NORDPLUS

SENIOR MOTIVATION TO LEARN

SENIOR MOTIVATION TO LEARN

In an increasingly aging society, much more attention is paid to older persons' education needs. One way to achieve this goal is the establishment of special training facilities for the elderly. Such special educational institutions are also needed due to the fact that older persons have specific needs. They usually don't need graduation certificate recognized by the state, by the way, older learners because of their health conditions raise the requirements for learning, teachers must speak clearly and loud enough, the provided information should not be very extensive, the relationship with educational institutions should be much more informal, more liberal than in normal educational institution. Older people's needs can be met in very different ways in senior world. Foreign sources claimed that older people who are retired and without major family commitments, have more free time and want to use it in a meaningful way. Foreign sociologists believe that not only the newly acquired knowledge and skills, but also new contacts to people are important, when people learn in older age. "Brain exercise" is also described as the positive side of learning result in older age.

Organisation Alytus Third Age University is an independent, nonprofit organization which provides formal, informal and self-contained learning for seniors. The main idea of the university is to stimulate senior integration to society by learning. Older people attend courses and lectures in philosophy, psychology, history, art, science etc. Learning stimulates older people's integration to society, purposeful life sustaining physical activity, work effectiveness increasing knowledge and cultural level. There are about 700 members in our university.

NGO from Latvia "Vecmāmiņas.lv" (Grannies.lv) unites active seniors, grandmothers, with long life experience who want to share their knowledge with others and are active in adult learning activities. The organization has identified the needs of adult and especially senior needs in the changing world and promote active participation in lifelong learning activities of its members. The organization members participate in voluntary activities, charity activities, especially for young women and women from single parent families by teaching them the basic life skills. NGO has participated in a project "Wise trainer" in Riga City social Day care centres, NGO is a member of women -

entrepreneur NGO "Tīne". The main goal is education of senior and adult women about active participation, against violence actions, lobbying the interests of women in society. In the project Latvian partner will share the life-long knowledge about family issues and how we can support young women, how to teach them not to be afraid to report of domestic violence, to defend their rights. We will organize local activities around the theme of violence prevention, collect data, organize trainings and share best practices around the theme. Both our trainers and trainees will attend the mobilities in other project countries and disseminate the gained knowledge back to other members and other NGOs in Latvia. A webpage will be created for the project and organization and information will be also distributed in social media.

Otepää Garden City Club The mission and main activities of the institution: Voluntary work:Voluntary work promotes elder people active and healthy style. The project activities give people more energy, positive thinking and makes life enjoyable. To improve their knowledge in communication and voluntary work.

The main idea of the project is to survey senior motivation to learn, meeting their expectations and needs in different countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). Which aspects of motivation to learn, meeting their expectations and needs are permanent and which are changing depending on education, social environment, cultural environment and country's features. To achieve these objectives special methodology (questionnaire) was created and used to survey. After that data from different countries were analyzed and compared to find permanent and changing learning aspects. Data will be used to develop and improve the quality of organizations and stimulate senior learners to learn and to be active socially. Other object of this project is to start cooperation between partner organizations from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, share methods and experience of management and teaching.

The main focus of this project is older people or senior status. Senior status is society attitude to older people, government and local authority politicians to seniors, given facilities for active participation in social activity, learning opportunities, means and ways of seniors integration to society etc. Theoretical and practical knowledge of the participants of the project and their good experience will be adapted and used in their own countries. The offers how to improve and develop organization activity adapting positive experience from other countries will be given to local authorities. The aim is to get in touch with other organizations and develop cooperation.

MOTIVATION CONCEPT

Motivation (from Latin Movere - move to promote) - is a human activity and behavior perceived or not completely aware of the internal, that is mental, causes excitation energy performance and giving it direction.

