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Solving the
intergenerational puzzle
INTER-PUZZLE

ERASMUS+

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INTER-PUZZLE



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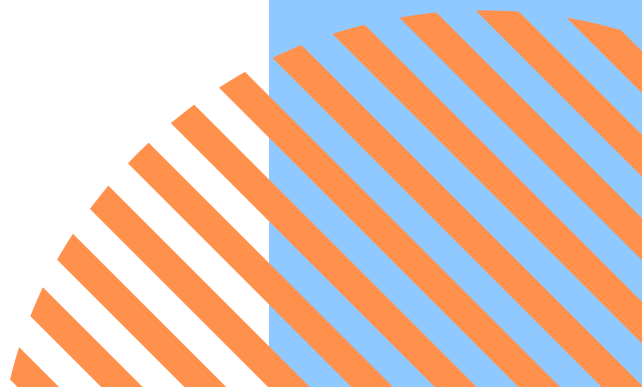


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Contents

- 02 Introduction**
- 03 About the project**
- 04 Project partners**
- 06 Intergenerational learning**
- 08 Collecting stories, Slovenia**
- 16 Collecting stories, Czech Republic**
- 24 Collecting stories, Portugal**
- 32 Collecting stories, Italy**



Introduction

Before you is a collection of stories meant to be read as a reminder that there are many experiences that connect us and that there is a lot we can learn if only we allow ourselves to take some time to listen to each other and explore.

The stories were told by people aged 55+ who live in four different European countries: Slovenia, Czech Republic, Italy and Portugal. We asked 25 people from each county to talk about their lives and life experiences.

We prepared a collection of stories from each country and added stories from other three countries as well so that the reader can learn about the lives and the culture of people living in those countries.

There are 4 e-booklets in 4 different languages: Italian, Portuguese, Czech and Slovene available on our project blog: This is an international e-booklet written in English.

All the stories were collected in the Erasmus+ project Solving the intergenerational puzzle INTER-PUZZLE.

We invite you to read the stories and discover all the similarities that connect us as well as all the attributes that make us unique.

Erasmus+ Solving the intergenerational puzzle INTER-PUZZLE, 2023

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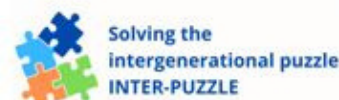
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About the project

“Solving the intergenerational puzzle” is an Erasmus+ project which addresses the issue of the inclusion of adults into various non-formal educational activities, especially the inclusion of older adults aged 55+, by promoting intergenerational learning as a means of developing social, linguistic, digital and other skills of adults. Nowadays, the world changes swiftly, so adapting to the new ways of living, communicating and learning has become quite a challenge for adults as they age. In this project, we will reach out to older adults (55+), collect their stories, categorise them in accordance with the topics and present them in a form of a booklet. The booklet will be a basis for developing tools to be used to improve and promote intergenerational learning activities for adults. Intergenerational workshops for adults aged 18 to 55+ will be organised where participants will be able to meet, communicate and develop their skills. Project activities will contribute to the activation of adults to participate in intergenerational learning activities. It will promote the importance of life-long learning as well as the benefits of becoming or remaining active regardless of one’s age. Tools will be developed for use by individuals, teachers, adult educators and wider public to promote intergenerational learning. This project will strengthen cooperation of relevant organisations at the local, national and transnational level. The project is funded by European Union.



Project partners

School center Slovenske Konjice-Zreče (SCSKZ)

School centre Slovenske Konjice-Zreče is a public institution for the education of youth and adults. Our centre consists of three organizational units: grammar school, secondary vocational school and SIC – adult education and counselling.

Organisational unit SIC – adult education and counselling provides a wide range of various formal and informal programmes for adults.

Adult participants can choose among the following formal education programmes: economy, mechanical engineering, gastronomy, preschool education and health care.

For adult participants we organize various trainings, education programmes, courses and practical workshops with the emphasis on lifelong learning. We are specialized in performing National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ).

Furthermore, we provide counselling and trainings for entrepreneurs in our local community. We also develop new programmes in accordance with the requirements and needs of the people who live and work in our local community (companies, entrepreneurs, the employed, the unemployed, senior citizens, etc.).

We participate in various national and international projects both as project coordinators and project partners.

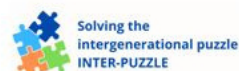
Senior University of Évora (USE)

Senior University of Évora (USE) is a private, nonprofit association that develops non-formal education and several activities for people over 50 years. We are located in Évora, Portugal, a 55.000 inhabitant's city situated in the interior south of Portugal in an area identified as having the highest percentage of older people. In 2005 we've created this association with the purpose of doing something to get better the life style of the oldest population. Our institution's main goals are to promote and active aging; to develop intergenerational relations; to inform and sensibilize seniors about different topics; to do training and educative sessions; to promote volunteering in the community and for the community.

The main activities of the Sénior University of Évora are diversified from ICT, to arts, to mother and foreign languages, literature, history, history of art, psychology, natural sciences, gymnastic, walking, dancing, painting, health, embroidering, music, etc. Besides this, complementary activities are offered, like cultural (music and theatre) and intergenerational relations are privileged, which are not accessorial but complete the knowledge and expertise of this population in nowadays and in the society. Since 2006 we participate and coordinate variou national and international projects.



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Project partners

HR club of Moravian and Silesian region (KPMS, Czechia)

HR Club of Moravian and Silesian region is a professional association of personnel specialists and HR managers from small, medium and large companies from various industries. The club cooperates with 12 universities in the Czech Republic.

The main goal of the club is to support its members in the field of human resource development. It organizes educational events and discussion platforms for its members, on which HR professionals share good practice and obtain up-to-date information on HR trends.

The organization cooperates on national and international projects supporting adult education, equality, diversity, etc.

EDUVITA, Italy

EduVita is an educational, cultural, and intergenerational centre in the heart of Lecce, Southern Italy, founded in 2019. EduVita is a place of connection between past, present, and future: it creates learning opportunities to improve the quality of life of elderly people through intergenerational dialogue, development of digital, linguistic and social competences.

We focus on social activation of elderly people, pedagogical research, innovating teaching and learning processes, designing and implementing learning settings based on intergenerational learning approach, developing new methodologies based on Adult Education and Intergenerational learning approaches.



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Intergenerational learning

Intergenerational learning has always been a way of transferring knowledge, experiences, values and wisdom from older to younger generations within families and it was invaluable for society. Seniors can be very active and useful members of society because they represent a valuable source of knowledge, which can have an immense influence on the development of younger generations. Children can learn from life experiences and wisdom of seniors and in that way become more prepared to face numerous challenges and decisions in their lives.

On the other hand, younger generations, for example, know a lot about new technologies and can help seniors with their digital competencies.

Nowadays, transfer of knowledge and experiences can take place in many forms through intergenerational projects, volunteering, and mentorship or simply by spending time together and talking to each other. In that way, strong bonds and respect between different generations are established, thus enhancing social cohesion and inclusion.

Despite all the challenges and novelties that we encounter, we can learn a lot if we look back on who we are and where we come from. We believe that we can be successful if we are able to mix our previous experiences with new knowledge.

While conducting interviews with seniors whose stories you can read in our ebooklets, we also asked them about their experiences and thoughts on intergenerational and life-long learning.

The majority of our interviewees stated that they mostly transfer their knowledge and experience to their children and grandchildren at home. However, some of them are very active, they are members of various clubs or associations. They are also educators and have workshops for children, students or their peers. The topics are mostly art, crafts, traditions and heritage.

They believe that communicating with the young keeps them active since they can learn a lot from them especially regarding digital skills and the use of mobile phones. Seniors have come to realise that they can remain connected to people around them through the use of technology, which they have encountered later in their lives and are therefore sometimes reluctant to use it. One of our interviewees stated that “she does not feel lonely anymore since the young taught her how to use her mobile phone”.

From the young they can learn about life, how to take life “more lightly” as well as being proud of what they have accomplished. They pointed out that adults should listen to the young, that children are the same everywhere and that adults should approach the young in the right way. Younger generations do show interest in their stories and want to learn from their experiences although they spend a lot of time glued to the screens.

Intergenerational learning

However, they feel that there is sometimes a communication gap as the young cannot really understand that the older generations have led completely different lives. Quite a few of our interviewees say that there was no running water in most homes. Watching TV was a social event where all family members as well as neighbours were present. Children did not have as many toys as today. Travelling was quite different than today. In the past, people had to grow all of their food and prepare everything from scratch as opposed to nowadays when many children have not seen any domestic animals other than on TV or in books.

