



active
80
PLUS

valuing and
valorizing
the knowledge
and skills of
people 80+

**Handbook for
Practitioners**



Handbook for Practitioners

Partner Overview

The following authors have contributed to this handbook:

EUROPEAN COORDINATOR

queraum. cultural and social research
Anita Rappauer & Michael Stadler-Vida
rappauer@queraum.org
www.queraum.org

AUSTRIA

Austrian Red Cross
Claudia Gröschel-Gregoritsch
claudia.groeschel@roteskreuz.at
www.roteskreuz.at

GERMANY

ISIS – Institut für Soziale Infrastruktur
Karin Stiehr
stiehr@isis-sozialforschung.de
www.isis-sozialforschung.de

ITALY

Lunaria
Sergio Andreis & Angela Pagano
andreis@lunaria.org
www.lunaria.org

LITHUANIA

Senior Initiatives Center
Edita Satiene
rasyk@senjoru-centras.lt
www.senjoru-centras.lt

THE NETHERLANDS

OVN-NL – Oudere Vrouwen Netwerk –
Nederland
Laura Christ & Kees Penninx
laura.christ@ouderevrouwennetwerk.nl
www.ouderevrouwennetwerk.nl



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Impressum:

Published by: queraum. cultural and social research
Lingual Revision: Leslie Steele, Design: Verena Blöchl

*“Dreams can be renewed no matter how old you are,
dreams are always infinite possibilities within ourselves
and it is new beauty waiting to be born.”*

Dale R. Turner



TABLE OF CONTENT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION	9
ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK	13
SUPPORTING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP OF VERY OLD PEOPLE IN FIVE PARTNER COUNTRIES: IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS	17
ACTIVE 80+ PROJECTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT	23
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	43

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What is Active 80+?

We are witnessing a longevity revolution; in 2060, one in eight Europeans will be 80 years or older. Very old people will thus not be a small minority in our societies but a significant citizen group. General perceptions of very old age are mainly associated with limitations, loss (e.g. abilities, possibilities, autonomy) and health and care issues.

We believe that we have to change this attitude towards the very old and to shift the focus from inabilities to opportunities and strengths. Our project *Active 80+* wants to contribute to this change and has elaborated policy recommendations at the EU, national, regional and local levels so that changes may become structural. These policy recommendations are available on www.act-80plus.eu.

Active 80+ is an *Erasmus+* project carried out by six partners from five European countries: Austria, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, and the Netherlands. The project was carried out between October 2014 and September 2016 and aimed at developing and testing a research-based training for care staff and volunteers working with people 80+. The core idea was to enable professionals and volunteers to coach very old people in developing and realising their own ideas of learning and active citizenship.

Links

For more information on *Erasmus+* please visit

<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus>

For more information on *Active 80+* please visit

www.act-80plus.eu

Our Vision

Active 80+ - Everyone has got something to contribute

The Active 80+ project does not support hierarchies – neither between the recipient and provider of help, nor between activity areas. It is the effort to be engaged in an activity that counts. We believe that commitment to others is possible in each phase of one's life, and also with functional restrictions. When there is a will, everybody has something to contribute.

Why should we promote lifelong learning and voluntary engagement of very old people?

Active citizenship of very old people is not a major focus of research, thus findings on this issue are scarce. However, studies suggest that active contributions to community life have positive effects on people at high age, among others:

- Better self-perceived quality of life
- Strengthened cognitive, social and physical abilities
- Increased self-confidence, feelings of accomplishment
- Sense of meaningfulness and connection to others

There is evidence that activities, such as learning and volunteering, help seniors to be independent and prevent isolation.

And it is not only the older people who profit from their activities. Seniors have a lot to give: they can forward skills and knowledge and contribute to our collective memory (e.g. as contemporary witness).

*“I have also a lot of time ...
if you want, you can knock at my door any time.”*

80+ participant

There is no need for specific activities for the very old. Learning and volunteering activities have to fit their needs, wishes and individual talents and interests.

"One should not exclude anything and start from the opportunities people have, find out what someone wishes to do, what makes a person tick. A fulfilled life, as long as you can and want to contribute, that is what counts."

(European report, pp. 24–25 interview with Dutch 80+ citizen).

What could be barriers to the engagement of people 80+?

