

How seniors learn digital skills in the Nordics and Baltic?

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Who I am?

- Ville Hirvikoski
- planner/ project coordinator at Summer University of Jyväskylä since 2018
- responsible for different kinds of courses organized under the Finnish liberal adult education law or as open university studies (administrative / planning role)
- educational background: M. A. German language and pedagogical studies for subject teachers at the University Jyväskylä + some Russian studies

Partners in our project

- Jyväskylä Summer University (coordinating unit), Finland
 - Leena Meriläinen
 - Ville Hirvikoski
- Seniornett, Norway
 - Sturla Bjerkaker
 - Kristin Ruud
- Swedish Association for Distance Education (SADE), Sweden
 - Ulf Sandström
 - Ebba Ossiannilsson
- MCTAU – Medardo Čoboto Trečiojo Amžiaus Universitetas, Lithuania (U3A Vilnius)
 - Laima Tuleikiene
 - Jurgita Rotomskiene

What we do during the project?

- strengthen and develop co-operation between countries
- learn and share ideas of digital skills teaching for seniors
- Main question:
 - How we teach seniors digital skills and how they learn them, and is there differences between these countries and participating organizations?

How we do that?

- Four transnational meetings during the academic year 2020-2021
 - A written a memorandum about the meeting and the most important observations will be written and shared with the participating organizations.
 - A final report summarizes four memorandums to anchorage good practices and experiences
 - Changes possible due Covid19: first meeting online organised by SADE



What will take place during a transnational meeting?

- Introduction to digital skills education for seniors in the local organization / country
- Conversations and learning more about the topic, how we learn IT-skills
- The most important thing: networking with others!

Summer Universities

- Regional educational organizations
- Open university studies, vocational further education, language studies and short-term, non-formal education, for example.
- Also providing university-level courses in arts and culture, seminars and events as well as university activities for mature students. Their activities are focused on open higher education as well as on responding to the region's other learning and civic needs, also taking into account people who already have a degree in higher education.
- They are owned by regional associations and some regional councils.
- Summer universities are decentralized and operate in facilities owned by other educational institutions.
- Tuition is organized all year-round
- No age limits or any requirements for prior education

Summer University of Jyväskylä

- founded in 1912 and is the oldest Summer University in Finland
- In the beginning courses were organized only in summer: the main task was to offer lectures for high school graduate (to become students) and elementary school teachers – courses were taught mainly by Helsinki university professors and teachers.
- In 1981 Summer University started to offer studies around the year and its concept changed nearer to life-long learning: open university studies, language courses and vocational further education for teachers and other high educated professionals.
- In 1985 started the U3A
(= University of 3rd age, in cooperation with JYU)
- Summer University is nowadays legally an association
(members: municipalities of middle Finland, JYU, JAMK etc.)
- In 2014 new form of cooperation: Childrens' University "JYUniorit"

3rd Age University of Jyväskylä

In Jyväskylä The University of the Third Age is the meeting place for new scientific knowledge and life experience!



The U3A activities in Jyväskylä

- ✓ **About 20 000 participants in the U3A for the whole of Finland (2018)**
- ✓ **about 10 500 active participations in Jyväskylä (net 976 persons)**
- ✓ **Activities are arranged by the Summer University jointly with the city of Jyväskylä and the University of Jyväskylä**

Activities such as:

- **Lecture series either in person or streaming to 70 Adult education centres around Finland** (Studia Generalia –type with emphasis on health and self care)
- **Seminars** (creative writing, cultural tradition, literacy, art history, languages, philosophy etc.)
- **Creative working groups** (e.g. Senior choir and Grand Old Big Band)
- **Study tours and visits** (organized together with the seniors themselves)
- **ICT-skills for seniors** (courses in computer skills → **Geronet**)

U3A open to all

- no entry requirements
- no age limits
- no gender preferences, ~ 75 % of the participants are women
- the ages vary from 50 to 94 years old, average age of 75
- Students educational and professional profile is very wide and colourful
- Academic and highly educated seniors are the majority



Nordplus



JYVÄSKYLÄN
KESÄYLIOPISTO

The U3A activities in Jyväskylä



Financing of the U3A activities

Fees

- 35 € for lecture series per semester
- 15-100 € for seminars and computer courses

The fees cover ~60 % of the expenses

Other resources:

~40 % comes from the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture

+ Projects such as Geronet are funded by the National Agency of Education

+ Nordplus / Erasmus+ funding for transnational projects

+ new form of funding: European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) -> developing ICT-skills in rural areas of middle Finland



U3A lectures have been very popular from the very beginning



Pictures: 7.5.1986 and 10.10.2019

U3A-students learn ICT through Geronet

Geronet

Geros = old

Net = internet



The Geronet-team in Jyväskylä

- About 30 tutors assist other seniors in learning ICT-skills during courses or at assisting points in libraries and other locations.
- Computer / Mobile phone courses are planned for seniors: slower tempo in teaching (enough time for practising), nice atmosphere and tutors assisting participants