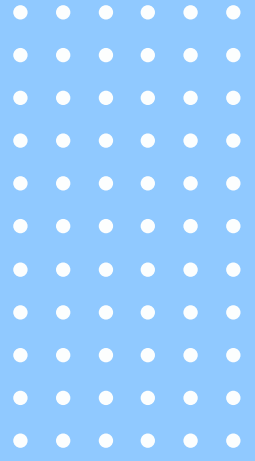
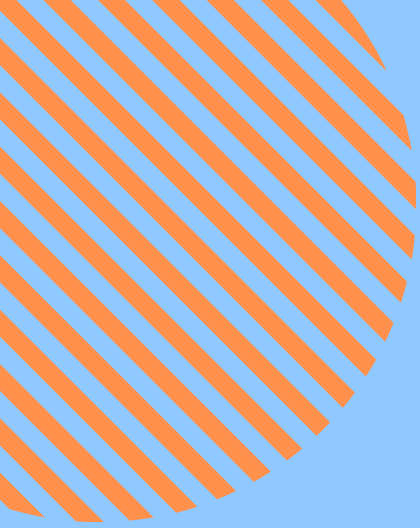
According to our interviewees, the reasons why some seniors do not participate in any life-long learning or intergenerational activities are complex. They stated that the major reason why seniors are reluctant to participate in any educational activities is the fear of the unknown, fear that they will not be able to understand or to participate in activities. The other reasons they stated being: slower learning process, health issues, prejudice towards older people, isolation, feeling that they do not need to learn anything new anymore, belief that they already know everything they need to know, feeling that they are unheard and undervalued because they do not know how to use technology, the presumption that they know more than educators. Some of them also have a lot of responsibilities since they are taking care of their grandchildren or they have to take care of their spouses on their own. For others, transportation is an issue when trying to participate in certain activities as they do not drive or do not have public transportation available at all times.

For some of them, retirement was a turning point. They think that since they are not employed that nobody needs them, that they have lost their purpose.

Our interviewees were happy when we contacted them to collect their stories. They saw that their life experience has been recognised. They were more than open to share their views and ideas, although some of them did not want to be photographed or recorded.

At the end of each story there are key words defining the topics discussed in stories. Upon analysing the key words, we found that the words/topics most often used and covered are: nature, family, sport, food, education, crafts, celebrations, singing, art, history, heritage. Those key words represent topics that our interviewees see as the most vital ones in their life stories.

When asked what they would like to learn about and which topics would be interesting for them to participate in various educational activities, they most often stated: digital technologies, especially the use of mobile phones and computers, cooking, gardening, first aid, arts, crafts, choir singing, music, well-being, communication.



Collecting stories - Slovenia





Name: Darinka Gilčverk-Brdnik

Age: 63

This is Darinka Gilčvert-Brdnik. She is a biology teacher and a botanist. She is 63.

She has worked in education her entire career. She has taught numerous generations of pupils and students. Her curiosity and a scientific way of thinking have led her to always introduce new approaches in the way she teaches. She is quick and skillful in putting ideas into practice. She has always used state-of-the-art technology when teaching, so she can say that she has used everything from video recorders to VR technologies in her classroom.

She provides support for the care of the Žiče grobeljnik habitat. It is a small plant with yellow flowers that grows only in Žiče near Žiče Carthusian monastery.

She has 4 daughters and 5 grandchildren. She likes cooking and baking. Her secret ingredient when baking potica (Slovenian pastry made from yeast dough with walnut filling) is some ground coffee in the filling.

Embroidery is her hobby. She is happy to share her knowledge and skill with her pupils, too. She currently teaches embroidery to 3 groups of pupils, and notices the rise in the interes for embroidery with her pupils.

She likes travelling and preparing presentations about her travels for her family as well as pupils and students.

She is happy when she can share her knowledge and skills with others.

Key words: teacher, biology, embroidery, potica

Name: Aleksander Žvikart
Age: 55



Aleksander Žvikart's family has more than 65 years of tradition and experience in beekeeping. He notices that this year has been a difficult one for bees and beekeeping due to cold, rainy and demanding weather conditions. Climate changes have a negative impact on beekeeping. It was Einstein who said: "If the bee disappeared off the face of the Earth, man would only have four years left to live." The number of wild bee species and other bee species is decreasing constantly. It is the beekeepers that help domestic bee species survive.

The Carniolan honey bee is native to Slovenia and beekeepers in Slovenia can keep only this bee species. In border areas, especially with Austria and Italy, the bee species can sometimes mix. In the areas bordering with Croatia, this is not such a large issue, as the Carniolan honey bee is mostly kept in Croatia as well. By producing queen bees and taking care of the health of the bee family, beekeepers make sure that the Carniolan honey bee remains native to Slovenia. It is a hard-working, calm bee. It is not aggressive. If a bee starts flying around your head, for example, you should step into shade and remain calm. If a bee stings you, the bee dies.

He has more than 400 bee colonies, of which approximately 200 to 300 bee colonies can be moved to other locations in their hives. They also have six apiaries. This type of apiary is specific to Slovenia. Such an apiary is functional as a number of beehives can be stored under one roof. At the same time, it is visually interesting and decorative as paintings on it depict stories about beekeeping, people, nature.

He points out an important distinction that honey is only that which bees produce, everything else is a syrup. Honey is third most-faked produce in the world. It has many health benefits. Honey was discovered in amphorae in Egyptian pyramids. In the past, all farms had to keep bees. Such was the law under Maria Theresa. Another rule was, that along the roads fruit trees had to be planted for travellers. He notices that people go against nature nowadays and that nature in return sometimes strikes back. Winters are not the same as before. Bees retrieve to their hives from December until the end of February. He has noticed a change in the way bees behave. Usually, bees leave their hives when outside temperature is higher than 10°C, now they come out when temperature reaches 9°C.

A beekeeper must know a lot about bees, but also about plants, the diversity of forests, nature and its laws because in beekeeping there are no strict rules or dates. A beekeeper needs to be a good observer. The knowledge about bees and beekeeping in his family was transferred from father to son. Aleksander's father received an award from the Mayor of Slovenske Konjice for his work in beekeeping as well as three Anton Janša awards of the Slovenian Beekeeper's Association. Aleksander has so far received two Anton Janša awards. Aleksander's father was a professional beekeeper having received his qualification in 1956. In 2006, Aleksander became a Master beekeeper. They are the only beekeeping family in Slovenia to have both of these qualifications. Aleksander is also the president of the Beekeepers' Society of Slovenske Konjice and the Beekeepers' Association of Slovenske Konjice.

His knowledge about beekeeping Aleksander shares with his offspring. He also cooperates with schools and kindergartens in the local community. For tourists who visit Slovenske Konjice, he prepares presentations about the importance of beekeeping, honey and its benefits.

May the honey flow!

Key words: beekeeping, apiary, honey, nature, climate changes

Konrad Ž. is 86 years old. He was born at home in Klokočovnik, near Loče. He has three brothers and a sister. When he was 4 years old, his tasks was to take cows grazing. He helped his parents with the work on their farm. He remembers that when he was ten years old, his father made him a small scythe so that he could mow grass. He work for other farmers as well. He would begin in the morning and would work till evening. He was paid for the work and he got three meals a day, as well. He says that they produced or manufactured almost everything they needed. They rarely went to the shops and when they did go, they only bought certain products such as yeast or salt. They did not by any sweets as we do today. They produces their own vinegar, pumpkin seed oil, flour. They had to carry the water to their house, as there was no water supply.

Later, when he had his own family and farm, he did most of the work himself. He made brooms, rakes, etc. He knew how to make and mend things. He says that he worked as a railway maintenance worker. He did not spend much and he saved up to by his own land and a farm. The farm is now unoccupied as he has been living at a residential care home in Slovenske Konjice for a year now.

He went to church on important religious holidays. They prepared “butara” for Palm Sunday, before Easter and took it to church. It was made from branches of hazelnut, willow, elm tree, cornus (dogwood) and common box. They also added apples. Those who could afford it, added oranges as well. He liked going to »pušelšank«*. He liked dancing and he could dance polka, waltz, tango. When he was in the army in Belgrade, he learned how to dance their traditional dance “kolo” as well. He notices that people used to walk for an hour to arrive at their destination. They had to put in some effort to achieve something. Now everything is faster and it has to be done immediately. He likes being among people. This is something that did not change. When he looks back, he says that it was all good.

*pušelšank – Farmers would occasionally sell their wine in the open »under the tree branches« from spring till autumn to empty their barrels and prepare for the new season.

Key words: holidays, farm, butara, green practices

Name: Konrad Ž.