Although we want to change common perspectives of old age and the capabilities of and possibilities for very old people, there are, of course, more or less real barriers to the engagement of this target group. From the few studies dealing with this issue and the research done in the *Active 80+* project we can conclude that there are internal (e.g. intrapersonal, physical) as well as external (e.g. interpersonal, framework) factors resulting in participation barriers:

Internal factors include:

- A self-identity of being old and less capable (e.g. afraid of going out, fear of being slower than everyone else)
- Chronic diseases, functional restrictions, etc.

External factors include:

- Lack of trust of younger people in the capabilities (e.g. mental) of the very old
- Stereotypes regarding the "fourth generation"/ age discrimination
- Not enough staff resources in organisations (e.g. care homes) to support the very old in their activities
- Lack of age-friendly environments and infrastructure (e.g. accessible public spaces, public transport) (European report, pp. 26–28)

*"If you feel well with your body,
you feel safer and age more actively."*

80+ participant

What could supportive framework conditions look like?

Obviously, to build up supportive framework conditions that would stimulate lifelong learning and voluntary activities of very old people would mean to reduce or remove the barriers described above, by e.g.:

- Technical aids that may compensate certain physical limitations.
- Respect and encouragement by others to improve self-esteem.
- Strong community networks.
- New volunteer profiles and/or activities that reach out to this demographic.
- Self-help or support structures to compensate insufficient infrastructure and inaccessible environment.
- Combating age discrimination.
- New awareness and financial funding for research and training regarding very old people (European report, pp. 29–30).

Info

For more background information please consult our European Research Report that can be downloaded from www.act-80plus.eu (Outcomes).

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Who is this *Handbook for Practitioners* for?

The *Handbook for Practitioners* is dedicated to people 80+ making the best of their knowledge, experiences and talents as well as coaches who support them in doing so.

The Handbook directly addresses **volunteers and paid staff** of health and social services providers, empowerment groups, older people's organisations and associations willing to coach, empower and work with people 80+ interested in learning and meaningful activities.

This publication is meant to inspire and provides many practical examples of projects that emerged from our *Active 80+* trainings in the partner countries.

The *Handbook for Practitioners* is accompanied by another publication, the *Handbook for Trainers*. The Handbook for Trainers mainly addresses health and social services providers as well as trainers and adult training providers who want to inspire and train persons to become coaches for older people. The *Active 80+* training process consisted of an in-class training of two (half) days, the development and implementation of projects and a follow-up meeting to reflect upon experiences and discuss follow-up activities.

Info

More information on the trainings in our partner countries and the Handbook for Trainers are published on the *Active 80+* website www.act-80plus.eu (News & Outcomes).

Why was this Handbook written?

People aged 80+ are at present invisible and underestimated in their abilities, strengths and capability to contribute to our communities. It is our aim to foster the change and development of new perspectives on very old age. To make this happen

we need as many "agents of change" as possible – people who have the willingness to make a difference.

In order to provide all those interested in a change with the necessary tools, we have developed *Active 80+* materials and publications. The Handbook for Practitioners targets people 80+ and those willing to work with them in specific ways that set free their creativity, knowledge, skills and enthusiasm. It provides ideas and practical examples to set up activities and projects together with people 80+. This Handbook should inspire both 80+ participants interested in becoming engaged in learning and meaningful activities and coaches supporting them to realize their ideas.

How was this Handbook written?

This Handbook for Practitioners is the result of a longer process based on theoretical and practical work by the *Active 80+* partnership:

The starting point was research by the partners in Austria, Germany, Italy, Lithuania and the Netherlands about learning and active citizenship of very old people – at the national as well as the European level. This knowledge as well as the extensive expertise of our partners laid the foundation for the development of a training concept that served as a general framework for the training in the participating countries. The training tools and methods that were provided helped to develop and set up projects in the partner countries matching ideas and needs, especially of the 80+ people and coaches involved. Learning experiences from these projects were collected and analysed for this Handbook.

How do you use this Handbook?

This Handbook aims to inform and support its readers in preparing and carrying out projects together with people 80+. Since each group of people, context, and community one works in are unique and have different challenges and solutions, the practical examples and tools in this Handbook should not be seen as a blueprint. They are meant to inspire and may help to set up a project. The information is provided in short sections that can be accessed easily and quickly.

