

# Peer to Peer Support Fostering Active Ageing (2014-2016)



Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP)

Call for proposals 2013

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## WP 3: National Report Spain

*Studying active ageing education and active ageing policies based on the current needs of older adults above 55 years*

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## Contents

1	Introduction: Active Ageing in (Spain) .....	3
2	Research Methods briefly explained .....	6
3	Results of the desk research.....	7
3.1	Service Centers for Active Ageing in (Spain) .....	7
3.2	Trainings and educational service for active ageing.....	11
3.3	National and local policy documents supporting active ageing .....	14
4	Results of the quantitative survey with older adults.....	16
4.1	Who participated in the survey? .....	16
4.2	Opinions about active ageing and information seeking behaviour .....	18
4.3	Literacy of older adults .....	20
4.4	Technology literacy of older adults.....	21
4.5	Interest in an active ageing course.....	24
4.6	Conclusions from the survey .....	26
5	Results of the qualitative interviews with older adults .....	28
5.1	Who was interviewed? .....	28
5.2	Meaning of active ageing .....	28
5.3	Examples of active ageing from the interviewees .....	32
5.4	Interest in becoming peers or participating in an active ageing course .....	34
5.5	Conclusions from the interviews.....	38
6	Results of the focus group discussions .....	39
6.1	Results of Focus Group 1 with older adults.....	39
6.2	Results of Focus Group 2 with local stakeholders.....	45
7	Conclusions for Spain .....	55
8	Literature list .....	58

## 1 Introduction: Active Ageing in (Spain)

The current study aims to support the development of useful and desired methods for **active ageing education** in the respective local communities across the EU for older adults aged 55+. The PPS project will develop a face-to-face training programme (30 hours) on active ageing and an e-learning training (11 modules).

The **main research questions** of this study are: What **is active ageing education** and how responsive are older adults to active ageing education? How can active ageing trainings/courses be integrated into local communities?

Spain is currently one of the pioneering countries in the field of active ageing. Thanks to scientific breakthroughs, to the high quality of public healthcare and to the development of social policies, Spanish citizens live longer and with a better quality of life, due to which seniors have grown in number, enjoy an improved health condition, are more participative and, therefore, are expected to play a more relevant role in society. Today's older adults are largely active and healthy; they look after themselves in order to stay independent and autonomous as long as possible, and they also demand social space and voice.

The World Health Organisation defines active ageing as “the process of optimisation of opportunities for health, participation and security with the aim of improving quality of life as individuals age.” The purpose sought with ‘active ageing’ policies is to boost people’s abilities when they age, so that they can lead a productive life both in society and in the economy. The term ‘active’ refers to participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, and not only to remaining physically or financially active.

A number of important steps have been taken from the political spheres in recent years and a revision is being carried out in relation to the scope and notions related to the actual idea of active ageing, on which progress and clarifications still continue to be made. In this respect, it is worth highlighting the significance of the citizenship concept, of the satisfactory experience with the process itself, of the importance that lifelong learning actually has, of intergenerational relationships, of the capacity to treat them in an imaginative and innovative way, as well as of the relevance corresponding to the gender perspective.

Older adults are an active asset for social growth because, insofar as they enjoy a good health condition and have time at their disposal, they are agents who can collaborate with families and become actively involved in society, providing their experience and availability to help others, and they additionally represent an opportunity for firms to create and place new goods and services specifically designed for them at the disposal of these groups of consumers.

The celebration of the 2012 European Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity Year has permitted to make society become fully aware of the contribution made by seniors and to encourage political leaders and all stakeholders to act creating opportunities for active ageing and solidarity between generations.

The Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality elaborated the White Book on Active Ageing in 2011. The purpose of this working document was to diagnose the real situation of seniors in our country with a view to help in the implementation of policies and the management of actions aimed at meeting their demands.

For three decades, the concern about active ageing focused on what could be described as the satisfaction of basic needs –with care-related objectives. At present, the moment has come for us to complement it with proposals that offer more and better opportunities for personal development and well-being, without neglecting the improvement of basic needs. The term ‘active’ currently:

- expresses the idea of individuals’ ongoing participation in social, civic, economic, cultural, educational or spiritual issues regardless of the support that they may eventually need to achieve it.
- seeks a new society model where people have the chance to age, being the main characters in their lives, in a pro-active task and not as mere recipients of products, services or cares.
- materialises differently in each person, in accordance with one’s own meanings; you can be ‘active’ in a wide variety of ways.
- implies a community approach where senior citizens must have the chance to participate in everything that is specific to them, both privately and in the community sphere.
- requires an assurance that the older adult citizens can continue to improve or maintain their competences and have control over their life (guaranteeing all their rights).
- challenges the traditional approach according to which education is only of interest to younger citizens and offers opportunities for development and learning throughout our lifecycle.

Active ageing includes many aspects of an educational nature because every behaviour, attitude or intention has a significant learnt component which can also change and thus be ‘re-learnt.’ Individuals can change, improve their way to mix with others, and perform more active and self-determined roles. People may modify their perception or opinion about themselves, educational experiences being the ones which favour active ageing.

However, the new society of technology, information and communication entails dangers for those individuals and groups who are unable to adapt to it. The risk of new types of illiteracy (computer-related, technological, technical, scientific, etc.) constitutes a true

obstacle for society because inequality and exclusion will grow among its members unless sufficient and suitable opportunities are created to eradicate it. One of the goals of lifelong learning for active ageing is to minimise this danger and prevent information society from losing its human dimension.

This risk increases among citizens of a more advanced age, which is why it becomes essential to give them chances to learn throughout their lives so that they can achieve an active ageing on an equal footing and in an appropriate way –with their abilities being recognised, valued and taken advantage of.

In the case of Spain, specific socio-educational activity circuits have been made available to seniors. Although the development of such schemes has been growing progressively, their current state is highly segmented and heterogeneous. Various circuits can be identified following organisational and pedagogical criteria:

- the one promoted from social services, which offers socio-educational actions with a varied pedagogical style: informative talks, conference cycles, gatherings, workshops, intergenerational activities and community projects;
- that offered from universities, which has a scientific-academic nature with a syllabus that seeks recognition and differs from one university to another; and
- finally, the circuit led by the seniors' association movement, which presents a twofold dimension: cultural and social-relational.

A need currently exists to reflect and make progress in relation to the quality of the multifarious offers/circuits for active lifelong learning so that they can have a positive effect on teaching-learning processes, making them more satisfactory and efficient.

## 2 Research Methods briefly explained

The study uses four main instruments with a different scope and intensity, namely:

- **Desk Research** – keywords led search through scientific databases of journals, books, book sections and grey literature (project reports, policy documents) on *active ageing education and policy* in Europe as well as services for active ageing in the partner countries
- **Quantitative Questionnaires** – consists of a set of closed questions about the main challenges and problems which the target groups face on active ageing. The questionnaires give the possibility for a broader and more detailed collection of information among the target groups in each country.
- **Life-stage-based qualitative Interviews** – this instrument will be used to deepen the results of the questionnaires and to conduct life-stage-based interviews about the life stage of ageing with older adults. The interviews will follow an interview guide and therefore be semi-structured.
- **Qualitative focus group discussions** – a focus group is an instrument which allows a discussion of opinions between research participants about a certain topic. It can have the aim of simply discussing inputs, developing new ideas or finding consensus about a certain idea or proposal. Focus groups can be conducted with natural groups (groups which meet anyway, like school classes) or non-natural groups (groups which only meet for the purpose of research). In this research older adults will come together and both natural and non-natural groups could be used (e.g. sports groups, reading groups, volunteer groups).

### **3 Results of the desk research**

#### **3.1 Service Centers for Active Ageing in (Spain)**

- **UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE**  
***PERMANENT UNIVERSITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE***

The Permanent University of the University of Alicante (UA) is a scientific, cultural and social development programme of the UA which has as its aim to promote Science and Culture, as well as intergenerational relationships, in order to improve the quality of life of seniors (older adults) and encourage their participation, within their life context, as social 'dynamisers', in accordance with Articles 2.d), 108.c), 120 y 164 of the University of Alicante Statute, Art. 35 of the Generalitat Valenciana (Regional Government) Statute, Act 1/95 of the Generalitat Valenciana on training of older adults, the Preamble, 2nd and 9th paragraphs of the Organic Law 4/2007 of April 12th on Universities that modifies Law 6/2001 of December 21st on Universities, and the Agreement signed by the Generalitat Valenciana - Conselleria - Regional Ministry - of Education, Culture and Sport and the University of Alicante for the implementation of training actions addressed to the segment of Older Adults above 50 years of age.

The University of Alicante wants to facilitate older adults' personal and social development, regardless of their place of residence, income level or education, offering them helps in return for the invaluable contribution they have made to society with all their work and efforts throughout their lives.

This is the new challenge the University of Alicante's Permanent University is going to take up with the collaboration of the Education and Culture and Sport Departments of the Valencian Community Autonomous Government, various municipalities, as well as several private bank institutions: offering the UPUA older adult university education programme, which seeks to meet the interests and needs of this sector of the native and resident population living in the Valencian Community.

The UPUA programme is integrated into the framework of specific university education for older adults and responds to such demands as the need for a deeper democratisation of knowledge, a reduction of social inequalities, a greater social involvement of older adults in society, and the enhancement of intra- and intergenerational relationships, all of which will contribute to maintain their quality of life and besides, will enlarge the range of options available for them to continue active life outside their normal working environment.

- **VALENCIAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT: REGIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
***LOOK AFTER YOURSELF: The Valencian Region Health Portal***

Growing older is healthy if you age well. It is possible to reach old age in a good state of health by watching what you eat and keeping active, as well as maintaining social relationships and following guidelines in order to properly prevent and treat chronic health issues that are the cause of most disabilities and dependence in many elderly people.

According to WHO, active, healthy ageing enables us to reduce inequalities in health and improve the quality of life for many elderly people. To achieve this, action needs to be taken in three core areas: health, involvement and safety of elderly people.

We have to top up ageing with health, ensuring that people live longer but in good health and free of disabilities.

We have to get elderly people involved so that they can pass on their experience and leadership to society through voluntary activities.

We need to protect the rights of the elderly and satisfy their needs by encouraging solidarity between generations and promoting a positive outlook on ageing.

Elderly people in a good state of health are an active resource for society and can act as health workers by providing their experience and willingness to help families and the community.

- **IMSERSO (Spanish abbreviation for “Institute of Seniors and Social Services”)**

«Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity in Europe» is a page included within the IMSERSO web platform which has as its aim to become a space for reflection, dissemination of information, experiences and documentation about active ageing and solidarity between generations.

The purpose of this page is to give continuity to the work developed in the 2012 European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity, a commitment assumed by IMSERSO to keep on sharing information and experiences among social interlocutors, experts and stakeholders, taking advantage of the synergies established during 2012.

- **REGIONAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE**  
***Preventive Care Centres for Seniors***

These are preventive care centres meant to offer specialised services with the aim of maintaining seniors in a physical and emotional condition which allows them to manage by themselves and stay in their family and social environment, so that their entry into old people’s homes and hospitals can be delayed as much as possible.

Being conceived as units for prevention, health maintenance, rehabilitation, training, information and development of activities in the areas of culture, leisure, coexistence and social promotion, Preventive Care Centres for Seniors will not only favour healthy lifestyles but also dynamise interpersonal and group relationships, with the aim of avoiding solitude and seclusion, becoming a support resource both for seniors and for families, and seeking to make it easier for older adults to stay in the environment that is most familiar to them as long as possible.

- **MADRID TOWN COUNCIL**

- ***Madrid Health. Active and Healthy Ageing Programme***

The programme has as its goal to increase seniors' active and healthy life expectancy, maintaining their autonomy and independence, and promoting their participation and presence in society.

*What do we do?*

Priority preventive interventions in accidents, social isolation, anxiety and depression, maltreatment, physical inactivity, disability and dependence, dementia and cognitive deterioration, nutritional deficits, barriers for the access to healthcare services and urban environments which are detrimental to health.

- **ANDALUSIAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT**

- ***Regional Department of Equality, Health and Social Policies***

It is the responsibility of the Directorate General for Senior Citizens to develop, coordinate and promote active policies in the area of older adults.

More precisely, the aforesaid Directorate performs the following functions:

- those related to the organisation, management and coordination of the Centres and Services dedicated to seniors' care and protection, both the public ones run by the Andalusian Regional Government Administration and those private ones which receive a public subsidy too;
- management and control over the financial aid granted in this area;
- design, implementation and evaluation of the specific services and schemes addressed to seniors, especially those focused on attention to dependence and promotion of active ageing; and
- those attributed by the legislation with regard to authorisations and accreditations for Seniors' Care Centres.

Number	Service Center	Place (city)	Contact
1	UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE: <i>PERMANENT UNIVERSITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE</i>	Alicante	Permanent University of the University of Alicante Tlf: 965909793 <a href="mailto:Universidad.permanente@ua.es">Universidad.permanente@ua.es</a>
2	VALENCIAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT: REGIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH <i>LOOK AFTER YOURSELF: The Valencian Region Health Portal</i>	Valencian Region	LOOK AFTER YOURSELF: The Valencian Region Health Portal <a href="#">Webpage</a>
3	IMSERSO (Spanish abbreviation for "Institute of Seniors and Social Services")	Spain	IMSERSO <a href="http://www.imserso.es/">http://www.imserso.es/</a>
4	REGIONAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE <i>Preventive Care Centres for Seniors</i>	Valencian Region	Regional Department of Social Welfare <a href="http://www.bsocial.qva.es/">http://www.bsocial.qva.es/</a>
5	MADRID TOWN COUNCIL <i>Madrid Health. Active and Healthy Ageing Programme</i>	Madrid Town Council	Madrid Health. Active and Healthy Ageing Programme <a href="#">Webpage</a>
6	ANDALUSIAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT <i>Regional Department of Equality, Health and Social Policies</i>	Andalusian Regional Government	<a href="http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/">http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/</a>

### **3.2 Trainings and educational service for active ageing**

- **UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE:**

- **[PERMANENT UNIVERSITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE](#)**

The UPUA programme is integrated into the framework of specific university education for older adults and responds to such demands as the need for a deeper democratisation of knowledge, a reduction of social inequalities, a greater social involvement of older adults in society, and the enhancement of intra- and intergenerational relationships, all of which will contribute to maintain their quality of life and besides, will enlarge the range of options available for them to continue active life outside their normal working environment.