Age: 86





Name: Emil Mumel
Age: 64

Emil Mumel has already visited numerous countries. Norway, Korea, Finland, Georgia, Latvia, Romania, Portugal, to name some of them. He has visited some of those countries with scouts. He has been a scout since 1975 and is one of the first scouts in Zreče. Members of Scout organisation Green Rogla Zreče have participated in numerous state and international competitions and they have achieved excellent results. They have also taken part in World Scout Jamboree, a gathering of Scouts from all over the world. Since 1995, has attended Jamboree 7 times so far and this year's gathering, which will be held in Korea, will be his 8th. Jamboree is organised every 4 years. At his first four Jamborees, he was also the contingent leader. He points out that when children join scouts, they can learn many practical skills. More importantly, they develop their social skills, management and leadership skills. Even later in life, those skills prove to be useful, when looking for employment, for example. He has always enjoyed working with children and the youth as well as spending time in nature. After 20 years of teaching mathematics at Primary school Zreče, in 2001 he was ready for a career change. He has been at the head of Centre for School and Outdoor Education Gorenje. There he could merge the work of a teacher and a scout as well as project work. In 2004, he participated in his first preparatory meeting for a project in Berlin. Since then, every year he either prepares a project application or is a project coordinator for at least one project. At the same time, he has been a project partner in numerous other projects. All those projects were mostly Erasmus+ programme projects. He says that he has never really counted all the projects he has participated in. He points out that the most important thing is exchanging experiences, learning about other cultures and traditions. Numerous souvenirs from different travels in his office are proof of that. He is currently preparing for a trip to Georgia with a group of students. Although he is going to retire in a couple of months, he believes that he will remain active.

Ključne besede: scouts, teacher, travels, Erasmus+ projects

Name: Marija R.

Age: 74



Marija R. says that education always went hand in hand with work. First, they had to do all the work on their farm so that they could survive. It was a practical education, vital for their lives. Going to school and getting formal education was a privilege for her. She was happy to be able to go to school and her grades were fine but there was not much time for studying. So, when she was at school, she used that time to complete her homework and she listened carefully to the teachers. She was lucky her parents knew how important for children it was that they read books. They usually read books in the evening; there was no time for reading during the day. Her father was of weak health and he could not work so he read to children aloud. He would read beautiful novels written by Slovenian authors as well as the Holy Bible. Children then listened to these stories and talked about them. She has invaluable memories of those moments with her parents. She points out that she lived together with her parents and grandparents and that she felt safe in that environment. Parents encouraged them to help each other, so she would help her younger sister or her grandmother to tie their shoes, for example. She always had an image of what old age looks like in front of her. She learned a lot about life, life experiences, adapting, from her parents and grandparents.

They did not have a lot of free time, except on Sundays and church holidays, when they all attended a church mass. She could not wait for those gatherings since her aunts and uncles and neighbours would come visit. At the end of any farm work, for example harvesting, people would sing old folk songs. She remembers fondly playing with her brother and sisters in front of their house. Manual work, cooking, sawing, climbing a tree. Those were all skills they had to learn as soon as possible.

She stresses that everything they owned had to be used up. They did not know what waste was nor plastics, for that matter. When she started school, they made her a basket out of corn leaves, which she used as a school bag, and she had it until it was completely ruined. The same was the case with clothes. They were grateful for everything nature provided. They had to be careful with what they had and they had to be frugal. They mostly ate potatoes, beans, wheat, fruit, mushrooms and a little bit of meat. They had to produce their food. They did not know about candy and sweets. For holiday, their mother would prepare “potica” and some biscuits and that would be gone quickly. They respected food, and were thankful for it. As children, they were especially happy when there was a holiday because they could spend time with their cousins, neighbours.

Key words: farm, nature, folk songs, family, crafts



Name: Marjan Grosman

Age: 74

Marjan Grosman has been a member of the Alpine Association of Slovenia since 1964. Alpine club Zreče was formed in January 1958. He became a member of the club when he returned from the army service. Various locations in Pohorje needed to be marked so he decided to join the club. He became a mountain guide in 1986, over 37 years ago. He was also the president of the Alpine club Zreče. He was a volunteer there, putting in his hours and free time as a volunteer. He says that if you live for that and with that, then it is not a difficult task. If you are only in it for personal gain, it will not function, he says. He had to pass an exam to attain a license, which needs to be renewed after a period of time. His first guided hike was the hike to Rogla. He remembers the cold winters in Rogla with a lot of snow. Especially the winter on Rogla more than sixty years ago, when there was so much snow that the children could not see outside. At the time, Ana and Valter Podgrajšek were caretakers of the cabin in Rogla and invited him to spend the holidays in Rogla and help them with their work, as at that time the students of Celje grammar school were there for a skiing course. When the work was completed, he could go skiing. He accepted the proposal with pleasure. But first it was necessary to get to Rogla, as 1.5m of snow had already fallen. They were able to get to Resnik by car. From there, it was necessary to walk. They needed two days just to carry all the food they would need to the hut. There was so much snow, that they could not see the cabin. They could only see the spruce tops. They shoveled snow to get to the entrance. They fired up the stove and prepared everything for the arrival of the visitors. One of his tasks was to go to the neighboring farm to collect fresh milk in the morning. He skied down to the farm, and he would strap on his skis in his room and set off right through the window because there was so much snow. A hot cup of coffee and some breakfast awaited him at the farm every morning. He prepared firewood and made sure that the stove was always warm. He says that you have to know how to look at nature, you can see a lot of sculptures there if you know what to look for.

Nowadays, he likes to go on hikes without climbing. Rocks and heights no longer attract him. He was on Triglav more than 20 times; he counted up to his 20th hike and then he stopped counting. He mentions that, among other things, he visited Mont Blanc, Aconcagua. He and his wife visited many regions in Spain, Italy as well. They went camping. Both of them love nature and being active, resting on the beach by the sea on vacation is not their cup of tea. Together with his wife, he also guides groups of hikers. They mainly work with children now. They have established good contact with Zreče primary school and kindergarten. There are currently 2 teachers undergoing mountain guide training. He says that his generation did not encounter technology until they were older. They had to find for themselves something to do to pass the time. Nature was their playground on which they did everything. Sports have always been part of his lifestyle: basketball, football, handball. He has also been a member of the Bowling Club Slovenske Konjice for 20 years. In his backpack he always has one bag, a spare t-shirt and a long-sleeved t-shirt, a cap, gloves, a bandage, a scarf, fluids, a top and a first aid kit. The rules must be followed when you are in nature, he says. He also points out that there are two criteria for evaluating success: if you enjoy the hike, the top is not your goal. The top is always waiting for you. Routes are measured by experiences and satisfaction, not by kilometers or hours. Still, his watch diligently counts the steps he takes every day. In May, it was recorded that he has made a total of 395,000 steps.

Key words: mountain guide, hiking, nature, sport



Name: Pavel Skaza

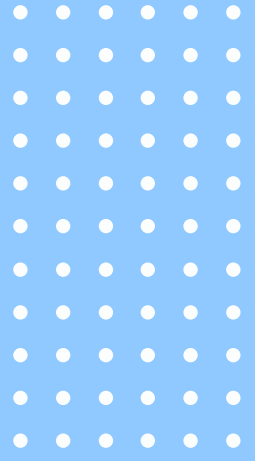
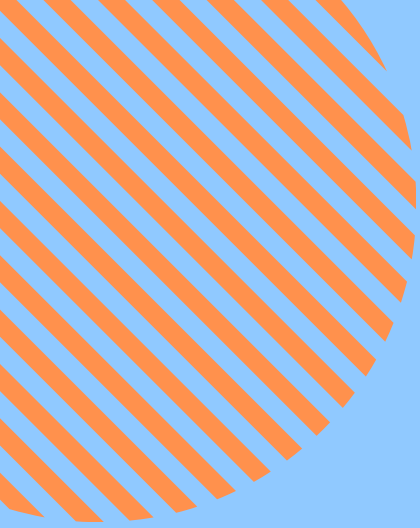
Age: 61

Pavel Skaza was 39 years old when he began making violins. In his family, everybody plays one or more instruments. He plays the baritone horn, the bass guitar and the tuba. One day, he was reading an old issue of a book about making violins, when suddenly knowledge and experiences of his ancestors were awakened in him. Namely, one of his ancestors played the violin, another one worked with wood. Immediately it was clear to him how to make a violin. At that time, he was working in maintenance both at a music school and at a primary school with an adapted educational programme in Slovenske Konjice. He speaks proudly and with a lot of emotions about the time he spent at those two schools. Before he started working here, he had already completed his 14-year career as a professional musician having played in various bands all across Europe.

He improved his skills and knowledge for making violins by attending various workshops in Switzerland, Germany and Italy. He has also cooperated with renowned violin makers. In 2005, he entered an international competition for violin makers for the first time and as soon as in 2010, his violin was ranked 9th in the tone category and 36th overall out of 480 violins that had been evaluated. His instruments are entirely handmade, including lacquering and polishing. He uses only natural and ecological materials (glues, lacquers). In his workshop, he also repairs and restores all bowed string instruments.

He mentions many anecdotes from his workshop and explains that life consists of small and big wheels. Small wheels rotate quickly and in doing so move bigger wheels, which rotate slowly, sometimes even unnoticeable, but are in motion nevertheless. He remembers that when he was 8 or 9 years old, he was playing with other children. They were running and he fell into dirt. He realised that he had stumbled upon a string and when he pulled the string out of the dirt, there was a scroll from a cello at the end of it. He cleaned the scroll and attached it to a wood base, as a cup. A small wheel put in motion a big wheel and many years later you can visit him in his workshop in Spodnji Dolič. There he lives with his wife. He has already begun transferring his knowledge about violin making to one of his two daughters who joined him in his workshop. Recently he became a grandfather.

