



Ageing Well Transnational Summary Report



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Executive Summary

The Erasmus+ funded project, *Ageing Well - Science based habits of people who age well* [Project number: 2023-1-FR01-KA220-ADU-000153350], seeks to **enhance the well-being of adults aged 65 and above by improving their skills, fostering active community participation, and supporting caregivers**. Initiated in 2023, the project involves research across six European countries—Cyprus, France, Greece, Spain, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic—and aspires to identify the current needs and challenges related to ageing and caregiving.

Key findings are derived from desk research, focus groups, and online surveys. The desk research provides an overview of national and EU policies promoting positive ageing, highlighting **health maintenance, social inclusion, and lifelong learning as crucial pillars**. The report also underscores the importance of supporting caregivers through financial assistance, training, and improved working conditions.

Focus groups across the partner countries reveal diverse experiences of ageing, emphasizing the **importance of maintaining physical activity, social connections, and mental engagement**. Challenges identified include health issues, limited governmental support, and the need for better digital literacy among seniors.

The online survey results from caregivers highlight the **complexities of balancing caregiving responsibilities with personal life, the role of digital tools in caregiving, and the need for enhanced support systems**.

The report concludes with recommendations for developing a toolkit to support elderly well-being, including enhancing community programs, improving healthcare access, and expanding support networks. The project emphasizes the need for continued innovation and collaboration to address the evolving needs of ageing populations.



1. Introduction

Ageing Well - Science based habits of people who age well [Project number: 2023-1-FR01-KA220-ADU-000153350], an Erasmus+ funded project that initiated in 2023, aims to improve the well-being of older adults from 65 and above. **The objectives of this project include enhancing the skills and competencies of older adults to boost their well-being and active participation in their communities, equipping adult educators and caregivers with the necessary tools to better support elderly well-being and active ageing.** The project will provide a positive ageing toolkit to offer practical strategies and resources to help maintain physical, mental and emotional health. It will offer a training program for adult educators and caregivers, empowering them to support elderly well-being and active ageing effectively and e-learning platform that will equip older adults with basic digital skills, facilitating better communication with family and friends and enabling access to digital services and information.

The present report aims to summarize the findings from primary and secondary data gathered across partner organizations conducted in Cyprus, France, Greece, Spain, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic in the framework of Ageing Well project. Each partner organization has carried out a desk research to review evidence based data and carried out activities to collect reliable and evidence-based data from target group members to identify current needs, critical challenges in ageing and caregiving. Specifically, this report is outlined in three sections:

1. **Desk research:** that gave an overview the current state of the art with relevant and national and EU practices on positive ageing will be described based on desk research conducted in each partner country. The desk research included national practices and policies that provide support to the elderly, national practices and policies to promote the psychological resilience and wellbeing of the elderly. Successful practices to provide support to caregivers at the European and national level .Best practices on Positive Ageing and Active Ageing from other



countries who have good social welfare systems along with good practices and case studies.

2. **Focus groups:** In-depth interviews were conducted amongst older adults to gain insights on the well-being, positive ageing of elderly people across all partner countries. Each focus-group-based case study provides a detailed examination of seniors' daily activities, perceptions of ageing, challenges and support systems.
3. **Survey questionnaire:** Questionnaires were distributed to informal and formal caregivers online through Google forms from five partner organizations; Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Spain, and Switzerland in order to capture the responsibilities, challenges and support of caregivers as well as how they balance their personal life in regards to their responsibilities. The role and importance of digital skills and tools in caregiving were assessed, alongside factors promoting the well-being and quality of life of the elderly. Furthermore, the questionnaire examined communication methods used by caregivers and their preparedness for future caregiving needs. Finally, it collected suggestions for improving support systems and services.

In the following chapters, a description of the context of ageing and caregiving in each partner country is presented, along with critical views. This research includes the main strategies and policies in each country related to elderly care and support.

Moreover, the main points resulting from the focus groups held by each partner are presented, highlighting the main challenges and needs from the perspective of older adults. Additionally, the results from the survey research are presented, reflecting the viewpoints and needs of caregivers. Finally, the main conclusions are outlined along with the recommendations, which will guide the development of the toolkit for supporting elderly well-being and active ageing.



2. Desk Research Findings

2.1. Introduction

The concept of positive ageing has become a focal point in public health and social policy as populations worldwide experience unprecedented rates of ageing. This phenomenon presents both opportunities and challenges, prompting a comprehensive examination of how societies can best support their older citizens. **Positive ageing involves not only maintaining physical health but also ensuring psychological well-being, social engagement, economic stability and a sense of purpose.**

This report draws on research conducted across several partner countries, highlighting a variety of practices and policies aimed at fostering positive ageing. **The focus is on creating environments and systems that support the elderly in leading active, fulfilling lives.** These practices are essential for addressing the multidimensional needs of an ageing population, which include health maintenance, social inclusion, lifelong learning, and economic participation. Furthermore, **the role of caregivers and the support systems in place for them** are also considered, given their critical importance in the well-being of the elderly.

