



**Senior
Explorers
of Urban
Environments**

**Older people discover the
neighbourhood digitally**

HANDBOOK





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WHAT TO EXPECT ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Digital literacy is the key to the world of today. Not only do digital devices, applications and services help to keep us informed, they also enable us to participate, make use of a variety of services and stay in contact with friends and family. However, many older people are at risk of digital exclusion, and this also threatens their social inclusion.

With our transnational project [SEE U \(Senior Explorers of Urban Environments\)](#) we contributed to closing the digital gap. We collaborated with partners from Austria, Czechia and Slovenia, (supported by experts from GERONTOLOGIE CH in Switzerland and AGE Platform Europe in Belgium) to create engaging learning environments for older learners. Our participants were encouraged to use new technologies to explore their neighbourhoods. They developed and carried out app-based walks and we supported them in this process and facilitated their use of digital devices and peer learning in the group. Each learner participated in this according to their own interests and possibilities.

This handbook brings together some of our experiences with the development and learning processes of older learners, together with some of the results of these processes – the walking tours. Whenever possible, we provide examples or quotes from our participants to show the enriching experiences we all had throughout the project.

We would like to inspire older people and adult educators to organise their own digital walks in their neighbourhood. To this end you might want to read the following chapters that describe

- 👁️ the learning process we developed for the older learners in the SEE U project,
- 👁️ the possibilities of adapting our “ideal” or model process to the needs of the different contexts and people (i.e. learners, adult educators, organisations),
- 👁️ the results of our learning and training events (walks),
- 👁️ examples of the digital competences the older learners acquired, and
- 👁️ our own learning as adult educators.

www.see-u-project.eu

Please see our website for all our publications in four languages (English, German, Czech, Slovenian).

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WHAT WE WORK FOR

PROMOTING THE DIGITAL INCLUSION OF OLDER PEOPLE

Digital participation is social participation.

Take a minute and think of all the ways in which digital devices and/or tools help us in our daily lives. We navigate through the city with the help of a digital map, we communicate with friends, we pay our bills and make appointments online. We take pictures, look for the opening hours of a shop and book a train ticket on the internet. We compare prices, watch TV, sell second-hand clothes and order food. All of this and much more is digital participation. Our ability to participate contributes significantly to our way of life and we should be very aware of the fact that it can also contribute significantly to maintaining and increasing the quality of life of older people as it enables them to

© queraum



have an independent lifestyle. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the power of technology as it helped us to reduce social isolation and stay connected with the world. It also helped with learning, doing sports and other activities during those challenging times.

The digital gap has to be closed.

Europe is the most digitally connected region in the world with nearly 90 per cent of the

Marta E.,
80, participant
in Prague

“I am willing to learn new things and develop digital tools, when the knowledge is of use for me, which was the case here.”



WHAT WE WANTED

PROVIDING INSPIRING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

population online. The participation of older individuals in the digital world has increased considerably over the last few years. Despite this, many older people are at risk of being left behind in the digital world. And some groups of older people are at an even higher risk of exclusion, among them women.

To participate digitally, you not only need equipment such as a computer and internet connection, you also need to be digitally literate, a crucial skill in today's world. Older people who are not familiar with digital tools are at a high risk of both digital and social exclusion. The digital gap threatens their full participation – their ability to communicate, stay informed, use services etc. It has become obvious that the digital gap has to be closed or at least minimised.

Studies have shown that learning in later life is important for older people and society. It is not only essential for the social inclusion of older people but also for maintaining their health and wellbeing. For enriching and successful learning results, older learners need learning environments that:

- 👁️ stimulate their curiosity and passion for learning,
- 👁️ raise their self-confidence,
- 👁️ take into account their attitudes (towards technology),
- 👁️ respect their knowledge, needs, interests, abilities and aspirations,
- 👁️ enable self-directed *and* interactive (peer) learning,
- 👁️ consider the diversity of the learning group and use it and
- 👁️ are free of ageist stereotypes.

Dušana
Findeisen,
expert in
Ljubljana

“In this project we, adult educators, were not those who knew but those who co-learned and co-researched together with project participants.”

With our project [SEE U](#) we wanted to contribute to narrowing the digital gap that makes older people vulnerable to exclusion and isolation. We wanted to reach this goal by developing and promoting adequate learning environments and opportunities that inspire and support older learners – learning situations that put meaning, interest and fun at the centre and that relied very much on empowerment and peer learning.

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THE STEPS WE TOOK

THE SEE U APPROACH – IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

What the **SEE U** training was all about

With the **SEE U** trainings we wanted to

- 👁️ invite older women and men to get involved with digital tools and applications,
- 👁️ awaken their curiosity and the readiness to make use of the chances offered by digital tools and applications,
- 👁️ support older learners to develop their own walks and tours according to their interests and needs,
- 👁️ strengthen the sense of community to allow for reciprocal and mutual learning (peer and collaborative learning),
- 👁️ have older learners develop and test innovative and effective methods colliding the real, virtual and digital world.

