

# Citizen Senior Researcher

Diagnosis of seniors' needs related to participation in lifelong learning



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Project: “Citizen Senior Researchers - raising the competences of senior adults and incorporating them in research and analytical activities under the label of citizen science”

Table of contents

Project description ..... 3

General data ..... 5

Poland..... 14

Czech Republic..... 25

Slovenia ..... 34

Bulgaria ..... 42

Methodology and research tools ..... 49

Summary ..... 54

    Recommendation 1 ..... 54

    Recommendation 2 ..... 54

    Recommendation 3 ..... 54

    Recommendation 4 ..... 55

    Recommendation 5 ..... 55

    Recommendation 6 ..... 55

    Recommendation 7 ..... 55



Potential longer term project`s benefits are following:

- a) promotion of life - long learning among senior adults
- b) activating senior adults by participating in science research projects
- c) popularizing citizen science among science community in countries represented in the project.

To maximize the dissemination of projects results will be organized two multiplier events for participants outside the consortium. Important feature of the intended project is to gather institutions from countries with different experience and achievements in the area of senior adults engagement. It will allow to develop universal solution to universal challenge which is a longevity revolution. Consortium members have an extraordinary opportunity to engage senior adults with science in ways that can benefit both individuals and societies.

# General data

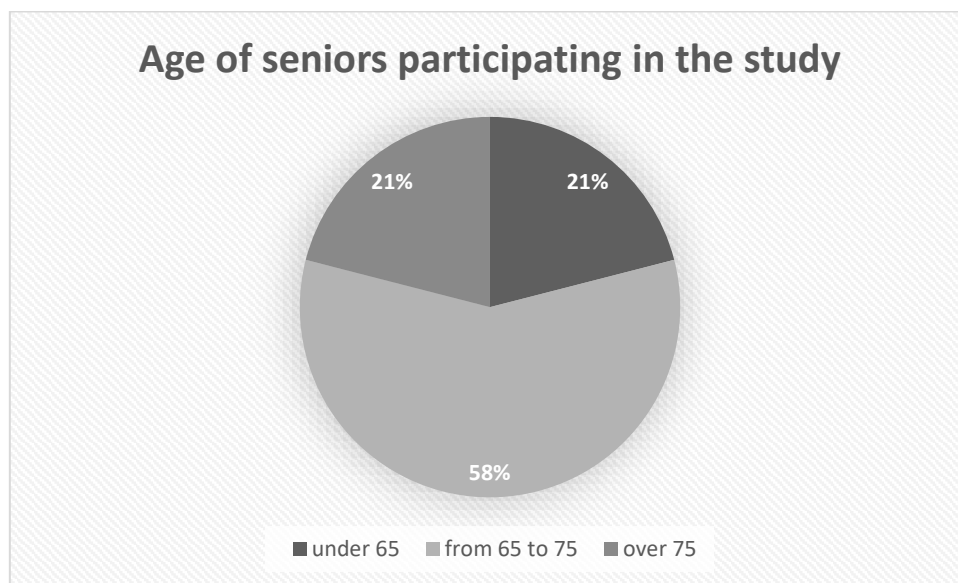


196 research participants

As part of the study, the team collected responses from 196 elderly people:

- 78 from Poland
- 67 from Czech Republic
- 41 from Slovenia
- 10 from Bulgaria

Detailed data for study participants from individual countries will be presented in the further part of the report. Below we present the data and general conclusions for all seniors participating in the study.



*Chart 1. Age of respondents who took part in the survey*

The vast majority of respondents (as much as 58%) are people aged 65 to 75. The other two groups have the same share in the sample - 21% each. This proves that the vast majority of seniors who are to some extent interested in participating in educational projects are at the age that allows them to retire. It should be remembered, however, that retirement is not the same as no work, because the elderly often devote their attention to other family members (mainly children and grandchildren). However, they also want to devote some of their free time to their own development and cultivating their interests.

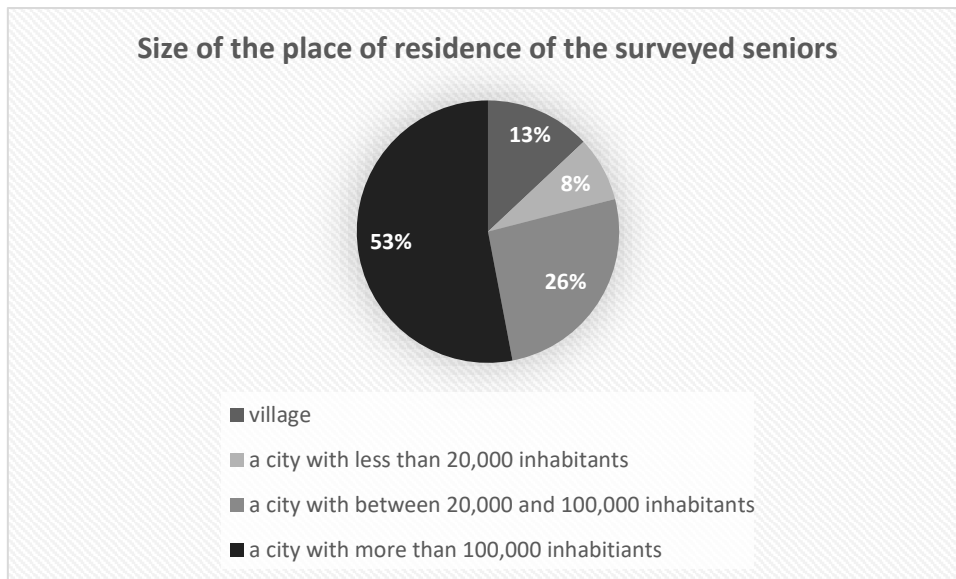


Chart 2. The size of the localities where the surveyed seniors live

The data from the survey show that the majority (53%) of seniors interested in their development live in large cities (over 100,000 inhabitants). The second largest group (26% of respondents) are inhabitants of medium-sized cities (from 20,000 to 100,000 inhabitants). The next group are inhabitants of rural areas (13% of the respondents). The smallest representation (8%) are inhabitants of small towns (up to 20,000 inhabitants).

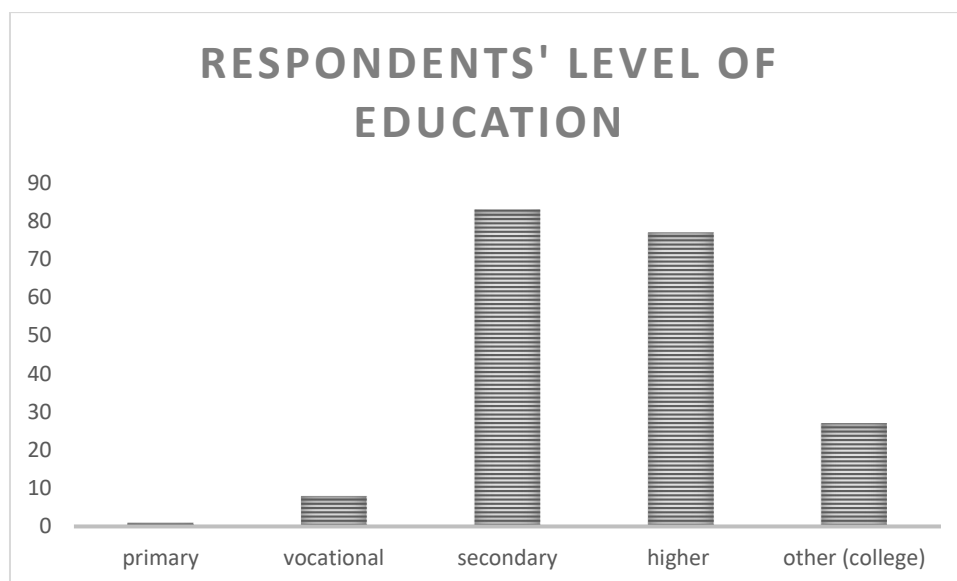


Chart 3. The level of education of seniors participating in the study

Data on the education of the respondents show a significant dominance of better educated people. Most respondents have secondary education, followed by higher education. A large group of respondents (from Slovenia) chose the "other" option and reported that they had finished collage, a non-academic form of vocational training after obtaining a secondary school diploma. Few of the respondents stated that they had vocational education, and a few respondents answered "basic".

Thus, it can be seen that the activities of lifelong learning are of interest mainly to people who, in the earlier stages of life, were also more ambitious about obtaining diplomas. The greater share of seniors with secondary education than with tertiary education is probably due to the fact that in this age group the majority of people in general completed their education at the secondary or post-secondary level. According to a Eurostat survey from 2021, only 21% of Europeans aged 55-74 have a complete university education. In the case of our sample, it is as much as 39% of respondents, which confirms the thesis that the processes of lifelong learning are primarily interested in older, better educated people. It also shows that less educated people, due to their passivity, are excluded from participation in activities increasing knowledge and competences.

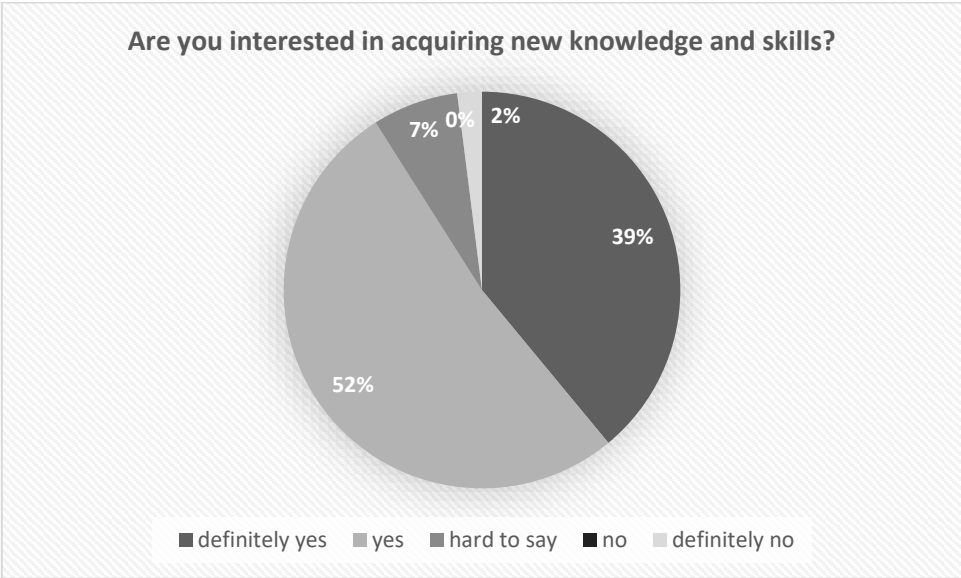


Chart 4. The level of seniors' interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills

The respondents were asked about their attitude to the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. The absolute majority of respondents expressed a positive opinion in this respect - 91% of the respondents stated that they were interested in acquiring new knowledge and skills. Only 7% did not have an opinion in this regard, and 2% of the respondents stated that they were not interested in it.

These results are interesting because it could be assumed that older people would prefer to cultivate their current interests as part of their free time. It can be seen, however, that it is a fairly open group willing to acquire new, interesting information about the world.

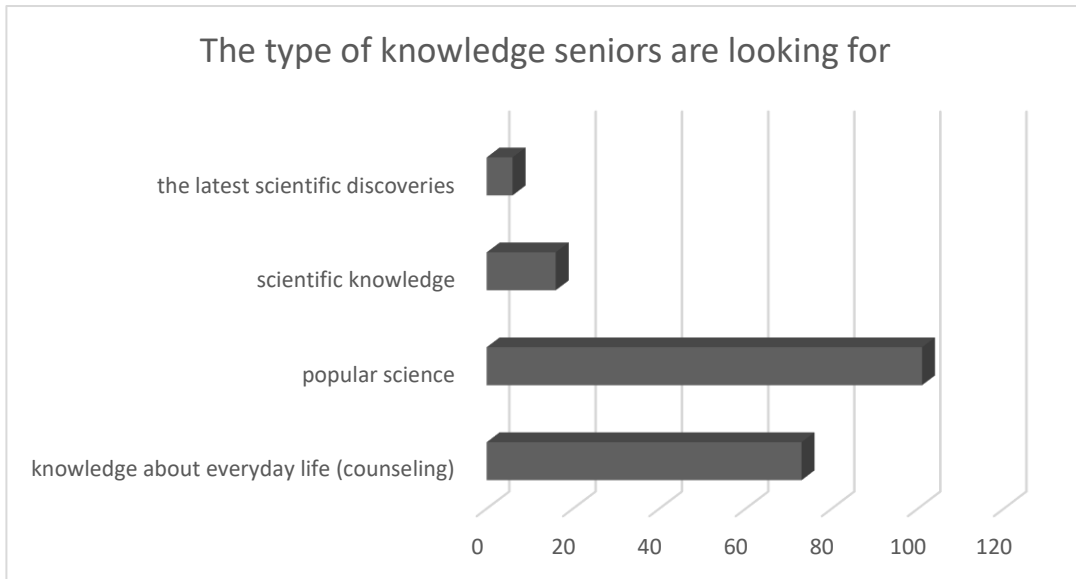


Chart 5. The type of knowledge seniors are looking for in lifelong learning

In order to organize educational processes that will be valuable and interesting, it is necessary to consider what level of knowledge should be passed on to the participants of the classes. Most of the respondents stated that they found popular science news the most interesting. Secondly, they indicated knowledge about everyday life and counseling.

Typically scientific knowledge and information on the latest scientific discoveries are much less popular. This is important information due to the fact that research workers from local universities (doctoral students, assistant professors, and even professors) are often involved in the lifelong learning processes of older people. The level of knowledge cannot be too difficult, specialized and detailed, as the recipients rather expect knowledge that is interesting and at the same time presented in an accessible way.

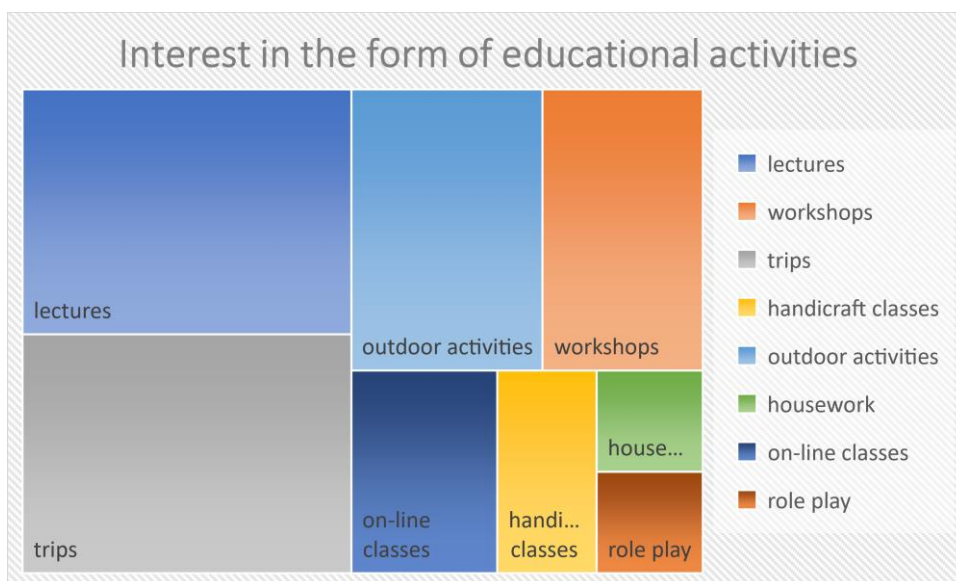


Chart 6. The interest of seniors in educational activities due to the form of their organization

Having knowledge of what kind of knowledge recipients are looking for, you should consider the optimal forms of its transmission. For this purpose, the respondents were asked

to choose educational forms which, in their opinion, are the most interesting and valuable for them. Based on the answers of seniors, four didactic favorites can be selected:

1. Lectures
2. Tours
3. Outdoor activities
4. Workshops

The data presented in Chart 6 shows that older people prefer educational forms related to movement and being outdoors (outdoor trips and activities) and those related to listening (lectures and workshops). It can also be seen that the most popular forms of education are based on learning new information combined with integration with people of a similar age.

Manual classes (handicraft classes) are less popular, but it should be emphasized that artistic classes will also find their target group. Often, when organizing this type of classes, one must first diagnose the current needs on a small scale and consider the logistic possibilities related to the given classes (size of the classroom, number of materials, possibility of the teacher in the context of the size of the group).

On-line classes enjoy moderate interest. This is probably due to the low level of IT competences in the oldest age groups. However, this is still changing and conducting such classes and improving the digital competences of seniors can be an interesting challenge for NGOs and cultural institutions.

Seniors also declare the lowest level of interest in activities involving role plays or situations. Individual homework assigned as part of educational activities was equally disapproved of.

When preparing an educational offer, it is also worth considering the needs of future recipients in terms of the subject matter of the classes. Our research shows that the most popular are classes in 3 thematic areas:

- Culture and art
- Health
- New technologies

Subjects such as literature, cooking and cuisine are slightly less popular. And the least number of respondents reported interest in handicraft and sports activities. It should be emphasized, however, that none of the areas was completely rejected by the elderly. This means that you can reach interested people with each of these offers, and at the same time you cannot expect the entire local seniors community to engage in any type of activity.

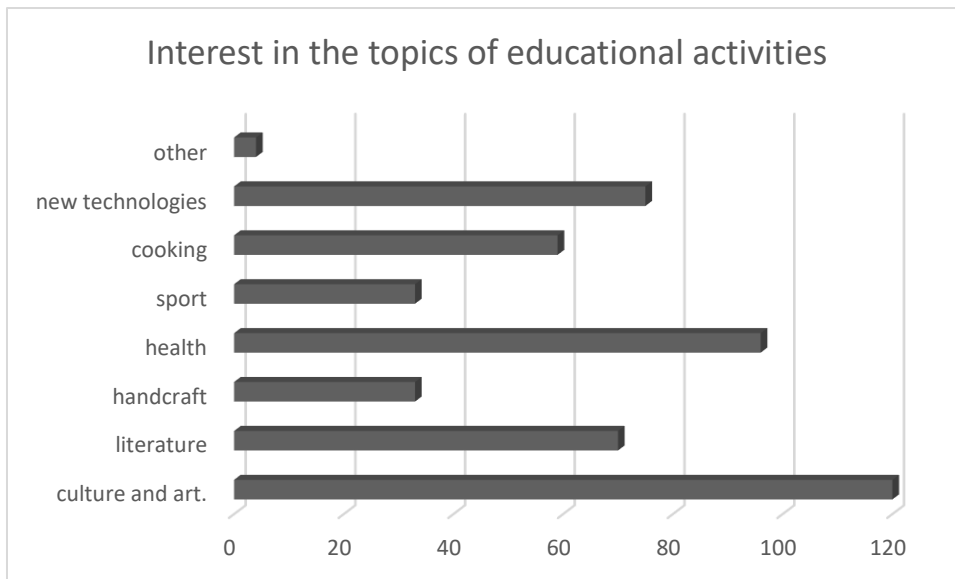


Chart 7. The interest of seniors due to the topics of the educational activities organized

In order to develop the subject of civic science, we decided to ask respondents about their interest in participating in research projects, in particular in social experiments. As many as 63% of respondents expressed interest in participating in such activities. Another 29% said they had no opinion on this topic. Which may mean that by formulating an interesting educational offer combined with research on a sphere that is important for seniors, we can encourage such undecided people to join planned projects. Only 8% of the respondents stated that they were not interested in participating in social experiments.

