



**ACTIVE – Active Citizenship Training Initiative for Volunteers in Europe**

**Rome 25th – 29th January 2009**

**Day by day programme**

	Monday 25th January	Tuesday 26th January	Wednesday 27th January	Thursday 28th January	Friday 29th January
Morning Session 9.30–12.30	Session 1 Davide Di Pietro - Lunaria	Session 3 Davide Di Pietro – Lunaria	Session 5 Gertraud Daye Seniorenbuero Graz	Session 7 Rory Daly University of Lancaster	Session 9 A Rabuiti Municip.Ferrara
	General Introduction to senior volunteers exchanges	Preparation of the volunteers Preparation of hosting organizations	Stereotypes and prejudices on senior citizens	Preparing your volunteers	Local governments and networking
Lunch					
Afternoon Session 14.30-17.30	Session 2 Dietmar Eisenhammer	Session 4 Carmen Stadelhofer University of Ulm	Session 6 Paolo Maddonni - Legambiente	Session 8 Italian National Agency LLP	Session 10 Horacio Czertok
	:Theory and Practice of Voluntary Service	Use of internet in voluntary work abroad	Senior volunteers and intercultural learning	Funding opportunities	Non verbal communication

**Introduction**

Lunaria and the SEVEN network are proud to introduce the training course aimed at staff and volunteers of adult learning institutions, voluntary service organizations and local governments dealing with social issues who are curious to learn how setting up and managing transnational senior volunteers exchanges throughout Europe. This course is based on the daily practical experience of the organizations belonging to the SEVEN network (Senior European Volunteers Exchange Network) and all the trainers belong to it. Both the Network and the training course are supported by the European Commission - Grundtvig program on adult learning.

Please find below an introduction to each session.

## **SESSION 1 General introduction to senior volunteers exchanges (Davide Di Pietro – Lunaria)**

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Since the year 2001, several pilot projects of senior volunteers exchanges have been carried out. More than 400 senior volunteers (i. e. 50 years old +) took part in a project abroad lasting from two weeks to two months, volunteering in favor of community based projects in the social, cultural and environmental field. Can we consider volunteering abroad, including its preparatory and follow-up stages, as a full informal education experience?.

How can we promote educational paths featuring intercultural learning, personal skills development and active citizenship in a perspective of social cohesion among different cultures and different age groups?

We will explore how the intercultural learning process works on two ways: not only the volunteer is deepened into another culture, but also the host learns from the volunteers different points of view, different ways to perform activities and directly deal with another mentality beyond all prejudices and stereotypes.

## **SESSION 2: theory and practice of senior volunteering (the voice of a volunteer) (Dietmar Eisenhammer – Senior volunteer from ISIS - Germany)**

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**Volunteering** in Europe is quite common for the younger generation. Now there are more and more **possibilities for senior citizens**. Many organisations offer places all over Europe for „older people“ also according to their qualifications. The conditions and the requirements for Senior Volunteering are quite different. We will clarify at the beginning the „**Ideal situation for Senior Volunteering**“. This will show us, how the ideal volunteer should look like in his opinion and expectation. It is also necessary to say something about the ideal placement, so we will go through the most important points for the theoretical situation in Senior Volunteering. But reality might be different from theory. You must have this in mind before starting volunteering in order to avoid surprises. In order to do this, we will illustrate the reality of senior volunteering through the experiences of five senior placements in France and Italy. Finally we can list up the **differences between „Theory and Practice of Volunteering“**. The more you know about this the more you are able to decide: „**Can I accept the reality of Senior Volunteering** “.

## **SESSION 3: Preparation of hosting organisations (Davide Di Pietro – Lunaria)**

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Last autumn 2008, the European Commission launched the SVP action – Senior Volunteers Programme aimed at senior citizens. This Programme gives the opportunity to our organisations to exchange a number of senior volunteers on the service projects abroad for periods lasting 3 to 8 weeks. Already witnessing vivid interest of potential senior volunteers to such type of exchange programmes during pilot projects of the past (Mobility 55, Still Active, Teaming Up) we believe that the demand will be high again. Will

we be able to respond it offering good number of interesting placements and ensuring the quality of those?

Having decided to participate in the Programme offering placements for senior volunteers every organisation will immediately face a number of quite natural questions. What to consider when planning an exchange? What are the main framework conditions (accommodation, meals, leisure time) on such exchanges? What type of work can be offered and how it should be organised? How to prepare local communities for hosting international senior volunteers? What are DOs and DON'Ts in the exchange?

During this session - Preparation of Hosting Organisations - we are going to try to find answer to these and many other important questions and get encouragement to organise host projects for senior volunteers in our countries. But there is no magic guidebook, nor a universal recipe or general theory how to do it. The basis for our discussion will be diverse previous experience of similar projects that we actually have collected in the past seven years of activity. This workshop will be interactive encouraging to share the knowledge and experience of the participants. We believe that the conclusions and drawn recommendations of this workshop will be helpful to the organisations who indeed wants to host senior volunteers in their countries.

