

Training on Social Inclusion in Tourism, by including elderly people as local storytellers for the Tourism Industry

REPORT

Good Practices on Social Inclusion of the Elderly Population

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Introduction

This document is a compilation of Good Practices produced under the scope of the project *Training on Social Inclusion in Tourism, by including elderly people as local storytellers for the Tourism Industry* hereinafter referred as TSITour.

The purpose of this output is to present the “Good Practices on Social Inclusion of the Elderly Population” from Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. The focus is on the benefits these programmes provide to the beneficiaries, that is, the elderly at risk of social exclusion who still have a lot of energy and are considered independent and able to positively contribute to society with the acquired know how throughout their personal and professional active lives. The knowledge and resources that they can share may be an asset for the development of new services, methodologies, and actions.

The methodological approach for the development of this activity consisted of the elaboration of guidelines that oriented the partners in the desk research, so that the collection of good practices in the countries referred above would be adequate for the aims of the TSITour project.

A total of 15 good practices were collected and are briefly presented in this document. Detailed information can be consulted in the annexes that are part of this document.

1. Good Practices on Social Inclusion of the Elderly Population- Greece

1.1. “University of the Third Age”

The University of the Third Age is a programme that started on 2019 in Athens which promotes and enables active ageing. Through lifelong learning and digital education, the people aged 65+ are able to come together and socialize, learn new knowledge and skills, and overall, improve their quality of life and physical and mental health. The main courses are European History, Greek Philosophy, Computers, Drama, Creative Writing, English language, Cosmology, and Intergenerational Storytelling.

IMPACT

The University started in 2019 and unfortunately, due to the beginning of the courses (February 2020) and the situation of the pandemic, there are no data of the impact or the long-term results of the University in Greece at the time of writing this report. Though, it is a very promising initiative and applauded effort by many community bodies since, the impact and the results in other countries such as Spain, (were all the public Universities of the country are involved on an educative program called “The University of the Experience” addressed to the elderly), or UK, are extremely positive and effective.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The availability of economic resources is one of the most significant conditions in order to be facilitated the practice. The program had a limit of 150 participants due to lack of resources and the received applications were 320. Also, as we have seen now during this health crisis, social and environmental factors have highly affected the implementation of multiple activities around the world. The University has turned into online form in order to continue providing to the elderly the education material and the joy of learning. Hence, the social environment determines the provided services and it is urgent for the services to be flexible and adaptive to the particular conditions.

MORE INFO

NGO People Behind:

<https://www.peoplebehind.gr/people-behind-eng>

<https://www.facebook.com/peoplebehind.gr/>

Some examples of the University of the Experience in Spain:

Zaragoza: <https://uez.unizar.es/>

Valladolid: <http://www.upmillansantos.uva.es/>

Barcelona: http://www.ub.edu/experiencia/index_es.php

Salamanca: <https://www.usal.es/universidad-experiencia>

This is the website of the U3A in the UK <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/u3a-research/254-home>

1.2. Open Care Centres for the Elderly

KAPIs started as a significant social policy practice in order to support the ageing population. KAPIs, the open care and social centers can be viewed as a good practice since through the activities they provide to the elderly, they have become a very successful initiative on their inclusion in the local communities. Nowadays in Greece, every municipality is responsible for at least one KAPI where the elderly can participate in activities such as painting, regular exercise, participation in trips e.g. visiting museums, or medical and social care e.g. physiotherapy and psychological support. KAPIs aim to achieve multiple goals such as the prevention of biological, psychological, and social problems of the elderly in order to remain autonomous, equal, and active members of society. At the same time, it promotes the awareness and familiarization of the general public with the elderly problems and needs, encourages research on health issues related to that age range, enhances the improvement of their social relationships through the participation in activities and fights social isolation and loneliness. It is a highly accepted institution in Greece and generally, Greek citizens view these centres as a great opportunity for the elderly to stay active, socialise, educate themselves and gain new skills as they grow.

