

Isolation to Inclusion



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From Isolation to Inclusion – Promoting Innovation in Re-Integrating Older Citizens into Community Life

The demographic change will have serious impact in all European states. It is not only accompanied by a proportional decrease of the working population, resulting in financial restrictions within the social security systems, but also by a trend towards the de-institutionalisation of family life. The population of old and very old people will increase rapidly, and new solutions must be found on how to support old and very old people in their daily life. The Isolation to Inclusion project was set up to identify problems and needs of isolated old people and to develop action plans on regional level. Another important task of the project is to look for existing innovative actions to prevent older people from isolation. Actually more than 80 actions were collected and documented in the Inventory of innovations (www.i2i-project.net). In most of these actions, special attention is given to voluntary work. This large collection of good examples show the creative potentials of civil society and makes clear, that solutions for demographic questions can be given in close cooperation between state and Third Sector.

The following 12 examples of good practice from our 6 partner regions have proven their concrete impact to enhance the social integration of seniors. With small adaptations to the concrete conditions at local or regional level, all these actions can be adopted by organisations in other countries. We hope that these examples will be helpful for many experts all over Europe to create their own measures. In this way we want to foster the process of mutual learning and knowledge transfer beyond national borders. For any questions please contact the coordinators in our project regions. Their contact data and further information are published on www.i2i-project.net.

Austria

NEXT TASK FOR SOCIAL HELPERS 60 +

The aim of this project is to encourage men entering the third age as well as “young” senior citizens to get involved as voluntary “social helpers” for men with mental illnesses and disorders. Basically, social helpers support men with mental illnesses and disorders to participate actively in society and to promote their healthy attributes. Due to their new task, the prior target group also plays an active role in the community and social isolation can be prevented.

Free information events and public relations inform the target group about:

- strategies in order to promote mental health and mental stability
- the social situation of mentally ill people in order to encourage them to get involved in voluntary social work

Furthermore, a number of workshops dealing with the topic “Introduction into social psychiatry” are carried out in order to train men interested in voluntary social work so that they are able to join the project. Other supporting activities for the elderly, such as training, supervision and regular support by experts help to promote the volunteer’s mental stability and to ensure the quality of the service.

Organistaion: Pro Humanis, Graz, Austria

PARK(T)RAUM: A PROJECT TO PROMOTE AN INTERGENERATIONAL COOPERATION IN PUBLIC PLACES

“Park(T)raum“ is an intergenerational project with young social workers and older volunteers (mainly senior migrant citizens). Both groups supervise recreation parks in Vienna and provide entertainment to young children playing in the park. The aim is to form new coalitions across the borders of generation and to strengthen intergenerational solidarity by integrating children, young adults, adults and senior citizens. In the first step, the project has been launched in two public parks in the 15th district of Vienna.

The objectives of the project are:

- Promoting intergenerational contacts
- Promoting intercultural exchange
- Developing new kinds of entertainments (games, joint actions)
- Promoting mutual support and solidarity
- Raising awareness of the needs of the other groups

Furthermore, the project aims at building up cooperation between social services, child day associations, youth clubs and services for older citizens.

Organisation: Verein Wiener Sozialdienste, Austria

Czech Republic

THE CRISIS INTERVENTION AND COUNSELLING TELEPHONE LINE FOR THE ELDERLY

Thanks to the exceptional support on the part of The Pfizer Foundation and the EU Phare 2002 programme, we have succeeded in innovating the crisis intervention and counselling line for the elderly (800 157 157), converting it from a paid service to one which is available free of charge to all older people throughout the Czech Republic. The line can be accessed round-the clock 365 days a year.