How the **SEE U** training was conceptualised

The **SEE U** training consists of six modules or “steps” that constitute an “ideal” or prototype process. In practice, the partners found rather individual ways of creating learning processes and environments catering to the needs of

- 👁️ the organisations they work for,
- 👁️ the partners they cooperated with, and of course,
- 👁️ the learners who come with their diverse expectations, interests, knowledge and competences.

In each of the modules, the older learners were encouraged and supported to use devices, hardware (e.g. smartphone, tablet, laptop) and applications (e.g. maps, search engines, social media, databases, video/audio recording apps, Actionbound app¹) that were relevant for the development of the tours.

The devices or tools served the development of the tours. They were subordinated to the needs and the interests of the participants (e.g. finding the topics of the tours) and concrete tasks (e.g. taking pictures on the way, searching for information).

Autonomous learning and learning from each other (peer learning) were encouraged and facilitated, e.g. by providing material that could be taken home, by organising exchange groups or by establishing safe learning settings where older learners feel at ease.

¹ see: <https://en.actionbound.com>

THE WORKSHOP MODULES



1. Getting Together



The participants get together and get familiar with the **SEE U** project. They are encouraged to express their interests, preferences and expectations.

Be comprehensible

The digital world has its own terms. It is important to make sure that the participants really understand what you are talking about. Regarding the Actionbound app we wanted to make “digital tours“ tangible right from the start by developing a test tour in the area where we first met our learners.

Be concrete

In order to help learners to directly “dive into“ the possibilities of the project and the app they would be working with, we provided examples of tours (in our city),

showcased the wide spectrum of possible topics and provided material (e. g. QR Code, quick instruction sheet on how to download the Actionbound app).

At this stage, it is important to be clear about how and for whom the results of the activities will be used. In the first meeting, the trainers roughly explained:

- 👁️ the structure and goals of the project,
- 👁️ how the project will be conducted and
- 👁️ how Actionbound will be gradually learned.

“I asked participants of my weekly chatting-group: What do you think digitalisation of a walk means?”

Hedi S., 94,
participant
in Vienna

Connect with existing groups

Instead of creating a new group to develop the tour, you may find it much easier to contact an existing group that is ready for new input. In the already existing groups, people know and usually trust each other.

Example In Slovenia, it was decided that widespread advertising of the project would be pointless. Instead, the project team targeted existing groups and organisations. The project team worked with study groups of the Third Age University in Ljubljana and Ilirska Bistrica.

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With existing groups you start with a community building, icebreaker activity, as the following example from Ljubljana shows:

“Think of the following jobs and professions and tell your neighbour of any memories or stories related to the proposed words: policeman, engineer, nurse. Do not forget to describe the urban environment where the story is taking place.”

“Actually, the word policeman reminds me of a policewoman, a very proud young woman. She was wearing a uniform and white socks and holding a stick, standing at the centre of the empty crossroads. The scene is from a film shot by Laibach band in the capital of North Korea. The streets were amazingly clean and there well-aligned high-rise buildings all around.”

Participants discuss this example and contribute their own examples and memories. Ideally, they also talk about the environment, the setting of this and their memories. Explain that different stories show how different we are and how differently we can approach the same topic. It is also important that group members express themselves and exchange their stories. The discussion needs a supporting moderator, who asks questions, etc.

2. Identifying Topics



Topics for potential tours are collected, discussed, agreed, and further developed by the group.

Let the brains storm

Use a joint meeting to brainstorm and collect ideas for tours together. Inspire the participants with questions such as: What interests me in my neighbourhood? What exciting places do I know? What topics or places would I like to show to others?

Example In Prague, everyone could create a tour idea on their own. The discussion was moderated by advanced tour guides who shared their tours as an inspiration. All the ideas were collected and jotted down on a flipchart. Next, participants were invited to vote for their favourite tour using the project WhatsApp channel. The top three tour ideas were selected and further developed.

Dušana Findeisen, expert in Ljubljana

Collect the stories

A good starting point for developing walks are the personal stories and memories of the participants.

Example In Ljubljana, the group participants collected interesting spots, chose meaningful places, created topical itineraries and named them, i. e. “My meaningful places, my neighbourhood”. Stories were collected and then exchanged. The learners even collected stories from their family members and peers.

“It is basic to know the purpose of the tour: informing, teaching, studying, having fun, validating one’s knowledge, etc.”

3. Developing



The participants learn about different possible elements of a tour (e. g. info bites, gamification elements). They try out different methods to be used in their own tour(s).