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#### **SESSION 4: Use of the Internet in voluntary work abroad (Carmen Stadelhofer – ZAWIW University of Ulm)**

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Internet offers a wide range of information and communication possibilities. It may be helpful also for senior citizens who work voluntarily abroad. Before they start their experience, they may inform themselves about the host organisation and the host country. They may previously get in contact with them by email. During their work abroad senior citizens may also want to stay in contact with their partners, families and friends. But also if questions or problems appear, Internet may be helpful to solve them. The relations to the host can be hold up also after the visit by communication tools offered by the new media. They offer also the ability to exchange with other volunteers, e.g. by discussion forums. Or to release exchanges' results on a website. This workshop will introduce to the advantages of the use of the Internet for senior volunteers.

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#### **SESSION 5: Acknowledgement and management of stereotypes and prejudices about senior citizens (Gertraud Dayè – SeniorenBuero Graz)**

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When organizing an exchange of senior volunteers we have to be well aware of the needs and typical behavioural patterns of this target group.

But how do we avoid falling into the trap of accepting prejudices and stereotypes?

This seminar is conceived as an interactive working group, with role play and discussion rounds to raise the awareness about differences and similarities within the age group 50+ to 70 – i.e. those who might be interested to work as volunteers in other countries, but also about characteristics and differences of older persons in general.

Participants will be encouraged to discuss with others what experiences they have made themselves with regard to the widely differing attitudes and needs of the different age groups of senior citizens (e.g.: spending the night in a tent might be o.k. for somebody aged 55 or 60 but no longer for somebody 65 or 70).

And thanks to the fact that there will certainly be workshop participants who come from different countries and bring in their specific working experiences, also cultural differences and behavioural patterns should become apparent in role play and discussion rounds.

To sum up: In this workshop we would like to define:

- which are the general characteristics that can safely be assumed as typical for senior volunteers,
- how can we detect stereotypes and preconceived ideas that might not apply,
- what are the prevalent prejudices and how can we avoid them
- which might be the differences in attitudes depending on the country the senior volunteers come from (different wishes, needs and attitudes of e.g. Swedish or Italian senior citizens).

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### **SESSION 6: Senior volunteers and intercultural learning (Paolo Maddonni – Legambiente)**

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#### ***One month abroad : how heavy is your luggage ? Tools and obstacles for a proper intercultural learning.***

The present senior European generations are those ones who come from the end of the Second World War and the beginning of '60. They passed through Nazism, Stalinism, the iron curtain, the '68 youth revolution, a new role for women, the European Union idea, drug abuses, terrorism, new music styles, a technology new revolution, the fall of Berlin's wall, new political parties, new feelings towards Muslims, new approaches towards immigration, new concerns about environmental issues, the domination of the television set. Senior volunteers or travellers have a long history of personal life, rich in experiences of family, work, studies, personal interests, political ideas. All together this represents a luggage to carry abroad. Which part of this luggage is useful for an intercultural fruitful exchange? Is there still some room for new inputs to collect during the project experience? With the use of study cases and piece of movies participant to the workshop will be invited to discover tools and obstacles for a proper intercultural learning during a senior voluntary service abroad.

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### **SESSION 7: Preparing your volunteers (Rory Daly – University of Lancaster)**

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Our experience with exchanging older volunteers tells us that a fully informed and trained volunteer will be an effective and happy volunteer.

The experience of volunteering in another country can be a challenging one for many older people. Many of the volunteers may not have travelled to another country before and they will be concerned about the travelling, the language, the new culture, the voluntary work itself and how they will cope with being part of a group of volunteers. Of course, such concerns are not exclusive to older volunteers but it is essential that the volunteers are prepared properly for their trip. The experience of the SEVEN Network demonstrates that this preparation is crucial for a successful exchange.

Each exchange and destination will require different preparation but we have devised a template which works for senior volunteers. This session will showcase the template,

demonstrate some of the key activities and allow participants to exchange suggestions and experiences that could be incorporated in to their training.

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### **SESSION 8: Funding opportunities (Italian national Agency of LLP)**

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In 2008, the European Commission launched an exchange program for senior volunteers in the framework of the GRUNDTVIG new actions. We will have one guest from the national Agency of the Lifelong Learning Programme who will introduce us to this program and will answer the many questions that we likely are going to have. We will be introduced to the technical procedures to submit a successful application in our own countries. There will be also time for the participants to share other funding opportunities.

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### **SESSION 9: Local Governments and networking (Augusta Rabuiti - Municipality of Ferrara )**

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The support of senior volunteers exchanges, as well as any other activity relating to active ageing, adult learning and active citizenship should not be sought only at European level. Local governments also should have a part in implementing these initiatives as they happen exactly in the areas they are called to administer. In this session we will explore on how local governments can implement senior volunteers exchange through a networking action at local level. We will look at good practices in building up social Networks and the ways of co-operation among the different actors. The session will have a problem solving orientation and will be carried out through examples, study cases and testimonials.

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### **SESSION 10 Non verbal Language (Horacio Czertok – Teatro Nucleo Ferrara)**

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How is it possible to communicate with people speaking a different language from ours? for thousands of years mankind communicate successfully without speaking, considering that, anthropologists teach us, languages we use today are not older than approx 10 thousand years. This means that we have a precognition of this non verbal language, as children teach us. It is a language that we do not need to learn, but that we already know and just need to be strongly refreshed. So we may discover that we know much more than we believe.

For non verbal language is more related to our emotions gear, through gestures and movements, this work leads to a recognition of the way emotions influence communication. And also: non verbal doesn't means voiceless, on the contrary a peculiar attention is devoted to voice.

Through a set of exercises we want to propose a practical work that leads to this findings, which we believe helpful to the volunteering experience.