

Interim results of the survey about about how Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are used in seniors' education in Europe. Conducted 2006/2007 by the project eLiLL- eLearning in Later Life of the eLearning Program of the Directorate General for Education and Culture.



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**Univerzita Komenského in Bratislava, Faculty of Philosophy 2006**

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## **E-iLL QUESTIONNAIRE REPORT**

Bratislava report

Our first step was devoted to the creation of proposal of questionnaire for all participated organizations in project. We had analysed questionnaire from our point of view and from our experience with the study of seniors at the University of Third Age (UTA) of Comenius University in Bratislava, and experience with learning senior students and young students to information technologies at the courses given at the Department of Library and Information Science of our Faculty of Philosophy too. Very good start position for our work was the questionnaire proposed by our colleagues from Ulm and from Alicante. This variant was discussed with our colleagues in Slovakia and then our remarks on the Questionnaire were send to Ulm, where they collected that from all collaborated countries.

After we had had the final version we translated that to the Slovak language, for use in some organizations related to the learning of seniors in Slovakia (not only UTA, and libraries with particular programmes for senior readers too). We had sended the Questionnaire to intitutions they are interested and devoted in learning of seniors. Not all of them have sended it fulfilled back. We have received 10 answers, 9 from UTA and 1 from library.

Institutions have answered the eLiLL Questionnaire	
1	Univerzita tretieho veku (UTV) pri Slovenskej technickej univerzite Bratislava
2	Univerzita tretieho veku (UTV) pri Centre ďalšieho vzdelávania Univerzity Komenského, Bratislava
3	Univerzita tretieho veku (UTV) Univerzity Mateja Bela, Banská Bystrica
4	Univerzita tretieho veku (UTV) pri Slovenskej poľnohospodárskej univerzite, Nitra
5	Univerzita tretieho veku (UTV) , Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa, Nitra
6	Univerzita tretieho veku (UTV) pri Trnavskej univerzite, Trnava
7	Technická univerzita v Košiciach. Košice
8	Technická univerzita vo Zvolene, Zvolen
9	Ústav celoživotného vzdelávania, Žilinská Univerzita , Žilina
10	Staromestská knižnica (Old Town Library), Bratislava

We hope that some libraries will send completed questionnaire later. It will be without impression to our work.

### **Results from questionnaires**

Material problem facts in Slovakia

1. All that 10 institutions for seniors learning programmes in Slovakia have no state support.
2. 5 institutions from 10 have no support from local institution, 5 other have PC or computer room from some local institutions (for example from school).
3. Inadequate financial resources on behalf of the learners.

### **Target learner groups and participation data**

All the Slovak institutions have set the formal requirement concerning age. 40 % institutions from 10 require for men age over 50 years, 40 % institutions age over 45 and 20 % institutions age over 40 years. For women it is from 40 to 50 years of age.

90 % from 10 our analysed institutions have set the requirement concerning qualification minimally secondary education (GCES, Abitur, etc). University degree have minimally 5 % of students from all number of students of cursus and maximally 52 % of students. Most of them have over 20 % students with university degree. 20 % of institutions have students with PhD (only about 5 % of all students of institution).

Number of students UTA is from 120 to 1520, average number is 502 students.  
Number of students at library is about 50 students.

On average, most of the students are in age between 50 and 65 years. Exemption is UTV Univerzita Konstantina Filozofa Nitra, where from average 250 students they are 60 %

younger than 50 years. On the other hand, UTA of Comenius University Bratislava, there are over 50 % from 1520 students older than 65 years.

Percentage of female in the institutions varies from 79 % to 90 % for women. That means then there is the „female“ majority. At the biggest UTA – of Comenius University Bratislava, from 1520 students are 89 % of them women.

#### Educational programmes: contents and forms

All study programmes at UTA in Slovakia are specified, oriented and designed for seniors and their interests. That is a wide range of interests. From internet and computer science to art, literature, languages, history, psychology, sociology, economy, health, law, etc. Implementation of initiatives and proposals of seniors depends on possibilities and facilities and traditions of concrete institutions and staff of teachers. For illustration in Slovakia there are for example two different UTA in the same town Nitra. UTA at the Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa is more oriented on history, languages, literature, art, internet for fine art, sociology, psychology – that means humanities (about 250 senior students). On the other hand, UTA at Slovenska poľnohospodárska univerzita Nitra (Slovak Agriculture University Nitra) is oriented on natural and technical sciences and their history and on health and gerontology (about 200 senior students).