*Programme description and duration.*

The UPUA programme, designed by teaching staff belonging to the knowledge areas existing at the University of Alicante, as well as by collaborating centres and other specialists, is an open, optional programme which offers courses designed and structured around the following areas: Humanities; Experimental Sciences; Health and Social Action; Social Sciences; and Computing, Image and Sound.

Each student enrolls for the academic year comprised between October and June, in a minimum of 2 subjects with at least 40 teaching (theoretical and practical) hours - each of them equivalent to 4 credits - distributed among the general programme and the timetables of the current academic year.

In order to achieve the Diploma Senior [Senior Diploma], students will have to take 720 hours.

The complementary activities and the programme offered by the Secretariats for University Venues and for Cultural and Linguistic Promotion are excluded when it comes to count credits within the UPUA programme or achieve the accrediting Diploma Senior. Nevertheless, being enrolled in the UPUA academic programme is a sine qua non condition to take part in the above-mentioned activities. The credits obtained with these activities will be incorporated into the student academic report (at the student's request) as Extra-Curricular Free-Choice Credits.

*Timetable*

The preferential timetable of the classes is from 5 to 8 pm., although there are some practical subjects, activities and credits which will be developed in the mornings and on Saturdays.

Classes are distributed in 2 or 3 alternate days taking into account the general programme of the academic year and the subjects students have chosen among those offered in the UPUA programme.

- **MADRID AUTONOMA UNIVERSITY – PROMOTION OF ACTIVE AGEING**

This course has as its purpose to train promoters who can encourage active ageing through the programme “Vivir con Vitalidad® [Living with vitality]” so that it can be disseminated on an individual basis, across the community and in different older adult contexts on a group basis (Community Centres, Seniors’ Centres, Old People’s Homes, etc.) and showing its effectiveness in every case.

The programme contains 5 theoretical modules (17 units in total, 3 ECTS per module) and 1 practical module (2 ECTS) with all the materials online (to be followed on the Moodle platform).

The 5 theoretical modules will be imparted during a six-month period in accordance with a previously fixed calendar (24 WEEKS, TOTAL: ONE SEMESTER).

- **CIUDAD REAL PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT – E-Learning-Based Training and Active Ageing Courses for Popular Universities**

The course will last forty hours and will consist of eight five-hour-long sessions.

- **GERIATRICS AND GERONTOLOGY FOUNDATION [FGG for its initials in Spanish] (Course for the Promotion of Active Ageing)**

- It is a Distance-Learning Course with permanent advice from a tutor and developed through the Plataforma de Teleformación [Teletraining Platform].
- Duration: 150 hours in 2 intensive months
- The documentation required to follow the Course must be directly downloaded from IMSERSO:  
[http://www.imserso.es/imserso\\_01/envejecimiento\\_activo/libro\\_blanco/index.htm](http://www.imserso.es/imserso_01/envejecimiento_activo/libro_blanco/index.htm), in PDF format.
- Students will be able to consult all the information about their marks using the Teletraining Platform in a personal and confidential way.
- Based on the aforesaid documentation, an Assessment Questionnaire has been elaborated for each one of the Units/Chapters that students will have to complete and hand in periodically following the Academic Schedule.
- At the end of the course, students will have to deliver a monographic proposal about a specific Active Ageing Programme, which will subsequently be published by the FGG.

- Each and every student will have a Tutor who will be responsible for the monitoring and supervision of their training and also for clarifying doubts, providing advice and giving them support whenever the said tutor is requested to do so.
- Assessment: Evaluation is carried out throughout the course, which means that students can check their learning level as well as their marks at any time using the Teletraining Platform.
- The Course is free of charge. Those participants who want to obtain a Progress Diploma will pay 9.95€ for the issue and sending of the Certificate.
- **“LA CAIXA” FOUNDATION**  
[http://obrasocial.lacaixa.es/ambitos/home/personasmayores\\_es.html](http://obrasocial.lacaixa.es/ambitos/home/personasmayores_es.html)

It promotes active ageing among our older adults; it favours their social participation and prevents dependence.

### People 3.0

*Health and Well-Being*

[Now, too](#)

[Active and Healthy Ageing](#)

[Waking up with a smile](#)

[Great readers](#)

*Information and Communication Technologies*

[Life stories](#)

*Volunteering and social participation*

- **SPANISH RED CROSS**  
**MADRID RED CROSS (‘REINA SOFÍA’ SENIORS’ CENTRE) ([webpage](#))**

The Active Ageing Project consists in the organisation of various activities/workshops which provide a meeting place where seniors develop initiatives of a socio-cultural nature, enrich their free time, enhance their level of integration into society and receive help to maintain their physical and mental capacities in good condition, thus delaying a potential situation of dependence.

A training space is placed at their disposal where they have the chance to acquire knowledge and skills which allow them to learn healthy lifestyles so that they can lead an active as well as dynamic life.

Workshop oriented to favour the acquisition of healthy habits, understanding health as a state of physical, cognitive, emotional and social well-being. With that aim in mind, we will learn how to take care of our body, our mind, our emotions and our relationships with the ultimate aim of feeling better and ensuring a good quality of life for ourselves. Active Life Workshops

- **UNIVERSITAT POMPEU FABRA – [POSTGRADUATE COURSE ON THE FOSTERING OF ACTIVE AGEING PROJECTS](#)**

The Postgraduate Course on the Fostering of Active Ageing Projects trains specialized professionals in Active Ageing. Nowadays, there are no policies for "active ageing", and virtually no specialist qualified for designing or encouraging them. There are also no socio-cultural animators/facilitators trained in this area of active ageing in order to be able to develop the projects and activities of this speciality in situ.

### **3.3 National and local policy documents supporting active ageing**

DOCUMENT 1: [WHITE BOOK ON ACTIVE AGEING](#)

Scope: National

Content: The White Book on Active Ageing has as its purpose to analyse the new situation of seniors, their concerns, interests and motivations, needs and demands for the design of policies and actions which give responses to their development from a social, cultural and formative point of view. It will be the 'road map' for the policies which are going to be developed in Andalusia during the coming years with regard to older adults' security and training as well as to their participation and contribution to society.

DOCUMENT 2: [REPORT ON SENIORS IN SPAIN. IMSERSO 2012](#)

Scope: National

Content: Every two years since 2000, the *Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales* [Institute of Seniors and Social Services, Sp. abbreviation IMSERSO] has been publishing a Report on seniors in Spain which contains the most significant data about the situation of this population group in our country.

Its content is structured into five chapters. The first four include a set of indicators which constitute the basic and comparable information with the historical series of Reports published in previous years. The first chapter refers to socio-demographic data; the second one to the socio-economic situation, social protection, and relationship with the labour market; the third chapter deals with social participation, lifestyles, socialisation and the way in which people age, and the fourth one has social services as its focus of interest. And, in keeping with the preceding editions, the fifth chapter approaches a current issue, «Seniors and Information Technologies», a topic considered essential at present.

DOCUMENT 3: [THE EDUCATION OF SENIORS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF ACTIVE AGEING. PRINCIPLES AND LINES OF ACTION](#)

Scope: National

Content: Document authored by the Granada University Professor, Mr. Mariano Sánchez Martínez, on the concept of education among seniors.

DOCUMENT 4: [ACTIVE AGEING STRATEGY IN THE VALENCIAN AUTONOMOUS REGION](#)

Scope: Regional

Content: This publication has as its aim to integrate the efforts made to help citizens age actively and healthily, and additionally seeks to offer the healthcare and attention required to improve our seniors' quality of life.

DOCUMENT 5: [ACTION PLAN FOR THE PROMOTION OF ACTIVE AGEING IN BISCAY \[BASQUE COUNTRY\] 2010-2011](#)

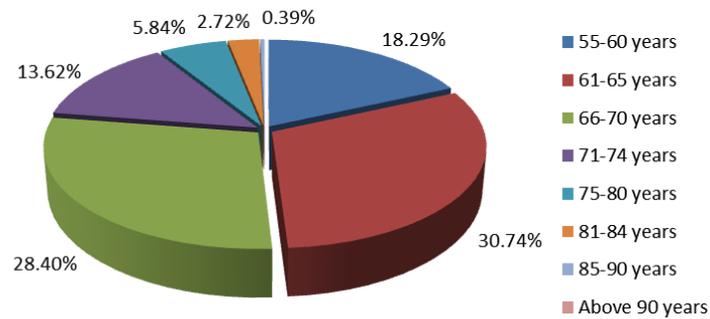
Scope: Regional

Content: The purpose sought with this document is to create the conditions under which individuals wish and learn to age actively, insofar as it is something which affects not only every administration level and context but also society as a whole. This document is expected to become a useful tool thanks to which it will be possible to support and orient the efforts of the actors involved during the next few years and also to trigger a true revolution in the way to understand old age.

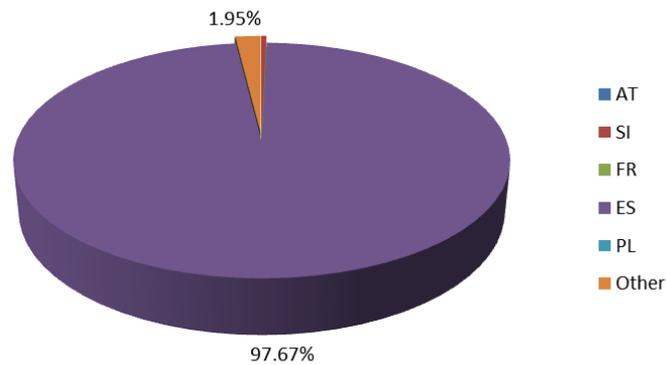
## 4 Results of the quantitative survey with older adults