Take a walk –
in real or in virtual life

Collect ideas for possible locations, content and tasks for a tour while walking the area of interest.

Example The learners from the multi-generation house in Graz realised on a walk that their planned route would even be suitable for two walks.

If it is not possible to take a walk, use applications such as Google Maps, Google Street View or Open Street Map (OSM) to take a virtual look at the planned route. If you are working in a larger group, use a large computer screen or a projector.

“Tour developers should have some idea about the possible audience and should adapt the tour to them”

Majda Ažman,
English teacher
and project
team member
in Ljubljana

Find a suitable way
of working together

There are different ways to develop a tour. Some groups have developed tours together and shared responsibilities. In other groups, individuals have taken on the main responsibility.

Example The tour owners in Prague prepared the general plan (e. g. stops, description of places) and discussed it in a planning workshop with the other participants. Supported by the project team, the tour owner prepared the tour in a digital map (e. g. www.mapy.cz) and presented it to the others. Together the participants created the final version, added new stops, discussed details and brought ideas (e. g. about a nice cafeteria on the way, etc.)

Example In Ljubljana, there were no tour owners as the tours were created jointly by all participants, or the whole study group, but a student responsible for the coordination of the activities was designated.

Collect and research

If the learners are interested, you can encourage and support them to search for and use diverse material (e. g. books, newspaper articles, sound files). These resources offer many learning opportunities in the digital field, including online research.

Example In Slovenia, the participants created their own photo repository. This helped them to make a collection of their meaningful places, places that trigger their memories and emotions.



4. Uploading



The elements of the tour that have been worked out in analogue form are now uploaded into the Actionbound app. Depending on the interests and knowledge of the group, this can be done individually or supported by the project team.

“Participating in this project, motivates me to get more familiar with my new MacBook and the operating system.”

Rosita R., 70,
participant
in Austria

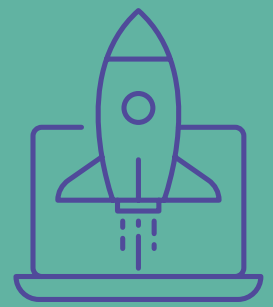
Consider different speeds

The previous knowledge of the learners can vary greatly. Some might need a little support or feedback; others may prefer to create their tour with the trainers or their peers.

Some learners may encounter barriers or even experience fear. It has been found helpful to provide “opportunities for approaching”. Some learners might prefer to watch and learn as a first step and move on to trying themselves later in the process.

Example In some cases the project team in Vienna started to upload elements of tours into Actionbound. This draft version was further developed in collaboration with the participants. This approach proved helpful in increasing their engagement with digital tools and “breaking the ice”.

5. Testing



The digital tours are tested several times by the group or individual tour developers. Feedback is collected and discussed.

Organise collective tour testing

Working with others on “testing“ of the tour is more fun and makes it easier to identify mistakes or inconsistencies and change descriptions etc.

Example In Vienna, queraum organised workshops with different tour developers to jointly test a tour. They used a projector to work together effectively.

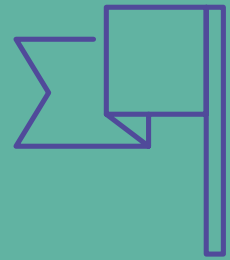
“I have learned so many things during our walk today, things I wouldn’t have learned otherwise.”

Fati H., 72,
participant
of a test tour
in Vienna

Example The team in Prague sent out the link to the testing group to see if the tour design worked. Then they went on the test tour with a few participants to check out the feasibility and adjusted the tour in the app based on the comments and tips from the group. The updates and corrections of the tour were done right on the spot on a computer that was brought along by the trainer team.

Example In Ljubljana, the testing was done in two steps – first by the group of developers and second by a test group.

6. Finalising



Ideas for improvements and changes are incorporated into the tour(s).

Invite others to join and learn

Guided tours were an integral part of our project: Tour developers offered guided test tours to people interested in exploring places in their neighbourhood. They proved to be stimulating and low-threshold learning settings.

Example During the test tours in Vienna, the participants had small moments of learning: e. g. how to add screenshots or links or how to save photos on a phone.

Example In Slovenia, the participants offered guided tours to students, older people from other study groups and their family members, and collected comments and suggestions. This feedback (including new and additional information) was inserted into the tour programme.

“I was against it but now I can see what I was missing. It is so easy at the end and I found a new way of staying in touch with my peers.”

Marta E., 80,
participant
in Prague

Offer different “entering” modes

To overcome barriers and fear, you could provide diverse ways to “enter” a tour. For example you could make the walk available in analogue form and hand out printouts.

Example In Vienna, some participants were rather reluctant at the beginning and did not want to enter their answers on the tablet themselves or switch to the next task. While walking together with others some reluctant participants gained confidence and tried to carry out the “digital tasks” on their own.