IMPACT

KAPIs have a very positive impact on the elderly and the communities as a whole. KAPIs are considered a very successful institution with high participation of elderly people. However, there are no official assessment and evaluation efforts of their impact and results. Due to that fact, it is not easy to determine the appropriate changes in order to be more effective in individual and community level. Anyhow, the positive comments by the beneficiaries and the high participation shows that KAPIs have positive effect in their social life, their inclusion in the community and their physical and mental health

SUCCESS FACTORS

This good practice refers to a service that is provided by the state and the municipalities. First of all, policy willingness to establish such service is needed and also, economic

resources are required. There are no special social and environmental conditions needed to replicate the practice, just normality in the operations of the state. For example, now due to the pandemic and the need of social distancing, KAPIs' operation and activities have been postponed

MORE INFO

Information about the KAPIs are found in the websites of the responsible municipalities. Each KAPI has its own email address and contact details, for example:

http://www.kallithea.gr/?page_id=169

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1.3. Intergenerational programme “From one generation to the next”.

The aim of the programme is to familiarise the children with the methodological approach of storytelling as a way to bring together different generations at the time that it increases the time spent with grandparents. This programme significantly contributes for the perception that this interaction can be interesting and fun. The main goal is to increase the amount of time that the children spend with the elderly. Simultaneously, the contact of the elderly with the children fills them with joy and optimism and they feel useful in society as they transfer their knowledge to the younger generations.

IMPACT

The impact of the program was multiple in individual level as well as community level. The interaction and the cooperation between the children and the elderly were very satisfying and successful. Children came closer and learned interesting stories from the older people about their life in the island, their habits and the changes that have occurred. In that way, children understood the value of older people and the importance of supporting them. On the other hand, the elderly enjoyed the process of storytelling to the children due to many reasons such as the opportunity to interact with young children, to talk about their experiences and to feel more alive and appreciated by other people. Therefore, the results were very positive and successful even from the pilot implementation in Skopelos and so, the program continued to 3 more islands to explore the differences and the similarities.

SUCCESS FACTORS

In order to be successfully implemented the program, several institutions needed to be involved and so, support from the municipalities and the local communities were required. The economic resources were found by the financial support of the TIMA Foundation. Socially, there were no restrictions since everyone from the selected schools and KAPIs could participate and so, there are no special social or environmental conditions needed in order to be replicated as a practice.

MORE INFO

At the website of the program, you can find the fairytales, the games and the lifetime stories of each island together with the artworks painted by the children describing them <https://apogenia.gr/>. / The following is the NGO 's Plegma website <https://www.plegma.org/>

2. Good Practices on Social Inclusion of the Elderly Population- Italy

2.1. Nonni SUD Internet (Grandfathers South Internet)

The objectives of this training course are the following: to promote an intergenerational learning methodology, to foster the digital alphabetisation of the over 60 years-old elderly people in Italy and to encourage socialisation and interaction between students and the elderly.

The project is based on a series of training courses implemented in various Italian Regions in the South of Italy. Young students lead these courses and the participants are elderly people at risk of social exclusion. The young students are in charge to transmit knowledge and practical information about technological devices to the elderly.

IMPACT

After having joined the training course, the elderly people share the learnt knowledge with their peers, becoming trainers themselves. In this way, they have the opportunity to re-elaborate concepts and practical information about technology in the way that they consolidate the knowledge coming from their previous learning experience. In addition, 6 “Recovery Offices” - one for each involved Region- open, in which disused laptops and computers are gathered and, then, distributed to the various centres for elderly people. Consequently, the results are the following:

1. Increased awareness on the importance of an intergenerational learning method;
2. Increased level of digital alphabetisation of the over 60 elderly people in Italy;
3. Increased number of social interactions between students and elderly people

SUCCESS FACTORS

The success factors of this series of training course are the following two: the focus on the relevant social issue of the digital illiteracy of the elderly people and the formation of

positive and fruitful intergenerational relationships among young students and elderly people.

MORE INFO

<https://www.mondodigitale.org/it/cosa-facciamo/ict-terza-eta/nonni-sud-internet>

<https://ausersardegna.it/nonni-sud-internet-si-riparte/>

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2.2. Conoscersi a tavola (Get to know each other around a table)

The project consists of a wide range of activities aiming to let the elderly people interact and socialise. Most of these activities aim to transfer theoretical knowledge on cooking styles as well as raise awareness to the importance of healthy lifestyles, especially, when it comes to fragile citizens. Many activities include practical exercises in which the elderly can learn “on the field” new notions and techniques in a way that their overall experience is fun and fruitful.