Key words: instrument manufacturing, music, wood



Collecting stories - Czechia



Vladimíra R.

Age: 55 let

"Nature is a resource that I can draw from, but I have to give it back," says Ms. Vladka. She was born in Prague, where she spent almost her entire childhood, except for 1.5 years, which she spent with her grandfather in southern Bohemia. Her childhood was not always idyllic. After her parents' accident, when she lost her father, she lived only with her disabled mother, and it was rough at times. The money was not much, yet she retained the optimism that accompanies her throughout her life. She traveled a lot in her youth, visiting India, Africa, Mexico and other countries. It was after the Velvet Revolution, the borders had opened, so she took advantage of the opportunities that were offered. After high school and college of economics, she went to the Sorbonne as part of the Erasmus project, where she obtained a doctorate. Although she was learning French, in Paris she found that she couldn't really communicate, but she stuck to it and in 1.5 years she was able to write an excellent dissertation.

After returning from France, she worked in banks, devoted herself to a number of projects, and is proud of the introduction of a tool for interest rate speculation. Even though it was interesting, she was not very happy with this work, so she jumped back to the ceramics circle for 1.5 years and devoted herself to creation. She was primarily interested in the technological side of ceramic creation, for example Japanese wood firing or the ancient prehistoric process of processing clay. While on parental leave, she started teaching and thus started her own business. She has remained there to this day, completing further retraining in the field and training in coaching. As part of her business, she handles their business with clients (especially managers from small and medium-sized companies). She deals with various topics, managerial, economic, but also psychological.

Mrs. Vladika is full of energy. Today, outside of her work activities, she takes photos of people. She also enjoys creating wire jewelry. She lives with her 2 adult children in Jílové u Prahy, where they renovated the house and enjoys the garden and devotes herself fully to her business.

Key words: courage, resilience, perspective, humor, flexibility, optimism



Jan K.
Age: 70

Mr. Jan has lived all his life in a small village in Slovácko, South Moravia. He comes from three siblings. His father worked in assembly and was away all week; their mother was in charge of the whole household, the fields and the house. Even so, they had a small vineyard, some fields and took care of many fruit trees. As a child, he went with his siblings to collect plums that had fallen from the trees that were on the border of the fields and in the garden. He remembers the "gulovačky", which were small round blue plums that were very sweet. In addition, according to his grandfather, it was a "proper base for ferment". It was their least favorite activity. The collected plums were poured into oak or ash vats. There it was allowed to ferment until it reached the so-called "dead point" when it could no longer ferment. If it was warm, fermentation went better. The sweeter the fruit and the longer the fermentation time, the less residual sugar remained in the fruit. After fermentation, a distillery was ordered and the ferment was taken away to be fired. The quality of the homemade brandy depended on how well the ferment was prepared. The worst was when the so-called "vinegar fermentation" started - when vinegar entered instead of alcohol, which most often happened with summer fruits or when the fermentation process was interrupted. This whole process is a kind of alchemy, the knowledge of chemical processes was passed on to his father by his grandfather, and his father passed it on to him over time. Mr. Jan then passed on this experience and knowledge to his children. He says that even though he has passed on the experience, young people prefer to buy alcohol in the store, because making homemade brandy is time-consuming and the prices for the distillery are high now.

Everyone who makes homemade brandy has his own procedure and technique. Mr. Jan only makes fermentation from plums. As he says, some growers even pluck the stems and pit the fruit or even add sugar. According to him, it is best when the fruit is naturally sweet and "has enough sunshine", because adding sugar reduces the resulting quality of the plum brandy, which is called slivovice.

Key words: ferment, plum brandy, slivovice, gulovačky



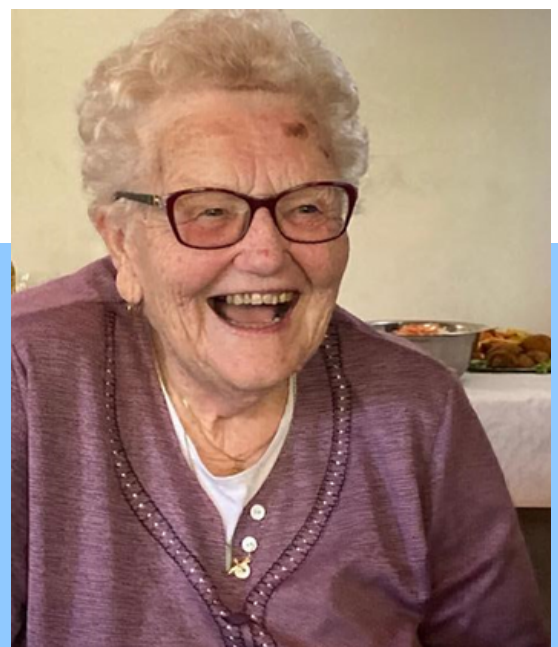
Božena K

Age: 84

Mrs. Bozena was born in the post-war period in a small village in South Moravia. She remembers how they had farm and she helped at home and harnessed the horses and, at the age of 13, drove a horse-drawn cart to take "deputies" (a share of the harvest) to the collective farm. Her dad worked as an ambulance driver and she had an older sister. Her parents wanted her to be a nurse. As she says herself, she was stupid, because even though she had good grades, she ran away from a one-year study after primary school because she wanted to earn money. Therefore, at the age of 15, she started going to work in a cannery. Then she joined the Kordárna, where she worked in the coiling plant - winding industrial fiber on huge spools, which was used in the production of tires for jet aircraft. After that, her sister talked her into going to work in a brickyard where there was more money. Finally, because of the children, she joined the local collective farm, where she worked as a milkmaid until the end of her working career. Ms. Bozena is known throughout the village for baking the best "vdolečky". These are traditional cakes made of yeast dough, filled with cottage cheese and raisins, decorated with "sprinkle" or crumbs made of flour, butter and sugar. She learned the traditional recipe when she was in her twenties. She started going to help an "auntie" from the village who was baking pancakes at the time. In addition to vdolečky, she also helped her make "báleše", which are flatbreads made from simple leavened dough, baked dry on the stove, and can be eaten sweet or salty. She says that her recipe for the vdolečky is very old, because the auntie was over 50 years old at the time. She likes to pass on her experience and share the recipe. However, the baking process is lengthy, the dough has to be "mixed" several times, and even if a small amount is prepared, it takes a long time. She bakes with love, exactly according to the old recipe and with great honesty. She does not skimp on ingredients, which is perhaps the reason why her one-bite-sized vdolečky are in the neighborhood the most popular ones.

Mrs. Bozena has three great grandsons and 4 great-granddaughters, with whom she gets along very well. Even at her age, she is active, goes to the theater and on trips with the pensioners' club. She likes animals, at home she has a parrot named Žofka, whom she taught to speak. She is a regular visitor to the go-kart races that one of her great-grandsons drives. As she herself says with a smile, "I'm definitely the oldest fan at the races, but if I can, I won't miss a race."

Key words: báleše, vdolečky, great grandchildren



Eva Š.

Age: 70

Eva graduated from a secondary hotel school and then, while employed, at the Faculty of Economics. She has had a varied professional life – she worked in gastronomy, one of her jobs was managing 58 restaurants, she also taught, and has a lot of experience as a sales representative. She is retired and still works 4-6 hours a day, now as a HR coordinator.

She lives in Čeladná (Czech republic) with her niece and her daughter. She has been a widow for 5 years, has 1 married son and a grandson. She takes care of animals and likes cooking. She follows bloggers and shows focusing on trends in gastronomy. She perceives that in society there is ignorance of technology and food treatment, which has a negative effect on the taste of food. She likes to pass on her experience in the field of gastronomy. For example, she makes cabbage, which she does not thicken with flour, but with grated potato. The environment is important to her, especially she doesn't like wasting food.

On St. Stephen's Day (December 26), she maintains the Beskydy (mountains in Czech republic) custom of "carrying happiness." A fir branch is decorated and it is used for "caroling" (visits). A given fir branch is exposed (on the photo it is placed on the board) and brings good luck for the whole year. It will be burnt in a year to be replaced by new branch of "happiness".

Her motto in life is not to stick to what one has learned once, but to openly accept changes.

Key words: gastronomy, customs



Pavel V

Age: 59

Pavel graduated from grammar school and then from the Faculty of Education, specialization physical and civic education. Later, while employed, he completed the state bachelor's degree in business management at the Faculty of Economics. He began his professional career as a teacher, then worked for 8 years at the town hall in Frýdek-Místek as mayor and for one year as a bank director. Since 2000, works as a trainer of courses for adults in the field of soft skills, communication, presentation, management, business, etc. He is a certified coach. He also worked as an executive director for three years, where he had used his experience in development management.

