

active  
80  
PLUS

valuing and  
valorizing  
the knowledge  
and skills of  
people 80+

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**Handbook for  
Trainers**



# Handbook for Trainers

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*"You are never too old  
to set another goal  
or to dream a new dream."*

C. S. Lewis



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## 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.

*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](http://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 elderly 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, frame-work) 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)

*“Nobody prepares you to become 80+.”*

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](http://www.act-80plus.eu) (Outcomes).

## ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

### Who is this *Handbook for Trainers* for?

This publication is dedicated to those who want to contribute actively to new perspectives on old age. It directly addresses [health and social services providers and trainers/adult training providers](#) who want to inspire and train persons working with older people (e.g. staff and volunteers, associations working for/with older people) to become coaches for older people who are interested in learning and carrying out meaningful activities.

This *Handbook for Trainers* is accompanied by another publication, the [Handbook for Practitioners](#). The *Handbook for Practitioners* mainly targets paid staff and volunteers who want to develop ideas on how to coach, empower and support people at high age. The *Handbook for Practitioners* does not only give general information on these issues but provides many practical examples of projects that emerged from our *Active 80+* trainings in the partner countries.

### 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. We want to contribute to a change in and new perspectives of 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. This *Handbook for Trainers* targets those willing to train practitioners of different fields to work with people 80+ in specific ways setting free their creativity and enthusiasm. This Handbook gives an insight into how to organise and design a training (including the implementation process and follow-up activities) and presents a range of methods and ideas that should inspire future *Active 80+* trainers.

## How was this Handbook written?

This *Handbook for Trainers* is the result of a longer process based on theoretical and practical work done 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 was the foundation for the development of a training concept that served as a general framework for the trainings in the participating countries. The training concept was the starting point for the national training activities that were designed to match the national, local and especially institutional needs of the organisations involved. The experiences made in these trainings were collected and analysed for this Handbook.

## How do you use this Handbook?

This Handbook aims to support its readers in the best possible way in preparing and carrying out trainings for future coaches of very old people. The information is provided in short sections that can be accessed easily and quickly.

It draws on the experiences of the partners and provides practical support in preparing and realising an *Active 80+* training. It includes a general example of an agenda for the in-class training and helpful tips for supporting participants and future coaches in planning and implementing their projects. Furthermore, experiences gained when organising the follow-up meetings are presented.

This Handbook also includes an overview of the projects carried out together with persons 80+. The detailed description of the projects is available in the *Handbook for Practitioners*.

We have developed a wide range of materials that were tested and probed in the various phases of the trainings. As we wanted to keep this Handbook as compact as possible, we provide more of these materials on our website [www.act-80plus.eu](http://www.act-80plus.eu).

## PREPARING AN ACTIVE 80+ TRAINING

### Aims of the training

- Enabling and inspiring the participants to take up a coaching role for very old people
- Enabling participants to carry out projects and to develop fields of activities with very old people
- Introducing adequate learning methods and environments for very old people
- Encouraging participants to change perspectives
- Showing the importance of communication at “eye level“

### Guiding principles

For the design of the training, several recommendations can be derived from the results of the desk research, survey and expert group discussions. One main point is that it is highly recommended to introduce the project and training to possibly interested organisations and participants as a co-production between all partners: project leaders/trainers, organisations, participants and – as the most important stakeholders – the 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 involve other stakeholders in the active citizenship of very old people (e.g. management, friends and relatives, voluntary organisations)
- Highlighting the importance and fostering sustainability, providing a certificate and evaluation of the training process
- Involving dialogue-oriented methods, the training should be as interactive as possible

*“Every individual is unique  
and should be cared for as such.”*

Trainer

## Trainers

The trainer(s) should be experienced in adult education. In particular, they should

- Bring in the ability to inspire people and support them to discover their creativity and strengths.
- Be convinced that everyone – no matter how old he/she is, where he/she comes from or what he/she has 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 training and implementation phase.

*“Respect, patience, facilitation -  
empowerment, integration, encouragement ...  
are key competences and factors on all levels!”*

Trainer

## Participants / Coaches

### Tip

Start the promotion of the training and the recruitment of participants early! Direct contact helps to encourage people and organisations to get involved.

Ideally, both staff members and volunteers will take part in the training and become coaches of old and very old people. But this will also depend on the organisations that the partners are working together with.

Definite criteria for choosing participants should be

- Interest in the theme and motivation to complete the training as well as implementing a project together with very old people.
- Experience in working with older and very old people. Ideally he/she already has contact to older and very old people and has a definite or potential idea for a project or joint activity.
- Clear commitment and support by the organisations. An agreement of the organisation that delegates the participant is necessary, but can be done informally (e.g. by email).
- The decisions of whom to include and how an agreement is formulated should be made by organisations running the training. The main point is to be inclusive and to be able to adapt to different situations.

