



WISELIFE
RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT AGEISM



Erasmus+

Creative Editor: Sevay Ipek Aydin, PhD.



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Project Consortium



IUE+KREA



I.S.R.A.A.
Istituto per Servizi di Ricovero
e Assistenza agli Anziani



UNIVERSITY OF THE
AEGEAN



**UNIVERSITY
OF LODZ**



Editor's Foreword

Timelessness... Turkiye was shaken by a major earthquake. Tens of thousands of people lost their lives in their sleep. The reason I am telling you this is to share a striking sentence from a dear friend about what she experienced while trapped under the rubble... Cansu was buried under the rubble for eight hours. When she was rescued, she said to reporters, "They say I was there for eight hours... but it only felt like one hour to me... There was no sense of time there." Time is a very relative concept. This hidden meaning in Cansu's words was also at the centre of the WISELIFE project, which is being carried out with great enthusiasm about the place of ageing and older individuals in society. The ageing period, which is only one of the stages of human life, has a very valuable socio-economic position in terms of productivity, quality, and social inclusion.

There are many successful examples between older individuals and the countries that serve them worldwide. As the number of older individuals continues to increase, supporting their social productivity and quality of life is reflected in statistical changes. A 2020 report has identified Finland as the best country in the world for older people to live in. Denmark and the Netherlands came in second and third place respectively. The report, which was published in 2020, ranked Switzerland in fourth place, while Australia was ranked fifth. Austria came in sixth, and Canada in seventh. The report found that Norway, New Zealand, and Spain occupied the eighth, ninth, and tenth positions respectively. As the global population ages, there will be more elderly people in the world.

Currently, there are approximately 901 million people aged 60 or over, but this number is expected to reach 2.1 billion people or 21.5% of the world's population by 2050. In the United States alone, there will be more than 98 million seniors by 2060, which is more than double today's 46 million. To determine the best countries for older adults to live in, a global study recently assessed 105 countries, which represent more than 92% of the world's population aged 60 and over. The rankings were based on seven categories: average life expectancy, health care index, safety index, happiness index, cost of living, property prices, and pension start age. Countries scored higher if they had higher life expectancies, better healthcare, lower crime rates, higher levels of happiness, lower costs of living, higher property prices, and lower pension start ages. The picture that emerges with the language of numbers aims to contribute as an ERASMUS+ project to present an appropriate education approach for older individuals to the educational institutions of six countries through the WISELIFE project. This toolkit aims to inspire other countries' educational institutions by presenting the experiences of the six countries as case studies.

I hope you find the toolkit informative, and I look forward to seeing more case studies and projects that support and enhance the lives of ageing individuals in the future."

Sevay Ipek Aydin, Ph.D.



Project Coordinator's Foreword

World Health Organization defines ageism as the stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel) and discrimination (how we act) towards others or oneself based on age. With Dr Ayşe Karaçizmeli, when we first met and decided to work on this concept, the main question we had in mind was how to combat with ageism. We knew that we were not strong enough to make policy and law changes, but we could do something, some educational activities to reduce and eliminate ageism. Because we knew, only education and educational activities could enhance empathy, dispel misconceptions about different age groups and reduce prejudice by providing accurate information and counter-stereotypical examples.

Education was not the only solution to ageism, we had to guide the centres and institutions which would like to reduce prejudice towards the elderly, so we decided to design a toolkit presenting the whole journey of our educational activities and processes. This is how this toolkit was born. This toolkit is a guidance for project managers who would like to design new projects related with the elderly. It is a guidance for lecturers who would like to teach, work, and change the elderly. This toolkit is a guidance sharing the limitations we had throughout our journey, which we thought to be very important for others to avoid the negative effects.

This toolkit is a combination of our joy we had during the trainings, tears we had with our participants and the smile we shared with them.

Of course, I owe a big thank you to our project partners for believing in the same dream we had with Ayşe at the beginning but the big thank you comes to the elderly friends, who joined our trainings and made this dream come true.

THANK YOU,
Prof.Dr. Nesrin Oruc ERTURK



The Structure of the Toolkit

In this toolkit, you will find the experiences of the 6 countries participating in the WISELIFE project. The project implementers of the countries reflected the richness of their institutions and cultures through individuals living in the project's focus. In its simplest form, each country was presented as a case study. Each country started its approach to the cases with an executive summary. Then, Value and Value Change, Pros and Cons, pre- and post-data, gaps, and some data were presented to you. We chose to end each case with a Letter From the National Project Coordinator and Recommendations from our project partners, adding a sincere touch to their efforts and suggestions.

The WISELIFE project is a collaborative initiative involving six countries. Through this project, the participating countries aimed to develop innovative approaches to support lifelong learning and active ageing among their populations. Each country brought its own unique perspective and experiences to the project, which are reflected in the case studies included in this toolkit.

The toolkit is designed to provide insights and inspiration to policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders who are interested in promoting lifelong learning and active ageing in their own contexts. By sharing the successes, challenges, and lessons learned from the WISELIFE project, the toolkit aims to encourage cross-border collaboration and knowledge-sharing in this important area.

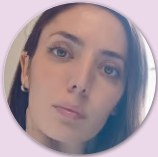


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TEAM



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Geographical Scope

Treviso, Italy

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The Role

Project Partner

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ISRAA is a public body that provides services to older adults. It is based in Treviso, Veneto Region, in the northeast of Italy. It counts 750 employees with different backgrounds and expertise: psychologists, physicians, nurses, social workers, physiotherapists, logopedists, educators, and research and innovation project managers. ISRAA delivers a wide range of services directed to older adults: it has 4 nursing homes counting 850 self-sufficient and non-self-sufficient residents, 32 flats for autonomous ones, and a senior cohousing hosting 60 persons. It provides home care services and manages 3 day-care centres dedicated to older suffering from cognitive impairment.

ISRAA also has a dementia-specialized centre composed of an interdisciplinary group of experts offering tailored support to seniors and their family caregivers. Through FABER, the department in charge of research and innovation, it gained knowledge and experience in supporting older people to remain independent as much as possible despite eventual functional and cognitive limitations, in promoting an active and healthy approach to growing older, in sustaining the development of age-friendly environments and the adoption of the technology for independent living and the early diagnosis of major physical and cognitive diseases.

**"Even the eyesight improves with time.
When young we see well, when old we look
far."**

Mirko Badiale

Executive Summary



In the pilot site of Treviso (Italy), the coordinators' objective was to ensure that as diverse a range of older adults as possible could benefit from the course: people with different social and professional backgrounds, different life experiences, different present living conditions (in terms of housing condition, presence or absence of disabilities and diseases, presence or absence of family/etc.), belonging to different age groups. For this reason, the search for participants went in multiple directions: towards residents of ISRAA's facilities, people assisted by home-care services, volunteers, and citizens previously met through other projects and activities of the organization. A total of 22 people were involved: 9 residents from ISRAA's nursing homes (all male), 2 people assisted by home-care services (one male and one female), 4 ISRAA's over 65 volunteers (all female), 7 citizens from the territory (2 male and 5 female). 11 were in the 70/80 age group and 10 in the age group from 81 to 90, while only 1 person belonged to the age group from 60 to 70. The participants were divided into 3 groups of 7, 9, and 6 people respectively.

Working with small groups responded to the desire to create a welcoming and familiar setting, facilitate socialization, encourage individual expression and sharing, as well as help trainers guide and support participants more closely. The training took place in the conference rooms of two nursing homes. These spaces were in fact large enough for allowing social distance and for hosting tables and materials to support artistic activities. Moreover, they were equipped with the necessary digital infrastructure. For almost all activities, with the exception of the artistic ones, the chairs were arranged in a circle or semicircle with the aim of avoiding creating a teacher-learner distance, being all on the same level (both in the teacher-learner relationship and between learners, according to the andragogic model), foster exchange and dialogue by allowing participants to see each other, but also to permit them to hear better.



The following courses were delivered: Mindfulness, Group guidance and Art Activities with regard to Psychological Well-being; Stretching and relaxation, Breathing exercises and Active and healthy lifestyles for what concerns Physical Well-being; Using social media & e-commerce, Protecting yourself against cyber crimes, Accessing e-public services in order to address Technological Wellbeing. In general, all the courses attracted interest, especially the Mindfulness one, Art activities, and the one treating the theme of Protecting yourself against Cyber-Crimes. There were no dropouts. The reactions and feedback provided by the older participants showed a remarkable desire to continue learning, stay informed, and have educational and training opportunities. There was indeed a diffuse demand to repropose the courses, even on new topics (nature, history, geography). In addition to this, the desire to be listened to and recognized, to express oneself, and to exchange experiences clearly emerged together with the search for socialization and proximity.



photo credit: Ron Lach, pexel



Value and Value Change

The three training cycles conducted at the Italian pilot site had as a common element the fact that none of the participants involved knew the meaning of ageism. This was not surprising. However, much more interestingly, all participants initially denied that they had ever experienced prejudice and stereotypes because of their age or that a similar phenomenon was particularly relevant or widespread in accordance with their experience. However, when guided through the proposed activities to reflect more closely on this topic and invited to enunciate some of the clichés commonly associated with ageing, the situation gradually changed: not only did they realize that the stereotypes associated with old age are many, and often not positive, but in some cases discovered that they had made or experienced prejudiced and stereotypical comments.

Thanks to the training, a general progressive change in perception has been observed, both at the individual and group levels. It is safe to say that the training made it possible to lay the foundations for awareness raising on ageism. Older people have begun to become conscious of the existence of the phenomenon, to acknowledge its expressions and how it can be deeply introjected and naturalized in society and in the individual. Such naturalization leads not to recognize discriminatory attitudes, stereotypes, and prejudices, perceiving them as normal, thus underestimating their concrete effects in personal everyday life. It also emerged that knowledge and information are powerful tools to make people aware and more able to cope with difficulties. It not only provides instruments to identify and understand phenomena but also has a beneficial effect from an emotional perspective, especially when learning takes place in a group, allowing for exchange and sharing. In this regard, it should be emphasised that a widespread desire to be welcomed and listened to has been detected, together with the interest and willingness to listen to others, discovering similarities and differences in previous and current life experiences.

The desire to be recognized also emerged expressed as being recognized both in one's own difficulties (often age-related) and in one's own life experience and skills. These elements were confirmed by the pride and contentment shown when receiving the participation certificate awarded to each attendant at the end of the training. Taking part in the course in fact not only enabled them to discover new subjects and topics of interest but also to feel welcomed, accepted, and valued and to socialize and spend quality time. The positivity of the experience was also testified by the request to have similar opportunities again in the future, either by replicating the courses carried out or by new opportunities to get to know and socialize. In this sense, it can be stated that the training was an important stimulus that enabled participants both to become aware of ageism and ageing and to awaken personal interests and desires, based on their own educational, professional and personal life history.



Pro and Cons

Project Challenge

The training implementation at the Italian pilot site highlighted challenges mainly related to older adults' participation. The principal one depended on the period in which it took place. Unfortunately, summer is not the best moment of the year to reach older adults: some left for holidays, and others have grandchildren to take care of as school ends. Also, during summertime senior clubs usually suspend their activities, so it was not possible leaving on their support as sounding boards to spread information.

Moreover, participation was still partly affected by the concern of Covid-19 infection. Another factor impacting participation was the training concentration in a single week, with days involving up to 5 hours of lessons. Although structured to be interactive and workshop-like, such an organization required both time availability and prolonged attention (which can be difficult to maintain for an older person, thus making participation tiring). Finally, the mandatory requirement to attend all classes, so not having the opportunity to choose those of greatest interest, played a role in discouraging participation.

Project Budget

The main cost incurred by the organisation for the delivery of the training was personnel expenses and in particular, the working days used by the trainers for the preparation and implementation of the activities. The total amount of working days was in line with what was established when the project proposal was created. Secondly, ISRAA did not invest resources in the rental of training rooms, as it already had suitable spaces within the Residences for the older people that it manages. Finally, ISRAA bore the costs for the purchase of the equipment needed to deliver particular types of training, such as the art course. In any case, the cost of this equipment was low and thus easily affordable for other organisations willing to replicate the initiative.



Communication

The communication component of the project was conducted both within the organization and externally. Internal communication aimed at informing the staff about the training opportunity: the coordinators of the nursing homes, co-housing, and home care services, as well as the different professionals working daily with the older people, such as psychologists, educators, physiotherapists, and social and health workers. In doing so, an attempt was made to reach out to residents and evaluate their willingness to participate. Moreover, professionals were directly involved as they were best qualified to identify who, among them, was suitable for participation (which required the absence of significant cognitive impairment) and to assess the potential benefits of the training for the single individual.

The Wiselife project coordinators held meetings with managers and working teams for this purpose. Internal communication also included meetings with some of ISRAA over 60 volunteers in order to involve them in the training. External communication was conducted through contact with citizens with whom a previous relationship of trust had already been established through participation in other ISRAA's projects and activities. Trust towards the organization and its employees plays a key role in the engagement phase, facilitating it.

In addition, posters were distributed at senior centres before the summer closure in an attempt to intercept some members. Seniors' clubs usually represent an excellent means of reaching out to citizens, as they can count on a good number of associates and good integration into the social fabric of the area they are located in. However, as mentioned above, because of the imminent summer closure, thus the end of recreational activities offered and the consequent low attendance, this channel, unfortunately, did not prove very effective.



Pre and Posts

As a care provider, ISRAA has built and oriented its services in order to offer holistic and comprehensive care of older persons. For this reason, the organization has always been attentive to providing proposals that go beyond care in the strict sense of health support, promoting a wide range of socio-relational and recreational activities to the people living in its facilities and to those assisted on the territory. However, no training with a "multidisciplinary" approach such as that organized in the frame of Wiselife has ever been conducted. Furthermore, thanks to the Wiselife project, the topic of older adult education, although familiar, was approached differently.

Older persons were in fact involved in a structured educational and training course aimed at transferring new knowledge and skills, something that differs from activities of a recreational nature (that, of course, remain fundamental). The results of this experimentation and feedback received from the participants made it possible to highlight how much the demand for knowledge is alive and continues in old age, even if to different degrees depending on the individual's condition. In support of this, it should be emphasized that the majority of those taking part in the training not only asked to give continuity to the initiative but also to expand the training offer in order to address other topics.

