



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

### Publication

Social Inclusion of Local Storytellers in the Tourism Industry

tsitour.eu



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## Executive Summary - English

Data from EUROSTAT shows that the population is ageing in EU-28. There are more people above 65 years old than below 14. The median age increased from 38 years in 2001 to 42,5 years in 2016, and it estimates that the percentage of the population in the EU above 85 years will triplicate from 2016 until 2080. This was the motto for creating the project co-funded by the Erasmus + programme under the title **Training on Social Inclusion in Tourism, by including elderly people as local storytellers for the Tourism Industry-TSITour**.

The project was designed in the scope of the strategic partnerships for vocational education and training (VET) since it aims to develop a Training Module for the VET courses on the fields of care and welfare in the five southern European participating countries. Some VET offers for social workers in the EU include a training module on how to implement projects for avoiding the idleness of the people under social care. However, minimising idleness brings only limited benefits for the psychophysical health of the elderly and does not bring significant socio-economic gains to society.

In contrast, the project proposes a methodological approach that benefits both VET professionals in the tourism and social sectors and elderly people under social care. In this framework, the project proposes the creation of a new training module for the VET courses in the fields of care and welfare, which will provide training on how to implement projects that will take advantage of the competencies of people under social care and value them. This will prevent their idleness and show them that they have an essential role in society, which will boost their psychosocial health and result in socio-economic gains.

The concept note of the project departed from the contribution of the elderly to the tourism industry by working as volunteer local storytellers in the touristic sites. This will exploit their capacities and allow the tourism industry to provide more authentic experiences to the tourists, resulting in economic gains and contributing to disseminating the culture and history of the communities. The choice of the tourism industry as a working model was based on the fact that it is probably the most relevant economic sector in the Mediterranean. It is strongly expanding in EU-27 and is open to innovative solutions. As a result, the project created a symbiosis between two focal areas – the social inclusion and the tourism industry, which enriches both areas.

This publication is focused on the concept proof in the sense that it presents a roadmap of the activities that were designed and implemented so as to achieve the structure of the proposed training programme. It is a tangible intellectual production tailored to the needs of its beneficiaries. It spotlights the main findings from the activities developed, namely, the compilation of the benefits of the local Storytellers for the tourism industry; the state of the

art and needs of performance of social professionals concerning elderly people's integration efforts; the compilation of good practices; the benchmarking of the existing VET courses focused on valorisation, and the round tables to discuss the main findings.

The activities enabled the consortium with an in-depth understanding of both sectors involved in the project – social inclusion and tourism- and they have established the foundations for creating the TSITour Training Module by identifying the possibilities of combining both areas. The existing gaps in the VET curricula were suppressed by a new multidisciplinary approach that explicitly considered the expertise of professionals currently working either with elders or in the tourism sector. These were fundamental actors in the process of designing the training programme structure, which was framed and supported by the significant data collection over eight months of implementation.

The approach of the training programme structure to the European Qualifications Framework principles is justified by the effort made by the Member States to better transparency and comparability of qualifications. Even though the module does not entitle its beneficiaries with a qualification, it is conceived to a specific target and level (EQF- level 4), which is recognised in the participating countries and other countries.

To sum up, this publication is a guiding document to relevant stakeholders that operate in the tourism and social areas, including VET trainers. Its reading endows the readers with knowledge on the importance of engaging the stakeholders in the construction of an adjusted answer to a problem or gap, which will produce fruitful results as a consequence of the exchange of expertise and field experiences.

## Executive Summary – Portuguese

Os dados do EUROSTAT mostram que a população está a envelhecer na União Europeia dos 28. Há mais pessoas com idade superior a 65 anos do que com menos de 14. A média de idades aumentou de 38 anos em 2001 para 42,5 em 2016, e estima-se que a percentagem da população na União Europeia acima dos 85 anos triplicará até 2080. Esta é a razão pela qual se criou um projeto cofinanciado pelo programa Erasmus+ com o título **Formação em Inclusão Social no Turismo, através da inclusão dos idosos como contadores de histórias locais para a Indústria do Turismo – TSITour**.

O projeto foi concebido no âmbito das parcerias estratégicas para o ensino e formação profissional (EFP), e visa desenvolver um módulo de formação para os cursos do EFP nas áreas do cuidado e bem-estar nos cinco países participantes provenientes do sul da Europa. No que respeita à atual oferta formativa disponível no EFP para os trabalhadores da área social na União Europeia, alguns cursos incluem um módulo de formação relacionado com a implementação de projetos, tendo como objetivo evitar a ociosidade das pessoas dependentes de assistência social. Contudo, a minimização da inatividade traz apenas benefícios limitados para a saúde psicofísica dos idosos, e não traz ganhos socioeconómicos significativos para a sociedade.

Assim sendo, o projeto propõe uma abordagem metodológica que beneficie tanto os profissionais do EFP no setor do turismo e área social como também as pessoas idosas dependentes de cuidados. Neste contexto, o projeto propõe a criação de um novo módulo nos domínios do cuidado e da assistência social, que proporcionará formação sobre como implementar projetos que irão tirar partido das competências das pessoas idosas e valorizá-las. Isto não só evitará a sua ociosidade como também lhes mostrará que têm um papel importante na sociedade, reforçando assim a saúde psicossocial e proporcionando ganhos socioeconómicos para os países.

A nota conceptual do projeto baseou-se na contribuição dos idosos para a indústria do turismo, trabalhando como contadores de histórias locais voluntários nos locais turísticos. Isto irá explorar as suas capacidades e permitirá à indústria turística fornecer experiências mais autênticas aos turistas, resultando em ganhos económicos, e contribuindo para a divulgação da cultura e história das comunidades. A escolha da indústria do turismo como modelo de trabalho baseou-se no facto de ser provavelmente o setor económico mais relevante na zona do Mediterrâneo, de se tratar de uma área que está em forte expansão na EU-28 e de estar muito aberta a soluções inovadoras. Como resultado, o projeto criou uma simbiose entre as duas áreas em foco – a inclusão social e a indústria turística – o que enriquecerá ambas.

Esta publicação centra-se na prova do conceito no sentido em que apresenta um roteiro das atividades que foram concebidas e implementadas por forma a atingir a estrutura do programa de formação proposto. Trata-se de uma produção intelectual tangível adaptada às necessidades dos seus beneficiários que destacará as principais conclusões das atividades desenvolvidas, nomeadamente: da compilação dos benefícios dos contadores de histórias locais para a indústria do turismo; o estado da arte e as necessidades de desempenho dos profissionais da área social relativamente aos esforços de integração das pessoas idosas; a compilação de boas práticas; a aferição comparativa dos cursos de EFP existentes centrados na valorização; e as mesas redondas para discussão das principais conclusões.

As atividades permitiram ao Consórcio obter um conhecimento mais aprofundado em ambos os setores envolvidos no projeto – inclusão social e turismo – e estabeleceram as bases para a criação do módulo de formação do TSITour, identificando as possibilidades de combinação de ambas as áreas. As lacunas existentes nos currículos do EFP foram assim supridas através da adoção de uma abordagem multidisciplinar, tendo em especial consideração os conhecimentos dos profissionais que trabalham quer com os idosos quer no setor do turismo. Estes foram fundamentais para o processo de conceção da estrutura do programa de formação que, por sua vez, foi enquadrado e apoiado por uma recolha significativa de dados ao longo dos oito meses de implementação.

A aproximação da estrutura do módulo aos princípios do Quadro Europeu de Qualificações justifica-se pelo facto dos Estados-Membros terem feito um grande esforço para conseguir uma maior transparência na comparação das qualificações obtidas. Embora o módulo não atribua uma qualificação, ele é concebido para um público-alvo e nível específico (4), sendo reconhecido tanto nos países participantes como noutros.

Em suma, esta publicação é um documento orientador para os intervenientes relevantes que operam na área do turismo e na área social, incluindo os docentes do EFP. A sua leitura confere conhecimentos sobre a importância de envolver os interessados na construção de uma resposta ajustada a um problema ou lacuna, o que produzirá resultados frutuosos provindos de um intercâmbio de conhecimentos e experiências.

## Executive Summary – Spanish

Los datos de EUROSTAT muestran que la población está envejeciendo en la Europa de los 28. Hay más personas mayores de 65 años que menores de 14 años. La edad media aumentó de 38 años en 2001 a 42,5 años en 2016, y se estima que el porcentaje de la población de la UE con más de 85 años se triplicará desde 2016 hasta 2080. Este fue el motor para la creación de un proyecto cofinanciado por el programa Erasmus + bajo el título **Formación sobre Inclusión Social en el Turismo, mediante la inclusión de personas mayores como narradores orales locales en la Industria Turística - TSITour**.

El proyecto se diseñó en el ámbito de las alianzas estratégicas para la educación y formación profesional (EFP), ya que tiene como objetivo desarrollar un Módulo de Formación para los cursos de FP en los campos de la atención y el bienestar en los cinco países participantes del sur de Europa. Ciertas ofertas formativas de FP para profesionales de la intervención social en la UE incluyen un módulo de formación sobre cómo implementar proyectos para evitar la inactividad de las personas bajo asistencia social. Sin embargo, minimizar la inactividad solo trae beneficios limitados para la salud psicofísica de las personas mayores, pero no implica beneficios socioeconómicos significativos para la sociedad.

Por esta razón, el proyecto propone un enfoque metodológico que beneficiará tanto a los profesionales de la FP del sector turístico y social como a las personas mayores bajo atención social. En este marco, el proyecto propone la creación de un nuevo módulo de formación para los cursos de FP en los ámbitos del cuidado y el bienestar, que permitirá capacitar sobre cómo implementar proyectos que aprovechen y valoren las competencias que tienen las personas bajo atención social. Esto no solo evitará su inactividad, sino que también les mostrará que tienen un papel importante en la sociedad, lo que impulsará su salud psicosocial y redundará en beneficios socioeconómicos para los países.

La nota conceptual del proyecto partió de la contribución de los ancianos a la industria del turismo, trabajando como narradores orales locales voluntarios en lugares turísticos. Esto aprovechará sus capacidades y permitirá que la industria del turismo brinde experiencias más auténticas a los turistas, lo que previsiblemente se traducirá en beneficio económico y contribuirá a la difusión de la cultura y la historia de las comunidades. La elección de la industria del turismo como modelo de trabajo se basó en el hecho de que probablemente sea el sector económico más relevante del Mediterráneo, está en fuerte expansión en la UE-28 y está muy abierto a soluciones innovadoras. Como resultado, el proyecto creó una simbiosis entre dos áreas de focalización, la inclusión social y la industria del turismo, aspirando a enriquecer ambas.

Esta publicación presenta una hoja de ruta de las actividades que fueron diseñadas e implementadas para lograr la estructura del programa de capacitación propuesto. Se trata de una producción intelectual tangible adaptada a las necesidades de sus beneficiarios que pondrá de relieve los principales hallazgos de las actividades desarrolladas, a saber, la recopilación de los beneficios de los *Storytellers* locales para la industria turística; el estado de la cuestión y las necesidades de actuación de los profesionales de la intervención social en relación con la inclusión de las personas mayores; la recopilación de buenas prácticas; la evaluación comparativa de los cursos de FP existentes centrados en la valoración, y las mesas redondas para debatir los principales resultados.

Las actividades permitieron al Consorcio conocer en profundidad los dos sectores involucrados en el proyecto - inclusión social y turismo - y han sentado las bases para la creación del Módulo de Formación TSITour al identificar las posibilidades de combinación de ambas áreas. Las lagunas detectadas en los planes de estudios de FP se suprimieron mediante un nuevo enfoque multidisciplinario y teniendo en cuenta explícitamente la experiencia de los profesionales que trabajan actualmente con personas mayores o en el sector turístico. Estos fueron actores fundamentales en el proceso de diseño de la estructura del programa de capacitación, el cual fue enmarcado y apoyado por la significativa recolección de datos durante ocho meses de implementación.

La estructura del programa de formación en el Marco Europeo de Cualificaciones se justifica por el esfuerzo realizado por los Estados miembros para mejorar la transparencia y la comparabilidad de las cualificaciones. Si bien el módulo no habilita a sus beneficiarios con una calificación, está concebido para una meta y un nivel específicos (nivel 4), reconocido en los países participantes y otros países de la UE.

En resumen, esta publicación es un documento de orientación para las partes interesadas relevantes que operan en las áreas social y turística, incluidos los formadores de FP. Su lectura dota a los lectores de conocimiento sobre la importancia de involucrar a los actores en la construcción de una respuesta ajustada a un problema o brecha, que producirá resultados fructíferos como consecuencia del intercambio de conocimientos y experiencias de campo.

## Executive Summary – Italian

I dati di EUROSTAT mostrano che la popolazione sta invecchiando all'interno dell'Unione Europea. Ci sono più persone di età superiore ai 65 anni che persone al di sotto dei 14 anni, l'età media è aumentata da 38 anni nel 2001 a 42,5 anni nel 2016 e si stima che la percentuale della popolazione europea di età superiore a 85 anni triplicherà dal 2016 al 2080. Questa è la ragione principale che ha portato alla creazione del progetto co-finanziato dal programma Erasmus+ con il titolo ***Training on Social Inclusion in Tourism, by including elderly people as local storytellers for the Tourism Industry – TSITour***.

Il progetto è stato disegnato all'interno dei Partenariati Strategici nel settore dell'istruzione della formazione professionale visto che si prefigge di sviluppare un Manuale formativo per i corsi di formazione professionale nell'area del sociale all'interno dei cinque Stati Membri meridionali dell'UE. Alcuni programmi nel settore dell'istruzione e della formazione professionale includono moduli formativi su come portare avanti dei progetti finalizzati a coinvolgere anziani e persone inattive in attività sociali che prevengono la noia e l'apatia. Tuttavia, ridurre al minimo l'ozio porta solo dei benefici limitati alla salute psico-fisica degli anziani e non porta nessun beneficio socio-economico alla società.

Di contro, il progetto TSITour propone un approccio metodologico che va a beneficio sia dei professionisti della formazione professionale e dei settori turistico e sociale, sia degli anziani sotto assistenza sociale. In questo quadro, il progetto propone la creazione di un innovativo Manuale formativo per i corsi di formazione professionale nei settori dell'assistenza e del welfare, fornendo una formazione su come realizzare progetti che sfruttano le competenze degli anziani e le valorizzeranno. Questo non solo eviterà loro ozio e apatia, ma mostrerà loro che possono ancora avere un ruolo importante nella società, rafforzando la loro salute psico-fisica e apportando vantaggi socio-economici per i Paesi Membri.