Motivation can be defined on the basis of certain terms of external behavior. Interested people are increasingly trying to achieve better performance than those who are not interested. Motivation is the desire to do something and it leads to the possibility of action to meet the demand (demand means a physiological or psychological deficits due to which certain results look appealing). Unmet needs cause stress, which promotes certain human incentives. These incentives induce specific objectives which, if implemented, meet the needs and reduce the tention (Robbins, 2003).

Motivation is a psychological characteristics which determines the degree of personal commitment. This includes factors that cause, locate and support human behavior in relation to obligation. Motivation is generally accepted as a good thing. Motivation is one of several factors that influences the results of individual action. There are other important factors such as the skills, resources and the conditions under which it is performed. However, motivation is not a constant state of mind, so it must be periodically replenished.

Human motivation consists of variety of factors, conscious or unconscious stimuli and influences that cause human desire to achieve certain goals.

VALUE OF MOTIVATION

Motivation is one of the main psychological factors in adult learning. Motive is an inner state that deliberately promotes human action to achieve the objective. A lot of reasons that encourage a human to achieve the objective is called motivation. Reasons help to understand the sense of their own activities involved in the monitoring and modification. And what is the need? It is a motive to act, encouraging us to achieve a certain goal. Each of us strives for something in his or her life. Consequently, that aspiration influences the orientation of personality. Motif is what drives the performance of a personality. The motives include being active, needs, interests, inclinations, beliefs, ideals, values, and other demands. The basis of human activity is demand. Motivation is promoted by the needs, inclinations, and aspirations, causing the body's activity and describing the direction of activity.

Learning motivation theories can be divided into two main research areas: **behavioral and humanistic motivation theories**, called content theories. **Behaviorist learning** concept appeared in the early twentieth century and up to the eighties it has been the dominant approach both in research and in practice. Learning is based on the core principles of stimulus and response. Behaviourist school perceives a person as a mechanical body, which basically works like other animals. The internal operations and human causes mean nothing in learning process. Behaviorist theory denied the opportunity to examine the inner human processes, and learning understood as instrumental tying-based activities. External learning activities are considered to be learner-oriented performance criterion, and what the student is thinking while working is ignored (Žukauskienė, 1995).

The promotion of learning in various forms affects the quality of learning. Russian I. Pavlovas and Americans E. L. Thorndike, J. B. Watson, B. F. Skinner (Furst, 1998) have done a lot of in developing this field of science. Behaviourists are looking for a general learning model which describes all the activities of living organisms. Under this approach, teaching and learning are the most important factors in education is the stimulus and the result of the training which is the reaction. So learning (or acquisition) is considered to be a change in the individual's external behavior, which can be enhanced by awards and penalties. According to the behaviourists, study of learner thinking and information processing is not possible, because they cannot be directly observed. So the object of study is the organization of teaching, learning and behavior and their interrelation.

Positivist model is the method of research which is borrowed from the natural sciences methods. The biggest problem of the behavioral learning and learning concepts is that the description of change in behavior and the entrenchment are based on the "outside" observation. The student or the learner is perceived as a passive recipient who is not responsible for learning and how to learn (and Butkienė Kepalaitė, 1995). The main attention of the training and testing improvment, which is based on the principles of behaviourism, is paid to training and especially to the teacher's reactions and behavioral changes of learners. Motivation is seen as the mechanism of the one-dimensional process in behaviouristic motivation interpretation. Motivation is seen as the reasoning power, which may explain the effort to complete a task, action depends on the internal and external forces influencing an individual in the latter theories Learning motivation is a sort of response to internal or external reinforcement, which determines the behavior of the learning situation according to behaviorist attitude (Myers, 2000).

In his opinion the main purpose of education is the satisfaction of desires (which is the most important source of values) so the main laws of learning are as follows:

1) Pre-law implies readiness to adapt rather than to grow;
2) the law of the exercise (skills training law);
3) The law of effect means that human behavior is changing, because of the relationship between the situation and response is stronger when it relates to satisfaction, and it is weaker when associated with trouble.

Later E. L. Thorndike complemented the last law saying that the punishment helps make appropriate connections.