This Handbook draws on the experiences of implementing projects that follow the idea and concept of the *Active 80+* project. It includes background information about the *Active 80+* project and provides information about the planning and realization of a project, including examples of contributions of very old people involved in setting up projects. A selection of project portraits from the five *Active 80+* partner countries highlights what the project was about and what worked well, including some helpful tips based on the learning experiences and feedback of the participants.

As we wanted to keep this Handbook as compact as possible, a summary of other projects that were carried out in the five countries, tools, methods, other useful materials and links can be found on our website: www.act-80plus.eu. Translations of the Handbook in the national languages of the five partners can be found both on our website and on the websites of the partners.

*“I would never have thought
that there is so much energy and preparedness
to develop one's own ideas within the old people
whom I have known for years.”*

Coach

SUPPORTING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP OF VERY OLD PEOPLE IN FIVE PARTNER COUNTRIES: IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS

Implementing a project

The *Active 80+* project aims to support active citizenship of very old people, taking into account their abilities and wishes, within the bounds of their capabilities. Putting these aims into practice means that projects that follow the idea and concept of the *Active 80+* project should have the following characteristics:

- Benefit for someone other than oneself and family members
- Focus on what someone can contribute according to his/her own resources
- Learning from each other and reciprocity

Guiding principles

The development and implementation of the projects must be seen as a co-production between project-leaders/trainers, organisations, participants and – as the most important stakeholders – very old people.

It should be understood as a cooperative effort from the start:

- Building on existing expertise (of very old people as well as care staff and volunteers)
- Considering framework conditions (of very old people as well as care staff and volunteers) including organisational aspects
- Focusing on strengths and potentials of very old people and encouraging adequate learning methods and environments for them
- Encouraging the participants and their organisations to also involve other stakeholders in the active citizenship of very old people (e.g. management, friends and relatives, voluntary organisations) starting in the implementation phase.

Contributions of people 80+ in the Active 80+ projects

Contributions of very old citizens in the planning and realization of the Active 80+ projects were many-sided. Besides their ideas, talents, wisdom and enthusiasm they contributed in:

- *Planning of projects and events*
- *Providing a meeting location*
- *Design of invitations, catering and tidying up after events*
- *Photo documentation*
- *Preparation of gadgets and decorations for a carnival party*
- *Objects for exhibitions (paintings, photos, plastics)*
- *A flea market (incl. home-made marmalade)*
- *Performances (sketches, singing, declamations)*
- *Contributions to praying, blessing and anointing*
- *Dolls for UNICEF*
- *Participation in literary context*
- *Comments on videos and movies*
- *Sharing of experiences and memories*
(<https://youtu.be/GrVCLgZQU9g>)
- *Bilateral teaching*
- *Brain jogging sessions*
- *Folding T-shirts for kindergarten children*
- *Parties for the "birthdays of the month"*
- *Planning of social programmes for local seniors*
- *Recommendations to local authorities*
- *Setting up their own sport club*

Characteristics of coaches

As people grow very old they are at risk of a shrinking social network. In the *Active 80+* project, volunteers and professionals of care and welfare organisations played an important role by encouraging and supporting them to become actively engaged, bridging the gap to the community. To be able to function as a coach, one needs the following characteristics:

- Be able to inspire people and support them to discover their creativity and strengths;
- Be convinced that everyone – no matter how old they are, where they come from or what they have experienced – can contribute something meaningful and improve life in our communities;
- Be aware of and have an open-minded and non-discriminatory approach to age issues (e.g. active ageing, functional limitations);
- Be flexible and remain positive during the implementation phase.

Info

If you are interested in exercises regarding competences of coaches within the *Active 80+* project, please have a look at the Handbook for Trainers on the *Active 80+* website www.act-80plus.eu.

How to involve very old people in the planning and realization of a project

The planning and realization of a project require a decision whether to do it oneself or to mobilise others. Involving very old people in the planning and realization of a project requires that one should:

- Define aims and objectives.
- Identify supporters and figure out how they could be involved.
- Determine framework conditions: e.g. tasks and responsibilities, target groups.

- Organise and budget: arrange time, finances and capacity.

Tip

An information sheet for potential participants should include the following information:

1. *Benefit for participants*
2. *Background information on the project*
3. *Expectations towards the participants*
(*how much time is involved etc.*)
4. *Duration of the project*

In residential settings: pay a visit, leave flyers
(residents can become ambassadors)

Practical issues

When organising a project and/or joint activities, practical issues should be considered, for instance: arranging a venue, transport and financial issues.

