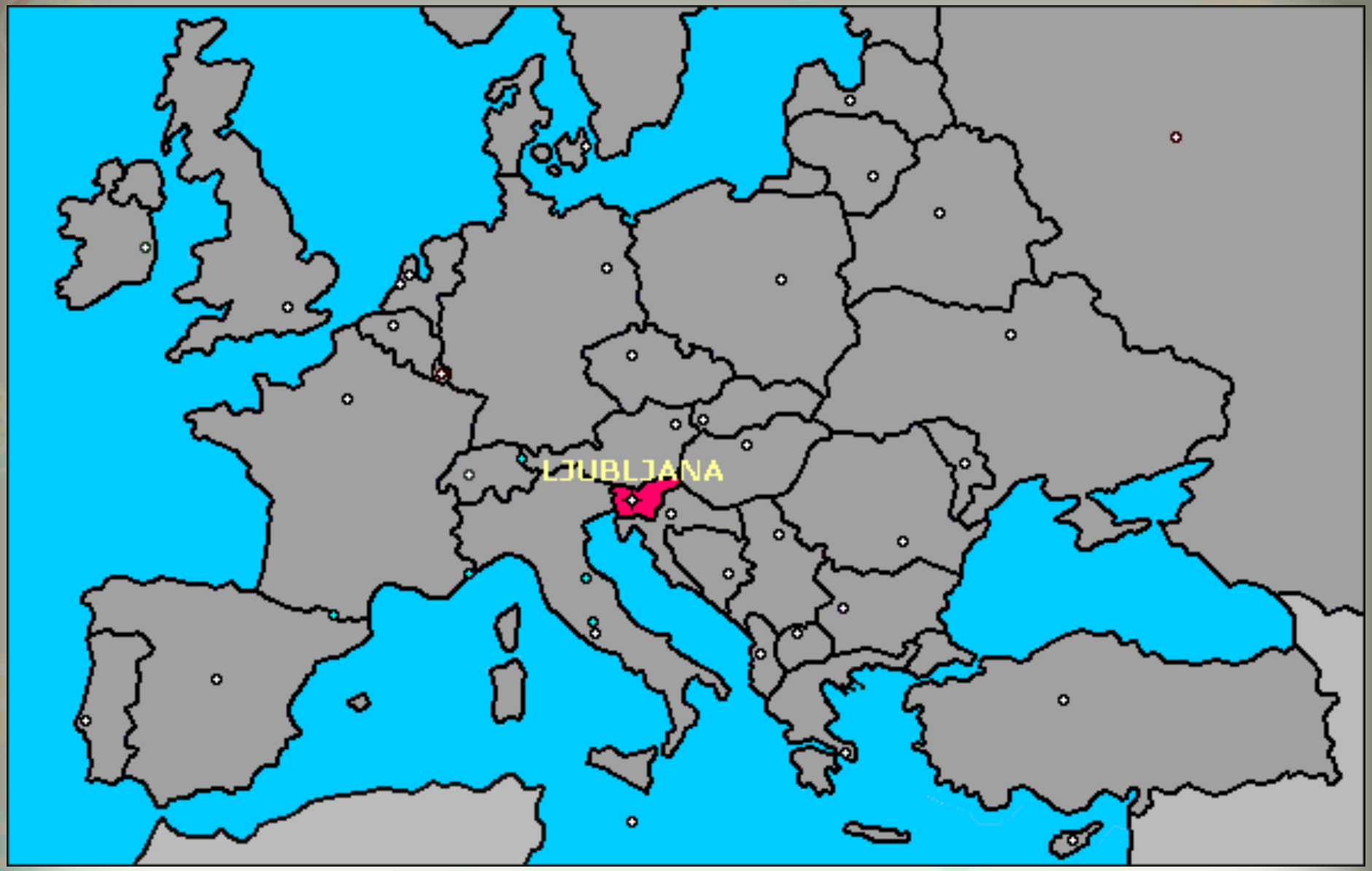
Sabina Jelenc Krašovec & Marta Gregorčič
Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Intergenerational exchange of knowledge, skills, values and practices between self-organized active citizens in Maribor, Slovenia

fppt.com

Getting of wisdom, Ballarat conference, 14 Feb 2017

fppt.com



Getting of wisdom, Ballarat conference, 14 Feb 2017

fppt.com

	Slovenia	Victoria	Australia
Area	20.273 km²	237.629 km²	7.692.000 km²
Inhabitants	2.1 mio	5,8 mio	23,13 mio
Population 65+	17.5%	13.7% (2010)	15.3% (2014)
Unemployment rate	9.6% (2014)	5.8% (2017)	5.7% (2014)

fppt.com

Participatory democracy in Maribor

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

global financial crisis
economic downturn in 2008
economic austerity measures in EU

LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

economic crisis,
corruption,
clientelism,
lack of trust,
neoliberal policie

Intensive uprising in november 2012 - solidarity protests all over Slovenia

The resignation of the prime minister of the national government in 2013

collaborative public action

real-world problems, social and political issues, widespread mistrust of politicians, environmental degradation, community development, etc.

fppt.com

Getting of wisdom, Ballarat
conference, 14 Feb 2017

Getting of wisdom, Ballarat conference, 11 Feb 2017

Theoretical framework

- **learning in counter-hegemonic movements** (Colectivo situaciones, 2003; Holloway, 2010; Gregorčič, 2011);
- **Informal learning through participatory democracy process** (Schugurensky, Lerner, Mündel, Duguid, etc.);
- **Intergenerational community learning** (Hatton-Yeo, 2007; Kump & Jelenc Krašovec, 2014; Longo, 2007; Merriam & Kee, 2014; Poster & Krüger, 1990; Schmidt-Herta, Jelenc Krašovec, & Formosa, 2014; Tett, 2006; Thompson, 2002; etc.)
- **social learning** (Serrat et al., 2016);

fppt.com

Social learning

Three categories of informal learning through research on democratic participation in political organizations

social learning

political learning

instrumental learning

- the “ability to listen to and respect others’ opinions”;
- “a sense of solidarity with and awareness of others”;
- a “recognition of the importance of social harmony”;
- the “appreciation for the companionship of others”
- “integration into the community”.

Serrat, Petriwskij, Villar and Warburton (2016)

fppt.com

Methodological approach

- militant research,
- passive observation of the process,
- **twelve semi-structured interviews,**
- **a focus group,**
- a study visit to Reykjavík.

fppt.com

Research groups

- the City-wide Assembly Initiative (CAI)
- the Self-organized Districts Communities (SDC)

Sample

Table 1: The characteristics of 12 interviewees					
'Gene-ration'	Gender	Age	Member of	Status	Level of education
1. gen	Female	25	CAI & SDC	student of history	high school
1. gen	Female	30	CAI & SDC	employed; cultural anthropologist and ethnologist	university degree
2. gen	Male	37	CAI & SDC	employed; constructive technician	high school
2. gen	Male	39	CAI & SDC	unemployed; precarious worker in journalism, culture & art	high school
2. gen	Female	55	SDC	self-employed; philologist; professional international humanitarian worker	university degree
2. gen	Male	62	SDC	self-employed; lawyer	university degree
3. gen	Male	66	SDC	retired, lawyer	higher education
3. gen	Female	68	CAI & SDC	retired, worked as economist	higher education
3. gen	Female	68	SDC	retired, worked in hospital	high school
3. gen	Male	73	CAI & SDC	retired, worked as economist	higher education
3. gen	Male	77	SDC	retired; worked as technician, ecologist	high school
3. gen	Female	83	SDC	retired; worked as financier	high school

fppt.com

Getting of wisdom, Ballarat conference, 14 Feb 2017

Research questions

- What are the perceptions of different age groups regarding selected social dimensions of knowledge, attitudes, skills and practices acquired through the participatory democracy process?
- What are interviewees' perceptions of intergenerational learning through civic participation in SDC assemblies?
- What are the advantages, challenges and impacts of intergenerational informal learning in participatory democratic practices?