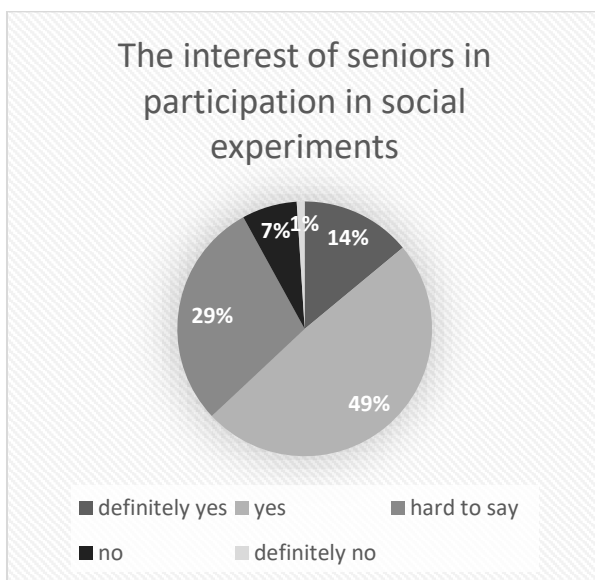


Chart 8. The interest of seniors in participation in social experiments

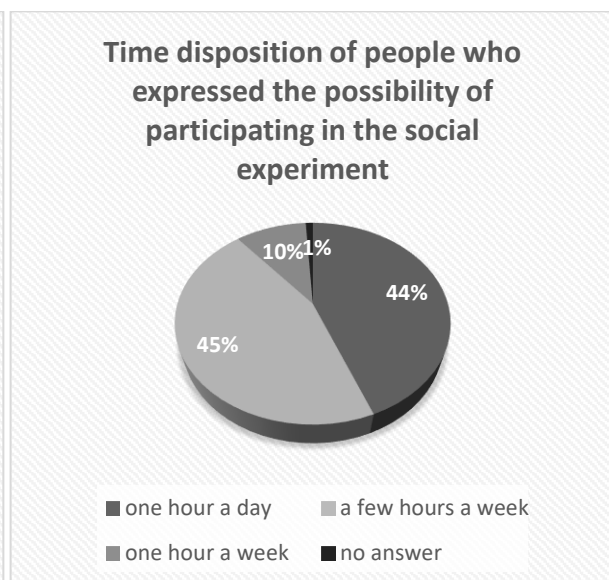


Chart 9. Time schedule of seniors who declared the possibility of participating in social experiments

We already know that seniors do not really want to bring home extra work after school, but organizing some experiments or research processes requires a little more time. People who showed interest in participating in these projects and those who were hesitant were asked to estimate how much time they could spend on participating in future research.

As many as 45% of respondents stated that they can devote up to several hours a week, and 44% of respondents said that they are able to work independently for one hour a week. One hour each day during the experiment could be devoted by up to 10% of respondents. These results provide a wide field for the organization of possible research processes involving seniors, however, it should be taken into account that most people prefer to work less time.

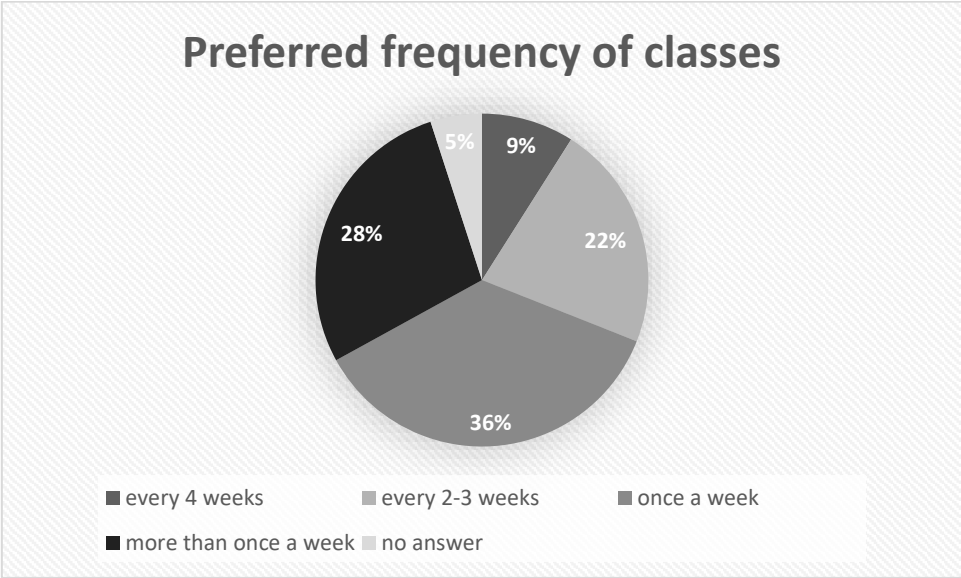


Chart 10. The frequency of classes as part of lifelong learning projects preferred by seniors

In order to properly organize educational activities, it is worth considering the needs of recipients regarding the frequency of meetings. The respondents most often (36%) chose the option "once a week". The second most frequent answer (28%) was "more than once a week". Next in line (22%) was the "every 2-3 weeks" option. Only 9% of respondents said that they would like to meet more or less once a month. 5% of the respondents did not choose any of the answers.

On the basis of these responses, it can be concluded that for older people a fairly important aspect is frequent meeting in the process of lifelong learning. The vast majority (64%) of the respondents believe that project activities should take place at least once a week. It seems that on the one hand, it helps seniors to organize their weekly calendar, and on the other hand, it helps to maintain the continuity of the educational process.

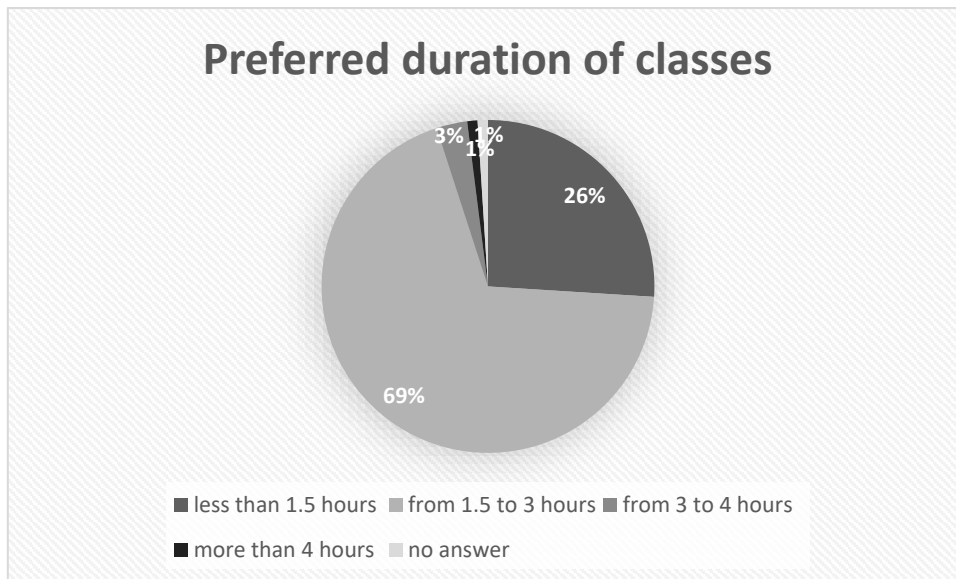


Chart 11. The length of individual classes preferred by seniors as part of lifelong learning projects

Another extremely important aspect is the length of the classes, corresponding to the needs and capabilities of the recipients. The vast majority of respondents (69%) state that the optimal length of classes is between 1.5 and 3 hours. Second in terms of the number of elections (26%) was the "less than 1.5 hours" option. The remaining answers related to classes longer than 3 hours were chosen by only 4% of the respondents, and 1% did not choose any of the answers.

The study shows that seniors prefer activities that are held more often, but one-time meetings cannot be too long. The duration of classes should be selected primarily in terms of the subject and form of classes, and remember to organize breaks, which should not only help you rest, but also integrate the group.

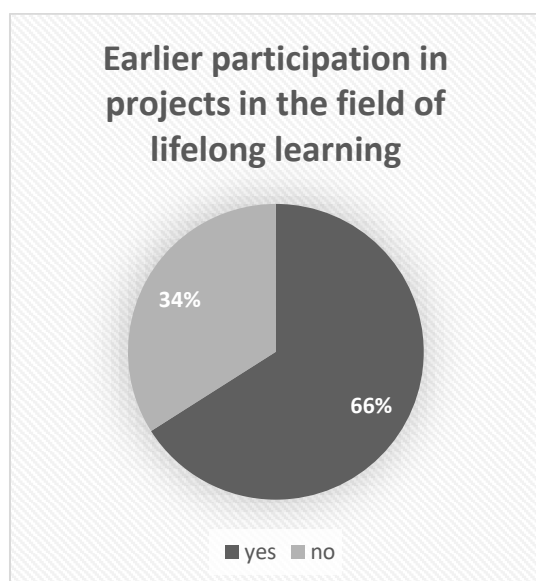


Chart 12. The level of participation of seniors in projects in the field of lifelong education

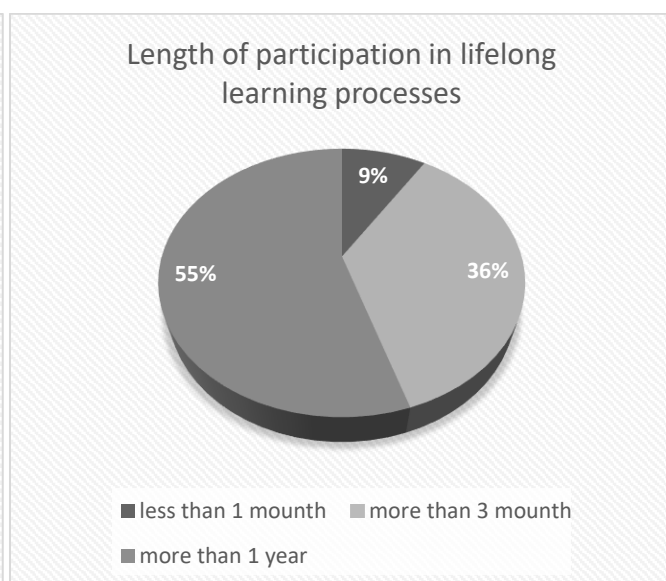


Chart 13. The length of participation in projects in the field of lifelong learning declared by seniors

At the end of the survey, the respondents were asked about their previous experience with lifelong learning. Almost 2/3 of the respondents stated that they had previously participated in various types of educational projects for seniors. Most of them (55%) were processes that lasted at least 1 year, and over 1/3 of the projects lasted over 3 months. Episodic projects lasting less than 1 month accounted for only 9%. This shows that most of the educational processes for seniors are long-term.

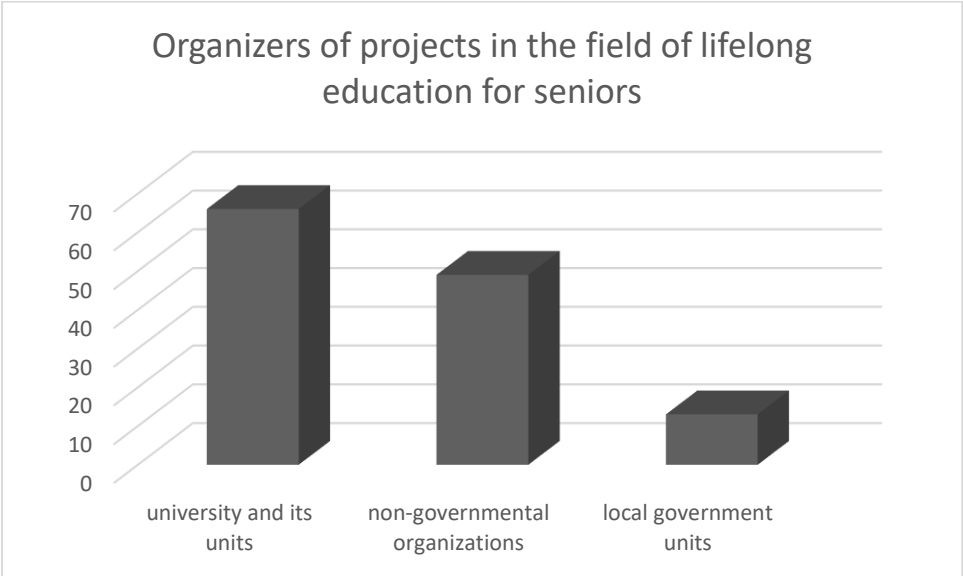


Chart 14. Organizers of lifelong learning projects in which seniors participated

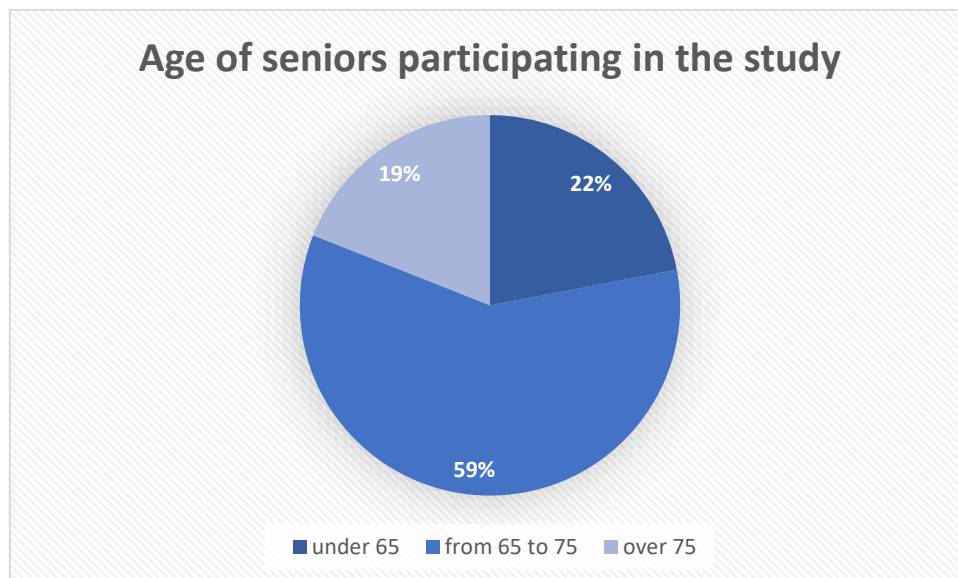
The respondents were also asked which entities organized educational activities in which they participated. Most of them mentioned universities and their units. Not many fewer people said that they took part in projects implemented by non-governmental organizations. The respondents had the least experience in participating in educational projects carried out by institutions related to local government units.

# Poland



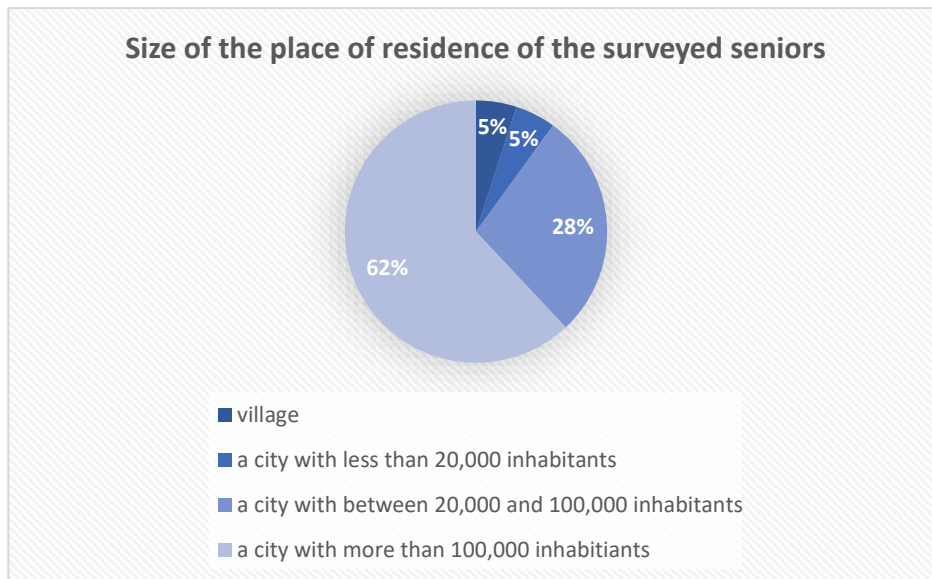
78 research participants

In Poland, the most numerous group of respondents were seniors aged 65 to 75. Such a result should not be surprising, as these are people who have recently reached retirement age (women - 60, men - 65) and are often still active and looking for additional activities. The other two age groups are comparable in terms of size: the youngest 22% and the oldest 19% of the respondents. The younger group certainly includes women who have retired around the age of 60 and younger people who are interested in additional activities in everyday life (meetings for seniors are often attended by people aged 50+ who are economically inactive, stay on pension or retired early for some reason).



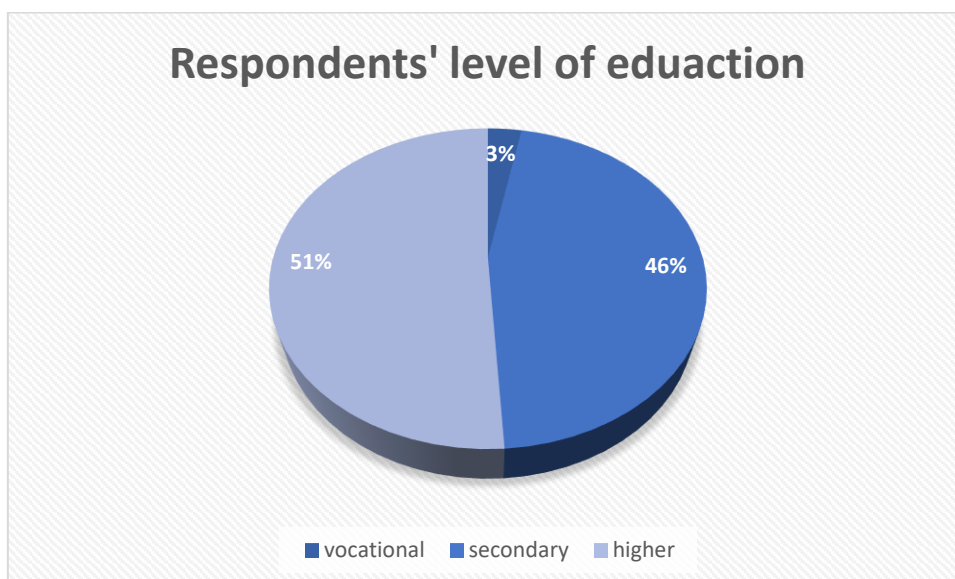
*Chart 15. Age of Polish respondents who took part in the survey*

The sample included mainly middle-sized seniors (28% of respondents) and large cities (62% of respondents). Inhabitants of villages and small towns (less than 20,000 inhabitants) constitute a total of 10% of all respondents. These data show the increased activity of seniors from larger towns. The problem with reaching respondents from smaller towns shows that there is a kind of educational gap in this area and it is worth considering reaching recipients in excluded areas with projects.