IMPACT

These activities receive many positive feedbacks from the elderly people. A mood improvement is detected together with an evident increase in the number of social interactions. Consequently, the results are the following:

1. Increased level of social inclusion of the elderly people;
2. Increased elderly people’s knowledge about typical cuisine;
3. Increased knowledge on new types of cooking styles;
4. Increased elderly people’s awareness on healthy lifestyles.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The main success factor is the fact that the project focuses on a very inclusive and common topic: food. In this way, the project attracts the attention of the elderly people, who find themselves in a welcoming space in which they have the opportunity to socialise and interact with each other.

MORE INFO

<https://www.ouser.it/conoscersi-a-tavola/>

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<https://www.auser.it/notizie/conoscersi-a-tavola-occasioni-piacevoli-per-incontrarsi-e-saperne-di-piu/>

2.3. Palermo apre le porte (Palermo opens the doors)

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Palermo apre le porte is an initiative that mainly focuses on the re-discovery of the cultural and historical heritage of the city of Palermo. Each involved school picks up a specific heritage site (monument, church, square, etc.) and learns all the information about it. Then, in the days of 7-8 May 2016, the same students “open” the historical heritage sites to the general audience, presenting and explaining the main characteristics of each heritage site. In this context, the *Sorgente de Gabriele* (The Spring of Gabriel) is assigned to the Centro Diurno Anziani (Public Centre for elderly people).

Once the Centro Diurno Anziani (Public Centre for elderly people) receives the management of the *Sorgente del Gabriele* (The Spring of Gabriel), the involved elderly people start to search for information using books, old newspapers and Internet as well. In addition, a historian is invited to the centre in order to talk about the *Sorgente del Gabriele*. In this way, they gather a lot of new information. Then, in the days of 7-8 May 2016, they present the *Sorgente del Gabriele* to the general audience, elaborating the learned information in a personal way.

IMPACT

The impact of the initiative *Palermo apre le porte* is very successful thanks to a capillary campaign to promote it in the entire city of Palermo. As *Sorgente del Gabriele* concerns, many elderly people take part in the various phases of the activity, from gathering information to presenting the heritage site. All the objectives of the initiative are reached. Consequently, the results are the following:

1. Increased level of audience (students and inhabitants) knowledge about the most beautiful heritage sites of the city of Palermo;
2. Increased level of social inclusion of the elderly people in the active society;
3. Increased level of mental health of the elderly people, thanks to the fact of learning and elaborating new information on the heritage of their city;
4. Increased level of interaction between different generations, such as elderly people and youngsters.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The main success factor is the participation of many inhabitants of the city of Palermo in this initiative both as “curators” and general audience. This facilitates the intergenerational interaction in the context of the *Sorgente del Gabriele*. Another important factor is the fact that the elderly people have the opportunity to obtain many information on the *Sorgente del Gabriele*, getting passionate and involved in the initiative.

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MORE INFO

http://www.attivitasociali.palermo.it/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23&Itemid=196

<https://www.palermotoday.it/cronaca/visite-sorgente-gabriele-7-8-maggio-2016-via-riserva-reale.html>

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2.4. Nonni in camice bianco (Grandparents in white coat)

In the Italian region of Emilia Romagna, the Day Centres are used to organising small theatre performances, choirs, readings of short stories and poems on the occasion of the Italian festivities. The good practice consisted on transferring this set of consolidated knowledge and skills of the elderly into an initiative aiming to provide relief and joy to hospitalised children.

Each involved Day Centre for elderly people chooses a fairy tale coming from the tradition that the elderly people know best. Then, a theatrical adaptation is prepared. Operators and seniors take care of the texts and the seniors assign the different parts of the script. In addition, the elderly people prepare costumes facilitated by the social operators. The music therapists of the various Day Centres edit the soundtrack for all the plays. In the following phase, the elderly people go to the S. Orsola-Malpighi Hospital, bringing all the prepared equipment, and recite the fairy tales for the hospitalised children. In December 2010, on the occasion of the last event, a party is organized, in which the elderly people deliver small gifts to the children and sing Christmas songs.