It is designed for older people who have found themselves in a difficult life situation due to their social circumstances or deterioration of their health condition. Availability of such service gives the clients a feeling of safety, provides them with support and guidance, thus bringing them relief and giving them hope, which makes it easier for them to cope with their situation and return to the pre-crisis level. It represents help in a crisis, including counselling and where needed, also further follow-up services for the clients and their close relatives. Currently it can be used in real time only by one calling client at a time. The goal of the project is to make it possible (in technical as well as staffing terms) for at least two clients to access the line at the same time in the “peak hours” – when most clients use it. Another important objective is to maintain the current level, stabilize and develop the operation of the innovated line.

INTERNET FOR SENIORS

An Educational Project targeted not only at the seniors, but also at citizens above the age of 55, who prepare for getting old. The Project’s purpose is to improve computer literacy of seniors 55+, thus enabling them, by using the internet and e-mail services, to have a better access to the most recent information from the fields of health care, social welfare and modern effective treatment of a variety of diseases, and to promote their employability, and social inclusion.

Providing for a ZIVOT 90 Minibus with the installation of 4 internet instruction stations; In the selected cities, the Event “A Week of Internet for Seniors“ shall take place at turns. A “SENIOR INTERNET BUS“ will park in the town square, the Project presentation and promotion will take place, first hands-on experience with modern technology will be offered in the Minibus.

Germany

BEING THERE – COMPANIONSHIP IN LIFE UNTIL DEATH: VOLUNTARY BEFRIENDING SERVICE FOR LONELY PERSONS IN CARE INSTITUTIONS

The volunteers of this befriending service spend time with the residents, including activities such as reading books or newspapers to them, listening to music or singing together, going shopping, taking a walk or accompanying wheelchair-drivers. The companionship does not end when the health state of the person worsens but is usually only ended at the funeral.

The volunteers are prepared for their work by seminars and offers opportunities for a regular exchange of information and further qualification. The relations between the volunteers and residents are very reliable. A professional monitoring of the action is necessary.

Organisation: Bürgerinstitut e.V., Frankfurt am Main, Germany

LIVING WITH ALZHEIMER DISEASE IN FRANKFURT AM MAIN: ORGANISATION OF A CAFÉ WITH DANCING FOR PEOPLE WITH AND WITHOUT ALZHEIMER DISEASE

This action wants to reduce fears of contact with people concerned by Alzheimer, provide opportunities for new acquaintances and support caring relatives.

Volunteers organize the dancing event, taking place on each fourth Friday per month and being announced in newspapers. The entrance fee is 2,50 € and includes beverages and cookies. Dancing is offered, partly with live music by a volunteer who plays the accordion. Music from the fifties onwards is favoured most.

Organisation: VDK, Frankfurt am Main, Germany

Italy

SOCIAL CENTRES OF SOCIALIZATION AT LOCAL LEVEL

The social centres of socialization, in Modena, propose recreational and animating activities, in a partially protected context, to old lonely persons.

These centres, opened from 10 a.m. to 16 p.m. from Monday to the Friday, organise several activities finalised to favour the socialisation among older persons in order to tackle the risks of exclusion and isolation: newspaper readings, animation, laboratories of graphical activities, physical training, walking, music listening, etc... Every old person attends the centres one or two days a week.

Professional social operators and old volunteers, pertaining to the numerous and heterogeneous associations that collaborate to this plan, favour a climate of acceptance and familiar sharing of all the moments of the day.

These activities are organised near sport centres, clubs and parish churches in order to keep older people in a network of relationship outside their own families.

Organisation: Municipality of Modena and several local associations

“GIUSEPPINA” PROJECT:

EVALUATION, ACCOMPANYING, INTEGRATION AND VALORISATION TO SUSTAIN SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND INDEPENDENT LIVING OF ELDERLY PEOPLE

The main objectives of the project are to improve the health and the quality of life of elderly people living alone and for that reason being at higher risk of self-sufficiency lost and institutionalisation. The project represents a tool to guarantee a serene and independent life for elderly people giving a support in the daily life needing.

