3 - Examples of initiatives in teaching seniors.

N	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
01	Virtual Senior University (2.0) Universidade Sénior Virtual (2.0) / RUTIS	https://www.seniorvirtual.pt/	A platform for free courses: Language courses, IT skills courses, Dance, Lecture series in the social sciences (art, history, literature) and mental health	Seniors aged 50+ (portugueses and brazilians)	Project developed in partnership with the Open University for the Elderly program from the Pontifical Catholic University of Goiás (PUC-Brazil).
02	Projeto En-RED-Versados Clube de Poesia on-line	https://enredversados.wordpress.com	A blog to promote the Portuguese language and poetry, as well as develop ICT skills. The 60+ students share poems and author biographies, video and audio records	Seniors aged 60+ (portugueses and spanish)	Project developed by the Senior University of the University of A Coruña (Spain) in partnership with the 60+ Program of the Polytechnic of Leiria (Portugal)
03	Senior University of Santarém Universidade Sénior de Santarém (UTIS)	https://utisantarem20.wixsite.com/utis/utis-tv	Virtual Photography Exhibition (2021 - 9th Competition, theme: Gardens of Santarém)	General senior citizens	
04	Contemporary Senior University of Porto Universidade Sénior Contemporânea (USC) do Porto	https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5940DDFE6E19CED4	Online Television Channel of the Contemporary Senior University (programs and video classes organized by USC students)	General senior citizens	USC Web TV, first online TV channel to appear in Portugal within the scope of the SU
05	National Tile Museum Museu Nacional do Azulejo	https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/national-azulejo-museum	Online exhibition about the identity art of the tile	General senior citizens	Linked to the project: 'Portugal: Art and Heritage', with virtual access through Google Arts & Culture

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06	Virtual tour of the Tower of Belém Visita virtual à Torre de Belém	https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/tower-of-bel%C3%A9m	Virtual tour of the country's cultural reference architectural ensemble - a monument classified by UNESCO as "Cultural Heritage for All Mankind" in 1983.	General senior citizens	Monument classified by UNESCO as "Cultural Heritage of All Mankind" in 1983. Virtual tour accessed by Google Arts & Culture
07	Atlantic Digital Art Project Projecto Atlântico de Arte Digital (PAAD)	https://www.iac-azores.org/projectos/paad.html	Creation of a network of cooperation and exchange between the distinct regions that form Macaronesia, based on the circulation of its artists who dedicate themselves to creation using the new communication technologies.	General senior citizens	Transnational initiative promoted by six Macaronesian institutions
08	The Landscape Museum O Museu da Paisagem	https://museudapaisagem.pt/	A digitally based museum dedicated to landscape that has as its mission to contribute to the formation of a landscape citizenship, seeking to awaken the critical and participatory sense of all citizens	General senior citizens	Created in 2019, the Landscape Museum is constituted as a non-profit scientific and cultural association, with headquarters at the School of Social Communication of the Polytechnic of Lisbon
09	Digital Room - House of Music Blog Sala Digital - Blog Casa da Música	https://blog.casadamusica.com/category/concertos/	Online streaming of musical concerts promoted by Casa da Música	General senior citizens	

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10	"Staying at home in our company" - National Ballet Company “Ficar em casa na nossa companhia” - Companhia Nacional de Bailado (CNB)	https://www.cnb.pt/41-2/ficar-em-casa-na-nossa-companhia/	CNB's project that brings together a set of online initiatives through the use of digital tools. Access makes it possible to follow the artists' day-to-day activities, develop knowledge about dance and creativity, and watch shows online.	General senior citizens	

2.3 Conclusion

An overall view and conclusions from the desk research

Research on seniors' education in the Portuguese context shows the relevance of the work developed by Senior Universities throughout the country. Most of them are characterized as non-governmental organizations and operate in partnership with other institutions, public or private. There are several learning themes offered by SU, which aim to encourage conviviality, foster social participation and a higher quality of life for seniors.

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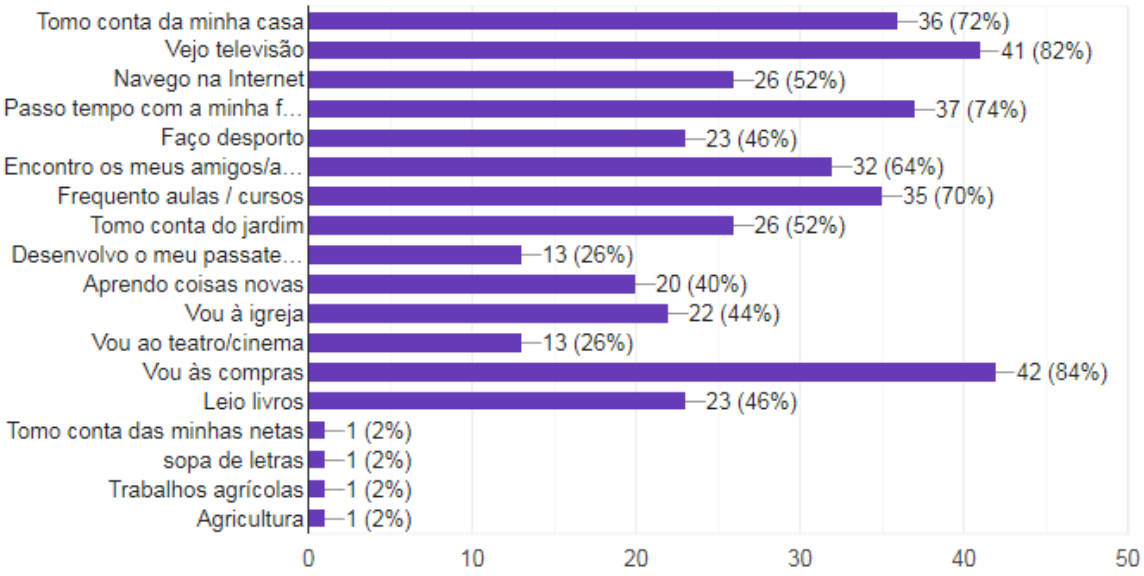
3. Online survey results

3.1. Survey among senior citizens

1. How do you usually spend your free time?

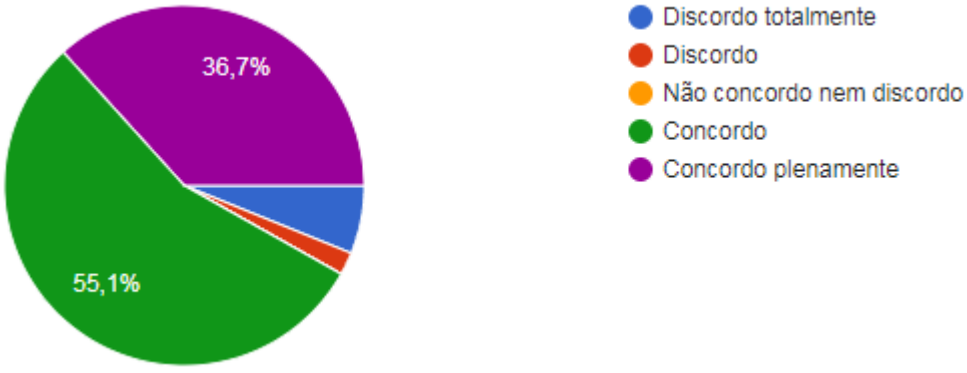
50 responses



The way seniors spend their free time is quite diverse. In this questionnaire question they could mark more than one option, which is why the graph does not total 100%. The most prevalent activities, in order of frequency, were: "go shopping", "watch TV", "spend time with my family", "take care of my house", "attend classes/courses", "meet my friends".