He has 7 children (the youngest is 17 and the oldest daughter is 38) and 8 grandchildren. He spent his free time with his children playing sports. It is a parental satisfaction for him that his children get along and that the family meets almost every weekend. He is actively involved in events for the parish - he trains and encourages lecturers, participates in the organization of marriage evenings and events for parishioners. Every year he goes on a walking pilgrimage to Velehrad with his 3 friends, they have been walking regularly from different places for 15 years. Their pilgrimage varies in length, sometimes they had traveled over 150 km.

It is important for him not just to talk about things, but to actually do them - to be useful and beneficial. That is why he started working as a volunteer in a hospice in 2016, where he each week talks and spends time with people who are dying.

He sees meaning in communication and relationships. He perceives mutual listening as essential, when the young learn from the elders and vice versa. The children force him not to stand still and to think about things that he might not otherwise pay attention to.

Keywords: family, education, parish



Iveta B.

Age: 60

Iveta is a very active person, she exudes energy and is full of ideas and inspiration. As she says herself, her greatest driving force was her grandmother, who replaced her parents at an early age and helped raise her brother, who was 4 years younger. When her mother died at the age of 17 and her father at the age of 25, her grandmother moved in with them in the village and taught her a love of nature, farming and instilled in her faith in herself. To this day, she benefits from her example and advice, especially occupational therapy, which helped her overcome the most difficult moments in her life, and she follows them in her work in institutions for the physically and mentally disabled.

After studying at VŠB, she briefly worked in the economic department of ČKD, but after parental leave she decided to try something else. Without previous experience or education in the social sphere, she applied for the selection process to become the director of Bylany's home and won. That was 25 years ago and he still works there today, they managed to open 3 more facilities, either for permanent clients or for palliative care. Today she is the director of 3 such homes. They have several hundred clients who are with them for their whole life. In fact, no one leaves them, they are like a "big family." Here she was very inspired by her grandmother's words that occupational therapy is above all, so even if they sometimes have clients with very severe disabilities, they try to make them as involved as possible in normal daily activities not only around you, but also for the facility and also the community in which it resides. Clients work in the village on cleaning services, distribution of leaflets, in the kitchen or household management, and those who can work independently in other organizations, e.g. in a coffee roaster.

Iveta uses all available options for the development, not only of herself, but also of her colleagues and the development of the facility. She has toured homes in almost every European country and used these inspirations for herself and her clients. Today, he lectures on these successes and experiences at meetings and meetings of directors of such facilities throughout the Czech Republic. It has a wonderful name in the Central Bohemia region, their Home has many supporters. Iveta is proud of her colleagues, what they have achieved together, and she values the support of her family, especially her husband, 2 adult sons, and her 2 small grandsons make her happy. In her free time, she spends time in the garden and on hockey, which she passionately follows directly in the stadiums.

Keywords: social services, occupational therapy, grandmother, inspiration



Libuše H.

Age: 61

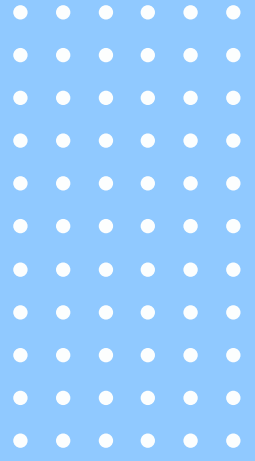
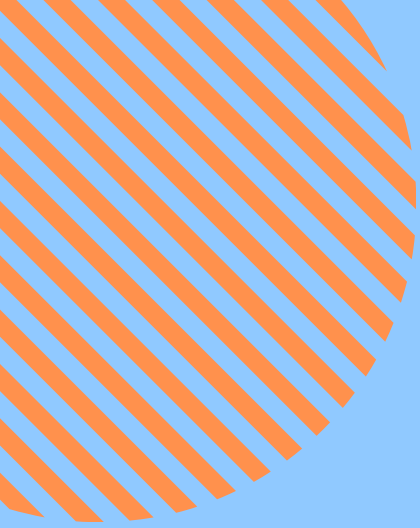
Libuše was born and raised in a small town in Vysočina. She wanted to be a teacher since she was little. Due to the fact that her parents were not members of the Communist Party of the Czech Republic, she only got into university through distance learning in the field of special education. During her studies, she worked as a teacher in a special school and then as a leader for extracurricular activities at a secondary vocational school. After maternity leave, she started her dream job as a primary school teacher. Although she "ran away" from teaching in the course of her life and worked for a while at the labor office, the social welfare department, the head of a day activity center for people with mental disabilities or as a special pedagogue in a pedagogical-psychological counseling center, she eventually returned to teaching.

Her great love and passion is writing. Although the beginnings of her work fall into the period of her high school studies, she began to write more intensively when she was 42 years old, coping with the death of her father. Even now, she copes with her emotions and feelings by writing poetry - she writes when she is happy and feels happy, she is inspired even in difficult life situations. In addition to poetry, she wrote a fairy tale for children "Daisy Aninka". For a long time she contributed to the web blog of the newspaper IDnes. About writing for the newspaper, she says that it was very simple. You just need to register, and when writing, meet the specified conditions regarding scope and inappropriate content. Now she does not contribute there with his articles, columns and comments, but the blog is still working today. If the article catches the reader or editor, it will receive further publicity. People can give their opinions or ratings to the articles on the blog, and the author thus receives feedback on what he writes. She has published the book "In the shadows behind the mirror", which deals with life with psychosis, of which she is the co-author - here she tells the story of an acquaintance who is struggling with this disease. Her other writing credits include the shorter novel On the Swing Between Debt and Love, which can be found on her website, and she is currently completing a novel, Breathe! Jump!... And fly!. She is inspired by the stories of people around her.

She still lives with her husband in the same town in Vysočina where she was born, she has 2 sons and one granddaughter. She has been working with people all her life. Whether they are children or adults who are in a difficult situation and need help. In addition to writing, her hobbies include gardening, theater and Argentine tango.

Keywords: writing, blog, novels, garden





Collecting stories - Portugal





Odete Molero
Age. 80

During my professional life I was employed by the Post Office, but to get there, I spent a good time, I had to study at night because I worked during the day. I couldn't just study, because my parents didn't pay me for my studies. I have always had good relations with my parents and my childhood was very happy. I worked in the post office for 30 years serving the public, I liked what I did, because I was always a person who likes to live with and I really like to talk. And at the time people would go to the post office and many would even vent about their lives, and we would listen and give a little encouragement. I worked at the post office in a village where the important people were, the post office lady, the teacher and the doctor. I got married, I have a son and 3 grandchildren and I will have a great-grandchild.

My ideal was always embroidery and sewing, everything that was manual work is what I liked to do. While reading is important, I don't really enjoy reading. Currently, and since I returned to Évora, I went to live on the farm and I have a lot of agricultural work. I go to the senior university, where I learn, live and create friendships, and where there is a choir in which we sing and play and give a certain meaning to life and forget a lot.

I'm a person concerned about the environment, I don't think we should cut down trees, I have a lot of centenary trees on my farm, but I don't cut them down. All this is good for the environment.

My diet has always been more fruit- and vegetable-based. Even today I have health advantages for this and I eat more fish and vegetables than meat. I loved all the parties that had dance, since I was young, I sing and dance. At my house during the Christmas and Easter festivities, we would gather the family to socialize, sing and dance.

I live a lot with my grandchildren and play with them a lot. I taught them the old tales, the games, I taught them everything I knew. As I attend the Senior University, I am always participating in classes and learning, here and in projects abroad, where I have already gone with the Senior University.

What I would like to do the most, and I see that I no longer have that possibility, is theatre. When I came to Senior University we had drama classes, we did 2/3 plays. I would like to do it again, but at this age it is no longer very easy to memorize the lines, but I really like the atmosphere of the stage and the rehearsals.

Keywords: Family; Post Office; agricultural work.



Manuela Pascoal
Age. 76

I lived in Lisbon, my upbringing was always respecting others, so it was a very healthy family environment. The school education was first in the Lyceum of D. Filipa de Lencastre, then I went to take a professional course of Secretary, but I wanted to have been a Social Worker. However, to take the course of Social Worker, one could not have worked before, so I went to study for a College of adults (the 6th and 7th grade), and then enter the College.

However, I took the 6th and 7th grade, met my husband, and decided to "use" the Secretary course I had, to get a job. I got married, had three children, and the family relations are very good. During my free time, I do Castelo Branco Embroidery, Crochet, Cross Stitch, Arraiolos Embroidery and Sewing.

Currently I work in resale of accessories, as I care about sustainability and the environment, I work with a collection in which it uses in the manufacture the leather that is recycled. This is because, per year, 100 tons of leather are wasted from suitcases and shoes of major Haute Couture brands (e.g. Gucci, Louis Vuitton). And this brand that I work with, uses these leather scraps, which are used in a sustainable way, to make bags and shoes.