The phases of project realisation were:

- Implementation of a Social research about the identification of target groups, needs and not self-sufficiency areas;
- Implementation of local committees to coordinate people belonging to the network system (social services, health departments, voluntary associations, social cooperation, trade-unions, ecc)
- Elaboration of shared protocols for concrete realisation of actions (transports for accompanying to medical visits, medicines and foods delivering, ecc)

Organisation: Municipality of Ferrara – Health and Social Participation Department with the cooperation of several local associations and organisations

Lithuania

LIVING WITH ALZHEIMER DECEASE IN PANEMUNE'S HOUSE FOR ELDERLY

There are residents living in Panemune's house for elderly, who are suffering from Alzheimer's decease. It is additional burden for personnel. Two workshops were organized to train personnel working with these residents. Workshops were fulfilled by The Nederland's medical staff.

It is decision to organize permanent training for personnel and volunteers of NGO in common how to work with people suffering from infirmities of age. In addition the groups for exchange of experience and relaxation will take place in the house.

Organizations : Panemune's house for elderly and "Senior's Initiative Centre"

COMPANIONSHIP AND TRAINING FOR MEMBERS OF ASSOCIATION OF PARKINSON DISEASE

During annual meeting of members of Lithuanian Parkinson's disease association was demonstrated specific gymnastic exercises and dances by self-help group of Kaunas. Exercises helping to hold the body in good shape performed to dance leading by music give good physical and psychical effect.

To organize regular meetings of self-help group two times per month

Elderly Woman's Activities Centre
Lithuanian Parkinson's Disease Association, Kaunas Branch
Senior's Initiative Centre

United Kingdom

VERY SHELTERED HOUSING

The main objectives are to provide sheltered accommodation with extra social care that prevents deterioration and enables older people to live at home for longer. The target groups are older people including BME elders and those older people with a hearing impairment.

Very sheltered housing (VSH) was developed as an alternative to residential care as each person has their own flat (apartment) and their own front door but, importantly, there is an on-site care team to meet any care needs the occupants may have. Over 150 flats have been built by three independent providers across the city of Bristol, and there are more new schemes in progress.

Of the 150 flats, ten apartments are reserved for older people who are deaf or who have a hearing impairment, and facilities have been developed following consultation on specific requirements; between 10 and 15 flats have been set aside for Chinese elders; and several more flats have been set aside for BME Elders.

Those consulted and involved in the VSH scheme (which started in 2002) are Bristol City Council (Department of Adult Community Care), Black and other Minority Ethnic elders, Local Government officials, Members of the Bristol Older People's Forum (an organisation of more than 3,000 older people) and Private Sector development companies.

The main strengths of the VSH programme is that the scheme reflects the diverse needs and cultures of BME elders and those older people with hearing impairment.

LINKAGE PLUS

The UK Government is tackling social exclusion by following three key principles: a commitment to progressive, personalised services tailored to need; social justice which means services that work for all, particularly the most excluded; and economically efficient services, through better prevention and co-ordination. It has established a pilot programme called 'LinkAge Plus' that will test the Sure Start approach for older people. Eight English local authorities are developing the LinkAge Plus concept. As a key part of its Quality of Life Strategy, the City of Bristol is also taking forward the central recommendation and will develop a number of **LinkAge centres**. The Centres will differ in size and character to reflect the differing population profiles and needs of the areas in which they are located. They will be run and managed by community organisations including older people themselves, working closely with a range of organisations and partners. The LinkAge Centres will act as 'single accessible gateways to services', embodying the following design principles:

Working with older people: older people will be involved in the design, development and delivery of the centres and associated services. These developments will be community driven but with professional support where appropriate;

Services for everyone: but not the same service. Progressive, preventative and personalised services that reflect the diverse needs of individuals;

Accessible: centres need to be easy to access in terms of location, opening times, transport and disability;

Promote well-being and independence: services will be preventative in approach incorporating a strong 'outreach' function to identify local older people who might be isolated and at risk.

Overall responsibility (Impressum):

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