



## Project description

In 2014 a large occurrence of the abuse of seniors at promotional events held by fraudulent traders was noticed. They were attracting the seniors offering them trips with a rich programme. Actually, their goal was to make the seniors buy overpriced and often also poor quality household products, such as blankets or kitchen equipment. Under pressure the seniors often contracted debts and subsequently they got into financial situation that was hard to solve.

The topic became an all-society issue discussed even by the parliament. Towns throughout the country banned this way of sale and organization of such "trips". A shocking documentary "Šmejdi" ("Wrong-doers") depicting such practices was shot. It was broadcasted by the public TV. The author of the documentary later became a patron of the association "Hurá na Výlet" (Hurray, Let's Have a Trip!), which was founded at that time. Trips with cultural programme, medical supervision, refreshments and live music are a "competition" for the promo events and a safe way of spending their free time for seniors. The attendance at the promotional events reflects the seniors' need to spend their time more actively and to make and maintain social bonds. The association Hurá na Výlet provides the opportunity to meet such needs.

The focus of Hurá na Výlet! association activities is to create space for active involvement of seniors in community life and thus to improve the quality of their lives in general. We want to provide safe and easily accessible and available space providing an offer of leisure activities for lonely seniors.

Currently, Hurá na Výlet! association operates in 5 regions of the Czech Republic: Pardubice Region, Vysočina Region, South Moravian Region, Hradec Králové Region and the Capital City of Prague.

There it organises one-day trips for seniors respecting their limitations and special needs. Therefore the trips are prepared to be easily manageable, safe, for reasonable price but interesting at the same time. They include medical supervision, personal assistance, a guide and live music.

The trip price for a senior is symbolical 100 CZK/ 4 EUR and includes the transportation, entrance fees and lunch. The real costs per trip are approx. 800 CZK/ person/ 32 EUR.

During the trips, when talking individually with our volunteers and colleagues seniors often share their worries and concerns. Therefore an integral part of the trips is the provision of information on organizations and social services that could help the seniors. Thanks to the great interest of pensioners in the trips, Hurá na Výlet! association is often the only organization they contact. By



means of purposeful provision of information we have a unique opportunity to offer services provided by other organizations to people who would hardly get the information otherwise. It was one of the reasons why we started cooperation with institutions that provide us with materials focused on social services providers, customers' rights, home violence against seniors or their safety. Among the cooperating organizations there are regional and municipal authorities, police, fire brigade, charity, etc. Seniors are offered the materials not only during the trips, but also during the association events mentioned below.

In some regions the association also organises educational-cultural events with concerts of popular music bands. The performances also include discussions with specialists from assisting organizations (police, fire brigade, charity etc.), who provide the seniors with important information and contacts. The participants can also ask questions to get useful information for themselves or for other people in their surroundings.

Our trips and cultural-educational events are an impulse for the seniors to spend their leisure time actively, to visit interesting places despite their age, and to make new friendships.

In the town of Chrudim we opened a senior centre, where lectures focused on travelling, nature and education, computer courses and other educational activities are held weekly. In connection with the centre activities a community of seniors has gradually been formed; they spend here part of their free time, maintain friendly relationships and help organize the association activities providing small volunteer support.

Regarding the demographic developments in the Czech Republic, as the numbers of seniors will be increasing, we understand the goals of the association as up-to-date in a long-term perspective. Therefore we would like to maintain and extend the number of our activities and seniors contacted so that we could contribute to a better quality of their lives. In this respect we are planning the further development, education and Hurá na Výlet! team extension so that we could meet the demand for our activities in a greater extent. Other goals we consider important is to support intergenerational co-existence, development of volunteer activities and medialization of the topic of seniors. Regarding the great interest in our services we would like to extend our operation into other regions of the Czech Republic. The extension of our activities is connected with the office spaces we are using now.



**Hurá na Výlet!**  
spolek | nezisková organizace

Thus our future goal is to ensure new, larger and wheelchair accessible spaces for seniors, which will – thanks to their greater capacities – enable efficient fulfilment of the association goals.

The key target group are seniors over 65 years of age, i.e. people of high age suffering from relating illnesses, limitations or handicaps. Very often they are lonely; they have plenty of free time but very limited options how to spend it safely, with respect to their health or other problems. Having to pay for their treatment and relating services, they often dispose of little money. Nevertheless they still have the need to socialize and they do not want to be alone. Upon the talks with many seniors we can say that the level of their loneliness, often connected with difficult economic situation, often leads to their passivity and loss of life prospects. We believe that the attendance at our events is a positive impulse for change and, to certain extent, it also contributes to seniors' dignified life when facing high age or health problems.

At the beginning of its existence Hurá na Výlet! association activity was mainly volunteer-based; there were no paid employees. Gradually seniors' demand for trips and cultural events was growing. Thus it was necessary to create a professional team that would prepare and realize such activities. Relating to the necessary professionalization of the team several paid employments were created. Nowadays there are three main employments in the association, namely the director of the association, the vice-director and the project manager. The team also includes guides, medical staff, accountants, etc. However, we still have volunteers and we extend this type of cooperation further collaborating with volunteer centres.

The association is funded from both private and public sources. Within fundraising activities the association concludes gift agreements with local entrepreneurs as well as individuals and organizes crowdfunding campaigns. We also cooperate with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and major bodies of municipal governments.

Hurá na Výlet! association understands the issue of seniors as very strong. Through its activities, participation in specialised conferences and occurrence in media it contributes to the development of discussion on this issue. As we do not offer the seniors just a passive programme, but also a volunteer-based participation in events organized by the association and by other organizations, the seniors get the opportunity to share their experience and skills. We understand senior volunteering as very beneficial for society where older people are often seen as people of very little use.