2.2. National Practices and Policies for Supporting the Elderly

In the context of an ageing population, partner countries have developed a wide range of policies and practices to support the elderly. These initiatives are built around several core pillars: Health Maintenance, Civic Participation, Non-Discrimination, Dignity and Independence, and Social Inclusion, Extension of Working Life, Life-long Learning, and Intergenerational Solidarity. These may be seen in the Figure below and further explored in the following lines:

Policies and practices for supporting the elderly

Health Maintenance	Civic Participation	Non-Discrimination	Dignity and Independence
Social Inclusion	Extension of Working Life	Life-long Learning	Intergenerational Solidarity



1. **Health Maintenance:** Key to positive ageing is the maintenance of good health. This includes comprehensive healthcare services that cater to both physical and mental health needs. Preventative measures, such as regular screenings and vaccinations, are promoted alongside management programs for chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension. Nutrition and physical activity are also emphasized to preserve mobility and overall well-being.
2. **Civic Participation:** Engagement in civic life is a vital aspect of positive ageing, allowing older adults to remain active and contributing members of their communities. Programs are designed to facilitate volunteerism, participation in local government, and involvement in community organizations. This not only helps seniors stay connected but also leverages their experience and skills for the benefit of society.
3. **Non-discrimination and Social Inclusion:** Ensuring that older adults are not subjected to ageism and are included in all aspects of social life is a fundamental principle. This includes legal protections against discrimination, as well as initiatives to promote intergenerational understanding and respect. Social inclusion efforts also focus on providing equal access to services and opportunities regardless of age.
4. **Dignity and Independence:** Policies aim to uphold the dignity and autonomy of older adults. This involves supporting independent living through access to affordable housing, transportation, and personal care services. Assistive technologies and home modifications are also important components, enabling seniors to maintain their independence as long as possible.
5. **Extension of Working Life:** With many older adults wishing or needing to remain in the workforce, policies have been put in place to extend working life. These include flexible



working arrangements, retraining and upskilling programs, and phased retirement options. Such measures help older workers transition smoothly from full-time employment to retirement, while also addressing labor market needs.

6. **Lifelong Learning:** Education and continuous learning are encouraged to keep seniors intellectually engaged and adaptable to changes in society, including technological advancements. Programs include community education classes, online courses, and workshops on topics like digital literacy and financial planning.
7. **Intergenerational Solidarity:** Strengthening the bonds between generations is seen as crucial for societal cohesion. Initiatives include intergenerational housing, mentorship programs, and community activities that bring together young and old. These programs foster mutual understanding and respect, providing opportunities for older adults to share their knowledge and experience.

2.3. Promoting Psychological Resilience and Well-being

The psychological well-being of the elderly is a multifaceted issue that requires attention to several areas, as for example, ageing policies, healthcare systems, financial sustainability, social insurance systems, social issues, work accessibility, lifelong learning and digital skills. These areas of attention are explored as follows.

- **Ageing Policies:** Countries have been developing comprehensive policies that address the diverse needs of older adults, integrating healthcare, social services, and financial support systems. These policies are designed to adapt to the evolving demographic landscape and the specific needs of the elderly population.
- **Healthcare Systems:** Improvements in healthcare systems include better access to mental health services and training for healthcare providers on the specific needs of elderly patients. This includes geriatric care, dementia



management, and support for mental health conditions like depression and anxiety.

- **Financial Sustainability:** Financial security is critical for the well-being of older adults. Efforts in this area include pension reforms, subsidies for healthcare and housing, and financial literacy programs. These measures help ensure that seniors have the resources they need to live comfortably and securely.
- **Social Insurance Systems:** Robust social insurance systems are necessary to provide coverage for healthcare and other essential services. This includes long-term care insurance and social welfare programs that support those with limited income or savings.
- **Social Issues:** Initiatives aimed at reducing social exclusion and loneliness are key to maintaining psychological well-being. Community centers, social clubs, and support groups provide spaces for older adults to connect with others and participate in social activities.
- **Work Accessibility:** Creating opportunities for older adults to continue working, whether part-time or full-time, is beneficial for their mental and social well-being. This includes making workplaces more accessible and accommodating to the needs of older employees.
- **Lifelong Learning and Digital Skills:** In a rapidly digitizing world, ensuring that seniors are not left behind is critical. Digital literacy programs help older adults stay connected with family and friends, access information, and participate in the digital economy.

2.4. Good Practices in Positive Ageing from partner countries

Recognizing the essential role that caregivers play in supporting the elderly, partner countries have implemented several supportive practices:

- **Lifelong Learning and CPD Opportunities:** Providing caregivers with opportunities for continuous professional



development ensures that they are equipped with the latest skills and knowledge. This includes training in areas such as geriatric care, dementia management and the use of assistive technologies.