In addition to these three basic laws of learning, along with the dependency approach, the punishment and compensation dependence determines the extent to which they meet the student's motives and desires. E. L. Thorndike presented secondary education laws:

1) versatile response to the same situation;
2) The versatile response to changing situations;
3) treatment, self-determination and adaptation;
4) analogy and assimilation;
5) changes in associations (Beresnevičienė, 1995).

In investigating adult learning process, EL Thorndike found that adults can learn, because:

1) Almost everything can be learned at any age,
2) individuals experience allows them expect more difficulties in learning at the age of more than 40 years, than at 30 - 39 years., except learning to cook;
3) learning difficulties arising from learning from 30 to 40 years, are not bigger at 32 like learning in childhood and teenage years, but
4) older people's learning difficulties are mainly influenced by the approach of others to learning, because if it was normal that old people learn to swim, ride a bike or speak German, then the learning difficulties would be weakened (Beresnevičienė, 1995, p. 19).

C. L. Hull described the reinforcements as a learning key feature (Butkienė and Kepalaitė, 1996). The most famous representatives of behaviourism J. B. Watson, B. F. Skinner and Bloom can be mentioned too. J. B. Watson believed that human is like a billiard ball on an empty table, he does not move until it does not touch anything from outside. In this opinion, the learner's needs and

what is going, is determined only by external effects. In order to properly treat a child, it will just be distinguished from all other stimuli and the chosen method. It is possible to form not only behavior but also the grounds. B. F. Skinner, exploring the patterns of behavior and learning, found that in order to teach a particular behavior, it is important to find suitable reinforcements, their presentation and the number of repetitions. Human, even rarely experiencing a significant boost, uses the related reaction during his lifetime. In order to change undesirable behavior, it is necessary to remove the sources of negative reinforcement (Butkienė and Kepalaitė, 1996).

Humanistic Content Theory. Theory describes a person who is given an impetus to behave in a certain way. In interpreting motivation, content theories primarily are interested in the specific needs of nature and structure that is in motivation and motivational content. Humanistic psychologists focus on deep knowledge of the human personality. They emphasize the autonomy of human activity and the fact that a person can choose or change the prevailing motives of the life himself.

Humanistic psychology classic A. Maslow said: "If we want to study how people can grow, then we need to investigate those who are the highest, if we want to know the spiritual growth of opportunities, we have to study moral, most ethical, most sacred people (Butkienė and Kepalaitė, 1996, p. 156). Growth is influenced by contradictory forces: ones stimulate the security resulting from the fear which catches the human to regress back to the past, while the other - to achieve the self integrity of the uniqueness of their abilities unfoldment. The individual naturally strives to develop their human potentials (such as "acorn strives to be oak, according to A. Maslow); This is the main reason for the development of human purpose.

A. Maslow emphasized the desirability of meeting the core, basic human needs, which are hierarchically related evolutionarily and the acceptance of one basic need, consciousness opens another, "higher" demand for dominance (Antologija, 1999, p. 277). One of the key internal motivation factors (sources) is a value orientation. This is individual's moral, social, political, aesthetic principles system which programm all human activities, due to the behavior of the most important direction (Jacikevičius, 1994).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. A. Maslow reached means of spiritual growth and stated that all people have the potency of actualization and can achieve freedom. Human learning goal is to achieve self-fulfillment, namely "Full of their talents, abilities, the use of potency (Beresnevičienė, 1995, p 22).

Maslow recognizes the environment as a source of motivation influence. He believes that the human can respond wisely and productively to the environmental impacts. A. Maslow theory helps teachers to refrain from too rapid and significant efforts in awakening students' learning motivation. Many teachers also often encourage students to pursue higher needs, while the lower ones are not met. Maslow's theory has two basic assumptions:

- People tend to create to meet their personal needs. When an individual needs can not be met, he or she tends to decrease them. When the need is satisfied, it loses its strength, the motivating force.
- People have the same needs (Maslow, 1970).