L'idea del progetto TSITour è partita dal contributo degli anziani all'industria del turismo in qualità di cantastorie locali volontari all'interno dei siti turistici. Questa attività permette di sfruttare le loro capacità e di aiutare l'industria del turismo, fornendo esperienze più autentiche ai turisti (con conseguenti maggiori guadagni economici) e contribuendo alla diffusione della cultura e della storia delle comunità. La scelta dell'industria turistica come ambito del progetto si è basata sul fatto che si tratta probabilmente del settore economico più rilevante nei Paesi europei del Mediterraneo, essendo in forte espansione e molto aperto a soluzioni innovative. In questo contesto, il progetto TSITour crea una simbiosi tra due aree focali: l'inclusione sociale e l'industria del turismo, arricchendole entrambe.

Questa pubblicazione è incentrata sull'elenco delle attività che sono state ideate e realizzate al fine di designare la struttura del Manuale di formazione. Si tratta di un'opera d'ingegno adatta alle esigenze dei suoi beneficiari che mette in luce i principali risultati delle attività sviluppate in precedenza: la compilazione dei benefici che apportano i cantastorie locali all'industria del turismo, lo stato dell'arte e le esigenze performative dei professionisti in area

del sociale in relazione agli sforzi di integrazione degli anziani, la compilazione di buone pratiche, il benchmark dei corsi di formazione professionale esistenti sulla valorizzazione degli anziani e le tavole rotonde per discutere i principali risultati.

Le suddette attività hanno permesso al partenariato del progetto di approfondire la conoscenza di entrambi i settori coinvolti nel progetto -l'inclusione sociale e il turismo - e hanno posto le basi per la creazione del Manuale formativo TSITour, individuando le possibili combinazioni tra le due aree. Le lacune esistenti negli attuali programmi di formazione professionale sono state colmate da un nuovo approccio multidisciplinare, tenendo in considerazione le competenze dei professionisti coinvolti che attualmente lavorano con gli anziani o nel settore del turismo. I professionisti sono stati i protagonisti nel processo di progettazione della struttura del Manuale formativo, che è stato inquadrato e supportato dalla significativa raccolta di dati durata otto mesi.

L'approccio fedele del Manuale formativo TSITour ai principi del Quadro europeo delle qualifiche è giustificato dallo sforzo compiuto dagli Stati membri dell'Unione Europea per una migliore trasparenza e comparabilità tra le qualifiche. Anche se il Manuale non conferisce ai suoi beneficiari una qualifica particolare, questo è concepito per un obiettivo e un livello specifico (4) all'interno del Quadro, riconosciuto dai Paesi partecipanti e dagli altri Paesi dell'Unione Europea.

In sintesi, questa pubblicazione è una guida per gli *stakeholder* (portatori di interesse) che operano nei settori del turismo e del sociale, includendo i formatori della formazione professionale. La sua lettura fa riflettere sull'importanza di coinvolgere gli *stakeholder* nella formulazione di una risposta adeguata a problemi e lacune legati alla formazione professionale, producendo risultati fruttuosi che nascono dallo scambio di competenze ed esperienze sul campo.

## Executive Summary – Greek

Τα στοιχεία της EUROSTAT δείχνουν ότι ο πληθυσμός της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης γερνάει. Υπάρχουν περισσότερα άτομα άνω των 65 ετών, απ' ότι άτομα κάτω των 14 ετών. Η μέση ηλικία του πληθυσμού αυξήθηκε από τα 38 έτη που ήταν το 2001, στα 42,5 έτη το 2016. Εκτιμάται επίσης, ότι το ποσοστό του πληθυσμού άνω των 85 ετών στην Ε.Ε. από το 2016 έως το 2080, θα έχει τριπλασιαστεί. Αυτά τα δεδομένα έδωσαν το έναυσμα για τη δημιουργία του έργου που συγχρηματοδοτήθηκε από το πρόγραμμα Erasmus+ με τίτλο **TSITour - Εκπαίδευση για την Κοινωνική Ένταξη στον Τουρισμό, συμπεριλαμβάνοντας τους ηλικιωμένους ως τοπικούς αφηγητές στην Τουριστική Βιομηχανία.**

Το έργο σχεδιάστηκε στο πλαίσιο των στρατηγικών συνεργασιών για την επαγγελματική εκπαίδευση και κατάρτιση (EEK), καθώς στοχεύει στην ανάπτυξη μιας Εκπαιδευτικής Ενότητας για μαθήματα EEK στους τομείς της φροντίδας και της πρόνοιας, στις πέντε συμμετέχουσες χώρες της Νότιας Ευρώπης. Σε κάποια ευρωπαϊκά εκπαιδευτικά ιδρύματα υπάρχουν μαθήματα EEK, που απευθύνονται κυρίως σε κοινωνικούς λειτουργούς και περιλαμβάνουν εκπαιδευτικές ενότητες για τον τρόπο υλοποίησης έργων που στόχο έχουν τον περιορισμό της αδράνειας σε άτομα που λαμβάνουν κοινωνική περίθαλψη. Παρόλα αυτά, ο περιορισμός του κινδύνου της αδράνειας επιφέρει μεν, οφέλη στην ψυχική και σωματική υγεία των ηλικιωμένων δεν φαίνεται όμως, ότι έχει σημαντικά κοινωνικοοικονομικά οφέλη προς την κοινωνία.

Αντιθέτως, το έργο προτείνει μια μεθοδολογική προσέγγιση που θα ωφελήσει τόσο τους επαγγελματίες EEK στους τομείς του τουρισμού και της κοινωνικής πρόνοιας, αλλά και τους ηλικιωμένους που λαμβάνουν κοινωνική περίθαλψη. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, το έργο προτείνει τη δημιουργία μιας νέας εκπαιδευτικής ενότητας για τα μαθήματα EEK στους τομείς της φροντίδας και της κοινωνικής πρόνοιας. Η ενότητα θα παρέχει εκπαίδευση σχετικά με τον τρόπο υλοποίησης έργων που απ' τη μία, χρησιμοποιούν τις δεξιότητες των ηλικιωμένων ατόμων που λαμβάνουν κοινωνική περίθαλψη και απ' την άλλη, τα αξιοποιούν δείχνοντας τους εκτίμηση για την κοινωνική προσφορά τους. Αυτό όχι μόνο θα μειώσει σημαντικά τον κίνδυνο της αδράνειας, αλλά θα δείξει στα άτομα ότι διαδραματίζουν σημαντικό ρόλο στην κοινωνία, ενισχύοντας έτσι, την ψυχική και κοινωνική τους ευημερία, αλλά και οδηγώντας σε κοινωνικά και ενδεχομένως οικονομικά οφέλη για τις χώρες.

Απαρχή του έργου ήταν η ιδέα της συμβολής των ηλικιωμένων στην τουριστική βιομηχανία, μέσω της εθελοντικής εργασίας τους, ως τοπικοί αφηγητές σε χώρους τουριστικού ενδιαφέροντος. Με αυτό τον τρόπο, μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν οι δεξιότητες τους και ταυτοχρόνως, δίνεται η ευκαιρία στον τουριστικό κλάδο να προσφέρει πιο αυθεντικές εμπειρίες στους τουρίστες. Αυτή η δράση μπορεί να έχει ως αποτέλεσμα, οικονομικά οφέλη συμβάλλοντας παράλληλα, σημαντικά στη διάδοση του πολιτισμού και της ιστορίας των

κοινοτήτων. Η επιλογή της τουριστικής βιομηχανίας ως μοντέλου εργασίας, έγινε διότι αποτελεί έναν από τους πιο ισχυρούς και ακμαίους τομείς οικονομικής δραστηριότητας στη Μεσόγειο, καθώς έχει διαρκή ανάπτυξη και γενικότερα, είναι ένας πολύ ανοιχτός τομέας σε καινοτόμες ιδέες και προτάσεις. Ως αποτέλεσμα, το έργο δημιούργησε μία σύνδεση μεταξύ δύο κεντρικών τομέων ενδιαφέροντος – τον τομέα της κοινωνικής ένταξης και τον τομέα της τουριστικής βιομηχανίας. Μέσα από αυτή τη σύνδεση μπορούν να εμπλουτιστούν σημαντικά και οι δύο τομείς.

Αυτή η δημοσίευση επικεντρώνεται στην παρουσίαση ενός χάρτη των δραστηριοτήτων που σχεδιάστηκαν και υλοποιήθηκαν, έτσι ώστε να επιτευχθεί η δομή της προτεινόμενης εκπαιδευτικής ενότητας. Πρόκειται για ένα πνευματικό προϊόν, προσαρμοσμένο στις ανάγκες των ωφελούμενων και μέσω αυτού, θα παρουσιαστούν τα κύρια ευρήματα από τις δραστηριότητες που έλαβαν χώρα στα κράτη των εταίρων. Οι δραστηριότητες είναι οι ακόλουθες - τα οφέλη των τοπικών αφηγητών για την τουριστική βιομηχανία; η ανάλυση της κατάστασης και οι ανάγκες απόδοσης των επαγγελματιών κοινωνικής πρόνοιας για την ενίσχυση της ένταξης των ηλικιωμένων; η συλλογή καλών πρακτικών; η συγκριτική αξιολόγηση των μαθημάτων ΕΕΚ στις χώρες των εταίρων που επικεντρώνονται στην αξιοποίηση των ηλικιωμένων; και οι συζητήσεις στρογγυλής τράπεζας που πραγματοποιήθηκαν για να συζητηθούν τα κύρια ευρήματα των προηγούμενων δραστηριοτήτων.

Οι δραστηριότητες επέτρεψαν στην σύμπραξη των εταίρων να κατανοήσουν εις βάθος τους δύο τομείς κεντρικού ενδιαφέροντος του έργου – την κοινωνική ένταξη και τον τουρισμό. Παράλληλα, μέσα από αυτές δημιουργήθηκαν τα θεμέλια για τη δημιουργία της Εκπαιδευτική Ενότητας του TSITour προσδιορίζοντας τις δυνατότητες που υπάρχουν για να συνδυαστούν οι δύο τομείς. Τα υπάρχοντα κενά στα προγράμματα σπουδών της ΕΕΚ μειώθηκαν από μία νέα διεπιστημονική προσέγγιση, λαμβάνοντας σοβαρά υπόψη την τεχνογνωσία των επαγγελματιών που εργάζονται με ηλικιωμένους και στον τομέα του τουρισμού. Αυτοί ήταν θεμελιώδεις παράγοντες στη διαδικασία σχεδιασμού της δομής της εκπαιδευτικής ενότητας, η οποία πλαισιώθηκε και υποστηρίχθηκε από τη σημαντική συλλογή δεδομένων που πραγματοποιήθηκε εντός των οκτώ μηνών υλοποίησης των δραστηριοτήτων του έργου.

Η προσέγγιση που ακολουθήθηκε για τη δημιουργία της δομής της εκπαιδευτικής ενότητας σύμφωνα με τις αρχές του Ευρωπαϊκού Πλαισίου Επαγγελματικών Προσόντων (ΕΠΕΠ), έγινε χάρη στην προσπάθεια των εταίρων για μεγαλύτερη διαφάνεια και συγκρισιμότητα των προσόντων. Παρόλο που η ενότητα δεν παρέχει στους ωφελούμενους κάποια πιστοποίηση, έχει σχεδιαστεί με έναν συγκεκριμένο στόχο και αναφέρεται στο επίπεδο 4, το οποίο αναγνωρίζεται στις συμμετέχουσες και σε άλλες χώρες.

Συνοψίζοντας, αυτή η δημοσίευση μπορεί να λειτουργήσει ως ένας οδηγός για τα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη που δραστηριοποιούνται στον τουρισμό και στον τομέα της κοινωνικής πρόνοιας, συμπεριλαμβανομένων και των εκπαιδευτών ΕΕΚ. Η ανάγνωσή του προσφέρει στα άτομα γνώσεις σχετικά με την ανάγκη της συμμετοχής των σχετικών φορέων στην δημιουργία μίας προσαρμοσμένης λύσης σε ένα πρόβλημα και κενό που υπάρχει, το οποίο θα αποφέρει χρήσιμα αποτελέσματα χάρη στην ανταλλαγή τεχνογνωσίας και εμπειριών από το πεδίο.

## Introduction

*“There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age.” Sophia Loren*

The report *World Population Ageing 2019* produced by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs from the United Nations states that the “**population ageing is a human success story**, reflecting the advancement of public health, medicine, and economic and social development, and their contribution to the control of disease, prevention of injury, and reduction in the risk of premature death. The extension of human longevity and subsequent reduction in levels of fertility lead inevitably to a shift in the population age distribution from younger to older ages.” This positive perspective of the population ageing has the reverse angle that emphasises that the proportion of elderly people is increasing due to “*low birth rates, ageing baby-boomers and rising life expectancy*” (Comission, 2020). These findings are significant since they reflect one of the most relevant social transformations of the twenty-first century. This scenario led the European Commission (Comission, 2020) to foresee that:

- *Between 2016 and 2060, the share of people over 65 will grow from 19.3% to 29.0% of the total population. The percentage of people over 80 will more than double to 12.1%.*
- *During the same time, the working-age population (15-64) in the EU is expected to decline by 11.6%. As economic growth until now has been fueled to a large extent by workforce growth, a smaller labour force might have adverse effects on the European economy and social systems.*
- *Pensions, health care and long-term care systems risk becoming financially unsustainable, as a shrinking labour force may no longer be able to provide for the needs of the growing number of older people.*

To corroborate the predictions and studies, it is worth noting the Western European population pyramid to understand the evolution tendency towards an older population, comparing data from 1999 and 2019. The recent indicators show that the base is narrowing, whereas the top is widening, meaning that the birth rate is decreasing, and the life expectancy is ascending.

