



**Sustain4
SeniorsHUB**

SUSTAINABLE FORTIFICATIONS
FOR SENIORS LEARNING HUB



**Co-founded by
the European Union**

Sustain4 Seniors

in cultural heritage sites
roadmap





Project title:	Sustainable fortifications for seniors learning hub
Acronym:	Sustain4Seniors Hub
Programme:	Erasmus+
Action type:	Small-scale partnerships in adult education
Coordinator:	Public Institution Fortress of Culture Šibenik
Partners:	Asociatia Mioritica (Romania/Costanta), Viešoji įstaiga Kauno tvirtovės parkas (Lithuania/Kaunas)
Project duration:	11 months (January 1st 2024 - November 30th 2024)
Grant awarded:	60.000,00 EUR
ERASMUS+ PROJECT PAGE:	Sustainable fortifications for seniors learning hub

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Inclusion of seniors in sustainable heritage through ERASMUS+



The inspiration for this publication is to capture and share the valuable lessons learned, insights gained and ideas generated throughout the Sustain4Seniors Hub project. This roadmap is the result of collaboration between cultural heritage managers from Croatia, Romania and Lithuania, who are committed to developing new programmes that enhance sustainability, promote green skills and increase the engagement of senior visitors. With this publication, we hope to offer inspiration and practical tools to other cultural heritage sites looking to replicate similar initiatives.

Introduction to Sustain4Seniors HUB project context

The Sustain4Seniors Hub project is funded under the Erasmus+ programme, a European Union initiative aimed at enhancing educational, training, and cultural cooperation across Europe. The Erasmus+ programme provides funding and resources for projects like the Sustain4Seniors Hub that foster cooperation, innovation and the exchange of best practices in education and culture. With a strong focus on adult education, the programme supports lifelong learning initiatives, empowering institutions to address emerging societal challenges, such as sustainability and active citizenship among seniors.



The partnership for this project was based on a shared commitment to sustainability and cultural heritage management. Each of the participating organizations manages historic and cultural heritage sites and they recognized the need for knowledge exchange in creating more inclusive, engaging and sustainable programmes, particularly for senior visitors.





Project objectives

This project's main objective is to support upskilling, learning, networking, the exchange of good practices and the development of new ideas among cultural heritage managers in the field of sustainable, socially inclusive and green management of fortified sites, with a special focus on developing new programmes and activities that would increase participation and engagement of adult visitors (seniors). It aims to support their inclusion and raise their awareness of the links between cultural heritage and sustainability, greening, waste reduction, elimination, and re-use. The expected outcomes and project results promote fortifications as innovative learning spaces in local communities, fostering environmental awareness and participation of elderly citizens in cultural heritage sites.

Sustain4Seniors HUB Project Implementation Steps



1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Kick-off meeting	Monthly Progress Meetings (10 online meetings)	On-site Hubs (Šibenik, Rasnov, Kaunas)	Meetings and Surveys with and for Seniors citizens	Final Presentations (3 local events)	Cooperation agreements with Senior Associations	Online Brochure
<p>When: Month 1</p> <p>Purpose: Establish readiness and clarify next steps for project execution.</p>	<p>Frequency: Monthly</p> <p>Goal: Regular monitoring and evaluation of project activities to ensure effective cooperation</p>	<p>Focus: Capacity-building events focusing on sustainability</p> <p>Activities: Knowledge sharing, cultural engagement, and heritage activities for seniors</p>	<p>Audience: Local seniors and stakeholders</p> <p>Objective: Collect feedback to adapt activities to participants' needs and interests</p>	<p>Purpose: Showcase project results in each partner's region</p>	<p>Outcome: Each partner signs a cooperation agreement with a local seniors associations</p> <p>Goal: Ensure long-term implementation of developed programs</p>	<p>Title: "Sustain4Seniors in Cultural Heritage Sites Roadmap"</p> <p>Contents: Lessons learned, innovative ideas, and successful project activities</p> <p>Intended Impact: Inspire other heritage sites to adopt sustainable practices and engage senior citizens</p>