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

49 responses



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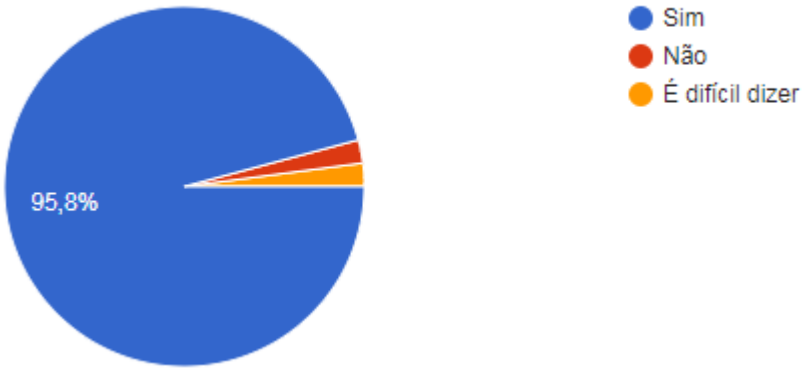
The pandemic situation and government restrictions regarding Covid-19 has changed the way 91,8% (55,1% + 36,7%) of seniors spend their free time. 8,1% (6,1% + 2%) do not agree that the pandemic has changed the way they spend their free time.

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

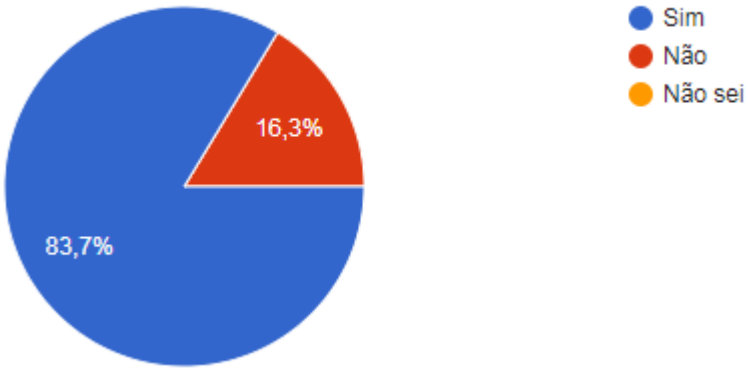
48 responses



95,8% of the survey participants said that they had ever participated in activities or classes dedicated especially to the elderly.

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

49 responses



83,7% of the seniors participating in the survey said that they have the possibility to participate in classes dedicated especially to seniors in the place where they live and 16,3% said that they have no possibility to participate.

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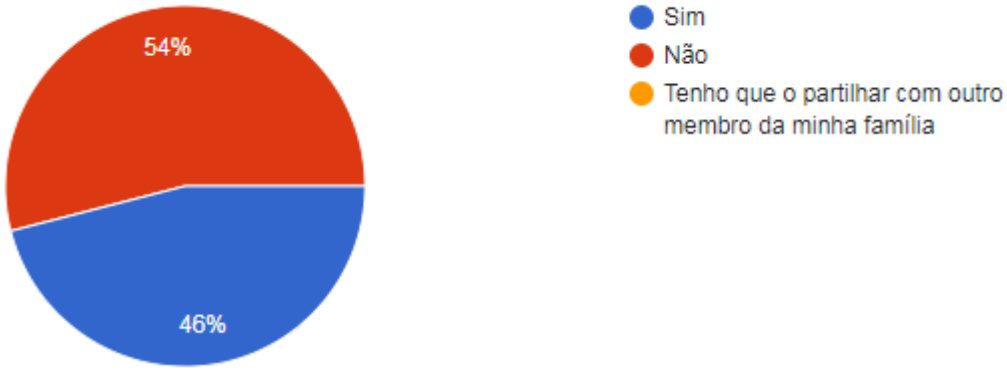
5. **Do you have a PC or laptop on your own?**

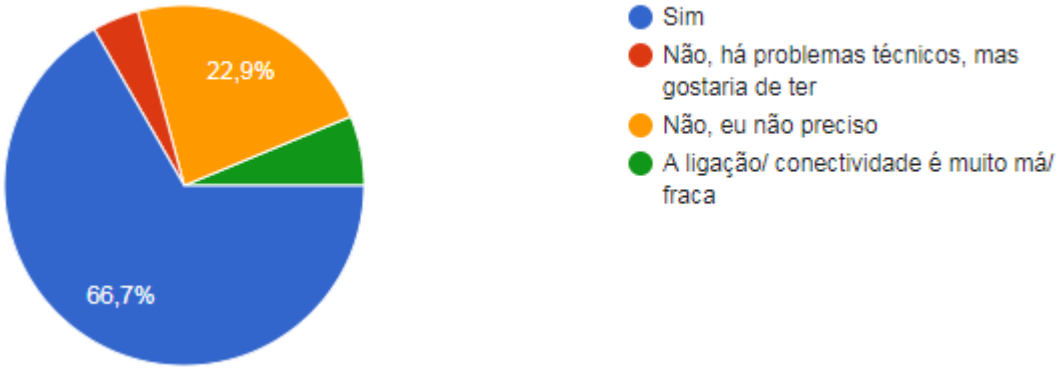
50 responses



54% of seniors said they have a computer or laptop available for their own use and 46% said they do not.

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

48 responses



66,7% of the survey participants said they have internet access at their place of residence. 6,3% said they have internet, but the connection/connectivity is very poor. 22,9% of the respondents consider that they don't need the internet.