- **Research-Based Practices:** Encouraging the adoption of research-based practices helps caregivers provide the highest quality care. This involves staying up-to-date with the latest research findings and incorporating evidence-based methods into caregiving routines.
- **Innovative Methods and Services:** Developing and promoting innovative caregiving methods and services, including the use of technology, is crucial. Examples include mobile apps for health monitoring, telemedicine services, and online support networks.
- **Work Conditions:** Improving work conditions for caregivers, including fair wages and reasonable work hours, is essential. This also involves providing emotional support and resources to help caregivers manage the stress and challenges of their role.
- **Financial Support:** Financial assistance programs for caregivers help alleviate the economic burden associated with caregiving. This includes stipends, tax credits, and subsidies for healthcare and respite care services.

2.5. Good Practices in Positive Ageing from selected countries all over the world

Several countries have implemented exemplary practices in promoting positive ageing, each offering unique models and programs:

- **Netherlands - Buurtzorg Model:** This innovative model emphasizes community-based, self-managed care. Small teams of nurses provide comprehensive care that includes medical support, social engagement, and assistance with daily living. This approach promotes independence and personalized care, reducing the need for institutionalization.



- **Sweden - Senior and Day Care Centres:** These centers offer a range of activities and services, from recreational programs to educational classes. They provide a supportive environment where older adults can socialize, learn, and stay active, which helps prevent social isolation and promotes overall well-being.
- **Denmark - Age-Friendly Cities and Communities:** Denmark's age-friendly initiatives include making public spaces, transportation, and housing accessible to all ages. This involves ensuring that urban planning and services cater to the needs of older residents, such as providing safe walkways, accessible public transportation, and community programs tailored to seniors.
- **United Kingdom - "Men in Sheds" Programme:** This program provides older men with opportunities to engage in woodworking and other hands-on activities in a communal setting. It addresses the issue of loneliness among older men and provides a space for socializing, skill-sharing, and community building.
- **Japan - Community-Based Integrated Care System:** Japan's integrated care system focuses on supporting seniors in their communities by combining medical care, long-term care, and social services. This holistic approach includes preventive care, rehabilitation, and fostering social connections through community activities.
- **Singapore - Active Ageing Programmes:** Singapore's active ageing initiatives encourage physical, mental, and social engagement. Programs include subsidized fitness classes, lifelong learning opportunities, volunteer initiatives, and intergenerational activities, all aimed at keeping seniors active and connected.
- **Australia - Home Care Packages Program:** This program offers personalized support services for older adults, tailored to their individual needs. Services include assistance with daily activities, healthcare, and home modifications, and allowing seniors to live independently for as long as possible.



- **Canada - Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs):** NORCs are communities where a high concentration of older adults live, either naturally occurring or facilitated by housing policies. These communities provide informal support networks and promote social interaction, helping residents maintain independence and a high quality of life.

2.6. Future Plans

Good practices and case studies from partner countries highlight several key areas for promoting positive ageing. The national reports of all countries may be found in *APPENDIX 1*:

- **Education:** Lifelong learning opportunities are crucial for keeping seniors intellectually active and engaged. Programs range from basic literacy and numeracy classes to advanced courses in arts, sciences, and technology. Digital inclusion is also a major focus, helping older adults develop skills necessary for navigating the digital world.
- **Health:** Maintaining physical health and functional capacity is a priority. This includes access to healthcare services, preventative health programs, and fitness initiatives designed to promote mobility and overall wellness.
- **Social Life:** Creating opportunities for social engagement is key to combating loneliness and enhancing quality of life. This includes promoting outdoor activities, cultural events, and community gatherings that encourage interaction and participation.
- **Work:** Facilitating access to the labor market and creating age-friendly work environments are essential for older adults who wish to continue working. This includes providing flexible work arrangements, opportunities for skill development, and support for entrepreneurship among seniors.
- **Psychology:** Programs aiming at boosting self-confidence, preventing elder abuse, and promoting mental health are



crucial. These initiatives often include counseling services, peer support groups, and educational campaigns to raise awareness about the challenges facing older adults.

- **Political Life and Citizenship:** Encouraging active participation in political life and citizenship helps ensure that the voices of older adults are heard in policy-making processes. This includes involvement in local councils, advisory boards, and advocacy groups that influence public policy and community planning.

2.7. Conclusion

As the global population ages, the importance of fostering positive ageing becomes increasingly evident. The practices and policies highlighted in this report demonstrate a commitment to supporting the elderly across various dimensions of life, including health, social engagement, education, and economic participation. These initiatives not only enhance the quality of life for older adults but also contribute to the overall well-being of society.

However, challenges remain, including addressing issues of social isolation, financial insecurity, and the need for better support systems for caregivers. Moving forward, it is crucial that countries continue to innovate and adapt their policies to meet the evolving needs of their ageing populations. This includes leveraging technology, promoting intergenerational solidarity, and ensuring that all older adults have access to the resources and opportunities they need to live fulfilling and dignified lives.

The exchange of best practices and collaborative efforts among countries will be vital in addressing these challenges and advancing the cause of positive ageing. By building on the successes outlined in this report, we can work towards a future where ageing is not only seen as a challenge but also as an opportunity for growth, contribution, and enhanced quality of life.



