



Manifesto on ageing population and intergenerational cooperation

Source:

- 👉 Fifth EAAL forum on the future of adult education:
AGEING POPULATION AND INTERGENERATIONAL COOPERATION
- 👉 30 November 2021 held online
- 👉 organisers: Slovenian Institute of Adult Education, the Slovenian Federation of Pensioners' Association and the Slovenian Third Age University
- 👉 website:
<https://epuo.acs.si/en/activities/forums/ageing-population>

INTRODUCTION

Life expectancy is increasing in Europe and Slovenia as well. Modern conditions enable most individuals to continue to be healthy even later in life and be able to continue to function in the labour market and society in general, and above all, to develop in all areas as individuals and members of various communities.

The principle of lifelong learning is essential for all generations, especially enriching and empowering a person in their third period of life. Through various programmes, projects and other activities, it is possible to ensure the equal inclusion of older adults in all aspects of life.

A comprehensive approach to the issue of an ageing society, raising awareness and cultivating values that connect and not divide generations, overcoming prejudices and forms of discrimination, establishing concrete forms of intergenerational cooperation – all these are the challenges of modern society.

Institutions that defend and protect the rights of the elderly to a dignified, fulfilled life and enable them to socialise, learn and (co)operate have an essential role in addressing them. Mutual learning and work not only connect members of the same generation but also establish solid, respectful ties between people in the broadest sense.

BASIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthening intergenerational cooperation and solidarity is a proven way of tackling the challenges of an ageing society. Weaving threads between representatives and participants of the programmes and the young is the right path. It turned out we have a lot of programmes that bring happiness.
- The young do not gain only material goods from the elderly, but also knowledge and life wisdom. Also, the young offer the elderly much more than just digital skills. They acquaint them with their views and broaden their horizons. They talk to them about life experiences and thus give them validation.

- Intergenerational centres are achieving excellent results. These are the result of the efforts, boldness, dedication of employees and volunteers. The programmes contribute to reducing the loneliness of the elderly and their better integration into society. In addition to the many organisations involved, the support of municipalities also significantly contributes to the development of the field.
- Education of the elderly is education for life and changes the view on old age. It requires students to make a decision for education, to be responsible, and it requires continuity.
- The programmes for the elderly offer much more than just learning, and they achieve various goals. We are talking about a socially engaged education that arises among people and returns to the environment. Learning of the elderly always includes cooperation and caring for others.
- Intergenerational cooperation presupposes the action of those who will participate. The elderly must first act to then cooperate with the young. The elderly can open the way to the labour market for the young and show them new opportunities.
- Social changes are dictating an increase in the need for home caregivers. The appropriate financial value will give this work greater social value. In the long run, social problems cannot be solved by volunteering.
- The elderly feel lonely and neglected. They want to do something, help, want to be validated, feel useful, so it makes sense to involve them as volunteers. Experience shows that the experience of volunteering enriches everyone involved.





Appeals



1. The elderly should be allowed to work after retirement if they wish and thus earn some extra money.
2. Volunteering (of the elderly) needs to be systematically regulated and not merely seen as unpaid work. Funding at the national or local level should be provided to strengthen the competencies of volunteers, which are extremely important. People should continue living after retirement – they should be active and learn.
3. Ageing strategies and policies should be based on human rights, lifelong learning, a cross-sectoral approach and the recognition of the contribution the elderly have to society.
4. Coexistence and mutual decision making must prevent negative attitudes towards the elderly and ageing at all levels, including in terms of language.
5. Every effort should be made to promote intergenerational cooperation and solidarity, including knowledge transfer.