Programme development process

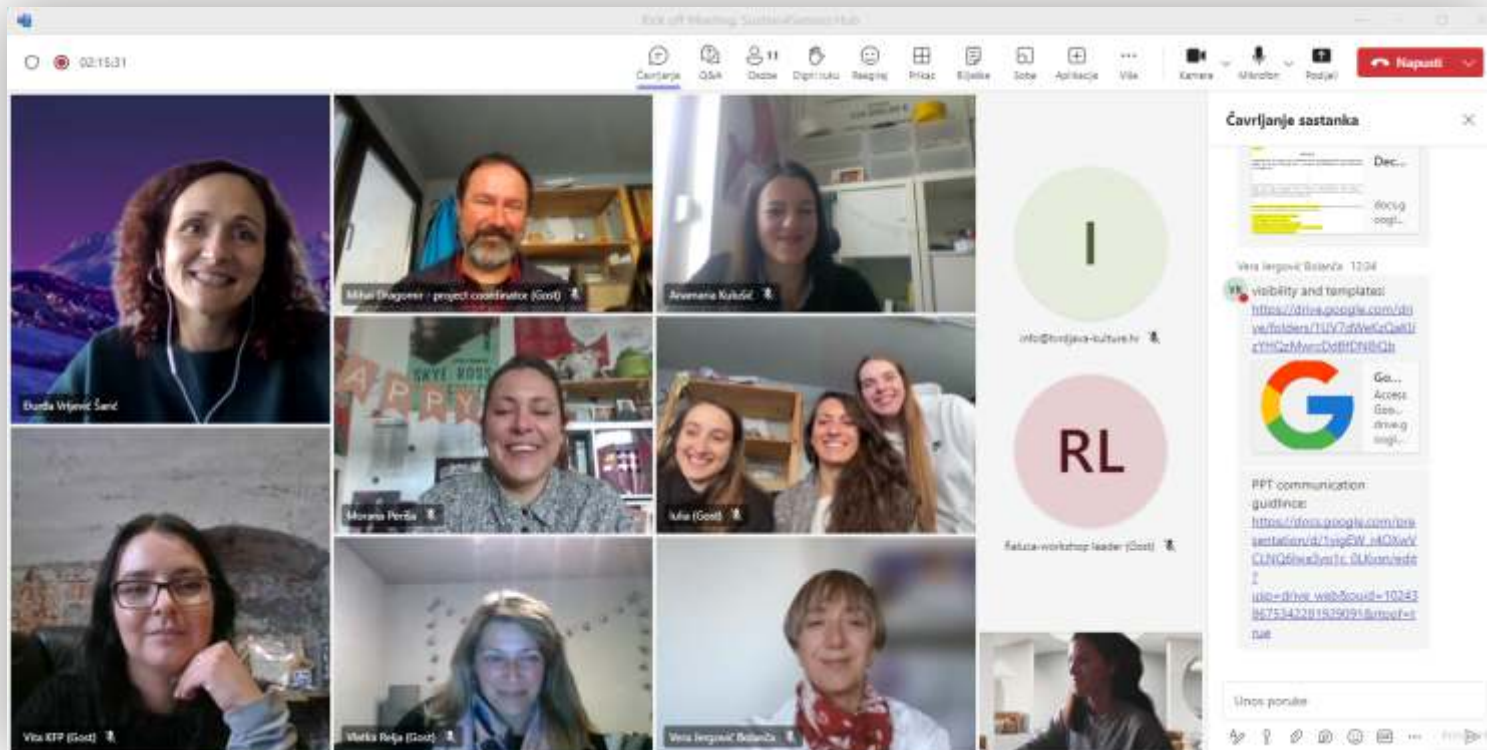
The project partners followed a similar approach in developing programmes for seniors, focusing on sustainability and inclusivity. In the initial stages, each partner identified the need to involve seniors more actively in community life and cultural activities, ensuring that the programmes would address their interests and needs. Additionally, they recognized the importance of sustainability and how to incorporate green practices into the programmes.