### 4.1 Who participated in the survey?

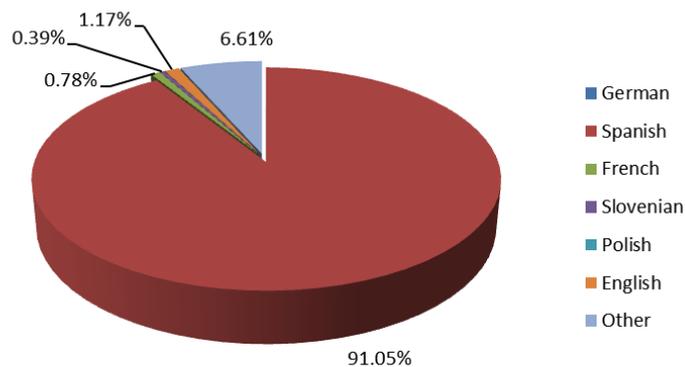
- Age



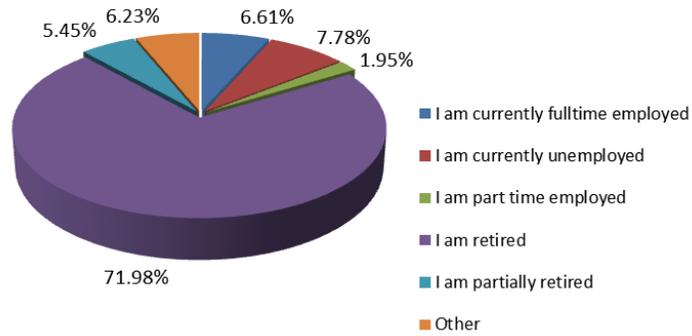
- Nationality



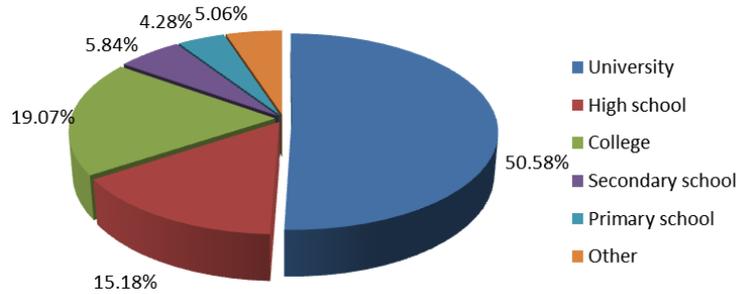
- Mother tongue



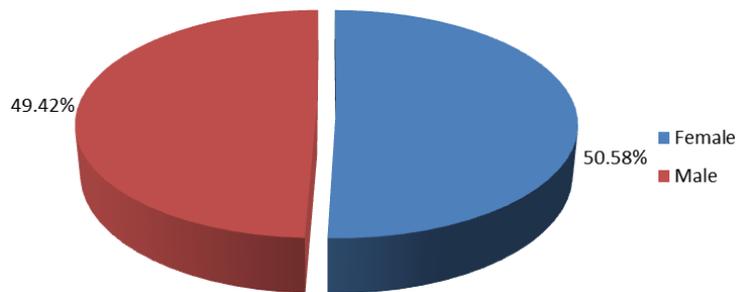
- Working status



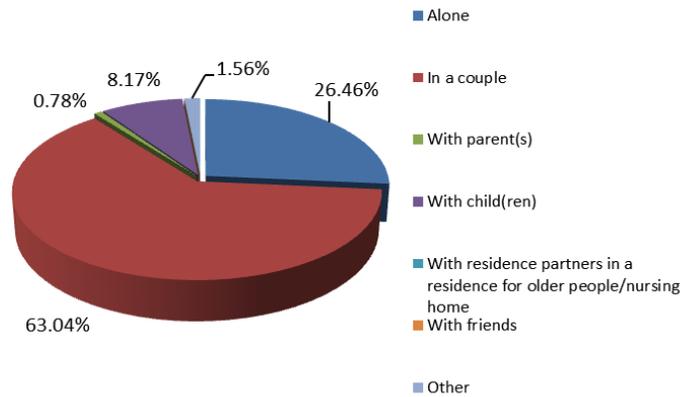
- Highest level of education



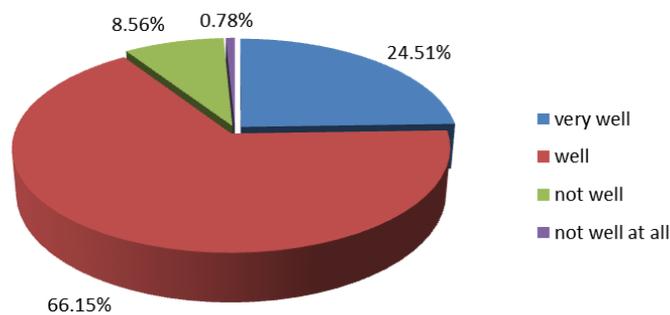
- Gender



• Living condition

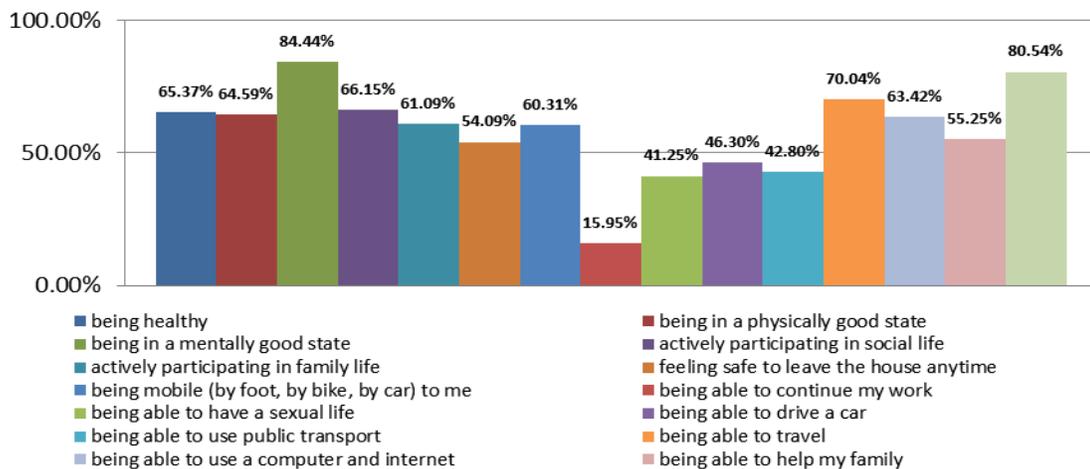


• Income/pension

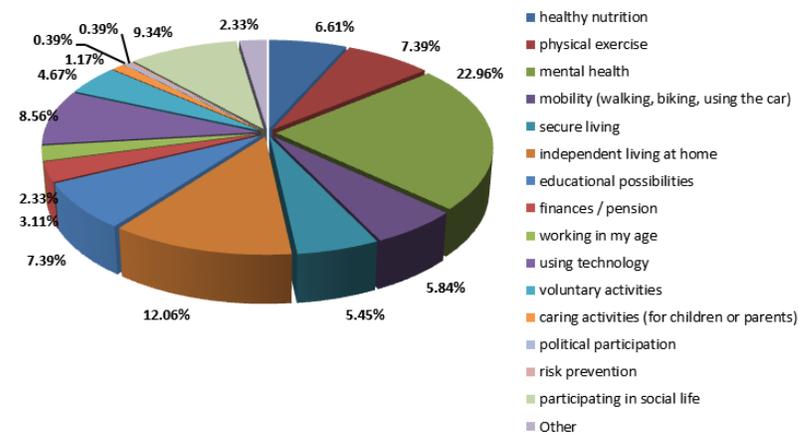


**4.2 Opinions about active ageing and information seeking behaviour**

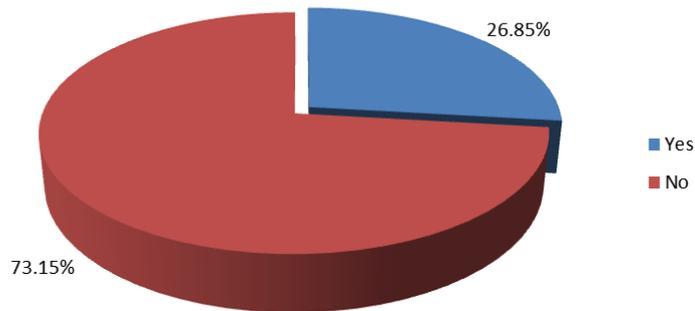
• What is active ageing for you?



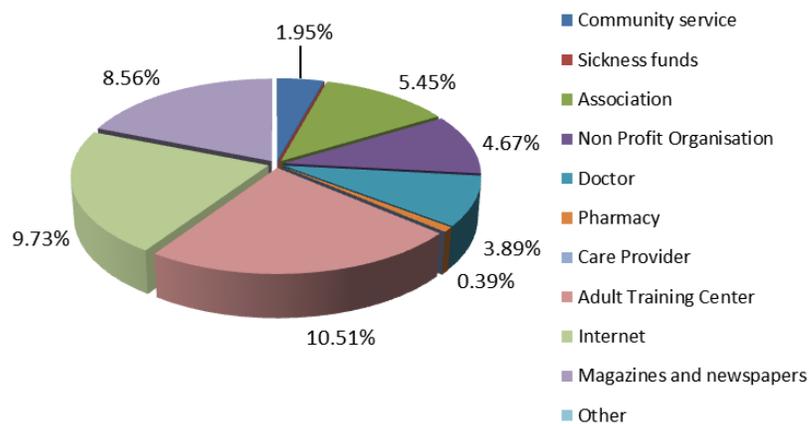
- Please indicate your main need or challenge with active ageing you have at the moment.



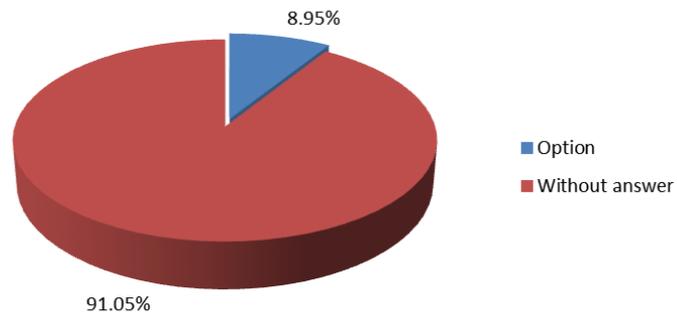
- Have you ever sought information about active ageing or one of the topics connected to active ageing for you at an association, a formal institution, the local community or somewhere else outside of your family and friends?



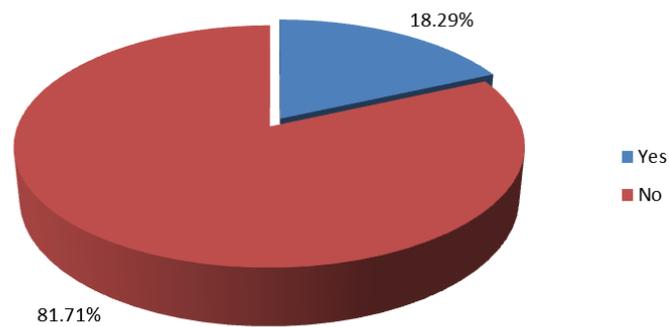
- [if 11=yes] Please indicate where you looked for information about active ageing?



- [if 11=yes] If you used the internet for looking for information about active ageing, which websites did you visit?

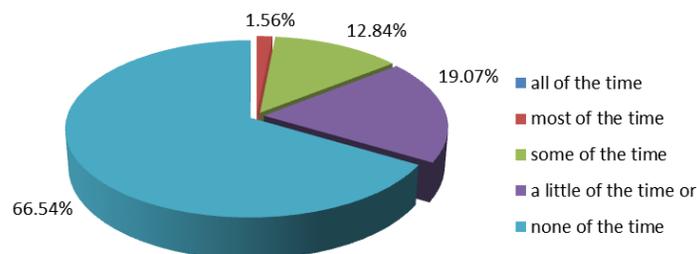


- Have you ever used informal advice on active ageing with friends, neighbours or family members?

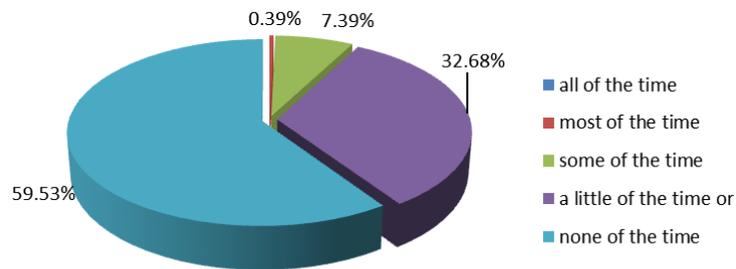


### 4.3 Literacy of older adults

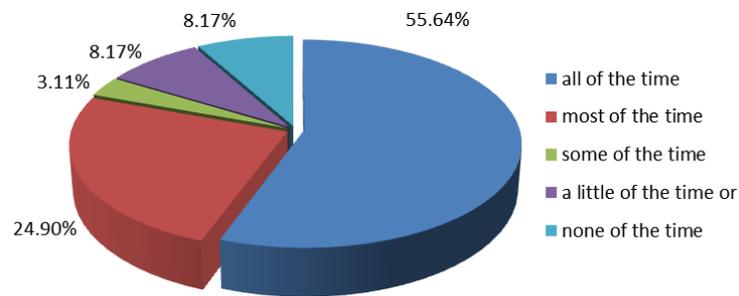
- How often do you have someone like a family member, friend or caregiver, help you read information material?



- How often do you have difficulty understanding written information?



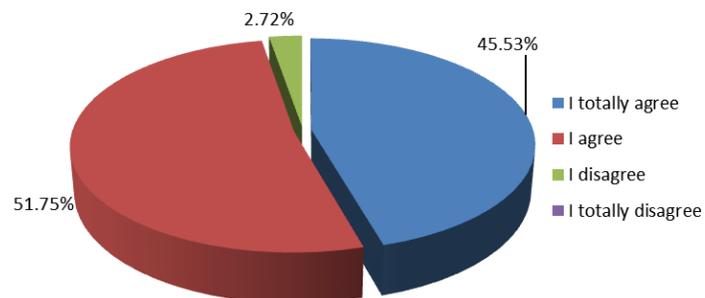
- How confident are you filling out forms by yourself?



#### 4.4 Technology literacy of older adults

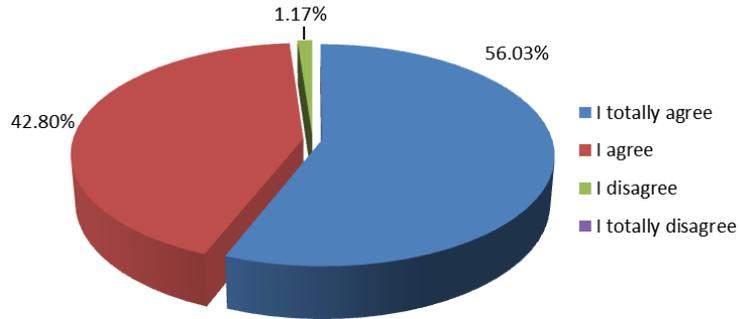
##### Technology knowledge

- I understand the basic principles of the internet. (Technology knowledge)

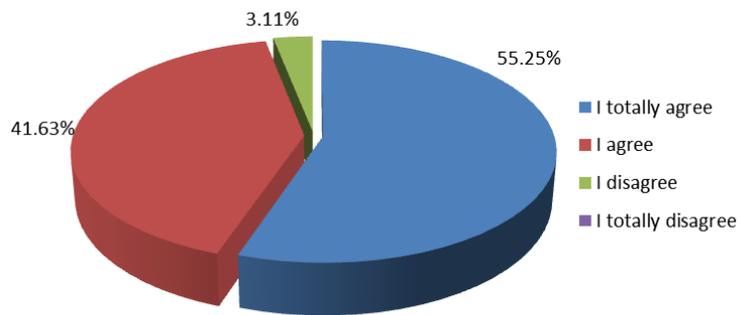


**Technology application/attitude**

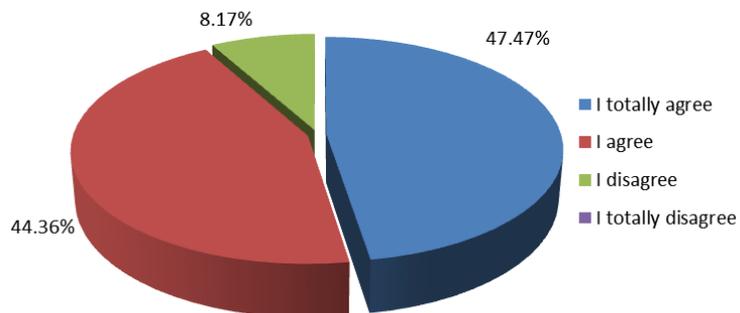
- I use the internet in daily life. (Technology application)