### Tip

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

1. *Benefit for organisations and for participants.*
2. *Background information on the project and the training.*
3. *Expectations of the organisation and the participants (implementation of projects, how much time is involved, etc.).*
4. *Contents and structure of the training and implementation phase.*
5. *Duration of the training and implementation phase.*

## Resources needed

Organisations interested in carrying out an *Active 80+* training need:

- Financial and time resources for promoting the training.
- (Preferably two) experienced trainers, who carry out the in-class training and support participants in implementing their projects.
- An adequate venue for the in-class training.
- Some kind of catering facilities.



Informational events prior to the training are helpful to get to know the participants in advance.

## PERFORMING AN ACTIVE 80+ TRAINING

*“You find new friends and a new group you belong to.  
This includes encounters that are filled with meaning  
and not only everyday small talk.”*

80+ participant



The *Active 80+* training process consists of three phases:

- In-class training

During the two (half)-day in-class training, participants get an introduction to the project as well as the aims and contents of the training. Furthermore, they reflect upon active citizenship of very old people and their own role as “coaches” for this target group. On the basis of this background information, discussions and brainstorming, the participants elaborate ideas of projects, which are planned and implemented together with very old people.

- The implementation of projects

Coaches – together with the target group of very old people – further develop and carry out projects. Within the *Active 80+* project, the implementation phase stretched over three to four months.

- Follow-up meeting

After the projects are carried out, people involved in the training and the projects (e.g. trainers, coaches, very old people) conduct a 2-4 hour meeting to reflect upon their experiences and discuss follow-up activities.

## Running the Active 80+ in-class training

An agenda for the *Active 80+* in-class training, consisting of six modules, can be structured as follows:

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Active citizenship of very old people
3. Methods and good practices of promoting active citizenship of very old people
4. Supporting active citizenship of very old people: How to make it real?
5. Next steps
6. Evaluation and closing

Experience from piloting the *Active 80+* training shows that all modules of the in-class training can be delivered in two half-days of four to six hours each. Some partners decided to carry out the training in two one-day sessions with an interval of one or two weeks to give the participants time for reflection and planning.

### Tip

If the training is carried out in two half-days with a time-span in between (e.g. 1-2 weeks), this can be used for self-organised learning. Participants can:

- *collect information on the interests of very old people in their organisations,*
- *collect ideas for possible projects in addition to the ideas created in the first half day of training,*
- *adapt own ideas to the interests of very old people in the organisation (or combine the ideas),*
- *think about possible cooperation partners and settings for carrying out the projects and/or*
- *think about the kind of support needed and from whom it would be helpful.*

The particular time frame will always depend on external conditions and individual contexts, such as the number of participants and their experience in developing activities with very old people. It is important to adapt the agenda, modules and activities to specific objectives, the size of the group, as well as the needs and interests of the participants. The timing of the modules in this guide is indicative only and depends on the size and composition of the group and the style of the trainer(s).

## MODULE 1:

### Welcome and introduction to the Active 80+ training

#### Tip

At the beginning it is important to set some house rules, like: Sharing personal information is optional and there are only individual perspectives – no right or wrong answers.

This first module introduces participants to the *Active 80+* training, especially to the background and the guiding principles of the training concept. The overall aim of this module is to create a supportive working environment and allow for participants to get to know each other. Module 1 includes ice-breaking activities as well as activities which encourage socialising and first discussions between the participants.

The trainers may also use this module to discuss participants' needs and expectations and any general questions.

#### Tip

Leave much space for discussions and exchange of experience.

## Gathering expectations from participants

<b>Description</b>	Participants are asked to write down their expectations of the training and discuss them in pairs. Then they share expectations in the plenary, the trainers noting answers on a flipchart.
<b>Aims</b>	The aim is to share expectations and visualise them so the trainer can check regularly that he/she is on track to meeting these.
<b>Material needed</b>	Cards, pens and flipchart
<b>Duration</b>	20 minutes
<b>Tips &amp; Tricks for Trainers</b>	Explain to the participants which of their expectations are likely to be fulfilled during the training and which expectations might not be realistic.

## When does old age begin?

<b>Description</b>	Cards with figures (10 - 20 - 30 - 40 ... - 100) are placed on the floor in one line indicating the age of people. The participants are asked to stand near the figure indicating when, according to their impression, old age begins. Afterwards each participant explains why he or she chose this particular age.
<b>Aims</b>	The aim of this exercise is to demonstrate that old age is relative and varies according to contexts and personal assessments.
<b>Material needed</b>	Cards with figures, a rope or other materials that can be used to illustrate a continuous sequence of years

<b>Duration</b>	As each participant has to explain his or her choice, and discussions with others are stimulated this way, at least 5 minutes per person should be planned.
<b>Tips &amp; Tricks for Trainers</b>	Long rooms, like corridors, are especially apt for this exercise.