IMPACT

This best practice gathers many positive feedbacks from the elderly people and from the children who assist to the theatre performances. Moreover, the doctors of the S. Orsola-Malpighi Hospital observe positive effects on the mood of the children. Consequently, the results are the following:

1. Decreased level of discomfort in children due to the fact of being in a hospital;
2. Reduced level of children's downtime and improved mood;
3. Increased level of active participation of the elderly people into the society;
4. Increased level of relief of the elderly people and children from issues due to age or illness;
5. Increased level of intergenerational relationships between the elderly people and the hospitalised children.

SUCCESS FACTORS

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The main success factor is the intuition to put together two very sensitive social target - inactive elderly people and hospitalised children- in a very creative way. In this sense, the encounter of these two social targets brings positive psychological effects for both of them, in a way that they help each other.

MORE INFO

12

https://www.cadai.it/images/bookspdf/Quaderno%202020_web.pdf

2.5. Ricordare per trasmettere valori (Remember to transmit values)

This is an intergenerational activity in which students and elderly people work together in small groups to represent through arts personal stories of the elderly related with the period of the Second World War.

In the first meeting, starting from a series of questions, the small groups -consisting mainly of two students and one elderly person - produce a "book" representing the personal story of the elderly person focused on the period of the Second World War. In addition, maps, songs and lyrics gathered by the students are included.

In the following meeting, an emotion or an important fact chosen by the elderly person and shared in the small group is represented and modelled through the use of clay. This activity helps both the elderly person and the children reorganise and re-elaborate the emotion.

In the last meeting, a box is decorated with images, words, buttons and beads through the collage technique. The box ideally aims at containing and preserving the whole experience of the elderly people.

IMPACT

This best practice receives many positive feedbacks from both elderly people and young students participating in the activity. Consequently, the results are the following:

1. Increased level of the active participation of the elderly people in the active society;
2. Increased level of interaction in the intergenerational dialogue between elderly people and young students;
3. Enhanced artistic and interpersonal skills of both elderly people and young students.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The main success factor is the idea to put together inactive elderly people and young students inside a creative and artistic context that facilitates the interaction and the

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intergenerational communication. In this sense, the encounter of these two social groups brings positive psychological effects for both of them, representing an important learning opportunity.

MORE INFO

<http://www.casamadonnadellafiducia.it/index.php>

<http://www.leccotoday.it/notizie/Alumni-Cittadini-a-lezione-alla-casa-di-riposo-Calolzio-.html>

<https://www.occhiovolante.it/2018/progetto-intergenerazionale/>

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3. Good Practices on Social Inclusion of the Elderly Population- Portugal

3.1. Aldeias de Memória (Memory Villages)

This project aims to develop the skills necessary to create an instrument that provides each village with the construction and dissemination of its history, leveraging its endogenous resources through the creation of true social and economic value.

This program is held in very typical villages of the interior part of Portugal. Some of those villages are almost abandoned since the number of jobs and opportunities is exceptionally low. The younger people left, and the only people living there are seniors. However, as those villages are very typical, they have a lot of tourism potential. That potential combined with a necessity of social inclusion of the elderly people created an ecosystem that welcomes this programme.

The project mapped eight villages. In those villages, they approach every senior member and created a profile with all the relevant information of them. We can find those profiles in the Website of the project. In association with the City Halls and Parish Councils, they implemented a strategy of elderly storytellers to those who visit the villages.

IMPACT

The impact was positive. The elderly people are more connected with the “outside world” and the people who visit the villages have a better understanding of the history and the culture.

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SUCCESS FACTORS

The success of the practice lied on two main factors, the amount of partnerships made with important institutions and the will of the elderly people to participate in such a project.

MORE INFO

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<http://www.aldeiasdememoria.com/benfeita/habitantes/>

3.2. Estória, História...: Encontro de Contadores, Lareiras e Sabores (Story, History...:Storytellers encounter, Fireplaces and Flavours)

This good practice aims at the promotion of the typical villages of the interior of Portugal through the art of telling stories and tales from the regions. Some of those villages are almost abandoned since the younger generations had to seek for jobs and opportunities in other geographical locations. The younger people left, and the only people living there are seniors.

The approach of the project consisted in going village by village reaching the elderly and asking them to share stories close to a fireplace and accompanied with the most genuine food from the region.

IMPACT

The impact was positive. The elderly people engaged with other people and the stories shared will be perpetuated in time.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The key factor was the will of the elderly people to participate in such a project because they found it interesting and appealing.