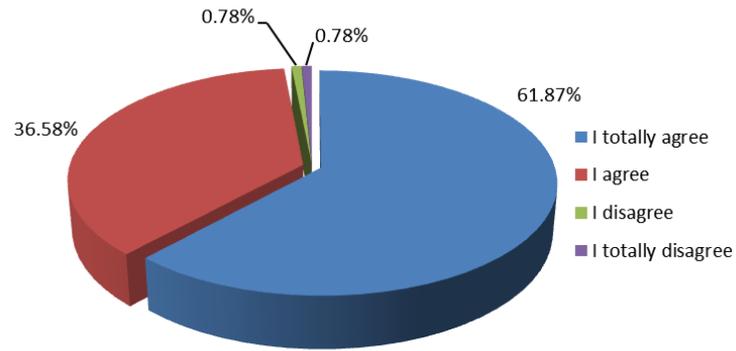
- I read and collect information online. (Technology attitude)



- I share information or communicate with others online. (Technology attitude)

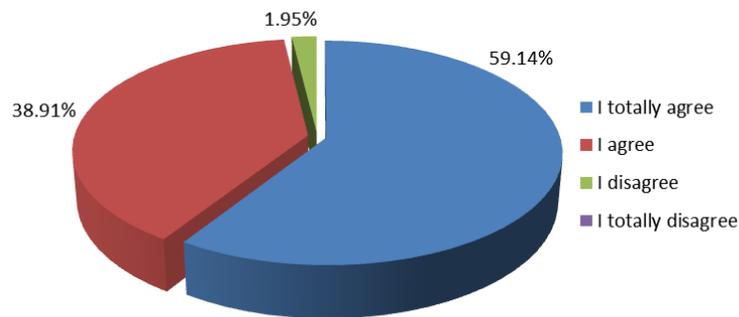


- I like learning to use or using the internet. (Technology attitude)

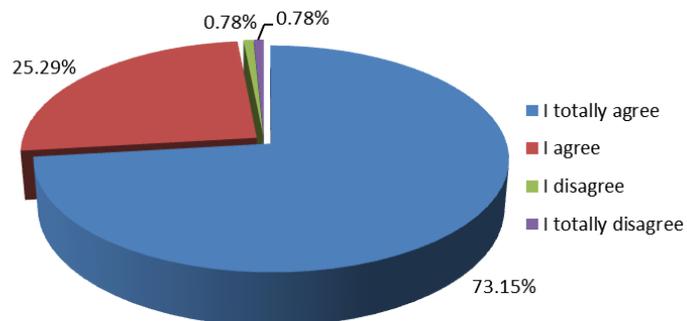


**Technology resources**

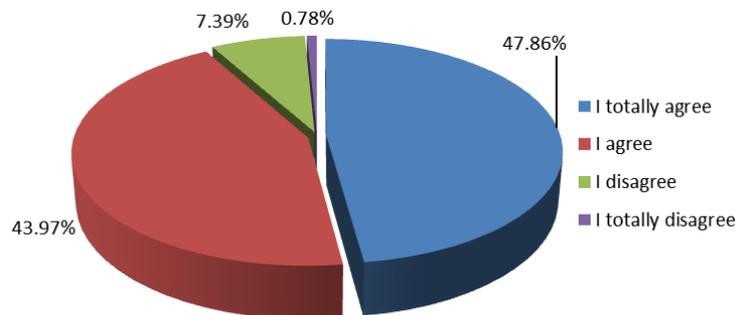
- I believe to be capable of finding information online. (Technology resources)



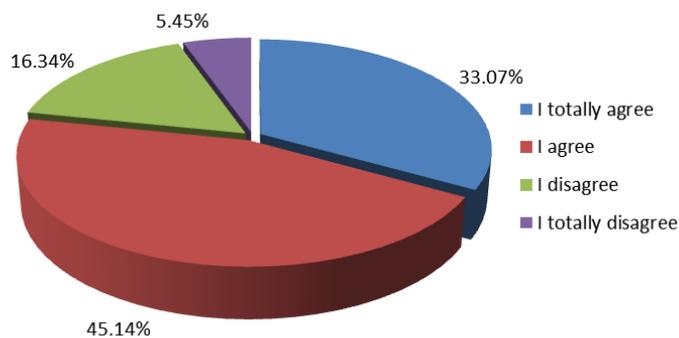
- I have a digital device with internet access at home – computer, pad, smart phone. (Technology resources)



- I can easily access and use the internet at a public access point – library, coffee house, community center. (Technology resources)

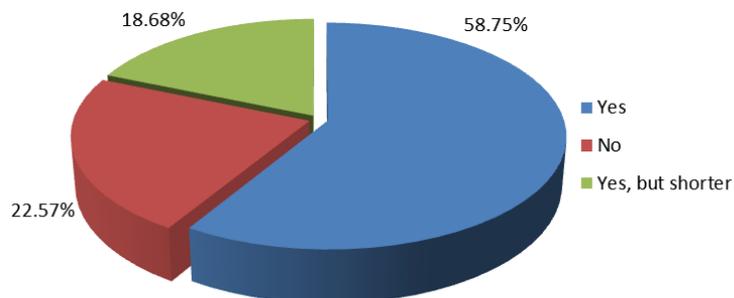


- I have someone at hand who can help me with the digital device if I have questions. (Technology resources)

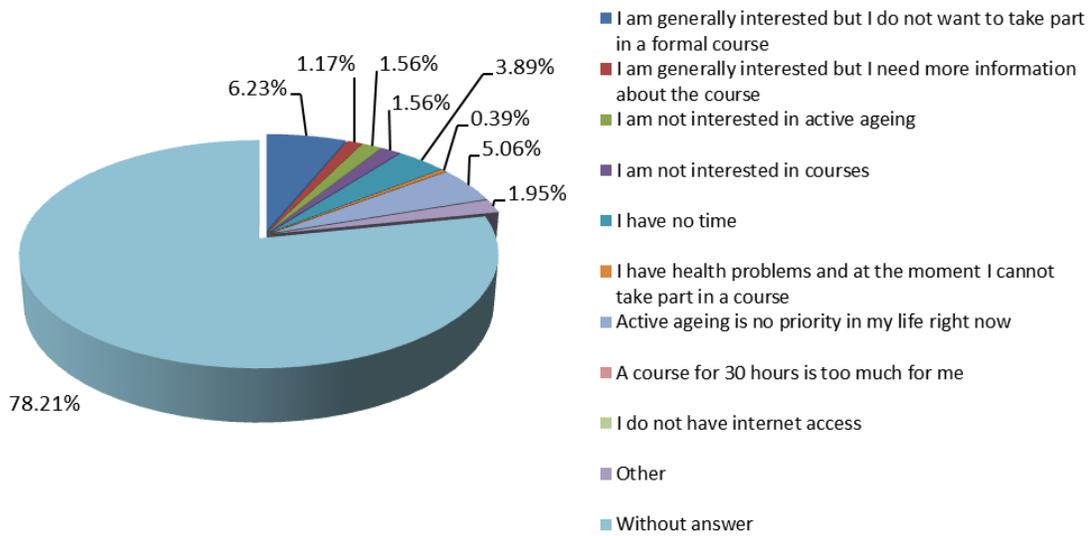


### 4.5 Interest in an active ageing course

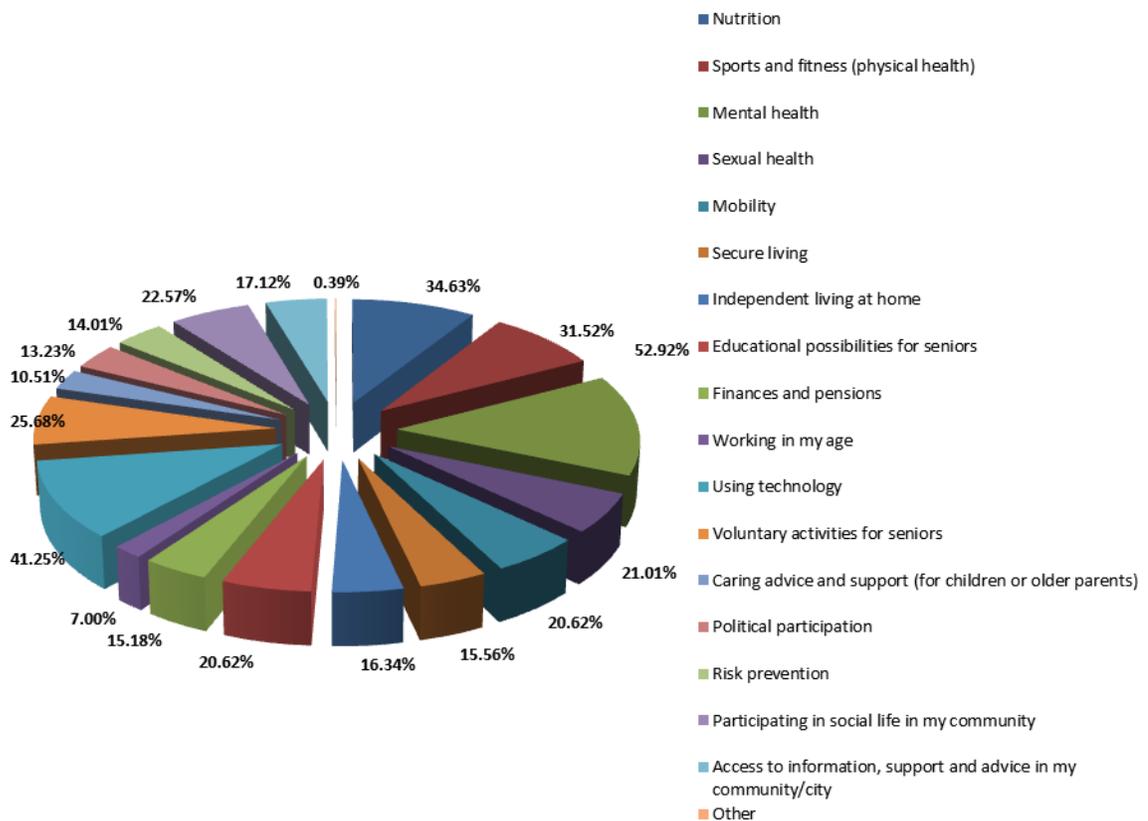
- Would you like to take part in this free course on active ageing?



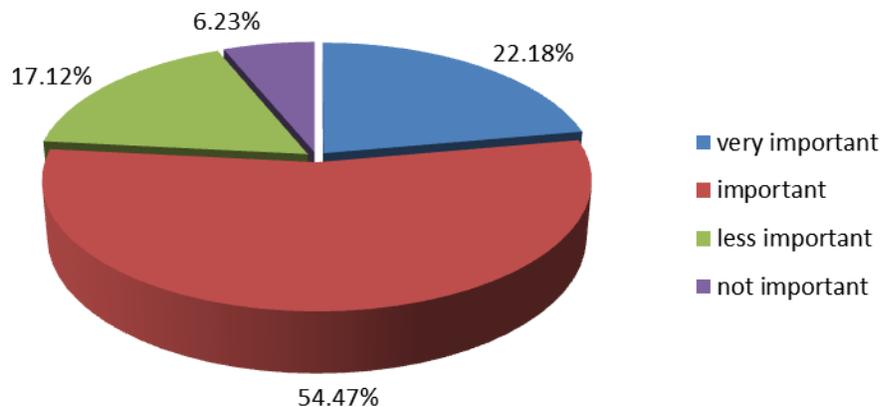
- If your answer is “No”, please indicate why you do not want to participate.



- If your answer is “Yes”, please let us know about which topics you would like to hear and learn more about in a course.



- How important would you rate a course about active ageing in your life right now?



#### **4.6 Conclusions from the survey**

The results obtained from the survey at UPUA-Alicante support the global view that we have about the older adults who attend Permanent University training programmes.

It is worth highlighting that the highest proportion of participating students corresponds to those who are between 60 and 70 years old –they represent almost 60% of all the students who answered the questionnaire.

It also deserves to be mentioned that they are actually interested in the topic of ‘Active Ageing’ but with a special focus on aspects and “activities which make them feel better.” However, when we talk to them about ‘Health’ issues, this does not seem to be so appealing to them, most probably because that term evokes the idea of ‘Disease’ in their minds.

The questionnaire results additionally introduce an important nuance, namely, that the group of interviewees represented by “students linked to UPUA” tends to be formed by older adults who are already involved in training and thus have a certain active predisposition to take part in it.

With regard to the active ageing, respondents say that it means to be in a mentally good state and the main needs or challenges with active ageing they have at the moment are mental health and independent living at home.

Among the proposed areas of information about active ageing, they have ever sought information at adult training centres, associations or non-profit organisations.

Concerning literacy, most of 68% of respondents are independent and do not need support or help to read information material and only 0.39% of respondents have difficulty to understand written information most of the time.

The survey shows that a large proportion of respondents, 97%, understand the basic principles of the internet. 98% of the respondents use the internet in daily life and 97% read and collect information online. Therefore, technologies are integrated in their daily life. However, taking into account our experience, around 25% of our 1,030 students use regularly Internet and would be the group interested in online active ageing courses.

They have a positive attitude towards technology because 92% of respondents share information or communicate with others online and 98% of them like learning to use or using the internet.

Concerning technology resources, the results obtained prove that almost 98% of respondents believe they are capable of finding information online and almost all of them (98%) have a digital device with internet access at home – computer, pad, smart phone.

Regarding their interest in an active ageing course, 59% of the respondents would like to take part in this free course on active ageing. The most prominent areas to which respondents would like to hear and learn more about in a course would be finance and pensions, using technologies and independent living at home.

Finally, 76% of the respondents consider important a course about active ageing in their life right now.

## 5 Results of the qualitative interviews with older adults

The purpose of the interviews was to deepen insights from the questionnaire survey (subjective view of active ageing, information seeking behaviour, literacy and digital literacy, and acceptance/rejection of a course on active ageing) and to screen older adults who could act as peer trainers later on.