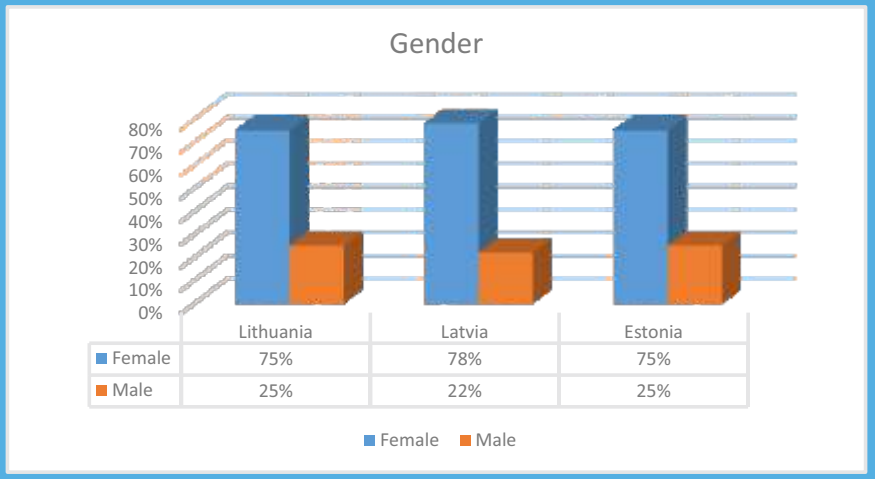
Common to all people needs according A. Maslow would be physiological (vital), security, love, friendship, and belonging to a group, self-esteem and recognition, finally expression (self-actualization and self-realization) needs; he considered the last needs to represent the human nature mostly:

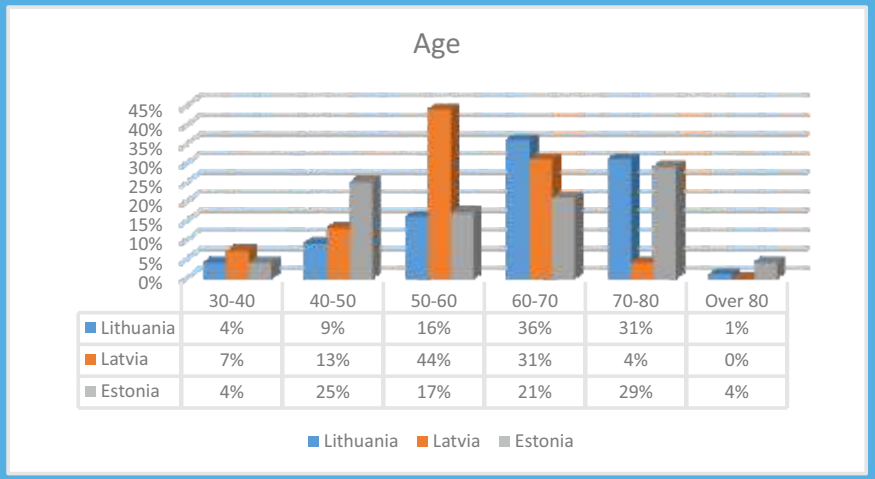
- Physiological needs - needed to survive. These are water, food, recreation and other of that type;
- Security needs - the needs to feel emotionally and physically safe, **to move away** from worries, health, working capacity preservation, future safety, etc .;
- Social needs - the need to make friends, to love. They are the needs of love and affection. It includes an individual's desire to maintain friendly relations with others, to integrate into the team;
- the needs to be respected - it needs to be recognized, observed, be different fromthe others. It is the desire of the individual to be positively assessed by the others, the desire to be recognized, to draw the attention of others, as well as stand out from the other;
- self-expression needs - it needs to realize themselves, to realize their potentialities and develop as a personality (Maslow, 1970, p.49).