Each partner organized initial meetings, gathered input from seniors through surveys or direct engagement and collaborated with external organizations or experts to co-create programmes. Regular discussions among project partners allowed them to share experiences, align their objectives and learn from each other. This collective approach ensured that programmes were designed with a strong foundation of shared knowledge and sustainability principles.

1 Collaboration and Partner Meetings

The partners emphasized the importance of regular project team meetings as they were important for sharing ideas, aligning goals and learning from each other. Each partner highlighted how these interactions helped them gain knowledge on sustainability principles and how to apply them in their work with seniors.



2 Implementation of Sustainable Principles through Learning Hubs

The project partners organized a series of sustainability workshops during three HUBs held in Šibenik, Rasnov, and Kaunas, where they expanded their understanding of sustainability concepts, their knowledge of sustainable development and the practical applications within their daily work.



The workshops covered diverse aspects of sustainability, including development dimensions, climate action and sustainable goals, with a strong focus on integrating these concepts into their cultural heritage initiatives.



These workshops were designed with the aim to provide a comprehensive framework for partners to develop sustainable, eco-friendly programmes that not only engage visitors, but also emphasize environmental preservation and awareness of climate change.

Sustain4Seniors HUB Sustainability Workshops

HUB in
ŠIBENIK
February, 2024

HUB in
RASNOV
April, 2024

HUB in
KAUNAS
June, 2024



HUB in ŠIBENIK

February, 2024



TOPIC

Sustainability Concepts and Cultural Practices

PRESENTER

Laura Orlić, Artist Company

KEY THEMES

- Dimensions of sustainable development
- Waste and sustainability goals data
- Climate action, circular economy, digital technology's role
- Cultural practices (Museum of Impact, National Museum of Northern Ireland)
- Simple, sustainable daily practices

OUTCOME

The participants gained insights into designing eco-friendly and awareness-focused programmes at cultural heritage sites

HUB in RASNOV

April, 2024



TOPIC

Education for Sustainable Development – Model and Applications in Community Work

PRESENTER

Luminita Tanasie

KEY THEMES

- 🌐 Connection between education and sustainable development goals
- 🌐 Practical benefits of sustainable methods
- 🌐 Introduction of the REDOC model for community work

OUTCOME

The partners learned strategies to integrate sustainable development education into community activities

HUB in KAUNAS

June, 2024



TOPIC

Enabling Senior Activism through Urban Gardening

PRESENTERS


Evelina Šimkutė and Rūta Lukošūnaitė, co-founders of "Šilainių Gardens"

KEY THEMES

- 🌱 Eight principles of sustainability
- 🌱 Challenges of implementing sustainable ideas
- 🌱 Regenerative placemaking strategy
- 🌱 Case study of "Šilainiai Garden" urban gardening project

OUTCOME

The participants explored practical sustainability through a tour of an urban garden and identified ways to apply similar practices locally



The main findings after the implementation of the three on-site HUBs revealed that, while all three partners share common goals of involving seniors and integrating sustainability into their programmes, they each adopted distinct approaches in terms of process, emphasis on sustainability and methods of engaging their target audience, reflecting the differences in their local environments.