### 5.1 Who was interviewed?

No.	Date	Duration in minutes	Female/Male	Age	Position towards active ageing
1	2014/07/21	3'25"	Female	74	Positive
2	2014/07/21	6'23"	Male	66	Positive
3	2014/07/21	5'38"	Female	82	Positive
4	2014/07/21	6'44"	Male	76	Positive
5	2014/07/21	5'35"	Female	73	Positive
6	2014/07/21	6'45"	Male	67	Positive
7	2014/07/21	10'39"	Female	58	Positive
8	2014/07/21	6'35"	Female	69	Positive
9	2014/07/21	9'32"	Female	69	Positive

### 5.2 Meaning of active ageing

- What does the word “active” in “active ageing” mean to you?

#### No. 1:

“For me, it means to continue to be useful for society, that we must continue to learn, that we must exercise ourselves in all the spheres of society, both from a civic point of view and politically and in any other sense... otherwise, that’s what active ageing really means to me, but, in my opinion, society does not perceive it like that; society perceives it in the sense that seniors must do things like, a bit ...above all physical exercise, when it’s true that we need to do physical exercise, but I don’t think it is the most essential thing at this age, only physical exercise, for me, mental exercise, to carry on learning, is much more important.”

#### No. 3:

“The word ‘active’ means that once you have entered a particular stage of life, usually after having already cut yourself off from professional activities, you are facing a new way of living, of living away from those problems and then a large void suddenly appears. If that void is not refilled, if you don’t replace it with a certain amount of activity, you can fall into the temptation of accommodating into a relaxing kind of life, which is not, I don’t think is positive to achieve an ageing which develops in a positive

way; therefore, carrying out some specific activities which force you to be in touch with society, with friends, inside a group, to my mind, that would be the way to live actively during that period, together with a certain amount of physical exercise, depending on the possibilities in accordance with your age.”

**No. 6:**

“Well, in my opinion, there are no new formulas in these topics; we go on with the idea of being physically well and intellectually alert. I think it is essential because we very often forget that health must come first. If we are not physically well, we can hardly function intellectually, I... for me, it’s an essential issue. To my mind, the essential thing is to take advantage of the opportunities that we have in front of us every day.”

**No. 8:**

“For me, the word ‘active’ means participating, participation in every sense and participating in projects, participating in classes and, in this respect, the Permanent University has given us a great possibility to do so.”

**No. 9:**

“It’s said by the word itself: ‘active.’ It means doing things permanently, being with people, having the desire to learn things, moving, having interests in everything. The fact that you’re older doesn’t mean that you’re no longer interested in anything; on the contrary, at least in my case, I have... well, I’ve always had interests, but now I have the possibility and I’m very keen on remaining active.”

- After retirement still one third of a person’s life lies ahead of that person. Older adults step into retirement in a better physical and mental shape than ever before. How would you assess the degree of activity today in your generation compared to previous generations? (your parents or grandparents)
  - In which ways are you more or less active than your parents or grandparents? Please compare and give examples.

**No. 2:**

“I think that the activity level could be the same, what happens which makes that activity different is that in the past there was a sort of ‘slavery’ (obligation), especially in relation to the family, associations faced serious difficulties, going out with others was hard, studying away from home was hard and now things are completely different, aren’t they? There is a mental part and a physical part, the issue of physical possibilities is... they have totally changed and the mental part, where we can take part as we are doing in university activities and other kinds of activities like associations of anything, they can be gastronomic, photographic, poetic, you name it; that would have been unthinkable at the time of my parents or of my grandfather.”

**No. 4:**

“It was very different for my parents. My father was always busy; he was short of time for everything. He painted, he wrote, he was very active. My mother was really very calm, she was happy with her housework and so on and then, I think we have changed now but we’ve got more opportunities at present, a woman is always active, I mean, they don’t let you, you have to keep moving at home, you have to do everything; we have other opportunities though. I have recommended the Permanent University to very many people because, for me, it gave me the life. I stopped working and then, I, for example, I knew nothing about art, I have done secondary education, I studied to become a midwife. Then, the possibility of doing things with people, for me, having worked with people so much, having communicated with them... liking the human being so much, the Permanent University gives me the chance to mix with plenty of people and, besides, it is enriching for you because you realise that there is not a single truth. Hence the difference, people used to stay inside their circles, the previous generations, in their circles, their towns or cities, a context, and now this allows you to move, to explore other worlds, to mix with other people. Activity has been changing over the years in my case, from the professional stage to the current stage as a retiree; I’m actively participating in other experiences of a different sort of active life.”

**No. 7:**

“It has been a significant evolution, a great evolution indeed; to start with, reaching this age in a good physical as well as mental condition becomes essential, of course. For instance, my parents’ generation, well, you see, in my family, fortunately, I have been extremely lucky to have a good, I mean, quite a good environment... well, not only academic, but also with interests in many things, in many disciplines, then, well, look, in the case of my family, by way of example, being up to date meant going to the library, for instance, reading specialised journals, which is what was available at the time. For example, now, in order to remain up to date, I mean, since the development of the new technologies, which are so helpful, it allows you to stay up to date, if you are specialised in something, you can visit a blog, you can consult, well, opinions of highly specialised people who additionally share their knowledge with everyone else, you don’t need to be physically in the same place, so many specialists, well, that implies so much... it makes such a great difference and it entails so much more convenience.”

**No. 9:**

“Things have changed to a great extent, because we have thus also evolved mentally and therefore, what I think now has nothing to do with the thoughts of my grandmother, even though she was very active. Perhaps, she believed that being active meant working at home, cooking, whereas we see it now as a way to acquire things for our mental enrichment, because we must always stay functional. In other words, a change has occurred, let’s say, in the way to approach, apart from the fact

that statistically a person who is 60 or 70 years old at present is totally different from someone from previous generations. A 60-year-old person was much older than nowadays.”

- In which ways has your level of activity changed during your lifetime, in different phases of your life, in retirement?

**No. 2:**

“Of course, because, besides, time has increased to a large extent, well, it is practically a third of life that we still have ahead of us to live, isn't it? Then, what I think is that we are getting ready to really live that ‘freedom,’ and not then again from the ‘yoke’ of work, from any kind of work, I'm not only talking about ourselves at work, I mean, even at home and so on and so forth, you see, it is a real liberation from our responsibilities and so on, you must be prepared for that; you need to think about the way to do it, don't you?”

**No. 2:**

“Well, in my particular case, I am a very active person and what I previously used to do was to reconcile the responsibilities at work with those at home and the so to speak ‘amateur’ responsibilities related to doing things that I liked. When retirement comes, it means a liberation, not to say how I organise myself from now on, no; I already have other responsibilities, if I already had a son... and now I have a grandson, which means that my responsibilities are lower, but they have increased with respect to another... or I want them to grow in another direction because, in my view, from everything we have learnt throughout our lives, we must return part of it, or possibly all of it, even more and also a little... Jacques Delors already said in his White Book about life and employment that we had to study throughout life, not only during the ‘active’ period of our working life but all lifelong. So there's no better moment to dive into the pool of new studies and so on.”

**No. 7:**

“Well, in principle, for me, the word ‘active’ is a very positive word, personally it implies plenty of things because I am a highly positive person, so it means collaboration, collaboration at all levels, professional, personal; it means getting involved, involved in many tasks; it means being socially involved at the Permanent University, not only as a student, which is done with great pleasure and with a high degree of participation, but also, well, in the projects, something that is very interesting because, it allows you to meet people from other countries, we talk about dynamics of great interest and, if you like education and participation, well, it is an ideal context.”

**No. 9**

“I’ve always liked activity. I’ve always tried to be active, the only thing is work occupied a lot of my time before and, now, I focus the activity on myself, because I didn’t use to have time in the past and so, all the activity that I carry out, I do it to enrich myself, because as a result of that, in turn, I can transmit it to everyone around me.”

**5.3 Examples of active ageing from the interviewees**

- What do you personally do for active ageing?
  - In which ways or where do you get information about active ageing? Please give examples.

**No. 1:**

“I am registered at the University Programme for Older Adults at the University of Alicante, the Permanent University, and it’s there that I keep on learning, that I remain active both mentally and physically because we socialise there, we learn all sorts of activities, of subjects and that ... is where I have learnt what active ageing represents in the context where I live, I still have plenty of activity actually, not, not so much at a household level as at... a public level, at a social level; the truth is I have neglected the household context to a large extent.”

**No. 3:**

“Well, specifically, me, apart from the training courses that I chose, well, I joined a theatre group, I joined a poetry group, ... it’s not about you doing it well or badly, it doesn’t matter, but it has brought me satisfaction, it has forced me to do myself up more, to go out more often, in one word, to socialise, to make a lot of friends that I didn’t have before and all this makes your horizon broaden to such an extent that you don’t feel that you are getting old, but that you are ageing in an ‘agreeable’ way.”

**No. 5:**

“Well, this starts from the assumption that when this moment comes, you have several hobbies, and it is the moment when you have time to develop them, then I, in my personal case, I have activities such as photography, I like to paint, I like video-editing. So this allows me to fill life with a number of things where I am actively involved, instead of having a passive position before the evolution of events; on the other hand, I participate as a student at Alicante’s Permanent University for Older Adults and there I also find a way to learn things that are of interest to me because I’m still interested in things and, at the same time, I cultivate and increase my... the number of friends, which also obliges me to be a little more in contact with society.”

**No. 8:**

“Let me think, getting involved in many things, I try to be with groups, in a permanent attempt to enrich myself personally and, in my view, we all simultaneously enrich one another by participating in different activities with groups. Beyond the activities in the training context, in the fun or the cultural context, I belong to a volunteer group which forms part of the ‘bookcrossing’ (book release) movement in which, together with some partners, we have set up a network of places where book release and exchange is facilitated; that forms part of cultural volunteering. It is a highly rewarding activity and then you see how people participate, they leave books and then they collect books and, well, you sort of monitor what comes in and out, and it is very interesting and participative, people are very keen on it.”

**No. 9:**

“Very important, I am at the Permanent University of the University of Alicante and so I try all the projects that I can, that are offered by the University, I try to join them because it enriches me to a great extent, I’m learning loads of things, I’m learning to manage a bit better because before I didn’t use to, I learn a lot in the classes..., whether it is art, humanities, what I’m keen on, I enrol in, then I do the course, besides I do trekking, which is also important for me, because I feel well doing that exercise and furthermore, not only that, you’re also with groups of people, which is very... as I said before, for me, it’s so important to keep in touch with people, to transmit what you know, and to collect everything that other people transmit to you.”

- Active ageing can be connected with individuals and groups. Which do you prefer and why?

**No. 1:**

“It can be done individually, but I think it is much more difficult; for me, active ageing must be a much more social issue, it is much more related to society, to a face-to-face with others, doing it on your own is much harder; I believe it is much better to do it in groups on the basis of volunteering, like the way I am doing it at the Older Adults’ University and continue to learn, remain active but differently from what we used to do in the past above all.”

**No. 4:**

“I am of the opinion that it must be done within a group. I have a German mind-set. I take up physical exercise, and I did it alone at home, two days a week at least, but, what can I say? It’s much more rewarding with people, and we laugh and have a good time, and you feel less lazy to do it. I am in favour of developing group activities above all.”

**No. 8:**

“It’s undoubtedly better to do it collectively. I am convinced that it is much more productive, more satisfactory.”

**5.4 Interest in becoming peers or participating in an active ageing course**

- We want to develop a course on active ageing. If the course on active ageing was already finished, what would it have to look like for you to take part? (e.g. structure, contents, time of the day, duration etc.)

**No. 3:**

“As for the timetable, I don’t think that is a problem for seniors. We’ve got more time, that’s one of the things of which we have plenty, it causes me no trouble to have one timetable or another. Well, I think 40- or 50-hour courses is the most advisable thing.”

**No. 5:**

“Well, me, since I am one of those who like to participate and create, to carry out something, I would be more prone to take part, to enrol in those courses where I could have the chance to perform some of the actions that I like. Perhaps I shy away a bit more from those courses which force me to take a passive attitude, listening to one lecture after another about a topic which may be very interesting but which, ultimately, because of my personality, I prefer one where I can develop something... some activity which is more creative or which is able to exploit my skills to some extent so that I can put them into practice.”

**No. 5:**

“Well, in my case, I have found it. The truth is I’ve found all sorts of things. Who would have told me that I was going to enrol in an Astronomy course, or, for example, when I took one about the European Union, but, I mean, this is going to be too much for me, but then I learnt lots of things, there I haven’t got, I haven’t got this... what happens is that people need a lot of self-help, it is there that one can... and, besides, look, it’s difficult for a person to say “I need help,” but if that person finds it and faces people, if they receive that help indirectly.”

**No. 7:**

“Yes, why not? Let’s see, concerning the structure, well, okay, I’d do, depending on the levels to which the course is addressed, because there are always people who are more specialised than others, so, well, starting from a minimum basis, I mean, I would structure it according to the level, with regard to the structure, the content, of course, I would like something, well, to some extent what is done by the Permanent University, that is, quite... well, it depends, not only a theoretical part, with a practical part too,

because I would find it very interesting if it offered flexibility, in other words, if people could... in short, I would like it to be highly participative, then also workshops, visits, well, somehow, just that, being highly participative, giving everyone the chance to express their opinions within a suitable environment.”

**No. 7:**

“The duration, for me it seems very advisable, 40 or 50 hours seems highly appropriate to me because it is a period which provides us with enough time to know if the subject is being properly approached; there is fun, there is communication, there is a fluent exchange and we can take advantage of it all.”

- We would like to develop a course which can be held by an older adult himself/herself. We call this “peer trainer” which means that it is someone from the age group of the participants who holds the course. What do you think a peer trainer should be like for such a course?

**No. 5:**

“In principle, for me, it wouldn’t matter if the course instructor was younger or older than the seniors, that would be unimportant to me, what matters is that they know what... that they know exactly what they can teach and that they make the course interesting, therefore, this would not be relevant in my opinion. That is to say, in principle, the issue of age, or even the aspect of gender... receiving training from a person of the opposite sex does not represent any inconvenience for me.