Needs arise from stage to stage. When the physiological needs are met, there is security; When the following are met social needs apear and so on. Therefore, A. Maslow combined needs into a hierarchy. The highest level is the expression of human behavior when there is a need to be what he wants. Self expressed human needs are to be open, to love themselves and others, conform to the aggression and treachery, to act honestly and in good faith with respect to the public, to be autonomous and creative, to be curious and genuinely interact with the environment (Maslow, 1970). Edwards, R. (1997). A. Maslow's hierarchy of needs meaning is as follows:

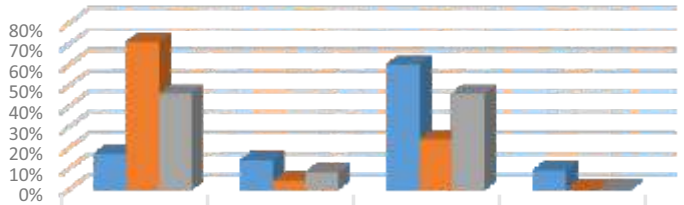
- Individual, who did not meet lower levels of needs, higher level needs may no longer interest;
- If the work "meets" the needs of a higher level, it is easier to tolerate a lower level of unmet needs;
- When any level of need is satisfied, gaining reward decreasing law (though friends and I like going out, but as there are so many of them, I lost any interest in going on);
- "satiety can lead to feelings of guilt or self-conscious impoverishment;
- People's needs are of different strength.

One of their social needs can be met when it he or she surrounded by friends, andfor the other it is enough to communicate with one person. Thus, the development of personality, according to A. Maslow, is understood primarily as an individual humanization process.





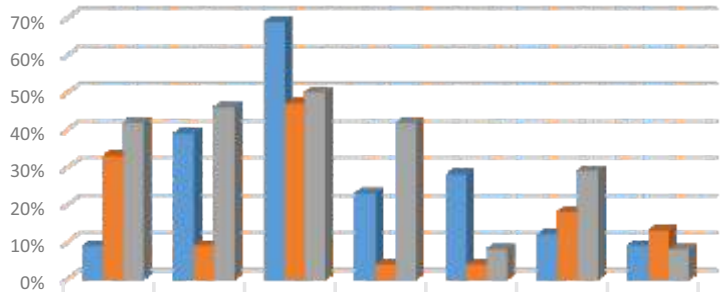
Are you working at the moment?



	Working	Unemployed	Retired	Other
Lithuania	17%	14%	60%	9%
Latvia	71%	4%	24%	0%
Estonia	46%	8%	46%	0%

Lithuania Latvia Estonia

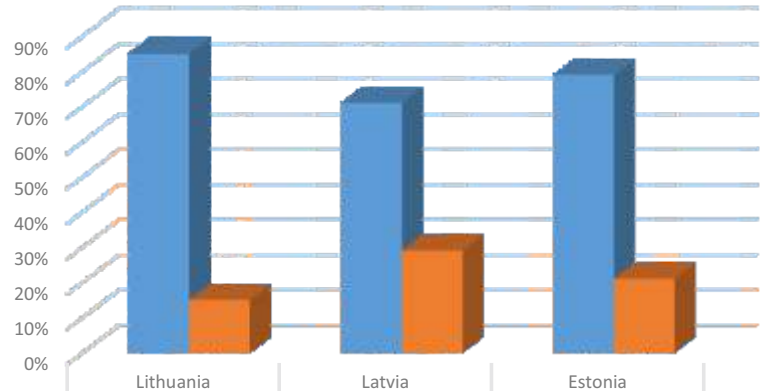
My favourite activity



	Reading	Theater	Traveling	Discussion	Listening to others	Participating in the courses	Other
Lithuania	9%	39%	69%	23%	28%	12%	9%
Latvia	33%	9%	47%	4%	4%	18%	13%
Estonia	42%	46%	50%	42%	8%	29%	8%

Lithuania Latvia Estonia

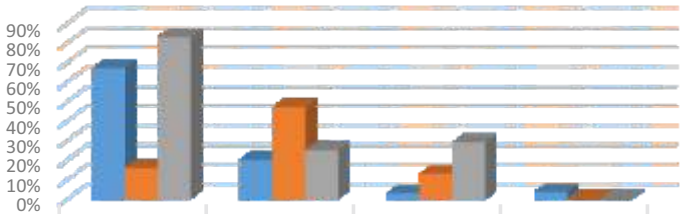
Would you like to study in the future?