© queraum

perspectives on known places, the digital tools offer a new type of experience.

Example Similarly, Slovenian Third Age University is planning to include the tours into their outdoor educational provision. The study walking tours will be promoted through different channels (national radio channel Slovenia 1, specialized magazines, e-news of the network of Slovenian Third Age Universities) together with other study programmes. The participants will be encouraged to spread the news about the offered tours by word of mouth.

Make your tours available

In order to advertise the walks to older people in the neighbourhood, you should use as many communication channels as possible and make it easy to access.

Example The **SEE U** walks are accessible via a QR code and can therefore be advertised very well via social media or postcards.

Example Letokruh in Prague promoted the new tours as part of their already existing portfolio of walks and excursions for participants. The **SEE U** tours offer new

[www.see-u-project.eu/
outcomes](http://www.see-u-project.eu/outcomes)

Please check out our Online Manual for developing Action-bound tours. This step-by-step guide can be used in trainings with older learners but also independently by tour developers.

SIDE EFFECTS OF WALKS

VISIBILITY & MOMENTS OF LEARNING

“Walking should be done, always to the best of one’s ability. Movement is healthy at any level. It’s not for nothing they say “If you move – you live!”

Jiří G., 87,
participant
in Prague

Please consider an important side effect of the walks: They strengthen older people’s identity and increase their visibility in community. Older people need to do everything they can to make themselves visible. It is important for them to struggle against ageist social stereotypes in different ways. One of them is by being achievers in the digital world for their own benefit and the benefit of the community.

Moreover, during the development of the walking tours, there were plenty of opportunities – or “moments of (informal) learning” – for the participants to become familiar with digital tools and acquire digital competences. Here are some examples of what they took away from the trainings and walks:

Using Actionbound (log-in,

insert texts and links, upload photos etc.)

Searching for information online Taking

pictures Saving photos on the smartphone

Transferring files from the smartphone to

the computer Adjusting font sizes on the mobile

phone Setting up a WhatsApp group

Using WhatsApp for communication

Using a projector for presentation

Using VR device

THE WAYS WE WALKED

SEE U WALKS IN:

- 📍 Prague
- 📍 Ljubljana
- 📍 Ilirska Bistrica
- 📍 Vienna and Graz



HISTORY, HIDDEN GEMS AND GREEN OASES

THE SEE U WALKS IN VIENNA AND GRAZ

HOW WE WORKED

The team from queraum worked with diverse partners in Vienna and Graz. Existing groups (e. g. visitors of a seniors' club, neighbourhood centres, multi-generation house or Agenda 21 groups) and individuals (e. g. people who learned about the project in a newspaper, on social media or through cooperation partners). As the digital literacy of the participants varied a lot, they received individual support in developing their tours. To foster peer learning, exchange meetings of the participants (e. g. to share experiences

with Actionbound, tips and tricks or discuss questions regarding data protection) and joint test tours were regularly organised. In some cases, adult educators (e. g. group leaders) were also involved. In line with the train-the-trainer approach, the project team passed on know-how about the Actionbound app and thus contributed to sustainability in the participating organisations.

“VR reality glasses are a totally new experience for me. It literally opened my eyes.”

Eva V., 72,
participant
in Prague

“For me, it's interesting too. I always discover new things while I am preparing and customising a tour. Often during the walk, at least one participant adds some, sometimes very private, information like, “Oh, I remember, here was where I got my first kiss at the age of twelve.”

Karin F.,
participant in
Austria

A Walk Through the 8th District



Walk in minutes: **approx. 60-90**



Walk in kilometres: **2**



Outdoor



Location: **Vienna, 8th district**

Vienna's 8th district (Josefstadt) may be the smallest district, but it has a lot to offer. On this walk, you can discover some exciting places and locations and learn a lot about the district's past and present.



© Tom Werchota

Developed by **Hedi S.** has lived in the district her whole life – for more than 90 years. She is very knowledgeable about the neighbourhood's history and hidden gems. In the past few years, she has organised several guided walks and has now digitalised one of her walks.



Green Oases in Vienna



Walk in minutes: **approx. 60**



Walk in kilometres: **approx. 3**



Outdoor



Location: **Vienna, 1st district**



The walk takes you to green oases in the 1st district (Inner City). Those interested receive interesting information on the topic of urban greening and can get to know or rediscover new places in Vienna’s city centre in an enjoyable way.