Šibenik/Hrvatska
**Tvrđava kulture
Šibenik**

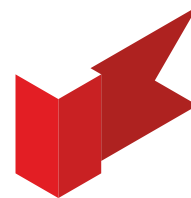


Kaunas/Litva
**Kauno tvirtovės
parkas**



Rasnov/Rumunjska
**Asociația
Mioritics**





TVRĐAVA KULTURE ŠIBENIK

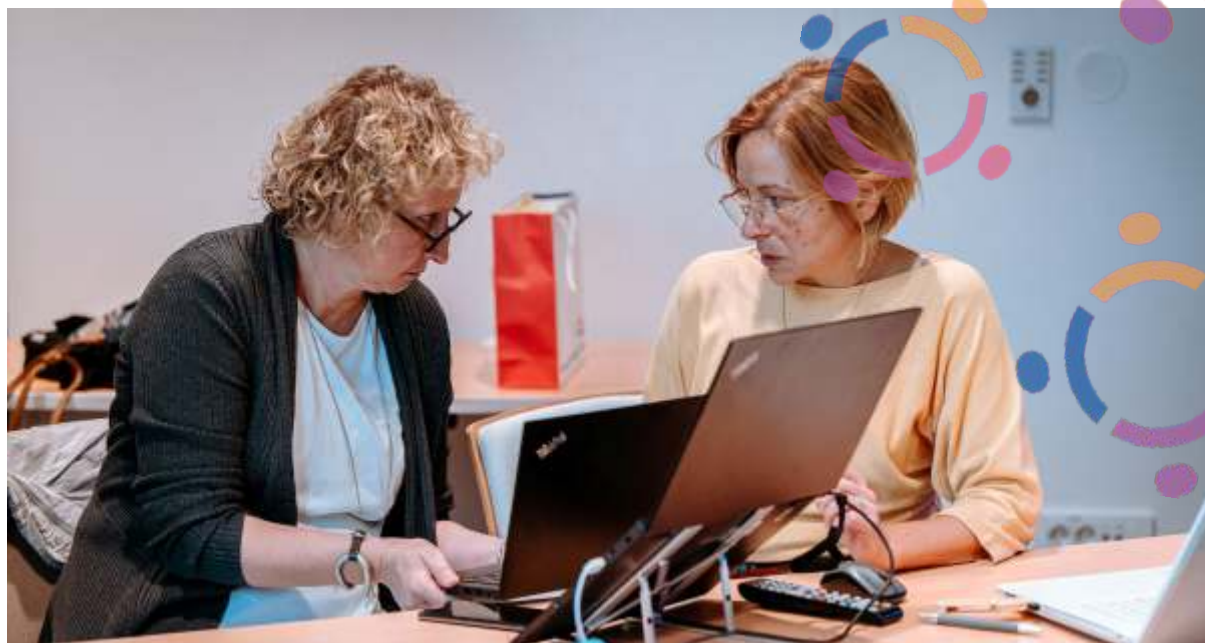
Fortress of Culture Šibenik

recognized that educating their cultural managers on sustainability principles was the first step toward effectively implementing these practices across all senior programmes.

To achieve this, **Fortress of Culture Šibenik** prioritized education and upskilling of its staff on sustainability topics, aiming to embed green practices throughout its programming.

Fortress of Culture Šibenik has prioritized sustainability from the very beginning of the project, ensuring that all activities involving seniors adhered to sustainability principles.

Throughout the entire process, programme creators and participants collaborated with senior citizens, keeping in mind that sustainability principles should be woven into the programme's foundation to foster environmentally conscious practices. By embedding sustainability into the core of its programme development, Fortress of Culture Šibenik ensured that all aspects of its work with senior citizens aligned with the broader goals of environmental awareness and sustainable development.





Mioritics

Keep hiking



Mioritics Association Rasnov integrated sustainability principles directly into the co-creation process with seniors. From the very beginning, **Mioritics** ensured that sustainability was a key part of discussions with seniors' ambassadors and that these principles were embedded in the programmes being developed.

During the co-creation process, seniors were encouraged to take an active role in implementing sustainable practices at community events. For instance, during traditional events like workshops and fairs, sustainability principles were integrated into activities such as upcycling, promoting the use of locally sourced materials and avoiding unnecessary waste.

Mioritics Association also collaborated with local manufacturers for community fairs, emphasizing the importance of supporting sustainable local economies.



During the hubs, **Mioritics** also organized workshops and presentations focused on sustainability, including interactive sessions teaching seniors about eco-friendly practices in everyday life.

These sessions were led by experts like Luminita Tanasie, who helped raise awareness about global sustainability goals and how the community could contribute.

These efforts ensured that sustainability was not just a topic of discussion, but an integral part of activities organized by **Mioritics** and involving seniors.



