



Grundtvig



Education and Culture DG

Grundtvig Senior Volunteering Project:

Language of Music and Poetry in Italian and Slovenian Tradition

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About the Lifelong Learning Programme and Grundtvig Programme

The European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme enables people at all stages of their lives to take part in stimulating learning experiences, as well as helping to develop the education and training sector across Europe. The programme funds a range of actions including exchanges, study visits and networking activities. Projects are intended not only for individual students and learners, but also for teachers, trainers and all others involved in education and training.

The Grundtvig programme focuses on study needs of learners taking adult education and 'alternative' education courses, as well as the organisations delivering these services. It encourages the development of the adult education sector, as well as enables more people to undertake learning experiences in other European countries. One of the Grundtvig actions is a 2-year senior volunteering project, which enables senior volunteers (aged 50+) to work for an organisation in other European country for any kind of non-profit activity from 3 to 8 weeks.

In 2010 The Slovenian Third Age University and partner organisation Music School Francesco Landini (Associazione Musicale Francesco Landini) from Florence, Italy, applied for the senior volunteering project. Both organisations have long time experience with work and education of the seniors. The Slovenian Third Age University since 1984, when it was established by voluntary endeavours of a group of adult education experts and university teachers, has steadily grown into a nation wide set network of 45 universities in 41 localities with about 21000 students, more than 1000 mentors and volunteers (in May 2012). The initial idea was to enable different groups of seniors to strengthen their social identity through getting aware of their cultural role in the society; to gain knowledge and to pass their knowledge, experience and culture onto their peers and younger generations. Education performed by the Slovenian Third Age University is meant for personal growth, paid work and organised volunteer work of seniors.

About the Senior Volunteering project

The project's summary:

- cooperation between two organisations: Associazione Musicale Francesco Landini and The Slovenian Third Age University with the aim to evaluate musical culture of the two European countries in connection with the theme of music and poetry;
- mobility of 6 Slovenian and 6 Italian senior volunteers aged 50+ for 3 weeks in each country with the intention to present senior volunteer work and promote multicultural cooperation. Language of the project: Italian;
- participation and collaboration of the senior volunteers in the programmes of the musical association and the Slovenian Third Age University on the themes of music and poetry. The project offers opportunity for education and the possibilities to implement the social and personal development in the European dimension;
- organisation of cultural events intended for senior volunteers of both countries (volunteers as performers and/or spectators).

The project's objectives:

- exchanging on cultural, musical and educational level with evident social effects realised through activities and events in which the senior volunteers of both countries participate actively;
- offering new possibilities of informal education for seniors (e.g. travelling, visiting cultural sights and events, visiting other organisations, observing other nation's traditions and habits, etc.);
- offering possibilities for independent inclusion of seniors in the (new) social environment; familiarity with new people and new environment;
- developing the collective European history;
- getting to know another European country, its people and culture;
- understanding and accepting diversity;
- promoting senior mobility;
- extending the senior social network and fortifying the senior position in the society.

Both, Slovenian and Italian volunteers bring social aspects as well as cultural aspects together and they learn to interrelate to all levels. Each volunteer brings his/her own personal experience together with knowledge of musical history and poetry of each country's tradition. Knowledge and experience of each volunteer help the others to get to know the other country better and to seek for similarities and differences between the two countries.

We can say that each volunteer plays the role of the »cultural ambassador« and presents each country through the undermentioned activities:

Slovenian volunteers in Italy:

- have the opportunity to participate in the activities at Music School Francesco Landini and in educational courses of music for adults 50+ and other target groups;
- participate actively in musical recitals reading Slovenian and Italian poetry;
- cooperate with Italian students at the music school to deepen their ideas and opinions, history and culture of their own choice, involving music and culture of both countries;
- participate in the didactic activities of the organisation for example connection of sounds, rhythm, melodies and colours in a class of music for children, coordinated by teachers and mentors of the music school;
- improve their knowledge of music participating in seminars and concerts;
- improve their foreign language skills;
- observe concert lessons of music (video projections or live music) where the participants talk about the lyrics, music, language and history of musical pieces, composers and their life.