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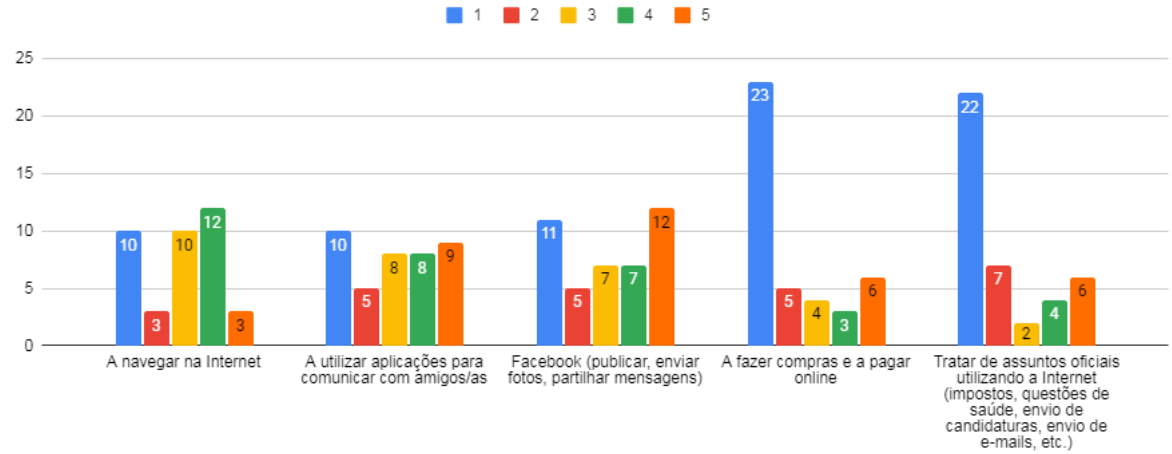
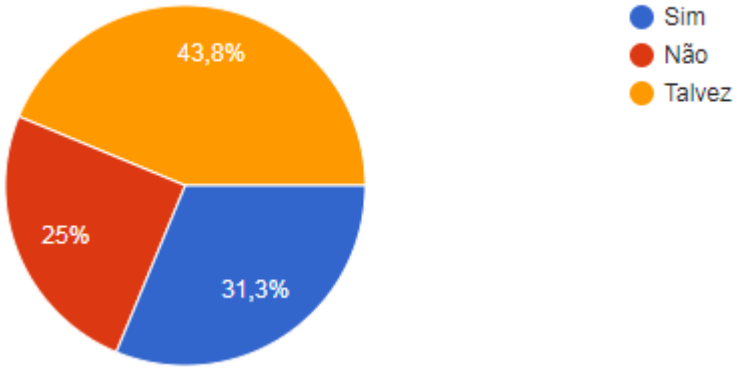
7. **How good are you at: Evaluate your level of competences from 1 to 5, where 1 = can't do it, 5 = very good?**



"Shopping and paying online" and "Dealing with official matters" were the tasks with the lowest level of competence reported by the seniors (23 and 22 respondents in each of them, respectively). The tasks equivalent to "Using applications to communicate with friends" and "Facebook" show varied results of competence levels, with the majority of answers signalled with level 5 "very good/good" by the seniors.

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?**

48 responses



31,3% of the seniors said they would be interested in a training course in creativity and digital arts, i.e., they would like to discover arts available on the Internet and learn how to create their own art with Internet tools.43,8% of the seniors said that they might be interested and 25% answered that they would not be interested.

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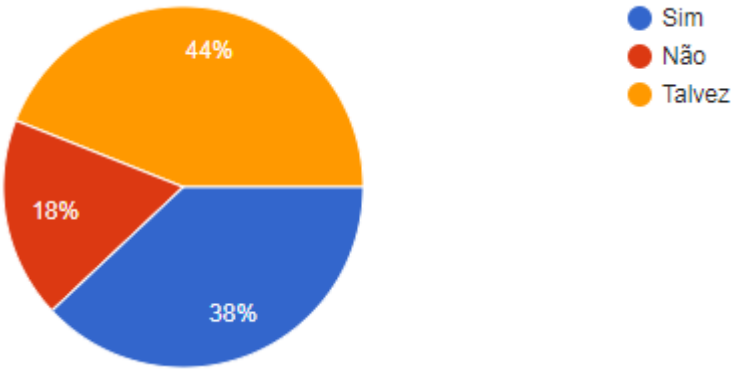
9. Do you think on-line tools could help you to develop your creativity?

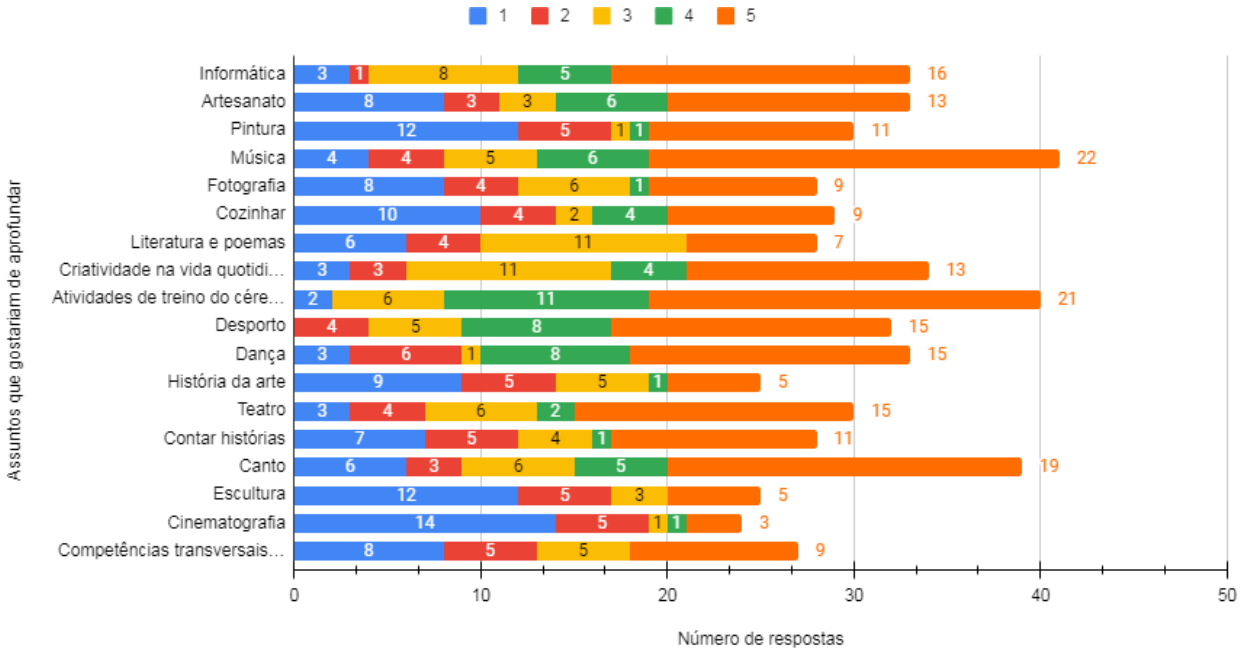
50 responses



38% of the survey respondents consider that online tools could help you develop your creativity.

44% consider that maybe they could help you and 18% answered no.

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



The top four subjects that seniors would like to delve into were: Brain training activities (21 responses), Music and Singing (22, 19 responses each).