fppt.com

Indicators of social learning – intergenerational dimension

1. *The meaning of CAI and SDC in changed social circumstances*

2. *Solidarity and awareness of others, respect of others' opinions*

3. *Intergenerational cooperation and learning in CAI and SDC*

4. *Intergenerational community learning*

fppt.com

1. The meaning of CAI and SDC in changed social circumstances

- *"At the moment nothing is good. We, the old…we are the generation which is quite safe even though we have low pensions; we can babble, nobody can harm us.* ***I'm here because of the grandchildren****, and most of us probably, too […] those children will be slaves if this continues.* ***This is all about our children and grandchildren, not us, our generation****. In this sense we all fight…****we are here to push together*** *in right direction." (Focus group)*

fppt.com

*“When the system changed, people suddenly changed values. Me and nobody else. **Previously we were connected, collegial**; today it depends on family, what values they impart. **I think that we older people are an inspiration for younger people**. That's why I'm here.”*

(Focus group)

fppt.com

2. Solidarity and awareness of others, respect of others' opinions

- *"I'm **more proud of my neighbourhood**, and I'm **more sensitive to other people's problems**. We've done a lot, and will do more in the future. **We are connected**; we know each other's needs better. This is a big achievement." (woman, 83, SDC, 3. gen.)*

- *"I absolutely **increased my sensitivity** towards people from the neighbourhood and **deepened my knowledge about the needs in the neighbourhood.**" (man, 39, CAI & SDC, 2. gen.)*

fppt.com

- *“I’ve **learned how to listen to myself and others** and to **create space where people know that they can trust each other**. You are there for support, you provide secure space and you have **knowledge about how to do it.**” (woman, 30, CAI + SDC, 1. gen.)*

fppt.com

3. Intergenerational cooperation and learning

- *"I have **intergenerational contacts upwards and downwards**; with my older friend, who is also a member of SDC, and with moderators, girls, who sacrifice their time for us, for the group." (man, 66, SDC, 3. gen.)*

- *"Our assembly is the best assembly **ever…a group of nice, relaxed and open people** with a huge sense of humour. They are mostly middle aged, around 50, mostly men; **some are educated, some are not…workers."** (woman, 25, CAI & SDC, 1. gen.)*

fppt.com

" "*We have C in R in the group (retires, aged 68 and 73);* ***their stories are absolutely crazy****. They have* ***completely different perspectives about the world****,* ***different experiences, which our generation don't have and will never have****. They take care of us (laughing…). C is such a mother! In the assembly meetings and in private conversation, intergenerationality is always there."*

(woman, 25, CAI & SDC, 1. gen.)

ppt.com

4. Intergenerational community learning

- *"I have **a lot of knowledge** which I pass on; others have other kinds of knowledge, which **we share**." (man, 62, SDC, 2. gen.)*

- ***"This is a mass social movement in formation, and consequently, learning is crucial**. That way people internalize those actions, become empowered..." (man, 39, CAI & SDC, 2. gen.)*

fppt.com

- *“For me**, learning in the community is crucial**; it's learning through the process of co-determination, which includes **learning about communication, consensus building, direct actions**... When people internalize those practices, we can talk about democracy. After that people become **aware of themselves as parts of personal and social relations in a certain environment**, and only then they start to achieve radical improvements and changes.” (man, 39, CAI & SDC, 2. gen.)*

fppt.com

- *“The one who participates learns a lot. **This is learning, where each person who participates gains**. It’s really a good way of learning; it's in the environment, where you live, and **you solve common problems**.” (woman, 83, SDC, 3. gen.)*

fppt.com

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

- Our interviewees stressed **the importance of solidarity, social harmony, companionship and camaraderie**, and the importance of intergenerational cooperation and learning.

- 'exchange of experiences, opinions, connectedness, collective deliberation, ability to understand problems directly, awareness that one can contribute to equality, openness to different people‘

fppt.com

Older generations...

- the **needs and prospects of younger generations** are the most important motivation for them to join CAI and SDC.

- **SDC assemblies are particularly important for further social change and intergenerational solidarity,** which is needed because of the insecurity and dead-end social situation affecting younger generations.

- to **encourage younger people to participate** more actively in community actions and SDC - collaborative action is the only way to achieve social change;

fppt.com

CONCLUSSION

Due their involvement in CAI/SDC, interviewees...

...strongly emphasised **personal changes**, such as being happier, more satisfied, more confident and mature;

...**social changes** as most important in the course of participation and learning through the participatory democracy process;

...'**tolerancy towards the opinions and attitudes of others**', more confidential and more patient;

...they '**search for consensus**' and their 'trust in people increased'.

THANK YOU ☺

sabina.jelenckrasovec@ff.uni.lj.si

fppt.com