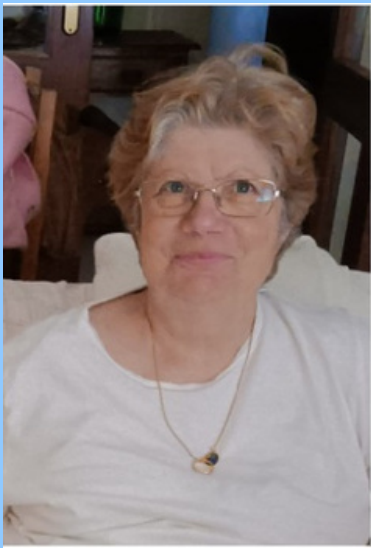
During Christmas traditions and festivities, I have a habit of bringing the family together. The sweets are typical of Christmas and I make some "broas", which one of my grandchildren says: "It even smells like Christmas!"

As I have a great manual dexterity, the knowledge that I transmit to the younger generations, are not so receptive to this kind of crafts (mentioned above). However, the cooking will still be passed on to my children and grandchildren. On the other hand, I can say that the younger generations offer us other ways of thinking. It is also with them that I have learned a lot at the level of Informatics.

From my perspective, the biggest obstacles to teaching other generations are lack of interest, availability, lack of opportunity and motivation to participate in these craft activities. Because otherwise, I was open to passing on this knowledge.

At an opportune time, I would like to acquire new digital and linguistic skills.

Keywords: Sustainability; manual dexterity; embroidery arts.



Marilia Vaz
Age. 75

I During my time, I only studied until 7th grade of middle school. Before I retired, I was working in the secretariat of a school at EB 2,3 Sebastião da Gama, for the state. I am a widow and I have 2 children, a 44-year-old boy and a 35-year-old girl. I have 3 grandchildren, two girls and a boy who make me very happy.

I really like handicrafts, at another time I even took a tin course. One of the things that gives me the most pleasure is doing crochet work in my spare time. I think it's important that we recycle, so I have a habit of recycling glass, plastic and paper at home.

One of the things that gives me the most pleasure is cooking, because it's something that relaxes me. I really like to welcome my family members to the festivities, with good delicacies.

Throughout my life I have transmitted my experiences and knowledge to other people, especially to my children. I've also always thought that you always learn something from the younger generation, because they have grown up in a more technological and more evolved world.

Unfortunately, lately I have not participated in courses or workshops, because the place where I live has been an obstacle to new learning, since there are not many new activities or intergenerational activities.

I would also like to be able to learn more about new technologies, as it is an increasingly necessary area and I feel that it is always in constant advance.

Keywords: sustainability; family; new learnings.



Maria Helena Chumbo
Age. 67

I did the Elementary school in the village where I was born, and then I came to study in Évora where I did the General Course of Administration and Commerce. Therefore, I qualified to work in offices and post offices.

It's April 25, and I couldn't find a job. I got married, got pregnant, and the chances of finding work were less and less.

Then we went to live in Setubal, where I finally got a job in a shop downtown. But the salary I received was all to pay the babysitter who stayed with my daughter. Therefore, as it did not pay, I gave up and started working from home: making lace towels and other jobs and then selling.

Later, I got a job in a factory, until we decided to move to Estremoz, where I had a clothing store and simultaneously made Arraiolos carpets.

When I was a child, I had the habit of reading a lot, thanks to the itinerant library, which existed at the time, and which circulated through the villages. Fortunately, I still have the habit of reading, but I also enjoy gardening, and teaching Arraiolos Embroidery at the Senior University of Évora.

I care a lot about sustainability and environmental issues, namely water saving, waste separation and composting, and then putting the substrate in the plants.

In my home village, we have the festivities, in honour of the Saints, and the tradition is always to eat a stew of grain. As my sons-in-law are not from Alentejo, they did not know the grain stew, and now they love it! So my family relations are good, and we all get along very well.

Also in my village, we have the meeting with the children of the Pre-Primary, where I transmit my knowledge. I am happy to teach and to transmit my experiences.

The biggest obstacles I encounter in transmitting my knowledge (such as the Teaching of Arraiolos Embroidery), is that people do not want to learn: "Oh, I do not know how to do it!" "Oh, I don't want to go," "Oh, then that's boring."

In the future, I would like to acquire digital skills, because I don't know much about new technologies.

Keywords: factory, reading



Maria Antónia
Pombinho
Age. 59

I was born in São Bartolomeu do Outeiro, municipality of Portel. My family was very humble, and quite numerous. My parents were able to raise 10 children with some difficulties.

I only attended primary school, but my parents wanted me to continue my studies until the 6th grade. I chose to drop out of school and enter the world of agricultural work at the age of 14.

Then a few years later, I came to Évora to serve the house of the Judge of the Court of the city. But my big dream was to be a hairdresser. My mother made the sacrifice of paying for the course, which at that time was quite expensive: 200 euros! I started attending the Hairdressing course, but I didn't finish it completely because I started dating my husband. He emigrated to Switzerland, and when he came to Portugal on vacation, I went with him in search of a better life.

Our family relations are very good, we regularly go to each other's houses, and we protect the health of our older siblings.

I still have a habit, every year on Ascension Thursday (Easter) fasting meat until the Saturday at noon.

As I am fascinated by the world of botany, I pass on my advice to both younger and older people. For example, one of the pieces of advice I give you is when you plant a flower, water it daily.

In transmitting this knowledge, I feel happy, but I also like to listen and learn, although I think that these new generations do not like to learn as much as the older generations, because they focus essentially on studies and work.

Keywords: botany, agriculture.



Francisco Pombinho
Age. 64

I was born in the village of São Bartolomeu do Outeiro, municipality of Portel. I lived with my paternal grandparents until school age. My grandparents had a large vegetable garden where there were animals and fruit trees. I went to school until I finished primary school.

Then I started working in agriculture (in tomatoes, olives, cork, harvest). When I finished the activity in agriculture, I started the course/work of mechanic. As the salary was low, I started working in construction. In the meantime, I got married, I have a good family relationship with my daughters and my wife. Unfortunately, my parents have passed away, but we had a good relationship.

However, the population of my village was a population of emigrants, which led me to leave for Switzerland, in search of a better life, meanwhile I returned to my country.

I enjoy helping my wife with gardening, DIY work, and household chores like cooking.

We practice recycling and are sustainable because we separate household waste and packaging.

I remember the time of Carnival in my village. They made a doll built of straw and dressed it. On the day of Ashes they burned the doll.

Along my way I have already transmitted my knowledge of mechanics to new people, including my daughters. I was happy to pass on this knowledge of traditional mechanics, because today's cars are more modern and sophisticated.

However, it is difficult to transmit the knowledge, because the younger ones do not like to learn.

Keywords: migration; mechanics



Maria Luisa Henriques
Age. 71

I was born in Angola, I did the 5th year of high school, then I went to the Pius XII Institute of Education and Social Work that was in Luanda, to take the course of Social Educator. I have 4 children that I raised on my own, they give me all the support possible and imaginary. I love to read, and that taste was instilled in me by my grandfather. As he became blind very early, on vacation he bought books to read to him.

I began my career as a Social Educator in 1969, in an organisation that was called the Provincial Board of Settlement. I worked and studied, because it was an organism that badly needed Social Educators, and therefore employed students and paid us the salary. We didn't have school holidays, because we had to work in agriculture, in the sanzalas with the rural communities.

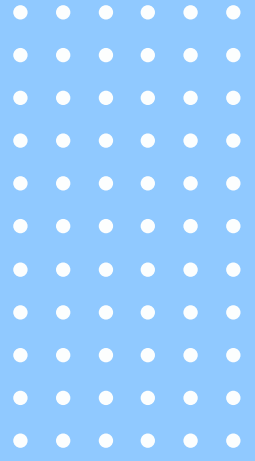
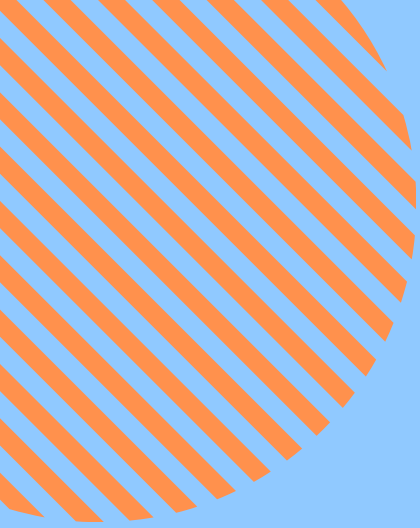
In 1982, I came to Portugal for the first time, and I had contact with the Higher Institute of Social Work at Mitelo in Lisbon, where there was the course of Social Workers, the post-labor regime where I took the course. I returned to Luanda in 1986, but in 1994 I had to return to Portugal again for health reasons. In 2002, I started working at the University of Évora, and enrolled in the master's degree in sociology and also did a Post-Graduation in Transdisciplinary Studies, Economics, Law and Society in the Age of Globalization.

In Angola I was invited to teach how to do manual work to Early Childhood Educators. I also worked with children, to whom I passed on much of my knowledge from when I was a child, for example teaching music, telling stories and games.

I was in love with the Carnival of Angola. I would go to the street, and they would mix me in the groups to celebrate Carnival. And even today I have a favourite group: the Fisherman's Island Group.