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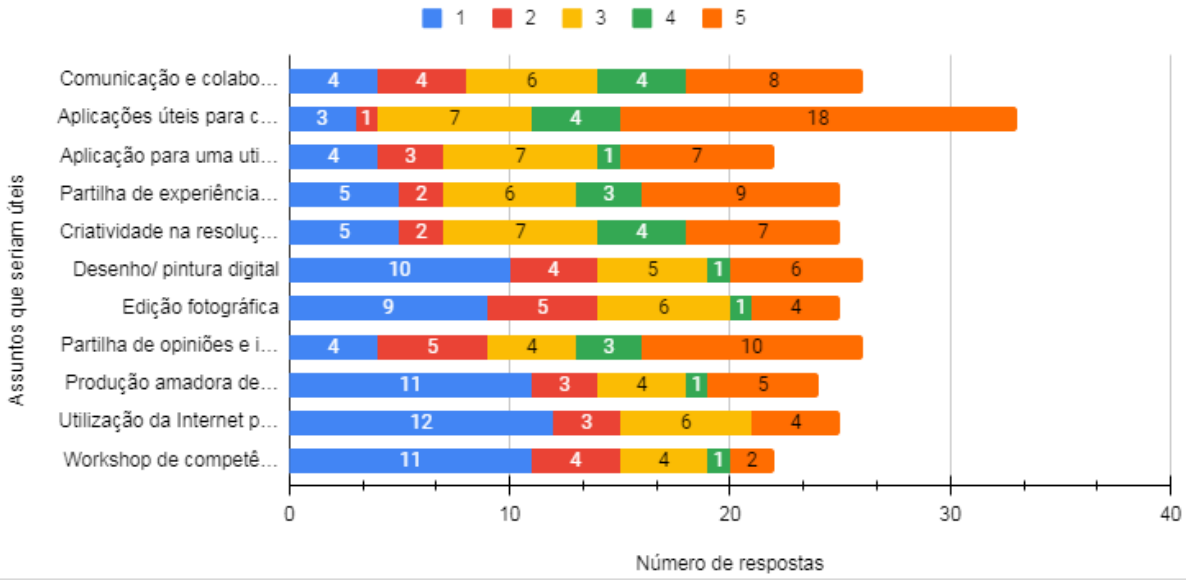
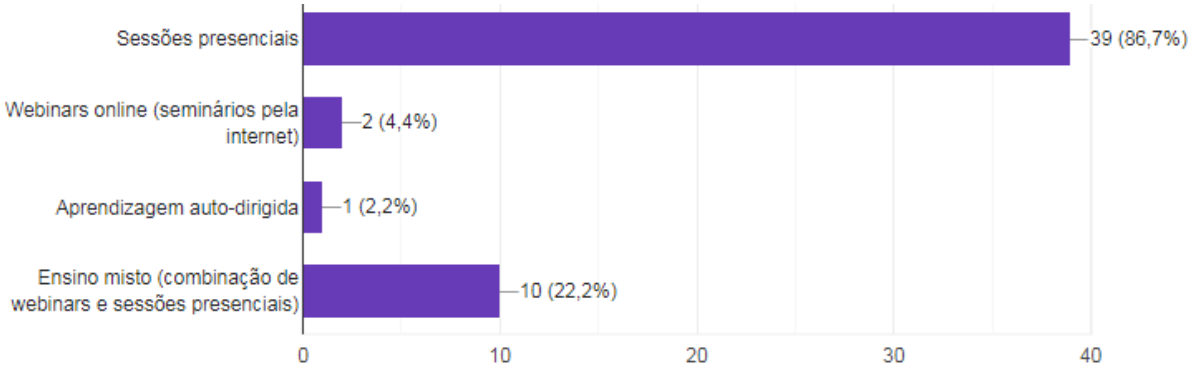
11. Please, evaluate which of the listed topics would be the most useful for you in a Training programme: Culture & creativity in the digital world? (scale from 1 up to 5 where 1 means very useless and 5 very useful)



The subjects considered most useful for seniors were related to "useful applications to communicate with other people" (18 answers) and "sharing opinions and information (citizen involvement)" (10 answers). The topic "Using the Internet for cultural heritage related purposes" was considered less useful, by the seniors.

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

45 responses



Regarding the teaching method that seniors prefer in a training, 86,7% said they prefer face-to-face sessions, 22,2% prefer blended learning (combination of webinars and face-to-face sessions), 4,4% prefer online webinars (webinars) and 2,2% prefer self-directed learning.

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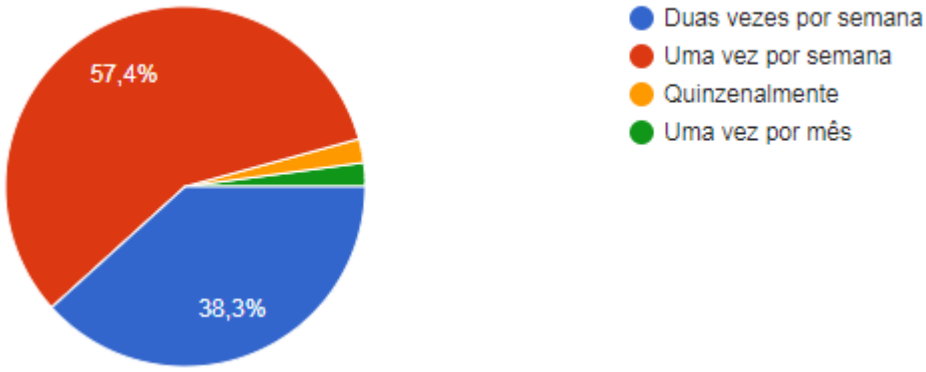
13. If you participate in the training course, how often would you like the sessions to take place?

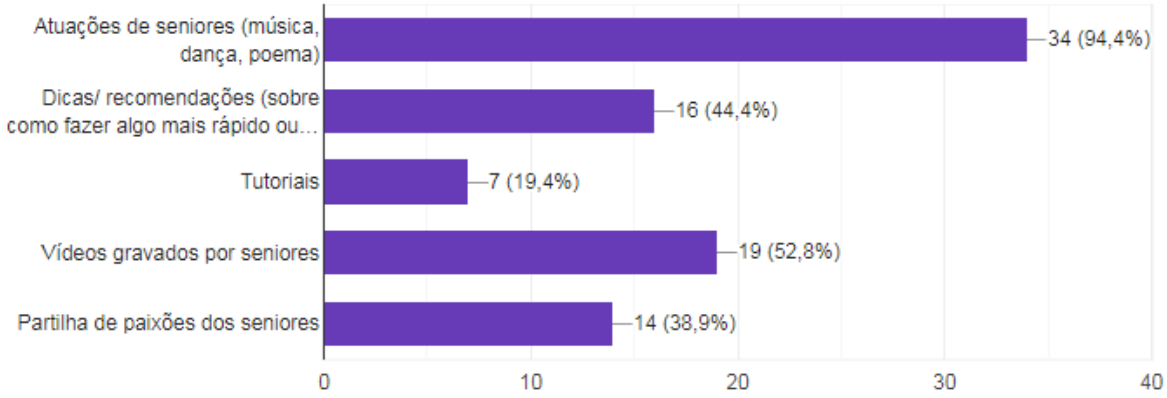
47 responses



In the case of attending the training course, 57,4% would like the sessions to be held once a week. 38,3% said they would like them to be twice a week.