During the initial phase of the project, **Public Institution Kaunas Fortress Park** realized that there were significant differences in the level of sustainability knowledge among their staff, particularly those members of staff who had direct contact with visitors and seniors.

As a result, **Kaunas Fortress Park** made it a priority to further the knowledge of guides, culture managers and other staff members in terms of sustainability principles and practices.

To implement these sustainability principles, **Kaunas Fortress Park** first organized internal training sessions and discussions on sustainability, focusing on how these principles could be incorporated into daily activities and interactions with visitors, particularly seniors. The institution introduced monthly tours for seniors free of charge, as part of their collaboration with the Public Health Office of Kaunas City Municipality, emphasizing sustainable practices, such as eco-friendly transport and reducing energy consumption during tours.

As staff members became more familiar with sustainability, **Kaunas Fortress Park** began integrating these principles into senior-focused programmes. The educational programmes developed for seniors now included components on how to live sustainably, from urban gardening to the history of sustainable architecture at the fortress.



Senior citizens were encouraged to participate in hands-on workshops that promoted environmental consciousness and sustainable living, such as planting and maintaining fortress gardens.

3 Project S4S Key Messages

During the three HUBs, project partners collaborated to create key messages focused on **sustainability, inclusivity** and **community engagement**.

These themes were essential for shaping programmes that resonate with seniors and the wider community.

Vision:

The project brings seniors' valuable experiences into the community for everyone's benefit. It aims to attract and engage senior citizens, fostering respect and inclusion, while using culture to build community connections and promote sustainability.

Problem:

Senior citizens often experience isolation and lack meaningful engagement, which affects their quality of life and limits their contribution to community sustainability.

Solution:

·By creating programmes specifically aimed at seniors, the project enhances their community involvement and heritage site visits, promotes sustainable practices and strengthens community bonds, making senior citizens feel valued and supporting environmental sustainability.

4 Collaboration with Local Seniors Associations

Each partner identified the need to involve seniors more actively in community life and cultural activities. They all recognized the importance of creating or adapting programmes specifically tailored to the needs and interests of the senior population.





The partners established formal or informal collaborations with seniors associations to ensure active engagement in programme development. This included personal meetings, questionnaires and workshops aimed at understanding and addressing the interests of seniors. In addition, **cooperation agreements with seniors associations** were signed to solidify these partnerships, ensuring a formal commitment to long-term collaboration.

Involvement of Local Seniors Associations

All three partners worked closely with local seniors associations or pensioners organizations to develop and implement their programmes. They engaged with these groups to understand the needs and preferences of seniors and to involve them actively in the programme creation process.

Challenges with Engagement

Each partner faced challenges in involving seniors who were not already part of established pensioner associations or who were less connected to cultural activities. Overcoming these challenges required innovative approaches, such as reaching out to new organizations or forming dedicated groups of senior citizens' ambassadors.

Internal and External Collaboration

All partners highlighted the importance of collaboration, both within their internal teams and with external experts or stakeholders. This collaboration was essential for designing effective programmes that integrate the principles of sustainability.

8-Step Roadmap Encouraging Cooperation with Seniors



Analyse
Current
Senior
Engagement
Programmes

1

Identify and
Connect with
Senior
Communities
and
Prominent
Seniors

2

Conduct Initial
Meetings to
Present
Project
Goals

3

Address
Challenges
and Gather
Feedback
from
Seniors

4

Organize
Co-Creation
Sessions for
Programme
Development

5

Engage
Seniors
in Existing
Cultural and
Community
Events

6

Develop
Surveys or
Questionnaires
to Assess
Senior
Interests

7

Launch
Specialized
Senior
Programmes
Based on
Co-Creation

8

Lithuania
KAUNAS FORTRESS PARK

Kaunas Fortress Park initially analysed senior citizens engagement and found limited data on their participation. They began by educating their staff on sustainability and gradually created senior-specific programmes. Collaborating with local seniors communities, such as Sanašos Bendruomenė, they encouraged the involvement of senior citizens in the Sustain4Seniors Hub project through meetings and events. A partnership with the Public Health Office of Kaunas City Municipality under the "Social Prescription" project enabled monthly guided tours for seniors free of charge and adapted for accessibility needs. Additionally, Kaunas Fortress Park collaborated with Kaunas Region Third Age University to implement new seniors-focused programmes, addressing the lack of age-specific data by tailoring activities to seniors' interests. Further community partnerships led to gardening events and sustainability lectures, fostering ownership and stronger engagement of senior citizens in the Kaunas Fortress.