1. Slovenian volunteers Maša and Ksenija with the Italian volunteer Manuela



2. Viktorija, Leonardo, Donatella Bojana at home having dinner

Volunteers Ksenija Kreft, Maša Martinčič, Bojana Žokalj Jesih, Viktorija Brozovič, Tatjana Delić and Amalija Venturini spent 3 weeks at hosting organisation in Italy. In May 2011 Ksenija and Maša, in October 2011 Bojana and Viktorija and in April 2012 Tatjana and Amalija. The youngest participants at music school listened to stories and poems for children (Piki Jakob, Zvezdica Zaspanka, Zverinice iz Rezije, Maček Muri and others), drew the rhythm of rivers Arno and Ljubljana and searched for common characteristics of both. The youth listened to music of Siddharta, Perpetuum Jazzile, Carmina Slovenica, Katalena etc. All groups enjoyed in the presentations of the Slovenian culture and history, the adults also got to know important Slovenian individuals, the concept of the third age university, history of the Slovenian Philharmonic, Slovenian composers, poems by Prešeren, Kosovel, Minatti, folk songs and other musical forms (jazz, opera, choirs etc.). The adult participants loved listening to Janez Lotrič, Dubravka Tomšič Srebotnjak, Irena Grafenauer, Sabina Cvilak, Marijana Lipovšek, Elda Viler, Vlado Kreslin, Slovenian Octet, Avsenik band, Katalena, Terrafolk and others.



3. Amalija and Tatjana with Selene Fiaschi, the Italian project leader

Italian volunteers in Slovenia:

- cooperate weekly in study groups of Italian language as native speakers and present Italian musical culture and poetry to elderly students in other study groups and events;
- present Italian musical culture and poetry at the annual meeting of the Slovenian third age universities;
- improve their knowledge of music visiting concerts at Ljubljana's cultural institutions (e. g. Cankarjev dom, Slovenian Philharmonic, Opera);
- get to know Slovenian culture, art and tradition by visiting cultural organisations (museums, theatres etc.) and other Slovenian cities.



4. Project leader in Slovenia Maja Vodopivec with Gianna, the Italian volunteer

Italian volunteers Gianna Bennati, Donatella Collini, Leonardo Sarperi, Laura Bubola, Manuela Sebeglia and Riccardo Ceccherini spent 3 weeks at hosting organisation in Ljubljana in April 2011 (Gianna), in November 2011 (Donatella and Leonardo) and in April 2012 (Laura, Manuela and Riccardo). Participants of the Italian courses at the third age university took the opportunity of native speakers' visits; they listened to the presentations of Italian and Tuscan history and culture, Tuscan dialect, life and work of famous Italian and Tuscan individuals (the Medici family, Leonardo da Vinci, Dante Alighieri, Paolo Conte, Giacomo Puccini, etc.) and also improved their knowledge of Italian grammar. Culinary enthusiasts were able to try out the recipes of the delicious Tuscan cuisine they got at the lessons.



5. Donatella and Leonardo during their presentation



6. Manuela, Laura and Riccardo in one of the Italian study groups

All volunteers in these 3 weeks explored the scenery and culture of the hosting country. Not only the organisers, but also the participants engaged to make their stay more pleasant. It is always interesting to meet new people and hear their lifestories. Slovenian participants also improved their language skills while spending their spare time with the Italian volunteers.

In conclusion...

The expected outcome has been confirmed; besides general impact, such as promotion of senior volunteer work, impact of volunteers' knowledge and experience on other target groups and improvement of European cultural identity, more notable impact is that on individual volunteers: better knowledge of music, poetry, culture and history, social and personal development and consequently better self-esteem (using foreign language for Slovenian volunteers, preparing for the exchange, travelling alone, meeting new people, staying in a foreign country for a longer period of time).

The project concluded with a visit of Italian partner and a concert at the Italian Institute for Culture on 11th June 2012.

References

About Grundtvig programme. Retrieved May 24, 2012, from <http://www.cmepius.si/en/llp-in-slovenia/grundtvig.aspx>

About Lifelong Learning Programme. Retrieved May 24, 2012, from <http://www.cmepius.si/en/llp-in-slovenia.aspx>