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?

36 responses



On the development of Seniortube - a channel where seniors can share their video recordings, participants would like to find, in order from highest to lowest: performances by seniors (34); tips/recommendations (16), videos recorded by seniors (19), sharing of seniors' passions (14), tutorials (7). In this question they could mark more than one option.

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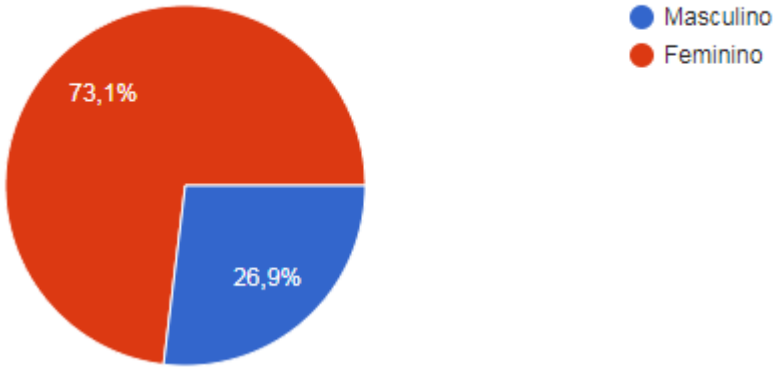
Sociodemographic Data

Gender

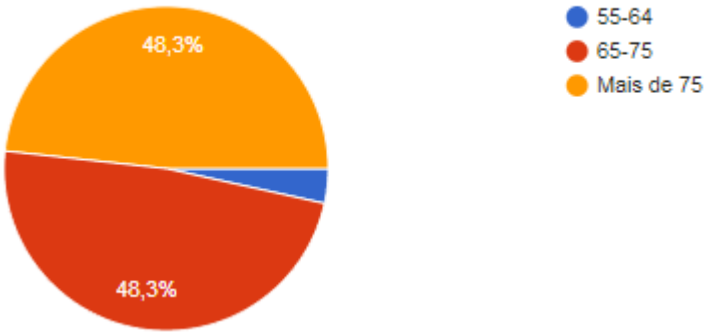
26 responses



Of the 26 participants who answered this question, 73.1% were female and 26.9% were male.

Age

29 responses



Of the 29 participants who answered this question, 48.3% are over 75 years old. 48.3% are between 65 and 75 years old and 3.4% are between 55 and 64 years old.

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Residence

27 responses

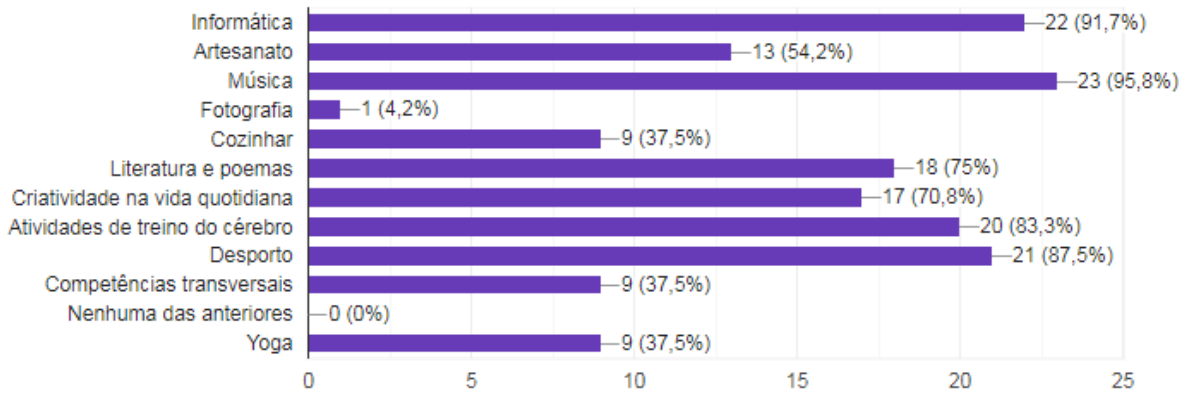
Of the 27 participants who answered the questionnaire 85.2% live in a small town (with up to 20,000 inhabitants) and 14.8% live in a village.

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.*

1. **What activities/classes does your institution/NGO offer to seniors? (you can choose more than one answer)**

24 responses



The main activities/classes offered to seniors are music (95,8%), IT (91.7%), Sport (87.5%) and brain training activities (83,3%). (In this question educators could mark more than one answer option.)

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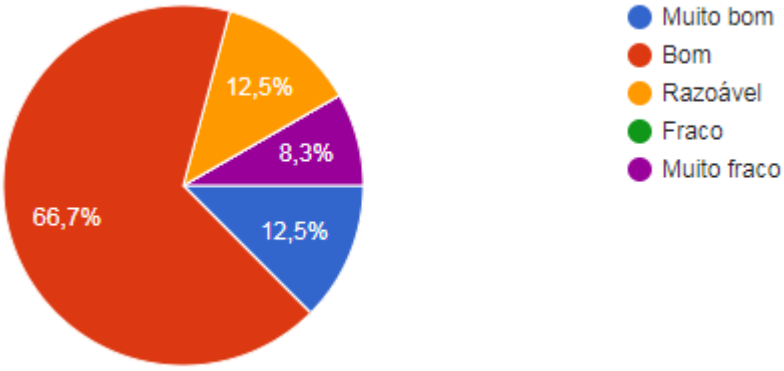
2. The Covid-19 situation has changed the way you work

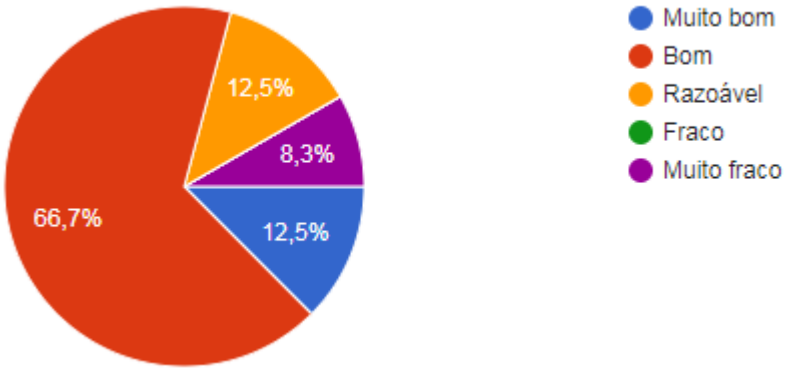
24 responses



According to the educators, 66,7% reported that the Covid-19 pandemic situation has changed their way of working.