Developed by **The Agenda 21 group Sommerfrische im Zentrum (“Summer holidays in the centre”) campaigns for small, green spots in the district.**

www.la21wien.at/blog-detail-la21/sommerfrische-im-zentrum.html



© Mehrgenerationenhaus Waltendorf

Multi-Generational Walk in Waltendorf, Graz



Walk in minutes: **approx. 60**



Walk in kilometres: **approx. 3**



Outdoor



Location: **Graz, district Waltendorf**



What does “rocket science” have to do with the former “Kotzbeck” bakery in Waltendorf? And what was the loamy soil of Waltendorf used for in the 19th century? Answers to these and many other questions can be found on the interactive walk through the Waltendorf district of Graz.

Developed by **The walk is based on historical facts and special features collected by volunteers from the multi-generational house in Waltendorf and compiled in a publication. This interactive walk was created together with pupils from Waltendorf elementary school. The entire development process was accompanied by Radio Helsinki. Listen in!**

<https://helsinki.at/podcast/664378/>
<http://www.mgh-waltendorf.at>

VILLAS, LEGENDS AND VELVET MEMORIES

THE SEE U WALKS IN PRAGUE

HOW WE WORKED

The team of Letokruh invited senior volunteers who were interested in tours and walks, already had experience with creating or guiding tours and/or wanted to work with digital applications. Letokruh cooperated with the VR studio VR Kaleido because VR content is part of one of the tours and serves people with disabilities. The project team, other Letokruh team members and a representative of VR Kaleido supported the learners. For communication the team created a group in WhatsApp and invited participants to follow the SEE U channel. During the workshops the framework of the project was introduced, the Actionbound application was tried out together by trying out an already existing tour. The learners

brainstormed tour ideas and selected three of them. Their creation was led by those who had brought the idea (tour owners). They led the workshops and introduced their tours in the application www.mapy.cz, and adjusted them according to feedback. They were shown how to download the tours to their mobiles and to log into the Letokruh profile. This was done in a 1:1 approach (one senior volunteer: one project member). Testing of tours was done with seniors offline and in reality. Project outcomes influenced other senior volunteers to join walks and inspired other organisations working with seniors.

“Walking and lots of other sports belong to me. I appreciate that the application attracted new people to our walking group”

Jiří G., 87,
participant
in Prague



The Most Beautiful Villas in Baba



Walk in minutes: **approx. 150**



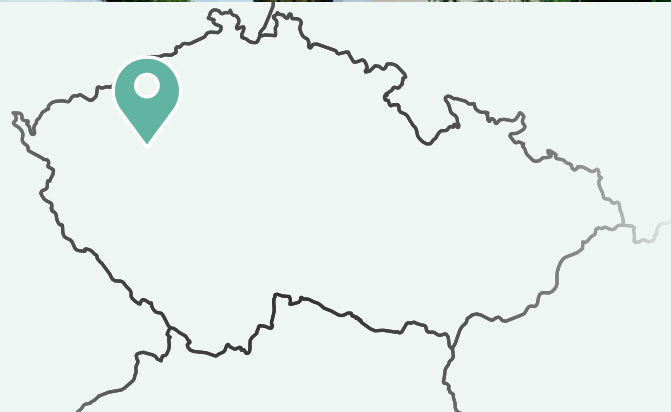
Walk in kilometres: **5.3**



Outdoor



Location: **Prague, area of Baba and Podbaba**



© private

The area of Baba and Podbaba is so exceptional that it was declared a city conservation area in 1993. The reason is simple: There were only six similar building colonies in Europe that promoted the modern housing trends of the time. Five of them have been significantly damaged over the years, but the Prague functionalist one has remained in its original form.

Developed by **Petr K., a Letokruh volunteer, is the owner of this tour. He is passionate about developing tours and collecting information and data about places. He has been organising walks and excursions for other Letokruh senior volunteers for more than a year. He developed the Baba tour because he wanted to show its exceptional architectural style.**



National Avenue Walk



Walk in minutes: **approx. 150**



Walk in kilometres: **1.3**

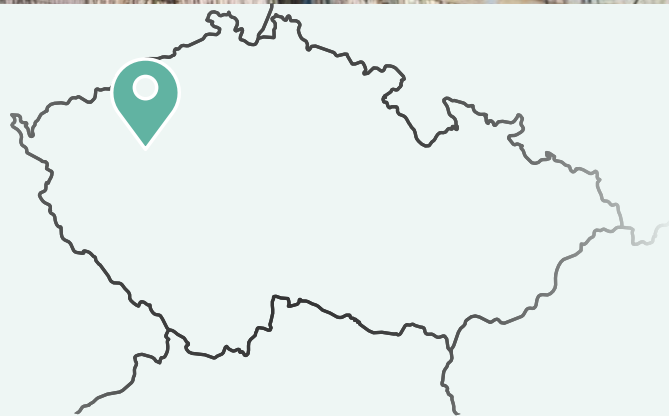


Outdoor and indoor



Location: **Prague, Národní třída**

Národní třída (National Avenue) is located on the border of the Old and New Town. The present National Avenue was built from 1781. After the completion of the National Theatre in 1881, a number of important buildings and institutions were built on Národní, and many famous people (e. g. artists, entrepreneurs) lived and worked here. Národní třída made history primarily through the Velvet Revolution, which took place on 17th November 1989.