The Wiselife project made it possible to highlight how the organization should consider systematizing or at least deliver on a regular basis educational and training courses aimed at both its residents and older citizens: on the one hand, this would further enhance the quality of life of older people; on the other hand, it would help to expand the dialogue and the link with the local area, which is a key element in breaking the isolation and separation between care facilities and the surrounding social fabric.



Gaps

Access to Knowledge: The training was aimed at a group of older persons differentiated by age, education and professional background, current life situation, and past life experiences. This diversity meant that the training had to be structured in such a way as to offer content that was as simple and accessible as possible. Equally important was the trainer's ability to adapt the language and register according to the interlocutors. With this attention, it was possible to avoid gaps in access to knowledge, ensuring that all participants could benefit from it, each one according to their possibilities.

Gender Gap: There were no gaps related to the gender of the participants. A decidedly balanced number of men and women (12 men and 10 women) participated in the training. It should be however noted that in the case of ISRAA facility residents, the majority of those deemed eligible to participate were men. The two women invited did not attend, but this absence was due to health-related reasons. In general, a gender-differentiated approach to the activities was not found.

Differences, when detected, were linked to personal preference, but without this being associable with gender-related trends. Also, when it comes to the level of interaction with the trainer, no significant differences were observed. A difference was noted concerning the level of interaction, dialogue, and exchange between participants, which was higher in female-dominated groups.

Career Gap: We found that being a caregiver of grandchildren had an impact on the possibility to participate. Although it does not have to do with the career in the strict sense, it is linked to the role played by the individual in society. The exit from the labor market and the formal distancing from the production process in a purely economic sense does not in fact necessarily coincide with the loss of a social role. In this sense, the care of grandchildren clearly highlights the relevance of the older person in the family economy. Seniors' active presence thus remains essential as it reverberates on the socio-economic macro infrastructure, indirectly ensuring its functioning. This observation should also lead to a more thoughtful reflection on the educational role played by the aged persons and, more broadly, on the need to enhance the knowledge, experience, and historical memory of which they are repositories.

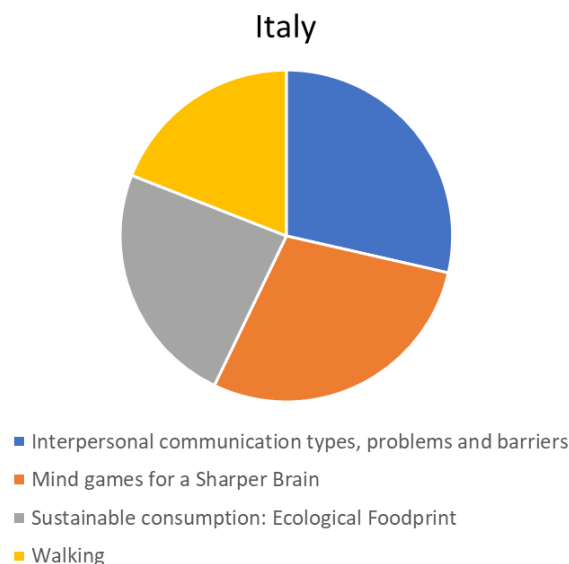
Understanding and Responding to Ageism: Not all participants had a complete comprehension of the many expressions ageism can take, precisely because of different personal and educational backgrounds and current living and health conditions. In this sense, it should also be considered that ageism is a multifaceted and sometimes subtle phenomenon that may not be immediately visible and recognizable. However, the experiential dimension through which knowledge and awareness on the topic have been transmitted (e.g. mindfulness course, art workshop, group guidance...) has undoubtedly facilitated accessibility and understanding, enabling each individual to access the topic according to his or her possibilities and resources.



Some Data

Older persons participating in the training were asked to fill in an pre- post test aimed at assessing its effects on various quality-of-life indicators. Furthermore, they were invited to express their level of interest in a list of training/educational activities by means of another short questionnaire. The intention here was to evaluate other topics of interest. While the pre-post test was completed by all participants, 9 participants did not answer the questionnaire on educational needs. Indeed, it should be pointed out that test/survey completion can be challenging for some of the frail older people, which precisely included the nine who did not fill in the document at the Treviso pilot site.

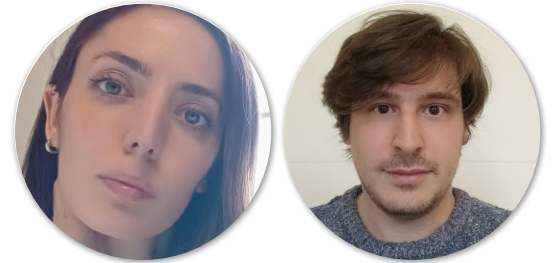
This may be due to different reasons, either psycho-physical (difficulty reading the questions, holding the pen, fully understanding the meaning, demand for excessive concentration), related to unfamiliarity with the “instrument” and the rules of its compilation, or, in some other cases, attributable to lack of interest in the research and analysis aspects, the usefulness of which is not seen. In the specific case of Treviso, in interfacing with this specific target, we, therefore, chose to prioritise the compilation of the ex-post-test to ensure the completeness of the analysis.



The results of the pre-post test showed a significant difference between the answers given before and after the training, reporting a positive effect of the training on individual experience. With regard to educational needs, the majority showed interest in topics related to interpersonal communication, followed by mind games, ecology, sustainable consumption, and finally walking. We also ask them to give free suggestions on other subjects they would like to address. They reply by proposing themes related to history, geography and nature.



Letter From the National Project Coordinator



Working with older people always holds surprises. In our case, as can be probably guessed from what was mentioned in the previous sections, what surprised us was the curiosity still living in these people. The desire to share and discuss, and discover new things remains strong, despite age and, often, despite health conditions, life history, and level of education. Equally surprising, was the willingness of these people to get involved, which was definitely unexpected. We have seen sceptical people change their attitudes, as happened, for instance, in front of artistic activities or mindfulness practices; we have seen resistance melt away, especially toward the internet and technology, first rejected and then reconsidered. This is not only an important lesson that we carry with us as coordinators and trainers, but it is a lesson that should be taken on board by those who define the services and policies addressed to the over-65 population.

Knowledge is not only to be intended as one among the privileged weapons through which an older person can learn to recognize and counter ageism, but it is also a tool that institutions should foster to promote a new imaginary of ageing and the older person. Learning new skills and enhancing one's own are avenues of openness to dialogue and exchange with society, a strategy to bring back older people into the public debate and public life with an active and propulsive role. Starting with knowledge means starting with an approach oriented toward openness and reciprocity, by so doing deconstructing prejudices and stereotypes and valuing the individual.

Our advice to those who aim to develop projects for ageing individuals is;

- *Be open to learning.*
- *Remember the fact that they are former professional workforce, strong athletes, and great lovers.*
- *Be willing to see what they need in order for a sincere approach to empower them.*



Recommendations

When structuring the training course, it is important to keep in mind how timing is fundamental. This means first of all identifying times of the day when older people tend to be more available. The availability of the older person as a 'pensioner' should not be taken for granted. Often, for example, the older person is in charge of her/his grandchildren, is an informal caregiver, or is actively involved in volunteer activities. In addition, any age-related needs and habits should be taken into account, such as mealtimes, or the difficulty of travelling at times when public transport is infrequent, for example in the evening, or when too crowded, such as at rush hour. Furthermore, it has been shown that it is preferable to ensure that the duration of lessons is not excessive, so as to guarantee both participation and the maintenance of the level of attention. In this regard, it is also useful to avoid organizing too many lessons one after the other or, if possible, to alternate activities of a more theoretical nature with more practical ones.

In structuring and delivery training, it should be borne in mind that an adult learner cannot be equated with a regular student. This implies on the one hand that the older adult primarily chooses to take part in the training, and this usually happens if she/he sees a utility, a benefit, and/or a personal enrichment in it; on the other hand, it should be considered that older adult learner is non a tabula rasa, but has a previous experiential and educational background. From an operational perspective, this should lead to enhancing individual knowledge and experience, making room for such autonomy and for the active role that the subject plays in the learning pathway. Equally important is the flexibility of the trainer, who must know how to adapt language and register according to participants, and her/his propensity to listen and welcome. The older person not only often "has something to say" based on life experience, but sometimes needs to be listened to.



Also, in order to introduce and foster reflection on abstract topics, such as the theme of ageism we treated in the project, it may be useful to take advantage of hands-on activities, for example, workshops and laboratories. This strategy could promote accessibility to a wider audience, making them more understandable precisely because of the experiential dimension it leverages. At last, again in support of the process of understanding and participation, it seems useful to work with small groups, so as to foster and facilitate exchange and to support participants more closely.

Finally, if some kind of research is to be conducted, it is advisable to develop accessible analysis tools (especially in the form of written tests or surveys), which should not be excessively long by limiting the items, nor include overly complex questions or particular filling-in criteria, which might discourage or prevent accurate answering. It is useful that the font size is appropriate, so as to facilitate reading. As mentioned above, specific psycho-physical characteristics, lack of understanding or interest in the research-related dimension, whose usefulness is not immediate or considered sufficient to justify such an investment of time and effort, may in fact discourage (an accurate) completion. The same criteria should be adopted when drafting privacy documents, obviously taking care not to affect the completeness of the information. Before compiling these documents, it is useful to introduce them by explaining their purpose, illustrating their content and accompanying participants in their following completion if necessary.



TURKIYE / İZMİR

TEAM



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İZMİR EKONOMİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ

Izmir Chamber of Commerce (IZTO), one of the leading non-governmental organizations of Turkey, which has 80 thousand members, was founded in 1885. Izmir Chamber of Commerce, which has witnessed three centuries, has always been the symbol of innovations and changes since the Izmir Economics Congress in 1923 to which Atatürk attended personally. Izmir Chamber of Commerce, which is on a mission to develop projects that will add value to Izmir, and make the city progress in all areas, has established "Izmir Chamber of Commerce Social Welfare Foundation" in 1988 in order to leave long-lasting works in the area of education. The Foundation, which grew rapidly with the support of the benefactors in Izmir, has trained many students by opening primary schools, Izmir Chamber of Commerce Süleyman Taştekin Foundation Industrial Vocational High School, and vocational courses. In 1995, the Foundation's name was changed to "Izmir Chamber of Commerce Health and Education Foundation". The establishment of a foundation university, a pride Izmir had been longing for, took place in 2001.

Izmir University of Economics was established officially with 2 faculties, 5 schools, and 2 graduate schools pursuant to Law No.4633 published in Official Gazette No. 24373 and dated April 14, 2001. On July 1, 2001, it moved to its current campus on Balçova with the support of Ahmet Piriştina, the Metropolitan Mayor of Izmir at the time. Starting its education journey with 288 students, Izmir University of Economics, which carries the status of being the first foundation university of the Aegean Region, became one of the most preferred universities across the nation and produced 16 thousand 200 graduates so far. Total of 464 academics, 59 of whom are foreign nationals, work at Izmir University of Economics which has almost 10 thousand students. Izmir University of Economics, which offers 28 associate degree programs, 35 undergraduate programs, 30 masters programs, and 6 PhD programs, continues to take firm steps towards its progress.

TURKIYE / İZMİR

Geographical Scope

Izmir, Turkey

The Name of the Organisation

Izmir University of Economics

Contact info

<https://www.ieu.edu.tr/tr>



İZMİR EKONOMİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ

İZMİR UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS CONTINUOUS EDUCATION CENTER (EKOSEM)

Izmir University of Economics Continuing Education Center (EKOSEM) was established under the Rectorate of Izmir University of Economics. The aim of EKOSEM is generally academic programs in all fields where the university provides education and research. It also aims to organize training programs and social activities that will be provided continuously and to contribute to the development of the university's cooperation with the public, private sector and international organizations through these programs announced. EKOSEM also provides services to the public, private sector and international organizations and individuals in the areas they need. It produces training programs, proposes package programs, courses, seminars, conferences, national and international organized education fairs. EKOSEM is the first Continuous Education Center in Turkey that has an ISO 9001:2008 certificate. Since its establishment in our center, approximately 25,000 private and business professionals in the fields of vocational and personal training have been given to enrich their lives.

To Forget the elderly is to
ignore the wisdom of the
years !!

Donald Laird



Executive Summary

"Raising Awareness about Ageism" was implemented primarily with the idea of raising awareness and combating this type of discrimination against the elderly. Because aging is a phenomenon that every individual will one day probably experience, unlike being of a certain ethnicity or gender. Therefore, activities focusing on ageism and aging experience and measures to be taken for age discrimination will be beneficial not only for a certain group of people but for the well-being of humanity.

At this point, the project aims to touch the elderly group with some outputs which will help raise awareness about ageism and to facilitate the adaptation of the elderly to daily life. Five outputs were planned to be put forward within the project. The first output was a publication that contains descriptive and comparative analysis, country contexts and literature review on ageism. Each chapter focused on the concept of ageism, simply putting forward the ageism climate in related countries by investigating the historical aspects of ageism. A literature review and political actions taken against ageism in the country were examined in the following chapters.

The second output was a training package for elderly which promotes active aging. Within this output, a mutually agreed training plan was implemented and its results were evaluated conducting a pre-test and post-test. The third output of the project was to shoot a documentary in which planning and implementation of the project will be reflected step by step. The fourth output of the project was to put forward a digital memory. The digital memory was planned to be a platform that contains oral history studies, narratives on old photographs of objects and materials which connects the elderly to the past. The last output of the project was to provide a toolkit for elderly education for CECs in order to combat the exclusion of elderly from the social-sphere and to increase their happiness.

1. The Educational Pillar of the Project: Real-Life Encounters with the Elderly:

The training output was the main output of the project which aimed to implement a training program that will promote active aging. Therefore detailed information will be given about the intellectual output of the project "advanced age training" held in June 2022.

An education needs analysis form shown below was prepared about the fields in which elderly individuals would like to receive training and these forms were filled in before starting the training.