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

24 responses



79,2% (66,7% + 12,5%) of educators reported obtaining a good level of competence to teach online. 12,5% obtaining a reasonable level and 8,3% a very weak level.

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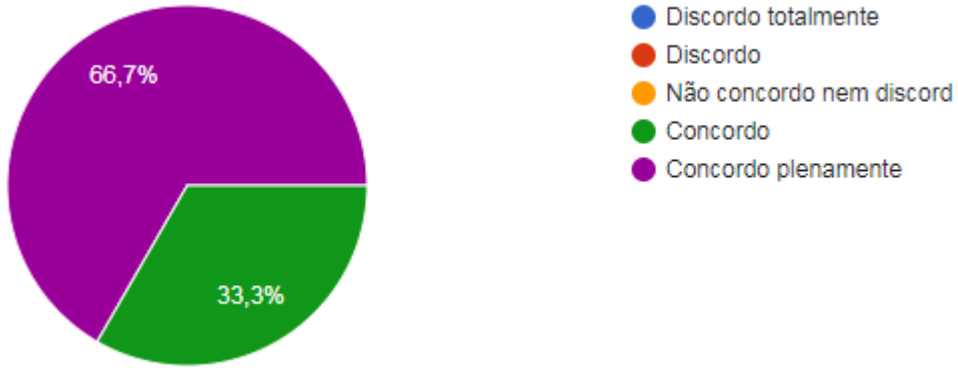
4. Local seniores are eager to take part in activities offered by our institution/NGO

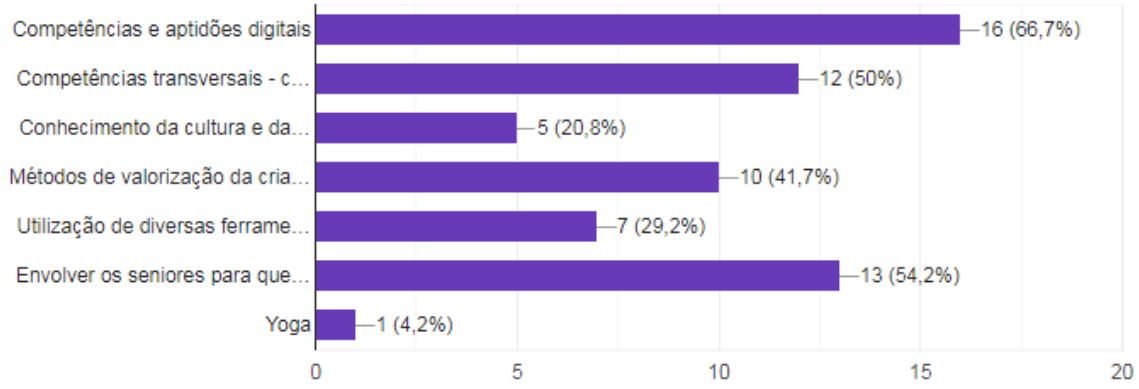
24 responses



66,7% of the educators fully agree that the students are eager to participate in the activities developed in the institution. 33,3% agree that the students are eager to participate in the activities developed in the institution.

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

24 responses



The three most important competences that educators would like to develop are related to digital skills and competences (66,7%), engaging seniors to be active in different areas of their interests (54,2%) and soft skills of how to talk to seniors, how to create interesting lessons for them (50%).

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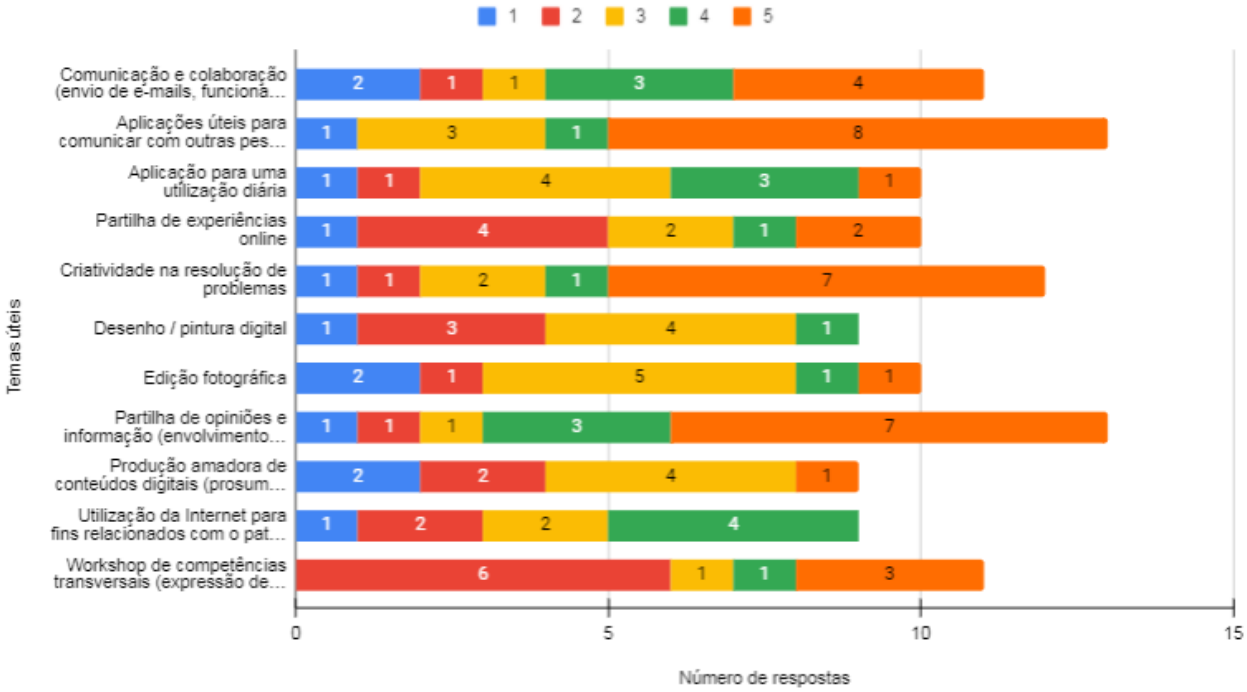
6. What would be the most useful topic for a lesson targeted to seniors?