Venue

A group-activity involving people 80+ requires a venue that is accessible, preferably the ground floor. Make sure the atmosphere of a meeting place is pleasant, not lifeless. Safety is also important. There should be no obstacles, and cables should be secured with tape on the floor. The incidence of light should be sufficient and the temperature approx. 21 degrees. Very important in old age is the auditory quality of the environment. At the start of a meeting one should consider if participants have any special needs regarding hearing, sight, comfortable seats, mobility etc.

Tip

Bad hearing rises with age: 20% of people 50+ suffer from bad hearing, whereas at age 85+ the percentage is 85%.

The hearing problem people report suffering from most is having difficulty with understanding speech in rooms with lots of background noise. For work in small groups it is recommended to make use of two rooms at least, so the groups do not hinder each other.

Transport

Activities should be organised in the vicinity of a home or residence, preferably at walking or walking frame distance. People 80+ will appreciate to go for a stroll. However nearby the activity may be, transport may still be needed. Make sure there are possibilities to arrange transport or personal accompaniment to and from the venue, should participants need it.

Financial means

Take into account possible staff costs for professionals who participate in a project. There may be material costs as well, e.g. hiring a venue, coffee, tea and water, invitations, or insurance for volunteers. Optional costs could include lunch or drinks after a meeting. Activities that are in accordance with the local policy may get funding from local authorities or private social funds.

ACTIVE 80+ PROJECTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Introduction

The *Active 80+* projects following the training can be characterised by a variety in settings, contents and approaches, reflecting also national, regional and local differences between and within the five partner countries.

Some *Active 80+* projects focused on the living environment of people 80+ such as care or residential homes or assisted living centres. Other projects reached out to the community (municipality, district or neighbourhood) and developed a community based method involving people 80+. Some projects were planned and carried out as once-only activities with the potential to be repeated regularly, for instance performances or presentations. A project, however can also be set up as recurring or ongoing activities, for instance reading circles, a bowling group, dialogue or conversation groups.

Coaching of *Active 80+* projects also differed: coaches worked with people 80+ individually or in a team. Coaches could be volunteers, staff, a mixture of both or individual citizens. Projects also differed in the amount and kind of support provided by the coaches.

Given the variety of the *Active 80+* projects, they should not be seen as a blueprint. The projects presented in this Handbook are meant to inspire. The five partner countries selected two projects each that are portrayed in more detail in this chapter.

Info

If you are interested in more projects developed and implemented within *Active 80+* please have a look at the website www.act-80plus.eu (News & Outcomes).



VIENNA (A)

FOSTERING INDIVIDUAL TALENTS IN A SENIOR HOME

- October 2015
- February 2016 – and going on

Artists and enthusiasts 80+

Some, maybe even a lot of, people living in senior homes possess hidden talents, interests and capabilities that are (still) vivid, but normally seem not to be of interest in the institutional “setting”. Old persons sometimes need encouragement to “come out” with what is really theirs. The aim of the project was to detect and foster talents and interests of the inhabitants of a senior residence. During this project the individual empowerment was the focus - including the option that some of the individual projects might find followers.

Show that you have something to show

Painting, poetry, mandala arts, DJ performances for hits of the ‘30s and ‘40s, and photograph and cinema shows were developed and performed by people 80+. Each of them were accompanied by a volunteer/coach. The presentations and performances took place in the hall and recreation or function rooms of the senior home – open for the public.

Individual Coaching of Individuals

The focus of this project was the appreciation of individual interests and characters by individual volunteers/coaches who concentrated on the respective person with his/her very own ideas. The diversity of talents and personalities was documented in portraits (photographs) of the artists – either “in action” or sitting/standing, alone and together with their personal coach.

Lesson learned – and most encouraging experiences

At the beginning, when the coach tried to advertise the project *Active 80+* in front of an “anonymous” audience, there was no response at all to his “keynote speech”. When he started to contact one person after the other, (who were recommended to him by staff members who knew them best) things began to move and to evolve quickly. There was an unexpected amount of energy and preparedness to develop one’s own ideas and bring them in and learn new ways of presenting oneself and one’s products.

All people that joined by realising their “small projects” were very happy, proud and positive!