Which of the following do you think should be in an elderly education programme? You can choose as many as you want from the list. (Please tick the options)

COURSE NAME	Not Important	Important	Very Important	NA
Yoga				
Water Aerobics				
Dancing				
Walking				
Digital Learning				
Second Language				
Social Media				
Popular Culture				
Food hygiene, food safety and food literacy				
Healthy food preparation and cooking methods				
World culinary cultures				
Fermented foods				
Interpersonal communication types, problems and barriers				
Communication with children and adolescents				
Post-modernism and contemporary art				
Literary text analysis				
Ecological Literacy				
Sustainable Consumption: Ecological Footprint				
Media Literacy				
Mind Games for a Sharper Brain				

If there are any other courses you would like to have, please write the name/names of the course/courses below:

.....

Thank You
 WISELIFE Project Team



The training was given to individuals over the age of 60 by experts as one-week programs. In the training, Nutrition at Old Age, Chair Yoga and Meditation, Breathing Exercise, Art Activity, Social Media and Internet Usage, Group Guidance, Access to E-Government Applications, Mindfulness Training, Self Protection against Internet Fraud classes were included. The aim of these trainings was to bring older people together on an education campus, to enable them to socialize, to provide life skills appropriate to the requirements of the age, and to create an environment where they can share their experiences and feelings about aging. Accordingly, it was aimed to increase the quality of life of these individuals after the training.

In order to provide an idea for institutions that want to organize training, our training program was as follows:

	17/06/2022 FRIDAY	20/06/2022 MONDAY	21/06/2022 TUESDAY	22/06/2022 WEDNESDAY	23/06/2022 THURSDAY	24/06/2022 FRIDAY
10:00-11:00		Elderly Nutrition	Gentle Chair Yoga and Meditation	Gentle Chair Yoga and Meditation	Breathing Exercise	Art Activities
11:00-12:00		Elderly Nutrition	Gentle Chair Yoga and Meditation	Group Guidance	Breathing Exercise	Art Activities
12:00-13:00	LUNCH BREAK					
13:00-14:00		Art Activity	Using Social Media & E-commerce	Group Guidance	Accessing E-Public Services	Mindfulness
14:00-15:00	Opening Ceremony	Art Activity	Using Social Media & E-commerce	Group Guidance	Accessing E-Public Services	Mindfulness
15:00-16:00	Opening Ceremony				Protecting Yourself Against Cyber-Crimes	Closing Ceremony
16:00-17:00						Closing Ceremony



2. The Roadmap Followed For The Trainings

After deciding which courses will be included in the program, the measures that can be taken to ensure that the trainings are carried out without interruption were discussed.

2.1. Some Concerns About Regulating Trainers-Participants Relationships

First of all, the team had some concerns about regulating instructor-participant relationships. Because the trainers were experts in their field, but most of them did not have a background of educational experience with older participants.

Since “ageism” is a very sensitive subject, educators who will work with the older age group should first have a certain sensitivity on this issue. In this regard, we have prepared a guide for educators on the issues that they need to be sensitive about when working with older individuals. We had our educators read these guides and complete this process by getting their signatures on what they read. Below is the guideline for trainers who will study with the elderly:



Fotograf: Wellness Gallery Catalyst Foundation: <https://www.pexels.com/tr-tr/fotograf/dans-grubu-12086690/>



Rules for teaching seniors

1. *Be patient: learning takes more time and effort when you are older, don't lose your temper.*
2. *Be calm: use a calm voice to explain, don't create unnecessary panic, speak slowly enough.*
3. *Be supportive: it may take more than one or two trials before learning how to use something new.*
4. *Choose a quiet space without disturbances.*
5. *Take time: ensure that you have enough time to teach things properly.*
6. *Keep it simple: use common words, not slang nor too complicated terms.*
7. *Focus on one thing at a time: don't complicate learning by concentrating on many things at the same time.*
8. *Use an audible voice; speak clearly and make sure you are understood.*
9. *Do your homework first: ask what the concrete goals for learning are, and make sure that you have the needed skills and knowledge yourself.*
10. *Repeat: repeat as many times as possible.*
11. *Check what has been learnt: make questions, practice and ask to see what has been learnt.*
12. *Respect: don't be arrogant and condescending.*
13. *Keep an open mind: don't be judgmental and underestimate anyone's abilities.*
14. *Be flexible: it may take some time and effort to learn new things.*
15. *Keep the learning sessions short enough: learning takes time.*
16. *Be kind!*
17. *Have fun: enjoy the time you spend together!*

Source: Katriina Vesanen, Anne Heikola, Maika Kummel & Sini Eloranta (2019), "Tips for Teaching Technology to Seniors A Pedagogical Guide", Course Material from Turku University of Applied Sciences 128

I have read this guideline and I am aware of the rules for teaching seniors

Name/Surname:.....

Signature:



2.2. Preparing for the courses: Course Content Form

After the courses to be given were roughly determined, the trainers who would give the training were asked to prepare a course content form as follows. In this way, the content and boundaries of the training program have been made more specific.

COURSE CONTENT FORM		
Course Name		
Course Language		
Mode of Delivery		
Teaching Methods and Techniques of the Course		
Course Objectives		
Course Description		
Subjects of the Course		
Learning Outcomes		
Evaluation		
Trainer's Name and Surname		
Trainer's Signature		

2.3. The Trainings: Demographics of the Participants

Following the announcement of the trainings, the project team faced a huge amount of applications. Care was taken not to exceed the planned number of participants in order for the lessons to be conducted in a healthy way. Although flexibility was provided to increase the number of participants in some courses, it was deemed necessary to conduct courses such as art activity and group guidance with a much smaller number of participants.

The training was completed with a total of 82 participants, 41 from the 1st group and 41 from the second group. 66 of these participants were female and 16 were male. They were coming from different parts of İzmir.



2.4. Ageism Analysis: How Do They Experience Ageism in Their Daily Lives?

Many of the participants were not aware of ageism as a concept. But they were practising it in their daily lives. When they met "the concept" theoretically, it made sense for them; To be able to describe an experience theoretically increases the coping power of the experienter.

According to the statistical data we have collected from the questionnaires, 54 of 166 participants from the young group (18 to 59 years old) stated that they have been discriminated against in terms of age. In another questionnaire which was conducted to the elderly group for understanding the level of exposure to ageism, among the 20 situations given, the most experienced 3 situations for females were; "My request to rent a house was turned down because I am old", "My request for medical treatment was turned down because I am old." and "A joke was made to make fun of the elderly."

When the mostly experienced three situations were analyzed for the male participants, there were some similarities in the top three situations. For both male and female participants, the most experienced event was the same; "My request to rent a house was turned down because I am old". The percentage of male participants who experienced "There were people who thought I didn't understand what was being said because I was old" was 19.2, and for the same item females' percentage was 16.3.

2.5. How Did Training Touch Their Lives? Pre/Post Tests

The project team aimed to find out if the training made any difference in the daily lives of the participants. In order to understand this, a questionnaire about their life satisfaction was conducted for the participants. After the training, the same forms were conducted again and statistical analysis was made to see whether there was a significant difference.



For the statistical analysis, the following questions were used in the questionnaire:

PRE-TEST- POST-TEST QUESTIONS (Hyde et al. (2003):

1. My age prevents me from doing the things I would like to
2. I feel that what happens to me is out of my control
3. I feel free to plan for the future
4. I feel left out of things
5. I can do the things that I want to do
6. Family responsibilities prevent me from doing what I want to do
7. I feel that I can please myself with what I can do
8. My health stops me from doing the things I want to do
9. Shortage of money stops me from doing the things that I want to do
10. I look forward to each day
11. I feel that my life has meaning
12. I enjoy the things that I do
13. I enjoy being in the company of others
14. On, balance, I look back on my life with a sense of happiness
15. I feel full of energy these days
16. I choose to do things that I have never done before
17. I feel satisfied with the way my life has turned out
18. I feel that life is full of opportunities
19. I feel that the future looks good for me

According to the analysis, it was clear that there was a significant difference in the participants' life satisfaction before and after the training. Which was very good news for the project!



While conducting the questionnaires an informed consent form was also used for the data gathering ethical process. This form is strongly advised for the institutions that aim to collect statistical or qualitative data:

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant,

This research is carried out for a project called “WiseLife: Creating Awareness About Ageism” which is funded by the European Union.

You will be a participant in the project if you approve your participation in this research. Your credentials will not be shared with anyone outside of the project without your permission, during and after the study. Scientific information to be obtained within the scope of this study will only be shared in scientific publications, presentations and in an online environment for educational purposes by researchers. The collected data will be deleted from your name and stored in an encrypted file on the computer.

Participation in this study is on a voluntary basis. Your participation in this project can contribute to your knowledge of the existing discrimination against older people. None of the stages taking place during the project may cause personal discomfort. However, if you feel uncomfortable for any reason, you are free to quit the applications and leave the research without explaining the reason. In such a case, the use of the information you provide by the researcher will only be possible with your consent. Thank you in advance for participating in this study.

If you have questions about your participation in the research and the protection of your rights, or if you believe that you are at risk or will be exposed to stress in any way, you can reach us from the e-mail address of the Project: wiselifelife@ieu.edu.tr.

I fully participate in this work voluntarily and I know that I can cut it out whenever I want. I know that I will take part in the survey work required within the scope of this project. I accept the information I give to be used in scientific publications. I know that the results of the surveys during the project period will not be used except for scientific articles, academic presentations and an online education environment.



Value and Value Change (The Value Of This Project)

This project has increased awareness about the concept of ageism. Gaining this awareness took place in three dimensions.:

The first of these dimensions is the elderly individuals themselves. These individuals were exposed to ageism, but they could not fully understand it and could not give a name to what they experienced. However, they now had an awareness of what they experienced after the project.

The second dimension of this awareness is the younger generation. University students accompanied the elderly individuals who came to the university campus especially during the education period of the project. This both revealed the awareness of ageism in this young generation and enabled the strengthening of intergenerational dialogue.

In the third dimension, there are institutions in raising awareness about ageism. In particular, at the TUSEM (Turkey Universities Continuous Education Centers) council, which is the first of the multiplier activities carried out, many continuing education center officials from different provinces of Turkey were informed about the ageism concept. Considering that continuing education centers can be the leading organizations in the fight against ageism, the contribution made in this dimension is of great value.

Another value of the project is to support the willingness to learn and produce by collecting training requests. Before the training, elderly individuals were asked which courses/activities they would like to take if a training program was organized for them. This situation has moved the planning technique of training from a hierarchical structure to a more feminist perspective in terms of designing the training process together.

However, the preference of on-campus education has been very valuable in terms of giving older individuals the experience of being in school again, an experience they have been out of for a very long time.

In addition, sharing the project training announcements with municipalities, NGOs and universities, publishing an international book on ageism and ageism experienced in Turkey, shooting a documentary and the establishment of a digital memory platform made the project valuable in terms of inclusiveness in communication and education.



Project Challenge

Project Budget: A certain amount of the budget was spent for the training output of the project. A large part of this budget was allocated for the payments of trainers and specialist psychologists. In addition, a budget has been allocated for the materials to be used in the training, the treats provided to the participants, the gifts given for their participation and the lunches. In this training program, no item has been allocated for the transportation of the participants to the campus. Institutions that want to organize such training can also take into account transportation and adjust their budgets accordingly. In this way, participants from less advantageous groups would be able to access the training.

Communication / Marketing Target: The onset of the pandemic immediately after the approval of this project has been the biggest challenge for the project. Since elderly individuals are the most vulnerable group in pandemic conditions, these conditions were expected to be pushed to start the training. Although there was a great demand for the training, the number of participants in the class was limited to be more cautious. In order to reach the determined number of participants, communication was established with nursing homes, municipalities and city councils in addition to the university's internal communication facilities to announce the training. And the news about the training took place in the press.

Pre and Posts

Before this project, the only connection we had with the elderly people were a few parents or some senior faculty members we could see on campus. During the trainings; however, hosting around a hundred senior citizens even took the attention of the young university students looking at them with wonder and trying to understand why they might be here.

At the end of the training we recognized the necessity of working with elderly in other educational fields.



Gaps

The most challenging obstacles for the team during the project implementation phase were the bureaucratic obstacles stemming from the concerns regarding the pandemic process. For this reason, the trainings planned to be held in the nursing home were moved to the campus. Accordingly, those who participated in the training with the announcements were a relatively lucky group that somehow had a relationship with NGOs, universities or municipal councils.

Therefore we can talk about a social class gap in accessing the knowledge about the training at this point. Our recommendation to the institutions that want to organize such a project is to design a communication path accordingly, considering that these groups have less access to technology and information when they want to work with more disadvantaged groups in terms of income and education level.

The barriers to using technology appear as the main difficulty in accessing information. The rapidly changing technologies, the fact that technological devices do not offer convenient ease of use for ageing individuals and the diversity of access to digital information creates a sense of confusion and inadequacy can be cited as examples of this situation.

The gap from a communicator's perspective would be the lack of awareness and interest in ageism amongst journalists.



Some data

There was a significant and positive change in the life satisfaction of elderly individuals before and after education. The statistical data regarding this is as follows:

Number of Pre/Post Tests Applied in Turkey: 70 participants

Test results before the training (M = 31.41; SD = 7.68) and after the training (M = 33.92; SD = 7.24); [t(221) = -4.673, p < .05]. revealed that there is a significant difference in terms of life satisfaction.

However, when these measurement results are examined in the context of other partner countries, it has been determined that there is a significant difference in life satisfaction before and after education in all countries:

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 SUM_PRE	31.4099	222	7.67782	.51530
SUM_POST	33.9189	222	7.23945	.48588

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
	Upper			
Pair 1 SUM_PRE - SUM_POST	-1.45088	-4.673	221	.000

According to the Education Need Analysis Results, the Most Demanded Courses were food hygiene, safety and food literacy, healthy food preparation and cooking methods, walking, communication with children and adolescents while the Least Requested Lesson was Dancing.



Letter From the National Project Coordinator

When COVID-19 broke out, the physical health of our senior citizens was our focus and warranted urgent attention more than ever before. After a while, we all realized that the psycho-social health of the elderly was as important as their physical health. It was important because only inclusion in social life could save them. We wanted to create opportunities for the elderly and to decrease their exclusion of them from the social sphere with the training. We wanted to provide a road map for the institutions, continuous education centres and lifelong learning centres both at national and international levels. We wanted to support centres which are willing to work with older adults with the toolkit we created. We wanted to promote active ageing via enabling the elderly to benefit from educational opportunities. We wanted to fight with the “social evil” of ageism and taught people to reconcile with ageing.