*Chart 1. Size of the localities where the surveyed seniors from Poland live*

The respondents, when answering the question about education, had five options to choose from. In the case of seniors from Poland, the sample included only people from three groups with education: vocational (3%), secondary or secondary technical (46%) and higher (51%). These data show that better educated people are particularly interested in the forms of lifelong learning.



*Chart 2. The level of education of seniors from Poland participating in the study*

The respondents were asked about their interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills. The vast majority answered this question in the affirmative - 73 out of 78 people chose the answers "definitely yes" and "yes". Three respondents said it was "hard to say". And two decided that they were not interested in new competences. This shows that older people who have contact with non-governmental organizations and cultural institutions are largely

active and willing to broaden their horizons, and also want to devote their free time to educational activities and improving their competences.



Chart 3. The level of interest of seniors from Poland in acquiring new knowledge and skills

From the point of view of organizations preparing a cultural and educational offer for the elderly, it is important to analyze the preferences of recipients. In general, an important aspect is to adjust the level of information provided to the needs and perceptive abilities of recipients. Our diagnosis shows that the vast majority of Polish respondents seek knowledge about everyday life and counseling (41% of respondents) and popular science knowledge (41% of respondents). People who would like to participate in the processes of lifelong learning are interested in knowledge that is easily assimilated and may be important in their everyday life (often improving their quality of life). They are less interested in typically scientific or academic knowledge (9% of respondents). The study shows that there is also little interest in information on the latest scientific discoveries.

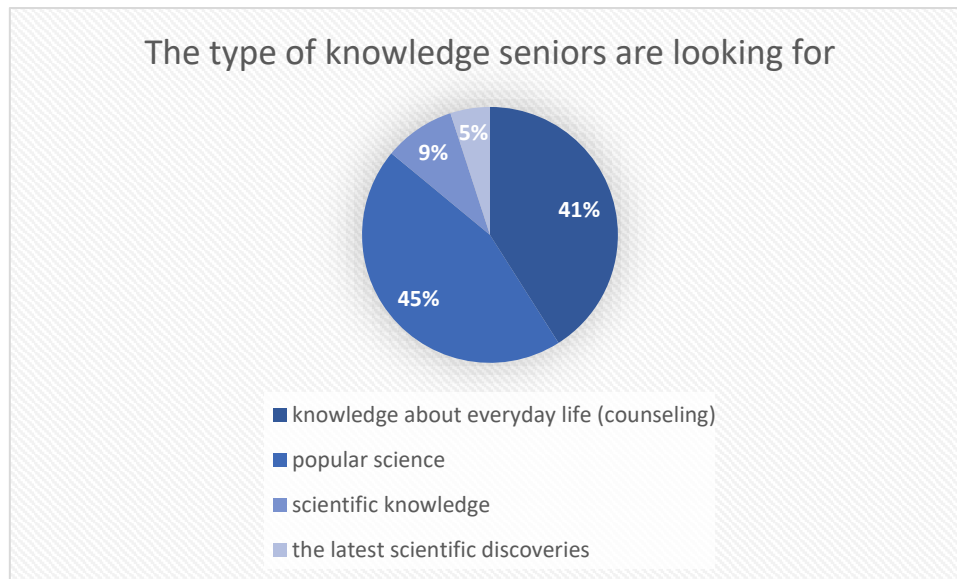


Chart 4. The type of knowledge that Polish seniors are looking for in lifetime learning

Having knowledge of what kind of knowledge recipients are looking for, you should consider the optimal forms of its transmission. For this purpose, the respondents were asked to choose educational forms which, in their opinion, are the most interesting and valuable for them. Based on the answers of seniors, four didactic favorites can be selected:

1. Tours
2. Workshops
3. Lectures
4. Outdoor activities

The data presented in Figure 20 shows that older people prefer educational forms related to movement and being outdoors (outdoor trips and activities) and those related to listening (lectures and workshops). It can also be seen that the most popular forms of education are based on learning new information combined with integration with people of a similar age.

Manual classes (handicraft classes) are less popular, it may be related to reduced manual dexterity of the elderly or worse eyesight. However, it should be emphasized that artistic classes will also find their target group.

On-line classes are definitely the least popular. This is probably due to the low level of IT competences in the oldest age groups in Poland. However, this is still changing and conducting such classes and improving the digital competences of seniors can be an interesting challenge for NGOs and cultural institutions.

Seniors also declare a lower level of interest in activities involving role plays or situations. And the least favorable is individual homework given as part of educational activities.

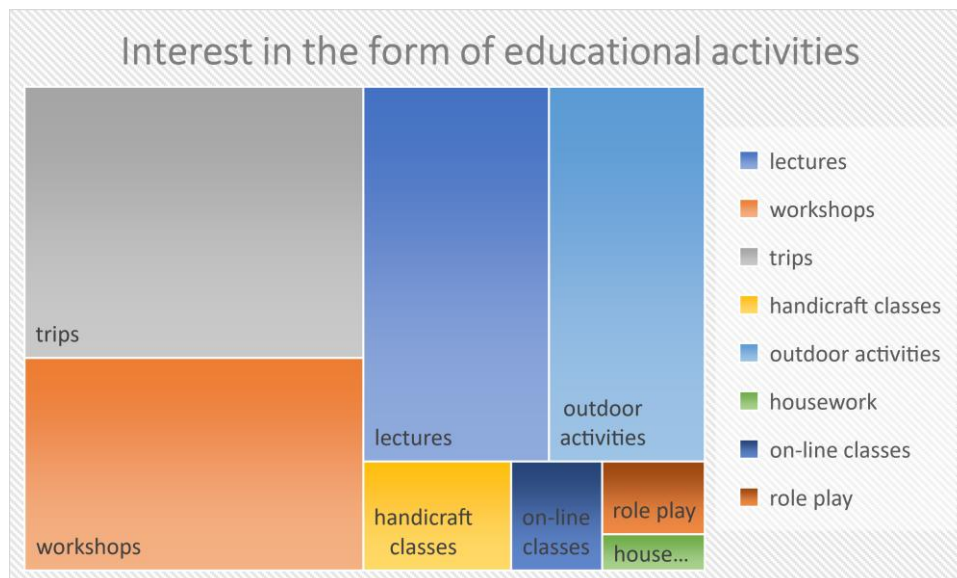


Chart 5. The interest of seniors from Poland in educational activities due to the form of their organization

It is worth looking at the above data through filters regarding the age of the respondents, their education and place of residence. These data may help to better understand the needs of respondents from different socio-demographic backgrounds.

Age of respondents	<65	65-75	>75
lectures	59%	61%	40%
workshops	76%	54%	47%
trips	71%	76%	73%
handicraft classes	0%	17%	13%
outdoor activities	59%	48%	33%
housework	0%	4%	0%
on-line classes	6%	11%	0%
role play	0%	11%	0%

Table 1. The interest of seniors from Poland in the form of educational activities broken down into age groups

The interest in lectures is similar in the group under 65 (59%) and in the group aged 65 to 75 (61%). However, it drops significantly in the oldest age group (only 40%). Similarly, with age, the interest in the workshops decreases: in the youngest age group of seniors it is as high as 76%, then it drops to 54% in the 65-75 age group and reaches only 47% in the oldest age group. The issue of outdoor activities is similar, as the youngest seniors (59%) are most interested in them, those in the intermediate group only 48%, and in the last age group they are valuable only for every third seniors.

Activities in the form of excursions are the most popular, in all groups the level of interest is at a similar level: from 71% to 76% of the respondents.

Other forms of educational activities are less popular. Craft classes in general are not attractive to a group under the age of 65. 19% of respondents show interest in the intermediate group, and only 13% of the oldest ones. Only seniors from the 65-75 age group were interested in homework and role-playing, while online classes were rejected by all seniors over 75 years of age.

The level of education of the respondents	vocational	secondary	higher
lectures	100%	56%	55%
workshops	0%	47%	70%
trips	50%	75%	75%
handicraft classes	50%	17%	8%
outdoor activities	50%	44%	50%
housework	0%	0%	5%
on-line classes	0%	6%	10%
role play	0%	8%	5%

Table 2. The interest of seniors from Poland in the form of educational activities due to the education of the respondent

Along with the increase in the level of education, the interest of older people in such forms of education as workshops and online classes is growing. It is interesting that only people with higher education declared their willingness to carry out individual educational activities as part of homework (5% of the respondents).

The reverse is the case in handicraft classes, where, along with the increase in the level of education, the willingness to participate in this type of activity decreases.

People with vocational education most often participate in lectures, which are passive forms of education, while representatives of other groups value lectures at a similar level (55-56%). Interestingly, they also show a similar level of interest in excursions (75%), which people with vocational education are definitely less interested in (50%).

Domicile	village	<20000	20000-100000	>100000
lectures	25%	50%	36%	69%
workshops	75%	50%	45%	63%
trips	75%	50%	77%	75%
handicraft classes	0%	0%	27%	8%
outdoor activities	75%	75%	59%	38%
housework	0%	0%	0%	4%
on-line classes	0%	0%	5%	10%
role play	0%	0%	9%	6%

Table 3. The interest of seniors from Poland in the form of educational activities depending on the respondent's place of residence

The respondents from small (50%) and large (69%) cities are most interested in participating in the lectures. The workshops are chosen mainly by inhabitants of rural areas (975%) and large cities (63%). In large and medium-sized cities, however, open-air activities are less popular, which would be chosen by ¾ respondents from rural areas and small towns. Only the respondents from medium and large cities mentioned handicraft classes, on-line classes and role plays. Homework seems to be a good way to work only with some seniors in the city of over 100,000 inhabitants.

An important aspect for all organizers of educational activities is to identify thematic areas that are of particular interest to potential recipients. The seniors participating in the

study were asked about the topics of the classes they were most interested in. Among older people from Poland, activities in the field of culture and art (56% of the respondents) as well as health (28% of the respondents) and nutrition (37% of the respondents) were predominant.

Seniors would be definitely the least interested in sports (only 1% of respondents) and the subject of new technologies (3%). The subject of the classes related to literature (6%) and handicraft workshops (6%) are also of little interest.

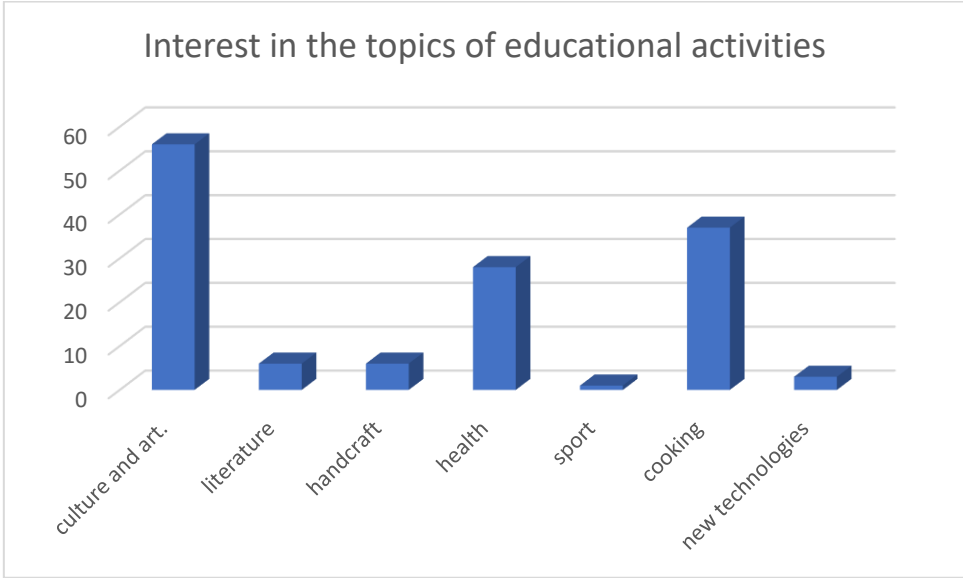


Chart 6. The interest of seniors from Poland due to the topics of the educational activities organized

From the point of view of a civic science project, it seemed important to us to check to what extent elderly people are interested in participating in research or experimental projects at all. As many as 64% of respondents said that they would be interested in participating in a social experiment. Additionally, 20.5% said she was undecided. Only 15.5% of the respondents declared that they were not interested in this form of activity at all.

People who chose the answer "definitely yes", "yes" or "hard to say" to the previous question were asked to declare their time disposition related to the implementation of such a social experiment. Most of the respondents (52%) declared that they could devote one hour a week, slightly fewer people (44%) said that they could engage in even a few hours a week. 4% of respondents would like to engage in everyday research activities.

Considering the above data, it can be concluded that research projects in which elderly people are to participate cannot be too time-consuming. Seniors generally like to engage in various activities, but have a strong sense of autonomy in their free time. As a rule, if they devote themselves to some activity organized by the institution, they want it to have a fixed time frame and take place in a fixed place. They are definitely less interested in independent activities in their own space.

## The interest of seniors in participation in social experiments

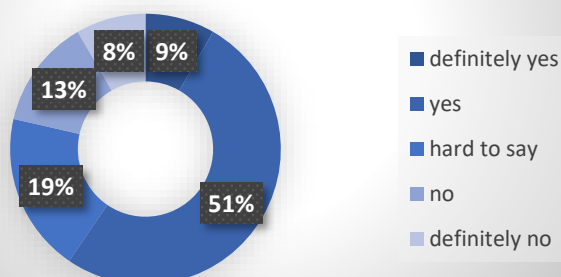


Chart 7. Interest of seniors from Poland in participation in social experiments

## Time disposition of people who expressed the possibility of participating in the social experiment

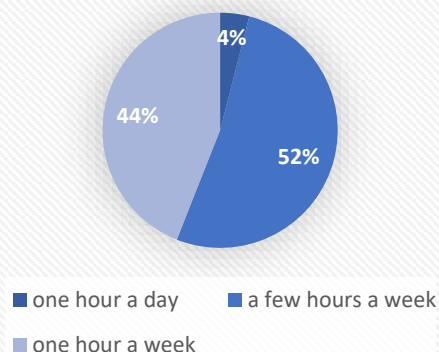


Chart 8. Time schedule of seniors from Poland who declared the possibility of participating in social experiments

## Preferred frequency of classes

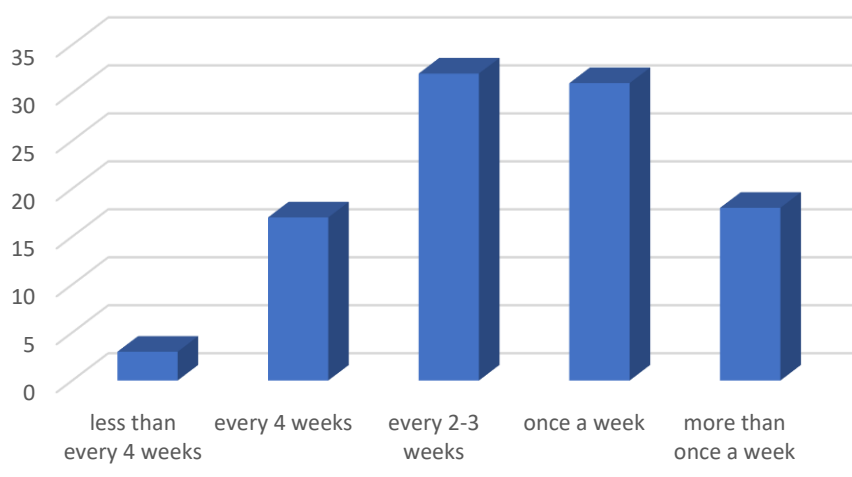


Chart 9. The frequency of classes as part of lifelong learning projects preferred by seniors from Poland

When planning educational activities, it is also worth taking into account the possibilities and preferences of participants as to the duration and frequency of individual classes. Elderly people may seem to have a lot of free time and are not in a hurry. However, this is a misconception as they often have many responsibilities both in their own households and with other family members (they often help their children with everyday matters or look after their grandchildren). Participation in educational or cultural activities is only one of the elements on their calendar.

Older people declare that they most willingly participate in organized classes held every 2-3 weeks (32% of respondents). Classes organized once a week are of similar interest (31% of respondents). However, there are groups of people who would like to meet more than once a week (18%) and groups who say that it is best to meet once a month (17%).

Occasionally (less than once a month) only 3% of the respondents would like to meet during classes.

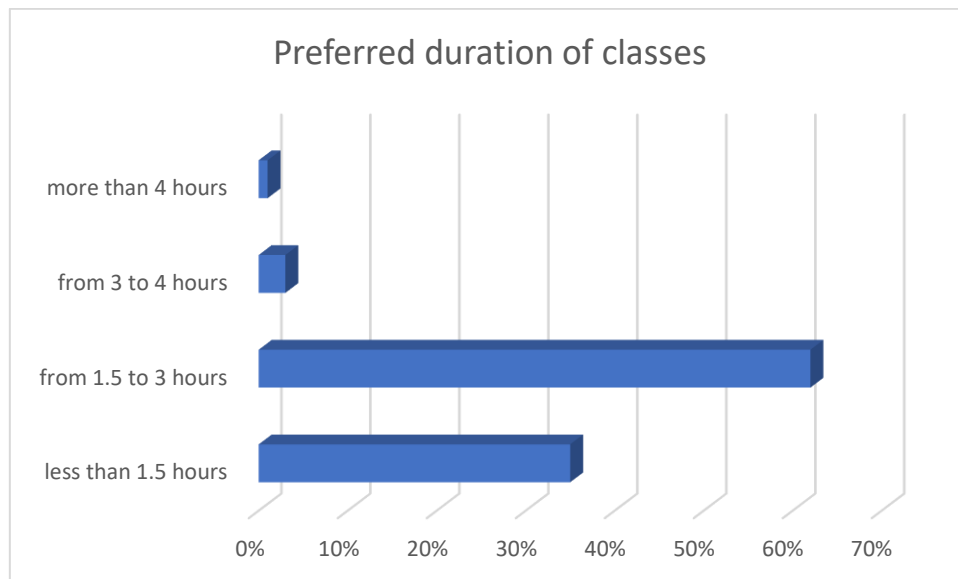


Chart 10. The duration of individual classes as part of lifelong learning projects preferred by seniors from Poland

When asked about the preferred time of classes, the vast majority of seniors consider that the classes cannot be too long. 35% of respondents were in favor of meetings lasting less than 90 minutes, and as many as 62% of respondents were in favor of classes lasting from 90 to 180 minutes. Longer classes are of interest to only 3% of all respondents.

These data show that when organizing meetings for seniors, it must be remembered that they cannot last too long. There are at least two reasons: the elderly, as mentioned earlier, have many daily duties and are often unable to maintain their attention for long hours.

Depending on the nature and subject matter, classes for seniors can be divided into:

- 1) 45-60 minutes
- 2) 90 minutes
- 3) 120-180 minutes

When organizing meetings, it should also be taken into account that the classes must be divided in such a way that you take a break every 45 minutes. During the break, it is also worth taking care of a small snack (coffee, tea, cookies), which favors the integration of participants.