Romania
MIORITICS ASSOCIATION

Mioritics collaborated with the Pensioners Association and former community school professors to form a group of seniors' ambassadors, who provided feedback and attracted more seniors through word-of-mouth. Senior citizens participated in community events like workshops, traditional dances and cultural lectures, expanding their engagement. Mioritics introduced projects such as the Film and Histories Festival, thematic fairs, and nature tours, sparking senior citizens' ideas for co-creation. Some seniors contributed by sharing historical insights, leading workshops and joining thematic fairs with activities like Easter workshops, dance presentations and traditional sweets tastings. To better understand the needs of seniors, Mioritics held three additional meetings and distributed a questionnaire, collecting responses from 102 seniors on topics like anxiety, loneliness and financial challenges. This feedback refined programme content. Inspired by these interactions, Mioritics is launching the "Seniors with Passions" programme, which will encourage seniors to pursue and co-create activities in Râșnov, fostering ongoing engagement and community inspiration.

Croatia
FORTRESS OF CULTURE ŠIBENIK

By way of initial analysis, Fortress of Culture Šibenik identified a lack of cultural programmes for seniors and collaborated with pensioners associations, appointing seniors' ambassadors to increase engagement, which led to the involvement of Krešimir's City Pensioners Association in the project. During the initial meeting, they discussed challenges, such as limited interest, distrust in institutional programmes and financial barriers. To improve accessibility, offering discounts or free admission for seniors was considered. Throughout multiple meetings, topics like upcycling, puppet theatre, dance parties, book clubs, storytelling, and art exhibitions were identified. Later on, a conducted survey further refined these interests. This collaboration led to the creation of the Silver Programme Line, launched in November 2024. This programme provides seniors with free access to a variety of events across locations managed by Fortress of Culture Šibenik, including theatre, workshops, film screenings and dance nights, while incorporating eco-friendly practices, such as recycled costumes. The Silver Programme Line aims to boost cultural participation, foster friendships and celebrate community contributions of senior citizens.

Collaborative methodology: a framework from shared project experiences

Through collaborative efforts, project partners developed a methodology that can guide them in designing and implementing programmes for seniors.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PHASES OF EACH PROJECT:

Initiation, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

Defining the Mission When, Where, For Whom, How and Why?

Project Initiation Internal and External Analysis

Setting the Strategy How Will We Achieve Success?

Planning What Does Success Look Like and How Can We Measure It?

Production Plan Setting Who Does What and When?

Knowledge Transfer Mutual Learning

Implementation Control and Monitoring

Evaluation Have We Achieved the Set Goals? What Needs to Change?



Final events: Sustain4Seniors HUB Project

Each project partner hosted a final event at the end of the project to present the achieved results to their local communities. These events have showcased and publicly launched the developed programmes and promoted signed agreements with seniors associations to ensure the sustainability of newly developed programmes and activities and to present the online project brochure. Each partner has further presented their unique new programme lines/activities that will extend beyond the project.