Quote

*“To be active in a field that is “yours”
and to get response and sometimes even a sign of admiration
by peers is simply great for the self-confidence.”*

Coach



VIENNA (A) LITURGY PREPARATION GROUP

- October 2015
- February 2016 – and going on

People 80+ taking the weekly holy mass seriously – and personally

A group of about 5 – 8 people over 80 meets regularly to prepare, design, modify and enrich the following Sunday mass which takes place in the senior home. They are coached by a volunteer with theological background (himself already over 70 and retired). All participants are interested in religious issues and ceremonies, but not confident with a way of celebration that does not fit to the situation, interests, language, skills, or preferences of the mostly very old audience.

Exchange ideas and discuss issues on a "high level" with a benefit for the whole community

The aim of this group is to make the liturgy more adequate and relevant to themselves and other old people who join the holy mass and to foresee options for engaging e.g. by singing known songs. It is not an exclusive club of intellectuals, but (also) a lobby group for the interests of old people in general who might like to join the mass in a way they can contribute actively and feel that they are not just visitors but part of the celebration.

Being inclusive as a challenge for very old people

The group has been continuously changing and growing. The reception and integration of new members with their special interests, attitudes, skills and peculiarities is a never ending challenge and a never ending learning process. Thus the effect of the project is not only its direct output but also the growing of skills in team work, mutual respect, constructive debate and flexibility.

Quote

“To see to what extent learning of social skills and competences is possible even in a very high age was one of the most impressive experiences for me. Our common credo is: everyone counts and is important”

Coach



NEU-ISENBURG (D) FLEA MARKET

- 7 November 2015

Support for old people by old people

On 7 November 2015 a Flea market was organised by care home residents who then donated the revenues to a foundation which financially supports old people with low incomes.

A flea market with various attractions

The flea market took place in a retirement home in Neu-Isenburg. Visitors were not only offered a variety of items apt for becoming Christmas gifts, but also to train their memory, get a taste of the senior's gym, and enjoy delicious homemade cakes. Ahead of the event, an 82-year old lady produced delicious jam which was sold out within a couple of minutes. Many older men and women donated well-preserved flea market items. A sales team of three persons worked with enthusiasm at the sales table and haggled with the visitors. Others worked at the cake stand and volunteered in the kitchen. At the end of the event - when everything was tidied up again with the help of the seniors, 300€ could be donated to a local foundation for seniors in need of support. Everybody is looking forward to the next flea market.

Active involvement from start to end

The flea market as such, starting from the preparation in which the seniors were actively involved and ending with the donation to the foundation, can be considered a success. The biggest problem has been the limited working time of paid staff and volunteers, which does not allow several events of this kind per year as desired by the residents of the retirement home. Nevertheless, before the flea market at the end of this year, all interested residents will be invited to jointly produce the homemade jam.

Re-detected talents, skills and knowledge

Paid staff and volunteers share the impression that the active involvement of very old people is an approach worthwhile to apply. Seniors have re-detected talents, skills and knowledge and are proud of their achievements. The biggest surprise for paid staff and volunteers is that they are now supported in many working tasks, as the residents have started to offer help on their own initiative.

Quote

“We published the event in the local newspaper but did not expect that so many young people attended the flea market. The flea market involved the community and attracted all generations.”

Coach



DREIEICH (D) CHURCH SERVICE FOR OLD PEOPLE WITH BLESSINGS BY AND FOR SENIORS WITH AND WITHOUT DISEASES AND FUNCTIONAL RESTRICTIONS

- 5 February 2016

A special kind of service

On 5 February 2016, between 3 and 4 pm, a church service took place with approx. 30 participants with and without dementia, many in wheelchairs or with walking frames. Younger people were also welcome, of whom a few accepted the invitation.

The desire for spirituality...

The aim of this church service was to respond to the spiritual wishes and needs of very old people and provide an opportunity for them to actively engage with others. Inspired by the story of Jesus, healing a man with withered hand, the importance of positive thoughts towards each other was elaborated. A very old lady read texts from the Bible and assisted the preacher. A choir from a nearby residential care home, consisting mostly of dementia patients, attended the event and performed pieces of music such as Dona Nobis Pacem which seek peace. Prayers, in which specific persons could be named for the wishing well by the whole community, took place as well as mutual blessings and anointments with rose oil. Everyone engaged in the opportunity to send positive thoughts and feelings to the persons sitting next to them or those who were on their mind.