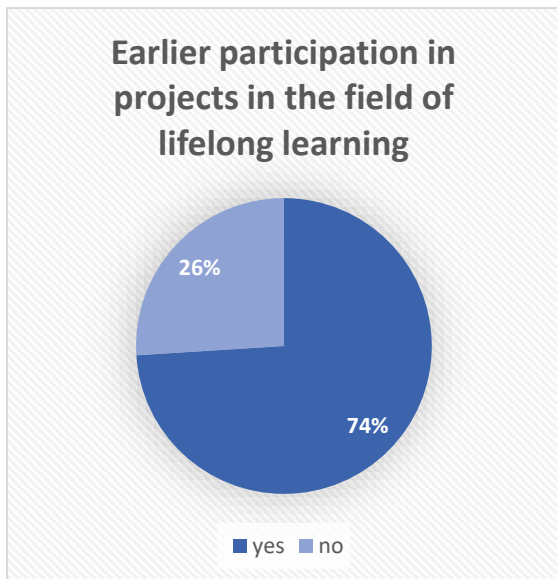


Chart 11. The level of participation of Polish seniors in projects in the field of lifelong education

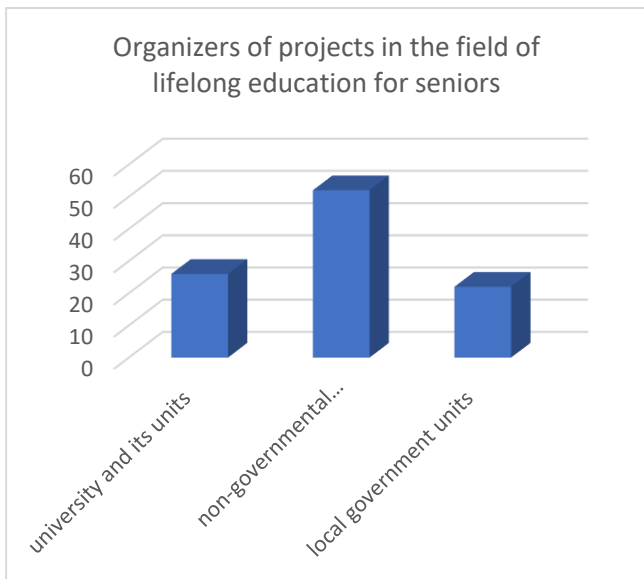


Chart 12. Organizers of lifelong education projects in which seniors from Poland took part

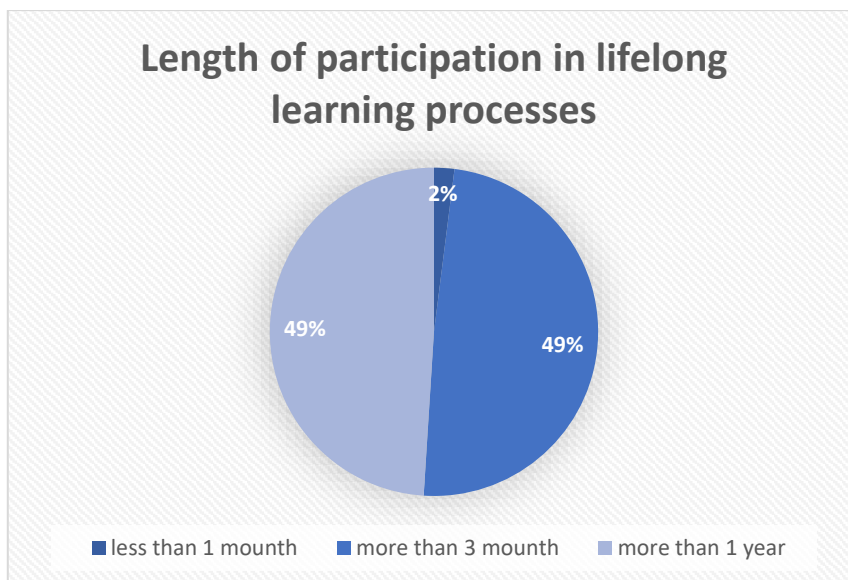


Chart 13. Length of participation in projects in the field of lifelong learning declared by seniors from Poland

The respondents were also asked about their previous experiences with the processes of lifelong learning. As many as 74% of people declared that they had participated in various types of educational projects in the past. However, over a quarter of the respondents did not have such experiences. The respondents who answered yes to this question stated that the majority of previous projects were implemented by non-governmental organizations (52%). To a lesser extent, these were activities organized by universities and their units (26%) and local government units (22%).

On this basis, it can be seen that activities aimed at lifelong education of the elderly are primarily grass-roots initiatives carried out by independent organizations. The respondents, when asked about the length of these educational processes, indicated equal duration (49%

each) as more than "3 months" and "more than a year". This shows that these are usually not incidental or episodic actions, but long-term processes.

# Czech Republic



67 research participants

In the Czech Republic, the largest group of respondents was made up of seniors aged 65 to 75 (55% of respondents). Such a result should not be surprising, as these are people who have recently reached the retirement age (the Czech Republic has undergone the pension reform and retirement depends on the year of birth and the number of children, but according to the current regulations, for people born after 1971 it is at least 65 years (gowork.pl 2022)). People under 65 constitute only 15% of the sample, which is related to the fact that they are still professionally active people who have fewer opportunities to participate in the processes of lifelong learning. The oldest group (over 75) accounts for 30% of the sample.

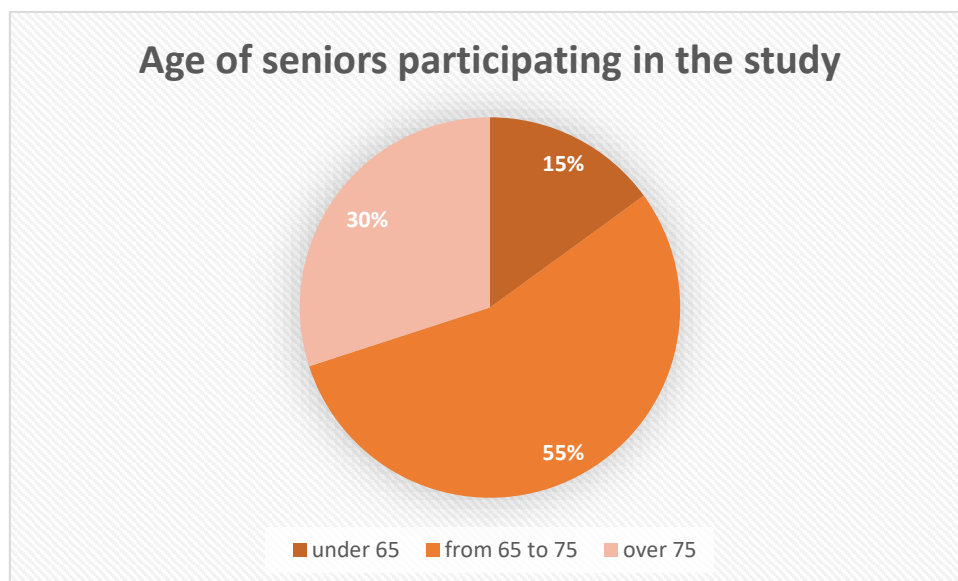


Chart 14. Age of Czech respondents who took part in the survey

The sample included mainly seniors living in large cities (76% of respondents). In total, inhabitants of villages and small and medium-sized towns constitute 24% of all respondents. These data show the increased activity of seniors from large urban centers. The problem with reaching respondents from smaller towns shows that there is a kind of educational gap in this area and it is worth considering reaching recipients in excluded areas with projects.

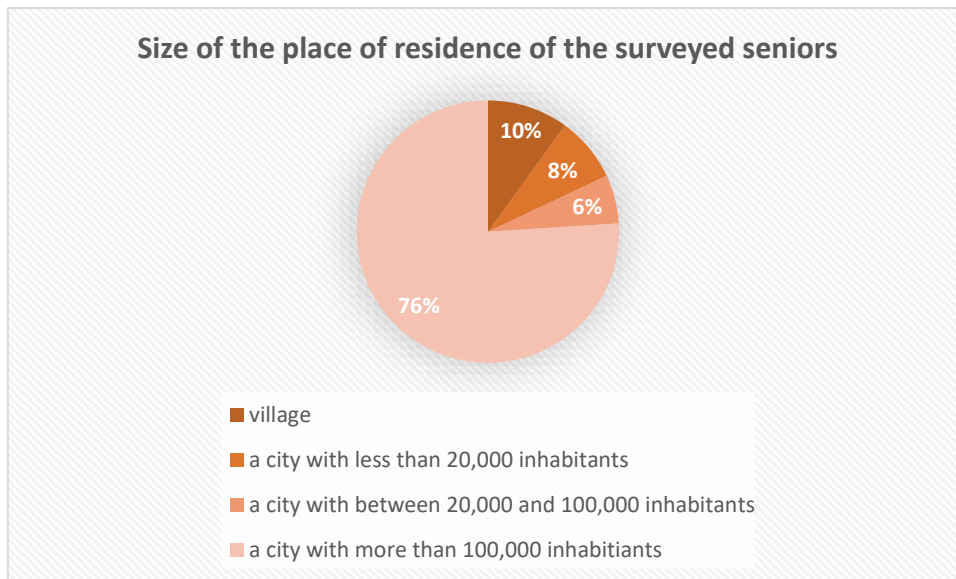


Chart 15. The size of the places where the surveyed seniors from the Czech Republic live

The respondents, when answering the question about education, had five options to choose from. In the case of seniors from the Czech Republic, the sample included only people from three groups with education: vocational (7%), secondary or secondary technical (51%) and higher (42%). These data show that better educated people are particularly interested in the forms of lifelong learning.

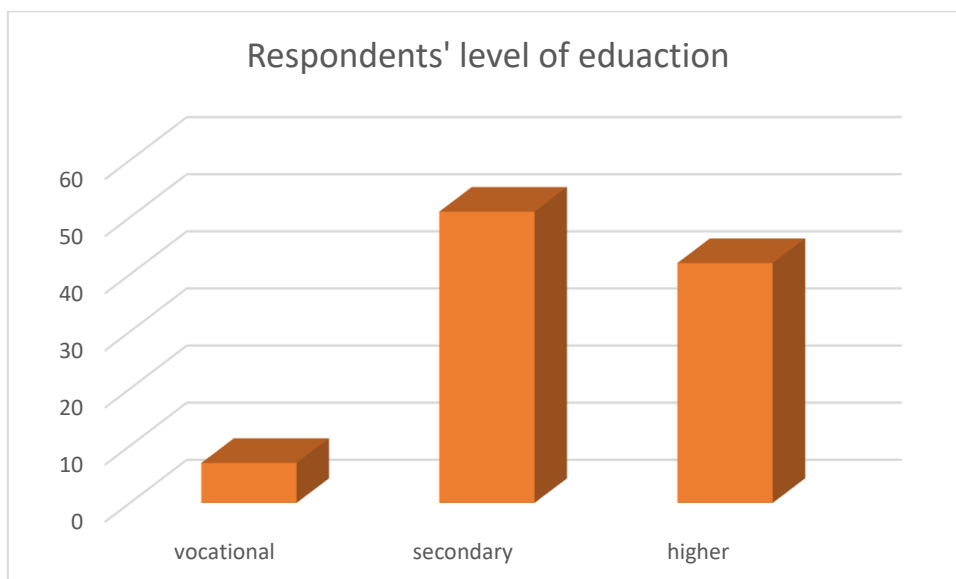


Chart 16. The level of education of seniors from the Czech Republic participating in the study

The respondents were asked about their interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills. The vast majority answered this question in the affirmative - 61 out of 76 people chose the answers "definitely yes" and "yes". The other six respondents said it was "hard to say". None of the respondents decided that they were not interested in acquiring new competences. This shows that older people who have contact with non-governmental

organizations and cultural institutions are very active and willing to devote their time to educational activities and improving their competences.

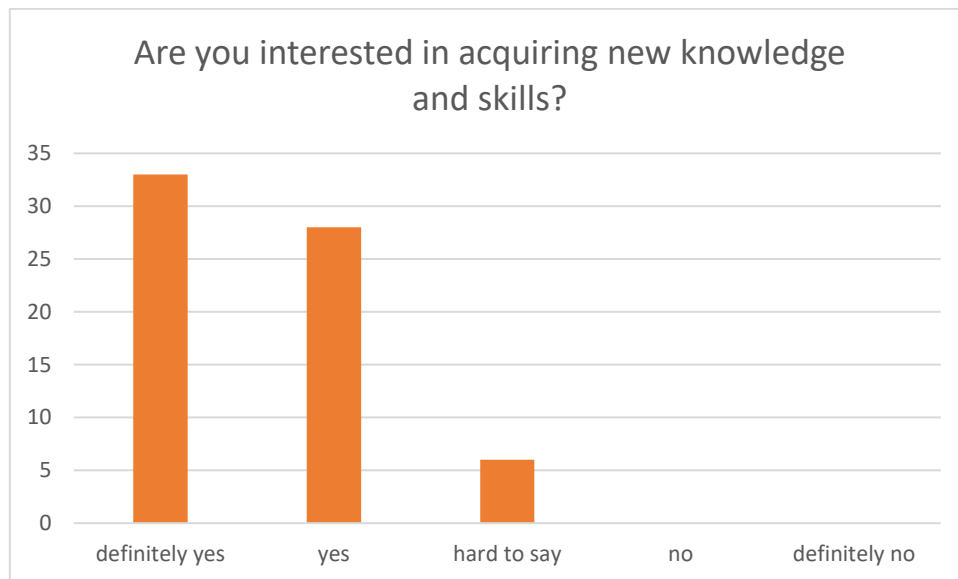


Chart 17. The level of interest of seniors from the Czech Republic in acquiring new knowledge and skills

When creating an educational offer, you must take into account the needs and capabilities of potential participants. The data we have collected show that the majority of Czech respondents seek knowledge of a popular science nature (51%). Fewer respondents said that they were most interested in news about everyday life and counseling (42% of the respondents). People who would like to participate in the processes of lifelong learning are much less interested in knowledge of a scientific nature (only 7%). Interestingly, none of the respondents was interested in knowing about the latest scientific discoveries. Older people in the Czech Republic are interested in knowledge that is easily digestible and can be important in their everyday life (often improving their quality of life).

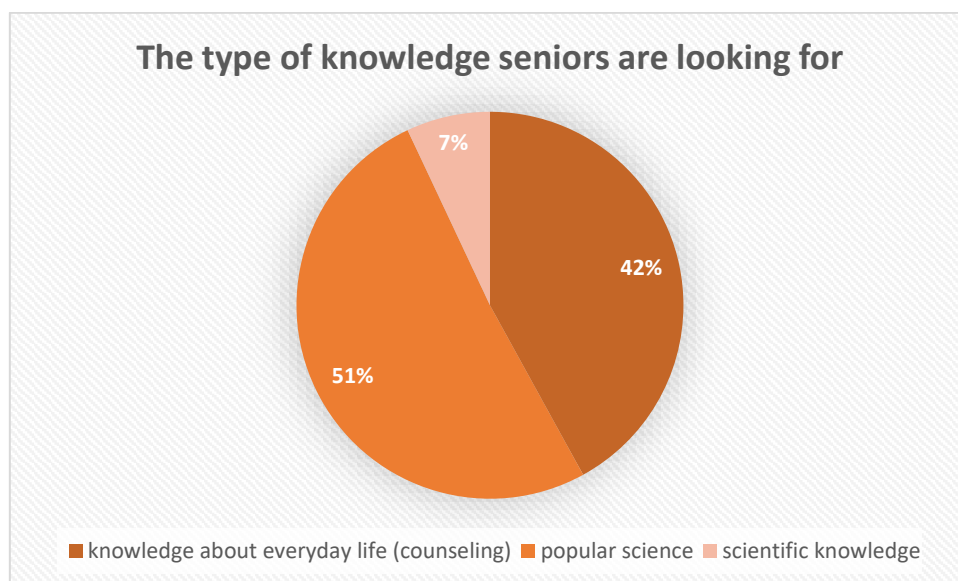


Chart 18. The type of knowledge that Czech seniors are looking for in continuing education

Further, it is worth considering the optimal forms of its transmission. For this purpose, the respondents were asked to choose educational forms which, in their opinion, are the most interesting and valuable for them. Based on the answers of seniors, four didactic favorites can be selected:

1. Lectures
2. Tours
3. Outdoor activities
4. On-line classes

The data presented in Figure 34 shows that seniors from the Czech Republic prefer various forms of education. On the one hand, activities related to movement and being outdoors (trips and outdoor activities) are very popular. On the other hand, the respondents are enthusiastic about the lecture classes, both in the direct and remote form (lectures and on-line classes).

More active forms of cooperation between the teacher and participants (workshops and handicraft classes) are of less interest. Seniors are less likely to participate in role-play activities. The forms of individual work at home are also of little interest.

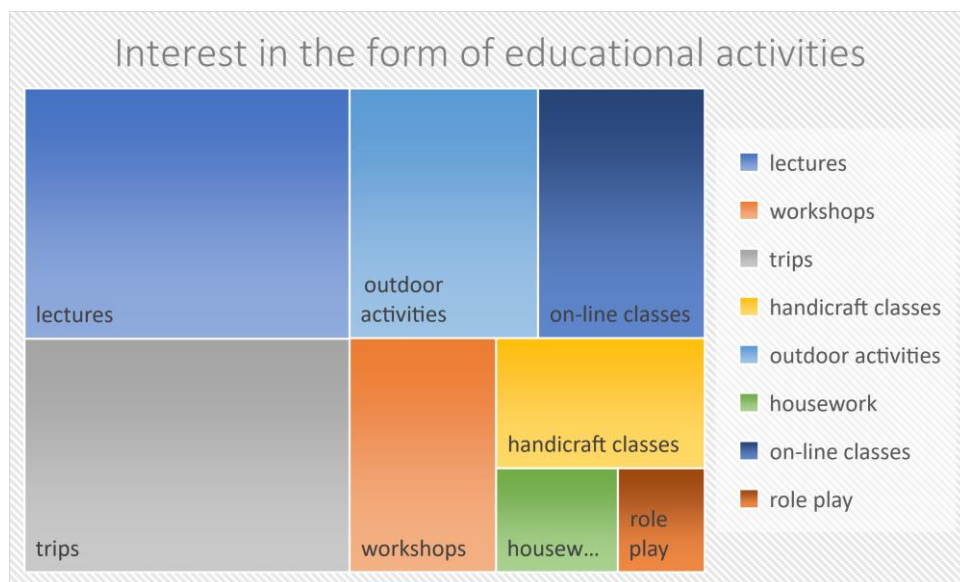


Chart 19. The interest of seniors from the Czech Republic in educational activities due to the form of their organization

The interest in lectures is similar in the group under 65 (60%) and in the group aged 65 to 75 (62%). However, it increases significantly in the oldest age group (up to 80%). Interestingly, the interest in excursions is very high only in the youngest age group (80%), and in the older groups it definitely decreases (middle group - 11%, the oldest - 15%). Likewise, the interest in outdoor activities decreases with the age of the respondents.

It is interesting that online classes are preferred mainly by people aged 65-75 (41% of respondents). They are not much less attractive to the oldest seniors (35% of the respondents). It is surprising that only 10% of seniors from the youngest age group are interested in this type of activity. It is possible, however, that people from this group are still quite active, including physically active ones, and prefer more engaging forms of activities.