**No. 8:**

“I wouldn’t mind at all if the instructor were younger provided that they are well-trained in the subject that they are going to teach and that they teach in an appealing way, so that you can enjoy it, I wouldn’t mind at all.”

**No. 9:**

“It would be interesting but, on the other hand, the fact that they belong to another generation, with a different way of thinking, maybe there’s a feedback which can be very interesting for people from both groups.”

- What do you think of the statement: “We learn best from someone who is similar to us” (has the same age, background, gender)?

**No. 6:**

“I don’t think the instructor would necessarily have to be the same age, but he would have to be someone of a certain age. To my mind, teachers of a certain age transmit, say, more confidence. It’s worth considering that, as we grow older, we become more and more demanding, then it’s hard for someone to make us change an already formed opinion; therefore, the qualification of the instructor, of the teacher, becomes

fundamental, however, it can be said that I'm thoroughly integrated into the Permanent University, I enrol in quite a few courses every year and with a high level of satisfaction, I think. In my opinion, the teaching staff's level is suitable, and that's important."

- Would you be interested in teaching a course or one module yourself? Which one?

**No. 5:**

"Participating in such a course, well it would be interesting to participate, what happens is, of course, seniors, if we are not trained to impart a particular kind of teaching, maybe we confine ourselves to tell our personal experiences, and I don't know if that would be enough for a course like this."

**No. 2:**

"Well, I, the question takes me a little by surprise but thinking that a course of... would it be face-to face? that is, of people, would it be taught by experienced people? I would do it globally, I mean, with other people, not only one, one would be for example to encourage people to remain active, another one to explain the experiences that each one of us has had, and we all together could develop a series of what is known as a 'brainstorming' to gather a number of aspects that can be of interest to other people who wish to join the course; I think that the Permanent University, in this case, Alicante's Permanent University for Older Adults would almost be a previous, I mean, there should be a previous course before you enrolled so that I could really see where I should or how I could develop, I don't think we all are good for everything."

**No. 6:**

"Yes, yes, I understand the question. Look, after I retired, one of the things which I have missed the most is precisely that: teaching. I spent 10 years at Miguel Hernández University teaching students who were doing the last years of the engineering degree. Really... It is a really complex topic, very difficult, but at the same time it brings plenty of satisfaction. Me, when the classes started in February, I always said, classes are starting in February, oh, my God! It was a true challenge to start teaching all over again. The truth is I was already enthusiastic by the second day, it was pure adrenaline... I think, I think it is very important indeed. And probably, in my opinion, society very often leaves aside seniors too early, society should take advantage of them in aspects like training; that's a fact; it is obvious that, when we grow older, we don't have the same physical impulses, but we do have our well-trained intellectual capabilities; we are more reflexive, but I think senior citizens' professional experience should be exploited by society."

- What do you think about "online learning/e-learning"? In which ways do you have experience with it?

**No. 1:**

"I haven't done any online courses and the truth is that I believe they can prove useful and also that they are interesting but, to my mind, it is better to do it in a way... for me, being physically in the classrooms, for seniors, is much better because we need to share our time with one another, staying always at home is a problem for seniors."

**No. 3:**

"I must admit I haven't used it yet. I have never participated. No, and in this respect, my opinion coincides with that of other partners of mine, we believe that seniors need to be with people. If you stay at home, and you know that social networks take a lot of your time, because you can sit before a computer and, suddenly, one hour has gone by, and well, you haven't even realised; no, that's not good. Seniors must go out and be with other people, of our age, or young people or whoever it is, but being with people."

**No. 5:**

"I haven't participated in any of them, possibly because the development of all these courses took place after the period during which I found myself in the learning stage. At present, I think that... taking part in such courses wouldn't be positive at all because... for two reasons, first because they are not trained to follow a course of this kind regularly; and second... in second place, because it forces them to stay at home for some time, and it is very difficult, to have the willpower to keep track of that work every day and, furthermore, in my view, teaching has to be more lively, teaching programmes, the instructor must know how to transmit and encourage, and to give force to what is being said, and in online teaching programmes, well, they are very cold, very distant; I appreciate it much more when there is an active participation of monitors who give warmth and strength to teaching."

**No. 6:**

"No, no, for me, the issue of social relationships because, after all, training is a social relationship, virtually, maybe it goes with another generation; it's not easy for me actually. That is to say, I don't understand... I have relatives who have found a girlfriend through the internet, I don't quite understand it, I mean: how do you do that? Then I think that the essential thing in the training context is physical contact, visual contact, the teacher must look at students and the students must look at the teacher, and there has to be some feeling, there must be communication."

**No. 7:**

"Not yet, not yet. But the door is still open, I mean, e-learning has great advantages. For instance, what you said before about the physical location, you don't need to be in a specific place, you simply have direct access through a screen. It has great advantages. It has some drawbacks too, of course, but I think they can be solved, for

example, the aspect of socialisation, well, it is advisable, but there could also be... that could mean possible hindrances without a doubt, but there are ways to overcome such obstacles. For instance, periodical meetings, if that were possible, so solutions exist for that type of problem. I think it is quite interesting.”

## **5.5 Conclusions from the interviews**

For our group, the word “active” in “active ageing” has a positive sense. It means to continue to be useful for society, to continue learning and to participate in all the spheres of society, both from a civic point of view and in any other sense. For them, it means participation in a wide sense.

They are more active than their parents or grandparents. It has been a significant evolution, a great evolution indeed; to start with, reaching this age in a good physical as well as mental condition becomes essential. Statistically a person who is 60 or 70 years old at present is totally different from someone from previous generations. A 60-year-old person was much older than nowadays.

In their case, the level of activity has been changing over the years, from the professional stage to the current stage as a retiree. Now they are actively participating in other experiences of a different sort of active life.

For active ageing, they, personally, are registered at the University Programme for Older Adults at the University of Alicante, where they remain active both mentally and physically. They are enrolled in training courses but also in theatre, poetry and cinema groups, projects and a wide variety of activities.

Although active ageing can be connected with individuals, they prefer groups because it offers a much more social issue and it is also much more rewarding and satisfactory. They consider that doing it on your own is much harder.

Regarding the course, they consider that 40 or 50 hours seems highly appropriate. For them, in principle, it wouldn't matter if the course instructor was younger or older than seniors, what matters is that they know exactly what they can teach and that they make the course interesting. The issue of age, or even the aspect of gender, receiving training from a person of the opposite sex does not represent any inconvenience for them.

Concerning e-learning, they haven't done any online courses. They consider that it is very difficult to have the willpower to keep track of that work every day and, furthermore, in their view, teaching has to be more lively, and online teaching programmes are very cold, very distant; they appreciate much more when there is an active participation of monitors who give warmth and strength to teaching. However, they consider e-learning has great advantages and suggest the blended learning as a proposal.

## 6 Results of the focus group discussions

### 6.1 Results of Focus Group 1 with older adults

Date of the focus group	Duration	Number of participants
July 28 <sup>th</sup> 2014	120 minutes	10

The group is made up of 10 people, 4 men and 6 women. Of all these group members, 8 are retired and only 2 are still developing their professional activity.

Their ages are comprised between 82 years (the oldest woman) and 46 years (the youngest man). Most of the group members (6) are situated between 65 and 74 years of age, whereas only 2 exceed that age and another 2 are below 60.

As for the socio-occupational profile, except for one woman who has performed tasks at home as a Housewife, the other 9 members have developed paid professional activities outside the home in various entities (banks, lawyers' practices, airlines, marketing, industry, healthcare, university training and public institutions).

This is a group of older adults belonging to the world of the "Permanent University" who are involved in a training process for their personal and cultural development without professionalising aims.

It is also worth highlighting that, although all the group members are now residents in Alicante, some of them actually come from other Spanish autonomous regions such as Madrid, Castile-La Mancha, Basque Country, Andalusia or Murcia (and also from the other provinces of the Valencian Region, i.e. Valencia and Castellon).

Chairwoman: Concepción Bru Ronda. Director of the Permanent University.

#### **Results Part 1: Active Ageing**

- What are your attitudes towards active ageing and the main problems?

The concept that international institutions (EU/WHO) have of active ageing sometimes does not match what the citizen feels; for the latter, AA means participating in the social, economic or political life. This is at times not of interest for the institutions that promote AA, and we had the chance to experience it during the celebration of the 2012 European Year of Active Ageing, where many actions were undertaken to promote AA. However, seniors were encouraged to participate as spectators of events, not as promoters of initiatives and even less if those initiatives had some relevance with regard to politics, society or protest. The emphasis seemed to be focused on complacency and on looking for seniors' votes in elections rather than on their real involvement with proposals and all the contributions that they could make thanks to their experiences.

Feeling useful or participative throughout our life and being entitled to have lifelong education and training.

That people see us as we are: various types of older adults with different realities who want to have a full (social, educational and economic) life continuity after retirement and going on with life in all senses, because there is no reason why activity has to finish when one retires.

As a matter of fact, we think that there is generally a negative culture associated with the ageing process.

This means that seniors and retirees are perceived as second-class citizens in some cases and social spheres; they are transparent and invisible people.

However, in our opinion, twenty-first-century Spanish seniors are active individuals who wish to be present in life as well as in society. It is necessary to carry on working in an effort to achieve integration and fighting to make a contribution to society and thus avoiding exclusion, though. It is also true that older adults are sometimes afraid of changes, of new things.

In this respect, we must fight to “Be Visible” and an effort must be made to collaborate in order to avoid being invisible and also to show that we are not content with this reality of seniors which has been defined by others; we must be present with our actions.

An effort must be made to prevent the “Idea of Youth” from prevailing in a society that needs to be plural and inclusive. The word “seniors” cannot be linked to loss of capacities under the excuse that the “Idea of being young” dominates –to the detriment of older adult citizens.

Something that needs to be highlighted in this regard is how advertising in the media is above all addressed to young people, even though older adults have a higher purchasing power.

It is necessary to overcome this widespread image of discrimination against seniors that exists in our society which has to do with the biological decline that takes place as we grow older. A worsening of physical and mental conditions truly happens, since there is a wide variety of older adults, but precisely for that reason an effort has to be made to leave behind this “gradual reduction” –but not “lack (or loss) of physical and mental capacity”– and this requires an ongoing effort to continue training ourselves and keeping a good level of social and cultural activity. We must know ourselves and, in accordance with our ages, keep on “reinventing ourselves” with a wide variety of activities and training schemes for the purpose of coping with the natural ageing process. That is why training and socialisation seem so important to us.

There is a need to take advantage of all the opportunities that ageing offers us; there are actually various cultures which value ageing, where respect for elders (wise men of the tribe, grandparents....) is one of their cornerstones because these people accumulate the experience of those societies and cultures. Therefore, with the ageing process and the end of a working stage, we must make sure to maintain a sufficient level of activity oriented to: health and physical activity (walks, hiking, exercises, dances); communication and socialisation by means of games and fun activities; and a personal, creative development through artistic or manual activities which permit to maintain, and why not, develop or improve our skills and capabilities.

The general attitude focuses on being useful in society and in our environment, and this can only be achieved if we move, are active, learn, share knowledge, and offer to help others (volunteering).

It is all about “not disconnecting from life,” end of working stage does not mean “end of life.” Sometimes we seniors tend to cut ourselves off from many things when our working stage comes to an end, and we do so for reasons of convenience –we must avoid falling into that state of disconnection. In fact, if seniors disconnect ourselves, what we do is reinforce the other social groups and generations, who consequently occupy the space of seniors as a group and misappropriate their visibility and physical presence.

In this sense, it is seniors that have to take action, being participative and ensuring that the impulse of their presence is not left in the hands of society/the State. It is up to seniors to take the initiative.

The problems related to attitudes for the true development of an active ageing can consequently be summarised as follows:

1. Seniors' convenience (accommodating attitude)
2. Fear of new things and of socialisation in contexts other than those that we have been familiar with for many years during our labour life or at home (being afraid to strike up relationships with other people)
3. Fear of criticism (feeling odd among new cultural groups; there are many people who do not become involved in training or cultural activities because they think they do not own a sufficient level of knowledge and are afraid that they will lay themselves open to ridicule; that still happens in our country)
4. Financial problems are also a hindrance (there is a considerable group of seniors with scarce economic resources who additionally have to help their children and who can thus hardly afford to take up many activities outside their homes)
5. Exclusion due to lack of mobility, accessibility of resources (disabled people or people with reduced mobility who do not have a sufficiently developed support network at their disposal)

6. Lack of space and recognition for older adults both due to reasons associated with their own attitude or behaviour and for the previously described reasons which are alien to them
7. The concept of break and turning point which leads to fear of the unknown future when retirement comes, especially so when traditions and sociocultural encumbrances outweigh the new projects.
8. A need arises to prepare retirement as a step towards the freedom of new projects. Educating for retirement, learning to age and promoting an ageing culture

It is necessary to suggest patterns and keys in order to get ready for retirement and for an Active Ageing, and it is from this perspective that Older Adults themselves –because of their specific needs and demands related to training– can help make progress in AA. The idea is that Older Adults should promote that AA which can contribute to make society change. A society that will see how seniors are actually able, enterprising persons who can imbue society with their spirit, helping it assume co-responsibility for this situation and needs. But not only society has to be made responsible, it is seniors that must convince everyone of that need to take them into account because they are active and capable individuals keen on participating in this AA process.

- What are your central sources of information on active ageing?

We have come to be aware about the varied supply of training proposals, patterns or activities for AA especially through associations and cultural groups, through neighbours, acquaintances and friends and through advertising in the media (press, radio, Internet) and, above all, through the university and municipal centres.

In some cases, and already since the working stage prior to retirement, we took up hobbies (painting, hiking, handicrafts, theatre...) that we have striven to implement through various channels, e.g. groups of friends and retirees from our firms.

On some occasion, the Internet has also provided support but most of us have had access to this information through groups of acquaintances and through the “mouth-to-ear” which has made it possible to know about training and cultural offers in the city quarters, in municipal or private cultural centres, and also from University.