➤ **Kaunas, Lithuania: Fortress for Silver Members**

➤ **Râşnov, Romania: Seniors Talk #Passions**

➤ **Šibenik, Croatia: Silver Programme**

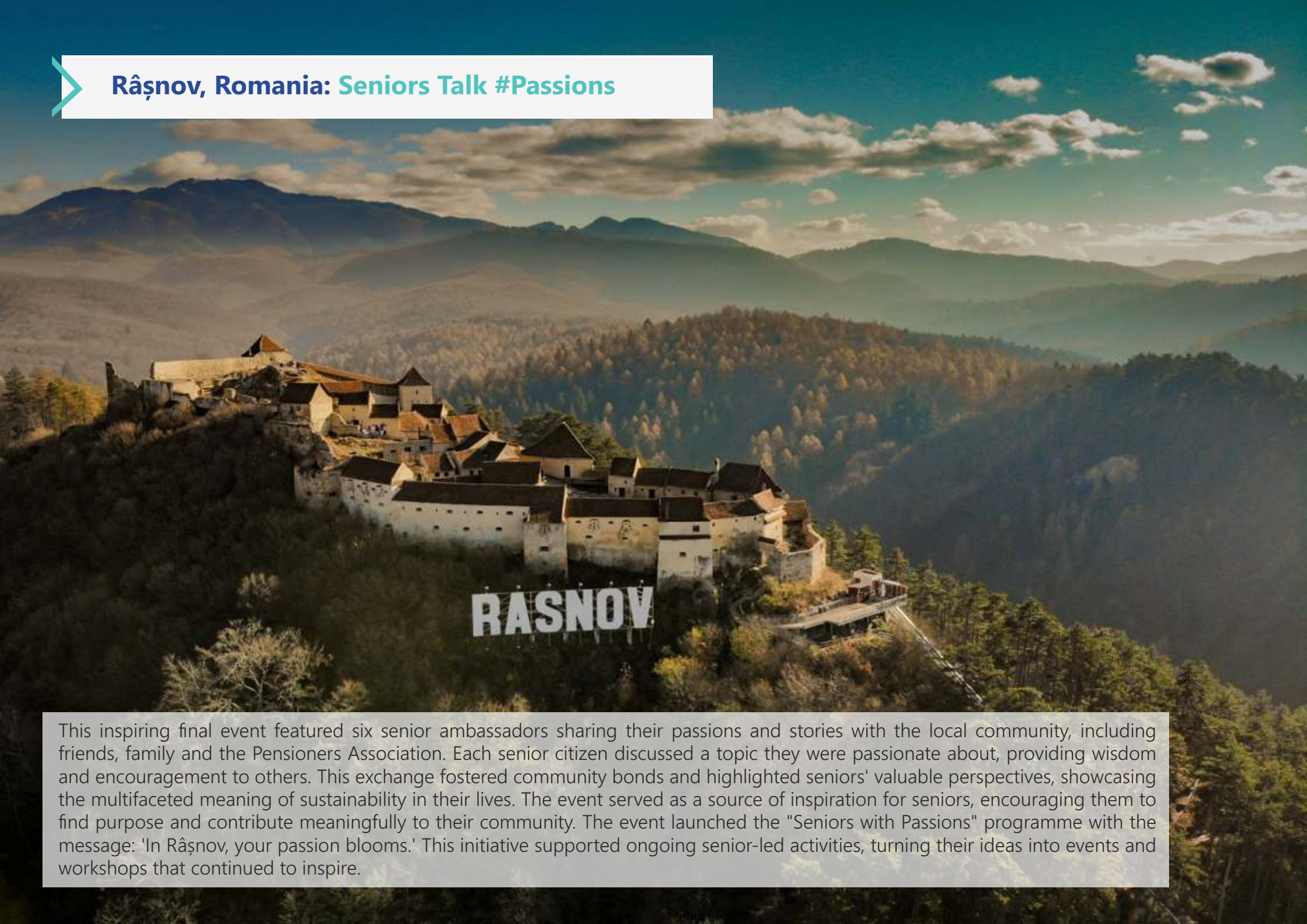
Kaunas, Lithuania: Fortress for Silver Members



The final event, held during Lithuania's adult education week, featured lectures, a concert, workshops and educational activities. It welcomed senior citizens of Kaunas City and its district, members of the Kaunas Region Third Age University and municipal representatives. Kaunas Fortress Park presented the achievements of the Sustain4Seniors HUB project, including new collaborations and programmes developed within a partnership with the Kaunas Region Third Age University and the "Social Prescription" initiative. The park introduced its sustainable approach, "between human, heritage, and nature," highlighting its commitment to environmentally friendly and inclusive practices for seniors. As part of the Sustain4Seniors HUB project, Kaunas Fortress Park introduced a 30% discount on excursions for seniors to help track senior participation and make visits more accessible, encouraging greater involvement in fortress activities. This continuation of the programme offered new activities to the Kaunas Region Third Age University members, encouraging seniors to participate in lectures, excursions and community events at the fortress.