Age of respondents	<65 lat	65-75 lat	>75 lat
lectures	60%	62%	80%
workshops	40%	24%	30%
trips	80%	11%	15%
handicraft classes	20%	27%	15%
outdoor activities	50%	41%	30%
housework	10%	11%	10%
on-line classes	10%	41%	35%
role play	0%	14%	0%

Table 4. The interest of seniors from the Czech Republic in the form of educational activities broken down into age groups

The respondents from small (80%) and medium-sized (75%) cities are most interested in participating in the lectures. However, the level of interest in lectures in large cities (67%) and in the countryside (57%) is also high. Only seniors living in rural areas and in large cities are interested in the workshops.

Trips as a good form of educational activities were indicated primarily by the inhabitants of small towns (80%) and large cities (67%). In medium-sized cities (50%) and in rural areas (29%), they enjoyed much less interest.

Similarly, when it comes to handicraft and outdoor activities - they dominate as interesting in small towns (80% each).

Half of the respondents living in medium-sized cities, 40% of inhabitants of small towns, 43% of rural residents and only 31% of inhabitants of large cities would like to attend online classes.

The inhabitants of small towns (20%) and villages (14%) are most interested in individual work. In medium-sized cities, none of the respondents declared willingness to participate in such activities, and in large cities it was only 10% of the respondents.

Domicile	village	> 20000	from 20000 to 100000	> 100000
lectures	57%	80%	75%	67%
workshops	43%	0%	0%	20%
trips	29%	80%	50%	67%
handicraft classes	14%	80%	0%	20%
outdoor activities	29%	80%	25%	37%
housework	14%	20%	0%	10%
on-line classes	43%	40%	50%	31%
role play	29%	0%	0%	6%

Table 5. The interest of seniors from the Czech Republic in the form of educational activities depending on the respondent's place of residence

The lectures are the most popular among seniors with secondary education (74%). People with higher education are slightly less interested (64%). People with vocational education are the least interested in lectures (40%).

Along with the increase in the level of education, there is a growing interest in such forms of education as excursions, on-line classes and handicraft classes. It is also worth

mentioning that only seniors with secondary education (12%) and higher education (11%) would decide to work individually as part of housework.

The level of education of the respondents	vocational	secondary	higher
lectures	40%	74%	64%
workshops	20%	9%	32%
trips	40%	53%	79%
handicraft classes	0%	21%	29%
outdoor activities	20%	38%	43%
housework	0%	12%	11%
on-line classes	20%	29%	43%
role play	0%	9%	7%

Table 6. The interest of seniors from the Czech Republic in the form of educational activities due to the education of the respondent

The seniors participating in the survey were asked about the topics of the classes they were most interested in. Among older people in the Czech Republic, activities in the field of culture and art (78% of respondents), as well as new technologies (55%), health (52%) and literature (49%) prevailed.

Seniors would definitely not be interested in sports at all, and issues related to handicrafts (27%) and cooking (16%) were of interest to a much smaller proportion of the respondents.

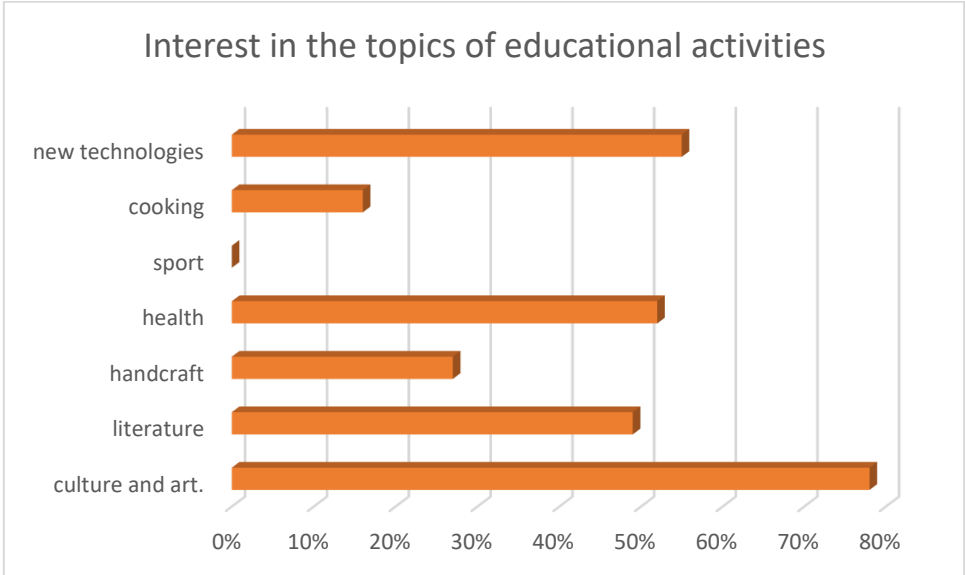


Chart 20. The interest of seniors from the Czech Republic due to the topics of the educational activities organized

As many as 57% of respondents said that they would be interested in participating in a social experiment. Additionally, 37% said she was undecided. Only 6% of the respondents declared that they were not interested in this form of activity at all.

People who chose the answer "definitely yes", "yes" or "hard to say" to the previous question were asked to declare their time disposition related to the implementation of such

a social experiment. The respondents primarily declared that they were able to devote one (42%) or several hours a week (43%) to the research process. 15% of respondents would like to engage in everyday research activities. Research projects carried out in cooperation with seniors from the Czech Republic can be very diverse, as seniors declare their readiness to be highly involved.

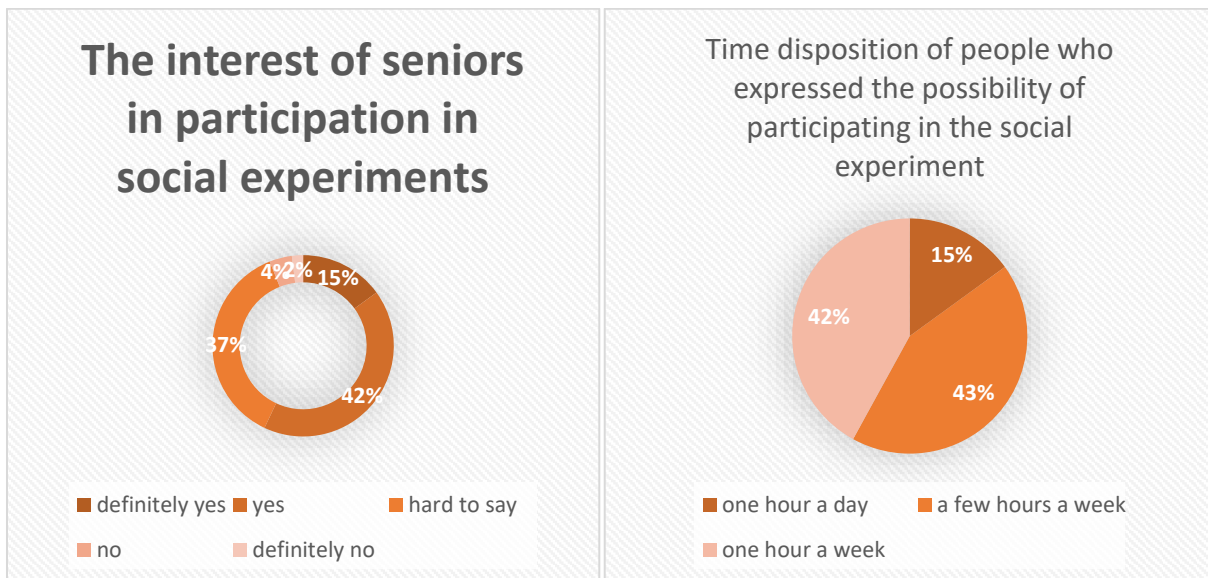


Chart 21. Interest of seniors from the Czech Republic in participation in social experiments

Chart 22. Time schedule of seniors from the Czech Republic who declared the possibility of participating in social experiments

Seniors from the Czech Republic declare that they most willingly participate in organized classes held every week (57% of the respondents). Classes organized every two or three weeks (25% of respondents) are also very popular. However, there are groups of people who would like to meet more than once a week (10%) and groups who say that it is best to meet once a month (7%).

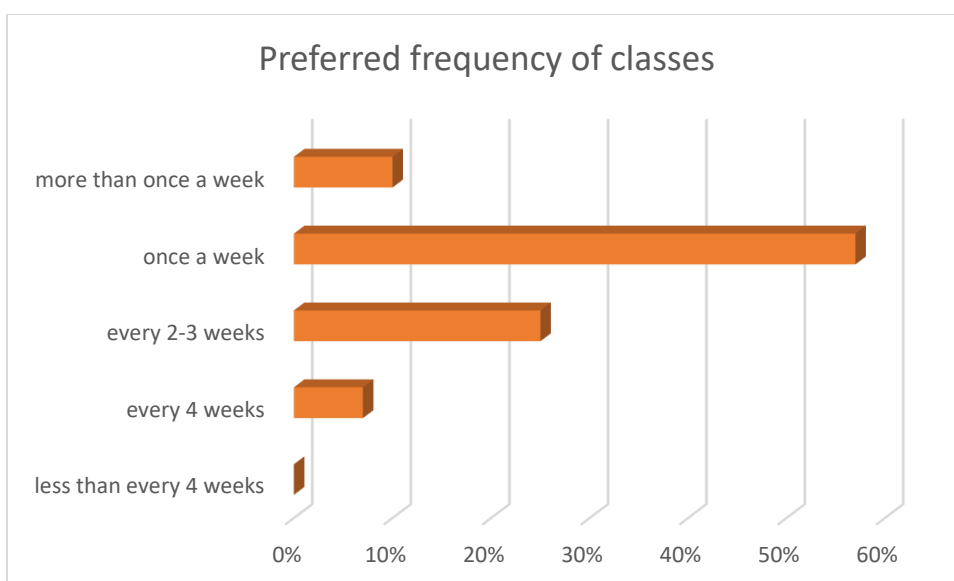


Chart 23. The frequency of classes as part of lifelong learning projects preferred by seniors from the Czech Republic

When asked about the preferred time of classes, the vast majority of seniors consider that the classes cannot be too long. 25% of respondents were in favor of meetings lasting less than 90 minutes, and as many as 69% of respondents supported classes lasting from 90 to 180 minutes. Longer classes are of interest to only 6% of all respondents.

These data show that when organizing meetings for seniors, it must be remembered that they cannot last too long. There are at least two reasons: the elderly, as mentioned earlier, have many daily duties and are often unable to maintain their attention for long hours.

Depending on the nature and subject matter, classes for seniors can be divided into:

- 1) 45-60 minutes
- 2) 90 minutes
- 3) 120-180 minutes

When organizing meetings, it should also be taken into account that the classes must be divided in such a way that you take a break every 45 minutes. During the break, it is also worth taking care of a small snack (coffee, tea, cookies), which favors the integration of participants.

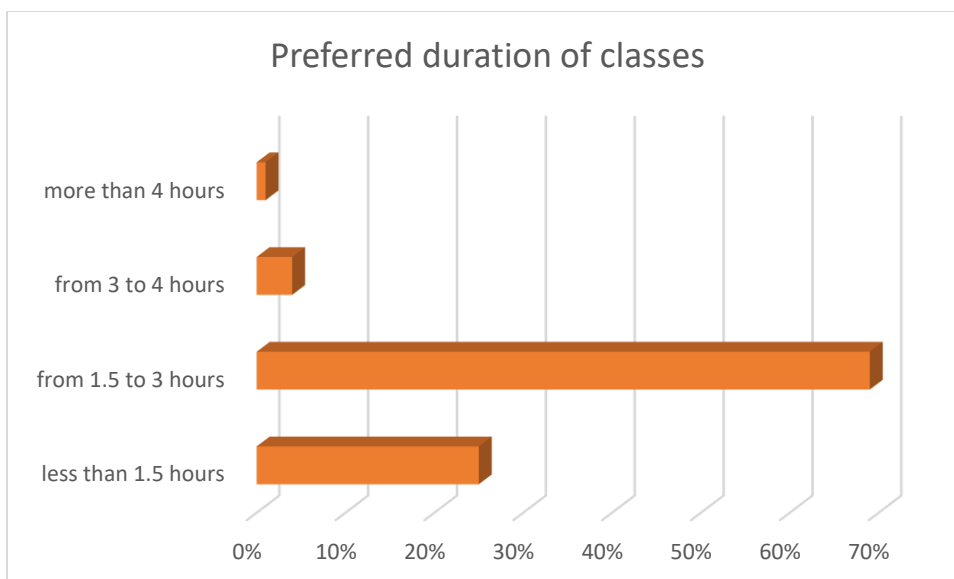


Chart 24. The duration of individual classes as part of lifelong learning projects is preferred by seniors from the Czech Republic

The respondents were also asked about their previous experiences with the processes of lifelong learning. As many as 64% of people declared that they had participated in various types of educational projects in the past. However, over a quarter of the respondents did not have such experiences. The respondents who answered this question in the affirmative stated that the majority of previous projects were implemented by universities and their units (61%). To a lesser extent, these were activities organized by non-governmental organizations (39%). None of the respondents marked the answer "local government unit".

On this basis, it can be seen that the activities aimed at the lifelong education of older people in the Czech Republic are primarily initiatives carried out by research centers and non-governmental organizations.

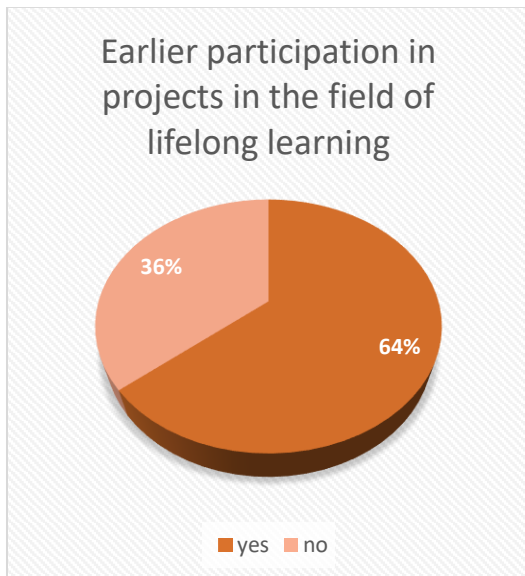


Chart 25. The level of participation of Czech seniors in projects in the field of lifelong learning

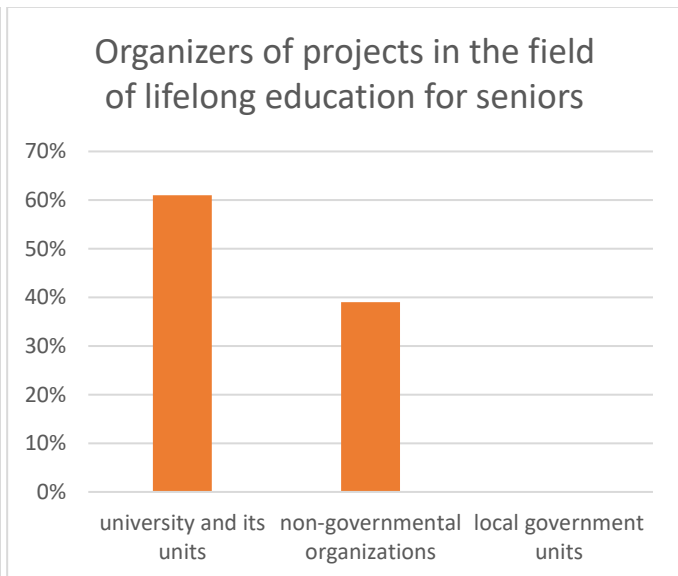


Chart 26. Organizers of lifelong education projects in which seniors from the Czech Republic participated

The respondents, when asked about the length of these educational processes, indicated that most of them lasted at least a year (75%). Shorter experiences - 16% of respondents had at least 3 months, and only 9% of respondents took part in activities lasting less than a month. This shows that these are usually not incidental or episodic activities, but long-term educational processes.

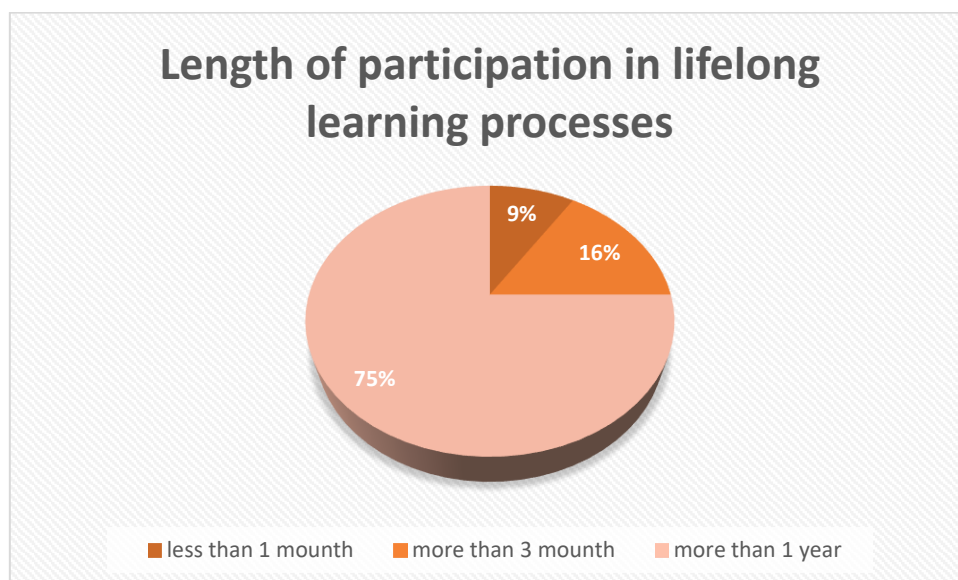


Chart 27. Length of participation in projects in the field of lifelong learning declared by seniors from the Czech Republic

# Slovenia



41 research participants

In Slovenia, the most numerous group of respondents were seniors aged 65 to 75 (61% of respondents). This result should not come as a surprise as these are people who have recently reached retirement age. People under 65 constitute 22% of the sample, which is related to the fact that they are still professionally active (or after early retirement after the age of 60) who have fewer opportunities to participate in the processes of lifelong learning. The oldest group (over 75) accounts for 17% of the sample.