	Lithuania	Latvia	Estonia
Yes	85%	71%	79%
No	15%	29%	21%

Yes No

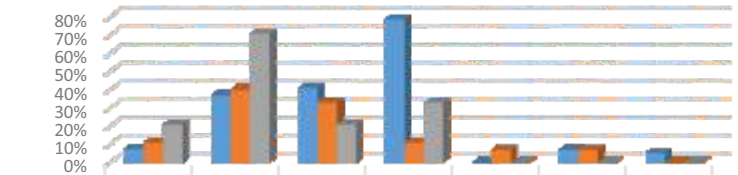
What time do you prefer to learn at?



	On weekdays during working hours	On weekdays during working hours	At the weekend (Saturday and Sunday)	Other
Lithuania	67%	20%	3%	4%
Latvia	16%	47%	13%	0%
Estonia	83%	25%	29%	0%

Lithuania Latvia Estonia

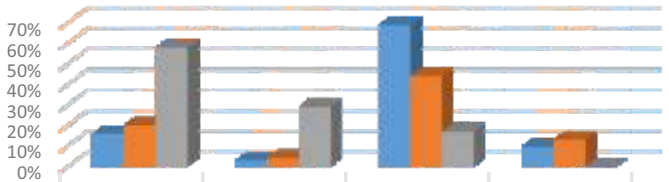
What learning form do you prefer?



	Individually, alone	Courses, trainings	In a group or with friends	Participation in various organisations	At work	Informal activities	Other
Lithuania	8%	37%	41%	79%	0%	7%	5%
Latvia	11%	40%	33%	11%	7%	7%	0%
Estonia	21%	71%	21%	33%	0%	0%	0%

Lithuania Latvia Estonia

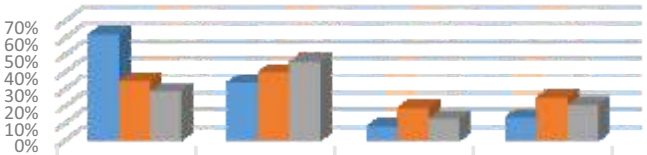
What learning enviroment do you prefer?



	At home	At work	At school, at university	Other
Lithuania	16%	3%	69%	9%
Latvia	20%	4%	44%	13%
Estonia	58%	29%	17%	0%

Lithuania Latvia Estonia

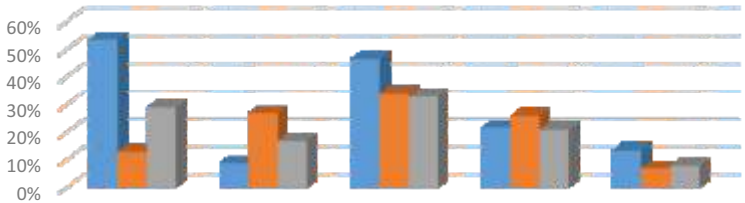
What learning method do you prefer?



	Reading	TV, radio, cd, using the internet	Distant method	Other
Lithuania	62%	34%	8%	14%
Latvia	35%	40%	19%	25%
Estonia	29%	46%	13%	21%

Lithuania Latvia Estonia

Where do you get information about seniors' organisations, ongoing training?



Lithuania Latvia Estonia

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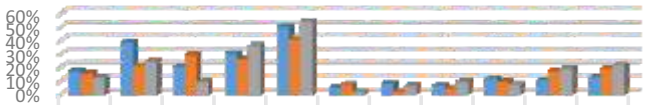
What subjects do you want to learn?