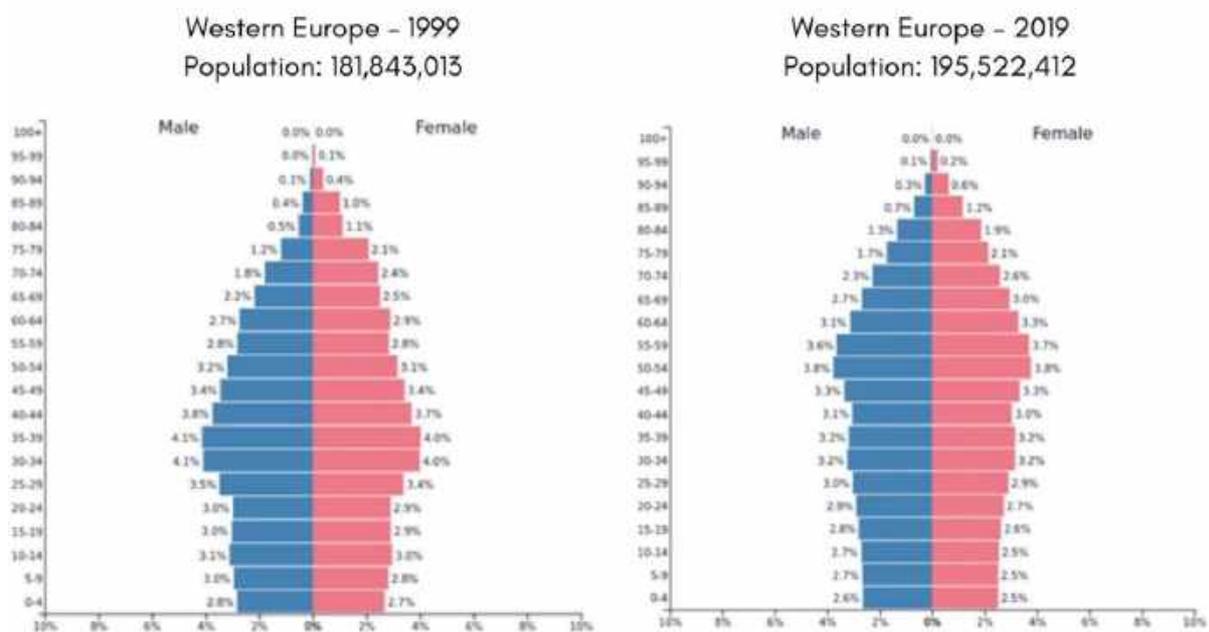


Figure 1- Western European population pyramid

Considering this tendency, European countries must fine-tune common challenges concerning the elders, such as care, **social inclusion**, and promotion of a **central role in society**.

The European Commission has made policy recommendations that address the **ageing process as an opportunity** rather than an obstacle. It focused on the concept of **active ageing**, which can be defined as *“helping people stay in charge of their own lives for as long as possible as they age and, where possible, to contribute to the economy and society.”* (Comission, 2020).

The TSITour project was designed in line with active ageing, considering that the participation of elders as local volunteer storytellers can provide them with an active role in society. They can contribute with their knowledge and life experience to the development of the touristic sector, thus contributing to the economy and at the same time to their social integration.

# 1. Methodology

The methodological approach followed by the participating countries was devised to enable the achievement of the goals defined at the application stage. In addition, to achieve the expected results, the consortium defined a set of activities that would bridge the gap between the objectives and the results.

The division of work departed from the expertise of each partner organisation, under the supervision of the intellectual output leader and the project coordinator. Each activity was preceded by guidelines for its implementation and a toolkit of templates for its accomplishment. The work methodology also included regular meetings, constant communication flow and peer review so that the results were accurate, accomplished on time and in accordance with the defined quality standards.

Below is a description of the methodology followed for the activities conducted that culminated in the training programme structure presented in this publication.

The starting point was a ***compilation of the benefits of local storytellers for the tourism industry***, which was implemented through interviews with tourism professionals, VET trainers, and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) representatives from the tourism sector in the partner countries. The interview script was jointly prepared, each partner collected the data from the interviews, and the activity leader produced a report with the main findings.

The second activity was the ***state of the art and needs of performance of welfare/social professionals***, which was implemented through questionnaires and interviews. Both instruments had as targets the welfare/social professionals. The survey questions and the interview script were jointly prepared. The activity leader of the survey inserted the questions on LimeSurvey, monitored the progress of the activity and prepared a report with the main findings. The questionnaires provided both qualitative and quantitative inputs, which have helped to understand the *current work of the institutions, their needs and their main findings regarding the elderly people's inclusion and valorisation* (Ovar Forma, 2019). The activity leader of the interviews prepared a template for the collection of data and produced a report with the main findings. The partners distributed the link nationally and conducted interviews, which completed the data obtained through the questionnaires by getting more profound inputs from the agents involved and helped out defining the contents to be included in the TSITour Training Module, with a qualitative approach.

The third activity was a **collection of good practices on social inclusion of the elderly**, which was implemented through desk research. The activity leader produced guidelines and a template where the partners registered the data collected. The compilation of good practices across the partner countries helped to get inspiration, considering ongoing success topic-related cases.

The fourth activity was a **benchmarking** to analyse social VET courses related to the valorisation and inclusion of elderly people. The activity leader produced guidelines and a template where the partners registered the data collected. The benchmarking revealed the current contents taught in VET courses of social areas, showing the potentialities that the TSITour Training Module has in the framework of each partner country reality.

The fifth activity was the implementation of one **round table** in each partner country with the participation of tourism professionals, social workers, VET trainers from tourism or social areas and representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises from the tourism sector. This activity had as primary goal to discuss the main findings of the activities above. One report was produced with the main points derived from the discussions.

Following the collection of data and the engagement of relevant stakeholders in the project activities with enabled to collect direct feedback and discuss strategic areas of the project, the partnership, under the leadership of Ovar Forma, designed the training programme structure, which is the basis for the construction of the training module on Project Development for Social Inclusion.

**The methodological process applied was based on two main stages:** the first comprised the elaboration of reports with the main conclusions in each participating country, and the second, the development of a global report that compiled the main national findings and a comparative analysis which resulted in recommendations to be taken into account for the construction of the training programme. Each activity leader elaborated this global report.

This methodology contributed to configuring the structure of the training module, considering the first beneficiaries: the trainers and trainees of the VET courses. In addition, thanks to every step carried out during this process, the partnership was able to deeply understand the role of VET institutions with training in social areas in the development of competencies and skills that focus on the valorisation of the elderly people, which is the social group the future professionals will work with.

## 2. The path to the construction of the TSITour Training Programme

This section is dedicated to the description of the path that led to the construction of the TSITour training programme. A detailed description of the activities implemented will be presented, as well as the most relevant findings and considerations.

The construction of the TSITour Training Programme had a total duration of eleven months, during which the consortium implemented a set of activities in the participating countries so as to achieve the pre-defined project priorities: Social inclusion and further strengthening key competences in initial and continuing VET.

The path to the construction of the training programme started with an intensive transnational cooperation for the compilation of the benefits of “Local Storytellers” for the Tourism Industry, followed by the analysis of the state of the art and needs of performance of welfare/social professionals. A collection of good practices and/or inspirational cases was done in the participating countries, as well as a benchmarking to analyse the existence of social VET courses related with the valorisation and inclusion of life-span experiences of elderly people. The contribution of relevant stakeholders was critical at all stages, including in the round tables promoted in Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece. The path culminated with the definition of the Training Programme Structure, which is the focal point of this Publication.

### 2.1 Benefits of local storytellers for the Tourism Industry

It is fundamental to consider the central role that the tourism industry has in the Mediterranean countries that take part in this project. Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain are tourism-driven countries given their open-minded and cheerful people, their splendid landscapes and gastronomy and, of course, the seaside that links them all. For many years the tourism has been in the basis of these countries’ economies, evolving to different models and addressing different targets. The role of the tourist guide has itself changed over time, adopting other features and merging with other areas such as literature, theatre and improvisation. The tourist guide is now multi-skilled, and uses different techniques and local players to enrich the tourism experience of the clients. The local storytellers are, thus, valuable instruments at the service of the tourism industry, in cooperation with the tourism guides.

The organisations from the four participating countries engaged relevant stakeholders in the compilation of the benefits of local storytellers for the tourism industry, which included professionals from the tourism sector, VET trainers from social areas and representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises from the tourism sector. Sixty interviews were conducted to identify the benefits of the inclusion of local storytellers in the tourism sector. Below are presented the main findings in the participating countries, regarding the main relevant topics discussed with the interviewees.

### 2.1.1. The concept of *Storytelling*

The concept of Storytelling and its application to tourism or to social areas was a topic exploited during the interviews and the results varied from country to country and target group.

Concerning **the trainers**, the majority were already familiar with the concept, but recognized that this terminology was not commonly used in their daily teaching practice.



All the **SME representatives** evidenced some lack of profound knowledge about the concept. In Spain and Greece, most had already heard of it, however, they never used it or did not fully understand storytelling and how they could use it in their companies. In Portugal and Italy, the results were very similar. Three of the interviewees of each country had some level of knowledge, and the other two had never heard about *Storytelling*.

Concerning the **tourism professionals**, in Spain, only one of the interviewees had some level of knowledge about the concept, whereas in Italy, all knew the concept. In Greece, only one of the tourism professionals interviewed did not know the term, and in Portugal, only two had some degree of knowledge about *Storytelling*.

From the results, it was possible to conclude that the knowledge of the concept varied considerably. As a consequence, the project team had to raise the participants awareness to this topic by fostering an open dialogue about its relevance and benefits.

### 2.1.2. Techniques for applying oral storytelling

The **SME representatives** and the **tourism professionals** were asked about best practices in terms of techniques to apply oral storytelling. The answers were very close in terms of target groups and countries. Almost every country and group have chosen the options related to the passage of stories through generations, stories about the jobs performed in the region, or stories about the cultural context. In addition, the SME representatives stressed that the on-site storytelling, if possible, dressed as a historic character linked to the site, should be considered as a good methodological approach for storytelling.

The **VET trainers** and the **tourism professionals** considered that working with the tourist guides was critical to help them implement a narrative approach during the guided visits. The

The main conclusion was that the best techniques to apply are those that bring more authenticity to the experience.

### 2.1.3. The involvement of older generations in storytelling, and main themes

The **VET trainers** recognized the involvement of the elderly in the storytelling process because of their knowledge, their “historical memory”, and the perpetuity of the culture that the elderly people can provide.

The Portuguese and the Italian interviewees underlined the promotion of active ageing and the Spanish, the benefits related to the mental and physical health and the intergenerational connections that can be fostered by this project.

There was a consensus regarding the social valorization and dignification of the elderly by their participation in such initiatives.

The **Tourism professionals** shared the same recognition and added their experience, wisdom, personal touch, and a glimpse of the past, which is essential. Nevertheless, both the Spanish and the Greek professionals mentioned that oral storytelling should be complementary to the official tours, or restricted to a specific space, like museums.

The **SME representatives** were in line with the opinions of the other targets interviewed. The Italian and Portuguese professionals focused their attention on the need to always have a tourism guide, that is essentially necessary for the translation process and for the simplification of the details of the stories.

The SME Representatives were unanimous in considering that the themes should be the ones in which the elderly can add value, which are related to local history, legends and myths, labour/professions, and local traditions.

### 2.1.4. The Storytelling benefits

The interviewees were requested to share their personal views of the benefits of Storytelling in their area of work.

All **the trainers** in the tourism area agreed that storytelling could be crucial because it is a different way to sell the touristic product and its importance to the local economy and the preservation of the culture and traditions. The trainers in social areas agreed that storytelling could contribute to developing particular skills in the elderly or those at risk of vulnerability.

The **tourism professionals** expressed a similar tendency. They believed that storytelling provided another dimension to the touristic experience since the tourist had the possibility to know more about a city or region by hearing the elderly people and the stories they had to share. The authenticity would be emphasized when using storytelling as the methodological approach. Nevertheless, some interviewees remarked that the facts could not be manipulated to have a better story. Some coherence between the oral narrative and the reality must be maintained.

The **SME representatives** were unanimous to consider that this type of activity promotes better engagement, stimulates interest, improves the experience, fosters the local economy, and it is a new way to create profits and promote the national economy. However, some remarks were made that pointed that this type of tourism is not appropriate for all tourists or tourism experiences. Therefore, it is critical to involve the right local partners in this project to ensure its sustainability.

In all countries, both the tourism professionals and the SME representatives highlighted the following four benefits of storytelling:

It enables to experience diverse cultures	It enables to relate to people, places and situations	It offers insights of different traditions and values	It reveals differences and similarities of cultures worldwide
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### 2.1.5. Storytelling and social inclusion

The **VET trainers** considered that the benefits of storytelling for social inclusion relied in the valorisation of the elderly knowledge; the opportunity to learn new things and develop new skills; its role in keeping the elders active, sociable and give them a sense of contribution; its

benefit to the maintenance of their mental health, helping them with dementia and other problems of the third age, and possible economic benefits if the enterprises decide to offer a financial incentive to the storytellers.

The **tourism professionals** confirmed the importance of oral storytelling activities as an essential tool to foster the social inclusion of the elderly community. All the interviewees have pointed out the significance of this concept in valorizing the knowledge of elderly people, the promotion of their physical and mental health and the fight against their feeling of loneliness.

Even though the **SME representatives** do not have an expert knowledge on the inclusion topic, the majority recognized that this was an excellent idea that could improve the health and social inclusion of the elderly, the local economy, and the income of the elderly volunteers.

### 2.1.6. The Storytelling applied to the tourism industry

The application of the storytelling concept to the tourism industry was a central point discussed during the interviews. The results were very similar in all the participating countries and target groups.

**The trainers** from the tourism and social areas recognized not only the potential of storytelling for the social inclusion of elderly people, but also its contribution for a better tourism service and improvement of the touristic packages.

In all countries the interviewees underlined the importance of preserving the culture and traditions of a city or region, which could be made by this methodological approach. Some trainers mentioned that the availability of storytelling can be remarkably interesting for the tourists even in the initial stage when they are deciding their next touristic destination. In other words, it is a differentiating factor that can lead the business to gain many new clients through its promotion.