MORE INFO

<https://www.memoriamedia.net/index.php/estoria-historia>

3.3. Senior Inclusive

As the name implies, Senior Inclusive focuses on the elderly population, seeking to provide better monitoring for the elderly, benefiting the elderly, and at the same time an entire community of caregivers.

The elderly population, in some cases, has started to become less aware of their surroundings and, they even start to forget what medication they need to take at a given time. The project aims to create a technological solution for those problems, by creating software that helps the elderly population not to forget their medication and not getting lost. By creating equipment suitable for the needs of the senior population, this project aims to keep elderly people active and improve their sense of security. The project began firstly by detecting the major problems that the elderly population faces, and how technology could create a solution for those problems. After the creation of the software that detects the medication boxes and understands if the elderly should take that medication or not, the project started its test phase in care homes.

IMPACT

The project is still in test phase. However, until this moment the results are positive both for the elderly people and for the caregivers.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The technological approach to the problem provides a solution for concrete needs of elderly and also promotes its autonomy by remembering them the medication doses and intakes.

MORE INFO

<http://www.ccg.pt/projeto-senior-inclusive/>

3.4. RUTIS

This programme was created to unify all the Senior Universities of the country. When the Senior Universities are combined, they can interact and share good practices between them in a more prolific way. RUTIS promotes a very wide range of activities in all the associated Senior Universities. The idea is to promote studies about the elderly population to understand their needs and how the Social Assistance programmes are working. The recognition of the relevance of the elderly volunteers gained some importance in the last years as a way to encourage the social inclusion of the seniors.

IMPACT

The impact was positive. The network of Senior Universities worked as planned, and all the associated partners acquired information and ideas for new projects.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The main factors of success are the interest that a great number of Senior Universities had on the project and the rich environment created by the RUTIS association.

MORE INFO

<http://www.rutis.pt/intro/home>

3.5. Programa Aconchego (Cosiness programme)

This programme, based on an intergenerational perspective, aims to combat loneliness and isolation of seniors. To do so, the programme houses young university students in senior citizens' residences in the Municipality of Porto, that, with a symbolic contribution in goods or food, may contribute to the increasing expenses in water, electricity, and gas.

The methodology used in this project brings benefits for two different target groups. Most of the elderly live alone and in houses with a spare room, which increases the feeling of loneliness. To fight the loneliness, the project combines students, who come from other cities and towns and need a home, with those elderly people. With this approach, both groups gain something, and the social inclusion of the elderly is assured

IMPACT

The impacts of the project were incredibly positive. The elderly people tend to say they found a new grandchild, as the student that lives with them is their companion and is the one who is there to help. The students say that their feeling of belonging and humanity increases with this experience.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The key factor has been the revolutionary approach that wants to ensure the quality of life to two different target groups by putting them together.

MORE INFO

<http://www.cm-porto.pt/bonjoia-projetos/populacao-senior-programa-aconchego>

3.6. Prémio Seniores (Seniors' Prize)

17

It is an award to support projects that promote active, healthy and at-home ageing for people over the age of 65 in situations of social vulnerability. The number of elderly people is growing in the Portuguese society. As a result, the need for projects that approach the Social Inclusion issues increased too, and with that, the necessity of getting funds to complete the projects. To help the institutions with interesting ideas and well-developed projects, this award was created with the support of two important financial partners. The applicants submit their applications and a panel of judges evaluates every project and decides which project deserves to be funded.

IMPACT

Through the years many projects were developed to benefit the elderly people because of the financing promoted by this award.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The members that created the initiative were bankers and had a lot of money to cofound the projects

MORE INFO

<https://www.bancobpi.pt/responsabilidade-social/premio-bpi-'la-caixa'-seniores>

4. Good Practices on Social Inclusion of the Elderly Population- Spain

4.1. “Artesaneando” (Pursuing wellness through handcrafting).

“Artesaneando” (handcrafting) pursues participation, improvements, and integration of old people living in rural areas, by making themselves the principal characters of the project itself. In fact, they can transfer their experience and wisdom to both youngsters and to peers. Through this initiative, it is also expected to recover the knowledge and the skills related to ancient handcrafting and traditions.

The project was engaging, open, and flexible, based on community animation and respect for the rhythm of each person's work. Thus, a teaching-learning process based on their knowledge was started, taking into account physical and psychological limitations.

