Ensuring a society for all ages:
Promoting quality of life and active ageing

**SLOVENIA**

**Project Title:**
**LET’S DANCE!**
**FOLK DANCE HERITAGE – BRIDGE BETWEEN GENERATIONS**

The Project description
Appreciation of folklore has in Slovenia a long and rich tradition that varies greatly in different regions. More than 800 folklore groups and societies are now engaged in preserving the treasured cultural legacy, among them very many veteran and pensioner folkdance groups.

The project Beltinci Let’s Dance! folklore festival was conceived as a platform for the introduction, promotion and interconnection of the best folklore groups in Slovenia and for mutual exchanging of the know-how in the fields of dance, folk music and clothing heritage. As a traditional annual festival it comprises three stages.

Masters of some such special skills are now in Slovenia only a few older people and the festival enables them to hand over their precious abilities to next generations. Transfer of knowledge between generations is therefore quite an important component of this project. Without such festivals many elements of the non-material heritage and craft would soon be lost forever. From the very beginning the goal of the project - aiming at durability - has been the inter-generation transfer and preservation of the cultural legacy, relationship between generations and social cohesion.

The project gives an older person, a bearer of specific knowledge or a member of a folklore group, the opportunity to join the social life, to gain the satisfaction of being useful and of self-affirmation.

In addition, the Let’s Dance! project is extremely important also for social, economic and environmental development and revitalisation of the involved region. The inclusion of the local population and cultural groups in the preparation and organisation of the project brings therefore numerous advantages, it enhances the tourist arrangements and offers, and popularises non-material heritage among the inhabitants, particularly the youth. One of its further reaching accomplishments is the development of Pomurje in the last years into a region with the highest amount of young participants, male and female, in the folklore activities.

Why is it considered a good practice it is considered a good practice because it allows the transfer of knowledge and specific know-how from generation to generation, it enables social inclusion and self-affirmation of older people, while presenting folklore heritage of all Slovene regions as well as other countries.

Timeline/duration of the project
Annual cycle of workshops and a 3-day National Festival in July.

Lessons learnt
Intergenerational cooperation and transfer of knowledge from older to younger generations are sine qua non for folklore and national identity that retain ageing people in the hub of society and convey valour to their activities in retirement.

Relevance for the UNECE region
Promotion of traditions in Central Europe.

Location of the project
Beltinci, Prekmurje (north-eastern region of Slovenia).

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