With the implementation of this project, it is expected that both international awareness will be raised against ageism and the activities which will support active ageing will be shared, reproduced and become widespread. Also, in the long term the project is expected to contribute to the development of national policies and dialogue between EU countries on adult education and combating ageism.

We believe that supporting the educational needs of the elderly in an academic context will be a precious educational strategy for continuous education centers. Taking it one step further, we believe that our project results can be evaluated under the support given to lifelong learning under Erasmus+.

We would be glad to share the results of the WISELIFE project with institutions which would like to insert these into their own strategies.

Let this be the starting of a new era where the elderly are supported to continue to learn and to be more involved in life no matter how wise they are.

*Prof. Dr. Nesrin Oruç Ertürk
WISELIFE Project Coordinator*



RECOMMENDATIONS

Now that we are almost at the end of the project, there are some recommendations which might be useful for continuous education centers and future project managers.

To start with, Wiselife is a project that has some considerable impact on elderly peoples' lives. We all believed that the dissemination of the project would enable some awareness which will lead to other impactful project possibilities for continuous education centers and other researchers. Therefore, it was a great experience to plan and execute a public relations plan where a documentary was an intellectual output. Sharing this experience with all partners, created awareness that projects like this will benefit from a communication perspective.

We observed that among the senior citizens there was a need to raise awareness on topics such as; "marginalization", "communication gaps with youth" and "the ability to define the needs in educational processes".

Any institution, either a continuous education center or any other educational settings may consider getting support from a communication specialist before, during or after the implementation of the project. It would be useful to evaluate the perception of the elderly throughout the process about developmental processes in order to be able to make revisions if necessary.

With the population we worked with, namely the Turkish participants, the desire to contribute and participate in the educational processes was a touchstone. All other institutions should be aware to keep that desire alive by emphasizing the importance of continuous learning.



SELECTED RESOURCES

Global Campaign to Combat Ageism - Toolkit, World Health Organization; 2021. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-campaign-to-combat-ageism-toolkit>

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HUNGARY

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The University of Szeged (UoSZ, Szegedi Tudományegyetem, also known as SZTE) is a prestigious institution in Hungary, founded in 1521. The study fields of scientific life are represented in 12 faculties.

The UoSZ is one of the largest state-domestic higher education complexes with about 21,000 university students, including more than 4,000 international students. Approximately, there are 8,000 members of the working staff, and the university is a leading workshop of education and science, and it has a crucial role in Hungary's and the region's cultural, social and economic activities.

It has been selected among the best universities in Hungary and around the top 500 institutions of the world for years (QS WUR). As for the Erasmus+, the teaching staff of the University of Szeged is the most motivated and mobile to deliver courses and lectures at Erasmus+ partner institutions. Among the Hungarian HEIs, the University of Szeged is the leading one, while it is the third according to the statistics of the EU E+ ranking. The University of Szeged has 484 Erasmus+ partner institutions and nearly 1,000 bilateral agreements Europe-wide.

*“Live your life to the fullest; and then, and only then, die. Don't leave any un-lived life behind.”
(Irvin D. Yalom)*

Institute for Vocational, Adult Training and Knowledge Management, Juhász Gyula Faculty of Education

As a department of the predecessor Juhász Gyula Teacher's Training College, the Institute for Vocational, Adult and Distance Training was established by the College Council in 1998 to meet the challenges of the world of labour in the field of vocational education and training. With the growth of the societal need for VET, the share of the University of Szeged in the regional provision of vocational education and training has been increasing over the decades. Besides its training provision, in 2005, the institute became the coordinating, implementing and reporting agent of the university's adult and continuous training programmes as well.

Following several restructurings, the Institute for Vocational, Adult Training and Knowledge Management was established in 2021 as a result of internal restructuring and to align with the model and maintainer change of the whole university. The institute incorporates the following units: the Department of Applied IT, Department of Andragogy and Department of Moving Picture Culture, which provide short-cycle, bachelor and master-level courses.

The vocational and training courses for full-time and adult students are coordinated by the Division of Vocational Training and Education. The main aim of the institute is to work in the spirit of a service-providing university and respond to the newer and newer challenges of the labour market by developing such infrastructure, training framework and learning content that is responsive to the training requirements of the local and regional economy and society. To meet this aim, the institute has taken part in various EU projects conducted in cooperation with local and regional stakeholders in the spirit of lifelong learning.



Executive Summary



Upon being given the task of organizing a training programme for elderly people to improve their perspectives on old age and to raise awareness on improving wellbeing, the local coordinators' primary aim was to make a survey on the scope of local human and physical resources they could mobilize in the interest of successful implementation. Since neither of us works in the field of elderly care, we had to take into consideration how to reach out to the stakeholders, how to contact suitable trainers and, what was most important, how to get the end-users, the main beneficiaries involved in participation. We also kept in mind that there was the pressure of time, and we had to work from limited means and also within some administrative constraints, so when we looked for cooperating partners, we had to be very clear about what we would be able to offer by providing the training, but we also had to be very explicit what the project's expectations were.

It was essential for us to contact the relevant persons in authority, ask for their permission, and clarify some confidentiality and privacy issues. Since the Wiselife training proposal was an external initiative, our collaborating partners needed to see how the project could fit into their daily activities and operating philosophy without unnecessary intrusion. The first step was to consult the stakeholders to give us some ideas on how such a European Union-supported international project could be for the benefit of local elderly people. Luckily enough, some of our colleagues also act as local council members, and they were happy to share information and find suitable local sites and professionals in charge of the training in their district. We also relied on our own professional and community networks.



As part of the preparation, we also pre-interviewed some of our colleagues who we thought would be the right trainers to work with us, and we asked for their intent to participate. Naturally, we also discussed our plans with the management of our institute and asked for our dean's consent and support as well. Following some individual meetings, discussions and scheduling, our choice fell on two distinguished institutions: one in Szeged, an elderly day care centre, the other in Deszk, a village ten km far from Szeged, also a daycare club for elderly people, both maintained by the Szeged Small Region Senior Care Service Provision. The leaders of both sites ensured us that we could recruit 25-25 members to participate, and could help us maintain interest and motivation during the course of the whole programme. They also committed themselves to providing the necessary human help and physical environment. The Mayor of Deszk personally welcomed us but also warned us to be tactic with the elderly people since some project fatigue can be experienced among them.

The next step was setting up the exact programme and timesheet, keeping the preliminary requirements in mind, however, adapting the programme to local needs with some flexibility. We created the same programme parallel with different time slots as our site managers (leaders of the two senior clubs) recommended to us. In the framework of physical well-being, we organized the following sessions with the titles: Sofa-chair training and breathing exercises; in the framework of psychological well-being and art: Ageing – Chance for Self-actualization – Reflections on the past, present and future, Enhancing psychological health in old age, mindfulness; Photography session: Let's go to Scotland, Art activities: Let's create together; and in the framework of technological wellbeing: Use of electronic and smart devices, shopping online, Electronic access to public services, cyber crime, Watching a film and discussing it together: THE GRANDSON. (For some more details about the movie, see our blog on Wiselife: <http://wiselifeproject.com/en/blog/the-grandson-introducing-a-new-hungarian-film>.)



The opening and closing ceremony were also essential parts of the project. As it can be seen from the outline of the training, we skipped the nutrition part since the participants usually get updated on such issues, but we added a movie theater visit, which was greatly appreciated. One of our art sessions was so popular in Szeged that we added an extra workshop after closing the project.

COURSES /ACTIVITIES and allocated hours in Deszk and Szeged		
HOURS	LIST OF COURSES/ACTIVITIES	
2 (-2)	Elderly Nutrition (0 hours)	PHYSICAL WELLBEING
3	Gentle Chair Yoga and Meditation (3 hours)	
2 (+1)	Breathing Exercise (3 hours)	
4 + (2)	Art Activities (2+2 hours) + 2 hours extra	PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING
3 (-1)	Group Guidance (2 hours)	
2	Mindfulness (2 hours)	
2	Using Social Media & E-commerce (2 hours)	TECHNOLOGICAL WELLBEING
2	Accessing E-Public Services (2 hours)	
1 (+2)	Protecting Yourself Against Cyber-Crimes (3 hours)	
2	Opening Ceremony (2 hours)	Introducing
		Explaining the project
		Conducting education needs analyses
		Conducting pre tests
		Signing the informed consent forms
		Making a list of smart phone users
2	Closing Ceremony (2 hours)	Evaluation
		Conducting post tests
		Giving the certificates
Total:25 hours / 25 people x 2 Groups		

Upon the group evaluation of the training, we can conclude that though participation was not always even in the different parts, there was no drop out. Members and the staff of both care centers expressed their appreciation for the organizers' and trainers' dedication and involvement, and their desire to have further similar opportunities to enhance their daily activities in the service of elderly's wellbeing. The Wiselife project brought new colors and ideas in their efforts to create a better place and community for old people.



Overview

Finally, 26-26 participants signed up at the two sites in Deszk and Szeged, and they were the ones for whom we issued the certificate of participation at the end of the training. In Deszk, there were 8 males and 18 females, and in Szeged 6 males and 20 females, so our data seem to support some demographic observations that among the elderly, women are overrepresented and they live longer, and for certain sociological reasons, it is easier for them to join support groups. According to activity level, we can also say that they showed higher motivation and commitment to the project. Both facilities were suitable for all activities, however, the club in Szeged was a bit small for physical exercises, therefore, some tasks (e.g. breathing exercises, meditation and yoga) were done outside under the trees as well. The training activities were organized throughout four weeks during June, in some cases both in the morning and afternoon because we also had to adjust to our trainers' other engagements as well. In deciding the time slots, we tried to adjust to the daily regular activities of the clubs, for example, in Szeged, members usually gather in the morning hours since they get their lunch in the centre. For this reason, they mainly appreciated it if they did not have to come back for the afternoon. Unfortunately, June was extremely hot, which held them back in the shade and protection of their homes. Though both centres are equipped with air conditioners, they appreciated early morning activities.

The furnishing gave some flexibility in movement, chairs could be set according to group activities in Deszk, however, in Szeged, the sofas and armchairs limited flexibility so the workshops had to be organized accordingly.

Some trainers were our colleagues who had formerly worked in senior projects, some others were also selected from participants or local institutions. Since we are also trainers in group guidance and therapeutic counseling as it can be seen from the short biographies, we also acted as trainers as well, or at other times, we assisted our contracted trainers. Our main aim was to integrate the activities into the life of the participating senior people as smoothly as we could, and as their daily routine dictated or allowed. Nevertheless, we wanted to show something new, and to raise awareness on issues they may not usually think about. After a while, both staff members and club members welcomed us as part of their community. We especially appreciated their invitation to programmes they organized themselves, for example, in Deszk, a lovely old lady recommended us to organize the project opening at her 90th birthday party, as we later did. In case of needs analysis in Deszk, more guests filled in the questionnaires than our participants since they came together for their usual cooking party in a great number. Publicizing the Wiselife training was made easier by the fact that one of the coordinators lives in Deszk, and previously she had been engaged with some of the senior club staff and members as well in other projects.



Value and Value Change

Although the overall purpose of the training was to make elderly participants aware of and improve individual attitudes to active ageing and well-being, in some of the sessions, ageism was also touched upon. As a human scientific concept, it had to be explained in layman's terms and had to be brought close to participants' individual experiences. Watching *The Grandson*, a Hungarian-made movie, together also demonstrated some examples of when old people suffer various forms of ill-treatment, implicitly or explicitly become victims of prejudices and discrimination or even fraud or robbery, furthermore, of various mistreatment. The group training or guidance session was an excellent occasion for them to identify incidents when they experienced societal stereotypes or even started using them voluntarily for themselves as labels. It was desirable to identify the associated feelings as well by using exact examples from the labour market discrimination or how they can or just cannot get access to health and social care services, or how ageism can influence family relations as well.

Though some ageing experts (including Laura Carstensen too) support the idea of what a great resource an emotionally stable, highly knowledgeable and relatively healthy elderly society can provide, in reality, elderly people quite often become the most disadvantageous and vulnerable group in society. Because of the unhealthy functioning of society, their exclusion may increase, so we found it very important to raise their awareness on how to tackle such age discrimination, and how to maintain self-identity and a sense of belongingness to the community. Too much stereotyping and ill-adjusted behaviour may reduce the overall quality of life. In order to avoid loss of quality of life and develop resilience, we also taught them techniques on how not to internalize such negative labels, how important it is to create meaningful relationships, and how to develop diverse, tolerant and inclusive elderly communities. This was taken in a group work setting where they could freely reflect on each others' experiences and even on painful feelings. They now in a safe environment could appreciate other group members' individuality in a better way. They also expressed their wish for such meaningful togetherness in their club life more often.

In the framework of the group work, we also gathered individual associations with ageing with the help of a word cloud. Without presenting all results, it is worth pointing out that in the case of most respondents, the negative words were in the majority though there was exceptionally positive feedback as well. Here we can see some negatively charged words associated with ageing and old age: forgetfulness, heavy breathing, fatigue, loneliness, lack of proper sleep, backache, little pension, living alone, health problems, grief, financial worries, faraway family members, loss of confidence, slowing down, vulnerability, craving for being loved.



The rather positive associations were as follows: more time for family, endless free time, learning how to slow down, learning new things, joy from and with grandchildren, the importance of a healthy lifestyle, enjoying hobbies, positive attitude to life, sharing quality time with fellow pensioners, helping others, gardening, using the Internet, crossword puzzles, more time for travels, flexibility in spending time, organizing programmes for and with others.

We also flashed up faces of well-being, which as we pointed out does not only correspond with being healthy. Each and every one of us should define what individual well-being means for him or her, and what we can do to maintain such a positive attitude, inner shine and cheer, zest for life, intellectual inner peace and calmness. Again, we discussed some techniques and good advice, including planning the future, for example, making and sharing everyone's or the community's bucket list. Old age inevitably comes with losing the old, well-tested and comfortable roles and status, so it is very helpful for elderly people to find new roles, for example, taking care of grandchildren, helping others in need, doing something meaningful for the community, so we also explored how the process of retirement took place in their lives, how well they were prepared for their new roles and how they can find new meaning in this rather declining life stage.