© Letokruh

Developed by **Jiří T.** is both a **senior volunteer** and a **professional tour guide**. **Národní třída** was proposed by him and was voted for by the participants because of the possibility to learn more about the history of this significant street.



On the Slopes of Petřín



Walk in minutes: **approx. 150**



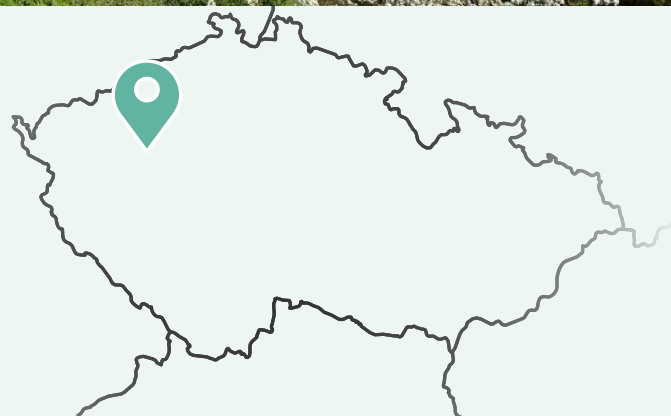
Walk in kilometres: **6.2**



Outdoor (indoor with VR)



Location: **Prague, Petřín**



© private

Petřín has a privileged position among the hills in Czechia. Not only is it surrounded by sweet legends of love, lovers, and cherry blossoms, but it also boasts many interesting monuments, statues, and historical sights.

Developed by **Petr K., a Letokruh volunteer, is the owner of this tour. He is passionate about developing tours and collecting information and data about places. He has been organising walks and excursions for other Letokruh senior volunteers for more than one year. Petřín was voted for because of its unique combination of view, natural beauty and historical buildings and sights.**

CULTURE, BREAD AND SOUL PLACES

THE SEE U WALKS IN LJUBLJANA AND ILIRSKA BISTRICA

HOW WE WORKED

There were two study groups in Ljubljana:

The group of architecture and urbanism “Squares, streets and Buildings around us” had been involved in exploratory learning before. They attended lectures, collected personal stories, went to archives to study, e. g. articles, radio broadcasts or post cards. With some support, they supplemented the already collected materials with recordings of songs, additional newspaper articles, films and advertisements. They learned how to gradually develop didactic materials from very different sources. At first, the 80+ members were unsure of their ability to learn Actionbound, but with encouragement from the group, they quickly gained self-confidence.

The second group was a group of advanced English language learners. They developed the tour “The Old Town We Love”, a walk that provides information about traditional crafts, as well as the bread and dairy shops in the Old Town. The method was easy to adopt – just memories about ordinary people who lived there and the services supporting everyday life in the Old Town in socialist times.

The Ilirska Bistrica group who developed the walk “Tječe, tječe bistra voda” („Running, running clear water“) were not familiar with the methods employed before. They started by collecting official publications about the sights copying the texts and pictures. So they set up a walkable tour, collected pictures, talked to each other, jotted down their own memories and those of other locals recorded mostly in local TV programmes. They searched for more data in master degree theses, scientific articles, newspapers, and videos about Ilirska Bistrica, checking and crosschecking the data. They made an introduction to their Actionbound tour introducing themselves and their U3A (University of Third Age).

The project results in all groups were tested by their peers from similar study circles.

“It is also nice to be among peers, to learn at my own pace and to be allowed to contribute what I know.”