This project started in 2004 and was recognised the present as a good practise by the Spanish Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs in 2010.

IMPACT

The project has impacted at several levels:

- Popular knowledge kept by old people has been revalorised.
- The creation of associations of old people within the rural neighbourhoods of Jerez has been boosted by the project
- The presence of women within those groups has been increased and ensured..
- Women have taken part in the in the decision-making process of those new associations;
- New job's positions have been created;
- As of 2010, one hundred and fifty people were oriented and advised on the different available aids.

SUCCESS FACTORS

- Detecting the absence of social centers in rural neighborhoods and promote a space for carrying out activities that cover various areas;
- Betting on motivation and improvement of self-esteem within the group of older people giving them a leading role within society, giving value to their knowledge and promoting the intergenerational relationship;
- Promoting the active participation of women in associations and centers of the third age, by including them into the decision areas.

MORE INFO

https://www.caritas.es/jerez/multimedia_tags_video.aspx?tag=Artesaneando

4.2. “Elderly cultural volunteers to show Museums to children, youngsters and retired people”.

This is a national program that started in 1993 and continues working because of its good results. The aim of the project is to create mobile libraries, through which older people can pass their knowledge and experience to the younger generations. Older people bring their cultural and historical-artistic knowledge to children and young students, as well as to older people and other groups that are excluded from the possibility to take benefits of cultural pleasure. Consequently, it aims to the wellbeing, overall health, and quality of life of older people, as well as prevent their ageing by remaining active, dynamic, participatory, and useful to society.

This project has been developed to take positive advantages from the knowledge that older people have, and which is very useful for future generations. Moreover, Spain suffers a lack of cultural workers, therefore, to respond to this need, this project has been implemented. In this programme, high importance is given to the Training of Senior Cultural Volunteers.

IMPACT

More than a thousand cultural volunteers over 60 years of age have participated so far in this program, developing this activity in more than 130 museums, cathedrals, churches, cultural parks, Botanical Gardens, palaces, monasteries, historical and artistic monuments.

This project had an International repercussion especially in Latin American countries (Chile, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Cuba, Paraguay, Honduras, etc.), China, South Korea, India, Algeria, Egypt and recently Japan were it has been replicated.

The Senior Cultural Volunteers themselves say that they have rediscovered their enthusiasm for life, that they feel useful and happy transmitting the cultural and historical-artistic wealth to school children and young people and to the elderly who come to visit the Museum.

SUCCESS FACTORS

In this Programme, high importance is given to the Training of Senior Cultural Volunteers. First, the Volunteers receive a "Training Course on Volunteering, the Elderly and Museums", lasting twenty hours, provided by professionals from the Spanish Confederation of Senior citizens.

Once the training course described above has been completed, potential "Senior Cultural Volunteers" are assigned by letter to the Museum that each one chooses according to their preferences, motivations, studies and professions. From this moment on, each Museum - with its own resources and through its professionals and technicians- dedicates between two and six months to train its Volunteers through classes, conferences, guided visits, documentary *material, catalogues, etc.*

MORE INFO

http://ceate.es/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/n1-CULTURA-MAYOR_Voluntarios-Culturales-de-Museos.pdf

4.3. The Orchards of La Candamia

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This good practice is being carried out since 1995 by the Municipality of León in La Candamia, a big garden of the city of León. In this natural area the City Council has created leisure orchards for elderly people. The orchards are cultivated using traditional techniques that revalorise the knowledge of the elderly.

This good practice is seeking a general physical, social, and mental wellbeing of its beneficiaries, which facilitates the participation in society. This practice provides people access to outdoor spaces to carry out activities connected with nature, tries to increase the offer of leisure activities especially for the elderly people, enhances the idea of community by promoting coexistence and solidarity, promotes the intergenerational relationship by fostering dialogue between the elderly and the youngsters based on the transmission of popular and rural traditions, provides an alternative leisure activity for those living in the city of León who want to carry out organic horticulture activities, promotes the use of renewable energy and environmentally friendly practices by increasing personal commitment to environmental problems, strengths the integration between the suburbs and the city centre by supporting the ecological restoration of the natural space of La Candamia through practical and innovative solutions.

It has been proved to be an excellent occupational and leisure therapy for older people, providing them with alternative free spaces that allow them to carry out physical activities in contact with nature.