3. Focus Groups Findings

3.1. Introduction

Understanding the diverse experiences of ageing across different countries offers valuable insights into how cultural, social, and systemic factors influence the lives of older adults. This chapter summarizes the findings from six focus groups (FGs) conducted in Cyprus, France, Greece, Spain, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic in the framework of the Ageing Well project. Each focus-group-based case study provides a detailed examination of seniors' daily activities, perceptions of ageing, challenges, and support systems. ,

Beyond summarizing the findings of the focus groups, the key findings are also compared between them highlighting the factors affecting seniors' lives and the support systems available to them. Both common themes and unique differences in how ageing is experienced and managed across various cultures and systems is presented, in an attempt to better understand ageing well.

All in all, about 50 seniors (aged 65+) participated in the FGs that aimed at shedding the light in ageing well key areas. All FGs reports from partner countries may be found in *APPENDIX 2*.

3.2. Focus Groups Framework

During the first semester of 2024, all countries conducted their FGs with 6-8 seniors (aged 65+), in order to gain a better understand of ageing well key areas and detect needs, interests, concerns, and good practices in ageing well.

The FGs/ interview questions can be found below:

FGs Interview Questions

1. How do you feel about your age?
2. What do you do every day/ week? How do you spend your day/ week?
3. What does ageing well mean to you? (Do you know what ageing well means?)
4. Do you think you are ageing well/ ageing positively? Can you give some examples from your experience?
5. What are the benefits of being a senior?
6. Are there any challenges in being a senior/ at your age? Can you give some examples? How do you overcome these challenges?



7. Do you get support from people around you (family, friends, neighbors, caregivers, etc.)? Can you give some examples?
8. Do you get support from the government/ society/ organizations or professionals? Can you give some examples?
9. Does technology development impact your everyday life? If yes, how?
10. What is your relation with technology? Do you use technology (communication/ mobile phone, ATM, online shopping, medicine prescriptions, digital alert(s), etc.)? Is it important to you?
11. In case of no relation, then what keeps you from using technology?
12. Are you getting support with technology developments? If yes, where from?
13. When you were younger how would you imagine yourself to be at the age that you have now? What did you anticipate? (Are you close/far from what you have imagined your ageing would be?)

3.3. Summarizing Key Findings from Focus Groups

The key findings of each country FGs are summarized below. For accessing the full reports, please view *APPENDIX 2*.

FGs – Key Findings from all Countries

CZ	CYPRUS
<p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile: Focus group of 7 women (ages 54-83) and interviews with 3 seniors (1 male, 80; 2 females, 80 and 90) in Prague, all engaged in part-time work. • Activities: Involvement in part-time jobs, sports, exercise, gardening, reading, socializing, cooking, babysitting, and caregiving. • Perceptions: Positive outlook on ageing, with an emphasis on maintaining physical health, activity, and meaningful relationships. <p>Key Findings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of Ageing: Positive attitudes, valuing wisdom and experience despite health challenges. 2. Daily Activities: Diverse activities promoting well-being and engagement. 3. Ageing Well: Defined by physical activity, positive relationships, and mental engagement. 	<p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile: 6 female seniors, aged 77, retired. • Activities: Morning walks, household chores, social activities, and religious gatherings. • Perceptions: Positive outlook, emphasizing happiness, independence, and active engagement. <p>Key Findings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of Ageing: Generally positive, attributed to a well-supported life. 2. Daily Activities: Focused on family, social interactions, and personal health. 3. Meaning of Ageing Well: Happiness, health, independence, and societal contribution.