## Bringing along a small object

<b>Description</b>	Participants bring a small object from home, representing their relationship to people 80+. In the introduction round, participants present their objects and explain why they have chosen it.
<b>Aims</b>	This ice-breaker is a creative way to introduce oneself. Participants get to know each other and learn about different backgrounds and personal relationships with people 80+.
<b>Material needed</b>	Invite participants to bring a small object from home
<b>Duration</b>	2-3 minutes per participants
<b>Tips &amp; Tricks for Trainers</b>	Bring a suitcase with items for those who have forgotten to bring a personal object.

## MODULE 2:

### Active citizenship of very old people

#### Tip

It is important to clarify the difference between doing something FOR older and very old people and doing something WITH them.

The focus of Module 2 is on the issue of active citizenship of very old people. At the end of this module, participants have an idea what active citizenship of older people means and why it is such an important issue. Photos, quotes and videos are used to encourage participants to reflect their stereotypes regarding very old people and to explore their own perspectives on ageing.

#### Tip

Provide handouts as a basis for discussions and to take home.

### Presentation of relevant research findings

<b>Description</b>	Relevant findings based on research are summarised in a PowerPoint presentation, on posters or in a handout.
<b>Aims</b>	The aim is to inform on relevant findings regarding active citizenship of older and very old people.
<b>Material needed</b>	PowerPoint presentation, PC and a beamer or a poster or handout

<b>Duration</b>	The presentation should not last longer than 30 minutes.
<b>Tips &amp; Tricks for Trainers</b>	Schedule some time for questions and discussions. Make sure that PowerPoint slides, handouts or posters are reader-friendly.

## Quotes

<b>Description</b>	Small cards with quotes connected to the issue of active citizenship of older people are displayed on the walls of the training room. Participants are asked to walk around and choose the one that appeals to them most. They then discuss their views with others. The trainer collects the different opinions and ideas on a flipchart and puts them up for discussion.
<b>Aims</b>	Participants are invited to reflect on and explore the importance of being meaningful, involved and engaged at a very high age. They find out about differences and similarities in the group concerning the views on active citizenship of very old people.
<b>Material needed</b>	Quotes on cards (see annexes), tape, flipcharts, pens
<b>Duration</b>	Up to 1 hour

### Info

Results of interviews carried out with very old people and experts within the *Active 80+* projects might be helpful for identifying suitable quotes. Please have a look at the European report published on the *Active 80+* website [www.act-80plus.eu](http://www.act-80plus.eu) (Outcomes).

## Models of ageing and of old age

<b>Description</b>	Several posters are displayed on the walls and the participants are invited to walk by and stay with a model they prefer. Afterwards the different images are discussed in the group.
<b>Aims</b>	Participants' awareness should be raised on different concepts of ageing and needs of old people and the diversity of images and preferences.
<b>Material needed</b>	Sheets of paper (at least size A2 is recommended) and something to fix them on the walls
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes

## House of Identity: a broad perspective on ageing

<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>How can we learn to look beyond our images and stereotypes of old age? Can we learn to look from a broad perspective?</p> <p>Image or slide of the “House of Identity” represents the five life domains: body &amp; mind, social contacts, material situation, work &amp; activities/participation, and values &amp; inspiration. Discussion in pairs or small groups about which domains of life one considers important, how one perceives one’s own “house of identity”. Questions for pairs or small groups are e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Do you usually look at yourself taking into account different domains of life? Why/Why not?</i></li> </ul> <p>The discussion in pairs or small groups is followed by a plenary discussion. Possible questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Do you usually look at older people taking into account different domains of life? Why/Why not? Could we look at older people/people at very high age from such a broad perspective? If so, do you think older people would profit from it?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Aims</b></p>	<p>Participants gain insight into their own images of ageing and identity and develop a broad perspective on ageing from different domains of life.</p>
<p><b>Material needed</b></p>	<p>Image of “House of Identity” (see annexes).</p>
<p><b>Duration</b></p>	<p>40 minutes: 5 min introduction/explanation of “House of Identity”, 20 min discussion in pairs/small groups, 15 min plenary discussion</p>
<p><b>Tips &amp; Tricks for Trainers</b></p>	<p>Explain to participants that looking at or discussing old age also means being prepared to look at yourself and consider your ageing process.</p>

## Reflection based on a film clip

<b>Description</b>	<p>Participants look at fragments of the film “Good Morning Future”, showing portraits of people 100+. Each participant receives green and red post-it notes, and is invited to write down stimulations (green note) and limitations (red note) for people at very high age to become involved, engaged and meaningful to other people (one per note). The green and red notes are all pinned on two big sheets of paper on the wall or flipcharts. The trainer assigns the notes and makes clusters. Participants explain their notes. Plenary discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>What strikes you the most in this film?</i></li><li>• <i>Where do we situate limitations and stimulations? With the individual older person? In her/his network? In the organisation? Ourselves?</i></li></ul>
<b>Aims</b>	Reflecting on active citizenship, limitations and stimulation of involvement and engagement as well as meaningfulness at very high age
<b>Material needed</b>	Film (selection of excerpts) e.g. “Goedemorgen Toekomst, Oud worden in de polder” (Good Morning Future – Growing old in the polder) by Kees Hin
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes

### Info

A trailer of the film “Goedemorgen Toekomst, Oud worden in de polder” (“Good Morning Future – Growing old in the polder”) is available on YouTube. For other trailers and short films about ageing or growing old please have a look at [www.cinemasenior.nl](http://www.cinemasenior.nl)

## Theater technique

<b>Description</b>	Participants are divided into pairs/small groups and are given the task to act out a situation, such as showing how an old person is served. When the situation is acted out, the “actors” go to the audience (also grouped) and discuss how to change the situation to make it more engaging and meaningful for very old people. Afterwards the actors continue acting out the situation with new perspectives advised by the audience. The spectators may stop the performance and give further advice or step in and act, showing how the situation should be improved.
<b>Aims</b>	Imitating a real-life situation should provoke a discussion on how prevailing practices could be improved.
<b>Material needed</b>	Items/props to further the action
<b>Duration</b>	1 hour to act at least two situations: 10 minutes preparing, 5 minutes acting, and 15 minutes discussing and reacting
<b>Tips &amp; Tricks for Trainers</b>	Trainers should familiarise themselves with the basics of Social/Forum/Applied Theater and explain the rules of the game to the participants. Be ready to act in order to help the participants better understand what is expected from them. Short videos with examples would be helpful.

## MODULE 3:

### Methods and good practices of promoting the active citizenship of very old people

One core objective of the training is to enable and inspire participants to take up a coaching role for very old people and carry out projects together with them. To give participants an idea of possible projects, Module 3 focuses on best practice examples in promoting active citizenship of older people. Furthermore, participants discuss possible tasks of coaches and reflect on possible challenges.

This module also includes activities, which support participants to develop and share the first ideas of their potential projects. At the end of this module they have a clear picture of what kind of project would be feasible to run in the implementation phase.

### Activities for learning about best practice

To give an overview on interesting examples of good practice and encourage discussion on possible projects, different activities are possible: a poster exhibition, a PowerPoint presentation on existing initiatives, photos or videos. It could also be considered to invite someone as guest speaker who has experience in organising initiatives involving very old people.

#### Tip

It is recommended to draw on the experiences and expertise of participants themselves. Perhaps someone has already been engaged in an interesting initiative or knows about an innovative project?

## Sunflower exercise

<b>Description</b>	<p>In small groups of 3–4 persons, the participants discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Which tasks have to be performed by coaches of active citizens 80+?</i></li><li>• <i>Which knowledge and skills are needed for this?</i></li></ul> <p>The answers are written on oval cards and are arranged as a sunflower: tasks are the blossoms, knowledge and skills form the leaves. The sunflowers from each small group are presented in plenary and discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Which knowledge and skills are already available?</i></li><li>• <i>Which knowledge and skills are still needed?</i></li></ul> <p>The training of not yet available knowledge and skills can be included in the second day.</p>
<b>Aims</b>	<p>The aim of this exercise is to raise awareness of the tasks and challenges in the work of coaches for active citizens 80+.</p>
<b>Material needed</b>	<p>Pinwall, cards, pens, glue, picture of sunflower (see in annexes)</p>
<b>Duration</b>	<p>60 minutes</p>
<b>Tips &amp; tricks for Trainers</b>	<p>If time and the number of cards allow, the different sunflowers can be integrated into one flower displaying the results of the plenary discussions.</p>

## Learning from best practice

<b>Description</b>	In small groups the participants look through the Handbook for Practitioners and other resources and identify especially interesting projects. They discuss how these projects could be implemented in their contexts and present their findings and ideas in the plenum.
<b>Aims</b>	The aim is to learn from projects that have already been implemented successfully and inspire participants to develop their own ideas.
<b>Material needed</b>	Printouts of handbooks, pinwalls, paper, pens
<b>Duration</b>	90 minutes

### Info

Concrete projects developed and implemented by coaches and very old people within the *Active 80+* project are described in the Handbook for Practitioners on the *Active 80+* website [www.act-80plus.eu](http://www.act-80plus.eu).

Some other inspiring examples of good practice can be found on [www.cinemasenior.nl](http://www.cinemasenior.nl): we especially recommend the film “Kijk in mijn ogen” (“Look into my eyes”). Some other very inspiring initiatives are the life-storytelling project “(G)oud voor de buurt”, (G)old for the neighbourhood (<http://www.noordhollandvertelt.nl/goud-voor-de-buurt.php>) and the foundation Fit-Art ([www.fitart.nl](http://www.fitart.nl)), which offers groups and individuals a voyage of discovery in the world of art, culture and movement. Fit-Art’s starting point is the potential of people. They want to offer people the opportunity to make the best of their experiences and talents.