...combines with wordly treats

After the service all participants were invited to have coffee and cake, thus contributing not only to their mental but also physical well-being. The old people also enjoyed being together after the end of the service and shared their impressions.

Plans for the future

After the service, interested persons could sign a paper in which they declared their interest in being invited for more events of this kind. Since almost everybody did so, a follow-up service was immediately put on the agenda. A transportation service will also be offered for those who need support in mobility.

Quote

“Although I had believed in the idea from the very beginning, the enormous interest in follow-up events is a real surprise.”

Coach



BOLOGNA (I)

ORDINE E LIBERTÀ (ORDER AND FREEDOM)

The Ordine e libertà small project was carried out at Bologna's *Villa Serena* care home. It experimented with a set of activities, adapted from Maria Montessori's educational methodology to suit very old people, to support and improve basic personal skills, allowing more dynamic interaction with others and the pursuance of the 80+ participants' own interests. The introduction of a more relaxed individual-oriented Montessori approach and ad hoc organized spaces have largely increased individual awareness and intuition of the 80+ residents.

Improves communication

A *Kit of Needs*, a set of three paper kits with images specifically created by the animation staff in co-operation with Bologna's information and communication technologies *ASPHI Foundation*, has contributed to improve communication with nurses, medical staff, families and socialisation with the others. Some of the residents, given the improvements reached in interactive roles and individual emotional skills, were allowed to return home.

Increased awareness and intuition

The introduction of a more relaxed individual-oriented Montessori approach and ad hoc organized spaces have largely increased individual awareness and intuition of the 80+ residents.

Readiness to get involved

The readiness of the 80+ participants to get involved was quite surprising. Given the excellent results reached, a similar Montessori pilot has been started with staff, residents and volunteers at the Bologna sister care home *Villa Ranuzzi*.

Quote

"We need to teach how to age well."

80+ participant



BOLOGNA (I) E NOI ? (AND US ?)

The E noi ? small project has been carried out at Bologna's Villa Ranuzzi care home during dedicated meetings and conversations involving residents, paid staff, and residents' relatives. It has addressed what is missing in Bologna local authorities' policies and services for and with very old people. Proposals from the 80+ point of view in social welfare, health care and tools fostering very old citizens' well-being and participatory patterns in social life within their communities have been gathered.

A positive approach

the care homes. Solution: trips were organised to the city and other places outside of the care home with the relatives / volunteers acting as coaches.

The understanding of active citizenship may affect individual self-esteem among 80+ persons who may not feel at ease with the proposed activities. Solution: support the elderly feeling useful when making something for others or for themselves or helping other 80+ peers participate successfully in group activities.

Shared ideas become policy recommendations

The emerged need to share ideas was positively surprising. The collected proposals were used for the *Active 80+* policy recommendations and included the following issues:

- Average pensions received by 80+ after a lifetime's work are low and should be increased to allow generalized 80+ dignity or, as an alternative, local authorities should offer more free-of-charge services for very old citizens

- Increasing cuts in public spending for the elderly are unacceptable
- Insufficient public transport opportunities for 80+ wanting to move around the city
- Current joint activities with the younger sectors of the population, limited to making dolls for the Bologna Unicef section and folding T-shirts for the local kindergarten children, should be increased
- More interaction opportunities with NGOs and other very old people's rights groups are needed
- The gap in understaffing of animators and care staff, compared to the needs, requests and wishes of the 80+persons, should be bridged
- The education qualification issue, raised by the professionals working with 80+: they should all have completed university MAs, which is not currently required in Italy
- Universities are not yet ready, in terms of more qualified educational offerings, to cope with the care and support of the increasing number of 80+ citizens

Quote

"Feeling useful gives happiness."

80+ participant



KAUNAS (LT) A NIGHT AT METROPOLIS

Reminiscences with hit songs of the 1930s

In October 2015, residents of Prienai Care Home celebrated the International Older Persons Day in the Metropolis Restaurant, opened just for one night in the assembly hall of the care home. They travelled back in time singing hit songs of the 1930s and remembering those 'good old days'.