These sessions also offered unique opportunities for the participants to open up, explore their present reality and touch on deeply buried feelings as well. With mindfulness exercises, we also helped them experience how important it is to bring their full focus to the enjoyment of and living truly the present moment. Working with them in such an exploratory and reflective way was greatly rewarding in all aspects. Their active involvement at a personal level raised their enthusiasm about learning something new in a most likely unusual way for most of them. Humour and playfulness were also excellent contributors to the relaxed and inspiring atmosphere. Not surprisingly, some senior participants asked for the possibility to continue with certain activities of the pilot training (e.g. gentle chair yoga, breathing exercise, art activities, photographic experience report, and some form of social media and/or e-public services).

Pro and Cons

Project Challenge

For organizational reasons for our Wiselife project, the training had to be done in the summer. In June, all colleagues taking part as trainers had an exam period, so they were able to be more flexible.



When discussing with the team members (trainers, coordinators, leaders and staff of the senior club in Szeged and Deszk), we decided to do it in two groups, 26-26 participants each. It was also our decision not to concentrate the training to only one week, so there were only 2-3 hours per day because it would have been too tiring for the seniors with more courses per day.

The extremely hot weather in June and the fact that most participants were females, affected the training, too. Since in Hungary, the vacations in primary and secondary school start in the middle of June and last until the 1st of September, parents cannot afford to stay with their children for such a long time. So it is usually the grandparents who take care of the children during the summer vacation. Therefore, some senior participants (esp. females) were not able to participate in all parts of the training.

As was already stated, some activities of the pilot training were very exciting and interesting for most of the participants, others did not really raise their interest. This may be dependent on the participants' personal interests and individual preferences. So for future training, it would be nice to have the opportunity to choose from a wider variety and not to make all activities obligatory.

Project Budget

The budget for the training was mainly the personnel expenses of the trainers, mostly colleagues from the University and the team of the local coordinators. The working day of the project was used for the trainers who were responsible for the preparation and carrying out of the activities both in Szeged and in Deszk. The team was also responsible for the whole management of the training programmes.

We, the team, were lucky enough because the senior clubs in Szeged and Deszk were open for our pilot activities, so there was no room rental fee. From the management cost, catering, all equipment, especially for the art activities, the tickets for the movie *The Grandson*, and all associated costs could also be paid.

Communication/Marketing Target

Communication and making publicity for the training was not complicated and difficult. For Deszk, it was a big advantage that one of the coordinators lives there, so she has contact with a great number of inhabitants. So the fact that so many seniors joined the programme in Deszk was based on acquaintance.



Moreover, the local coordinators had contact with the senior club in Szeged, too, where the head of the club was also absolutely open to the opportunity to do the pilot training there. The advantage of these clubs was that a certain number of seniors (20-40) keep visiting the club almost every day. The leaders and the staff of the clubs in general are responsible for organizing certain programmes and events to engage and entertain senior members thus the Wiselife training meant something special and refreshing for the participants.

Pre and Posts

As a Centre

The implementation of the pilot training in Szeged and Deszk was a great opportunity for our Centre at the Institute for Vocational, Adult Training and Knowledge Management, Juhász Gyula Faculty of Education as well. It was also something new and special for both senior clubs, and of course for the seniors there.

When formulating our Wiselife application in 2020-2021, our aim was to “raise awareness about ageism” (age discrimination) in a different way. Therefore, the pilot trainings were compiled in a way that seniors would take part actively, relying on their competencies in the sessions, and dealing with many different topics that are at their benefit and interests.

Gaps

Access to Knowledge

The network of the Wiselife project comprises various institutions from five different countries (Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Turkey), consequently, the background, the demographic situation of the participants of the pilot training is also different with regards to gender, education background, career, income, marital status, environment the senior persons live in, understanding and responding to age discrimination and ageism, etc. Therefore, the training content had to be easily understandable and still flexible, fitting the target group’s needs and interests.

Changes: For Hungary, we decided to do the training in two groups (Szeged and Deszk) and not to concentrate the training on only one week but for the whole of June. The trainings were held in the two training clubs, the seniors could access them easily because they go there regularly. In this way, there was no gap in the access to the training content.



Gender Gap

Out of the 52 participants, there were only 13 males. To answer the question why, we should consider sociological, psychological and health aspects as well. One aspect is life expectancy at birth:

Date	Life expectancy Women	Life expectancy Men	Life expectancy
2021	78.00	71.10	74.50
2020	79.00	72.30	75.70
2019	79.70	73.10	76.50

<https://countryeconomy.com/demography/life-expectancy/hungary>

The chart shows the difference (almost 7 years) between female and male life expectancy at birth in Hungary.

Understanding and Responding Ageism

According to recently quoted demographic data in a women's magazine*, the world average life expectancy was 72.98 in 2022, which was 0.24 higher than data of 2021. This number has been increasing year by year, and in the last twenty years, life expectancy has become longer by six years. Nevertheless, it has to be pointed out that life expectancy at birth does not extend our young but rather the elderly years, which has numerous societal and economic implications. The population's longer age could be looked at as the success story of humankind, but it is also known that this has posed new challenges with regards to how to provide proper care for elderly generations at family, community and national level. The dramatic growth of elderly generations' volume has brought about significant changes also in individual needs: declining health in old age necessitates increased demand in both health and social care. Beyond economic dilemmas, another issue of the dramatic growth of life expectancy is whether longer life remains enjoyable and can be lived happily.

*Juli Lami: We live longer but what can we expect from longer life? Women's Magazine, vol. 49, 2022, Budapest)
(**Interview with Kata Tisza ageism researcher by Zoltán Pogátsa, New Equality podcast, 2022)



Worldwide surveys show that longer life does not necessarily mean a happier and more contentful life. Therefore, it is really challenging for both individuals and societies how to develop new life strategies in order to see new opportunities for living longer. In order to avoid degradation and defencelessness in old age, the retirement years have to be filled with more meaningful and valuable activities, and society should be more responsive to the newly emerging needs of this very numerous and significant population in society.

Despite the above trends, dignified ageing is not really part of public communication as Hungary is an ageing society. As ageism researcher Kata Tisza pointed out in an interview if we address elderly issues publicly, we often talk about and with old aged people in a stigmatizing and stereotyping way. They also get marginalized financially, and most people associate old age with negative attributes. Their problems cannot be treated as individual ones but the social frameworks are also important. In the progressive approach to ageing, we should emphasize the role of autonomy, competence and relatedness that can determine if one's old age is enjoyable and satisfying. Preparation for enjoyable old age should start in middle age by making people aware of societal stigmas, stereotypes and taboos. Research shows that those who are courageous enough to dismantle and break away from societal expectations can live their elderly years more happily.

Kata Tisza also emphasizes the importance of self-acceptance in gaining higher satisfaction, which we also experienced during our training. We can add that having opportunities to give voice to self-respect and show inner values can also raise the sense of dignity and dignified ageing. We believe that the training programme developed in the framework of the Wiselife project can be an excellent model and instrument in helping elderly people to experience the continuity of their identity, to reflect on who they are and what sources of zest for life they can find.

It is absolutely essential to raise awareness about and allow them the right to self-determination in order to strengthen their capacity to live and create symmetric relations both in their family, their retired communities and in the overall society. Keeping Kata Tisza's words in mind and reassuring them, it is good to become old where there is no stigmatization, where the relationships are equal, there is equality and cooperation between the sexes, and sexual identity can be manifested with self-respect. Our project showed the members of the elderly clubs just like the site managers that meaningful activities can provide engagement, a new interpretation of the meaningfulness of life and a new sense of relatedness. We can also conclude that similar activities can mobilize the sense of usefulness and bring out elderly people from isolation.



Some statistics

At the beginning of the training, with the opening ceremony, participants were asked to fill in some questionnaires, tests and data about their demographic aspects. Here, the first aspect was about gender identity. As mentioned under the Gender Gap title, from the 52 participants there were only 13 males. Investigating their age, 16 persons were between 60-70, while 24 persons were between 71-80 and 11 were between 81-90. One person (female) was at the age of 91. Concerning the question “Which best describes your level of education?” 16 seniors were educated at the elementary level, 24 were high-school graduates, 11 were graduates and one person was postgraduate. For the monthly income, 11 persons did not answer the question, 35 persons’ income was below EUR 500, 5 persons’ pension was between EUR 501-1000, and only one person had between EUR 1001-2000.




The pre-test and post-test with 19 questions aimed at assessing its effects on various quality-of-life indicators, like “My age prevents me from..” or “I can do the things that I want to do”, etc. Here three questionnaires are invalid because not all questions were answered.

The questionnaire on educational needs analysis was filled out by 64 seniors (38 in Deszk, 26 in Szeged). Here, some additional answers are mentioned: handicraft techniques, book reviews, film reviews and recommendations, swimming and its teaching, doing exercises, information about the economy; psychological knowledge; social legal knowledge; information about human relations and situations among each other, handwork, colouring, hiking, visit to the botanical garden (arboretum) in Szeged, creative workshop, knowledge of horticulture (garden work), knowledge of herbal medicine, dating programs, hiking, programmes with the other seniors, hiking, playing cards, card championship, environmental protection, handwork, colouring, cinema programme together, hiking. These answers should be taken into consideration when developing further training for seniors.



Letter From the National Project Coordinator

It was a perfect idea proposed by the coordinator to make videos and photos during the training. What best describes our personal feeling is the photos we took during the trainings, because the fun, the happiness, relaxed and self-absorbed feelings of the senior participants made us happy, too.

	<p>Intensive art work with much concentration: decoupage</p>
	<p>Even those senior participants who were at the beginning <u>reluctant cautious</u> and even restrained were enormously happy and proud holding their own work in their hands.</p>
	<p>What also made us blissful was the participants' endurance and stamina, not giving up.</p>
	<p>Smiling and proud participants receiving the Certificate at the end of the <u>Wiselife</u> training in Deszk, Senior Club.</p>



Recommendations

Since the Hungarian team chose the opportunity to implement the pilot training in two senior clubs, the participants knew each other, so they were more relaxed. The training's timeslots were planned together with the leaders of the senior clubs, who know all participants very well. So we could take the seniors' habits, routines and age-related needs into account. As we experienced, there was a great difference in age, educational background, interest, competence, and state of health among the participants, so all trainers had to be flexible and design their parts according to the make-up of each group and session.

Some feedback from the senior participants (which can be useful both for CEC and for future projects): They asked to continue with certain activities of the pilot training (e.g. gentle chair yoga, breathing exercise, art activities, photographic experience report, some form of social media and/or e-public services). They recommended fewer lesson hours per day, as well as to include further activities in the training (listed in the ENA questionnaire). Also, they think participation should not be made "mandatory", and some senior representatives should also take part in designing the agenda and activities for the training, maybe in the form of a focus group. The timing may also be better in other seasons with more moderate climate circumstances.





GREECE

TEAM



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ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ
ΑΙΓΑΙΟΥ
UNIVERSITY OF THE
AEGEAN

The University of the Aegean (UAegean) was founded in 1984. It is a Network University of “academic ports of studies and research”, successfully established in 6 campuses spread across the Aegean Archipelago and offers a unique academic, natural, cultural and human environment to experience. UAegean has organized and established 90 research laboratories with activities in the following research areas: ICT, Design and Interaction Design, Sustainable Development and Environment, Geography, GIS, Meteorology-Climatology, Transport & Shipping, Culture & Education, Financial, Economic and Social Sciences. Since 1985, the Research Unit of the University has implemented more than 2400 projects for a total amount of 150 million Euros.

UAegean has established teleconferencing facilities on each island and Athens unit, used for administrative and academic purposes. Through these facilities, it can offer Modules for short seminars and courses in line with distance learning methodology. UAegean faculty and research staff amount to approximately 500 members in total, including 55 professors, 70 associate professors, 128 assistant professors, 39 lecturers, 100 scientific support staff, and 53 Special Technical Laboratory assistants for providing Knowledge Management related services to the academic staff. In addition to those, there are also 304 members of administrative and student affairs personnel.

Committed to its mandate, in 2012 the University launched the "UAegean Summer Schools" in the fields of Humanities, Social Sciences, Environment, Science and Business focusing on cutting-edge topics with strong interdisciplinary perspectives. In 2009, UAegean (School of Humanities) was awarded the award of "Excellence" in the use of new technologies by the European Foundation for Quality in e-Learning (UNIQUE).



WISELIFE
RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT AGEISM



GREECE

Geographical Scope

Lesvos, Greece

The Name of the Organisation

University of the Aegean

Contact Info

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ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ
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UNIVERSITY OF THE
AEGEAN

The academic orientation of several undergraduate and postgraduate programs of UAegean as well as its research reputation in the cross-section of social and humanities studies with new and innovative disciplines is fully aligned with the objectives of the project proposal. UAegean will contribute its expertise on social and humanities studies (especially in topics such as inequalities, gender, digital divide, lifelong learning, adult education, etc.) to inform the design of a new effective framework for promoting active ageing.

Moreover, through its extensive expertise and background in e-Learning, it can facilitate awareness and training in a more efficient manner and contribute to the quality assurance procedures, thus ensuring the overall success of the project. From 2021, the University of the Aegean will participate in the European Reform University Alliance (ERUA). The ERUA consists of five young European reform universities that will form a transnational university network with the same shared values and goals in research, teaching and continual institutional development.

**Ageism is rather a social construct
with far-reaching practical
consequences for its 'victims'.**

Executive Summary



General Information About The Training

Both trainings took place between the 13th and the 24th of June, with the first one spanning from the 13th until the 17th and the second one spanning from the 20th until the 24th. The opening ceremony for the first training took place on the 10th and the second one on the 17th. The training of each group lasted twenty-one (21) hours. Both pieces of training were identical, beginning every day at 10 o'clock and ending early in the afternoon. The number of participants was twenty (20), ten (10) in each group. The trainers of the courses were Katia Melnik and Afriditi Rallidi for physical well-being, Panagiotis Tsoukarellis and Eleni Rousopoulou for psychological well-being, and Ioannis Dimou for technological well-being.