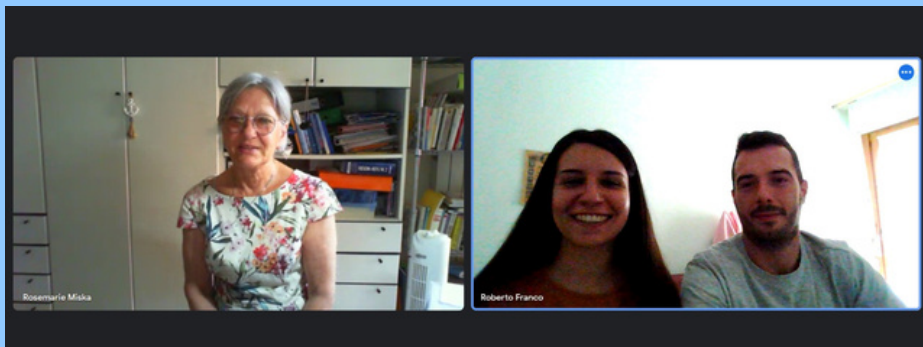
Currently I still participate in many intergenerational activities, however there are obstacles in these activities such as the personality of people, who are very closed, and claim that they do not have the ability to participate in the activities. I still want to acquire more skills in terms of manual and cognitive dexterity.

Keywords: social worker; Angola; intergenerational



Collecting stories - Italy





Rosemarie Miska
Age: 72

Rosemarie is 72 years old. She was born in Germany, near Frankfurt. After working some time in an informatics company to make a living during her studies, she started working for a hotel company with different hotels all over Europe, including Italy. After some moving through different branches in Germany, she was proposed to work in Italy for 6 months for the opening of a new tour village in Southern Italy.

So, in 1985, Rosemarie landed in Ugento, a small village near the coast-side, in Salento (Puglia). The cultural shock was so powerful that, after just a week, Rosemarie was willing to leave for Germany. Nevertheless, for contractual reasons, she could not. She then came to term with the situation and, day by day, she started fitting and understanding the local culture.

Even just a simple phone-call was challenging for her in that period: the only solution she could find was a pay-phone in a bar. But, for a woman in that period, it was not recommended to go around by her-self. One thing that really affected from the 80' in Salento was the line of women dressed in black, sitting out of their houses, waiting for their emigrated husbands and sons.

At the same time, she started working as a tour guide. That is when she began growing passionate about Salento history and culture.

One day, when she was not on duty, she went to Lecce because she needed some “town air”. While she was drinking her coffee at a bar, a man recognised her German accent and started talking to her. By the end of the chit-chat, he informed her that, at university, there was a vacant position as a German lecturer. Rosemarie decided to send her application, but she did not receive a reply. Until when, one day as she was getting ready to go back to Germany, received a phone-call from University. She passed the interview and became a German lecturer. That is when her Salentinan life began.

In the meantime, she was also working as a tour guide, activity which she is still carrying on to day. What she loves the most is to pass on to German-speaking tourists the connections between culture, history and territory of Puglia that deeply fascinate her.

For her, retirement is even more active than other phases of her life. Among the different activities, Rosemarie attends English courses at EduVita where she is learning the language. What she likes most about EduVita is the practical and interactive approach, from which she takes inspiration to use in her private classes.

Rosemarie suggests to younger generations to be more open to life, learn languages and travel to get rid of the assumptions we stick to, either willing or not. But, most of all, to know ourselves.

Her motto is: live life to the fullest, thinking that any day could be the last.



Franco Mongiò
Age: 66

Franco Mongiò is 66 years old and is a doctor specialised in infectious diseases and psychotherapy. He was born in Maglie, a Salentinan town about 30 km from Lecce (Puglia, Italy), in an ordinary family from Galatina. Because of his job, when Franco was still a child, his father decided to move to Lecce.

Franco studied and worked first in Rome, then in Alessandria, where he lived until 2019. As he specialised in infectious diseases and liver disease, he got the chance to travel a lot all over the world. In particular, during the '90s, he has been going to Chicago a few times to partake in a Medicine Convention.

As he travelled, he experienced different ways of perceiving life. Nevertheless, he regrets one thing: during his young travelling, Franco felt like in the audience, unable to live the experience to the fullest.

While he was away from home, Franco was often nostalgic for traditions which he describes as “a migrant figment”.

For instance, what he missed the most were the pittule, rounded fried dough made with flour, water and yeast, traditionally eaten on the Immaculate Conception's eve or on Christmas eve. The leftovers were usually eaten the following day with honey.

When he came back to Lecce, he found out that this tradition has been forgotten: nowadays, they make and eat pittule any day of the year. Other traditions have been forgotten too, such as the authentic bread quality. And the Taranta as a cathartic dance for women who suffered. That is why he suggests young people to go back to their historical and traditional roots. Only with deep and strong roots we can face, with strength and stability, the winds of life. Having a strong sense of cultural identity, in fact, has been fundamental for Franco during his trips and his period in Piedmont.

After 30 years of hospital service, now Franco is retired. In Lecce, he collaborates as a volunteer with the Immanuel Community, where he can support people in their path of rehabilitation from drug-addictions, and with Caritas, where he serves as a doctor. Furthermore, he attends the English course at EduVita, where he is happy to learn and to exchange new knowledge with local and European youngsters.

His motto is the one from his family: Fida è la rocca, come il suo sire. (Trusted is home as its owner)

Keywords: life story, cultural heritage, traditions, identity, volunteering



Fernando Bevilacqua
Age: 66

Fernando Bevilacqua is a 66 years old man from Salento. He lives with his family in Muro Leccese. When he was 20 years old, he moved to London with his partner, who became his wife soon after, where he worked as an interior decorator and attended English and Spanish language courses. Later, he attended the London Polytechnic and got his diploma in Photography Techniques. So he decided to become a photographer and to go back to his home-town. In Muro Leccese, he started his activity as a photographer looking at the territory under all points of view.

Fernando's job became, in time, a major cultural archive of Salento history: among his photos and portraits, he counts the ones of local and international characters, a repertoire of pictures on environmental changes - such as territory anthropisation - and on music "pizzica pizzica" and popular culture. Furthermore, he has captured many ritual moments of his community through photos and films, for instance the phenomenons linked to the Pagan-Christian tradition, and he was one of the creators of the movement for the reclaim of the oral culture of Salento, especially concerning popular music. He introduced a photographic exhibition in Los Angeles for the Institute of Italian Culture and UCLA: "A crazy urge to dance" and in Paris for the "La Maison de la culture du monde" the video "Bit stretti nello spazio senza tempo". Along with photography, he also held different courses of Image education for teenagers and adults. Fernando found it very interesting to talk about his profession and to put it into action - starting from the ground - with the youngest, and found stimulating the curiosity of the kids. He, indeed, organised a Cultural Movement called "Terra de Menzu", where young people from his town could organise and follow their passions. With Terra de Menzu, he organised many meetings on popular culture and the first parties in the courts of Salento with Pizzica Pizzica.

Fernando is in love with his land: he fought hard against massive anthropisation of the territory, the soil consumption, the destruction of the country houses in historical centres and the realisation of infrastructures that exploit nature under all aspects. The love for his land is the basis for the work that Fernando carries out every day, for the memory and the continuation of ideas and words of his poet friend Antonio L. Verri, taking as a cultural manifesto what the poet had written in his tale "La Cultura dei Tao": "The contact with the land that man has established since the beginning of times, the Long Sibillance of a millenarian culture".

Keywords: London, photography, Salento, music, culture, poetry, environment, youngsters.



Lucia
Age: 65

I started my study path in Liceo Classico. After I got my diploma, I studied languages at University. I found my fortune in the languages I chose: English and German. Back then, only a few people would study German so, because I was one of the few, I was called in as a substitute teacher right after my graduation. That is how I entered the school. I was lucky because, unlike my fellow teacher, I was not sent all over Italy for work. I started as a substitute in Taranto, then in Brindisi, as I was moving closer to my home-town: Lecce. Then I started applying to become a tenured teacher, I passed the tests and I was admitted to Middle and High School.

Soon, I realised Middle School was not good for me: I found that generation quite complicated, so I preferred to teach German in High School. When I was 30 years old, I got married and, from this marriage that lasted 15 years, I had a daughter. She is now 27 years old, she graduated in Physical Education and is now entering the labour world. Just like her, I love movement too. Since I was young, I have always been keen on sports; today I go to the gym and I walk a lot. Actually, I walk anywhere I can. Until 2 years ago, I used to live in the country-side so I had to use my car for almost everything. Since I moved to Lecce, it feels like I was re-born: I barely use my car and I can move around more freely.

Keywords: life story, teacher, education, sustainability



Giuseppe
Pietromatera
Age: 60

Giuseppe Pietromatera is 60 years old and he owns a restaurant in Montescaglioso, a few kilometres from Matera (Basilicata, Italy).