Activity designed by care-home residents

Celebration of Older Persons Day in October is an annual event. Usually, the programme is designed by the staff of the institution. This year the initiative for organising the event was taken by the residents. Violeta, a former accompanist, proposed to arrange a night at imaginary Metropolis, a popular restaurant in Kaunas in the 1930s. The 1930s-40s were important decades in Lithuanian history, when little by little Lithuanian city culture was formed (albeit somewhat Americanised). Affluent residents of Kaunas liked to spend time in spacious and stylish restaurants, frequented cinemas and cafés. During the day and lunch time the Metropolis guests enjoyed classical music, while the evenings were devoted to light genres: Hofmekler Brothers Ensemble accompanied Antanas Šabaniauskas, Daniel Dolski, Antanas Dvarionas, Stepas Graužinis, Jonas Byra and his quartet, as well as touring guests.

Building social contacts

The scenario of the Night at Metropolis was centred on popular old schlagers. Invitation cards were written and delivered in person to the residents of the care home. The preparation involved learning the words and tunes of the hits, and regular rehearsing. The women eagerly searched their wardrobe trying to reconstruct art deco fashion. Necklaces, gloves, fur shawls and hats were shared to match the dresses.

The Night at Metropolis was really successful. Preparation for the event and having a gala evening together strengthened the spirit of community and created new friendships.

The level of residents' involvement was different, however even those who only came to the "Restaurant" experienced positive emotions and the benefit of communication.

Assistance and collaboration

The staff helped to arrange and lay the tables in order to create the atmosphere of a real restaurant. Preparation for the event required more efforts and time compared to organising activities in the usual way. However, the Night at Metropolis left long lasting positive reminiscences and set a good practice for other initiatives of the care home residents.

Quote

*"It was the first time we went out to a restaurant.
We really enjoyed the evening."*

A couple residing at Prienai Care Home



KAUNAS (LT) CULINARY HERITAGE

Baking Tatar Gatlama

Genutė from Prienai Care Home is an expert in baking a Tatar sweet cake qatlama (a baked roll with a variety of fillings – poppy seeds, sesame seeds, raisins, nuts). The cake is made of many layers of dough. The layers must be neither too thin nor too thick. It is not easy to bake this cake just by reading a recipe. The baking process involves expertise that can be gained by assisted practice.

History
The presence of Tatars in Lithuania dates back from the 15th century. They were brought to Lithuania to serve as soldiers, their villages established at the Grand Duchy boundaries and around the capital city Vilnius. Some Tatar cuisine dishes, such as chiburekki (çiberek) and qatlama, gained a foothold in Lithuania. Tatar qatlama is called the Tatar Pie or a Cake of 100 layers. Today very few people, mainly of Tatar origin, can make the pie.

Genutė comes from the Alytus region where there is one of the biggest Tatar communities in Lithuania. She learned the secrets of baking the Tatar Pie from Tatar women.

Passing the skills

Baking the Tatar Pie is not an easy job and every confectioner has her own experience-based secrets. The Tatar Pie has become the house sweet at Prienai Care home; Genutė bakes it for special occasions. Genutė wants to pass her confectionery skills to younger generations in order to keep the tradition of the house pie. She invites other residents of the care home, paid staff and young volunteers to help her in baking and willingly gives expert advice and tips for baking the pie.

Quote

“I know there are many nice cookbooks but I believe in learning to make our meals not from a text but from oral tradition.”

Genutė



BARNEVELD (NL) OLD MEETS YOUNG

- December 2015
- January 2016 – and ongoing

Group dialogue – *Joint Strengths80+*

Residents of care centre *Ruimzicht* and neighbours from nearby sheltered accommodations meet young persons, volunteers and social welfare professionals. In two guided group dialogue sessions making use of the method *Joint Strength80+* (*Samenkracht80+*), the very old and the young get to know one another and explore mutual views on becoming engaged in meaningful activities in the neighbourhood.

Make dreams come true

The theme of the first dialogue session was 'dreams'. All participants were invited to bring along a meaningful item from their home to introduce themselves. This way participants could get to know one another, telling stories about their lives, exchanging ideas and dreams about activities they would like to undertake. In the second dialogue session, participants put their dreams on post-its. The central question was: how can I make my dreams come true in this neighbourhood? Existing contacts in the neighbourhood were mapped: who do we already know? How can we be of meaning to our neighbours? What kind of contacts do we need in our neighbourhood? Participants agreed it is not always easy to take initiatives yourself, which is why it is very important to invite and get to know one another.