Cultural associations is sometimes highlighted as being very important and, for some people, these types of initiatives have allowed them to start a preparation process for AA, prior to the retirement stage, and to “reinvent themselves and to build up a retirement that they could have never imagined.”

- Where do you look for formal and informal support?

It is worth highlighting that the same importance is given to formal and informal support when it comes to having access to various options for active ageing; the whole group agrees that both types of support have the same weight and relevance.

Even open, non-formal groups have the advantage that some open, unintended proposals can lead you to others and there is a higher involvement and participation of seniors in such developments.

However, they also stress that non-formal support goes to the detriment of seniors who are not participative (the fearful or shy ones who have never taken part in these experiences) and also that the proposals sometimes include types of non-formal support which may not meet their specific needs.

Many of the group members confirm that:

- A. They have resorted to formal support schemes and proposals for AA from UPUA, with regard to a wide variety of training or knowledge areas (ICTs, Photography, Humanities, Health, Social and Legal Science, and Natural or Experimental Sciences).
- B. They have resorted to non-formal support schemes and proposals in activities related to: hiking, sports, associationism, poetry, literary gatherings, theatre, trips, magazine/journal and blog edition, cultural or social volunteering, painting, cine-forums, dances ...

## **Results Part 2: Active Ageing Education**

- What kind of experiences do you have with active ageing training/seminars?

Most group members have been developing physical (non-virtual) activities, both in formal and in informal environments and structures and, as shown in the preceding paragraph, not only at UPUA but also in associations of retired people and cultural ones, as well as in municipal centres and cultural entities.

Nevertheless, they miss some introductory training (that they would have liked to have) about how to age and how to get ready for AA.

They equally miss having more seminars, lectures and workshops that provide information about the wide range of proposals, courses and activities which are available in order to develop an AA, and that are still unknown to many people.

The group considers that there is a lack of dissemination and marketing in this respect and that the information fails to reach a vast proportion of society –and, for that matter, of seniors. The structures meant to disseminate and provide information about the existing offer should be redefined.

There is additionally a clear exclusion of this offer towards people who do not live in cities and who have no mobility or cultural level (enough literacy). The inhabitants of rural nuclei, the disabled, and women should be the preferential addressees of this process focused on bringing the offer closer and avoiding discrimination.

- Which kind of face-to-face training on active ageing would benefit you?

Face-to-face training is the most-preferred one inside the group; in fact, according to the information provided, none of the participants has ever done an on-line or semi-physical (mixed) training course. Nevertheless, they believe e-learning or online training can be interesting though, for the time being, they think that older adults need to be in contact and interact with one another. One of the great aims of AA is socialisation and the removal of isolation and exclusion. That is why they try to mix and seek contact with other people, after having often lost their friendship and relationship circles when they retired.

Therefore when seniors come, they are in search of training proposals and activities oriented towards AA; they seek physical and emotional contact. It is quite complicated to do that on the Internet.

- What are your ideas about an e-learning training and how would it be useful in their context?

All in all, they positively value that e-learning or online training can be a solution to the isolation of people with reduced mobility or accessibility who have the possibility to be connected through the Internet. In this sense, it would be necessary to reinforce the teaching of ICTs because, among the group of older adults, there are a high percentage of people who have no mastery of these tools and who, therefore, are still digital illiterates. Apart from making this learning easier, some thought should be given to developing intuitive, user-friendly ICT tools and training platforms which seniors can find agreeable –instead of generating rejection among them.

Online training can be a double-edged sword too, insofar as seniors who join ICTs very often isolate themselves (that is what the women say, at least), they get hooked on the computer and forget about face-to-face (in person) relationships. It is easier for some people who stop going out to the street, become sedentary, do no exercise, and no longer physically carry out any activities with other groups.

The group members reached the conclusion that the ideal thing would be a mixed kind of training that could allow physical, “face-to-face” activities and online training as a complementary support for personal development that can help people continue with their training and broaden their wisdom from some previous, experimental knowledge.

## 6.2 Results of Focus Group 2 with local stakeholders

Date of the focus group	Duration	Number of participants
July 21 <sup>st</sup> 2014	120 minutes	14

The group is formed by 14 people, 7 men and 7 women. They are all working professionals and specialists linked to training and research in the field of seniors and/or health, as well as professional experts from entities and administrations dedicated to healthcare, assistance and training for active ageing.

The idea was to have a heterogeneous and multidisciplinary group with gender parity and with participants who know the reality of older adults in our country and can reach a very wide variety of social sectors and professional groups when it comes to transmitting the outcomes and breakthroughs achieved within the framework of the PPS project.

Their ages are comprised between 35 and 60 years of age. They all are residents in Alicante and were born in the Valencian Autonomous Region.

Chairwoman: Concepción Bru Ronda. Director of the Permanent University.

### **Part 1: getting to know each other – networking**

- Present and discuss the results of the research already done (questionnaires)

The results obtained from the survey at UPUA-Alicante support the global view that we have about the older adults who attend Permanent University training programmes.

It would be interesting to carry out this same discussion when the data from all the other partners are available.

It is worth highlighting that the highest proportion of participating students corresponds to those who are between 60 and 70 years old –they represent almost 60% of all the students who answered the questionnaire.

It also deserves to be mentioned that they are actually interested in the topic of ‘Active Ageing’ but with a special focus on aspects and “activities which make them feel better.” However, when we talk to them about ‘Health’ issues, this does not seem to be so appealing to them, most probably because that term evokes the idea of ‘Disease’ in their minds.

The reason for this attitude can perhaps be found in the fact that the Spanish Healthcare System has placed its attention to a greater extent on the ‘Pathological’ aspect and on the treatment of diseases and not so many efforts have been devoted to the paradigm of what is ‘Healthy’ –or it has been less developed. This is also in sharp contrast with the

approach followed in other countries which have worked more from a 'community' perspective and, consequently, from the perspective of "health promotion, prevention and education." If we add to this the fact that our society has traditionally established a close link between ageing and "loss of health" in its values, the situation becomes even worse. It therefore becomes necessary to work from a new concept of 'Ageing' which is not associated with something negative, even though society as a whole and, particularly the mass media, still prioritise the value of 'youth' over other values closely related to ageing.

That is the reason why the seniors we usually deal with have certain 'taboos' when they speak about Ageing –and linked to it, about Health– especially a connection is established between health and terms such as 'emergencies,' 'healthcare' and so on. This happens because the allusion leads them to think about certain life experiences, both some lived by themselves personally and others which affected their loved ones, and which may be sad, painful or which they simply prefer not to recall due to their 'illness-related' connotation.

The questionnaire results additionally introduce an important nuance, namely, that the group of interviewees represented by "students or staff linked to UPUA" tends to be formed by older adults who are already involved in training and thus have a certain active predisposition to take part in it.

- Who is involved in which active ageing programme and educational service?
- The whole society must be involved in active ageing programmes in a generic way. However, this should be specified at every level: national, regional and local. In order, the fields concerned would be education, healthcare, social services and housing.
- Of all these fields, public bodies should be the first ones to become involved, both nationally and at a local and regional level, in their mission of looking after the health of the citizens who make up the community, and additionally as providers of quality of life for seniors, ensuring the generation of the resources needed to achieve all this. Institutions such as older adult training centres (Spanish initials, CEPA) and Universities for older adults, and healthcare bodies such as the Regional Departments of Healthcare and Social Welfare, as well as the Social Services of Town Councils. Municipal authorities can also work in that direction within the overall approach that converges with the world project oriented to achieve Healthy and Senior-Friendly Cities.
- Private institutions which directly or indirectly have seniors as their work goal (elderly homes and care centres).
- Professionals whose field of action revolves around seniors.
- Firms who must take care of their employees and workers so that people who are above 55 and have to continue working until they are 70 years old can adapt to their ageing process (loss of capabilities, job adaptation needs, labour flexibility, working

timetable reduction due to age, etc..) to their workplace and thus carry on making a contribution to the firm but also manage to reconcile family life and an active, healthy ageing. Therefore, these programmes should be undertaken by staff and human resources managers and health prevention centres, and by firms with responsibility over workers older than 55.

- Seniors themselves must become actively involved in achieving a higher quality of life, for which an active ageing is needed. In this sense, associations of residents and retired people, those focused on cultural activities and volunteering, and some NGOs can also actively collaborate in these training programmes and have more possibilities to come closer to elderly citizens who sometimes are or live alone and to whom other sectors have no access.

Despite all the above, to our mind, achieving an empowerment of older adults around the concept and training for active ageing is only possible if all the educational institutions firstly commit themselves to design a programme with a scientific version –and consequently objective– of the essential concepts on which that training must be based. The promoters of such training programmes must additionally have a special sensitivity to transmit the idea that active ageing is holistic, i.e. no type of knowledge prevails over another.

- How can they learn from each other or collaborate?

With an overall programme that takes into account all the fields included in active ageing and where objectives and goals are set from general to specific with the aim of ensuring longevity and quality of life among seniors. This overall programme would serve as a reference framework for the different levels to collaborate and specify it locally through an adaptation to the peculiarities of each specific community.

- National: Ministries promoting National Active Ageing Plans in every sphere and encouraging the involvement of older adults in the training of minors and youngsters
- Regional: Preparing regional programmes for the development of National Programmes
- Provincial: Territorial Healthcare Directorates which can offer training opportunities and access to these programmes for people who cannot be reached through the usual channels thanks to their health centres (which know the seniors who live alone and need caregivers' help) and to community medicine nurses (who manage cases). Also Pharmacies, which are dependent on the Provincial Association of Pharmacists, provide an excellent network for the dissemination of programmes and training to which seniors can have direct access.
- Local: From the different administrations, elaboration of specific projects focused on the encouragement of active ageing:

- Education: Promotion of older adult education at all levels, according to each senior citizen's cultural level: Primary Education, Vocational Training, University Studies, Languages, Computer skills. Involvement of seniors in specific training
- Health. Preparation for active ageing in the context of health and approaching all seniors with the aim of involving them in the context of education
- Social Services: Participation of seniors in programmes of attention to people with problems as well as their recruitment in order to encourage them to take part in other active ageing programmes through Senior Care Centres.
- Associations: of Residents, of Retired people, those focused on Cultural aspects and Volunteering which are closer to seniors' concerns, needs and demands and connect better at a "non-formal" level and can really transmit to them how important this training and these schemes are for active ageing.

Through a fluent communication so as to integrate those older adults who want to receive training in programmes of collaboration between educational and political bodies.

A mutual knowledge of the peculiarities and operation of the different types of institutions will eventually result in a greater and easier interaction of those seniors interested in receiving training with a society that they sometimes are unable to reach because they are not familiarised with its functioning.

It is our conviction that attention should be paid to the figure of "Associate Partner" represented in Organisations and Institutions which, far from the initial goal of this project, would eventually contribute to implement Active and Healthy Ageing schemes not only on the public sphere but also on the private one. Those organisations, as in the case of Territorial Directorates for Healthcare and/or Social Welfare (as the local representation of the corresponding Regional Departments) would in turn benefit from a "change of mind set" or an "adaptation or turn" towards these issues. I do not think we should leave aside some Faculties, such as Health Sciences or Social Sciences, and even certain care centres like public and private healthcare centres where students are trained and/or patients (who have often not reached the age that we associate with ageing) are treated. They all could benefit from a change of "philosophy" in their vision or approach to cares or to the teaching imparted.

For example, if the Science Faculty collaborates as an Associate Partner, in return it could integrate this Project into its Gerontology or Geriatrics subjects or into those related to Adults and Older Adults, and contents related to Active and Healthy Ageing could be treated with students –i.e. the would-be professionals. The same could be done in care centres, where we could request to carry out a dissemination task among their patients so that the latter could come closer to this training and show interest in it, without forgetting about the actual centre staff, who could contribute to spread these new values and even apply those values to themselves and to their family/social environment. And another

possible option to make the project or the training scheme more visible would be through the EIP-AHA (European Innovative Programme on Active and Healthy Ageing) –a network of researchers dedicated to this particular area within the European Commission. This project undoubtedly fits in perfectly with the Patient Empowerment sub-branch.

## **Part 2: Developing a shared vision on active ageing education**

- Developing a shared vision of an active ageing educational service with participants for the country.
  - With regard to older adults, we have managed to make a high percentage of them receptive to training for active ageing and to their implementation.
  - Nevertheless, the participation of those older adults in educational services for active ageing is still limited because the vision or understanding of the actual concept of ‘active ageing’ by seniors is very restrictive and confined to the absence of physical or mental illness in a person. There is no overall conception of well-being in which active ageing also includes the relevance of cultural immersion, of mixing with other people and of the adaptation to social and technological changes.
  - At present, due to the shortage of resources derived from the economic crisis, active ageing is no longer a priority for public institutions, which is why they only maintain the existing resources at the most and the development of new project from the private context has also been limited.
  - Lack of public support is having a strong negative impact on any sort of activity.
  - A variety of initiatives currently exist (which are offered from universities for older adults and from municipal centres for seniors) which have as their aim to deepen into the training of older adults who not only seek a personal (and not only professional) development but also want to improve their health condition and quality of life. Such programmes contain subjects focused on health which provide them with tools so that they can start developing healthy attitudes that will eventually contribute to a better ageing. However, we should go further and design a specific EMPOWERMENT scheme which could include subjects from several areas of knowledge or fields of study (ICTs, Internet, languages, management, economics, etc.) and thus give an integral version of the essential tools required to achieve a true active ageing.
  - In addition to this integral training for Active Ageing which still does not exist, it is worth highlighting that the training needs cannot be understood in the same way when we are working with an autonomous person or with a senior citizen who has a restricted mobility or other disabilities. In accordance with their age and degree of autonomy, each individual should have the chance to develop a type of training suited to his/her active ageing model/needs. In this respect, we not only have to

revise the concept of active ageing (for many people it does not mean “to keep moving all the time”) but also adapt the programmes to the diversity of older adults and addressees.