Râșnov, Romania: Seniors Talk #Passions



RASNOV

This inspiring final event featured six senior ambassadors sharing their passions and stories with the local community, including friends, family and the Pensioners Association. Each senior citizen discussed a topic they were passionate about, providing wisdom and encouragement to others. This exchange fostered community bonds and highlighted seniors' valuable perspectives, showcasing the multifaceted meaning of sustainability in their lives. The event served as a source of inspiration for seniors, encouraging them to find purpose and contribute meaningfully to their community. The event launched the "Seniors with Passions" programme with the message: 'In Râșnov, your passion blooms.' This initiative supported ongoing senior-led activities, turning their ideas into events and workshops that continued to inspire.



Šibenik, Croatia: Silver Programme

As part of the final event for the Sustain4Seniors HUB, Fortress of Culture Šibenik introduced the Silver Programme, a new initiative dedicated to social inclusion and sustainability for seniors. The launch event featured a special theatre performance by the drama troupe of Krešimir's City Pensioners Association, titled 'Repatice,' with a musical background by ONI, a local high school trio, fostering an intergenerational exchange through shared cultural experiences. During the event, the new Silver membership category was introduced as an addition to the Šibenik Fortresses Friends Club. Interested seniors had the opportunity to join the club for a symbolic annual fee of 1 euro, gaining access to all member benefits. Additionally, Silver members of the Šibenik Fortresses Friends Club will be admitted to all events under the Silver Programme Line free of charge. The Silver Programme brings a variety of events tailored to the interests expressed by seniors during the co-creation process, including theatre performances, creative workshops, film screenings with discussions, concerts and dance nights.



Lessons learned and recommendations

These combined insights help create sustainable, inclusive and engaging programmes that foster a meaningful connection between senior citizens and cultural institutions.

1. Tailoring Programmes and Flexibility:

Programmes should be specifically designed for seniors' needs, taking into account their interests, availability and energy levels. Scheduling flexibility is essential to accommodate the seniors' unique circumstances.

2. Building Trust and Engaging Personally:

Trust is built by taking time to genuinely listen to seniors, by understanding their experiences and showing interest in their stories. Individual meetings and focus groups are effective for learning their needs and fostering a sense of connection.

3. Seniors as Mentors:

Engaging seniors as mentors leverages their experience, allowing them to share valuable knowledge while feeling valued and appreciated. This exchange benefits both seniors and younger participants.

4. Community Involvement and Empowerment:

Encourage local seniors to organize and participate in events at heritage sites. This increases engagement, fosters new traditions and empowers communities, especially with seniors as community ambassadors.

5. Financial Accessibility:

A significant number of seniors rely on fixed incomes, so offering discounts or free admission can significantly improve their participation and strengthen their connection to cultural sites.

6. Programme Adaptability and Sustainability:

Regularly adapt programmes based on seniors' feedback, maintaining openness to change. Seniors' practical knowledge, such as upcycling and resourcefulness, can guide sustainable practices within programmes.

7. Clear and Accessible Communication:

Speak clearly and use sound systems when needed to ensure all seniors can understand and participate fully.

8. Safe and Accessible Environments:

Assess and modify sites for safety and accessibility purposes in order to accommodate seniors with mobility or vision challenges, making sites inclusive for all.

About the Partners

The partners operate in historic, cultural and heritage sites within their respective communities, working daily to organize various events and programmes that transform these cultural sites into spaces for meeting, exchange, learning, socializing and cultural development for visitors and the community.

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SUSTAINABLE PORTFOLIATIONS
FOR SENIORS LEARNING HUB