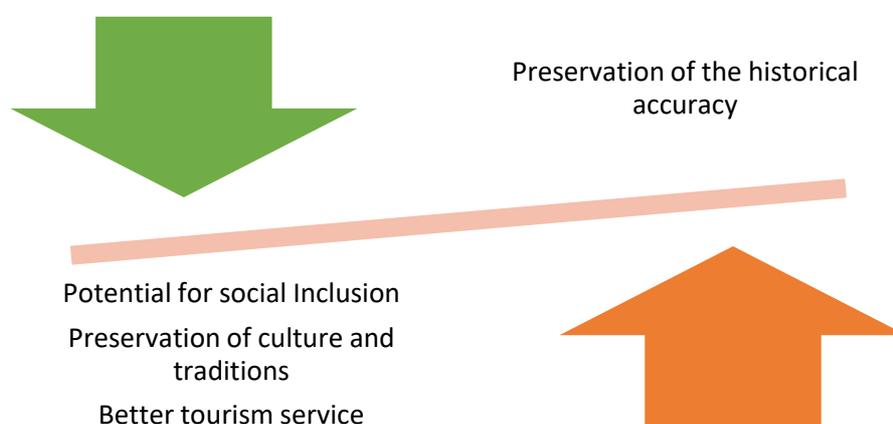
**The tourism professionals** recognized storytelling as a valuable tool for their daily work and for the interaction with the tourists.

They believe that the elderly people performing storytelling can provide an exciting experience to all involved. They can collaborate with the tourism guides, the tourism organisations or other tourism providers to implement better touristic packages. They also mentioned that this type of tourism can be an alternative to the more “mainstream” touristic packages. The elderly people have more knowledge about their

homeland, and if they work in collaboration with tourism providers, they can help the companies create better tourism itineraries.

Nevertheless, in Portugal and Greece the professionals recommended a careful implementation of the methodology to preserve the historical accuracy of the facts.

All the interviewed **SME representatives** agreed that storytelling, when appropriately applied and in the right business type, could be a very important, engaging, and rewarding tool to use since it could foster the relationship between the tourist and the tourism attraction, and it could add value to the touristic services. The differential aspect of this concept could bring a distinct tourist profile, keener to have a culturally immersive experience. They considered that having a different option for touristic packages is important and exciting to the sector and to their business.



### 2.1.7. Storytelling and the improvement of guided tours

The **VET trainers** expressed the differences between the storytellers and the tourism guides, despite considering that they could be complementary and thus enrich the guided tours. In their opinion the elders can accompany a tourist guide, tell the stories, and promote the oral traditions of a particular place, whereas the tourist guide can help in this process by translating and promoting them. However, the guide must always have the control of the group.

The **tourism professionals** also agreed that having elders as oral storytellers could improve the guided tours provided that the elders work in accordance with the best practices of tourism guiding. Teamwork was the solution found to maintain historical accuracy and promote the tourists' engagement.

### 2.1.8. Storytelling and VET

The countries that participated in the survey assumed that the VET courses in the tourism and social areas do not have any storytelling training unit in the curricula. These would benefit from a multidisciplinary approach so that the benefits could be potentiated. In addition, the trainers were opened to promote some techniques to implement the idea in the courses, once they recognized that it could provide an opportunity for the students to develop soft skills and later promote innovation in the job market by fostering new types of projects and opening new career opportunities.

### 2.1.9. Projects already in course

Concerning the projects already in course the participants referred some projects in Portugal that promoted the literacy of elderly people and a very important project linked with the storytelling concept called “Aldeias de Memória”. The Spanish trainers referred that there were many projects that targeted the elderly, but very few allowed them to participate actively. The Italian VET trainers mentioned one project called “CrazyFoodKit.” This project intended not to let old craftsmanship techniques be lost. To preserve it the project created a partnership between elderly people and young designers.

### 2.1.10. Main findings

The analysis of all the data collected by means of the interviews to VET trainers, to tourism professionals and to the SME representatives can be summarized in the following main findings:

- The concept of storytelling is known by the trainers, but not used in their daily practice.
- The concept of storytelling is unevenly known among the tourism professionals.
- The SME representatives have different levels of knowledge regarding the applicability of storytelling to their business.
- The storyteller and the tourism guide must work together to implement a narrative approach to the guided tours.
- The availability of storytelling might influence the choice of the touristic destination.
- Storytellers can help the tourism providers to create better tourism itineraries.
- The involvement of older generations in storytelling promotes active ageing, social inclusion, and benefits the mental and physical health of the storytellers.
- The storytellers should focus on stories related to the local history, legends, myths, professions, and local traditions. Nevertheless, the historical accuracy must be ensured.

- Storytelling can contribute to the local economy and to the preservation of the culture and traditions.
- The VET courses in the tourism and social areas do not have any storytelling training unit in the curricula.
- The VET trainers are interested in exploring the potential of storytelling

## 2.2 State of art and needs of performance of social professionals

The design of the TSITour Project included the analysis of the state of art of the work done by the social organisations in terms of the inclusion of the elderly. The methodological approach consisted of the implementation of questionnaires and interviews to collect relevant data on the topic. Specifically, the questionnaire aimed at understanding what the institutions already did to include and valorise the elderly and the needs they had to do it. The interviews had as target group the professionals from welfare and/or social intervention areas that dealt with elderly people, and focused on the social inclusion activities performed. The results of these activities are presented in this chapter.

### 2.2.1. Questionnaires to social professionals, representatives from tourism SMEs and social institutions and VET trainers

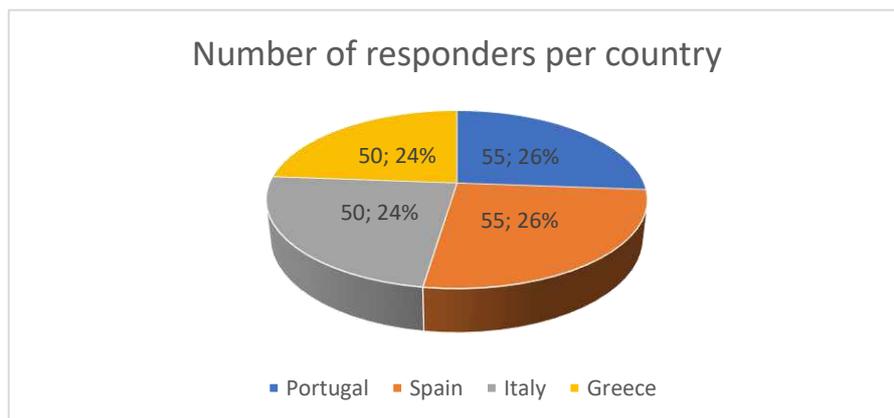
#### 2.2.1.1. Data collection methodology and sample

The applied methodology consisted of a survey with open-ended and close-ended questions for the four different target groups of the project: social and welfare professionals, SME, VET trainers and social solidarity institutions.

The survey was focused on the following topics: the situation of the elderly population in each country, the perceptions of the responders regarding the social inclusion policies that needed to be implemented, the most frequently organised activities to promote the social inclusion of the elderly, the initiatives taken by each target group for the inclusion of the elderly, the needs of each target group in order to implement such activities, and the perceptions they had regarding the benefits for the elderly of their social participation and volunteering.

The online survey system used was Limesurvey. This platform was chosen because it supports multilingual surveys and ensures anonymity, not keeping a record of IP addresses. For the statistical analysis, IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows version 26.0 was used.

The survey was available online from March 2020 to May 2020. The sample collection derived from Greek, Portuguese, Spanish and Italian responses. In total, 210 valid responses were collected as illustrated below.



**Graphic 1-Number of responders to questionnaires per country**

	Italy		Spain		Portugal		Greece	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Total participants</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Male	19	38.00	10	18.18	7	12.72	10	20.00
Female	31	62.00	45	81.20	48	87.27	40	80.00
SMEs	6	12.00	3	5.45	17	30.90	4	8.00
VET Institutions	10	20.00	3	5.45	14	25.45	6	12.00
Social Solidarity Instit.	15	30.00	28	50.90	14	25.45	23	46.00
Social & Welfare Professionals	19	38.00	21	38.18	10	18.18	17	34.00
18-22	1	2.00	1	1.81	11	20.00	1	2.00
22- 30	28	56.00	11	20.00	4	7.27	19	38.00
30- 40	19	38.00	20	36.36	13	23.63	21	42.00
40- 50	2	4.00	14	25.45	12	21.81	5	10.00
50+	0	0.00	9	16.36	15	27.27	4	8.00
Secondary education	4	8.00	1	1.81	12	21.81	3	6.00
Bachelors' Degree	8	16.00	21	38.18	25	45.45	13	26.00
MA/ MSc	35	70.00	18	32.72	10	18.18	28	56.00
PhD	1	2.00	5	9.09	1	1.81	2	4.00
VET Education	0	0.00	4	7.27	6	10.90	2	4.00
Other	2	4.00	6	10.90	1	1.81	2	4.00

**Table 1- Demographic characteristics of the sample**

The majority of the responders were female, and the most prevalent age groups were 22-30 years old and 30-40 years old. Most participants represented organisations in the private sector and were from the educational or social areas.

### 2.2.1.2. Survey results: all target groups

The **first set of questions** aimed at identifying the current situation in terms of social inclusion and opportunities for the elderly in Portugal, Greece, Spain and Italy.

In Italy 50% of the responders considered that there were **private and public institutions or NGOs conducting free medical examinations to older people**. However, a significant percentage of the responders (42%) had no knowledge of its existence, whereas 8% answered negatively. Similar numbers were found in Portugal with 43.64% of affirmative answers, 45.45% of uncertainty and 10.91% of negative answers. Spain (69.09%) and Greece (56%) were the countries where the responders seemed to have a more profound knowledge of the availability of this service. Despite this, 23.64% in Spain and 38% in Greece were also not sure of its existence.

When asked if **the elderly sought for psychological support**, the country where the elderly most resorted to it was Spain with 60%, followed by Italy (50%), Greece (48%) and Portugal (41.82%). Nevertheless, it is worth noting the high percentage of responders that were not sure about the answer, which is fairly 40% in each country.

As for **the existence of public or private institutions or NGOs providing psychological support and advice to the elderly**, all countries assumed this existence. Spain was the country with a more expressive result of 78.18% positive answers, whereas Italy was the country where the responders were less certain of its existence since only 56% provided a positive answer and 42% were not sure about it.

Another relevant topic addressed in the questionnaire was **the State provision of accommodation to homeless elderly people**. The results evidenced that in all countries the percentage of responders that answered negatively, together with the responders that were not sure, was over 50%, which reveals that the responders' perception is not positive regarding this social support.

Similar results were achieved regarding **the State provision of free food to the elderly in need**, except for Spain, where 69.09% of the responders answered affirmatively. Despite this result, in the other three countries, the responders believe that there is no support or that if it exists it is not of their knowledge.

Regarding **the existence of special centres where homeless elderly people could stay during heavy winter days**, all countries recognized their existence, but about 30% of responders in every country did not seem to know about their existence.

The results from the question that focused on **the existence of many elderly people living at the risk of poverty** reveals the solid perception of this reality. Portugal is the leading country with 89.09%, followed by Italy with 82%, Greece with 80%, and Spain with 72.73%.

When asked about **the existence of allowances to older people**, in Italy 40% answered affirmatively and 52% were not sure. In Spain 67.27% answered affirmatively and 23.64% were not sure. In Portugal 56.36% answered affirmatively and 29.09% were not sure. Finally, in Greece, 52% answered affirmatively and 40% were not sure. The remaining percentage of answers belong to responders that answered negatively.

As far as **the existence of public or private institutions organising social and leisure activities for the elderly** is concerned, all countries recognised their existence since the results are all above 80% of affirmative answers.

Concerning **the existence of socially inclusive programmes for the elderly** all countries recognised their existence. Nevertheless, on average, 27.9% of the total responders expressed a degree of uncertainty towards this topic of analysis.

The last question of this group had as goal to understand if **the elderly participated voluntarily in the existing programmes and activities**. Italy stood up for the lowest affirmative results (56%) and Spain for the highest (85.45%). Portugal and Greece achieved 76.36% and 70% respectively. These results demonstrate that the elderly belong to a group of citizens that participate in the available activities and also contribute as volunteers.

The **second set of questions** aimed to identify the participants' perceptions regarding the elderly and the policies that needed to be implemented for their inclusion and valorisation. The scale range used was of 5 evaluation degrees and went from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

Regarding the first four topics of analysis the responders were consensual in the sense that most of them either agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal of free access to examinations in public hospitals for the uninsured elderlies, the State provision of free medication for the same target-group, the fact that they feel lonely, and the crucial relevance of psychological support and mental health advice for the elderly well-being.

However, concerning the high number of elderly people seeking for psychological support, the opinions were less consensual. In Italy only 52% either agreed or strongly agreed, 34% were undecided and 14% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. In Spain only 36.37% either agreed or strongly agreed, 43.64% were undecided and 18.19% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. In Portugal only 47.27% either agreed or strongly agreed, 40% were undecided and 21.82% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. In Greece only 46% either agreed or strongly agreed, 36% were undecided and 18% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The results show that there is not enough knowledge about the number of elderly people seeking for psychological support.

The final three questions united the countries again concerning the need to increase the elderly's pensions, with Portugal assuming the leadership of positive opinions (87.28%); the need to have more public and/or private institutions providing social and leisure activities to the elderly population, with Portugal again assuming the leadership of positive opinions (94.54%) and the other countries above the 80%; and the need for public entities carrying out social inclusion activities for the elderly, with all countries above 70% of positive answers and Portugal with 94.55%.

All the target groups were invited to express their perceptions regarding the domains on which the social inclusion projects usually focused. The results achieved were transported to the tables below. For the purpose of this publication, only the common options were considered in the tables since the percentage of participants that selected "other" was considered irrelevant.