This Toolkit concerning the training programme implemented in Greece includes an overview of the courses and the demographics of the participants regarding gender, age, education, and income as well as a detailed description of the courses provided. Furthermore, the value of this programme and its pros and cons is introduced along with any challenges, the project budget, the means of communicating the programme, and how this experience affected the University. Lastly, special attention is paid to any gaps, the phenomenon of ageism and how it can be tackled, as well as the statistics from the pre and post-training surveys filled out by the participants. The project team also suggests a series of recommendations.



Shortlist of the Courses and Participant Demographics

The courses included breathing exercises, Gentle Chair Yoga and Meditation, Use of social media and e-commerce, Access to digital public services, Protection from cybercrime, Group guidance, Art activities, Mindfulness and Elderly nutrition. In regards to the demographic data that was collected, gender-wise, out of 20 participants in each group, only one (1) was male (group 1) and the other nineteen (19) were female, revealing the difficulty of recruiting male participants. Regarding age, most of the participants were under 70 years old, and only two (2) were above 81. Education-wise, most of the participants had a high-school level of education, however, two people had a postgraduate education.

In regards to income, participants making between 1001-2000 Euros were almost the same as participants making between 501-1000 Euros (9 and 10 people respectively). Most participants were either married or widowed (8 and 9 people respectively), and, except for two, were born in Greece. All of them reside in Greece permanently and most of them (18) live in the city. Lastly, fourteen (14) of them live in a house they own, making the majority in this category.

Demographics

Gender

Group 1 consisted of nine (9) women and (1) one man. Group 2 consisted of nine (10) women.

Age

Group 1 had two (2) people between the ages of 81-90, four (4) people between 71-80 years old, as well as another four (4) between 60-70 years old. Group 2 had four (4) people between the ages of 71-80 and six (6) people between 60-70 years old.

Education

Group 1 had two (2) people on a post-graduate level, four (4) on a graduate level, three (3) people on a high school level of education, as well as one (1) person with no education. Group 2 was composed of two (2) people on a graduate level, five (5) on a high school level of education and three (3) people with no education.



Income

Group 1 had five (5) people making between 1001-2000 Euros, and five (5) making between 501-1000 Euros. Group 2 had four (4) people making between 1001-2000 Euros, five (5) people making between 501-1000 Euros, and one (1) person making below 500 Euros.

Marital Status

Group 1 had five (5) widowed people and five (5) married ones. Group 2 had one (1) separated person, one (1) divorced, four (4) widowed and three (3) married people.

Country of Birth

Group 1 had all ten (10) people born in Greece, while Group 2 had nine (9) born in Greece and 1 born elsewhere.

Country of Residence

All ten (10) members from each group resided in Greece.

The Environment you live in

Group 1 had two (2) people who live in a village and eight (8) who live in the city, while all ten (10) of Group 2's members live in the city.

Group 1 had one (1) person living with other relatives, two (2) people who live with their children, one (1) person living in a rented house and six (6) people living in a house they own. Group 2 had two (2) people living with their children and eight (8) people living in a house they own.

Description of the Courses

Group Guidance

Course teaching methods and techniques: Experiential process-participatory teaching, role-playing, brainstorming, working groups, case study.

Course objectives: ways to process stress, melancholy, loneliness and reframing with positive thinking and application.



Course description: training through counselling in managing everyday difficulties.
Subjects of the course: stress management, pressure management, loneliness management, the creative self, organization and positive reframing.
Learning outcomes: adoption of techniques and their application in daily practice to a satisfactory degree with evaluation by the participants.

Mindfulness

Course teaching methods and techniques: Experiential process, role-playing, brainstorming, case study.
Course objectives: to strengthen mindfulness by understanding and adopting it in daily practice.
Course Description: education, understanding and applications of mindfulness for people over 65 years old.
Subjects of the course: clarification of the concept, giving meaning in everyday life, exercises - applications, practice and use according to needs, intention - observation - presence - curiosity.
Learning outcomes: adoption of techniques and applications in daily practice to a satisfactory degree.

Art Activities

Course teaching methods and techniques: creative teaching method, learning through play.
Course objectives: to get participants in touch with their creativity, which gives vitality.
Course description: topics and stimuli are given out, which the participants follow freely by coming into contact with new materials.
Subjects of the course: collage, ceramics.
Learning outcomes: discovering creativity through creative learning. Pleasure.

Elderly Nutrition

Methods and techniques of teaching the course: PowerPoint, discussion, projection of audio-visual material.
Course objectives: nutrition education and guidance.
Course description: nutrition advice for people over 65 years old and their practical application in everyday life.
Subjects of the course: nutritional requirements of the body over 65 years old, macronutrients and micronutrients, Mediterranean pyramid, preparation of a "plate" of meals, ideas for breakfast/main meal/snack, practical tips for good health.
Learning outcomes: nutrition education, guidance, improvement of eating habits.



Gentle chair yoga, breathing exercises and meditation

Course objectives: relaxation, stress management, improvement of body posture, balance, flexibility through gentle exercises, strengthening of general health and good physical and mental condition.

Course description: breathing techniques in a chair, gentle physical exercises in a standing and sitting position, relaxation techniques and guided meditation from a sitting position.

Subjects of the course: Dhirga pranayama and Anuloma Viloma Pranayama (breathing techniques), circulation of consciousness in the parts of the body, physical exercises focusing mainly on the points of the neck/shoulders/arms/legs of the spine/balance postures.

Learning outcomes: improvement of the practitioner's musculoskeletal system, awareness of the sensations of the body and breathing during immobility and movement, and self-observation.

Use of social media and e-commerce, Access to digital public services, Protection from cybercrime

Teaching methods and techniques of the course: lectures with the use of PC and supervision, discussion, practical exercise and questions-answers.

Course objectives: to familiarize the trainees with the computer and to perform practical exercises on the subjects of the course.

Course description: the course provides an introduction to modern concepts such as cyberspace, social media and e-commerce.

Subjects of the course: cybercrime, categories of crimes, e-government, use of e-government services, social networks in general, e-commerce, advantages and risks of e-commerce.

Learning outcomes: understanding the concepts introduced, adopting the view that technology is a valuable tool that hides risks, using e-government and e-commerce.

Courses Language: Greek

Course delivery method: face to face

Evaluation: using methods from COPI (Community of Philosophical Inquiry)

Each and every trainer of all the courses in both groups have studied the instructions for teaching people over 65 years old, signing the relevant form.



Value and Value Change

Through the WISELIFE training program, phenomena of social exclusion and social discrimination based on ageism are alleviated. Consequently, and through the promotion of the initiative in the public sphere, ageism stereotypes and prejudices are combated. At the same time, awareness about ageism is increasing and efforts to eliminate the phenomenon are increasing. Regarding the value of the programme, as can be seen in the participants' answers to the post-training survey, they felt more joyful, as well as more active after the training. Everyone was satisfied with the curriculum and most left with a renewed sense of living.

Pros and Cons

It was apparent that this training benefited both the participants as well as the trainers and the project team in different ways. The participants felt a sense of fulfilment after the training, while both trainers and the team got to understand the repercussions of ageism and exclusion first-hand by interacting with the participants. They also got to contribute to their entertainment and uplifting. Moreover, the participants got to discover their inner creative selves and felt a sense of belonging, while at the same time, they engaged in socializing, something that they admitted is rare in their age group. This training was one of the few that dealt with ageism in Greece, promoting awareness and paving the way for more projects like it. Lastly, it strengthened the bond between the University and the community, something that the participants themselves admitted to.

One setback was that there was no follow-up after the completion of the training, as it would have been a good opportunity for several actions to take place, so as to maintain the bond between the community and the University.

Project Challenge

The first challenge involved finding people over the age of 65 to participate in the program. The above issue is also linked to the effects of the covid-19 pandemic, since it promoted isolation and social distancing, expanding aspects of ageism. However, even though people aged over 65 had already limited their social activity, in the end, they thought of their participation in WISELIFE as a way out of the everyday life routine, while at the same time getting to participate in a creative activity after the period of isolation they experienced due to the pandemic. At this stage, the members of the project team on the one hand addressed an open call for expression of interest in participating in the educational program to people aged over 65, while on the other hand, they contacted agencies and organizations, such as the Open Care Center for the Elderly. The two groups of participants were formed after the above communications.



The main challenge in the implementation of the program concerned the initial insecurity that the participants felt in relation to whether they would be able to cope with the activities. The above challenge was overcome by building a trusting relationship with the people who would eventually participate in the training program since the members of the research team were in contact with them before the start of the training. Also, throughout the training program, the members of the project team were next to the participants, forming a creative framework of coexistence.

Project Budget

In total, the cost of the training came up to 2.025,4 Euros. The trainers' payments cost 840 euros, while the daily meals of the trainees cost a total of 300,84 euros. The opening and closing ceremonies added 380 euros to the budget, the taxi fares to transport the participants to the courses every day cost 390 euros and the course materials cost 114,56 euros.



Communication/Marketing Target:

The members of the project team sent out an open invitation for participation in the training program to people over the age of 65, while on the other hand they contacted agencies and organizations, such as the Open Care Center for the Elderly. Furthermore, there was the below poster shared through the local media.

Pre and Posts

As a Centre; Before the implementation of this training programme, the University had on the subject a more casual relationship with the community, as there was only a limited interest in ageism and setting up a training project to combat it was not a priority. Thanks to this initiative, the University is now more aware than ever of the consequences of exclusion for people aged over 65.

As good practice and highlighting the added value of the program, there are plans to carry out a corresponding educational program entitled "Training - Strengthening of individual resources and skills in older people to combat ageism and enhance social inclusion" for people aged 65 and over. The program will be implemented in the summer of 2023 by the Lifelong Learning Center of the University of the Aegean.



Gaps

There was a clear gender gap between male and female participants, revealing the difficulty of recruiting men for the training programme, which begs the question of what can be done for the training to appeal to men over 65 years old. There was also an education gap noted, as out of twenty (20) participants only two (2) had graduate-level education and most of the other participants had high-school level education, which might also indicate a social class and/or a career gap, however, more information is needed to deduct such a finding.

Understanding and Responding to Ageism

Do you think the elderly have any gap in Accessing Knowledge?

All of the participants admitted to being at a disadvantage regarding having adequate access to knowledge, which proves the existing gap in their age group. They also thanked the University for providing this training programme, as it introduced them to valuable information, such as e-commerce and being aware of internet scams. This can also be cross-checked with their answers in the post-training survey (see Annex I).

Social Class gap for accessing the knowledge about the project.

In regards to the relation between the social class of the participants and their access to knowledge about this programme, it can be determined through the demographic statistics of income and education that the majority of the participants can be classified as middle class compared to people belonging to the working class. This shows that lower income and lower social class people may have not had adequate access to learning about this programme.

Understanding and Responding to Ageism: What are your ideas and approaches against ageism?

It is very important for modern societies to develop inclusive strategies and policies, as it became apparent from the pre and post-evaluation tests that most people over 65 years old feel alienated and left out of things. Besides the existing public bodies that focus on the elderly, the implementation of training, workshops, social gatherings etc., that can offer people over 65 years old an opportunity to actively participate, can help bridge the gap between society and its older members. Moreover, educating the rest of the members of society (children, adolescents etc.) on the social stigma of age can bring about a gradual social change from within.



Some observations

Pre-Post Tests 2

1- My age prevents me from doing the things I would like to

Compared to before and after the training, the results are almost identical, save for two (2) people who, after the training, answered that their age “often” prevents them from doing things instead of “sometimes”.

2- I feel that what happens to me is out of my control

After the training, it is clear that some participants gained a boost of confidence, since the number of people who answered that they “never” feel that what happens to them is out of their control in the post-test increased from eight (8) to ten (10).

3- I feel free to plan for the future

It seems that the training helped a lot in boosting positive thinking, as the number of participants who answered in the post-test that they “always” feel free to plan for the future in the post-test increased from eight (8) to eleven (11).

4- I feel left out of things

The results of the pre and post-evaluation tests regarding the participants feeling left out of things are almost identical.

5- I can do the things that I want to do

The results of the pre and post-evaluation tests regarding the participants being able to do the things they want to do are identical with no apparent change.

6- Family responsibilities prevent me from doing what I want to do

The answers in the post-evaluation test are clearly more positive compared to the pre-evaluation test, as the number of participants who answered that family responsibilities “never” prevent them from doing things rose to twelve (12) from eight (8) and those who answered “always” dropped to zero (0).

7- I feel that I can please myself with what I can do

There was an improvement regarding self-sufficiency, as more participants thought that after the training they are “always” able to take care of themselves (fourteen (14) instead of eleven (11)).

8- My health stops me from doing the things I want to do

Compared to the pre-evaluation test, in the post-evaluation some participants were convinced that their health “never” stops them from doing what they want, however, there was also an increase in the number of people who answered that it “often does”



9- Shortage of money stops me from doing the things that I want to do

In the post-evaluation test, the number of participants who think that lack of money sometimes stops them from doing things they want to went up to eight (8) instead of four (4), while those that think that it often does stop them dropped to three (3) compared to six (6).

10- I look forward to each day

After the training, the number of participants who “always” look forward to each day rose to nine (9) instead of four (4), consequently lowering the number of participants who sometimes or never look forwards to each day, highlighting the importance of the training experience.

11- I feel that my life has meaning

The answers in the pre and post-evaluation test regarding the participants feeling that their life has meaning were almost identical.

12- I enjoy the things that I do

After the training, the number of participants who “always” enjoy the things that they do rose to thirteen (13) compared to eleven (11), showing a boost of positive energy after the completion of the training.

13- I enjoy being in the company of others

The results before and after the training were almost identical regarding the number of participants enjoying being in the company of others, with a slight increase by two (2) in those who “always” do, which shows the influence of socializing and communicating during the training.

14- On, balance, I look back on my life with a sense of happiness

The results regarding looking back on their life with a sense of happiness are almost the same in the pre e post-tests, with slight differences before and after the training, since no one answered that they “never” look back with a sense of happiness in the post-test compared to one (1) person giving that answer in the pre-test.

15- I feel full of energy these days

There is a clear distinction between the pre and post-test evaluations, showing that after the training thirteen (13) participants “always” feel full of energy, compared to only seven (7) answering that before consolidating the positive effect of the training.