Vera P., 81,
participant in
Ljubljana



© private collection of postcards by Zmaho Tancic

Between Culture and Friends



Walk in minutes: **approx. 60**



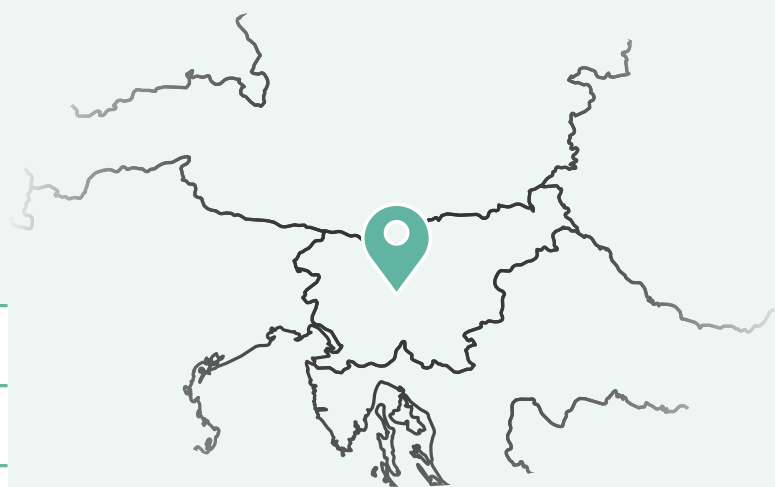
Walk in kilometres: **approx. 3**



Outdoor



Location: **Ljubljana, centre**



This tour combines the cultural landmarks and significant meeting points of Ljubljana's social life. Participants of this walk can immerse themselves in the calm and slow-paced atmosphere while rediscovering the forgotten relationship between inhabitants and artists. The itinerary has seven stops starting from the Nebotičnik building, passing by the Opera House and the Maxi market shopping mall – one of the iconic meeting places in the

past – and the national theatre, the once very popular Šumi area where politicians and artists used to carry out endless discussions about life and society. The walking tour ends up at the Union hotel.







© Dušana Findeisen

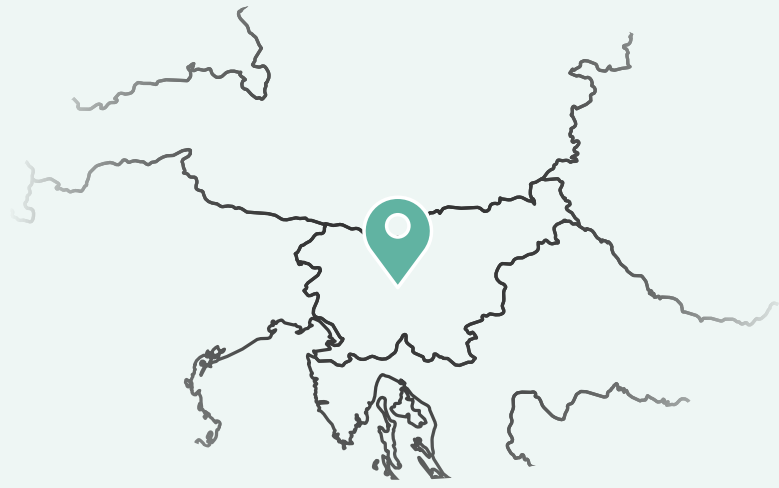
Developed by
**a study group
of the U3A in
Ljubljana**



The Old Town We Know



-  Walk in minutes: **approx. 45**
-  Walk in kilometres: **2.5**
-  **Outdoor / Indoor**
-  Location: **Ljubljana, Stari trg**



The walk reveals how the inhabitants baked and consumed bread during the socialist period following the Second World War. It starts at Breg in the baker's shop then it goes from one house to another in the Stari trg, one of the streets in the Old Town. Participants learn not only about the ordinary people who lived there but also about the local craftsmen and their crafts. They discover the ancient way of living in this part of the town. Different personal stories

were collected. The tour is described and based on photos taken by the Slovenian U3A students and short statements or stories written in English. Museums exhibiting the local way of life are also part of the tour.



© Dušana Findeisen

Developed by
**a study group
of the U3A in
Ljubljana**



Running, Running Clear Water



Walk in minutes: **approx. 45**



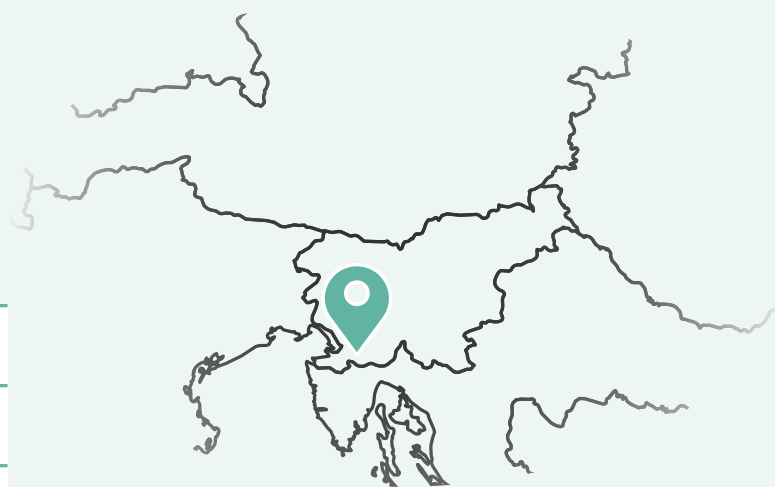
Walk in kilometres: **2.5**



Outdoor / Indoor



Location: **Ilirska Bistrica**



The walk takes the visitors to the most iconic locations of Ilirska Bistrica, a charming small town located in the western part of Slovenia. First it leads them to the Municipality House, then to the local Botanical Park, the Central Square in Guranji kraj, the buildings on the water revealing the soul of these places, as well as the vibrant history and present of the locality. Finally, it takes the walkers to the Sušec Waterfall, the meeting place of photographers from all over world.