- We additionally believe that none of the existing training schemes assesses the short-, middle- or long-term impact or repercussion of these training actions. That is where this project could provide added value. We should be able to create a network that permits a constant feedback in relation to these matters.
- What is the level of desirability of another active ageing education offer (PPS) in the country? What should be taken into account?

There is actually a supply of ‘Active Ageing’ but, as said above, it is highly scattered and the purpose and contents are not well defined in relation to the wide variety of older adult addressees who are very different in terms of age and personal situation.

There are 50-year-old retired people who appear as addressees of this training, whereas other older adults to whom the active ageing courses and training are addressed are 70 years old or older; hence the need to shape an educational offer which can allow these different groups to age actively from an integral programme which could subsequently deal with different specific cases.

In our opinion, this training offer is necessary and advisable and it should take into account the demands of those who still form part of the working world, those people between 55 and 70 years of age who are older adults and must adapt their capacities to the labour context with the aim of ageing actively and avoiding their exclusion from the working world due to that evolution in their ageing process. In this sense, it would be interesting to know the opinion of the other countries: What is the ‘normal’ age of retirement, or the work life(span)? And also to assess the interest that this training orientation raises among seniors and how it can benefit active ageing even inside the firms themselves. We think that there is an urgent need to undertake a kind of training meant to adapt the skills of workers in their working environment in accordance with the natural ageing process. Training must be offered in the corporate context so that employees and workers can cope with this loss of capacities derived from ageing and can better adapt to their job requirements in this new stage.

On the other hand, the diversity of training types is not harmful, just the opposite, as it can actually broaden the perspective and enrich both students and organisers. Being a geographical destination which receives seniors from other places, our province should occupy a pioneering position in the supply of all these training programmes and projects oriented to active and healthy ageing.

It is necessary to bear in mind that many older adults do not have a clear answer to the question “what is active ageing?” –and they do not know where they can receive training for it either. Besides, they have the impression that what we do in places like the University is something different and unattainable from their basic knowledge, which often makes them be afraid to participate in such training experiences, for fear of being ridiculed, because they are not sure whether they will be able to live up to other people’s expectations about them or they believe that they are simply too old for this sort of thing...

In other words, we must fight against ignorance and disinformation and find the way to reach these people. It is thus essential to come closer to citizens through different channels and explain to them what active ageing means, making them embrace this concept even before involving them in any training schemes. This could be achieved by contacting associations and groups of retirees or residents, as well as those dedicated to culture and volunteering.

It will also be imperative to define the project goal as clearly as possible, where we can – and we want to– get; who we want to reach (our target audience); and what we can offer them.

Individuals age actively when they are in the world; and they must be prepared, i.e. ‘empowered,’ to age actively, for which they need to be trained in a variety of fields (psychological-mental aspects, healthy lifestyles, nutrition, physical exercise, use of medicines, cultural aspects, ICTs, self-knowledge, philosophy of ageing...); that is, what they need is an integral, holistic view of Active Ageing. Therefore, far from being only a “question of health,” this is actually a very broad and dynamic concept which has to do with age and the evolutionary stages of a senior at different moments and under various circumstances –and depending on each person’s life profiles.

This programme should consequently be structured around multiple areas in an attempt to reach as many people as possible.

- In our view, the objective for such a programme would be to have the largest possible audience and ultimately to become a referent for information about active ageing in the Alicante province. Dividing the contents into different areas will most probably make it easier for us to achieve our aims, insofar as seniors are likely to be looking for one specific area, at least initially, but the programme will help them to develop an interest in other areas and broaden their concerns, for instance through requests for information about a specific topic. They will additionally have the chance to know the whole training scheme with all the possibilities that it offers, and eventually focus on other attractive aspects of active ageing that they had never heard of.

- It is also very important to have a clear profile for the instructor. To my mind, this person should gather a specific set of qualities such as:
  - Ability to transmit
  - Willingness to listen
  - Motivation to be an instructor
  - Empathy
  - Commitment
  - Capacity to transmit confidence/trust and to be positive
  - Sociability and flexibility

It is particularly important to remember that designing a scheme like this requires giving the same weight to all kinds of skills and knowledge without any specific module prevailing over the others and, ultimately, to carry out an integration task thanks to which all the knowledge items can be brought together.

### **Part 3: Practical issues**

- Answering the question “how” – discussion about the different approaches, modules, topics and methods for the educational services.
- Discuss the possibilities for team work, self-preparation, and use of technical equipment by older adults

Without a doubt, there is a group among seniors who have the right profile to develop the project; they are motivated people who have a sufficient mastery of new technologies as well as of the pedagogy required to cope without much difficulty.

As for team work, I think it is very enriching for everyone; it represents an opportunity which, in my opinion, can make all those involved in the project grow. Furthermore, team work is always more than the addition of all the individualities. The outcome which results from the collaboration between them will always be possible. This additionally permits to use the experience owned by each team participant and resort to social networks, which are also multiplied through the addition of the individual qualities contained in a working group.

We must take advantage of the knowledge and experience of well-trained people who are also involved in activities related to culture and volunteering so that they can become promoters of this concept and this type of training.

- Discuss the different approaches, modules, topics and methods for educational services

- To our understanding, the determinants of active ageing are in keeping with the WHO Model (2002) which lists the possible fields of action and refers to:
  - Transversal Determinants
    - Culture: The Mediterranean culture is not the same as the Slavic one and that becomes essential for this approach
    - Gender: Taking into account the different roles of each gender
  - Determinants related to healthcare systems and social services
    - Health promotion and disease prevention
    - Curative services
    - Long-term care
    - Mental services
  - Behavioural determinants:
    - Physical Activity
    - Healthy diet
    - Alcohol
    - Medicines
    - Therapeutic compliance
  - Determinants linked to personal factors:
    - Biology and Genetics
    - Psychological factors
  - Determinants associated with the physical environment
    - Security at home
    - Falls
  - Determinants associated with the social environment
    - Social and family support
    - Violence and abuse
  - Economic determinants
    - Income
    - Social protection
    - Work

This leads us to an integrated (holistic) approach to teaching in all the subjects covering the life process, as can be inferred from the aforesaid contents.

We should consequently include modules related to:

- Explanation of concepts and extension of knowledge
  - What is ageing?: cellular and emotional
  - Philosophy of ageing
  - Psychology of ageing
  - Ageing and Health: Physical Exercise, Nutrition, habits, memory

- Social Skills, Competences and Instrumental Capabilities
  - Emotional Intelligence and social skills
  - Competences: ICTs, languages, management of administrative issues
- Possibilities for the older adult to have an active participation in society
  - Different ways to collaborate in the training of minors (children) and/or youngsters. Intergenerationality
  - Volunteering among seniors
  - Other forms of participation
- Self-help as a form of collaboration between peers
  - What is self-help?
  - Creation of groups and work teams. Theory about groups and collaborative learning

Thus, an effort needs to be made in order to involve educational and social entities through teaching-learning modules which deal with all these problems, which are not only of a biological nature but also psychological, socio-cultural and economic.

With regard to Methodology, as explained above, we think that the type of older adult that we usually work with requires a b-learning (blended learning) system where knowledge is acquired through a combination of distance learning and in-the-classroom learning. That is to say, face-to-face and online sessions in the proportions which are deemed appropriate complemented with clear, practical and highly visual didactic materials and, most importantly, leaving plenty of room for feedback between peers (teacher and students).

As I see it, the methodology must be active with a clear and effective support for the technical part of the project because, first and foremost, seniors like to be listened to and also to have a constant feedback which is usually guaranteed in face-to-face classes; but in the case of the online training which is carried out on the Internet through the use of electronic resources, older adults also need to feel that there is someone who can solve any technical problems which may eventually arise. In this respect, the possible virtual platforms to be developed will necessarily have to be accessible, user-friendly and properly adapted to the teaching imparted.

In addition to the above, instructor training is of paramount importance too. It must be in tune with the project content, both in terms of relationship with his/her peers and regarding the issues covered in the Project, so that the training relationship established with his/her peers can become as effective as possible, for which the instructors will have to be suitably trained –apart from having a number of own qualities which make them apt for this task.

## 7 Conclusions for Spain

The whole society must be involved in active ageing programmes in a generic way. However, this should be specified at every level: national, regional and local. In order, the fields concerned would be education, healthcare, social services, housing and work settings.

Achieving an empowerment of older adults around the concept and training for active ageing is only possible if all the educational institutions firstly commit themselves to design a programme with a scientific version –and consequently objective– of the essential concepts on which that training must be based. The promoters of such training programmes must additionally have a special sensitivity to transmit the idea that active ageing is holistic, i.e. no type of knowledge prevails over another.

The participation of those older adults in educational services for active ageing is still limited because the vision or understanding of the actual concept of ‘active ageing’ by seniors is very restrictive and confined to the absence of physical or mental illness in a person. There is no overall conception of well-being in which active ageing also includes the relevance of cultural immersion, of mixing with other people and of the adaptation to social and technological changes.

A variety of initiatives currently exist (which are offered from universities for older adults and from municipal centres for seniors) which have as their aim to deepen into the training of older adults who not only seek a personal (and not only professional) development but also want to improve their health condition and quality of life. Such programmes contain subjects focused on health which provide them with tools so that they can start developing healthy attitudes that will eventually contribute to a better ageing. However, we should go further and design a specific empowerment scheme which could include subjects from several areas of knowledge or fields of study (ICTs, Internet, languages, management, economics, etc.) and thus give an integral version of the essential tools required to achieve a true active ageing.

It is worth highlighting that the training needs cannot be understood in the same way when we are working with an autonomous person or with a senior citizen who has a restricted mobility or other disabilities. In accordance with their age and degree of autonomy, each individual should have the chance to develop a type of training suited to his/her active ageing model/needs. In this respect, we not only have to revise the concept of active ageing (for many people it does not mean “to keep moving all the time”) but also adapt the programmes to the diversity of older adults and addressees.

We additionally believe that none of the existing training schemes assesses the short-, middle- or long-term impact or repercussion of these training actions. That is where this

project could provide added value. We should be able to create a network that permits a constant feedback in relation to these matters.

There is actually a supply of 'Active Ageing' but, as said above, it is highly scattered and the purpose and contents are not well defined in relation to the wide variety of older adult addressees who are very different in terms of age and personal situation.

This training offer is necessary and advisable and it should take into account the demands of those who still form part of the working world, those people between 55 and 70 years of age who are older adults and must adapt their capacities to the labour context with the aim of ageing actively and avoiding their exclusion from the working world due to that evolution in their ageing process.

From our point of view, the PPS Project is the most suitable one to put education for active ageing into practice, not only because of the context in which it develops and the possibilities that it can provide but also because of the professionals from various sectors who can become involved in it.

The PPS Project could be an appropriate framework for the design of a pilot scheme meant to integrate all the skills which are regarded as necessary for this all-encompassing vision of the active ageing concept. We are in front of a project of great interest which can above all generate knowledge among the population as a whole; training peers in order to boost active ageing may mean ensuring that the message is convincingly transmitted to population segments that could hardly have access to it otherwise.

Online training (or e-learning) implies a highly significant cost reduction in comparison to face-to-face learning. This sort of online learning allows saving expenses related to such varied aspects as spaces (classrooms), trips, accommodation, didactic materials, allowances, or registration, to which must be added that it permits to have an unlimited number of students.

E-learning has the huge initial advantage of being a kind of learning where immediacy prevails when it comes to obtaining the information required to learn about any aspect in particular. The information is collected on the spot and in an agile and accessible way, and this can additionally done at the very moment in which that information is needed, and students can do everything at any time of day and anywhere, as long as they have an internet connection and an electronic device. The permanently difficult time barrier can be overcome thanks to e-learning, and it is the student that can now manage his/her own learning pace. However, tutoring is important because the fact that students cannot have a direct contact with the teacher who imparts a certain subject is no impediment for the supervision of the student's progression by means of tutoring.

Face-to-face training is the one preferred by most of the older adults who live in our geographical context. For them, online training on its own is 'rough' and scarcely

motivating; the computer is not a widespread tool among seniors, the main problem lying in convincing a large part of the elderly population to enter the training platform which more often than not is unfriendly and complicated, and has obviously not been developed with older adults in mind, as shown by its concept, the design, the font sizes, the icons and, on the whole, its usability and accessibility features.

What seniors who become involved in training programmes are generally looking for is basically a return to classrooms which can allow them to establish contact with other people and mix or make friends with them. The loss of relationships with friends and colleagues at work once they have retired as well as the death of their loved ones not only in the family but also in the social context, causes loneliness and isolation to many seniors who seek contact, integration into groups and the affection of other people in the training schemes and experiences that face-to-face groups can offer them.

We consider peer training for active ageing as a very good idea because it has the advantages that a peer trainer...

- understands the needs of the other person, which leads to a better selection of the information which suits each person best.
- is aware of the other person's limitations, which helps to adapt the information so that it can be transmitted more effectively.
- knows the other person's motivations, which contributes to identify the information that may seem more interesting and helpful to that person.
- has experience, pedagogy and empathy to develop the task or if not, they should be taught.

Concerning the teamwork, self-training and the utilisation of technical equipment by older adults in order to implement training for active ageing? We must take advantage of the knowledge and experience of well-trained people who are also involved in activities related to culture and volunteering so that they can become promoters of this concept and this type of training.

With regard to methodology, as explained above, we think that the type of older adult that we usually work with requires a b-learning (blended learning) system where knowledge is acquired through a combination of distance learning and in-the-classroom learning. That is to say, face-to-face and online sessions in the proportions which are deemed appropriate complemented with clear, practical and highly visual didactic materials and, most importantly, leaving plenty of room for feedback between peers (teacher and students).

## 8 Literature list

Please insert 10 sources on active ageing from your country in your language or in English.

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