


# **Structures of Third Age Academic Education in the Project Partner Countries**



Gabriela Körting

ZAWiW, University of Ulm

# U3As in Italy



- ⌘ There are approximately 500 universities of the third age in Italy
- ⌘ Since the early 80s', the universities of the third age are organised in two large umbrella organisations: Unitre and FEDERUNI
- ⌘ The organisations are associated to regular universities, but also other educational, town or scientific bodies

# Three types of Universities of the third age in Italy



- ⌘ **Type I:** course programs of 3-5 years, regular courses, discussions, excursions. Aim: social integration
- ⌘ **Type II:** courses of 1 to 2 weeks, courses designed according to demand, no great organisation plan, participants have organisation tasks
- ⌘ **Type III:** U3As based at town directorates or local institutions of adult or seniors' education. Lecture programs and various other initiatives.

# Slowak Republic



- ⌘ Association of Slovak U3As founded in 1994.
- ⌘ Independent organisational units at regular universities. Structurally they fall under the rectorates.
- ⌘ Provision of non-professional education on interest basis, contents correspond with the profile of the „main“ university.

# Seniors' education in Slovak Republic



- ⌘ Education cycles vary, are usually 4 till 6 semesters long, supplemented by excursions, etc. The educational style and teaching methods are characteristic of the universities - lectures, seminars, excursions, incorporation of elements of scientific work. The teachers are usually university staff or sometimes on voluntary basis the seniors themselves.
- ⌘ Direct cooperation exists between the universities themselves as well as the Union of Pensioners and governmental bodies in the areas of education and social work who also give a subsidy for U3A activities.

# Czech Republic



- ⌘ History of U3As starts in 1986. Their beginning is connected with the Red Cross and the key subject is health.
- ⌘ In 1993 the Association of the U3As was founded. There are 40 members of the association. These are all state universities.

# Types of courses in CR



- ⌘ Seniors education based at state universities is directed at academics and offers primarily structured courses of study in academic subjects running over several semesters. The participants obtain certificates and the study ends with a „graduation“ ceremony.
- ⌘ There are however also some other initiatives, such as the University of the Free Time, subsidised by the local government, which does not stipulate any conditions of acceptance in terms of previous qualifications. The U3A offers structured courses of study on various academic subjects. There are no certificates at the end.

# Spain



- ⌘ Educational activities for older people reckon directly or indirectly with support of regular universities. There are generally no conditions of acceptance in terms of previous qualifications.



# Types of activities



- ⌘ **I. Integrated programs:** seniors as „guests“ or „associate students“, side by side with young students, in the lectures of the regular university
- ⌘ **II. Specific programs:** exclusively for seniors. Courses designed according to local demand. Only in some cases, the study includes formal university curriculum over one or more academic terms.
- ⌘ **III. University Extension Service Programs:** collaboration between University Extension Services and associations and organisations for third agers who have developed a great variety of educational and leisure time programmes and activities for seniors. Some ask regular universites for help in supervision, design of programmes or evaluation.

# United Kingdom



- ⌘ In Great Britain, adult education for people of all ages has a long tradition: institutes of adult education, workers educational associations, distance study (apart from OU) at the National Extension College, etc.
- ⌘ Especially Open University (OU) which came into being in 1969 attracts a number of senior students. There are no previous qualifications required for acceptance. There are short courses as well as regular academic study programmes available at OU.
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# Seniors' education in the UK



- ⌘ Senior Studies Institute - affiliated with Strathclyde University, uses the resources of the university as with cooperation of senior volunteers.
- ⌘ The University of the Third Age (U3A) came to Britain in 1981 and consists of single local groups run by volunteers. There is none or very little cooperation with regular universities. It relies on self-help and members' competences are utilised. There are no academic qualifications required for entry. The national centre, the Third Age Trust, has over 80,000 members.

# Germany



- ⌘ Academic continuing education for older people is integrated primarily at institutions of higher education (universities, teachers' training colleges, etc.)
- ⌘ The beginnings go back to the early 70s'. Approx. 50 institutions offer educational programmes for seniors.
- ⌘ The representatives of the many study programmes are members in the Federal Work Group (BAG) - "Opening of the Institutions of Higher Education to Older Adults"
- ⌘ Aims:
  - I. to rediscover, review and develop personal abilities and knowledge,
  - II. to support learning of older and younger students and promote exchange between the generations

# Types of seniors' education in Germany



Possibility to study:

- ⌘ I. as a „guest“ or „associate student“ in the regular university programs,
- ⌘ II. in qualifying courses (e.g. for voluntary work, PC & Internet tutors, etc.),
- ⌘ III. in structured study programmes in general education, compact academic courses (also residential)
- ⌘ IV. in self-organised groups „learning through research“