Insights gained

Older people do not like to ask for help. Young people explained to them they actually like to help: it makes them happy. 80+ participants discovered that even very small things like baking pancakes for a neighbour or bringing flowers to welcome a new neighbour can be very meaningful to another person - and to themselves.

Quote

*At the introduction Mrs D. said: "Please call me Corrie".
Everybody followed, introducing themselves by their first name.
Another participant, Joan, explained: "Nobody calls us by our first
name anymore and this is what I like so much here."*

80+ participant



ZUTPHEN (NL) COFFEE AND CAKE CONVERSATIONS

A focus on what moves people 80+

Very old people who live at home are at risk of becoming lonely and isolated. A declining social network makes it harder to get new contacts outside the family. Inspired by the *Active 80+* training, a district nursing team in Zutphen shifted their 'care needs' based approach to a focus on what actually moves people 80+. Instead of holding consultation office hours, older inhabitants were invited for open 'coffee and cake conversations'.

A personal invitation

The district nurses distributed personal invitations. Before house calls were made, a photo of the person(s) who would pay the visit helped to win the trust of the potential participant. People who attended the first coffee and cake meeting, only two of which were 80+, were invited to bring along a friend, relative or neighbour to the second meeting. The 'snowball effect' worked well. The second meeting was attended by eleven people, five of them aged 80+.

What's missing, how to become engaged...

In the 'open group dialogue' ideas, views and frame work conditions on becoming engaged in meaningful activities were brought up for discussion:

- The need for a communal room in the building or a meeting place in the vicinity where one could go for a coffee or just a chat, without there being any further obligations
- Problems in daily life such as mobility, transport and health problems that prohibit going somewhere or doing simple things like going out shopping
- The longing for contact with different age groups, including young people living in the same block of apartments
- Participants acknowledged their own difficulties in becoming engaged: the bottleneck often lies in taking the first step and actually doing it

Follow-Up

After two coffee and cake conversations, participants felt free to talk about their emotions, perceptions and shared difficulties. They discovered they can on the spot help each other, by teaching how to use an ipad for instance. Participants helped to get everything ready in such ways as making coffee or clearing the meeting room afterwards. They also urged for a third meeting and suggested to invite the district police officer or a civil servant of the municipality to explain and discuss relevant issues like safety or social and care services in the municipality.

Quote

“80+ Participants became aware that other people can actually expect them to contribute on their own initiative”.

Coach

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our special thanks goes to the 80+ participants, all organisations that supported the *Active 80+* idea, encouraged their staff members and volunteers in participating in the training and facilitated the realization of the *Active 80+* projects:

In Austria

- Kuratorium Wiener Pensionistenwohnhäuser
- Österreichisches Rotes Kreuz / Landesverband Niederösterreich

In Germany

- Hessische Staatskanzlei
- LandesEhrenamtsagentur Hessen
- Heimverzeichnis gGmbH
- Begegnungsstätte Haltestelle Langen
- Diakonisches Werk Offenbach-Dreieich-Rodgau
- Katholisches Dekanat Dreieich, Seniorensorge
- Kindertagesstätte Haus Kunterbunt
- Magistrat der Stadt Neu-Isenburg

In Italy

- L'Azienda Pubblica di Servizi alla Persona Città di Bologna
- Villa Serena, Bologna
- Villa Ranuzzi, Bologna
- Il Centro Anziani "Giorgio Perlasca", Roma

In Lithuania

- Prienų globos namai
- Kauno kartų Namai
- Dainavos dienos globos centras

In the Netherlands

- Zorggroep Ena in cooperation with Welzin (Barneveld)
- Vrijwilligers Zorghésidecé Het Seminarie (Amersfoort)
- De Deventer Dagsociétéit (Deventer)
- Sensire, wijkverpleging/ sociaal wijkteam (Zutphen/Warnsveld)
- Zorggroep Sint Maarten, locatie De Polbeek (Zutphen)

We are pleased with everyone who is interested in using the *Active 80+* training concept and the *Active 80+* logo. However, please tell us that you are using it and provide us with some feedback.

While every care has been taken in the editing of this publication, we apologise in advance for any misspelling or other mistakes, which unwillingly may have slipped in.







This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

<http://www.act-80plus.eu>