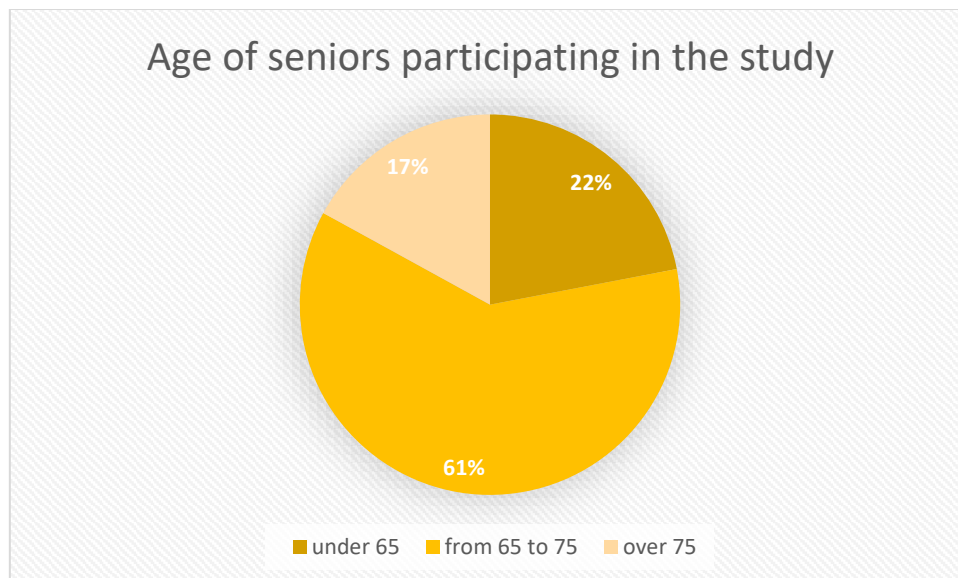


Chart 28. Age of Slovenian respondents who took part in the survey

The sample included mainly seniors living in medium-sized cities (51% of the respondents). The second, in turn, were inhabitants of rural areas (34%), and other inhabitants of small towns (15%). No resident of the city with more than 100,000 inhabitants was included in the sample. This is probably due to the fact that in Slovenia only the capital Ljubljana has more than 100,000 inhabitants, and the next largest city has only just over 96,000 inhabitants.

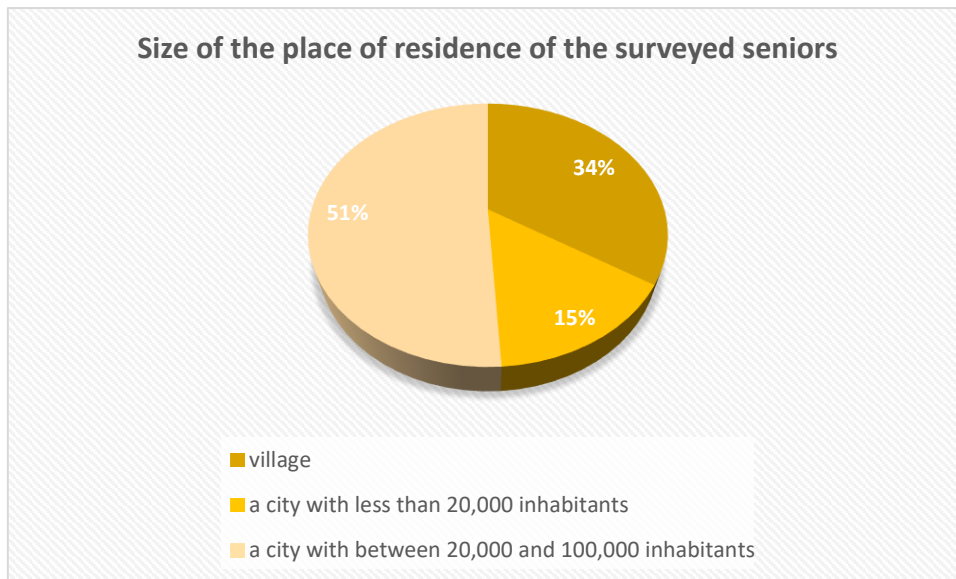


Chart 29. Size of the localities where the surveyed seniors from Slovenia live

The respondents, when answering the question about education, had five options to choose from. In the case of seniors from Slovenia, most people selected the answer other (college) - as many as 66% of the respondents. The next largest group are seniors with secondary education (27%). The respondents with primary and vocational education accounted for 10% of the sample, and people with higher education only 2% of the respondents.

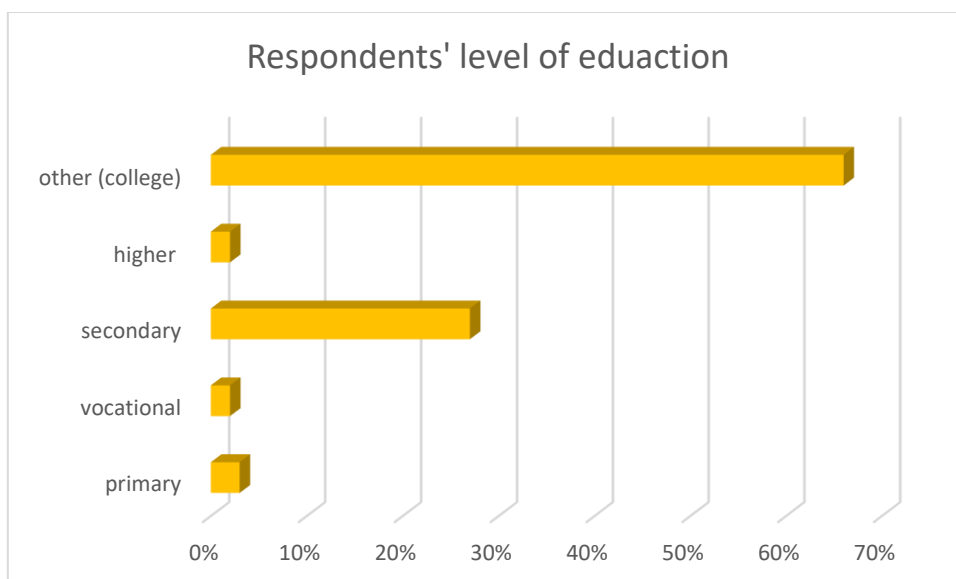


Chart 30. Educational level of Slovenian seniors participating in the study

The respondents were asked about their interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills. The vast majority of respondents (93%) answered this question in the affirmative: 27% chose "definitely yes" and 66% "yes". The remaining 7% of respondents said it was "hard to say". None of the respondents stated that they were not interested in acquiring new competences. This shows that older people who have contact with non-governmental

organizations and cultural institutions are very active and willing to devote their time to educational activities and improving their competences.

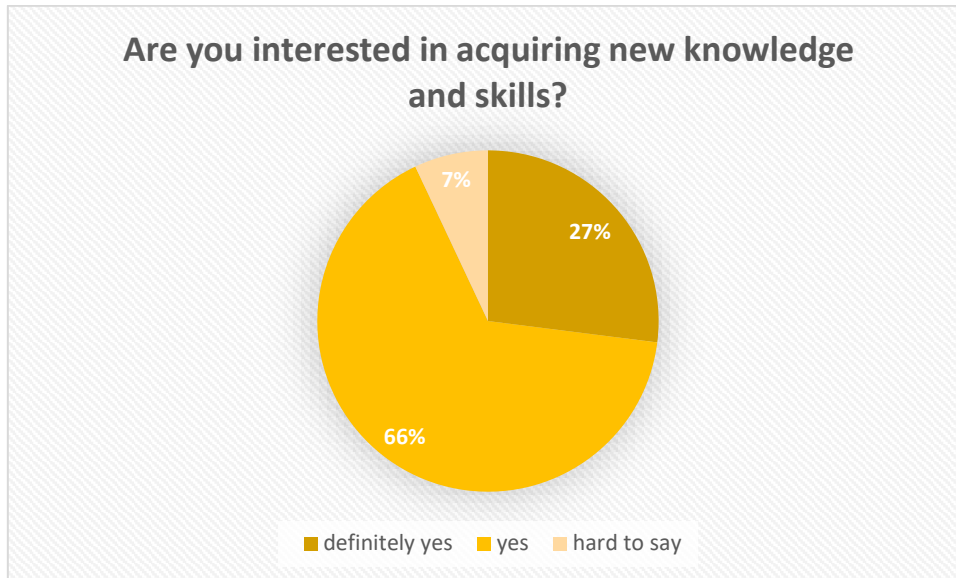


Chart 31. The level of interest of seniors from Slovenia in acquiring new knowledge and skills

The data we have collected show that the majority of Slovenian respondents are looking for popular science knowledge (71%). Most of the remaining respondents (27%) seek knowledge about everyday life and counseling. Only 2% of respondents are interested in knowledge of a scientific nature.

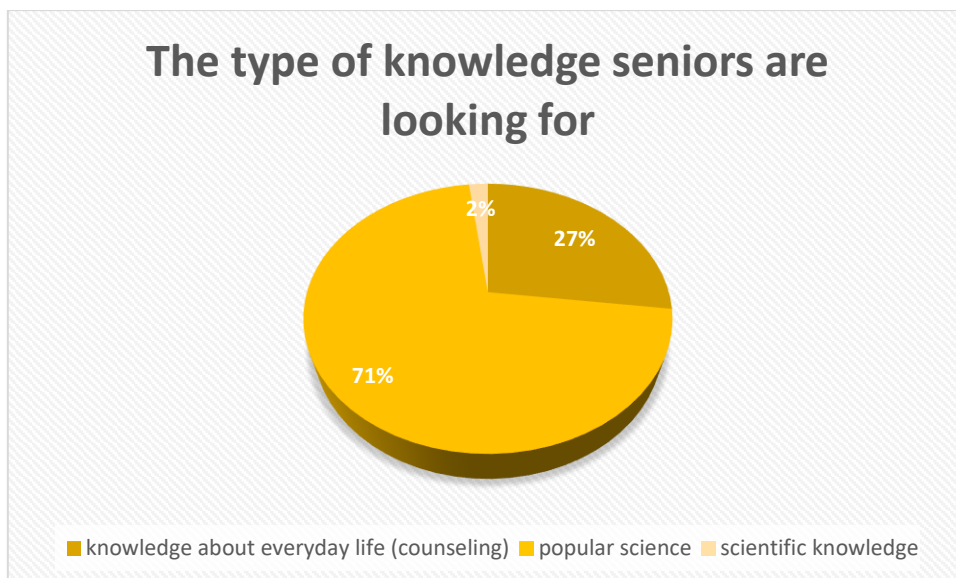


Chart 32. The type of knowledge that Slovenian seniors are looking for in continuing education activities

The respondents were asked to choose the educational forms which, in their opinion, are the most interesting and valuable for them. Based on the answers of seniors, five didactic favorites can be selected:

1. Lectures

2. Tours
3. Workshops
4. Outdoor activities
5. On-line classes

The data presented in Chart 48 shows that seniors from Slovenia prefer various forms of education. On the one hand, activities related to movement and being outdoors (trips and outdoor activities) are very popular. On the other hand, the respondents are enthusiastic about the lecture classes, both in the direct and remote form (lectures and on-line classes). Active forms of education, such as workshops, where recipients are co-creators of the content, not just passive listeners, are also very popular.

Handicraft and role-play activities are of little interest. The forms of individual work at home are also of little interest.

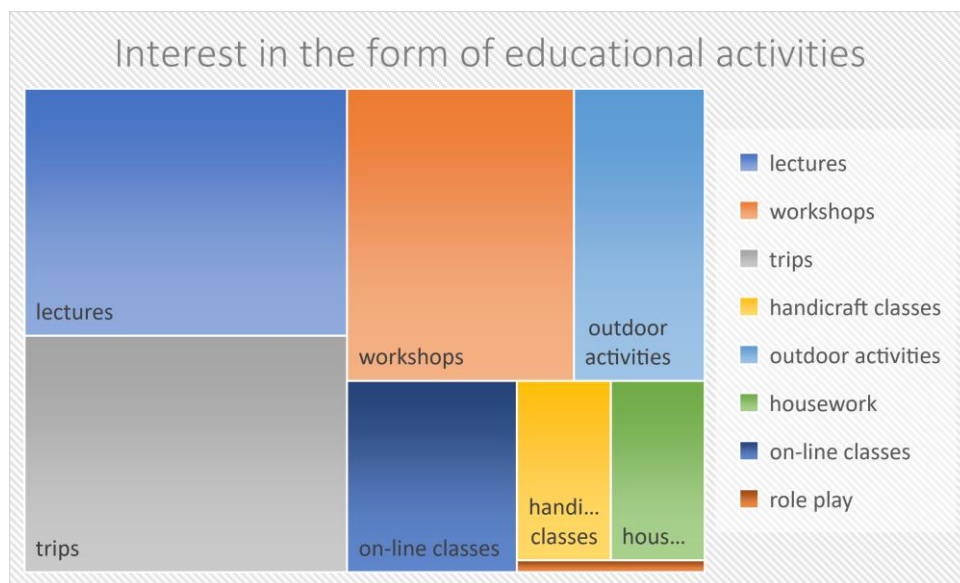


Chart 33. The interest of Slovenian seniors in educational activities due to the form of their organization

The seniors participating in the survey were asked about the topics of the classes they were most interested in. Among the elderly from Slovenia, activities in the field of health (63%), culture and arts (49% of respondents) and new technologies (49%) predominated. The subjects related to cooking and nutrition (44%) as well as literature (39%) enjoyed slightly less interest.

Sports activities (29%) and handicrafts (12%) were much less popular. As many as 10% of respondents indicated the answer "other", where, as part of an open question, they said that they would be interested in activities in the field of:

- manual classes (they can be classified as handicrafts)
- history classes
- dancing classes
- Spiritual classes, meditation and self-awareness

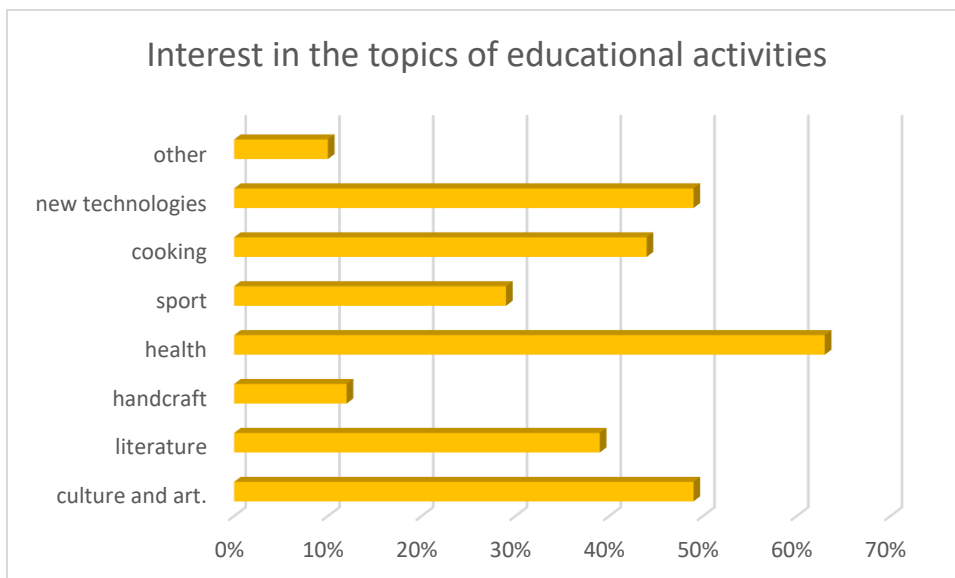


Chart 34. Interest of seniors from Slovenia due to the topics of the educational activities organized

As many as 71% of respondents said that they would be interested in participating in a social experiment. Another 29% felt she was undecided. None of the respondents declared that they were not interested in this form of activities at all.

People who chose the answer "definitely yes", "yes" or "hard to say" to the previous question were asked to declare their time disposition related to the implementation of such a social experiment. First of all, the respondents declared that they were able to devote several hours (61%) or one hour (32%) a week to the research process. Only 2% of the respondents would like to engage in everyday research activities.

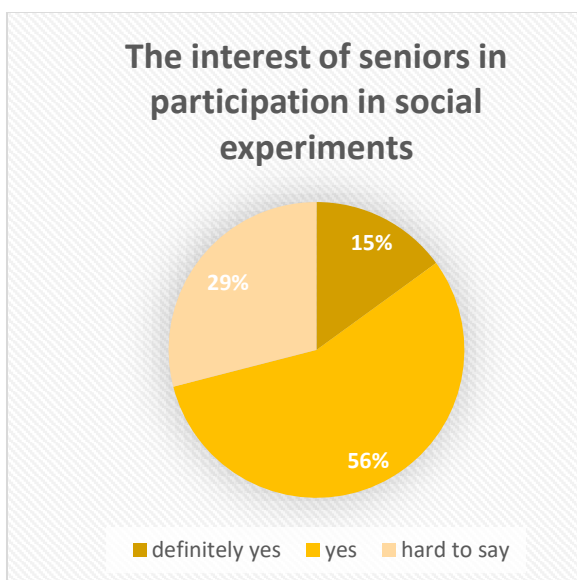


Chart 35. Interest of seniors from Slovenia in participation in social experiments

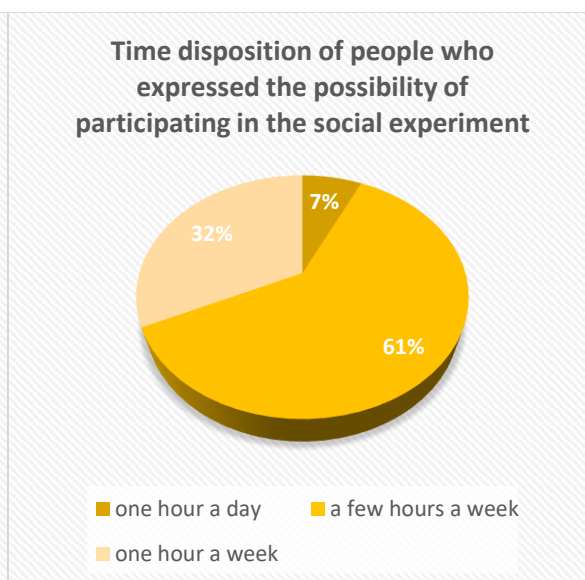


Chart 36. Time disposition of seniors from Slovenia who declared the possibility of participating in social experiments

Seniors from Slovenia declare that they most willingly participate in organized activities held every week (61% of the respondents). Classes organized every two or three

weeks (29% of respondents) are also very popular. However, there are small groups of people who would like to meet more than once a week (5%) and groups who say that it is best to meet once a month (5%).

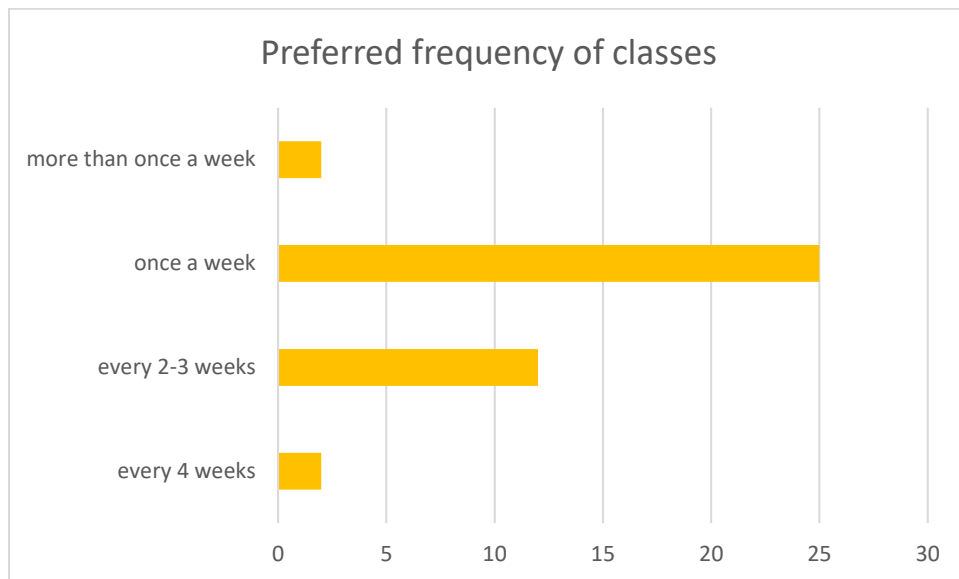


Chart 37. The frequency of classes as part of lifelong learning projects is preferred by Slovenian seniors

When asked about the preferred time of classes, the vast majority of seniors consider that the classes cannot be too long. 17% of respondents were in favor of meetings lasting less than 90 minutes, and 83% of respondents were in favor of classes lasting from 90 to 180 minutes. The respondents were not at all interested in activities that would last longer than 180 minutes.