## MODULE 4:

### Supporting active citizenship of very old people: How to make it possible?

*“When it comes to ‘communication’,  
it can be very helpful to highlight that there are essentially  
the same attitudes important in the trainer-participants-relation,  
in the communication of coaches with key persons 80+  
and in the communication of key persons 80+  
with other people 80+.”*

Trainer

In Module 4, participants have the opportunity to specify their project ideas. They discuss various steps that are required in planning and realising a project and actively involve very old people.

At the end of this module, participants

- Have an idea and know methods to involve very old people in the planning and realisation of a project.
- Know what to do in the following implementation phase and which kind of support is available from trainers.

#### Tip

Prepare coaches to be flexible regarding requirements of very old people and contextual conditions. Convince them that a gentle approach and a caring relationship have proven to be very helpful.

## What is a Project?

The projects 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
- include learning from each other and reciprocity

## Exchanging project ideas

<b>Description</b>	Participants elaborate their ideas in small groups, discussing the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>What do we need to nudge a project or further develop already existing initiatives?</i></li><li>• <i>Who will be our target group?</i></li><li>• <i>What do we need to consider when working with them?</i></li><li>• <i>How can we cooperate with existing programs and offers in our organisations / communities?</i></li><li>• <i>How can we cooperate with / involve local organisations, local community and / or family members?</i></li></ul>
<b>Aims</b>	Share and develop first ideas.
<b>Material needed</b>	One sheet of big packaging paper for each group (apt to function as a poster in the presentation in plenary) and pens
<b>Duration</b>	90 minutes for work in small groups, 15 minutes per project in plenary

## Conceptualization exercise

<b>Description</b>	<p>In small groups of 2–3 persons, the participants present to each other their first ideas for projects. They discuss the strengths and weaknesses of these ideas and views as well as their feasibility. For each of the project ideas that appear to be worthwhile to be tested, the participants sketch a first plan on how to implement them according to a predefined structure (e.g. aims, target group/s, content, organisation, organisers, necessary resources, documentation).</p> <p>The results are presented in plenary and form the basis for the “homework“: checking in detail if the preconditions for the project are met.</p>
<b>Aims</b>	<p>The project ideas are assessed in the form of peer reviews. Colleagues give advice for the implementation.</p>
<b>Material needed</b>	<p>One sheet of big packaging paper for each participant (apt to function as a poster in the presentation in plenary) and pens</p>
<b>Duration</b>	<p>90 minutes for work in small groups, 15 minutes per project in plenary</p>
<b>Tips &amp; Tricks for Trainers</b>	<p>Schedule enough time for initial practical support when developing project ideas.</p>

 **Tip**

Partners in the Netherlands discussed a community building approach and method “Samenkracht80+” (Joint Strength80+) and did some exercises (e.g. group dialogue). Participants had all received a concise handbook in case they were interested to make use of the method in their project. For more information on this method and tools please have a look at our website. For practical examples have a look in the Handbook for Practitioners.

## MODULE 5: Defining next steps

This module prepares participants for the implementation phase - the realisation of their project ideas together with old and very old people. The aim of module 5 is therefore to

- Inform on available support during the implementation phase.
- Define next steps, e.g. the follow-up meeting.
- Discuss and answer open questions.

 **Tip**

Leave enough time for discussing open questions and facilitate the exchange of contact information among the participants.

## MODULE 6: Evaluation and closing

At the end of each training day or after completing all modules, participants will have the opportunity to assess the training and reflect on their participation. In this chapter a number of different ways of evaluating training are suggested. We recommend using at least one.

### Smiley method

<b>Description</b>	The trainer draws three “smiley” faces on the flipchart: one smiling, one crying, and one neutral. Participants receive post-it cards or stickers and are asked to select a face for the post-it card depending on how they feel at the moment and stick their post-its on the flipchart below the appropriate face. Participants are invited to comment on their choices.
<b>Aims</b>	Finding out how the group feels.
<b>Material needed</b>	Post-its or stickers, pen, flipchart
<b>Duration</b>	10 minutes
<b>Tips &amp; Tricks for Trainers</b>	Leave it up to the participants if they would like to comment on their choices.