<p>4. Challenges: Health issues, physical limitations, emotional distress from loss.</p> <p>5. Support Systems: Reliance on family and community, with limited governmental support.</p> <p>6. Technology Use: Essential for daily tasks but requires more user-friendly support.</p> <p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Ageing: Active lifestyles and strong social ties are key. • Challenges: Significant needs include better health management and support. • Support Needs: Enhanced governmental and community support systems are necessary. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Programs: Foster physical and social engagement. 2. Support Services: Improve support systems for seniors' needs. 3. Technology Assistance: Provide better training for digital literacy. 4. Health Interventions: Offer more early health and wellness programs. 	<p>4. Challenges: Health issues, loss of loved ones, technological adaptation.</p> <p>5. Support Systems: Strong family and friend support; limited external support.</p> <p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Ageing: Active lifestyles and strong social connections. • Challenges: Health issues and technological adaptation. • Support: Family and friends are crucial; external support is varied. • Future Considerations: Enhance technology literacy and expand support networks. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Programs: Improve technological literacy. 2. Social Support: Strengthen community and family support. 3. Healthcare Access: Enhance senior-specific healthcare services. 4. Government Support: Explore enhanced financial support for seniors
<p>FRANCE</p>	<p>GREECE</p>
<p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile: Seniors aged 55 and above. • Activities: Sports, conferences, health meetings, language lessons. • Perceptions: Mixed feelings about ageing, influenced by health, activities, and support. <p>Key Findings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of Ageing: Varied perspectives influenced by health and activities. 2. Daily Activities: Active lives with physical and mental exercises. 3. Benefits of Ageing Well: Freedom, pursuit of new interests, and helping others. 4. Challenges: Mental health, physical limitations, financial anxieties. 5. Support Systems: Reliance on family and friends; mixed views on government support. <p>Insights and Conclusions:</p>	<p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile: Seniors aged 65 to 84 years old. • Activities: Household chores, grandchild care, gardening, cultural activities, reading, social networking, volunteering. • Perceptions: Mixed feelings about age; focus on physical and mental health, activity, and relationships. <p>Key Findings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of Ageing: Gratitude for health, though time constraints and justifying activities are challenges. 2. Daily Activities: Wide range of activities for well-being and engagement. 3. Ageing Well: Active living, discovering new things, maintaining positive relationships.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Ageing: Engagement in diverse activities promotes a proactive approach. • Challenges: Urban-specific mobility and health issues. • Support Networks: Family and community support are essential; mixed governmental support. • Future Considerations: Address urban infrastructure and enhance technology training. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Urban Planning: Improve age-friendly infrastructure. 2. Government Policies: Enhance support systems and subsidies. 3. Technology Training: Expand digital literacy programs. 4. Community Engagement: Foster activities to reduce social isolation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Challenges: Societal perceptions, lack of government support, technological barriers. 5. Support Systems: Reliance on family and community; inadequate state support. <p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Engagement: Active lifestyles and community ties support well-being. • Societal Challenges: Need for policy improvements and community advocacy. • Technology Use: Importance of tailored technology support. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policy Advocacy: Improve governmental support and age-friendly policies. 2. Community Support: Enhance community-based initiatives. 3. Technology Education: Develop accessible technology programs.
<p>SPAIN</p>	<p>SWITZERLAND</p>
<p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile: Seniors aged 65 to 84 years old. • Activities: Cultural activities, volunteering, grandchild care, socializing, physical activities. • Perceptions: Mixed feelings about ageing, focusing on maintaining activity and social connections. <p>Key Findings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of Ageing: Concerns about complications and reduced mobility; appreciation for time freedom. 2. Daily Activities: Cultural, social, and physical activities are central. 3. Ageing Well: Importance of physical and mental fitness; initially underemphasized but crucial in later years. 4. Challenges: Mobility, fatigue, independence, and adapting to daily changes. 5. Support Systems: Family, neighbors, and online services; some government support for ageing in place. 	<p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile: Seniors aged 75 and above. • Activities: Cultural activities, sports, socializing, volunteering. • Perceptions: Mixed feelings about ageing, with a focus on physical and mental health. <p>Key Findings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of Ageing: Concerns about complications and reduced mobility, but appreciation for freedom from work stress. 2. Daily Activities: Mix of cultural, social, physical activities, and volunteering. 3. Meaning of Ageing Well: Importance of staying active and engaged. 4. Challenges: Maintaining mobility, dealing with fatigue, and adapting to technological changes.



<p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Living: Physical and mental activities are key. • Challenges: Mobility and health management are common issues. • Support: Family and community are crucial; some governmental and digital support. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Healthcare and Mobility: Improve healthcare access and mobility aids. 2. Digital Literacy: Expand technology training for seniors. 3. Government Support: Enhance support for ageing in place. 	<p>5. Support Systems: Reliance on family, neighbors, and community resources; varied government support.</p> <p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Engagement: Participation in diverse activities supports well-being. • Challenges: Mobility, fatigue, and adapting to technological changes. • Support Systems: Critical support from family and community; varied governmental assistance. • Future Considerations: Focus on maintaining active lifestyles and addressing mobility and technology issues. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Programs: Enhance physical and mental engagement activities. 2. Social Support: Strengthen family and community support. 3. Healthcare Access: Improve access to senior-specific healthcare. 4. Government Support: Expand and improve senior support services.
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Captivatingly, key findings from the FGs reports, which may be found in *APPENDIX 2*, refer to the elderly perception of ageing, their daily activities, the challenges they face, the support systems, and the benefits of ageing well:

1. Perception of Ageing:

- **Positive Outlook:** Elderly FGs participants across all countries generally exhibited a positive perception of ageing, valuing wisdom, experience, independence, and freedom. However, feelings were mixed in some regions (France, Greece, Spain, Switzerland) due to varying health conditions and societal perceptions.
- **Importance of Engagement:** Ageing well was closely linked with remaining active, maintaining positive relationships, and engaging in meaningful activities.

