



## Activation of senior citizens

(Team number 81)

### **Team 81:**

Jakub Kudýn

Bc. Eva Bartošová

Eliška Handlová

Bc. Anna Pecková

Pavla Jiroušková

## Introduction

The main task of our project is to prepare concrete measures, which will enhance senior's quality of life. We are looking for social innovation which would decrease loneliness of seniors and increase their society participation.

## Demographic changes

Population is ageing. This trend is observable worldwide, but in Europe is the most evident. Demographic ageing is connected with two main signs: people live in general longer and fewer children are being born. According to Eurostat, in 2050 people over 65 should form a third of the population. Now it depends on us how we will react to this trend, because it will bring new issues as lack of money for pensioners or higher spending on health care.

Demographic ageing is also not avoiding to Brno. Nowadays in Brno live almost 70 thousands people over 65. Estimation for 2050 is the same as in other developed cities therefore Brno should count with 30% people older than 65.

In theoretical part we have made use of tool for measuring active ageing called Active Ageing Index. This index is comprised from 4 dimensions: Indicators of employment, Indicators of participation in society, Indicators of independent and secured life and Indicators of capacity for active ageing and supportive environment.

Vidovičová a Petrová Kafková (2016) applied this index on regional level in Czech Republic. Brno is part of southeast region, which obtain the second worst score. Under this result we can see great potential for improvement, especially in dimension of participation in society, for example volunteering reaches low level.

## What actually is Time bank?

Time bank is place, where you do not need money. You exchange activity with other members of time bank. It should connect people with diverse capabilities and different needs. It is based on old way of trading, which is called barter. It should support intergenerational solidarity, when old and young help to each other, because it is accessible for everyone and during that process they find new friends. Seniors can also demonstrate to society that they still have skills to share.

## Target groups

Time bank should at first target seniors. However, we are aware of that this activity will not be for every senior, because it is required some technical skills, at least with mobile phone. We tried to eliminate every barrier and we partly succeeded with contact point of time bank, because seniors do not need to work with computer, but we insist on mobile phone due to verification of the person which should ensure elemental security. So main group, which will use time bank, will be probably pre-seniors and younger seniors.

To support intergenerational solidarity we have made time bank for everybody in Brno. Everybody can join with their activity and benefit from it.

### **Time bank in practise:**

Thomas is young thirty years old man, who has excellent computer skills and he is willing to teach somebody basics on computer. He enters this activity on the website of time bank. Megan, who is already retired, would like to learn some basics on computer. She decides to visit contact point of time bank and ask clerk, who is handling the website, to let her know if somebody will offer activity concerning computer skills. When clerk finds out that Thomas posted activity concerning computer skills, she sends SMS to Megan with information about activity and location of Thomas place. If place and activity are suitable for Megan, she will pick up phone and call to clerk, that she is interested in this activity. Clerk will send her telephone number to Thomas and he will call to Megan to arrange the meeting. If the meeting goes fine and Megan will be satisfied with the activity, Thomas will receive one point to his account which he can exchange with other users of time bank. In the end, Megan will review Thomas services from 1 to 5 stars and write short comment.

We are aware of possible risks connected to this project. Especially when is project based on human trust. Firstly thieves can join to Time bank and easily get into senior's houses and take all of their stuff. This risk is partly eliminated by mobile verification and reviews by users.

Also some people can exploit system of time bank, when they offer activity but will not attend to the meeting and get point for free. This risk is eliminated by reviews by users. Users can also vent their anger on clerk behind computer, which would be unpleasant for him or her if they will not be satisfied with arranged activity. Web page has to have user-friendly environment that people can easily enter their activity without too much effort and will come back with pleasure. People who cannot work with computer, will be limited by closing time.

## Community gardening

The community garden is a single piece of land, which is farmed by group of people, which share the responsibilities for garden as much as harvest. People can come and start to cultivate part of this garden.

The community garden is a place, where members of time bank will meet. Concept of time bank can be for some people “scary”, because they have to communicate with strange people. The community garden should eliminate this barrier, because here can people casually establish relationships with other members and after that can start with activity exchange. Since we want make garden especially for seniors, it must be easily accessible. Main difference from other community gardens in Brno, ours should be run by the seniors themselves. We count with organizing regular events, such as workshops, lectures, exercise... etc. on the area.

Community gardening is also connected with risk as Time bank. Firstly, it will be difficult to find suitable location and land. Gardening is associated with a lot of work and initially there will not be that many members of community garden to cover the entire area, people can feel overwhelmed by that much work. According to several cases in Brno, some thieves can jump over fence and steal everything from it. This could be also frustrated for seniors, who had to work hard to make it grew. This experience can seniors discourage from visiting the community garden.

## Conclusion

Demographic ageing will influence our society and we should be ready for it. Now it is the best time to arrange suitable environment, in which seniors will feel comfortable. The time bank and the community garden should increase participation in society, which reached the lowest level in Active Ageing Index in southeast region. There will be some costs connected with this project, but benefits should be much higher. It is important to support physical and mental activity of seniors, because it is best prevention against depressions, dementia and other diseases. (Physical Activity and Risk of Cognitive Impairment and Dementia in Elderly Persons 2001) It is also important to show seniors, that they still represent a contribution to society.

## Sources

Vidovičová, L., M. Petrová Kafková. 2016. „Index aktivního stárnutí (AAI) v regionální aplikaci.“ *Demografie* 58: 49 – 66.

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