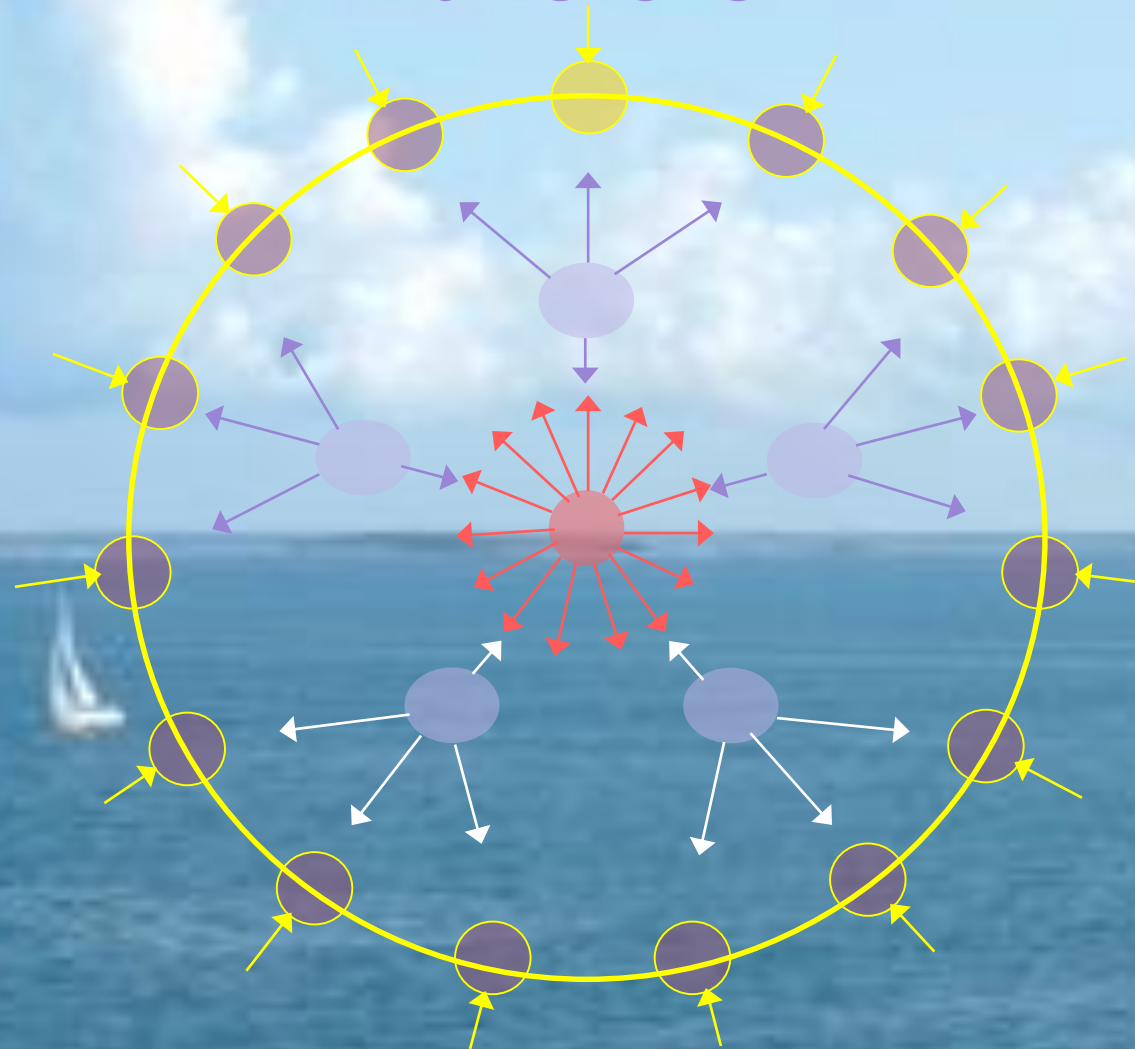


With active participation in ICT-classes

14 STUDENTS

4-6 TUTORS

1 TEACHER



Trying to make sense out of ICT together

National Geronet project 2018-6/2021

- Jyväskylä's model has been disseminated to 14 new areas by local Summer Universities
- Funding: 330 000 € from Finnish National Agency for Education.
- More than 200 Geronet tutors in Finland
- More than 15 000 contacts with seniors (during ICT courses, how-to videos on Youtube, tutoring sessions in libraries etc.)
- After the project tutors are going to join local senior associations and continue their work within them or as voluntary workers at libraries under their "supervision". In Jyväskylä tutoring continues as part of U3A.

Other questions on your mind?

You can always contact me:

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