**8.6.2016 Silver Economy Development Meeting in Ljubljana**

<http://eregion.eu/8-6-2016-silver-economy-development-meeting-ljubljana>

**The Opportunities for eCooperation with the Third Age University in Skopje**

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In this paper, we propose the creation of a common Internet portal that would encompass the Third Age Universities in the Western Balkan region with the aim of reviving, deeper and broader cooperation between them through the development of e-participation.

The idea of ​​the portal emerged during the conversation with Mrs Alijana Šantej, head of the Third Age University in Ljubljana on previous cooperation between them and the Third Age University in Skopje. It was approved in further discussions with dr. Ana Kranjc and dr. Dušana Findeisen.

The cooperation between the two universities started in 2009, enabled by the funding the Third Age University in Skopje had acquired for international engagement. The activities during the past six years consisted in:

* Visit of the head of the TAU Skopje to Ljubljana in 2009,
* Joint participation on the Radio Skopje broadcast in 2010,
* Participation of the group of seniors from Macedonia on the Third Age Festival in Ljubljana in 2012.

The volume of activity is relatively modest in comparison with the activities carried out in the cooperation with the Third Age University in Zagreb, which has long tradition and in the last years consists also of exchanging visits of groups of students.

Cooperation between universities brings additional value to their operations (exchange of experience, joint projects, possibility for comparisons, recognizing best practices, etc.). In the case of Third Age Universities, the biggest value is attributed to the active role that hosting students take as “lecturers” to student guests from the other university by presenting their own activities, achievements and experiences during exchanging visits.

There is willingness and desire for a more wide-ranging and intensive cooperation at the level of student meetings and their joint activities, but finance puts restrictions. Skopje is a further away from Ljubljana than Zagreb!

The opportunity is in the ICT. We believe that the internet portal, on which would take place each of the Third Age Universities in the Western Balkans, the region consisting of the countries of ex-Yugoslavia, could represent an opening to e-cooperation and provide a way to strengthen the existing mutual cooperation.

The content, the format, the rules of the portal and its links to other websites, as well as its implementation plan, of course, has to be defined in the way to meet the needs of the universities and their vision and plan on mutual cooperation and e-collaboration.

The proposed Third Age Universities in Western Balkans region internet portal would enable the creation of e-collaboration between universities and thus open the way to strengthening and widening their existing cooperation.