2. Daily Activities:



- **Diverse Engagements:** Seniors engaged in a wide range of activities including sports, cultural pursuits, social interactions, household chores, volunteering, and religious gatherings. These activities were central to promoting well-being and maintaining a sense of purpose.
 - **Physical and Mental Health Focus:** Maintaining physical and mental fitness was a common theme, with many emphasizing the importance of exercise, socializing, and continuous learning.
3. **Challenges Identified:**
- **Health and Mobility Issues:** Common challenges included physical limitations, mobility issues, fatigue, and managing health conditions.
 - **Emotional and Social Challenges:** Emotional distress from loss, societal perceptions, and adapting to changing life circumstances were significant concerns.
 - **Technological Barriers:** Adapting to new technologies was a noted challenge, particularly in Greece and Switzerland, where digital literacy levels were lower.
4. **Support Systems:**
- **Reliance on Family and Community:** Across all countries, seniors heavily relied on family and community networks for support. There was a general perception of inadequate governmental support, except for some localized services.
 - **Governmental Support:** Mixed reviews on government support were reported. Some countries cited limited external assistance, while others highlighted the need for enhanced support services and subsidies.
5. **Benefits of Ageing Well:**
- **Freedom and Independence:** Seniors appreciated the freedom from work-related stress and the opportunity to pursue new interests and activities.
 - **Social Contribution and Engagement:** Many seniors found meaning in contributing to society through volunteering and engaging in community activities.



Interestingly, active lifestyles, challenges in health management, and the significance of support networks were highlighted by elderly participants as critical in ageing well.

- **Active Lifestyles:** An active lifestyle, characterized by diverse physical, social, and cultural activities, is crucial for ageing well.
- **Challenges in Health Management:** There is a significant need for improved health management and mobility solutions tailored to seniors' needs.
- **Support Networks are Essential:** Strong family and community support systems are vital, but there is a critical need for better governmental and technological support.

Recommendations concern the community programmes, the support services, technology assistance, healthcare and mobility, governmental policies, and social support networks.

1. **Community Programs:**
 - Develop and expand community programs that foster physical, mental, and social engagement among seniors.
2. **Support Services:**
 - Enhance support systems, including healthcare services specifically designed for seniors and initiatives to promote community-based support.
3. **Technology Assistance:**
 - Improve digital literacy among seniors by offering tailored training programs that address technological barriers and promote the use of technology in daily life.
4. **Healthcare and Mobility:**
 - Improve access to senior-specific healthcare services and provide mobility aids to help seniors maintain independence.
5. **Governmental Policies:**
 - Advocate for policies that support ageing populations, including better financial support, subsidies, and investments in age-friendly urban infrastructure.
6. **Social Support Networks:**



- o Strengthen social support networks through community and family engagement, and address social isolation issues.

By focusing on these areas, policies and programs can be better designed to meet the needs and preferences of seniors across different countries, improving their quality of life and overall well-being.

3.3. Conclusion

The summary report of the FGs from Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Spain, and Switzerland underscores the diverse experiences and common themes related to ageing across different cultural and systemic contexts. **Participants in all countries express a desire for an active lifestyle and value strong social connections, reflecting a shared understanding of what it means to age well.** Despite these commonalities, **the challenges faced by seniors vary, including issues related to health, mobility, and technology, as well as differing levels of governmental and societal support.**

The report highlights that **while family and community support play a pivotal role in the lives of seniors, there is a notable variation in the extent and effectiveness of external support systems. Countries with more robust government programs and community resources tend to offer better support for the elderly, whereas others may benefit from enhanced policy interventions and expanded services.**

To improve the quality of life for seniors, recommendations include developing community programs focused on physical and mental engagement, enhancing support systems, and increasing accessibility to technology and healthcare services. By addressing these areas, policymakers and organizations can better meet the needs of older adults and foster environments that support active, healthy, and fulfilling lives as they age.

4. Questionnaire Findings

4.1. Introduction



Ageing well is a multifaceted concept that encompasses physical, mental, and emotional well-being in later life. As Europe faces a demographic shift towards an ageing population, the role of caregivers becomes increasingly critical. This summary report synthesizes data from five European countries—Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Spain, and Switzerland—focusing on the experiences, challenges, and needs of caregivers for the elderly. The data collected spans both informal (family) and formal (professional) caregivers, providing a comprehensive overview of the caregiving landscape across diverse cultural and socio-economic contexts.

Objectives

The primary objectives of this report are to:

1. Identify common themes and challenges faced by caregivers across different European countries.
2. Highlight the support systems currently in place and the gaps that need addressing.
3. Provide recommendations for improving caregiver support and ensuring the well-being of both caregivers and the elderly.
4. Draw lessons that can inform policy-making and the development of caregiver support programs.

Methodology

Data for this report was gathered through questionnaires involving a diverse group of caregivers from the five countries. The participants included both informal caregivers, predominantly family members, and formal caregivers, such as nursing and healthcare professionals. The data collected provides insights into the demographics, motivations, responsibilities, challenges, support systems, and future planning of caregivers.

Scope

As per project proposal and the questionnaire delivered, the report covers the following:

1. **Profile of Participants:** Demographic details including age, gender, and caregiving roles.
2. **Caregiving Motivations and Responsibilities:** Reasons for becoming caregivers and the range of duties they perform.



3. **Challenges and Support:** Common challenges faced, available support systems, and perceived adequacy of support.
4. **Balancing Caregiving with Personal Life:** Strategies employed to balance caregiving duties with other responsibilities.
5. **Digital Skills and Tools:** The role and importance of digital skills and tools in caregiving.
6. **Factors Contributing to Positive Aging:** Key elements that promote the well-being and quality of life of the elderly.
7. **Communication and Future Planning:** Methods of communication used by caregivers and their preparedness for future caregiving needs.
8. **Recommendations for Improvement:** Suggestions from caregivers for enhancing support systems and services.