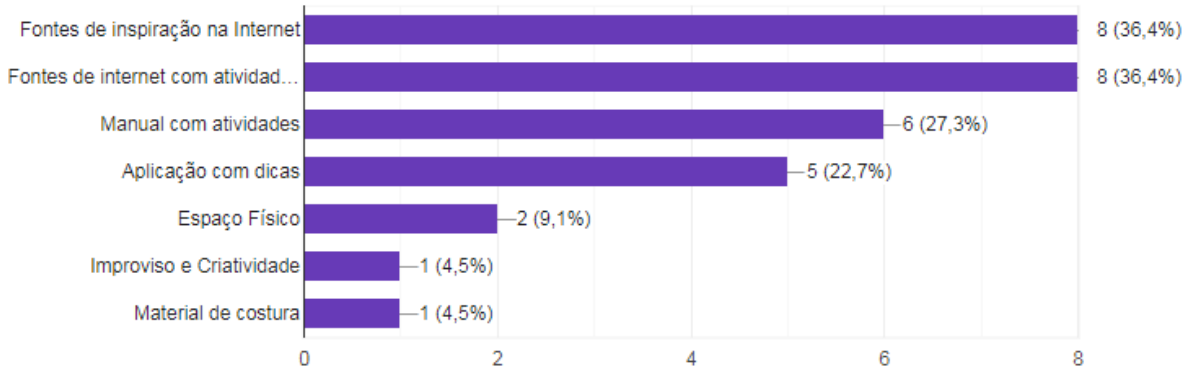
19 responses



The main themes considered most important for a class aimed at seniors were "useful applications to communicate with other people" (08 answers), "Sharing opinions and information (citizen involvement)" (07 answers) and "Creativity in problem solving" (07 answers).

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

22 responses



Among the tools needed to work with seniors, 8 answers referred to internet sources with activities, 8 to inspiration on the internet, 6 to manual with activities, 5 to application with tips and 2 to physical space. In this question educators could mark more than one answer option.

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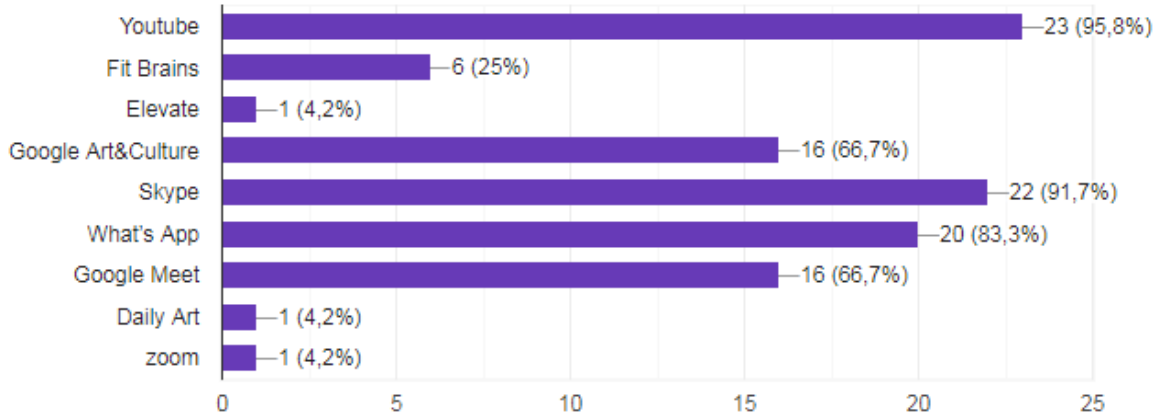
8. What applications/digital tools have you ever heard of? (you can choose more than one answer).

24 responses

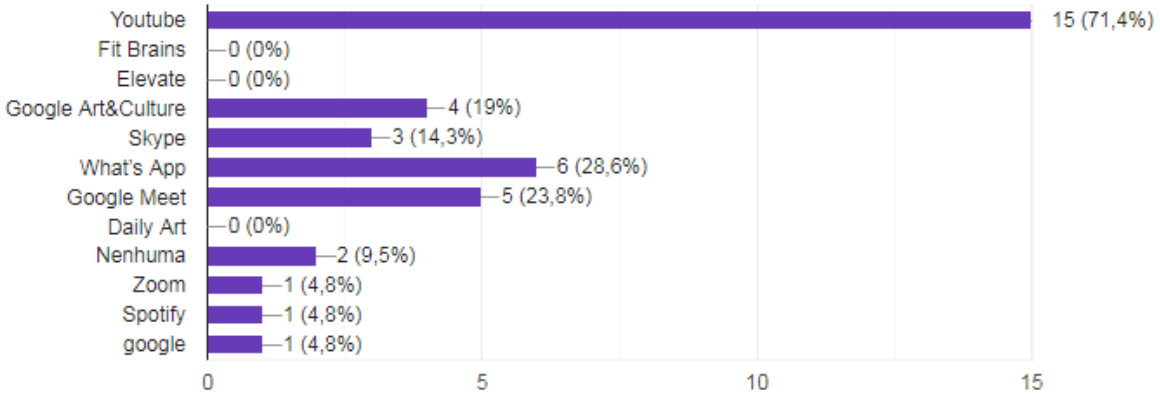


Question 8 asked what digital applications/tools they had heard of.

95,8% of them heard about Youtube; 91,7% about Skype; 83,3% about What'sApp; 66,7% about Google Meet; 66,7% about Google Art&Culture; 25% about Fit Brains e 4,2% about zoom. (In this question educators could mark more than one answer option.)

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

21 responses



The tool that educators use most during the activities is Youtube, representing 15 of 21 answers (71,4%). Whatsapp were each mentioned in six answers. Google Meet in five answers. Google Art&Culture in four answers and Skype in three answers.

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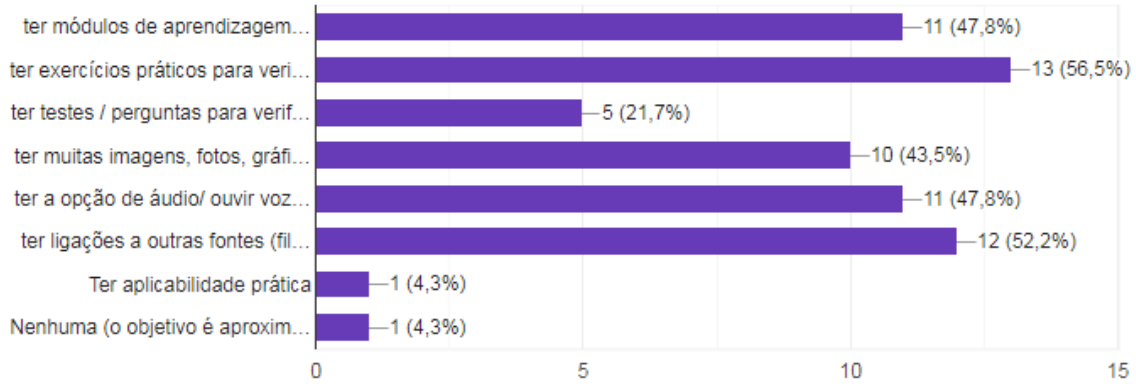
10. What is important for you when you participate in an e-learning course (choose 3 the most important ones):

23 responses



What educators consider most important when taking part in an e-learning (distance learning) course is: having practical exercises to check my progress (56,5%), having links to other sources (films, articles, etc.) (52.2%), having the option of audio/listening to recorded voice (instead of reading text on slides) (47,8%), having lots of images, photos, graphs (43,5%). In this question educators could choose more than one answer option.