	Computer literacy	Foreign languages	Law knowledge	Psychology	Health	Accounting knowledge	Business knowledge	Management	Economic knowledge	Traditional crafts	Philosophy
Lithuania	17%	39%	21%	30%	50%	5%	8%	6%	12%	11%	13%
Latvia	15%	21%	29%	26%	41%	7%	2%	4%	9%	17%	19%
Estonia	12%	24%	9%	36%	54%	2%	6%	9%	7%	19%	22%

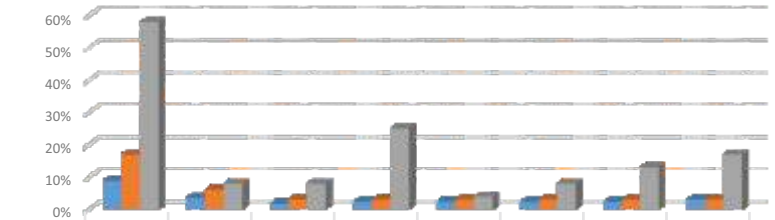
Lithuania Latvia Estonia

Why do you want to learn?

	I can express myself better	I am encouraged by the constantly growing requirements of the labor market	I am seeking more knowledge to get extra work and improve my situation	I can socialize with new people, establish new contacts	I want to find another job	My employer encourages me to learn	Everyone is learning nowadays, so I am learning too	Other
Lithuania	67%	7%	5%	29%	1%	9%	4%	
Latvia	70%	9%	5%	32%	0%	15%	2%	
Estonia	88%	13%	0	0	0	0	0	

Lithuania Latvia Estonia

Why you do not want to learn?



	It seems to be too late to learn	Learning is too hard on my health	I lack funds for learning	The existing knowledge and skills are enough	It is difficult to combine work and learning	There is no nearby place to study	I lack information about learning institutions and programs	Study programs are too complicated
Lithuania	9%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Latvia	17%	6%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Estonia	58%	8%	8%	25%	4%	8%	13%	17%

Lithuania Latvia Estonia

SENIOR MOTIVATION TO LEARN

THE STUDY CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed that older people in partner countries are interested in adult education and training, they are going to learn in order to participate in social life. A successful future depends on the physical and mental health, the ability to use new technologies. An important motive for participation is the opportunity to meet with others interested in the same things. While learning people feel healthier, active citizens, contributing to the country's economic growth. People with versatile capabilities is a significant contribution to the labor market. Unfortunately, some older people are forced to retire while they can and want to work. Employers often prefer young people, but that does not mean that they will work better than the older. Young people do not have accumulated experience and wisdom, which often comes in handy in professional life. The challenge of these days is to transfer accumulated experience by elder people to the younger generation. In order to keep pace with rapidly changing society, understand the flow of information it is necessary to learn for the younger and the older. Now it is difficult to imagine how you can live without a video camera, mobile phone, TV, internet. These technologies facilitate and reduce the cost of our lives. Elderly people can communicate with the children and grandchildren, pay for bank accounts and so on without leaving the house. Learning new things motivates us to keep up with life, raises self-esteem and dignity, and enables to feel a full-fledged member of the community. It was agreed in the project that participation in group training provides an opportunity to share their thoughts, feelings, discuss and exchange views. Therefore, the task for training organizers and the adult teacher is to create a cozy, open training (learning) environment that continuously encourages sincere talks, spontaneous reaction and reflection. However, if the trainings are not valued by employers, the local community, family members, or other environment, it can be that the courses will be attended and enjoyed by only a few older and younger people. Self-confidence and willingness to learn are reduced later in life by other reasons. For example, a long time has passed since the last training (learning) experience negative or previous training (learning) experience, the fear of new technologies, and the belief that learning is too late for the elderly and so on. Training techniques and forms are also important.