IMPACT

It has been proved to be an excellent occupational and leisure therapy for older people, providing them with alternative free spaces that allow them to carry out physical activities in contact with nature. This program was born in 1995 with one hundred initial plots, later expanded to the current 176. They occupy an area of 24,597 square meters. The 176 plots of the La Candamia Leisure Gardens are 100% occupied.

Given the high existing demand, new municipal gardens have been opened during the years. In 2019, these social gardens occupy a total area of 18,515 square meters.

This initiative has been replicated by many other municipalities in Spain.

SUCCESS FACTORS

In order to make this good practice replicable in a similar context it may be useful to seeking the collaboration of an institution, which may grant the use of certain parcels within a given territory. This is a good practice which can easily apply to different social and environmental contexts and can have as target the community itself, by granting not only the possibility to engage the participants into leisure activities, but also by providing a positive impact on a cultural, social and environmental ground.

MORE INFO

<http://www.aytoleon.es/es/ayuntamiento/areasmunicipales/mayores/Paginas/huertosdelacandamia.aspx>

4.4 LISTEN TO ME

This good practice was a European project aiming to prevent early school leaving in adolescents and, at the same time, enabling a path for active aging by making elderly people able to provide an important social contribution.

The initiative consisted in training elderly people to become mentors of teenagers, serving them as a guide, model, and providing them support. They help them by sharing their experience and teaching them values.

In turn, elderly people benefited from an active aging experience. In fact, mentoring is a generative behaviour fuelled by desires and motivations that mix self-affirmation and altruism and helps people to feel needed and feel useful. Generativity, in this sense, promotes psychological well-being and improves the quality of lifetime.

IMPACT

The research made during the implementation of the project by the University of Valencia revealed that it had a beneficial impact in both groups. The mentoring experiences allowed opportunities for older adults to renew positive emotions and reinforce meaning in their lives, and the young participants felt they were listened and supported.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The project provides a way to implement an active aging practice as well as intergenerational solidarity. Furthermore, mentoring is a generative behavior. Generativity is fueled by desires and motivations that mix self-affirmation with altruism. For this reason, generativity promotes psychological well-being and improves quality of life.

This is a good practice which can be easily repeated. It can have an impact even in a smaller area and may be helpful to collaborate with local schools, in order for them to experiment this new type of tutoring.

MORE INFO

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15350770.2012.697415>

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J083v44n03_03?src=recsys

Conclusions

The good practices presented are part of national projects implemented by a wide variety of organisations that share the same purpose. Although the projects are unique, they all have the same goal, that is, the engagement of the elderly people in society. This, in turn, will take them far from loneliness, depression, and social exclusion, revitalizing their spirit and making them still feel important thanks to their knowledge in terms of generating the current culture.

Two features can be identified as common in most of the good practices: they are focused on the valorisation of the knowledge of the elderly and are based on an intergenerational approach. Both have proved to present the best results for the direct beneficiaries first and for society as a whole.

Some key factors of success are common to those practices that have the most positive impact on the wellbeing and social inclusion of the elderly:

1. The flexibility and adaptability of the activities. The COVID-19 crisis has revealed that social and environmental factors have highly affected the implementation of multiple activities around the world, and thus successful activities have to foresee possible adaptations from their planning.
2. The involvement and support of several institutions, such as local communities and municipalities, constitute a warrant for the successful implementation of every activity.
3. Focusing on a very inclusive and common topic (food, gardens, local heritage, shared past, craft, etc.) helps to make the projects more appealing to the elderly and to other social groups.

4. Intergenerational activities have a great impact in the groups involved (children-elderly, youngsters-elderly). They have proved that this kind of approach that wants to ensure the quality of life to two different target groups by putting them together groups brings positive psychological effects for both of them, because they mix self-affirmation with altruism.
5. These activities also represent an important learning opportunity for both groups by improving social and cognitive skills of participants.
6. Active rol of the elderly in different stages of the activity. Those practices that give an active role to the elderly have been proved to be the most effective for tehir social inclusion nad welbeing, in these kind of projects they become owners of the activity and put into action different cognitive skills in each phase.
7. Creating welcoming spaces in which elderly have the opportunity to socialise with each other and with other groups of age in a comfortable environment.
8. The availability of economic resources.

These good practices and their successful factors will act as inspirational cases for the development of the TSITour curriculum.