Nevertheless, his story began with his other great passion: photography. After 8 years working in a photography studio in his town, Giuseppe felt the need to be an artist. He started studying, in particular black & white, and equipped his first dark room. At the same time, he works as a freelancer at a studio in Taranto, concentrating his whole activity in two days a week, so that he could have free time to spend with his art. He dreams of going to India to immortalise in a reportage the “Colours Day of Benares”, on Ganges river. A dream that was left on hold.

Then, he decided to start a photographic laboratory with two friends in Montescaglioso. After the success of the first years, the transition to digital revolutionised the market. People started taking loads of pictures, but do not develop them any more. Although Giuseppe is still convinced of the immortality of traditional photography, it is time to reinvent.

During the years after he closed his studio, while working as a trader in the photography world, Giuseppe starts to discover another one of his dreams.

In fact, he has always prepared lunch and dinner for family and friends, sharing his second creative passion: cooking.

So, in 2012, along with his friend, he opened the “Locanda dell’Abate”, a few metres from the Saint Michael Archangel Abbey. A timeless space, immersed in the historic centre of Montescaglioso, where Giuseppe can enjoy his creativity in the kitchen re-proposing the authentic tastes of tradition through the art that he calls “food”.

Giuseppe’s experimentation starts simply. When he cooks, composes, creates he always tries to evoke the memory of his parents and the recipes from his childhood, Those unique combinations of notes, textures and harmony which bring him back in time, with his mind and body.

For Giuseppe, being a restaurateur means taking care of everything: kitchen, wine, dish washing, welcoming. He loves to present his creations at the table, chit-chat with guests, make connections, and let them feel at home. He tries to create for them an experience which does not simply fill up their tummy, but captures them in a physical and emotional well-being. His biggest satisfaction is, in fact, seeing guests leaving the place happy.

To make the experience more unique and personal, Giuseppe chooses not to have a menu, but proposes dishes and wines on the spot. This represents the biggest challenge that Giuseppe deals with on a daily basis, because, often, not knowing the menu makes customers mistrustful.

Mistrust which, generally, he manages to cancel after the first dish, when the emotions of the mouth melt down the rational need to know the unknown.

Like in the film “Babette’s Feast”, Giuseppe hopes that his culinary art too could be so touching that guests, at the end of the lunch or dinner, take hands and turn around in happiness. To express the inexpressible.

Advice for young people in restaurants? Start with real cooking, the basic one, the dishes with only a few elements. Do not unconsciously follow the models proposed by mass-media, but commit to being a cook first.

His motto is: Food is life, energy, experience.



Nadia
Age: 66

One of my biggest passions has always been reading. When I was very young my father, who used to read a lot too, introduced me to books and, since then, I never stopped. In my life I have read so many books, of any kind, without precluding anything. Actually, I like reading anything because reading always means enriching and growing. Reading also made my school life easier: as a child, I mastered the language and I knew Italian grammar and syntax.

When I was young, I spent some weeks in London to make new experiences and learn English. My parents supported me in that idea, but the previous generation - my grandmother in particular - could not accept the fact that a young lady travelled abroad by her-self. It was hard to convince her that everything would have been fine and there was nothing wrong in what I was doing. I attended University in Lecce and, soon after, I partook the tender to become a teacher. That tender in particular was cancelled because of some internal fraud; so, I moved to Brescia where I started working. There, I became a teacher and I loved it.

After a few years, for love, I came back to Lecce where I began working in professional schools: the environment I found was awful. I was so traumatised that I thought I would find another job. Nevertheless, I rolled up my sleeves and decided to take the best out of that situation. So, I started attending several training courses where I learned how to manage classes of teenagers in such difficult realities. I learned a lot and, thanks to that courses, I continued working as a teacher. In the meantime, I got married and had two daughters who live and work abroad. Although I am happy for them, I wish they were closer. Today I am retired and I keep carrying on with my hobby: reading.

Keywords: travel, books, reading, teacher, school



Chiara
Age: 58

I was born near Ferrara but I moved to Cesena where I attended Liceo Classico. Then, I moved back to Ferrara where I studied Law. After graduation, I started working in a law office and, in the meantime, I studied for the barrister exam. In the end, I succeeded. In the same period, I met my husband and, with him, I moved to Lecce.

In the beginning it was hard because I was young and expecting my first daughter, so I had to leave my job. But then I fitted here and I learned to understand people. Today, I have lived in Lecce for 25 years and I am happy. I have two children, 25 and 25 years old, who live and study in Rome. They both study Law and would like to be lawyers one day. I do not complain about this place, even though the transportation system is not well-managed.

For years, I have been managing some property houses on the beach that we rent to tourists. This is yet another reason why I decided to learn English. One of my biggest passion is reading: I read loads of books and I have been doing it since I was a child. I could read anything, even committed books. I feel the same about films as well: I like art-house cinema and I am keen on committed films.

My main hobby, nevertheless, is a sport: I have been playing tennis for 15 years. I train twice or three times a week, this is not only a sport, but it became an activity itself: sometimes, I also go to fields and watch matches.

Keywords: travel, books, reading, teacher, school



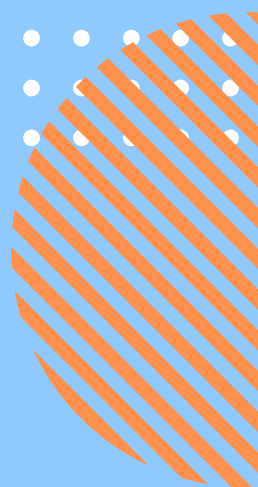
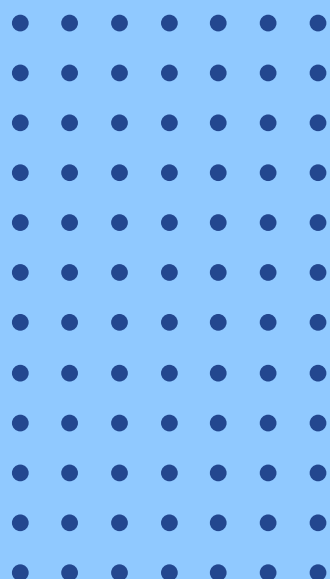
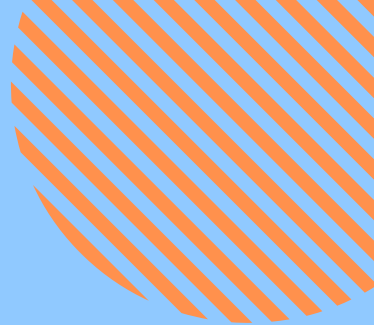
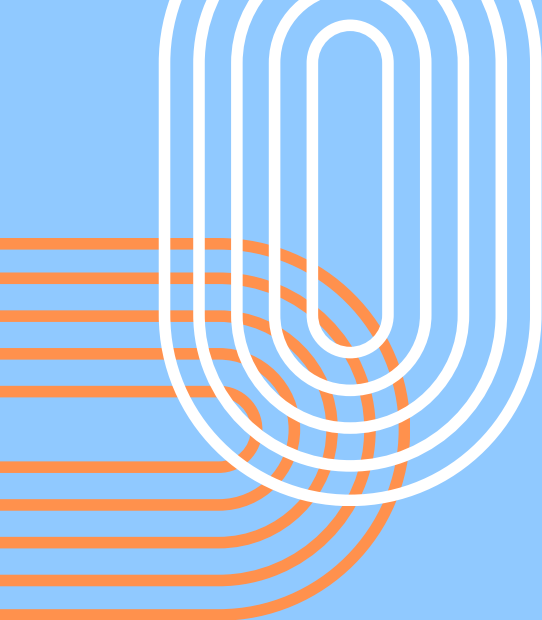
Ida Campagna
Age: 86

It was born in a very poor family. In the beginning, we were 7 brothers and sisters, but then some brothers of mine died so we were only 4 left. My parents were poor, but they loved us very much. My father was a shoe repairer, and my mother was a housewife. When we were very young, we did not have a big house with different rooms as there are nowadays, but only a little house but one bedroom. In that room we all used to sleep: that is how it worked back then. Entire families would sleep in the same bed and newborns and babies would sleep in the drawers. We did not have much to eat, but my neighbours were bakers. From time to time, their daughter would throw us a piece of bread from beyond the little wall that divided our houses.

Today, I still carry her in my heart. Unlike my brothers, I did not attend school: with magazines, I learned how to read when I was grown up and already had children. Since I was very young, I have always been keen on sewing, so I went to the tailoring school where I learned the art of tailoring. I was so good at it that it became my job. While I was attending that school, I met my husband, Nicola, who I married soon after. With him, I had 4 children and 8 nephews and nieces.

Thanks to my sewing job and to my husband's job in Crotone Municipality and as a fisherman, we raised our children and sent them to school and University, despite all the sacrifices we had to make. Today I am 86 years old, I have been a widow for 5 years, I live in the same city I was born and raised and, whenever I get the chance, I still sew.

Keywords: sewing, empathy, sustainability, big family



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