16- I choose to do things that I have never done before

In contrast with the pre-evaluation test, in the post-evaluation test, the number of participants who “always” choose to do things they have never done before rose to nine (9) instead of four (4), while those that answered they “never” do, dropped to zero (0).

17- I feel satisfied with the way my life has turned out

Answering whether the participants are satisfied with the way their life has turned out after the training most answered they “often” (six (6)) do or they “always” do (nine (9)), while before the training one (1) participant had answered that they “never” do.

18- I feel that life is full of opportunities

After the training, the participants were a lot more hopeful, as eleven (11) of them answered that they always feel that life is full of opportunities, compared to only seven (7) before the training.

19- I feel that the future looks good for me

In total, after the training, the participants feel that the future does look good for them, as nine (9) of them answered “always”, however, there was an increase of the answer “sometimes” and a decrease in the answer “often” compared to the pre-evaluation test.

Educational Need Analysis

- Most participants of the training voted yoga as being either very important or important, however, there also thirty percent (30%) chose not to opt for any answers.
- Thirty-five percent (35%) of the participants of the training considered water aerobics to be very important, however, the same amount chose not to answer, while twenty percent (20%) did not consider it to be important.
- The vast majority of participants considered dancing to be important or very important, while only twenty-five percent (25%) did not consider it important.
- All of the participants in the training voted walking as either very important or important.
- Almost all of the participants categorized digital learning as either very important or important, while only five percent (5%) did not consider it important.
- Eighty percent of participants (80%) considered a second language very important or important, while fifteen percent (15%) did not consider it important and five percent (5%) chose not to answer.



- Over eighty-five percent (85%) of the participants chose social media as either very important or important, while only ten percent (10%) did not find it important.
- Almost all of the participants chose Popular culture as either very important or important, while only five percent (5%) did not consider it important.
- Almost all of the participants considered food hygiene, food safety and food literacy as either very important or important, with only fifteen percent (15%) not considering it important.
- A large percentage of participants voted for healthy food preparation and cooking methods as very important or important, while twenty percent (20%) did not.
- Sixty-five percent (65%) of the participants in the training categorized world culinary cultures as either very important or important, however, there was twenty-five percent (25%) that did not find it important and ten percent (10%) chose not to answer.
- Almost all of the participants found fermented foods to be either very important or important and only a small percentage found it not important.
- Eighty percent (80%) of the participants chose interpersonal communication types, problems and barriers as either very important or important, while only the remaining twenty percent (20%) did not find it important.
- An impressive ninety-five percent (95%) of the participants in the training felt that communication with children and adolescents is either very important or important.
- Only fifty percent (50%) categorized postmodernism and contemporary art as important or very important, while forty percent (40%) categorized them as not important.
- A large percentage of the participants found literary text analysis either important or very important while twenty-five percent (25%) did not find it important.
- An impressive ninety percent (90%) voted ecological literacy as important or very important, while only five percent (5%) did not think of it as important.
- Regarding sustainable consumption and ecological footprint, almost all of the participants categorized it as either very important or important, with only five percent (5%) not considering it important.
- All of the participants in the training agreed that media literacy was either very important or important.
- Ninety-five percent (95%) of the participants considered mind games for a sharper brain either very important or important, while only five percent (5%) did not agree.



Letter From the National Project Coordinator

This training experience has been very fulfilling and eye-opening for the Project team. First of all, we were allowed the opportunity to listen and become a part of the participants' experiences, but we also had the chance to provide a training programme that enriched elements of their lives, as they mentioned after the completion of the training. Moreover, the University strengthened its bond with the local community and broadened the team's horizons. This is one of the few programmes tackling ageism, so it was very important for us to learn about it and try to combat it through this training. The University vows to continue actions that aim to tackle ageism now that we have been made aware of the gap and discrimination prevalent against this specific age group.

Recommendations

As good practice and highlighting the added value of the program, it would be beneficial to carry out future educational activities, such as the free-of-charge programme "Training - Strengthening of individual resources and skills in older people to combat ageism and enhance social inclusion" for people aged 65 and over from the Lifelong Learning Center of the University of the Aegean. Ideally, these future activities should be funded by the University of the Aegean.

Furthermore, as the participants themselves recommended in the post-training survey, it would be beneficial to include music and group mental awareness games in the activities, as well as more actions after the completion of a training programme, and stronger collaboration with the University and other relevant actors. Lastly, as a recommendation from the Project team, the next training should opt for cross-class training groups, as well as a more diverse set of participants regarding gender.

Annex 1

After the Trainings: Participants evaluation UAegean

In this blog post we use the data collected from the evaluation of the training that took place in the University of the Aegean for people over the age of 65, to highlight the importance of WISELIFE project for those people, as well as for society as a whole.



Opening Ceremony WISELIFE UAegean

When asked what they first thought when they found out about the existence of a programme for people over the age of 65, most people shared their happiness, as it provided a break from everyday routine. Indicatively, some answers given were the following:

“Something for us!”

“Great and eagerness to get away from the daily routine”

“It would be a pleasant break in my life”

“Great. A new experience”

“I could not imagine that it would be something I would enjoy so much. I thought it would not be something so worthwhile”

“This is for me! I then emailed Mr. Kouroutzas about my participation”

“I was glad that someone thought of us!”

“I accepted with great pleasure. As an experience”

“I was excited and wanted to attend. This programme motivates people”



Completion of WISELIFE forms WISELIFE UAegean

In a question asking how they felt after the first two days of the programme, most stated that they felt great because they got the chance to socialize with others, happy and overall confident. Indicatively they replied:

“I would like to continue”

“When the first two days passed, I realized that this change gave me vitality and joy”

“Very happy and joyful”

“Very happy because I was not let down”

“Very satisfied, full of energy”

“I felt that the programme offered to me was so worthwhile that I had the interest to continue”

“Very satisfied. The programme with its variety of topics met my expectations.

“Excellent because I had missed the social contact”

“I felt happy. Something changed in my daily life”

“Joy, confidence”

“Very, very beautiful. All the subjects are very interesting. They motivated me to continue after the end of the program. I made new friendships”

“I like it. I went with pleasure”

“Very nice. Without exaggeration I felt like a student again and at the same time like I was active teacher”



PHYSICAL WELLBEING
Gentle Chair Yoga and Meditation WISELIFE UAegean

When asked about their feelings on the last day of the programme, most felt sad that it was over, but happy that they got to participate. Indicatively they felt that:

“A week that took me out of the routine of everyday life. Happy because I gained new acquaintances and knowledge”

“I wish the programme had one more week”

“I was sad the days went by so fast”

“I feel sad because it’s over, but at the same time very happy for this experience”

“I was sad because it became a habit. I met a lot of friends and we had a lot of fun”

“Satisfaction that even though I had practical difficulties, I overcame them and participated. I feel sadness that this experience is over”

Regarding the most difficult moment in this journey, most people either stated that there was none, or just that the two hours of yoga tired them out a bit. Indicatively they said that:

“The hardest moment was when after the first day of yoga I was sore all over my body”

“No difficult moments”

“I don't think there were any difficult moments. On the contrary, I enjoyed it as much as possible”

“There were no difficulties. It combined many different interesting subjects (yoga, computer, collage, clay, counseling...)”



In the question regarding the most beautiful moment they felt, most answered that the mornings they would meet were beautiful, or that they enjoyed the art activities and the company in general. Indicatively, they stated that:

“When a lady said that we'd bonded and we should meet again. At our age, it's difficult to make new friends when the countdown has begun”

“All the mornings I met the ladies of the group”

“I can't isolate any particular moment as all the moments included in the programme were wonderful”

“The daily meeting with the group and the rotation of topics. Also, the kindness and willingness of everyone, especially Mr. Kouroutzas”

“The whole trip was very nice”

“The company and the friendly atmosphere”

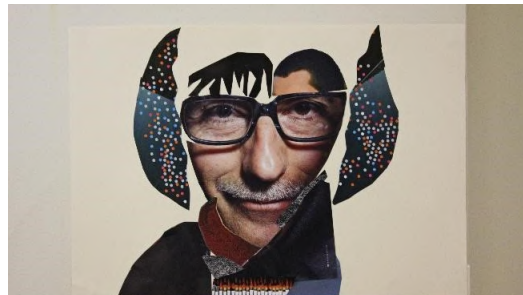
“The most beautiful moments when we were preparing for the participation in the mornings”

“Art activities”

“The company and the friendly atmosphere”



*PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING
Group Guidance WISELIFE UAegean*



*PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING
Art Activites WISELIFE UAegean*



When asked if they would return for another training, all of them answered positively with excitement. Indicatively their answers resembled the following:

“With great pleasure”

“Absolutely”

“Anytime they call me, I’ll be ready”

Moreover, all of them would recommend this programme to someone else. Indicatively, they said:

“Unreservedly”

“I have suggested it and I am looking forward to other people in my environment to sign up”

“Absolutely! No one has anything to lose. There is only profit to be made”

“I would gladly recommend it to others as well”

“Yes, unequivocally”



Closing Ceremony WISELIFE UAegean

During the evaluation, participants describe their experiences through Cavafys’ poem, following C.O.P.I. framework.

Participants said (indicatively):

“The whole poem “Ithaca” symbolizes the perpetual journey of knowledge and experience”

“Ithaca gave us the nice trip. Without it we would not have gone on the road (journey)”



Lastly, when they were asked to write down a wish, a critique or anything else they deemed important, the replies were all very unique. Indicatively, we provide four of them:

“To do programmes like this in order to help elderly people”

“I wish more elderly people could have this opportunity for a nice trip like this”

“I wish the program could be done again for other people”

“I wish there were more programmes like wiselife”

“I wish a similar programme will take place again”

“I wish such programmes were held on a more regular basis”

“I wish that the cooperation between University of the Aegean and society will be successful and benefit for those to whom they are addressed”

“I thank all participants by my heart”

“I hope that such programmes will continue. They are very constructive”

“I wish that our participation added something to your scientific work that would make us extremely proud”

“To have health, freedom, love”

“I wish everyone is keeping well, healthy and happy”

“My wish would be to meet again soon”

“Knowledge. To meet all again at the University”

“I wish a similar programme will take place again and many people will participate in them”

“I wish that such meetings would take place more often”

“Those who created the program should lengthen it and do more computer technology classes”

“I would hope that such a program would be done again and that I would be back”

“I would like to see a programme like this again”





TURKIYE / BARTIN

TEAM



**Asst. Prof. Dr. İhsan
Çağatay ULUS**

*Lifelong Learning
and Adult
Education
Programme (Chair)*



**Assoc. Prof. Dr.
Hüseyin KAYGIN**

*Continuing Education
Application and
Research Center
(Director)*



Geographical Scope

, Turkey

The Name of the Organisation

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BARTIN UNIVERSITY

Bartın University, whose faculties and vocational schools had previously been affiliated with Zonguldak Karaelmas University, now Bulent Ecevit University, was founded on May 22, 2009, in accordance with Law Number 5765.

Bartın University comprises the Faculty of Forestry, the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, the School of Physical Education and Sports, the Bartın Vocational School and the Vocational School of Health Services, and the Institute of Social Sciences and the Institute of Sciences. Later, -with the 2010/936-937 numbered decree of the Council of Ministers dated 27.09.2010- the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Literature; -with the 2011/1595 numbered decree of the Council of Ministers dated 04.04.2011- the Faculty of Sciences; -with the 2012/2772 numbered decree of the Council of Ministers dated 25.01.2012- the Institute of Educational Sciences was established.

You CAN teach old dogs new tricks



BARTIN UNIVERSITY CONTINUOUS EDUCATION CENTER (BUNSEM)

Bartın University Continuous Education Center (BUNSEM) is a department of Bartın University that provides non-formal education for all participants of different backgrounds and education and of different age groups. The mission of BUNSEM is to support lifelong learning through organizing pieces of training ranging from pieces training on vocational education, EU Project Implementations, language learning (German English Turkish for Foreign Students), preparation for advanced language exams, playing an instrument such as guitar and viola, sports activities such as boxing. We are also organizing collaborations with such institutions as the Turkish Employment Organization for entrepreneurs who want to set up their businesses.

The Center provides this training for individuals willing to improve their skills in a field and for a reasonable price for those individuals who do not have the opportunity to attend such courses for economic difficulties and, thus, contribute to and support the individual and public improvement. The program trainers include lecturers at the university and experts from universities and institutions outside the university. And the target groups of the training include people who want to develop themselves in a new field or who have already made a process in a specific issue.

For example, BUNSEM organizes Basic English- German and French Speaking Classes for beginner learners and Fluent English Speaking and Translation classes for advanced learners. So not only the university members attend those classes but also the city's people, willing to learn a language for either work –like writing EU projects for their organization- or as a hobby. Besides, the Center provides summer courses for younger individuals, like learning English via music and games for elementary school students. As the school and centre staff increases, the Center will offer a wide range of courses in its body.



Executive Summary

At first, the team announced the training program on social media and the institutional website, but that was not enough. Then, the team visited seniors who reside in nursing homes and who are at risk of facing ageism. Thirty-seven seniors lived there, most of whom had severe health problems and could not participate. The team had the opportunity to interview just seven seniors, and only four of them accepted to participate in the program, one of whom had to drop out of the program earlier due to health problems.

After then, the team got in contact with local authorities (municipality, neighbourhood mukhtars, and NGOs), and after interviewing several senior people, the team were able to reach the adequate number of participants that the team planned. 51 people, 39 of whom are female and 12 of whom are male participants, attended the training program. The training program covered different subjects including art activities (e.g., clay art), drama, breathing exercises, mindfulness activities, group guidance, nutrition in the third age, using social media and e-commerce websites, and accessing e-public services. The training program took place between 30th June and 6th July in Bartın University Campuses.