Depending on the nature and subject matter, classes for seniors can be divided into:

- 1) 45-60 minutes
- 2) 90 minutes
- 3) 120-180 minutes

When organizing meetings, it should also be taken into account that the classes must be divided in such a way that you take a break every 45 minutes. During the break, it is also worth taking care of a small snack (coffee, tea, cookies), which favors the integration of participants.

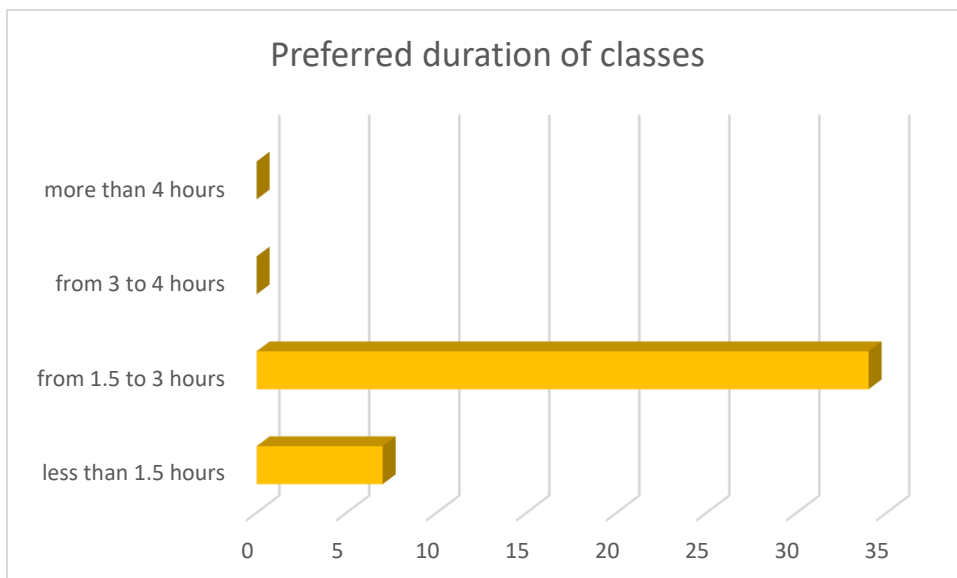


Chart 38. The length of individual classes in lifelong learning projects preferred by Slovenian seniors

The respondents were also asked about their previous experiences with the processes of lifelong learning. As many as 71% of people declared that they had participated in various types of educational projects in the past. However, over a quarter of the respondents did not have such experiences. Respondents who answered in the affirmative to this question stated that the majority of previous projects were implemented by universities and their units (90%). To a lesser extent, these were activities organized by non-governmental organizations (10%). None of the respondents marked the answer "local government unit".

On this basis, it can be seen that the activities aimed at the lifelong education of older people in Slovenia are primarily initiatives carried out by research centers and non-governmental organizations.

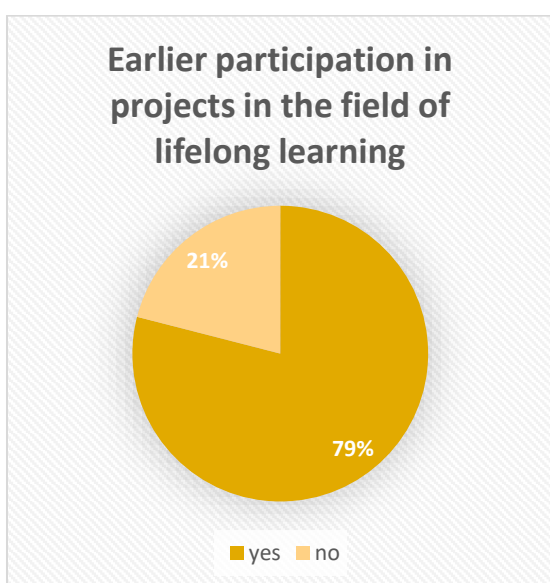


Chart 39. Level of participation of Slovenian seniors in projects in the field of lifelong learning

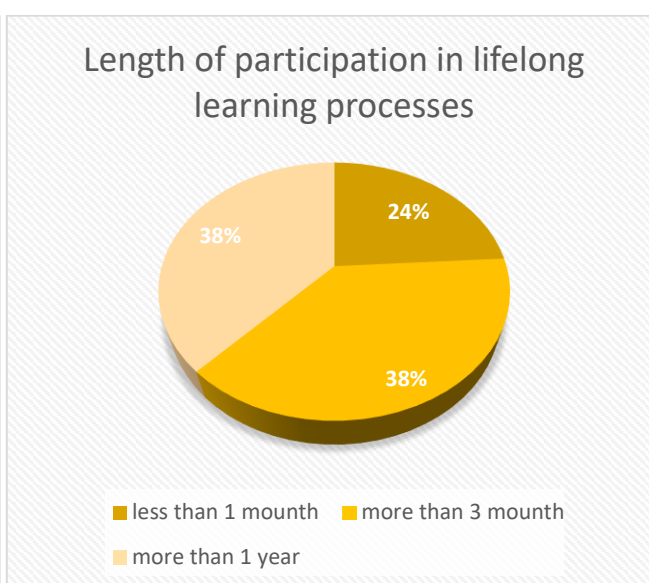


Chart 40. The length of participation in projects in the field of lifelong learning declared by seniors from Slovenia

The respondents, when asked about the length of these educational processes, indicated that most of them lasted at least a year (38%) or longer than 3 months (38%). 24% of respondents had experiences with processes lasting less than a month. This shows that in Slovenia, educational activities for older people vary in nature - often lengthy, more complex processes, but also mostly occasional activities.

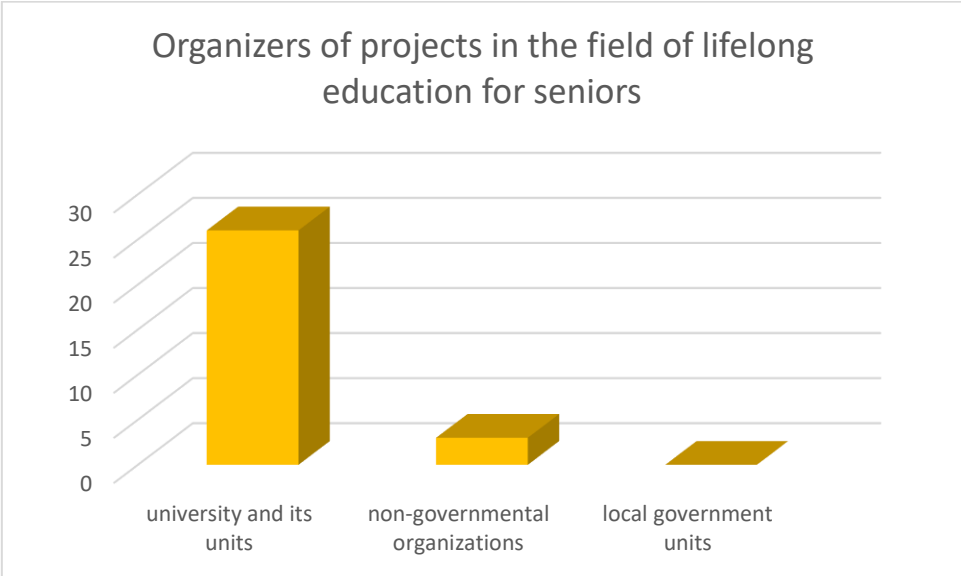


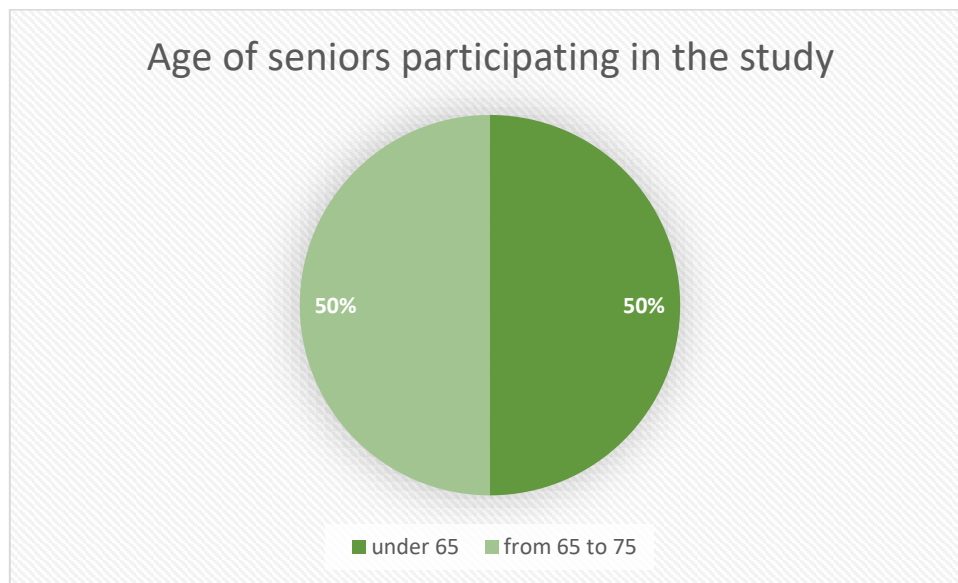
Chart 41. Organizers of lifelong learning projects in which Slovenian seniors participated

# Bulgaria



10 research participants

In Bulgaria, the division of respondents by age revealed two equal groups (50% each): people under the age of 65 and those aged 65-75. No respondents over the age of 75 were recorded.



*Chart 42. Age of Bulgarian respondents who took part in the survey*

The sample included mainly seniors living in large cities (40% of respondents) and medium-sized cities (40%). The inhabitants of villages and small and medium-sized towns constitute in total 20% of all respondents. These data show the increased activity of seniors from large urban centers. The problem with reaching respondents from smaller towns shows that there is a kind of educational gap in this area and it is worth considering reaching recipients in excluded areas with projects.

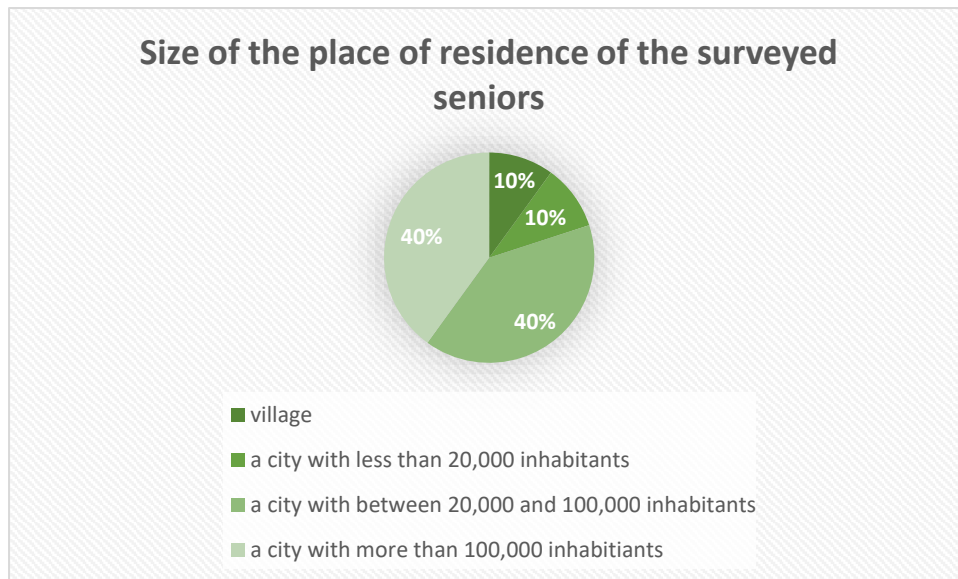


Chart 43. Size of the localities where the respondents from Bulgaria live

The respondents, when answering the question about education, had five options to choose from. In the case of seniors from Bulgaria, the sample included only people from two groups with secondary education (20%) and higher education (80%). These data show that better educated people are particularly interested in the forms of lifelong learning.

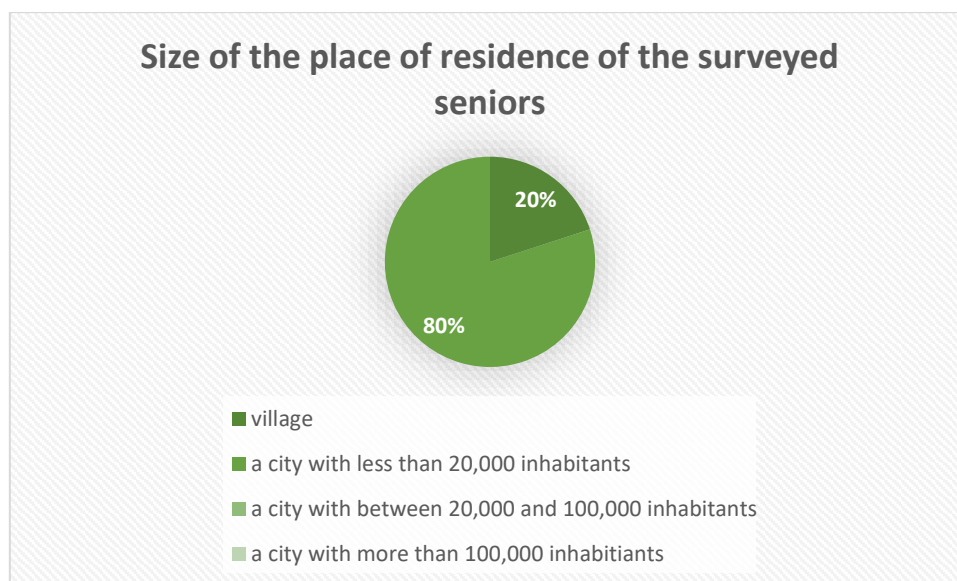


Chart 44. Educational level of seniors from Bulgaria participating in the study

The respondents were asked about their interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills. The answer "definitely yes" was chosen by 40% of the respondents, and the answer "yes" by another 20%. 20% of the respondents remained undecided. At the same time, the answer "definitely not" was also given by 20% of the respondents.



Chart 45. The level of interest of Bulgarian seniors in acquiring new knowledge and skills

The data we have collected show that the majority of respondents from Bulgaria are looking for popular science knowledge (30%) and scientific knowledge (30%). The rest of the respondents are interested in news about everyday life and counseling (20%), and they also see about the latest scientific discoveries (also 20%). The respondents from Bulgaria are interested in a wide range of knowledge, which should be taken into account when preparing a teaching offer for them.

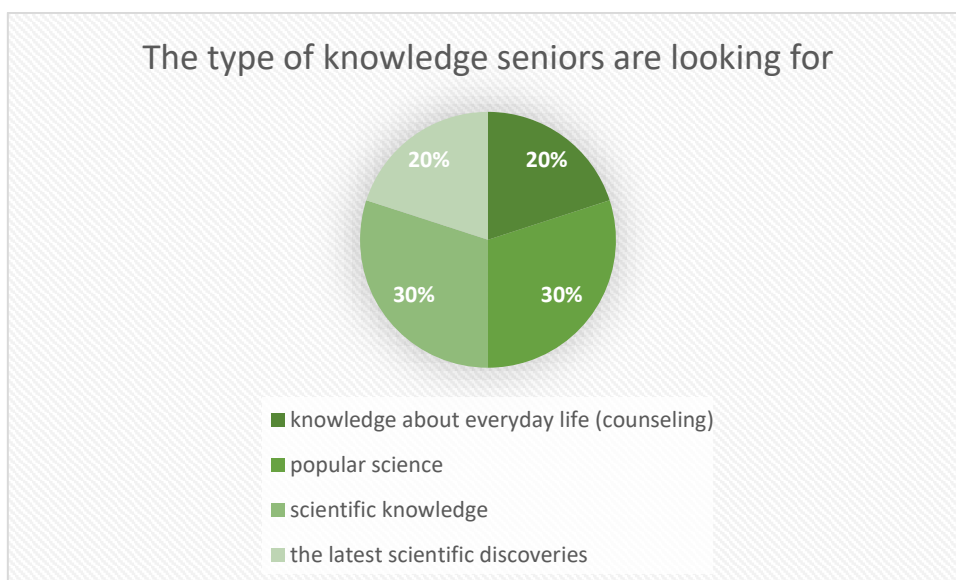


Chart 46. Type of knowledge that Bulgarian seniors are looking for in continuing education activities

Further, it is worth considering the optimal forms of its transmission. For this purpose, the respondents were asked to choose educational forms which, in their opinion, are the most interesting and valuable for them. Based on the answers of seniors, four didactic favorites can be selected:

1. On-line classes

2. Lectures
3. Role-playing
4. Outdoor activities

The data presented in Chart 62 shows that seniors from Bulgaria prefer various forms of education. The most popular, however, are lecture classes and on-line classes, where participants are usually passive listeners. However, the respondents are also interested in more active forms of activities, such as outdoor activities or role plays.

Forms of classes such as workshops or handicraft classes are of less interest. The forms of individual work at home are also of little interest. It is interesting that seniors from Bulgaria want to participate in activities in the form of excursions very little, which in the case of other countries were quite popular among the respondents.

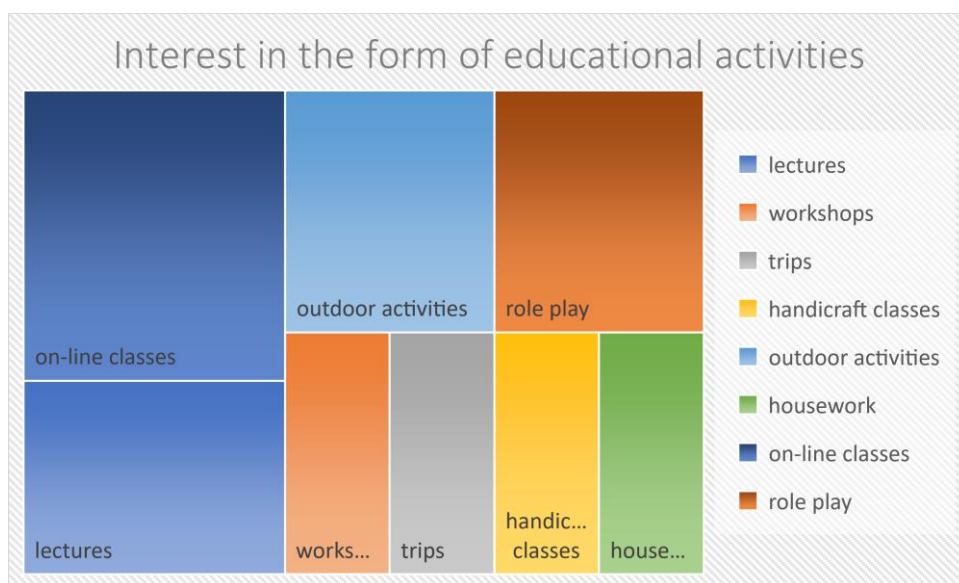


Chart 47. The interest of Bulgarian seniors in educational activities due to the form of their organization

The seniors participating in the survey were asked about the topics of the classes they were most interested in. Among older people in Bulgaria, activities in the field of new technologies (60% of the respondents), as well as culture and art (40%) predominated. Classes in literature, health and sports enjoyed less interest (20% of the respondents each). Seniors were definitely the least interested in crafts and cooking classes.