Social inclusion projects Domains	GREECE			
	Results			
	Social Professionals	VET trainers	Tourism SMEs	Social institutions
Culture	23.53%	16.67%	0%	13.04%
Education	<b>32.29%</b>	<b>33.33%</b>	0%	8.70%
Health	17.65%	0%	25%	8.70%
Psychological Support	0%	16.67%	0%	17.39%
Social Services	17.65%	<b>33.33%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>43.48%</b>
Tourism	5.88%	0%	25%	8.70%

Table 2- Main domains of the social inclusion projects in Greece

Social inclusion projects Domains	Italy			
	Results			
	Social Professionals	VET trainers	Tourism SMEs	Social institutions
Culture	10.53%	20%	0%	20%
Education	<b>42.11%</b>	<b>30%</b>	16.67%	20%
Health	20%	0%	<b>33.33%</b>	6.67%
Psychological Support	0%	20%	0%	13.33%
Social Services	31.58%	<b>30%</b>	<b>33.33%</b>	<b>33.33%</b>
Tourism	0%	0%	16.67%	6.67%

Table 3- Main domains of the social inclusion projects in Italy

Social inclusion projects	Portugal			
	Results			
Domains	Social Professionals	VET trainers	Tourism SMEs	Social institutions
Culture	14.29%	28.57%	17.65%	14.29%
Education	20%	0%	17.65%	7.14%
Health	20%	21.43%	23.53%	7.14%
Psychological Support	0%	7.14%	5.88%	28.57%
Social Services	<b>40%</b>	<b>35.71%</b>	<b>29.41%</b>	<b>35.71%</b>
Tourism	10%	7.14%	5.88%	0%

Table 4- Main domains of the social inclusion projects in Portugal

Social inclusion projects	Spain			
	Results			
Domains	Social Professionals	VET trainers	Tourism SMEs	Social institutions
Culture	14.29%	0%	0%	7.14%
Education	14.29%	<b>33.33%</b>	0%	3.57%
Health	<b>28.57%</b>	0%	0%	10.71%
Psychological Support	0%	0%	0%	10.71%
Social Services	23.81%	<b>33.33%</b>	<b>66.67%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Tourism	19.05%	<b>33.33%</b>	33.33%	10.71%

Table 5- Main domains of the social inclusion projects in Spain

The analysis of the tables above reveals that the **social professionals** from Greece and Italy believe that the social projects in their countries are focused on Education. In Portugal they are focused on the social services and in Spain on health.

The perception of the **VET trainers** is somewhat similar. The trainers from Greece and Italy believe the focus is on education and social services. The Portuguese trainers are in line with the social professionals and the trainers from Spain pointed education, social services and tourism.

The **tourism SME representatives** from Greece, Portugal and Spain voted for the projects related to social services. The Italians agreed, but also added health.

Finally, the **representatives from the social institutions** from the four countries agreed that the social services domain prevailed.

The main conclusions to withdraw from the results above is that all targets groups have recognised to some extent that the inclusion projects are being developed in the area of social services, and also that given the fact that the tourism area is not being sufficiently exploited for the implementation of inclusion projects, the TSITour project will be an opportunity to show to these targets that other areas other than the social one can also be used to foster

the social integration of the elderly. In the particular case of this project, the area to exploit is tourism.

### 2.2.1.3. Survey results: social professionals

The questionnaire included a specific section to collect information from the social professionals since they are in a privileged situation given the fact that they directly work with the elderly.

When asked about the existence of social inclusion programmes for the elderly the answers per country presented different results. In Italy 52.63% of the responders were not sure, 10.53% believed there were no such programmes and only 36.84% knew about the existence of this type of programme. Spain, Portugal, and Greece had similar results in the sense that most responders knew about social inclusion programmes and only a small percentage were not sure about their existence.

Regarding the possibility of the State financing social inclusion trainings and other activities, in Italy (57.89%) and in Greece (52.94%) of the social workers were not sure about that possibility. In contrast, in Spain, 71.43% underlined the existence of State support. In Portugal, only 50% were sure, 20% believed in its inexistence and 30% were not sure. In addition, there is the conviction that the existing ones are free.

When asked if they received public financial support for social inclusion and training activities, most participants in the survey from Italy (52.63%), Spain (66.67%) and Greece (58.82%) answered affirmatively, whereas, in Portugal only 30% provided the same answer. In addition, in Portugal 40% clearly stated that they did not receive any financial support from public organisations. The same question was made for the private sector and here the results varied when compared to the public sector. In Italy only 36.84% answered positively, followed by Portugal with 40%. Spain and Greece presented 52.38% and 52.94% respectively. Portugal was the country where most participants assumed they did not receive financial support from the private sector (50%).

Concerning the question that intended to know if the participants needed more financial support, all countries recognised this need and Portugal stood out with 100% of positive answers.

The social professionals were asked if they had specialized personnel for all the social inclusion projects and at least 50% of the respondents in all countries considered to have

specialized personnel to implement these specific projects. However, Spain and Portugal considered that they needed to recruit more staff.

When inquired if the personnel needed more training regarding the elderly's needs and social inclusion projects all countries recognised this need. In fact, Italy, Portugal and Greece achieved results above 75% and Spain 57.14%.

The final question intended to understand if the participants were about to start new social inclusion projects. In Italy 52.63% answered affirmatively, 36.84% were not sure and 10.53% were not starting any project of such kind. Greece presented similar results since the positive answers were 58.82%, the uncertain occupied 29.41% of the answers and the negative answers belonged to 11.76%. From Spain, 47.62% answered affirmatively, 33.33% were not sure and 19.05% answered negatively. Finally, from Portugal only 20% were about to start social inclusion projects, against 60% who were not. The percentage of answers that expressed uncertainty was 20%.

Four questions were made regarding the benefits of the participation of the elderly in social inclusion activities.

Concerning the role of social and leisure activities in the construction of a happier life for the elderly, both Portugal and Spain completely recognised the impact of social and leisure activities in the general happiness of the elderly. Greece and Italy also presented very high results with 94.12% and 94.74% respectively.

Since the TSITour project promotes volunteering among the elderly, its benefits for the elderly were assessed. 100% of the responders from Greece, Italy and Portugal recognised its benefits, whereas in Italy the result was 95.24%.

Another relevant aspect was to understand if the elderly felt productive while participating in social projects. In Portugal this recognition was total (100%), and in the remaining countries it was very high, specifically in Spain the agreement was of 95.24%, in Greece 94.12% and in Italy 89,47%.

The impact of the participation in projects for the mental health of the elderly was the last question of this group and it gathered the consensus of 100% of the total responders.

Since the social professionals are the ones that implement social inclusion projects, they were asked the domains on which this type of projects usually focus. The results per country are presented in the following graphics.

#### 2.2.1.4. Survey results: VET trainers on social areas

The questionnaire included a specific section to collect information from the VET trainers on social areas. It aimed to identify the projects they were implementing for the inclusion of the elderly, the existence of specialised courses regarding the elderly's needs and inclusion, and their needs in terms of specialised personnel for the implementation of such initiatives.

The participants were asked if they implemented social inclusion projects for the elderly population. None of the Greek and Spanish responders implemented social inclusion projects. From Italy only 10% did it, and Portugal was the country with a higher number of trainers dedicated to these projects (64.29%). However, the results also revealed the lack of specialised personnel for the implementation of these projects.

In addition, when asked about the existence of courses focused on the needs of the elderly population the results were low. In Italy the positive answers were 30%, in Greece 16.67%, and in Spain 0%. Portugal was the country with more favourable numbers (57.14%), which also accounts for the fact that Portugal was the promotor of the project. The next question was somewhat related to the previous. It intended to understand the existence of courses specialised in the social inclusion of the elderly. In Greece only negative answers were registered, in Italy 90% also provided negative answers, followed by Spain with 66.67% and finally Portugal with 50%.

The questionnaire was prepared to collect information in case the two previous questions achieved low positive results since the next question tries to assess if the schools offered extracurricular seminars focused on the social inclusion of the elderly. The negative results from Greece, Italy and Portugal were equal to the results from the previous questions, 100%, 90% and 50% respectively. Spain achieved an equal percentage of positive and negative answers (33.33%).

The following topics intended to investigate if the schools had specialised personnel/trainers that could teach courses or seminars focused on social inclusion, or if they needed more training on social inclusion of the elderly. Even though Portugal was the country where most trainers answered that the schools had trainers that could teach about social inclusion (92.86%), it was also the country where most recognised the need of more training for these professionals (85.71%). In Italy only 40% of the trainers assumed the existence of teachers in schools with the ability to teach, but 60% considered the need of more training for these professionals. Greece registered a low percentage of trainers with knowledge to teach about inclusion of the elderly, but only 50% recognised the need for more training, while 33.33% were not sure. All the responders from Spain were not sure if the schools had staff to teach the inclusion topics and 66.67% also were not sure if the training was needed.

These professionals were finally asked if they considered volunteering beneficial for the elderly. The trainers from Spain completely agreed with premise. In Portugal 92.86% were favourable to the benefits, followed by Italy with 90% and Greece with 83.3%. The remaining percentages were from trainers that were not sure about the benefits.

### 2.2.1.5. Survey results: representatives of SMEs from the tourism sector

The collection of data from the SMEs in the tourism sector was significant in order to understand the perception regarding the possibility of having the elderly as an additional resource to enrich their touristic experiences, and also their financial needs.

The responders were asked if they considered that the elderly could be productive after retirement. The results were very positive with the total responders from Spain and Greece considering them as productive, followed by Italy (83.33%) and Portugal (82.35%). Nevertheless, 75% of the Greek responders were not sure if they would recruit an older person to their business. In Italy the percentage of uncertainty is not so high (50%), but it is still expressive of many doubts. Spain has the same percentage of responders uncertain and that would hire older people (33.33%), and Portugal is the only country where 47.06% of the responders seemed face the elderly as sufficiently attractive to be hired.

However, when asked if they would accept older people in their business who would work as volunteers, the numbers were more optimistic. Greece and Spain were completely opened to receive these volunteers. In Italy, 83.33% also were in line with this cooperation, but in Portugal only 64.71% saw advantages in having volunteers working with the enterprises, particularly older ones.

When asked if they implemented social integration programmes, the results were not very encouraging. Italy reported 16.67%, Greece 25%, Spain 33.33% and Portugal 35.29%.

Regarding the two questions about the received or needed financial assistance, in Italy 66.67% of the responders considered that they did not receive any financial assistance from public or private authorities. The same percentage underlined the need for this support. In Spain, only 33.33% said that they did not receive financial support, but the same percentage preferred not to answer the question. As for the need of financial assistance, 33.33% recognised that need and the same percentage either rejected the need or were not sure. In Portugal, 58.82% of the responders denied receiving public or private financial assistance and yet only 23.53% recognised it a need for their business. Finally, in Greece 75% of the responders clarified that no financial assistance was received, and 100% considered that the financial support was needed and welcomed.

The last question intended to verify if the responders considered volunteering beneficial for the elderly. The consensus was reached in all countries that registers 100% of positive answers.

### 2.2.1.6. Survey results: representatives from private social solidarity institutions

Private social solidarity Institutions are an important sector in the social inclusion of the elderly. The aim of applying the survey to this group was to identify the programmes they were already implementing, their financial and human resources needs, and whether they already cooperate with the government to provide their services.

When asked if they implemented social inclusion programmes for the elderly, all countries registered percentages above 50%. Spain registered 75%, Greece 73.91%, Italy 60%, and Portugal 57.14%. In addition, all recognised that they cooperated to some extent with the national governments for that implementation. Spain was the country with the highest number of organisations in this situation (71.43%).

Regarding the gratuitousness of their services, in all countries, the answers were mostly distributed in the affirmative and negative options, which is understandable since the target was both public and private.

Finally, these organizations considered that they had no sufficient financial support for social inclusion programmes and activities, with Portugal registering the higher percentage (71.43%), and they all shared the common perception that they would need more financial support to support the social inclusion projects. Again, Portugal was the country with the most relevant percentage (92.86%). The need for specialised personnel was also acknowledged by all the organisations that stood above 60%. Once again, Portugal stood out with 85.71%.

The consensus was reached again, when the participants were asked if the social and leisure activities helped the elderly to live happier. Italy, Spain, and Greece achieved 100% positive answers and Portugal 92.86%.

The last question intended to verify if the responders considered volunteering beneficial for the elderly. The results were in line with the ones obtained from the other target groups. In Italy 100% of the responders found volunteering as beneficial, followed by Greece with 95.65%, Portugal with 92.86% and Spain with 89.29%.

### 2.2.1.7. Main findings from the questionnaires

The analysis showed no significant differences among the participating countries in most of the main areas of interest for the project. Participants across target groups seemed to be aware of social inclusion programmes for the elderly, especially when it comes to basic needs such as nutrition and healthcare. At the same time, across countries and target groups, participants seemed to value the benefits that volunteering, and social inclusion activities can bring to the elderly and their mental health.

Regarding the support needed, most target groups seemed to realize the importance of support both in financial and human resources to improve and expand their services, particularly in the social inclusion of the elderly.

Tourism seems particularly overlooked when it comes to social inclusion initiatives, which has ambiguous importance for the project.

On the one hand, dissemination and awareness-raising efforts need to focus on highlighting the importance of storytelling as a social inclusion methodological approach. On the other hand, it provides enough space to develop the project and have an innovative impact on the stakeholders involved. The proposals deriving from the report could be summarized as follows:

- Tourism is a field with great potential for the project in terms of innovation, and this innovative character should be promoted.
- Target groups reported the need for more training for their staff, so the TSITour Training Programme could be of great benefit to them.
- Volunteering activities are considered very beneficial for the elderly and should be implemented in all countries.
- There is room for improvement of the dissemination of the existence of socially inclusive programmes for the elderly.
- The elderly enjoy participating in activities, including volunteering initiatives.
- The VET training offers do not include social inclusion training which would be welcomed by the trainers.
- The vast majority of the participants considers that the elderly can be productive after retirement, which shows that the image of the elderly as active members in everyday social life can be a positive one.
- Most SMEs representatives were not sure whether they would hire someone older. However, the majority would accept elderly volunteers.

## 2.2.2. Interviews to social professionals

The state of art was also assessed by means of interviews to social and welfare professionals so as to identify the activities implemented by the institutions that contribute to the social inclusion of the elderly.

The tool used was an interview script that was built by the partners for the purpose of this activity. It addressed the following main topics of discussion:

- The national and international measures to counteract the demographic ageing.
- The most developed fields of social inclusion.
- The most frequently organised activities to promote the social inclusion of the elderly.
- The type of activities that could valorize the elderly's life experience and their social inclusion.
- The type of activities the elderly usually participated in by gender.
- The importance of volunteer work for the social inclusion of the elderly.
- The differences in social inclusion by gender and geographic location.
- The social image of the elderly, and
- Good practices for the inclusion of the elderly.