## Bull's eye

<b>Description</b>	<p>The trainer creates a bull's-eye beforehand and puts it in a central place. The bull's-eye will have three to four areas: e.g. content, timing, methods and atmosphere. Each participant has the same amount of stickers as areas on the bulls-eye and is invited to place the stickers in each quadrant to demonstrate their satisfaction with each aspect of the training. The more satisfied they are, the closer the sticker will be to the center.</p> <p>In a joint discussion, the aspects can be considered in-depth and improvements jointly developed.</p>
<b>Aims</b>	Swiftly gaining a group opinion
<b>Material needed</b>	Stickers and bull's eye
<b>Duration</b>	20 minutes

## Questionnaire

<b>Description</b>	<p>Participants are asked to fill in a formal questionnaire, which contains a set of questions regarding the most important aspects of the training. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>organisation</i></li><li>• <i>contents and methods</i></li><li>• <i>own involvement</i></li><li>• <i>outcomes and benefits</i></li></ul>
<b>Aims</b>	To receive participants' feedback on all aspects of the training.
<b>Material needed</b>	Questionnaire (see an example in the annex), pens

<b>Duration</b>	10 minutes
<b>Tips &amp; Tricks for Trainers</b>	Some partners added a question to the questionnaire regarding the initial motivation of the participant or the organisation, as the motivation turned out to be relevant. In a follow-up meeting one can reflect on this original motivation and expectations.

## The Implementation of projects

*“It is important to be open to all kinds of small projects and to encourage the participants to find creative ideas.”*

Trainer

The implementation of projects with very old people is considered as a part of the Active 80+ training. The idea is that trainers (or possibly others, e.g. team leaders) support training participants / coaches in realising their projects. The amount and type of support needed can differ depending on the coaches' experiences and confidence. Therefore, support should be flexible and oriented towards the needs of the participants and resources of the trainers' respective organisations.

### Tip

Stress the importance of the wishes, needs, skills and abilities of the persons 80+, who will be involved in the small projects. The projects have to match their interests.

Within the *Active 80+* project, the following approaches of support and supervision proved to be helpful:

- Personal support on request: One trainer is available for participants in case of questions and requirement of assistance.
- Active contacting: The trainer contacts participants via email or telephone approximately 1.5 months after the training and asks if any support is needed.
- Individual reflection meetings: The trainer and coaches meet regularly to share experiences and plan further steps.
- Social networks and online platforms: For staying in touch and sharing materials creating a WhatsApp-group or installing a Dropbox might be good options.



Trust in the coaches! Wait before you offer (too much) support.

## Follow-up meeting

The follow-up meeting takes place some weeks or months after the projects with older people have started. The overall aim of the meeting is to allow for internal reflection of how the training and implementation of the projects have been and include the very old people involved (if possible).

## Tip

### Internal reflection

A reflection round with training participants (coaches) and older and very old people involved in the projects could be carried out along the following questions:

- *What was your biggest success?*
- *What was your biggest problem?*
- *What was most surprising?*
- *What have I contributed?*
- *What have I learned?*
- *What have I unlearned?*

The follow-up meeting is also a good opportunity to honor training participants and old and very old people involved in the projects and to inform the press and local / regional stakeholders. Within the *Active 80+* project all partners decided for an internal and a public part of the follow-up meeting.

*“Involving very old people in the event means that organisational issues, such as transport and barrier-free venue, have to be considered.”*

Trainer

 **Tip**

Recommendations for the public part and celebration

- *Involve senior citizens and their coaches actively in the event, e.g. presentation of projects, short statements, public interviews.*
- *Include artistic interventions with a connection to the projects.*
- *Award certificates or donate little presents to express recognition and appreciation of the coaches' and senior citizens' engagement.*
- *Invite media representatives.*
- *Consider some budget for drinks and snacks ("coffee and cake").*

## ACTIVE 80+ PROJECTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The implementation of projects with and by people 80+ was a major part of the *Active 80+* trainings. In the implementation phase, the coaches together with the people 80+ further developed and carried out projects.

These projects are characterised by an exceptional variety regarding their settings, contents or methods used. Some of the projects focused on the immediate living environment of the people 80+ (e.g. senior residence), others reached out to the community. Some of them were planned and carried out as once-only activities with the potential to be repeated regularly (e.g. performances, presentations) whereas others were set up as recurring activities (e.g. reading circles, bingo group).

Given the great variety, it is not very easy to give a quick overview of all the projects carried out by project partners in the five countries. Very generally speaking, the projects that emerged from the *Active 80+* trainings belong to the following categories:

### Active Leisure

With these projects, people 80+ aimed at bringing entertaining activities – either single or recurring events – to their peers. In Austria, for example, one team organised a Carnival Party at a day center. Another team set up a Bingo group at a retirement home. Joint gardening or cinema shows are other examples of this type of project. One specific sub-type of these projects are activities to exercise the participants' body and brain. For example, "Ordine e libertà" (Order and freedom): Maria Montessori's educational methodology was adapted to very old people to support them to improve basic personal skills. "Wii-ing" using video game consoles to increase the very old persons' cognitive skills while playing games such as tennis or boxing. A "Brain jogging" group is organised by a woman 80+.

## Creativity & Arts

Some of the projects carried out within the *Active 80+* trainings revolved around creative and artistic group activities like performances (sketches) as a contribution to a Carnival party, painting, poetry or mandala arts groups, or a reading circle.