Significance

Understanding the experiences and needs of caregivers is essential for developing effective policies and support programs. Caregivers are pivotal in ensuring the quality of life for the elderly, and their well-being directly impacts their ability to provide care. This report aims to inform policymakers, healthcare providers, and community organizations about the critical areas that need attention to support caregivers better and, by extension, the elderly population.

In the following sections, we delve into the detailed findings from each country, extract common themes, and present targeted recommendations to address the identified challenges and gaps in caregiver support.

4.2. Questionnaire Summary Report

In the following table, national-based data from the questionnaires filled in by caregivers will be summarized. The national reports on the questionnaires delivered to the caregivers, along with a link to each partner country's questionnaire may be found in *APPENDIX 3*.

Questionnaire Survey – Key Findings from all Countries

CYPRUS	CZECH REPUBLIC
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are predominantly family caregivers, primarily women aged 45+. • Motivated by responsibility towards family members. • Spend varying hours on caregiving weekly, facing challenges in balancing responsibilities. • Utilize support from in-home care, online resources, and family. • Majority do not feel additional resources are necessary but emphasize the need for a helpline and support groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal/Professional Caregivers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivated by a desire to help the ageing population and pursue nursing careers. • Engage in diverse duties including food preparation, personal care, and administrative tasks. • Face challenges such as financial constraints and lack of recognition. • Utilize support systems like training courses and digital tools for efficiency. • Informal/Family Caregivers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivated by family responsibilities. • Handle tasks like food preparation and personal hygiene. • Seek support through helpers, in-home care, and online resources. • Prioritize self-care with breaks and emotional support from family.
FRANCE	GREECE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants consist of both informal and formal caregivers, primarily women aged 25-34. • Motivated by personal assistance jobs and family responsibilities. • Handle diverse responsibilities like medication management and housework. • Face challenges in balancing caregiving with other responsibilities and emotional stress. • Prioritize self-care and utilize limited support systems like training courses and home help. • Express interest in professional development and improvement in support systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of participants are family caregivers motivated by a desire to help elderly family members. • Responsibilities include medication management, transportation, and household chores. • Face challenges in balancing caregiving with other responsibilities and emotional stress. • Majority feel unsupported and seek additional resources like seminars and respite care.
SPAIN	SWITZERLAND
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal caregivers, mostly women aged 45+, balance caregiving with other activities like work and family life. • Feel sufficiently supported through public authorities and family assistance.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize self-care with breaks and leisure activities.• Value human relationships over digital tools in caregiving contexts.
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4.3. Common Themes across Countries

In summarizing the findings in all countries, the following common themes emerge:

1. Motivation and Responsibilities:

- Caregivers across all countries are primarily motivated by a strong sense of familial responsibility and the desire to provide compassionate care to elderly family members. This motivation is mainly driven by cultural values and personal relationships due to the importance of familial bonds in caregiving roles.
- Caregivers undertake diverse responsibilities to ensure the well-being of the elderly, including medication management, personal care, housework, meal preparation, transportation, and emotional support. These responsibilities highlight the comprehensive nature of caregiving roles and the multi-faceted support required to cater to elderly needs effectively.

2. Challenges:

- One of the most prevalent challenges faced by caregivers in all countries is the difficulty in balancing caregiving duties with other personal and professional responsibilities. Many caregivers struggle with time management and stress due to the demanding nature of caregiving, which often extends beyond typical working hours.
- Caregivers consistently report emotional stress as a significant challenge. Witnessing the physical decline or cognitive impairment of elderly loved ones, coupled with the pressure of caregiving responsibilities, can lead to emotional strain and burnout.
- Despite using various support systems such as in-home care services, online resources and family assistance, caregivers frequently express dissatisfaction with the level of support available. This includes financial



assistance, access to professional training, and recognition of their caregiving efforts.

3. **Support Systems:**

- Caregivers rely on a combination of formal and informal support systems to meet the diverse needs of elderly individuals. In-home care services, community resources, and support from family members play crucial roles in providing practical assistance and emotional support.
- There is a common perception among caregivers that existing support systems are inadequate to fully address the complexities of caregiving. Many express the need for improved access to financial aid, specialized training programs, and respite care services to alleviate caregiving burdens.

4. **Self-Care:**

- Caregivers recognize the importance of self-care in maintaining their own well-being while caring for elderly loved ones. Strategies such as taking breaks, engaging in leisure activities, seeking emotional support from family and peers, and practicing mindfulness are commonly employed to prevent caregiver burnout and enhance resilience.

5. **Future Outlook:**

- A notable finding across all countries is the lack of proactive long-term care planning among caregivers for the elderly individuals under their care. Many caregivers have not made formal plans for future caregiving needs, highlighting a potential gap in preparedness and continuity of care.