Educators' data

Workplace

17 responses

64.7% of the educators reported working in small towns (up to 20,000 inhabitants) and 35.3% in cities of up to 500,000 inhabitants.

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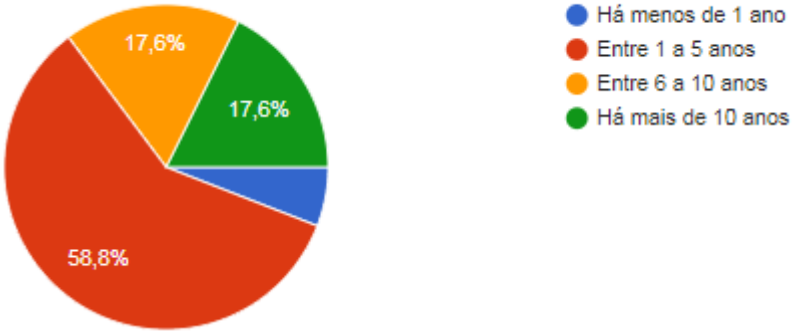
How long have you been working with seniors

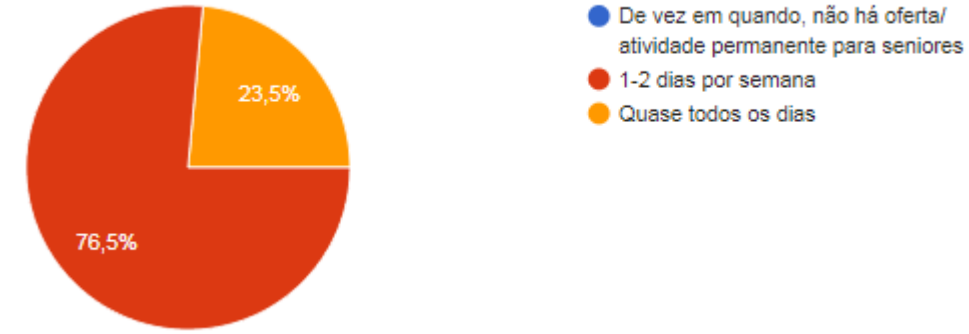
17 responses



Most educators reported working with seniors between 1 to 5 years (58.8%), followed by 6 to 10 years (17.6%) and more than 10 years (17.6%).

How often do you work with seniors?

17 responses



76.5% of the educators reported working with seniors 1 to 2 days a week and 23.5% almost every day.

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3.3 Conclusion

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

Regarding the questionnaires, all of them were filled out manually. We observed that in the questions that required answers in scales, many of them were not filled out correctly by the participants (assigning a value for each item).

The educators highlighted the importance of learning digital skills for their classes with the seniors, in addition to adopting communicative strategies that favor good relationship among them. For the seniors, sharing and convivial relationships were also signaled as important, as well as knowledge about digital applications that could help them, although access to and good communication with the Internet presented themselves as the main problems. The preference for face-to-face sessions as a teaching method indicated by the seniors is in line with the educators' responses.

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.)
1	José Luiz Adriano	Philosofy and Music Teacher	Academia Sénior do Fundão	68 years old. He was born in Paúl, Covilhã. Portuguese Culture and Literature Reasearcher
2	Adelino Pereira	Teacher. Sociologist, Master in Political and Social History. Puppet Theatre Animator.	Academia Sénior do Fundão	60 years old. He was born in Fundão.
3	Elga Correia	Yoga teacher and entrepreneur, she teaches the Senior Yoga class	Academia Sénior do Fundão	47 years old. She was born in the city of Covilhã.
4	Isabel Duarte	Language Teacher, teaches Creative Writing and Theater Group	Academia Sénior do Fundão	45 years old. She was born in Fundão.
5	Pedro Silveira	He teaches the Local Heritage class	Academia Sénior do Fundão	Hes 50 years old, works for Fundão`s Turism and he is from the town of Peraboa (Covilhã)

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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: Teachers/educators in this focus group believe that it is essential to listen to seniors before designing course/class programs, in order to do so according to their needs and interests. They consider that seniors need, in fact, active aging and, for this reason, it is not enough to develop work at the physical level, but also at the mental and emotional levels. As for the COVID-19 pandemic, they have no doubt that everything has changed due to the limitations imposed, drastically reducing the possibilities for learning sharing. For, although there has been an effort to maintain online contacts, many seniors are not ICT literate and/or do not have Internet access in their homes.
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: Teachers believe that it is necessary to value the knowledge and experience of seniors, to encourage and motivate them, and to transmit knowledge about physical and mental health in an integrated manner. They consider that seniors reveal various areas of interest and state that the arts and different areas of culture are of enormous relevance, particularly when they add to or promote critical thinking and aesthetic sense, helping to enhance the vision of reality. They also understand that combining theatre and artistic expressions with ICT can be an added value, as they empower seniors in a logic of lifelong learning.
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: We currently and commonly listen to and value the experiences of seniors and build on their motivations to develop the themes. We raise awareness of the importance of accepting and respecting one's own limitations due to age, such as the use of the voice.

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The preferred methods for teaching older people are interactive dynamics (rather than lectures).

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:

A great educator of seniors will always be able to motivate. In addition to specific training, he or she must have skills especially at the humanistic level. He or she must be sensitive and capable of adapting the way he or she transmits ideas and knowledge. Their communication should be adaptable, capturing and adapting content to the universe of seniors they have in theirs classroom.
The used language should be careful, simple, but not stooping to banal language. Educator should be a positive, fun, motivating, friendly person; and be one among all group. Finally, teachers also consider that they should develop physical activities with the seniors, activities that work on memory, listening skills, balance and concentration.

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:

Regarding barriers, the use of technology is still a challenge for many seniors, who do not know how to use it (correctly). Regarding the use of activities through art and culture, these are fundamental to reach seniors. The selection and implementation of activities should, in turn, take into account and be adapted to the reality of each geographical area, their needs, access or lack of access to information (of that audience) and also take into account the socio-cultural context of seniors, their beliefs, customs, motivations and interests.

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:

The group of interviewees considers the idea of "seniortube" an excellent idea and of unquestionable usefulness. They hope it will be a tool to exchange experiences and promote fun among seniors and, if possible, meet their needs and different realities, making resources accessible to all.

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.

Summary of the discussion:

Nothing to point out.

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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 conversations had with the focus group are in line with the answers to the questionnaires, corroborating the importance that activities through arts and culture represent in the education of older people, especially in more rural areas.
That's why the idea of "seniortube" was very well received, because they see in this tool a possibility to encourage the use of technology (sometimes still seen as something difficult). Sharing what is done by other people in an interactive, playful way and in a logic of knowledge exchange is very well received by teachers and certainly by seniors.
Meeting needs and expectations, valuing knowledge and expertise through culture and the arts will surely be a winning bet.

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