## Religion & Spirituality

Two of the projects that emerged from the *Active 80+* trainings were religiously motivated. In Germany, a specific church service was prepared by the people 80+ in which blessings were done by and for seniors with and without diseases and functional restrictions. In Austria, residents of a residential home meet regularly to prepare the liturgical celebration.

## Sharing Joint Memories & Traditional Skills

Several projects were based on the assumption that people 80+ have a lot of memories and knowledge/skills to share with others. In Lithuania, one project was dedicated to baking a traditional dish (“Tatar Pie”) for fat Tuesday. The Austrian Baking Group was set up to allow the participants to share their knowledge and recipes. The “Metropolis Restaurant at Prienai Care Home” project wanted to “bring back” the participants to a famous restaurant in 1920–40 Kaunas.

## People 80+ meet...

The idea that people 80+ have a lot to give – also to other generations – inspired many projects that aimed at bringing different groups of people together. One example is the “Singing Generation”, an intergenerational choir with members of a seniors’ day center and kindergarten kids. Another, the “Salon der Begegnung” (Salon of Encounters), is a project to share experiences of war and escape among people 80+ and today’s refugees. The Dutch project “Old meets young in Barneveld” is another project of this type.

## Group dialogue

The community-building approach and a group-dialogue was at the heart of the training and projects in The Netherlands. “Samenkracht80+” (Joint Strength80+) is a community building group activity that offers a stage to very old people to explore and make known to each other, volunteers and professionals, their ideas, wishes and opportunities to become engaged in meaningful activities and put these ideas into action together. The five project teams had different backgrounds (e.g. care and/or welfare, district nursing or citizens’ initiatives), but all held group dialogues. Settings and meeting-places could be very different: for instance, dialogue table organised by volunteers in a residential setting, coffee and “appeltaart” conversations in a district-nursing community center, living room meetings organised by citizens. The outcomes, however, were similar: exchange of ideas, engagement in social and cultural activities, mobilized strength, social commitment, shared responsibility and very practical mutual help (e.g. how to use an iPad).

## Charity

One of the *Active 80+* projects was a charity project in which care home residents organised a flea market and donated the revenues to a foundation that supports old people with low incomes.

## 80+ politics

In the Italian project “E noi?” (And us?), people 80+ expressed their criticism and ideas regarding 80+ policies by the Bologna Municipality. Issues discussed included cuts in public spending for the elderly, the quality of public transport or the need for more care staff. Two of the Dutch dialogue groups invited local civil servants of the municipality to discuss quality of services and lack of information.

Some of the projects took unexpected yet interesting turns because of personal or external factors. In Gravenbruch, for example, an old lady wanted to organise “Walking Encounters” for old people with and without walking frames. Despite various

attempts, it was not possible to find attractive and accessible ways in the surroundings of the town. The lady changed her plans and now offers “brain jogging” for people 80+. However, the deficiencies identified during the (fruitless) preparation of “Walking Encounters” were taken seriously by the local authorities who started to work on solutions to this problem.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all hundreds of people 80+ for their participation in the trainings and involvement in projects. Furthermore, many thanks to all interview partners for sharing their knowledge and expertise. Our special thanks go to 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+* project:

### 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

- Volunteers Amersfoort / Zorgrésidence Het Seminarie
- Zorggroep Ena in cooperation with Welzin, Barneveld
- Sensire, wijkverpleging / sociaal wijkteam, Zutphen / Warnsveld
- Zorggroep Sint Maarten, locatie De Polbeek, Zutphen
- De Deventer Dagsociëteit, Deventer

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.