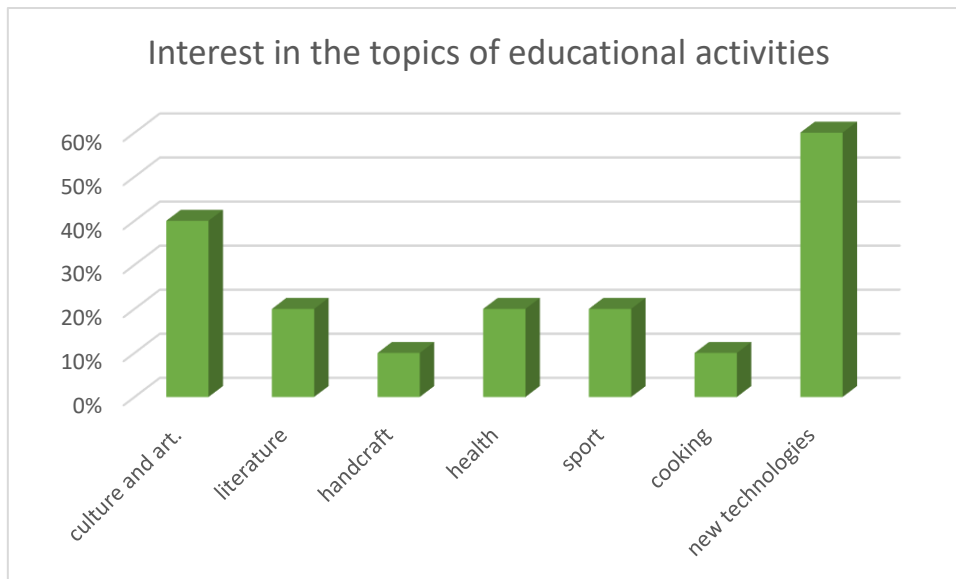


Chart 48. The interest of seniors from Bulgaria due to the topics of the educational activities organized

As many as 70% of respondents said that they would be interested in participating in a social experiment. Another 30% felt she was undecided.

People who chose the answer "definitely yes", "yes" or "hard to say" to the previous question were asked to declare their time disposition related to the implementation of such a social experiment. First of all, the respondents declared that they were able to devote one hour a week to the research process (70%). The possibility of spending one hour a day was declared by 10% of the respondents, and 20% of the respondents did not answer this question at all.

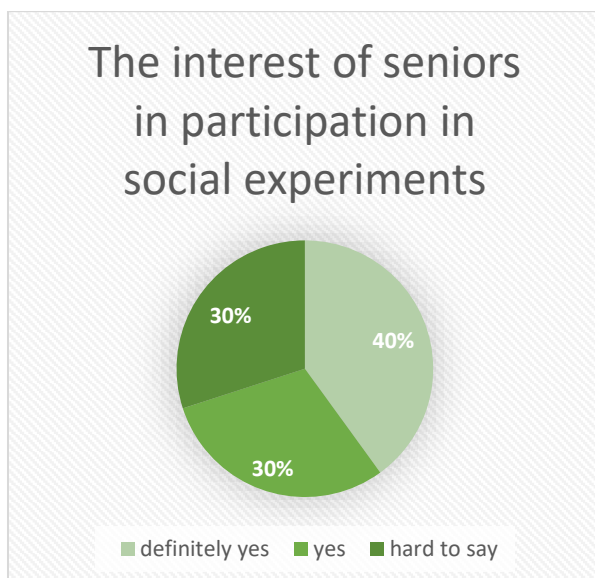


Chart 49. The interest of Bulgarian seniors in participation in social experiments



Chart 50. Time schedule of seniors from Bulgaria who declared the possibility of participating in social experiments

Bulgarian seniors declare that they most willingly participate in organized classes held once a week (30% of respondents) and once a month (30% of respondents). Less popular is the activities organized every two or three weeks (10% of respondents) and more often than

once a week (10% of respondents). As many as 20% of the respondents did not provide any answer to this question.

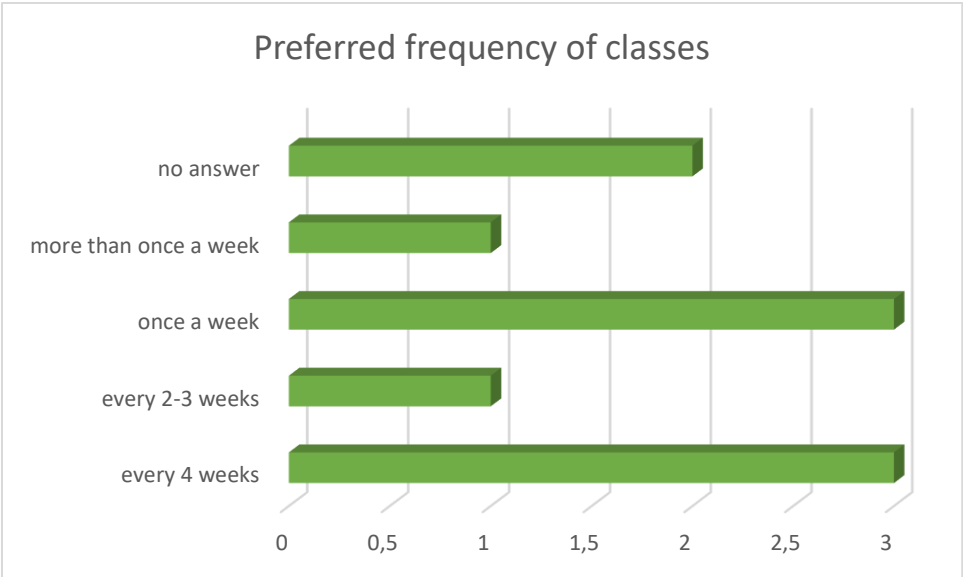


Chart 51. The frequency of classes as part of lifelong learning projects is preferred by Bulgarian seniors

When asked about the preferred time of classes, the vast majority of seniors consider that the classes cannot be too long. 10% of respondents were in favor of meetings lasting less than 90 minutes, and as many as 70% of respondents were in favor of classes lasting from 90 to 180 minutes. The remaining 20% of respondents did not provide any answer to this question.

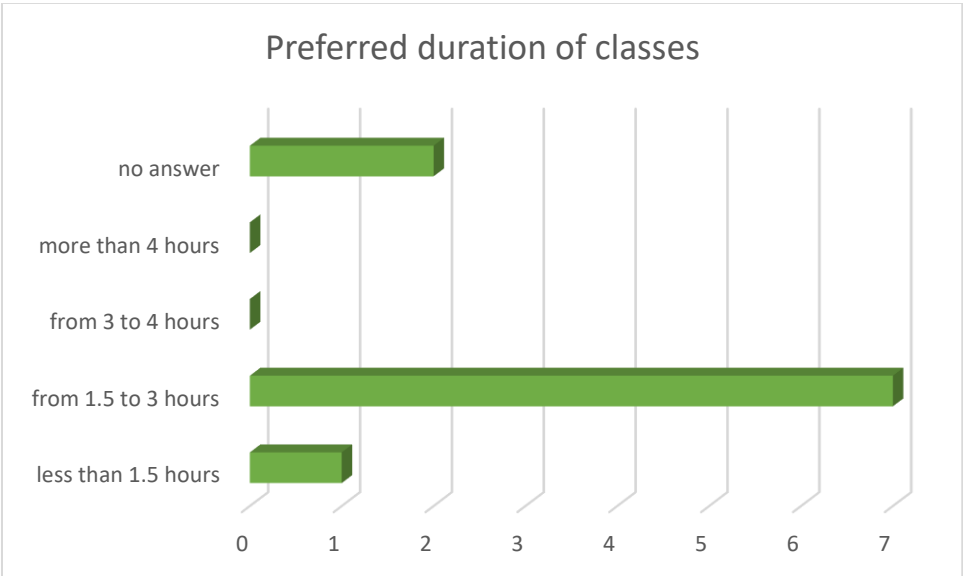


Chart 52. The length of individual classes in lifelong learning projects is preferred by Bulgarian seniors

According to the declarations of the Bulgarian survey participants, no one has previously participated in projects in the field of lifelong learning of older people. These data show that there may be a gap in Bulgaria related to the organization of educational activities

for seniors, which should be managed. Before taking any action, it is also worth making an extended diagnosis of the educational offer offered by local universities and non-governmental organizations.

# Methodology and research tools

In order to diagnose the participation of older people in activities in the field of lifelong education, we used a questionnaire.

The questionnaire was developed jointly by members of the team implementing the project "Citizen Senior Researchers - raising the competences of senior adults and incorporating them in research and analytical activities under the label of citizen science" (KA204-C4F4E254-EN under Erasmus +).

The questionnaire consisted of a record containing 3 basic questions about socio-demographic characteristics: age, place of residence (size) and education level. The second, main part concerning the experiences and needs related to the education of older people consisted of 11 questions.

## Research sample

The sample in this study was to be based on the availability of respondents. Each of the institutions participating in the study carries out educational activities aimed at the elderly and has extensive experience in this field. We decided not to formalize the sample structure because we were more interested in getting to know the opinions of real recipients of future activities than in gaining full knowledge about the insights of a representative sample for the entire population of elderly people in individual countries or the whole of Europe.

Country	Population	Number of respondents
Poland	37.6 mln	78
Czech Republic	10.6 mln	67
Slovenia	2.1 mln	41
Bulgaria	6.8 mln	10

Table 7. Comparison of the population size and the number of respondents from the various countries covered by the survey

The respondents were therefore elderly people who, to some extent, have contact with non-governmental organizations and scientific institutions (institutes, universities, science centers). It should be emphasized that the respondents were not only participants of previous projects in the field of lifelong learning, as many as 34% of the respondents declared that they had not participated in such activities before.

In the course of the study, 196 answers were obtained using CATI and PAPI forms, which were later standardized to the Google Forms database, from which an editable MS Excel calculation file was generated.

## **Substantive scope**

The imprint contained three questions. The first concerned the respondent's age, and there were three options to choose from: less than 65 years old, 65-75 years old and more than 75 years old. We assumed that people from the youngest group are people in pre-retirement age and those who have just retired or, for some reason, entered into early retirement or disability pension. The second group consists of retirees after reaching the retirement age (65), and the last group are elderly people who have been in retirement for several or several years. The second question related to the size of the city from which the respondents came. We have adopted four city size thresholds: villages, cities with less than 20,000 inhabitants, cities between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants, and cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. The last question in the certificate related to the education of the respondents. There were five options to choose from: Basic, Vocational, Secondary / Technical, Higher, or other.

We did not decide on the question about the sex of the respondents because we considered it to be unnecessary to enlarge the form. We know from our practice so far that the majority of participants of activities in the field of lifelong education for the elderly are women (men usually constitute about 10% of the groups). Older men are often less active in retirement and refuse to participate in such activities. This may be related to a lower level of education, work experience with manual (not intellectual) work, or health problems. It should also be emphasized that the average age of men is generally lower than that of women, and therefore they often do not reach the age that would allow them to participate in educational activities for seniors.

The first substantive question related to whether the respondent was interested in acquiring new knowledge and skills at all. Educational projects often assume that participants are to learn something new to use in practice or everyday life. So we wanted to check the expectations of the respondents in this regard. Are older people interested in new knowledge, or would they prefer to consolidate and use the skills they already have?

The second question was related to the subject of interest to seniors. We decided to use a closed catalog consisting of seven records (one of the entities cooperating in collecting the data additionally included the answer "other"). The topics of the classes were selected after an in-depth analysis of the experiences of all project implementers. Each respondent could select any number of answers to this question.

The third question concerned the level of knowledge that older people are looking for or expect from the organizers of educational activities and speakers. From our perspective, it was very important to diagnose whether the expectations of seniors and the perceptions of researchers and speakers are consistent in this regard. The respondents had four options to choose from: knowledge about everyday life, popular science knowledge, scientific knowledge and information on the latest scientific discoveries.

The next question was to determine whether the elderly are interested in participating in scientific projects at all. For this purpose, we asked if the respondents would

be interested in participating in a social experiment. We decided that this question is particularly important from the point of view of the implementation of any projects related to citizenship science.

The next question was answered only by those who answered the previous question in the affirmative or stated that they did not have an opinion. The question was how much time the respondent would be able to devote to the implementation of his part of the research project. We wanted to check how deep the level of cooperation with seniors is when planning classes in the field of civic science.

With the help of the sixth question, we wanted to check which forms of educational activities are most popular among the elderly. We proposed to the respondents a catalog of eight activities that we considered the most popular among those implementing projects in the field of lifelong education for seniors. The respondents could choose any number of answers.

The seventh question related to the demand of seniors for the frequency of organizing classes. We wanted to check how often the elderly are able to devote their free time to participate in educational activities.

The next question was also of a technical nature and it diagnosed how long the classes for the elderly should optimally last. This knowledge is important from the point of view of the organization of the classes themselves (so that they have good attendance) and the budgeting of remuneration in projects in the field of lifelong education for seniors.

The last block, i.e. the ninth, tenth and eleventh questions, referred to the previous experiences of seniors in the field of participation in activities in the field of lifelong learning. People who said that they had participated in such classes were also asked to answer how long such educational processes lasted and who was their organizer / organizer.

## Survey questionnaire

*The Mill of Knowledge Modernity Center and the RISE Foundation invite you to complete a questionnaire on the forms of education of the elderly. The research is carried out as part of the project KA204-C4F4E254-EN, funded by the Erasmus + program.*

*The results of this study will help us to prepare and test a high-quality training program for older people and to integrate them into citizenship education.*

*The survey is anonymous and the data collected by it will be used only for the purpose of the project.*

### Basic information about respondent

#### 1. Age

- a) up to 65
- b) between 65 and 75
- c) above 75

#### 2. Location

- a) village
- b) city with population up to 20.000
- c) city with population between 20.000 to 100.000
- d) city with population above 100.000

#### 3. Education

- a) primary
- b) vocational
- c) secondary / technical
- d) college
- e) higher

### Questionnaire

#### 1. Would you be interested in gaining new knowledge and practical skills?

- a) definitely no
- b) no
- c) hard to say
- d) yes
- e) definitely yes

#### 2. Which topics are you most interested in?

- a) culture and art
- b) literature
- c) handicraft
- d) health
- e) sports
- f) cuisine
- g) new technologies

#### 3. What kind of information are you most interested in?

- a) about the daily life (guidance)
- b) popular science
- c) scientific knowledge
- d) last knowledge achievements

#### 4. Would you be interested in assisting with a social experiment

- a) definitely no
- b) no
- c) hard to say
- d) yes
- e) definitely yes

5. How much time could you devote to participating in social experiment?

- a) a few hours a week
- b) one hour a week
- c) one hour a day

6. What forms of education are you most interested in?

- a) lectures
- b) workshop
- c) trips
- d) handicrafts
- e) outdoor classes
- f) homework
- g) online
- k) role play

7. How often would you like to take part in educational activities?

- a) every four weeks
- b) every 2-3 weeks
- c) once a week
- d) every 2-3 days

8. How long would you like classes to last?

- a) less than 1,5 h
- b) from 1,5 h to 3 h
- c) from 3 h to 4 h
- d) more than 4 h

10. have been part of Lifelong Learning education (LLL)

- a) yes
- b) no

In case of positive answer:

11. how long the education was

- less than month
- more than 3 months
- an year

12. the education has been organized by

- University or its structure
- by NGO
- local government units

# Summary

Finally, I would like to present a few recommendations resulting from the diagnosis of the needs of older people related to the organization of lifelong education processes. These recommendations may facilitate the organization of educational courses for seniors for entities wishing to conduct this type of activity.

## Recommendation 1

Classes for the elderly must correspond to their needs and interests. Therefore, it is extremely important to choose the right topic. Correctly selected course material will guarantee high attendance in the project and will activate participants to action, and will also be a good base for lively discussions.

According to the information provided by the respondents as part of this diagnosis of the needs of older people, the best topics for classes for seniors are:

- Culture and art
- Health
- New technologies

## Recommendation 2

People with different levels of education come to educational classes for seniors, therefore the level of knowledge transferred must be adapted to the audience. The lecturers are often academics and doctoral students who must be aware that the recipients expect knowledge that will be easy to assimilate. Speakers must be aware that older people are primarily interested in popular science and advice on everyday life. Even people with higher education are not fully interested in typically scientific knowledge. For seniors, participation in educational activities is primarily a form of recreation (so it should be pleasant, not burdensome).

## Recommendation 3

Older people are very skeptical about the implementation of activities outside the duration of educational activities. In any case, when you plan to outsource some homework to participants, this must be taken into account. The scope of work must not be too strenuous and too difficult as this will result in a very low return rate. In the case of planning experiments (in the spirit of civic science), they should be organized in such a way that they do not take too much time for seniors and concern the everyday activities of each person, and not complex, abstract problems.

#### Recommendation 4

When planning projects in the field of lifelong learning, it is necessary to predict the frequency of classes. The study shows that seniors expect that the classes will be carried out at short intervals. Therefore, it is worth remembering to plan at least two meetings a month, and with very active groups, you can organize classes even every week. In the case of organizations with a wide didactic offer, implementing several projects or series of classes at the same time, it can be counted that a large part of seniors will decide to participate in various activities and will want to come to classes even several times a week.

#### Recommendation 5

Most seniors treat educational activities as a form of entertainment that is supposed to give them pleasure, and not an obligation accompanying participation in the project. Therefore, the length of classes should be adapted to their needs and possibilities. Based on the survey, we distinguished 3 types of meetings:

- 45/60-minute - short meetings in the form of lectures or talks, which, if they are engaging, may be prolonged, especially at the stage of discussions between participants and the teacher
- Up to 1.5 hours - the most safe and universal time for the implementation of activities, especially good for lectures or workshops.
- Up to 3 hours - classes as part of longer, more complicated educational processes, in particular, preparing participants for further independent (supported) activities.

During the classes, it is worth planning breaks (preferably every 45 minutes), during which participants can rest and integrate. It is also worth providing some small refreshments (for example coffee, tea, cookies).

#### Recommendation 6

When preparing the educational offer for the elderly, it is important to correctly select the forms of organization of classes. Our research shows that seniors are primarily interested in classes in which they can be students: lectures and on-line classes and activities outside the walls of educational institutions: trips and outdoor classes. Among active educational forms, the workshops are the most popular.

#### Recommendation 7

When organizing on-line classes, you should first of all take into account the technical and equipment capabilities of the participants. It seems that this is a method that will be much better suited as a space for lectures and talks than for more active forms of cooperation with

the audience. Older people often belong to the group of digitally excluded people, but the research shows that this type of teaching has its supporters.