On average as a result of our analysis from 10 institutions we can show there is big domination of these fields of offer of study – cursus given by institutions: health (offer of 80 % institution), internet (offer of 60 % institutions), art (offer of 70 % institutions) and architecture (offer of 70 % institutions), history (offer 50 %), psychology (offer 50 %), etc. Offer there means, then there is interest and demand of seniors for this study cursus.

There is no distance study of these cursus at all. Study needs participation of students and teachers in classrooms or presence of students at excursions. Type of events are lectures and seminars (100 %) plus structured courses (30%). UTA of Comenius University Bratislava has excursions too.

80 % institutions have evaluated courses (50 % self evaluation or evaluation from university), only 20 % have not evaluation. 1 institution has ISO quality management.

As was shown above, there is big interest from side of seniors used new technologies, including internet. Mainly for classical services of internet - creation of text, internet search, e-mail, reading of newspapers and journals. Some of them are able to use internet for their study too, to search information (about 60 %).

#### Effectiveness / sustainability of educational activities in seniors education with use of the ICTs

All the universities from our analysis don't receive any support from the state in use of ICTs for lifelong learning activities. 5 institutions from 10 have no support from local institutions, 5 other have PC or computer room from some local institutions (for example from school) free of charge. Or some of them have free of charge software.

Application of ICT is good way for learning for teachers and for senior students too. Teachers can present their lectures by Power Point for example, they can show examples during lecture on history, health, etc. from internet, CD or DVD for example. But there is

not always good technology and good technical support. One of big problems is the lack of qualified teaching staff. This is point of view from principalship.

On the other hand, approach of senior students how to use ICT and to use ICT for learning is given by some their financial, technical, psychological aspects. Most of them are not experienced enough on using ICT, there have the lack of computer technology skills, many of them, mainly over 60 years are afraid of computers and all new technologies. Some of them feel reluctance to computers and new technologies. But, on the other hand, many of them appreciate the use of computers and they speak about non qualified teaching staff and its reluctance to use modern technology for learning process. From our analysis we can tell, there is more advantages from use of modern technologies for learning process with seniors. Many of them feel, use of computers in their life will be successful and it will make their life better. That is big motivation for them to be interested in internet and in ICT. They accept ICT.

But big problem for them is, they are accompanied by computers and ICT mainly at school. Outside school there is an absence of ICT for them, many of them have not their own computer at home, many of them have not access to internet at home or in neighbourhood. Also a problem is the lack of study and didactic materials about ICT made especially for seniors.

What is very interesting for us, is use of computers and internet at library by seniors. Most of them use there internet not for use of classical Word processor and search and e-mail, but for searching jobs too. They use often blended learning (seniors teach with teacher or help to teacher with learning ICT technology) and peer teaching or peer help in use ICT.

## **Conclusions**

After analysis the 10 institutions in Slovakia, 9 UTA and 1 library we conclude that:

- There is no state support for learning of seniors. Local support is only in 50 % cases, but it is limited.
- Blended learning and peer teaching is not very used. It would be better apply it more.
- It would be better to produce didactic materials especially devoted for learning of seniors with consideration to their skills and their psychology. As a base for that we can use materials and experience from learning of „young“ students too and apply it and transform it with experienced teachers for seniors.
- It would be better to begin work in the production of courses with virtual learning. As a base use experience and materials, analysis of benefits from experiments of e-learning have made at Slovak universities, especially at the Comenius University.
- It would be better to increase number of institutions outside universities for cheap internet access for seniors. To extend impact to state, government and parliament.

We think, it is a good idea to monitor institutions for learning of seniors for preparing more modern methods and higher quality of learning seniors. Number (percentage) of seniors in Slovakia increases, we need make them more active. One way for that is to familiarize them with new technologies and internet, to use and exploit it, derive benefits from it.