Some small local museums exhibiting the local way of life are also part of the tour.



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Developed by
**a study group of
the U3A in Ilirska
Bistrica**

WHAT WE LEARNED

ADULT EDUCATORS AS LEARNERS

As adult educators and trainers we did not “teach” the learners in a narrow sense but regarded ourselves as tutors who supported the various and very individual learning processes of the participants. We did not “apply” a training concept but adapted the flexible, module-based **SEE U** training to the needs and interests of the learners. Foremost, we regarded ourselves as teachers/tutors and learners at the same time. This understanding of ourselves provided us with plenty of opportunities to experience and learn. Here are some of the experiences and insights we could take away regarding our role(s):

“We have been reminded that our learning is never just for us. We never learn so well as when we learn for others.”

Majda Ažman,
English teacher
and project
team member
in Ljubljana

© Sarah Frühling



Adult educators need a comprehensive skills set to work with individuals and groups (e. g. project management, communication and presentation, learning techniques, knowledge about group dynamics, expertise in feedback). We have collected some additional facets that were relevant to our project:

👁 Flexible mindset.

The learners and facilitators bring in their different personalities, their unconsciousness, frames of reference, previous experience with learning, their gender capital, their latent and explicit knowledge, needs, interests, aspirations, etc.

“From time to time I invited my neighbour to look at my iPad and copy my steps.”

Miran H.,
participant
from Slovenia

👁 **Preparedness for uncertainty.**

As the scope of our project is extensive, including aspects such as the content of the walks and digital devices, we often encountered questions without clear answers. It is crucial to be comfortable with this level of uncertainty. The acceptable reaction to such situations is: “Well, I don’t know, I am not sure, I have not touched upon this matter for a while, but I will check”.

👁 **Learning by doing.**

As trainers or tutors, we knew about the goals we needed to achieve but we did not always have a fully developed plan on how to take the individual steps to reach this goal. So we relied on a “learning by doing” approach and used outputs along the way for planning the next steps.

👁 **Curiosity.**

This is absolutely crucial for a project where you need to continuously familiarise yourself with new topics.

👁 **Readiness for fear and inhibitions.**

Although [SEE U](#)’s enjoyable approach was very accessible, some participants were still hesitant to interact with digital devices, such as entering their ideas into Actionbound or using a tablet on guided tours. To reduce these inhibitions, it would be helpful to provide opportunities for “getting closer”, for example by having printouts of the tour.

👁 **Creative learning facilitation.**

If you offer several ways of approaching a problem or a task, more people feel addressed and invited. Think about how to “catch” and include also the silent and less talkative people at every step of their journey.

👁 **Feasible planning.**

A flexible approach is very time consuming. It is important to consider realistically how many groups or individuals you can support in the learning process.



© Letokruh

👁️ **Trust in the group.**

We noticed during the course of our project, that exchange meetings of all participants were very popular. The older learners found it very enriching to learn and get feedback from their peers. This exchange at eye level was very refreshing and proved very effective – especially with regard to the digital know-how that was

“I am getting better at what is generally appreciated in today’s society.”

Lučka Trontelj,
75, participant
in Ljubljana

passed on informally and “along the way”. Trainers should really support and empower older people in their cooperative learning and doing.

👁️ **Reality checks.**

A very specific observation from our project was that some of the tour developers or owners collected a lot of tour points and much information – too much for one tour. However, the tour owners tended to insist on their version. A reality check in the field – e.g. a try-out of a tour together with other participants – helped to make clear the limits of one walk or tour.

👁️ **Knowledge about stereotypes and ageism.**

When working with the target group of older learners, you should be aware of general (but also your own, very personal) prejudices regarding older people. It is very important to know about the mechanisms and consequences of ageism. In this context, it’s important not to overemphasise shortcomings, but instead to recognise personal development and progress. Additionally, it’s crucial to address older individuals as individuals, rather than as a collective group.



SEE U SOON HERE: www.see-u-project.eu



WHO WE ARE

SEE U is an *Erasmus+* project (Cooperation Partnerships for Cooperation, adult education) running from December 2022 until November 2024. The project is carried out by five partner organisations:

Austria

QUERAUM. CULTURAL AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

www.queraum.org/en

Czech Republic

LETOKRUH, Z.Ú.

www.letokruh.eu

Slovenia

SLOVENIAN THIRD AGE UNIVERSITY

www.utzo.si/en/

Switzerland

GERONTOLOGIE CH

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The Slovenian
Third Age University