The analysis of the data collected from the interviews in Portugal, Italy, Spain, and Greece allowed to conclude that, in general, there are **national and international measures to counteract the demographic ageing**. However, the existing measures in the four countries are not sufficient and more should be done in terms of policies related to the elderly people.

The interviewees considered that all **fields of social inclusion** are developed to some extent. Nonetheless, the access to ICT and the economic safety are the less developed fields, while cultural and touristic activities is the field that has received more attention. The health and wellbeing, the social participation and the active living have been considered as fields where there is some investment.

The interviewed also highlighted that there are other aspects related to ageing that should be considered, namely, the early detection of dementia, family and psychological support, housing, legal support, adaptation of spaces for elder people with some type of disability, intergenerational activities through volunteers and social support.

Regarding the most **frequently organised activities to promote the social inclusion** of the elderly, these are focused on health and wellbeing in the sample countries. The activities or programmes that could improve the social inclusion and valorize the experience of the elderly are those related to the transmission of knowledge and experience to younger generations: handcraft, crochet, painting and the promotion and preservation of cultural traditions from

past generations, etc. In fact, the interviewees mentioned that the elderly could, through volunteer activities, teach and share all this knowledge to younger generations.

There are **differences in the type of activities preferred by women and men** and in the engagement degree. Women take part in activities like handcraft, cooking, gardening, cultural and religious activities, gymnastics, and group exercises, and, in general, and they are more willing to participate in all kinds of activities. Men usually take part in handcraft, sports, cards and traditional games and cultural and touristic activities. Yet, in general, men are more reluctant to participate in the activities proposed for elder people than women.

Most interviewed agreed that **volunteer work as a tool for the social inclusion** of elderly people could be very beneficial for them. They would socialize more, feel less alone, have an active life and active ageing and they could contribute positively to society. In addition, the volunteer activities that could be beneficial for the elderly are those related to social relationships, in which they can help other people (e.g., teaching, visiting isolated or sick people, sharing knowledge and experience with young people), training and physical activities, storytelling, etc.

In general, the **differences in the social inclusion of elderly women and men** are quite similar in the four countries that participated in the questionnaire. In most cases, women are still the ones who take care of household chores and care for relatives such as grandchildren. Men have more free time to participate in different leisure and cultural activities. However, when women decide to participate in them, they do so in greater numbers than men, and more actively.

In all cases, great **differences** are found **between urban and rural areas**. Elderly people living in rural areas have fewer resources, infrastructures or activities addressed at them. In rural areas there are fewer activities aimed at this population and this factor does not contribute to their social inclusion. In urban areas, older people have more options and opportunities to socialize.

In general, **the social image of the elderly** is not good. There are still many stereotypes: dependent people, fragile and weak, who need help from other younger people and that are a burden to society. On many occasions, elderly people are seen as simply caregivers of relatives and their needs are not taken into account.

### 2.2.2.1. Main findings from the interviews

The analysis of the data collected produced the following summary of relevant findings:

- Social inclusion measures are similar in the sample countries.
- Gender and geography influence the participation in activities and their availability.
- In the retirement period the traditional roles of men and women which results in men having more free time to participate in activities.
- Some stereotypes related to the way the elderly are faced by society are still present.
- Social inclusion could be fostered by volunteer intergenerational activities.

## 2.3 Good practices and inspirational cases of social inclusion of the elders

The research and collection of successful cases and good practices concerning the social inclusion of the elders constituted a fundamental step to inspire and create projects like TSITour, addressed to have a positive impact among the elderly people. This exploration at the European level has helped the consortium become familiar with already existing experiences that seek to promote the social inclusion of elders through the encouragement of their participation in society. Two common features can be identified in most of the selected good practices: the focus on valorising the knowledge of the elderly and the basis of an intergenerational approach. Both have proved to present the best results for the direct beneficiaries and society as a whole.

This compilation has enabled a better understanding of the strategies followed in other projects and inspired the consortium's work following the lines of already successful practices throughout Europe.

The criteria to identify and include good practices was based on the following principles:

- **Effective and successful:** a good practice has proven its strategic relevance as the most effective way in achieving a specific objective; in the specific case of the project, the good practice has been successfully adopted and has had a positive impact on elderly individuals and/or their social inclusion.
- **Environmentally, economically and socially sustainable:** a good practice meets current needs, particularly the essential needs of the elderly population.
- **Gender-sensitive:** the description of the practice must show how actors, men and women, involved in the process, could improve their livelihoods.
- **Technically feasible:** it is easy to learn and to implement.
- **Inherently participatory:** participatory approaches are essential as they support a common sense of ownership of decisions and actions.
- **Replicable and adaptable:** a good practice should have the potential for replication and should, therefore, be adaptable to similar objectives in varying situations.

The consortium collected fifteen good practices: three from Greece, three from Italy, six from Portugal and three from Spain.

### 2.3.1 Good practices from Greece

#### “University of the Third Age”

The University of the Third Age is a programme that promotes and enables active ageing. Through lifelong learning and digital education, people aged 65+ can come together and socialise, learn and acquire new 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.

## 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 centres 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 preventing biological, psychological, and social problems of the elderly to remain autonomous, equal, and active members of society. At the same time, it promotes the awareness and familiarisation 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 participation in activities and fights social isolation and loneliness. It is a highly accepted institution in Greece. Generally, Greek citizens view these centres as an excellent opportunity for the elderly to stay active, socialise, educate themselves and gain new skills as they grow.

## Intergenerational programme “From one generation to the next”

The programme aims to familiarise the children with the methodological approach of storytelling to bring together different generations to increase the time spent with grandparents. This programme significantly contributes to the perception that this interaction can be exciting 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.

### 2.3.2 Good practices from Italy

#### Nonni SUD Internet (Grandfathers South Internet)

This training course aims to promote an intergenerational learning method, foster the digital alphabetisation of the over 60 years-old elderly people in Italy, and encourage socialisation and interaction between students and seniors.

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 elderly people.

### **Conoscersi a tavola (Get to know each other around a table)**

The project consists of a wide range of activities aiming to let 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 elderly people. Then, many activities include practical exercises in which the elderly people can learn “on the field” new notions and techniques so that their overall experience is fun and fruitful.

### **Palermo apre le porte (Palermo opens the doors)**

The objectives of the best practices are to inform the audience (students and inhabitants) of the most beautiful heritage sites of the city of Palermo; to encourage the social inclusion of elderly people to have an active role in society; to increase the mental health of the elderly people (encouraging them to learn and elaborate new information on the heritage sites of their city) and to support a dialogue between different generations, such as elderly people and youngsters.

Each involved school picks up a specific heritage site (monument, church, square, etc.) and learns all the information. Then, the students reveal the historical heritage sites to the general audience, presenting and explaining the main characteristics of each heritage site.

## **2.3.3 Good practices from Portugal**

### **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 by creating actual social and economic value.

This programme 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.

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

This good practice aims to promote 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 of going village by village, reaching the elderly and asking them to share stories close to a fireplace, accompanied with the most authentic food from the region.

### **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. 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 by detecting the major problems that the elderly population faces and how technology could create a solution for those problems. After developing 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.

### **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 more prolific. RUTIS promotes an extensive 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.

### **Programa Aconchego (Cosiness programme)**

This programme, based on an intergenerational perspective, aims to combat the loneliness and isolation of seniors. The programme houses young university students in senior citizens' residences in the Municipality of Porto, which, 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 spare room, which increases the feeling of loneliness. The project combines students who come from other cities and towns and need a home with

those elderly people to fight loneliness. With this approach, both groups gain something, and the social inclusion of the elderly is assured.

### **Prémio Seniores (Seniors' Prize)**

The number of elderly people is growing in Portuguese society. As a result, the need for projects that approach the social inclusion topics increased too, and with that, the necessity of getting funds to complete the projects. To help the institutions with exciting 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.

### **2.3.4 Good practices from Spain**

#### **“Artesaneando” (Pursuing wellness through handcrafting).**

“Artesaneando” 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 peers. This initiative is also expected to recover the knowledge and skills related to ancient handcrafting and traditions. The project was engaging, open, and flexible, based on community animation and respect for each person's work rhythm. Thus, a teaching-learning process based on their knowledge was started, taking into account physical and psychological limitations.

#### **“Voluntarios Culturales Mayores para enseñar los Museos de España a niños, jóvenes y jubilados” (Elders cultural volunteers to show museums from Spain to children, youngsters and retired people)**

The project aims 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 and older people and other groups that are excluded from the possibility of taking cultural pleasure benefits. Consequently, it aims to the well-being, overall health, and quality of life of older people and prevents 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.

## “Los Huertos de la Candamia”(Candami’as Gardens)

This good practice seeks the general physical, social, and mental wellbeing of its beneficiaries, facilitating participation in society. This practice provides 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, strengthens the integration between the suburbs and the city centre by supporting the ecological restoration of natural spaces 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.

### 2.3.5. Main findings from the good practices and inspirational cases

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: the engagement of elderly people in society. This, in turn, will take them far from loneliness, depression, and social exclusion, revitalising 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 valorising 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 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:

- 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 worldwide, and thus successful activities have to foresee possible adaptations from their planning.
- The involvement and support of several institutions, such as local communities and municipalities, constitute a warranty for the successful implementation of every activity.
- The focus on a common topic (food, gardens, local heritage, shared past, craft, etc.) helps make the projects more appealing to the elderly and other social groups.

- The implementation of intergenerational activities has a significant impact on 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 brings positive psychological effects for both of them because they mix self-affirmation with altruism. These activities also represent an essential learning opportunity for both groups by improving participants social and cognitive skills.
- The active role 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 their social inclusion and wellbeing. In this kind of projects, they become owners of the activity and put into action different cognitive skills in each phase.
- The creation of welcoming spaces in which the elderly have the opportunity to socialise with each other and with other groups of age in a comfortable environment is another critical factor.
- The availability of economic resources.

These good practices and their success factors will act as inspirational cases for developing the TSITour curriculum.

## 2.4 Benchmarking: analysis of the existing training curricula

Considering that the central result the TSITour project will produce is a training module addressed to VET students who, in the mid/long term, will be working with elderly people, it was fundamental to analyse the current VET curricula from the training offers focused on working with elders. Using the benchmarking registration as a comparative tool, every partner country collected and analysed specific data regarding the ongoing EQF Level 4 VET courses, from the professional family of social intervention, well-being and community service, which involve all the future professionals that will work with the elderly.

The purpose of the comparative benchmarking registration was to understand if the current curricula already approaches the valorisation of elderly people. The objective was to identify the potentialities and possible gaps existing in the curricula that could be completed and complemented by the TSITour training module.

The main findings derived from the benchmarking registration and analysis are presented per country in the following sections.

### 2.4.1 Summary of the benchmarking analysis in Greece

In Greece were analysed the upper secondary vocational education programmes (EPAL), the vocational school programmes (EPAS) and the upper secondary apprenticeship programmes (OAED) that provide certificates of EQF level 4 in Greece. The conclusion was that **there were no social VET courses in Greece focused on the valorisation or occupation of elders**. According to the research, inside the health, welfare and wellness sector, there were no courses that aimed to provide healthcare to the elderly or even their valorisation. There was no possibility of making a comparative analysis given the availability of one single training offer that met the criteria of this benchmarking- the Nursing Assistant VET.

It is addressed to future professionals who want to work as nursing assistants, providing support to the hospital and primary healthcare centres staff, public or private health facilities, rehabilitation centres for disabled people, as freelancers who offer services to patients who are treated at home and are under medical supervision. Even in this course it was not possible to find contents in the curricula that trained the students to valorise the elderly.

### 2.4.2 Summary of the benchmarking analysis in Italy

In Italy there are plenty of training courses for social operators and caregivers (professionals or non-professionals) that focus on the techniques of assistance to elders.

The benchmarking analysis was based on four different VET courses, offered by institutions that have a long-lasting experience in the Italian job market and offer training courses that the Italian public authorities officially recognise, releasing official certifications at the end of them. The analysed courses were:

- Expert in socio-educational entertainment (Formavol);
- Training course of art therapy with the elderly people (Coop21);
- Expert in socio-educational entertainment (PratikaONLUS);
- Training course for expert in socio-educational entertainment (Esedra Formazione).

The conclusion was that all focus on the importance of the interpersonal skills for the social operators that work with the elderly people. In addition, all the training courses stress the importance of the professional techniques that stimulate seniors' creativity, empowering them and increasing their level of self-esteem.

A deeper analysis of the curricula to become an *Expert in socio-educational entertainment* reveals that the training teaches some useful techniques and skills for social operators to empower and valorise the elderly people. However, the lack of a strong link between the training and the broader social context does not facilitate the re-integration of the elderly

people in the active society. This means that, this training can be adjusted to include the social valorisation of the elderly.

### 2.4.3 Summary of the benchmarking analysis in Portugal

In Portugal the benchmarking was based in the information provided by the VET regulatory body in Portugal - Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional, I.P. (ANQEP, I.P.).

The VET certifications analysed belonged to the family of social work and orientation and were the following:

- Sociocultural animator
- Family and Community Support Technician
- Psychosocial Support Technician

Despite the fact that the three courses belong to the same area, their focus is very different. *Sociocultural animator* focuses on social intervention through animation, while *Family and Community Support Technician* is mainly dedicated to daily care and, finally, *Psychosocial Support Technician* focuses on psychosocial intervention. The pedagogic approach of all courses is based on face-to-face activities, combining theoretical lessons with visits to the workplace.

The comparative analysis revealed that even though the training offers endow the future professionals to work with different social groups, including the elderly, none of them puts the focus on valorisation. Some teach what integration is, the importance of the community for the integration, the steps to build social intervention projects, but none puts the elderly in the centre as active citizens.

### 2.4.4 Summary of the benchmarking analysis in Spain

In Spain the benchmarking was based in the information provided by the VET regulatory body– INCUAL – dependent from the Ministry of Education and VET. The professional family chosen was Sociocultural, and Community Services, in which the only VET course linked to the contents of the project was *Attention to People in Dependence Situation Technician*. This 2-year training is offered both in the face-to-face modality and long-distance education in authorized centres. There was no possibility of making a comparative analysis given the availability of one single training offer.