Project number	2020-1-TR01-KA204-093161
Project topic	Raising Awareness about Ageism

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION			
S/N	Education Subject	Hours	Teaching staff
1	Elderly Nutrition	4	Dr. Hanifi DÜLGER
2	Creative drama	4	Dr. Eda ÇÜRÜKVELİOĞLU KÖKSAL
3	Group Guidance	6	Dr. Eda ÇÜRÜKVELİOĞLU KÖKSAL
4	Breathing Exercise	4	Dr. İhsan Çağatay ULUS
5	Awareness	4	Dr. Bilge SULAK AKYUZ
6	Art Events	8	Dr. İsmail EYÜPOĞLU
7	Access to E-Government Services	4	Dr. Murat DEBBAĞ
8	Protecting Yourself Against Cybercrime	2	Dr. Murat DEBBAĞ
9	Social Media and E-commerce Usage	6	Dr. Mustafa FIDAN
	TOTAL	42 Hours	



GROUP A

Hour	DAY						
	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	30.06.2022 Kutlubey	01.07.2022 Kutlubey	02.07.2022 Kutlubey	03.07.2022 Kutlubey	04.07.2022 Kutlubey	05.07.2022 Kutlubey	06.07.2022 Kutlubey
10:00-10:40	Opening ceremony	Social Media and E-commerce Usage Lab 311	Elderly Nutrition 115	HOLIDAY	Access to E-Government Services Lab 311	Protecting Yourself Against Cybercrime Lab 311	Group Guidance 115
10:50-11:30	Opening ceremony	Social Media and E-commerce Usage Lab 311	Group Guidance 115	HOLIDAY	Access to E-Government Services Lab 311	Social Media and E-commerce Usage Lab 311	Group Guidance 115
11:40-12:20	Breathing Exercise	Awareness 203	Art Events Z-11	HOLIDAY	Creative drama 115	Elderly Nutrition 203	Art Events Z-11
12:30-13:10	Lunch	Awareness 203	Art Events Z-11	HOLIDAY	Creative drama 115	Breathing Exercise 203	Art Events Z-11
				HOLIDAY			Lunch
				HOLIDAY			Closing Ceremony
				HOLIDAY			Closing Ceremony

GROUP B

Hour	DAY						
	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	30.06.2022 Kutlubey	01.07.2022 Kutlubey	02.07.2022 Kutlubey	03.07.2022 Kutlubey	04.07.2022 Kutlubey	05.07.2022 Kutlubey	06.07.2022 Kutlubey
10:00-10:40	Opening ceremony	Awareness 203	Art Events Z-11	HOLIDAY	Creative drama 203	Breathing Exercise 203	Art Events Z-11
10:50-11:30	Opening ceremony	Awareness 203	Art Events Z-11	HOLIDAY	Creative drama 203	Elderly Nutrition 203	Art Events Z-11
11:40-12:20	Breathing Exercise	Social Media and E-commerce Usage Lab 311	Elderly Nutrition 115	HOLIDAY	Access to E-Government Services Lab 311	Protecting Yourself Against Cybercrime Lab 311	Group Guidance 115
12:30-13:10	Lunch	Social Media and E-commerce Usage Lab 311	Group Guidance 115	HOLIDAY	Access to E-Government Services Lab 311	Social Media and E-commerce Usage Lab 311	Group Guidance 115
13:30-14:30				HOLIDAY			Lunch
14:40-15:40				HOLIDAY			Closing Ceremony
15:50-16:30				HOLIDAY			Closing Ceremony



Value and Value Change

Thanks to this project, senior people from different backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses in society had the opportunity to improve themselves in terms of significant life skills such as communication, health, technology literacy, psychological well-being, mindfulness, etc. Moreover, the training program was a great chance for them to socialize with younger trainers and their peers. The participants were hesitant initially, but during the activities, they were transformed into trainees who participated willingly and joyfully. In the end, all the participants expressed their satisfaction and happiness about the training program.

Pro and Cons

Pros:

- This is the first training project targeting elderly people in Bartın.
- Trainers and coordinators had a perspective transformation and gained new skills related to teaching seniors thanks to the process.
- Elderly people had a perspective transformation as well, and they developed self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect that would assist them in coping with the problems of ageing.

Cons:

The most challenging part of the experience was convincing seniors to attend the training program. Some participants were away from formal educational settings for such a long time that they were afraid of going back to the classroom and thought that they could not manage it because of their age. Actually, they showed ageist behaviour towards themselves by acting like this. Some of them did not want to attend it because of the negative past experiences they had in formal educational settings. Some were unaware of their need for such a training program. The team were able to convince some, but some others did not admit to attending.



Letter From The National Project Coordinator

Initially, we were concerned about potential dropouts, but fortunately, nearly all the participants completed the training program. During the training program, we observed their delightfulness and enjoyment most of the time, which made us feel like, “Yes, we did it.” You know you feel great when you accomplish your goals, but that was not the only thing to feel like that. It was amazing to feel their delightfulness and happiness inside our hearts.

They need such activities so much, and they all asked us to arrange such activities more frequently. Some of them told us that they had been in depression and stressed and that the training program was a remedial process. They did not just learn from the trainers, but they learned from each other as well. Most of them were prejudiced about the program and themselves, but their views were transformed during the program. We also observed wonderful interaction between the trainers and participants.





POLAND

TEAM



Justyna Ratkowska-Pasikowska

Partner of the Project



Sławomir Pasikowski

Partner of the Project



The University of Lodz, established in 1945, is one of the leading institutions of higher education in Poland. For decades it has been also one of the biggest and most popular Polish universities and is repeatedly ranked among the top higher education institutions in the country. The 12 faculties of the University provide 95 programmes and 158 specializations in Polish and 21 programmes in English. In addition, the University offers several doctoral programmes and more than 50 postgraduate study programmes. Currently, around 28000 students of all levels attend the University of Lodz, including 3000 from abroad. In this truly international atmosphere, everyone can experience the cultural diversity of both the city and the institution.

The interest in studying at the University of Lodz is determined not only by the high quality of instruction but also by the modern programmes of study adapted to the changing demands of the labour market. The University treats international cooperation as a way to foster its development and continue the city's tradition. Our institution regularly hosts guest speakers, renowned politicians, businessmen and cultural representatives from Poland and abroad and also actively participates in many international educational and research programmes. Within direct cooperation agreements, the school cooperates with 270 partner institutions from all over the world. Within the Erasmus+ Programme, the University has signed so far 700 agreements with 400 partner institutions.

Geographical Scope

Łódź, Poland

The Name of the Organisation

University of Lodz

The Role

Project Partner

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**"Even the eyesight improves with time.
When young we see well, when old we look
far."**

Mirko Badiale

Be stronger, age is just your mind border.





As a result of cooperation with a number of foreign universities such as Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3, Université François – Rabelais (Tours), Westfälische Wilhelms – Universität Münster, University of Maryland, University of Regensburg and Centria University of Applied Sciences (Kokkola, Finland) students of the University of Lodz can graduate with dual diplomas. Each year, about 400 students go to foreign countries for student exchange (most of them with a scholarship grant). On the other hand, the UL receives over 1000 foreign exchange students per year.

Faculty of Education Sciences of the University of Łódź - one of the twelve faculties of the University of Łódź. Its seat is located at No. 46/48 Pomorska Street in Łódź. Structure: Institute of Psychology, Department of Educational Research, Department of History of Education and Pedagogy, Department of Childhood Pedagogy. Department of Social Pedagogy and Re-socialization Department of Education Theory, Department of Art Education and Education of Creativity Department of Andragogy and Social Gerontology. Centre for the Education of Sports Educators. Research activities in the faculty focus on various aspects of the process of educating children and young people that are seen – theoretically and practically – from both historical and contemporary perspectives.

Another important field of Faculty research relates to the development of man throughout his life cycle: his somatic, intellectual, emotional, motivational, individual and social growth. It also takes into account the conditions of man's environment i.e. family, school, and work; the process of socialization and its influence on the individual and his/her personality is a point of research reference too. Complementary areas of the Faculty research interests include (among others): health problems and hazards, prevention and psychotherapy, problems of professional work in the psychological context of man's life, and forms of professional counselling, research in Andragogy and Gerontology: studies on continuing education – determinants of adults learning, studies on life-long learning.



Executive Summary



The project has been aimed at people 60+ and is concerned with raising awareness of ageism among the participants. It became crucial to develop common, so-called good practices, involving and co-creating the community. Key to the project were the work modules developed by the countries, i.e. Elderly Nutrition, Gentle Chair Yoga and Meditation, Art Activities, Mindfulness, Accessing E-Public Services.

Value and Value Change

The training took place in Koszalin (West-Pomeranian Voivodeship). A house and a wonderful garden were available. It was especially important for contributors to create a good space for work and mindfulness. The value of this project was to create a space for work and exchange together. The yoga, which took place by the sea, was at the same time meant to open the participants to experience themselves and the environment around them. It also showed that it was possible to combine working on oneself on many levels. The art activities started by complaining, first of all, that I can't do it, I don't know how to do it, over time it became apparent that their involvement had outgrown themselves.

Pros and Cons

Project Challenge

Expanded awareness of one's own abilities and sensitivity to ageism and issues of one's own potential.

Communication / Marketing Target

Posting of information on community forums.

Pre and Posts

Most of our participants are generally satisfied with the things they do, i.e. they try to enjoy every day and find the meaning of life. They also enjoy being among other people. After the workshops, the seniors declared that they are able to do more things than before the workshops and do not have a sense of bigger limitations.



Gaps

Gender Gap

The feeling of exclusion because of age is more often experienced by women than men. Healthcare is one of the crucial areas where seniors feel excluded.

Career Gap

Most participants of our workshops declared that they did not experience discrimination and exclusion due to their age. As they say – “old age is a state of mind”. They claim that their minds are full of movement and a sense of lack of clear limits. However, some of them have witnessed discrimination experienced by other seniors, which they perceive as a circumstance that makes them aware of people's readiness to discriminate and self-discriminate due to their age and a circumstance that allows them to mentally prepare themselves to counteract acts of discrimination that they would be subject to.



Letter From the National Project Coordinator

Participating in the project, we could experience the perspective and the way seniors experience these issues that are related to age. It is a valuable sensitizing experience in terms of opportunities and threats related to age and ideas about its role in shaping individual and social attitudes. The implementation of the project was conducive to noticing and discovering interesting areas of social practices that could be the subject of in-depth practical and theoretical research. Such conditions cannot be ensured by a distanced academic view, although the university is not a space that excludes or ignores seniors and issues important to them. In Polish universities, including the University of Lodz, there is a so-called The University of the Third Age, which is a social organization associating seniors and acting pro bono in their interest in the field of culture, education and health. The main goal of this organization is to strive for the inclusion of seniors in academic life, their social activation and creating conditions for them to maintain intellectual, mental and physical balance.

Key words: experience, integration, awareness, mindfulness



Recommendations for continuing education centres:

Ageism is an important topic that we cannot avoid, but we can raise awareness among employers, and social groups to support people affected by prejudice and age discrimination. Recommendations could include, on the one hand, promoting the image of older people, developing e.g. access to information also by eliminating the so-called e-exclusion and training social workers and other employees of the public and non-public services sector. It is reasonable to introduce educational activities from the earliest stages of education that sensitize seniors to issues and their social perceptions.

It may also be helpful in this regard to create intergenerational initiatives that integrate the community, such as operating IT devices and software, navigating the Internet and social media, and acting to protect the interests of users of such media and IT devices. The analysis of the research material indicated the needs of seniors in the field of health and social care, and community support, including access to knowledge and measures to raise social awareness in the field of a healthy lifestyle of seniors and people constituting their social environment. Seniors are motivated to engage in socially useful activities.

These needs can be met by creating support groups for physical and social activity, promotion of family and neighbourhood activities and other projects conducive to establishing intergenerational relationships, including an "exchange" of announcements in which seniors could act not only as beneficiaries but also providers of services and activities. In addition, it is worth undertaking initiatives aimed at shaping the urban space and communication structure, such as: creating places of activity (senior health paths, gyms); creating a free system of connections for the flow of information to support the lonely and the sick. The above proposals should be planned and implemented as part of systemic and long-term formal and informal undertakings.

For future project managers about ageism-oriented projects:

The good practices developed as a part of the Wiselife project should be a key element in the creation of programmes aimed at activating seniors while at the same time showing various alternatives, thematic meetings, cultural activities, and sporting tourist activities. Trying to involve seniors in city events and intergenerational tasks.





Epilogue

Ageism is a pervasive issue that affects people of all ages across the world. This problem is particularly prevalent in modern societies, where there is a growing ageing population. Using the PESTEL analysis technique, we can identify the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors that contribute to ageism.

From a political standpoint, governments must prioritize policies that protect ageing individuals from discrimination, promote their participation in society, and ensure their well-being. Economically, there is a need for innovation in service provision to meet the specific needs of ageing people. Service innovation can help to address the challenges that ageing people face, including social isolation, limited mobility, and access to healthcare. Socially, there is a need to change perceptions and attitudes towards ageing. Cultural differentiation plays a significant role in the perception of ageism, with different societies viewing ageing in different ways. Therefore, academic services that cater to ageing people must be designed to meet the cultural and social needs of specific communities.

Technological advancements can also play a critical role in addressing ageism. Technological solutions, such as assistive devices and telemedicine, can help to bridge the gap in access to healthcare and other services. Finally, legal frameworks must be put in place to protect ageing people from discrimination and ensure that their rights are respected. In conclusion, ageism is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach to address. Through innovative service provision, social and cultural awareness, technological advancements, and legal protections, we can combat ageism and promote a more inclusive and equitable society.

University's continuous education centres can play a crucial role in addressing ageism by providing academic services that cater to the specific needs of ageing people. These services can include courses, workshops, and training programs that are designed to promote their well-being, foster their social inclusion, and enhance their quality of life.



To ensure the effectiveness of these services, it is essential to understand the needs and preferences of ageing people. Continuous education centres can use service innovation to develop new approaches that address the challenges faced by ageing people, including limited mobility, sensory impairments, and health issues. These innovations can include online learning platforms, interactive technologies, and assistive devices that make learning more accessible and enjoyable for ageing people.

Moreover, cultural differentiation must be taken into account when designing academic services for ageing people. Cultural factors can significantly influence how ageing is perceived, and education centres must be mindful of these differences to ensure that their services are inclusive and culturally appropriate.

In conclusion, University's continuous education centres have a crucial role to play in addressing ageism. By providing innovative academic services that cater to the specific needs of ageing people and taking into account cultural differentiation, these centres can contribute to promoting a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

Sevay Ipek Aydin, Ph.D.



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