What works for one is not necessarily acceptable to others. Some people like to learn independently, others - with close friends. Suitable learning environment, methods and forms selection of methods and forms can remove many obstacles and improve senior's involvement in the learning process. Our project showed that one of the barriers is lack of exciting learning courses supply in the residential areas for the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian seniors. Participation in learning does not always depend on the readiness and motivation. Sometimes family members do not approve, it is not suitable for life, health, or lack of funds to pay the course fee, poor connections to larger cities, where training takes place. In any case, people who have previous positive training (learning) experience, basic or secondary education are more likely to learn. It is also important that learning selection criteria are training curriculum newsworthiness and use. Wage increase after receiving of certificate, learning at work are considered to be not important motivational factors for seniors. It can be assumed that this is due to the retirement age of the respondents. So what is opportunity to gain an encouraging, motivating learning experience? How to stimulate the desire to learn? Does everyone have to learn? On the training organizers side, there are plenty of training (learning) opportunities. This is why there are those who believe that the lack of adequate, interesting topics and learning courses. Does advertisment reach potential students? Maybe you need personal contact? Why men are less involved in learning? Is that due to the fact that the majority of training is planned and led by women?

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QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Gender:	a. Male b. Female
2. Age:	a. 30-40 b. 40-50 c. 50-60 d. 60-70 e. 70-80 f. above 80
3. Education:	a. Secondary b. Vocational c. Higher d. Other
4. Are you working at the moment:	a. Working b. Unemployed c. Retired d. Other
5. My favourite activity:	a. Reading b. Theater c. Traveling d. Discussion e. Listening to others f. Participating in the courses g. Other
6. Would you like to study in the future, increase your current knowledge and skills if you had the opportunity (if classes were held at a favourable time and in good conditions, if you had enough funds etc.)	a. Yes b. No
7. What time do you prefer to learn at?	a. On weekdays after work b. On weekdays during working hours c. At the weekend (Saturday and Sunday) d. On holiday

8. What learning form do you prefer?
   a. Individually, alone
   b. Courses, trainings
   c. In a group or with friends
   d. Participation in various organisations (Third Age Universities, seniors' organisations, etc.)
   e. At work
   f. Informal activities
   g. Other

9. What learning method do you prefer:
   a. Reading
   b. TV, radio, cd, using the internet
   c. Distant method
   d. Other

10. What learning environment do you prefer:
    a. At home
    b. At work
    c. At school, at university
    d. Other

11. Where do you get information about seniors' organisations, ongoing training:
    a. Newspaper
    b. Radio
    c. Internet
    d. I get information from friends
    e. Other

12. Why do you want to learn, to deepen your knowledge and skills?
    a. While learning I improve myself, expand my horizon, I can express myself better
    b. I am encouraged by the constantly growing requirements of the labor market
    c. I am seeking more knowledge to get extra work and improve my situation
    d. While learning I can socialize with new people, establish new contacts
    e. I want to find another job
    f. My employer encourages me to learn
    g. Everyone is learning nowadays, so I am learning too
    h. other

13. Why do not you want to learn?
    a. It seems to be too late to learn / because of my age
    b. Learning is too hard on my health
    c. I lack funds for learning
    d. The existing knowledge and skills are enough
    e. It is difficult to combine work and learning
    f. There is no nearby place to study
    g. I lack information about learning institutions and programs
    h. Study programs are too complicated
    i. It is difficult to combine learning with family
    j. There are no learning programs I would like to learn
    k. See no point in learning / I do not feel the need
    l. Other

14. What subjects do you want to learn, increase your current knowledge and skills if you had the opportunity (if classes were held at a favourable time and in good conditions, if you had enough funds etc.)
    a. Computer literacy
    b. Foreign languages
    c. Law knowledge necessary for everyday life
    d. Psychology
    e. Health
    f. Accounting knowledge
    g. Business knowledge
    h. Management
    i. Economic knowledge
    j. Traditional crafts
    k. Philosophy
    l. Art knowledge
    m. Handicraft
    n. Other

EXAMPLES OF THE BEST PRACTICES AND MOMENTS FROM THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES

NORDPLUS

SENIOR MOTIVATION TO LEARN