Its curricula aim to train students who want to develop skills in the care sector by offering services such as assistance, psychosocial support and domestic management. In general

terms, the pedagogical approach of the VET chosen was based on the promotion of the autonomy of the person. It was clear that the main focus of the VET courses is still linked with the care and assistance of people in dependency situations, being specifically relevant: social skills, specific needs, promotion of autonomy, psychosocial support, home support, health and hygiene care and communication support. Thus, it is possible to conclude that this curriculum focuses mainly on the person's day-to-day wellbeing.

## 2.4.5 Country comparative analysis and main findings

The country comparative analysis reveals that, in general, the VET courses related to socio-cultural animation are the more likely to be adapted to the aims of the TSITour project.

### Target and age range

The VET courses selected under level 4 of EQF are addressed to different targets depending on the country. Whereas in Spain and Greece the age range is not the main requirement, in Italy and Portugal it is regulated. In the first case, students must be older than 18, while in Portugal, students must be between 15 and 19 years old. In the case of Spain, aspirants need to meet at least one of the academic requirements established under the admission criteria.

### Aims

Regarding the aims, in Greece, the training provided is based on health support and promotion of patient's autonomy under a sanitary approach. In Italy and Portugal, the training aims at coping with basic social needs and the socio-cultural development through animation activities and socio-community intervention projects. In both cases, the VET courses are addressed to develop the skills that improve the quality of life, the interaction and social inclusion of the target group.

Last but not least, the VET analysed under the Spanish benchmarking registration offers a combination of the person's day-to-day wellbeing – hygienic care, nutrition, daily home-care, physical autonomy, psychosocial support – and social inclusion through the promotion of social skills and abilities.

### Focus of the training

The focus of the VET selected is different depending on the country. In Greece, the focus of the Nursing Assistant VET is in the promotion of the health of the patients, namely, all kinds of people in a dependent situation. In Spain, the focus of the Attention to People in Dependence Situation is focused on the day-by-day wellbeing of the person. In contrast, the Expert in socio-educational entertainment (Italy) and the Socio-cultural Animator (Portugal) are focused on the animation and training skills to promote the occupation of the elders.

## Pedagogical approach

The majority of the analysed VET require a face-to-face attendance, combined with visits to workplaces in Portugal, and with supervised internships in the case of Italy, Spain and also Portugal. The duration of the training varies from 600 hours to 2000 hours.

## Strengths

In the Italian VET analysis, the strengths identified are the possibility to get an official certificate that will allow the recipient to work as an expert in socio-educational entertainment. Portugal mentions as a strength of the Social-Animator the scope of the course and the contents related to the implementation and evaluation of a community project. In addition, the Attention to People in Dependence Situation, analysed by the Spanish partner, has as a strong point the consideration of the socio-economic reality and the study of the legal framework at all levels (local, regional, national and European). The Greek Nursing Assistant has as strength the focus on the health and wellbeing of the temporary or permanent disabled.

## Transferability to the TSITour project

The benchmarking analysis allowed to identify some aspects that could potentially be transferred to the TSITour project, namely:

- the contents related to the implementation and evaluation of community projects that could be incorporated in the TSITour module (Portugal).
- the focus on the communication and interpersonal skills as fundamental for the TSITour training module, since if the social operators build a trustful relationship with the elderly people, the final implementation involving them as local “storytellers” may be fruitful (Italy).
- contents such as the features and needs of the people in situation of dependency and the psychosocial support and attention. This last point includes empowering people in dependency situations, their social network and their social abilities (Spain and Greece).

## 2.5 Round tables

To discuss the main findings from the activities described from 2.1 to 2.5 of this publication, four round tables were organised in the participating countries. The round tables were also implemented to collect suggestions and insights for elaborating the Training Programme Structure of the module “Project Development for Social Inclusion”. The participants were carefully chosen in each partner country, guaranteeing the involvement of experts in the relevant areas, particularly, tourism professionals, VET trainer from the tourism or social

areas, SME representatives from the tourism area and welfare/social professionals. The total participants were 16.

The results from the discussions are organised in topic-paragraphs for a better understanding of the information.

### **Awareness of the concept of storytelling**

In general, the participants in every round table showed a high degree of awareness of the concept of storytelling, affirming that this technique could be applied in a wide range of contexts going from the touristic to the academic.

In **Portugal**, the Round Table organisers prepared a brief explanation of the concept of storytelling. All the participants agreed with the proposed definition, showing great interest in the concept and suggesting partnering with municipalities, parishes, other associations, universities, churches and community centres to disseminate this methodology.

In **Spain**, the participants declared that there were two main different storytelling approaches: tell personal experiences or tell stories already created by others or coming from the popular tradition. Linked to that, in **Greece**, the participants stated that storytelling was a very effective way to engage people and was a flexible method since it is possible to adjust stories in accordance with the audience. The Greek tourist guide mentioned that they used mainly storytelling as a method to present a tour. For example, in an exhibition of a museum, the guide might choose an object and share a story about it and based on this story, s/he finally described the exhibition. However, the participants stressed that another important asset of storytelling might be personal, especially if the storyteller is an older person who uses old-fashioned words and manners to tell about his/her past stories.

It is worthy of mentioning that the Greek historian declared that the techniques of storytelling were methods broadly used in different sciences, but in the field of History often took the form of oral history. In addition, the storytelling technique was used as a therapeutic method among the refugee populations to help them describe and elaborate on the different aspects of a story and/or an experience.

Finally, in **Italy**, all the participants had a clear idea about the meaning of the storytelling technique, stressing that this technique gives relevance to the person or the object to which it is applied. They specified, that the storytelling technique may be used in a wide range of sectors, and the participants themselves apply it in their work in different frequencies (the Italian touristic guide applies the storytelling technique daily, while the social operator rarely uses it).

## The relation between storytelling and culture

Every round table departed from a statement from a participant in the interviews that clearly explained the intimate relationship between storytelling and culture, and, in general, all the participants agreed to it. The statement was the following: “Storytelling allows to experience diverse cultures; it enables tourists to relate to unfamiliar people, places or situations; it offers insights into different traditions and values; it reveals differences and similarities of cultures around the world.”

In **Portugal**, all the participants agreed with the statement above. They also said that it justified why elderly people should do storytelling since they gathered many stories and experiences of one specific place.

In **Spain**, the participants were in line with the Portuguese. They added that the storytelling methodology might be a powerful cognitive stimulus to elderly people and might increase their self-esteem since other people value their knowledge and experience. Moreover, the storytelling experience might benefit the tourism industry because stories told in the first person transmit originality, honesty and closeness to the tourists. The inclusion of local people talking about daily stories and experiences would bring respect for the original identity and culture of those places. The participants declared that the TSITour project enriches the tourism offers because it promotes a different approach far from the practical goals that lead the touristic sector. In addition, the participants also suggested that the tourism industry frequently created false stories, places, changed its aspect to become more appealing to tourists and destroyed the real identity of people and places. As an example, one of the participants mentioned the Jewish neighbourhood of Santa Cruz in Seville (one of the most touristic spots of the city) that was rebuilt with a more Spanish-like appearance.

In **Greece**, there was agreement with the departure statement above, and the participants pointed out that the main benefit of incorporating the elderly people in the touristic sector is that they might add a “taste” of local heritage that a tourist guide could not. The stories that the elderly people would bring could be more personalized, uncovering things that were not easy to be unveiled.

Finally, in **Italy**, the participants stressed the importance of having elderly people involved in the storytelling experience. They mentioned that the relationship between elders and the touristic sector might effectively work, especially for those seniors who are forced to leave their houses and tend to live much more inactive lives inside a care home structure. Moreover, this relationship might represent an added value for the touristic sector, presenting places and cultures through the eyes of the elderly inhabitants.

## **The tourism guide and other professional figures that support the elderly people as local storytellers**

In general, when the participants were asked whether they saw the tour guides as the correct professional figures to support the elderly people as local storytellers, they answered affirmatively. In **Italy**, the social operator declared that caretakers might be very useful in case of having elderly people with physical impairment (i.e. wandering issues). They are more aware of health issues and the elderly needs, thus having a crucial role in helping the elderly during the implementation of the project activities.

## **Activities that valorise the experience, the skills and the knowledge of the elderly people**

In all round tables, the participants identified the lack of activities that valorise the elderly, their knowledge and experience. Most of the available activities are recreational, and the elderly play a passive role.

In **Portugal**, the participants highlighted the need to ask the elderly in which activities they would like to participate since they are the ones that indicate their preferences and what they would like to do.

According to the participants, the elderly deserve to be valued and not only those who have communication skills. Those who prefer to perform other types of activities that promote their wellbeing (i.e. physical exercise) need to be given the opportunity to do so.

In **Spain**, the participants referred the importance of the activities in which they could transmit their knowledge and experience. According to them, many practices with elderly people used to be based on mutual support and intergenerational cooperation. In the same line, in **Greece**, the NGO representative said that they gave an active role to the elderly people in order to engage them, putting them as coordinators of education workshops. They noticed that they obtained much more benefits than being simple participants in a workshop.

In **Italy**, the participants underlined the importance of focusing on elderly people, valorising their knowledge and experience. This is particularly relevant since the Italian social operator confirmed that there is a total absence of activities and project ideas that aim to improve the lives of elderly people in the long term. In this sense, two participants underlined the importance of activities such as gardening and painting, saying that those would be the perfect occasions to socialise and learn new competencies, maintaining the brains active.

## **Gender differences among the elderly people**

In this section, the discussions varied considerably. The answers were diverse and, sometimes, contradictory.

In **Portugal**, the participants referred that, since society is changing, the behaviour of the elderly women and men is changing too. They detected more gender equality in society. One

example mentioned was the number of male and female participants in the Senior Universities that was roughly the same. For the participants, the TSITour project should not create “mental boxes” and put all the elderly people in the same one.

In **Spain**, the participants declared that gender differences were important among elderly people. Women usually have more workload than men. Even though both are retired, women still carried out the housekeeping tasks and took care of their grandchildren. Nevertheless, women are the ones who take part in more activities: they are used to having more interest in culture, learning and doing things. They also are used to being more engaged in mutual support activities. Men do not participate as much. They usually prefer the activities in which they can show others what they know or what they can do, presenting their abilities.

In **Greece**, gender differences were recognised. At the University of Third Age, 85% of the participants are women, and men are more difficult to be approached and show less interest. They prefer topics such as well-being, exercises and also, surprisingly, philosophy.

In **Italy**, the participants agreed that elderly men have more free time since the elderly women take care of grandchildren and household chores. However, the Italian social operator declared no gender differences in residential structures since the elderly women who live there do not need to take care of household chores.

### **The role of volunteering activities and the good practices**

In general, the participants agreed that volunteering activities might be very beneficial for elderly people, and that there was a lack of valuable activities of this type.

In **Portugal**, all the participants agreed that elderly volunteering activities were very important. There were just a few projects related to senior volunteering, and these were very small, informal, and without a concrete structure. The participants mentioned a lack of senior volunteering projects related to the tourism area, thus valuing the design of the TSITour project. In addition, the participants highlighted the importance of the local and regional partnerships for the success of volunteering projects.

In **Spain**, the participants mentioned a couple of experiences with elderly volunteers, with special emphasis to “Lideresas Villaverde”: a radio programme where a group of retired women talks about what they like, and “Grandparents come back to school”: elderly people go to schools to share traditional cooking receipts with the children and the cooks. They considered that the elderly were more committed to volunteering than youngsters due to a very developed sense of responsibility.

In **Greece**, the participants agreed that volunteering might be good for elderly people. However, they considered that volunteering was not broadly accepted in Greece, being negatively perceived by a vast part of the population. Due to that reason, there was a lack of

adequate programmes of volunteering activities for elderly people, although they showed interest in such activities. The participants stated that the engagement of local municipalities in such projects was important, but difficult to achieve.

In **Italy**, the participants agreed that volunteering activities perfectly suited the elderly people, bringing benefits for their mental and physical health. These activities allow them to feel active and helpful to society, improving their state of mind. If possible, social operators should be involved too, so that they provide support for this target group.

Finally, the participants from the four countries were enthusiastic about the collected good practices and stressed the support of local institutions for dissemination.

### **The fundamental skills and competencies for the social operators who work with the elderly**

The participants discussed some skills and competencies that the social operators who work with the elderly should develop. These are illustrated below.



### **The educational methods to transfer skills and competencies to the elderly people**

In general, the participants agreed that a part of the training course could be online. Still, the most effective educational methods aimed to transfer competencies to elderly people should be face-to-face.

In **Portugal**, the participants believed that the module should have a part of online learning and should be open to the community on the Internet. The participants agreed that this type of knowledge was critical and should be spread and accessible since it could positively change the social image of elderly people.

In **Spain**, the participants favoured a participatory and ludic approach to involve seniors.

In **Greece**, the participants agreed on a balance between face-to-face and online learning, with 50% of the time for face-to-face training and 50% online.

Finally, in **Italy**, the participants declared that skills and competencies might be transferred online to elderly people. However, due to the specificity of the technique, the storytelling competencies need to be transferred face-to-face.

### 2.5.1. Lessons learnt from the round tables

In general, all the round tables were implemented successfully, and the participants were active, providing specialized points of view and suggestions.

A considerable amount of information was gathered, and the main findings that will be useful for the construction of the Training Programme Structure: Module “Project Development for Social Inclusion” are listed as follows:

- The suitability of the elderly people as local storytellers for the preservation of the culture and the traditions of a specific place.
- The possibility of having face-to-face and online pedagogical approaches.
- The importance of building relations with the elderly people based on respect and trust.
- The fundamental role of open communication for the interaction with the elderly.
- The importance of the volunteering activities (i.e. intergenerational activities) for the mental and physical health of the elderly people.
- The need to develop sensitiveness, communication, acknowledgment, empowerment and motivation skills in the future professionals.

## 3. Definition of the Training Programme: Training structure

### 3.1 Introduction to the Module: *Project Development for Social Inclusion*

This section presents the training programme structure for the module entitled ***Project Development for Social Inclusion***. This structure will be the basis for developing the training module that the VET trainers will use in courses in the social area to train better future professionals in the conception of projects based on the valorisation of the elderly.

The “TSITour Training Programme” is the result of the activities implemented by the project partners to establish the baseline to prepare a set of contents/materials that would meet the goals of the project and thus have a positive impact upon their users.

In this sense, the training programme structure was inspired in the results from the compilation of the benefits of the Local Storytellers for the Tourism industry; the questionnaires and interviews to assess the state of the art and needs of performance of social professionals concerning elderly people’s inclusion efforts; the collection of good practices regarding the inclusion of the elderly people and the benchmarking of existing VET curricula.