## ANNEXES

### Core Values/Issues – interviews People 80+ – Active 80+ Research

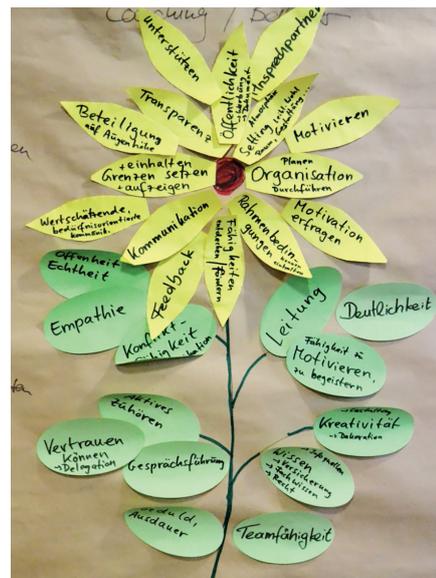
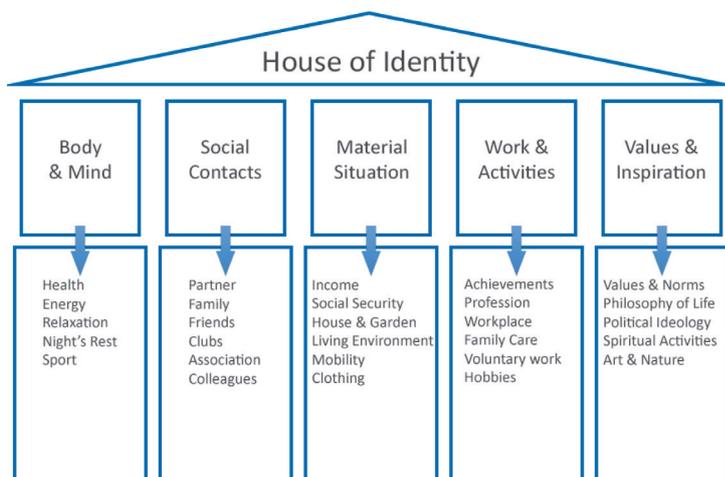
LEARN FROM EACH OTHER (interactive)	EXPERTISE OF PEOPLE 80+	SELF ACCEPTANCE	SATISFACTION
LOOK IN THE MIRROR TOGETHER	CREATE A POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE	CONSIDER YOUR OWN ATTITUDE (person 80+)	ARRANGE SOMETHING TOGETHER
HAVE CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUTH	DISCOVER THE KNOWLEDGE OF PEOPLE 80+	THINK ALONG	KEEP MOVING
LET PEOPLE DISCOVER FOR THEMSELVES	KEEPING UP	LOOK UPON CHANGES AS OPPORTUNITIES	DO NOT LET YOURSELF BE TALKED INTO AN “OLDER PERSON”
BEING RECOGNIZED	TO BE PART OF SOMETHING	THE FEELING ONE HAS SOMETHING TO CONTRIBUTE	BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR ABILITIES
MANIA FOR ORGANISATION	LONELINESS	BEING SEEN	KEEP BEING CHALLENGED
BEING ENABLED TO LEARN NEW THINGS	HOW ONE IS TREATED AT 80+	SEARCH FOR CONNECTION (e.g. in seniors club)	SHOW SOME INTEREST (e.g. policy-makers)

EXPRESS APPRECIATION (e.g. by voluntary organisation)	ACTIVELY INVOLVE OLDER PEOPLE	A LISTENING EAR TO CITIZENS INITIATIVES	USE PLAIN LANGUAGE
SIGNAL SENSITIVITY (advice to civil society organisations)	LISTEN (advice to civil society organisations)	BE OF SERVICE (advice to civil society organisations)	GOING FOR IT!
WANTING TO GIVE SOMETHING TO OTHERS	HAVING A REASON TO GO OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSE	BEING ENGAGED IN MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES	BEING IN TOUCH WITH NEIGHBOURS
BE PROUD OF WHAT YOU HAVE ACHIEVED	GET THINGS DONE	OFFER A LISTENING EAR	FACILITATE FAMILY CARE-GIVER (offer practical support)
MAKE USE OF CAPACITIES OF PEOPLE 80+			
POTENTIALS	DECLINE OF FUNCTIONS (Physical and / or mental)	SUPPORT ACCORDING TO NEED	CAREGIVER OF OTHER PEOPLE 80+
EFFORTS OF PEOPLE 80+	COACHING OF YOUTH	EXPERIENCES (e.g. from working life)	MOBILITY

FINANCIAL THRESHOLDS	ACCESSIBILITY	TAKING ACCOUNT OF DIFFERENCES (M/F, education, age, origin, soc. econ.)	THE OBVIOUS IMAGE OF THE EVER CARING MOTHER
KEEP DOING WHAT YOU DID	ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT DREAMS	ACTIVE CONTRIBUTION	BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER
DAILY CONTACT	ONE'S OWN IMAGES	OLDER PERSON AS A CONFIDANT(E)	SENSE OF PERSPECTIVE
OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET EACH OTHER	PEOPLE WHO ARE LIFE AND SOUL NEEDED	POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR A CONVERSATION	PREJUDICES
BE ASKED	SHOW COMPASSION	A WIDE OUTLOOK	ENCOUNTER
ROLE OF GRANDPARENT	PARTICIPATION WITHIN OWN CIRCLE (Partner, family)	TELLING STORIES	DIVERSITY OF GROWING OLD (Including loss, bereavement)
LIVE DIGNIFIED	MAKE UP THE BALANCE SHEET	SHOW YOURSELF (to your grandchildren or other people)	

DISCOVER AND PICK UP NEW THINGS	SEE PERSPECTIVE	DEVELOP AN AGENDA TOGETHER	EXPECTATIONS
PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES (In order to make a contribution)	LACK OF SELF CONFIDENCE	COME INTO MOTION	BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY
AWARENESS OF PREJUDICES			

Quotes, exercise in Module 2



left: House of Identity: a broad perspective on ageing, exercise in Module 2

Houben, P. (2009). Interactief levensloopbeleid. Amsterdam: SWP.

right: Sunflower exercise, exercise in Module

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.







**Erasmus+**

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