The analysis and discussion of the results of the abovementioned activities framed the outline of the training programme composed of one training module for VET trainees. The round tables implemented with the participation of experts contributed to the validation of the collected data and the fine-tuning of the contents and goals.

The structure will enable the partnership to build a training material that will endow the future professionals of the social area with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to design projects that valorise the elderly population.

Given the project’s cross-cutting philosophy by combining the social and the tourism areas to respond to an identified need, the partnership extended this methodological background to the structure in an effort to highlight the benefits of joint endeavours. As a result, the interdisciplinary concern is reflected throughout the module. The learning outcomes and objectives demonstrate the attempt to articulate the themes of the social area, tourism, and history.

The partners had access to a significant number of data and decided which specific objectives to formulate and which contents to consider. Below is the detailed reasoning of choices for each topic of the structure.

The first topic focuses on **the elderly person** and is based on the conclusions from the interviews with social and welfare professionals, the benchmarking analysis, and the round tables. The **interviews** highlighted health and wellbeing ageing as the most critical aspects of social inclusion. The participants pointed out the advantages of early detection of mental diseases. Thus, the structure proposes the study of the **foundations of ageing: sensory, motor, and cognitive levels**, as well as the **ageing processes**. In addition, the interviewees underlined as essential factors for the social inclusion of the elderly the following: family, psychological support, housing, legal support, adaptation of spaces for people with some disability, and intergenerational activities through volunteer and social aids.

The conclusions from the **round tables** were in line with the ones from the interviews. They spotlighted the fundamental role of open communication and introducing playful elements to favour interaction with and among elderly people. They also mentioned the importance of volunteering activities (i.e. intergenerational activities) for the seniors mental and physical health. These aspects contributed to integrating the contents **communication with the elderly; strategies to promote active, autonomous, and independent ageing, and age-friendly environments**.

The **benchmarking** enabled the partners to realize that the existing training offers focus on the elderly as receivers of the actions from future professionals, meaning that the core of the training is the care and occupation of elders and their support and health care. Some attention is given to the promotion of autonomy, the development of interpersonal skills, social abilities, creativity, solidarity, communication, and entertainment to achieve social inclusion. The conclusions of this activity recommended that the module included both theoretical contents and practical activities. The partnership will produce resources that will enable the beneficiaries to implement the practical activities.

The second topic focuses on the **integration of the elderly** and the defined contents derived from the same activities as in topic one. From the **interviews** with social and welfare professionals, it was possible to conclude that there are not enough initiatives for the social inclusion of the elderly. Also, in general, the social image of the elderly is not good. There are still many stereotypes: dependent people needing help from younger generations, fragile, weak, and a burden to society. To reinforce these conclusions, the benchmarking revealed that the focus of the available training is on care and entertainment. Nevertheless, some attention is given to the promotion of autonomy, the development of interpersonal, communication and social skills as inclusion vehicles. As a result, the structure includes the **promotion of social and community integration for the elderly** to cope with the identified gaps.

The participants of the **round tables** were conscious of the preconceptions mentioned above and mainly focused on the need to create a positive image of this older generation. They have underlined the suitability of the elderly as local storytellers and preservers of the culture and traditions of a specific region. Additionally, they considered it essential to listen to the elderly and promote respectful relations based on trust. This led to the inclusion of the concepts of **citizenship, inclusion and social development**, and the **rights and duties of the elderly**.

The third topic focuses on the **social intervention methodologies directed to the project work for the integration of the elderly**. Its contents derived from the conclusions of the questionnaires on social inclusion activities for the elderly, the analysis of the good practices collected and the activities mentioned in topics one and two.

The partnership implemented questionnaires to identify the current situation regarding the elderly in each country and the participants' perception about the social inclusion of the elderly. The report from the activity evidenced that in most countries, there are programmes of social and leisure activities in which the elderly participate; a considerable percentage of elderly still live at risk of poverty with implications for their social inclusion; the elderly can be productive after retirement, and volunteering activities could be very beneficial for them. Departing from these guidelines, the workgroup introduced in the training structure the **social intervention methodologies** with a particular focus on the **project work** as a tool for the **integration of the elderly**. This age range is still willing to contribute to society actively. This can be achieved by their integration in projects that valorise the immaterial knowledge they hold and should share.

Complementarily, interviews were made to assess the stakeholders' level of knowledge about storytelling since this is the case study proposed by the partnership. The tourism professionals were aware of the concept and argued that it added a new dimension and authenticity to the touristic experience. The data collected from the interviews allowed us to define some areas that could be explored to build projects aiming at the inclusion of the target group of the project, namely: storytelling, jobs, gastronomy, and traditions. Consequently, these topics were included in the training structure as fields that could be explored beyond the case study proposed by the project.

The interviews with the social and welfare professionals and the discussions in the round tables reinforced the background of the project in the sense that the results highlighted that the projects that valorise the elderly should depart from their life experience and immaterial knowledge, which should be passed to the younger generations. The elderly storytellers preserve the culture and traditions of a specific region. Consequently, the projects should foster their participation in the communities as a way to promote their integration. Furthermore, the activities implemented under the scope of the project work should

encourage volunteering, since volunteer work has a positive impact on the mental and physical health of the elderly, and it is frequently socially recognised as a valuable contribution to the common wellbeing, thus transforming the misconceptions and prejudice against the elderly as referred earlier.

The **good practices** collected had in common the engagement of the elderly people in society, taking them apart from loneliness, depression, and social exclusion, revitalizing their spirit and making them feel important thanks to sharing their knowledge. Two features were identified as common in most of the good practices: they were focused on the valorisation of the knowledge of the elderly and based on an intergenerational approach. These conclusions corroborated the experiences shared by the relevant stakeholders and were considered in the methodological approach of topic three.

The final topic focuses on the necessary **stages** to build a **social project for the integration of the elderly**. The contents under this topic are mainly the result of the benchmarking analysis of available contents that could be transferred to a section dedicated to the design of the project itself. Additionally, the lessons learned from the collected good practices, namely the importance of the partnerships for the success of the projects, were also included in this topic. The module that will be produced according to the proposed structure will integrate the innovation factors that direct the beneficiaries, the future social workers, to the design of projects with a strong component of valorisation of the elderly

### 3.2 General objectives

- Recognise fundamental concepts of the ageing process
- Role-play different communication situations involving the elderly
- Discuss strategies to promote active, autonomous, and independent ageing
- Explain the rights and the duties of the elderly
- Distinguish between different social intervention methodologies
- Recognise the social project work as a tool to promote the integration and valorisation of the elderly
- Design a social project aimed at the integration of the elderly through valorisation

### 3.3 Training structure

Module: <i>Project Development for Social Inclusion</i>				
Unit Number	Specific Objectives	Contents		Time
1- The elderly person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define ageing and identify the main sensory, motor and cognitive changes</li> </ul>	1.1.	Conceptual foundations of ageing: sensory, motor and cognitive levels	8 hours
		1.2.	Ageing processes	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Characterize the different ageing processes (active and pathological)</li> </ul>	1.2.1.	Pathological ageing	
		1.2.2.	Active ageing	
		1.3.	Communication with the elderly	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply strategies that facilitate the communication process with the elderly population</li> </ul>	1.3.1.	Communication strategies with the elderly	
		1.3.2.	Communication barriers and communication facilitators	
		1.4.	Strategies to promote active, autonomous, and independent ageing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify strategies to promote active, autonomous and independent ageing</li> </ul>	1.5.	Age-friendly environments		

Module: <i>Project Development for Social Inclusion</i>				
Unit Number	Specific Objectives	Contents		Time
2- Integration of the elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand basic concepts related to the integration of the elderly</li> </ul>	2.1	Promotion of social and community integration for the elderly	4 hours
		2.1.1.	Concepts of citizenship, inclusion and social development	
		2.1.2.	Rights and duties of the elderly	

Module: <i>Project Development for Social Inclusion</i>					
Unit Number	Specific Objectives	Contents		Time	
3- Social intervention methodologies: project work for the integration of the elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise different social intervention methodologies</li> </ul>	3.1.	Social intervention methodologies: definition, objectives, and results	8 hours	
		3.1.1.	Social project work		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define the concept of social project work</li> </ul>	3.1.2.	Social project work as a strategy for the inclusion of the elderly		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise social project work as a methodology capable of promoting the integration and the valorisation of the elderly</li> </ul>	3.1.3.		Social project work as a strategy for the valorisation of the elderly
			3.1.3.1.		Gastronomy
			3.1.3.2.		Traditions
			3.1.3.3.		Storytellers
3.1.3.4.	Professions				

Module: <i>Project Development for Social Inclusion</i>					
Unit Number	Specific Objectives	Contents		Time	
4- Social project work for the integration of the elderly: stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the phases of the elaboration of a project work</li> </ul>	4.1.	Diagnosis	8 hours	
		4.1.1.	Objectives of the diagnosis		
		4.1.2.	Grids to characterize the social environment		
		4.1.3.	The target audience and the sample		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elaborate diagnosis</li> </ul>	4.1.4.		Potential solutions and barriers
			4.1.5.		Establishment of priorities
			4.1.6.		Partnerships
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw up an activity plan</li> </ul>	4.2.	Planning	8 hours	
		4.2.1.	Characteristics of a plan		
		4.2.2.	Elements of an activity plan		
		4.2.2.1.	Objectives		
		4.2.2.2.	Strategies		
		4.2.2.3.	Methodology		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a social project work</li> </ul>	4.2.2.4	Time	6 hours
		4.2.2.5	Resources - human, material and financial	
		4.3.	Implementation	
		4.3.1.	Project development	
		4.3.2.	Project monitoring	
	4.3.3.	Project control		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on performance practices through evaluation</li> </ul>	4.4.	Evaluation	8 hours
		4.4.1	Evaluation criteria	
		4.4.2	Continuous assessment as a way to redirect intervention	
		4.4.3.	The final evaluation as a comparative analysis between the results obtained and the expected ones	

### 3.4 Learning outcomes

Module: Project Development for Social Inclusion			
Unit	Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility & Autonomy
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise the conceptual foundations of ageing</li> <li>Classify the ageing processes</li> <li>Define the strategies, barriers and facilitators to the communication with the elderly:</li> <li>Define the strategies to promote active, autonomous and independent ageing</li> <li>Select age-friendly environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the foundations of ageing</li> <li>Explain the ageing processes</li> <li>Select adequate communication strategies</li> <li>Compare communication barriers and facilitators</li> <li>Apply active, autonomous and independent ageing strategies</li> <li>Categorize age-friendly environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate concepts and ideas clearly</li> <li>Act with initiative and demonstrate analytical capacity</li> <li>Plan and structure tasks</li> <li>Recommend solutions to identified problems/barriers</li> <li>Propose age-friendly environments</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the social and the community integration of the elderly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan the social and community integration of the elderly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in initiatives aimed at the social and the community</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Define citizenship, inclusion and social development</li> <li>▪ List the rights and duties of the elderly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apply principles of citizenship</li> <li>▪ Compare social development activities</li> <li>▪ Respect the rights and recall the duties of the elderly</li> </ul>	<p>integration of the elderly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss the social development activities</li> <li>▪ Inform the elderly about their rights and duties</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify the social intervention methodologies: definition, objectives, and results</li> <li>▪ Recognise the social project work for the inclusion and valorisation of the elderly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Select adequate social intervention methodologies</li> <li>▪ Propose a social project to socially include and valorise the elderly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compare social intervention methodologies</li> <li>▪ Cooperate with a team to design a social project</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ List the social project work: stages</li> <li>▪ Describe the diagnosis: objectives, targets, social environment, solutions, barriers, priorities, partnerships.</li> <li>▪ Describe the planning: characteristics, objectives, methodology, time, resources.</li> <li>▪ Describe the implementation: development, monitoring and control</li> <li>▪ Describe the evaluation: criteria, assessment, results analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct a social diagnosis</li> <li>▪ Plan a social project</li> <li>▪ Implement a social project</li> <li>▪ Evaluate a social project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present the conclusions of a social diagnosis</li> <li>▪ Report on planned activities</li> <li>▪ Support the implementation and evaluation of a social project</li> </ul>

## Conclusions

This publication aims to present the main findings of the research and activities carried out during the intellectual output one of the project TSITour to determine the convenience and suitability of the proposed module “Project Development for Social Inclusion”.

The presented data, collected throughout the implementation of the activities described in this document, constitutes the foundations for the creation of appropriate training materials and resources, addressed to achieve the expected results, and filling an existing gap in the VET courses related to the inclusion of elderly people through their valorisation and occupation.

The process of research and elaboration of the training structure considered the main stakeholders’ opinions, experience and knowledge, as a continuous validation of the results achieved. The quality control strategy guaranteed that the final product that will be developed and implemented in the next stage of the project meets the objectives and reaches the positive impact expected on the beneficiaries of the project.

The path for the creation of the module has developed a deeper understanding of the needs of the final beneficiaries of the project amongst the members of the consortium. The implementation of each activity has conducted the final results towards the needs of the target group. Throughout this process, the partnership has gone deeper in three main aspects:

- The real possibilities, potentialities and challenges of involving elders as storytellers in the tourism sector.
- The existing gaps in current VET courses regarding the valorisation of elders and the general lack of multicourse approach.
- The predisposition and openness of professionals working with elders towards the participation in touristic activities that value the knowledge and experience of elders.

After the whole process of data compilation and analysis, the partnership has created the structure of the TSITour Training Module hereby presented, as a response to the needs of the different stakeholders involved, trying to meet the expectations of the final target – both VET students and elderly people. In the next project steps, the partnership will ensure the suitability of the training module by testing it with the different groups involved to guarantee the convenient adjustments that ensure the high quality of the final product. It is the consortium commitment to reach and offer, in their respective countries, a Training Programme that enhances the elders’ social inclusion by the basic principle of their valorisation and the proper training of the future professionals that will be working with them. Following that common belief, the consortium partners are fully committed to

implement a project with a real and solid social impact, while also updating and improving the training of the future social professionals.

*“Do not grow old, no matter how long you live. Never cease to stand like curious children before the Great Mystery into which we were born.”*

– Albert Einstein

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