6. **Digital Skills and Technology:**

- While the importance of digital skills varies, caregivers across countries recognize the potential benefits of technology in enhancing caregiving efficiency, communication with healthcare professionals and accessing information related to elderly care. However, there is also a preference for personal interactions and human touch in caregiving contexts.

These elaborated common themes provide a nuanced understanding of the challenges, support systems, self-care strategies, and future outlooks shared by caregivers across Cyprus, Czech



Republic, France, Greece, Spain, and Switzerland. Each country's unique cultural context and healthcare system influence how caregivers perceive and navigate their roles in supporting the elderly population.

4.4. Recommendations for Improvement

Emerging from the questionnaire, the following recommendations for improvement are highlighted: Enhancing support systems including financial assistance, training programs, and access to respite care; Promoting awareness of caregiving challenges and resources available through digital platforms; Improving recognition and professional development opportunities for caregivers; and encouraging long-term care planning among caregivers to ensure sustainable support for the elderly.

Specifically, it is essential to:

1. Enhance support systems for caregivers:

- Increase access to **financial aid and caregiver allowances** to alleviate the economic burden associated with caregiving. This could include subsidies for medical expenses, home care services, and respite care.
- **Develop and expand training programs** tailored to the specific needs of caregivers, including courses on elder care management, dementia care, first aid, and emotional support. Provide accessible and affordable training options to enhance caregiver skills and confidence.
- Expand availability and affordability of respite care services to provide caregivers with temporary relief from their caregiving responsibilities. Foster partnerships with community organizations and healthcare providers to offer respite care vouchers or subsidized services.

2. Promote awareness and accessibility:

- Improve **awareness and accessibility of digital resources** and tools designed to support caregivers. Develop user-friendly websites, mobile applications, and online platforms that provide information, guidance, and peer support networks for caregivers.



- Launch **public awareness campaigns to educate caregivers** about available resources, support services, and legal rights. Collaborate with healthcare professionals, social workers, and community leaders to disseminate information through workshops, seminars, and community events.
- **Tailor support programs and resources to reflect cultural diversity and sensitivity** within caregiving communities. Recognize and respect cultural norms, traditions, and preferences in caregiving practices and service delivery.

3. Recognition and professional development:

- Implement policies and initiatives to formally recognize the valuable contributions of caregivers. Establish caregiver appreciation events, awards and recognition programs to honor their dedication and commitment.
- Create career pathways and opportunities for caregivers to advance their skills and knowledge through continuous professional development. Offer scholarships, grants, and incentives for caregivers pursuing further education or certifications in caregiving-related fields.

4. Support Networks and Peer Mentoring:

- Foster peer support groups and mentoring programs where caregivers can connect, share experiences, and provide emotional support to one another. Facilitate online forums, support groups, and local meet-ups to promote solidarity and reduce isolation among caregivers.
- Forge partnerships with community organizations, non-profits, and businesses to expand support networks for caregivers. Collaborate on initiatives such as caregiver resource centers, helplines, and volunteer programs to enhance caregiver well-being and resilience.

5. Policy advocacy and legislative reform:

- Advocate for policy reforms at local, national and European Union levels to address gaps in caregiver support, funding, and healthcare infrastructure.



Lobby for legislative measures that prioritize caregiver rights, benefits, and access to essential services.

- Promote the adoption of caregiver-friendly workplace policies, including flexible working arrangements, paid leave for caregivers, and employer-sponsored caregiver support programs. Encourage businesses and government agencies to become certified as caregiver-friendly workplaces.

6. Evaluation and feedback mechanisms:

- Establish mechanisms for ongoing evaluation and feedback from caregivers to assess the effectiveness of support services and identify areas for improvement. Conduct regular surveys, focus groups, and consultations to gather caregiver insights and experiences.
- Implement quality assurance standards for caregiver support services and programs to ensure they meet the diverse needs of caregivers and the elderly. Monitor outcomes, satisfaction levels, and caregiver outcomes to drive continuous improvement efforts.

These detailed recommendations aim to address the identified challenges and enhance support for caregivers across Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Spain, and Switzerland. By focusing on financial assistance, training, awareness campaigns, recognition, peer support, policy advocacy, and quality assurance, stakeholders can work towards creating a more supportive environment for caregivers and improving the quality of care for elderly populations.

4.5. Conclusion

This summary integrates key findings from caregivers across Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Cyprus, Spain, and Switzerland, highlighting their unique perspectives and challenges in providing care for the elderly.

This comprehensive report brings to light the intricate and multifaceted role of caregivers in Europe, highlighting both the challenges they face and the essential support systems required to ensure the well-being of the elderly. By examining the data from the Czech Republic, Greece, Cyprus, Switzerland, and



France, several key insights and lessons emerge, underscoring the universal nature of caregiving challenges despite cultural and regional differences.

This report calls for collaborative efforts from policymakers, healthcare providers, community organizations, and society at large to recognize and support the invaluable contributions of caregivers. Only through comprehensive and inclusive strategies can we hope to meet the growing demands of an aging population and ensure that caregivers receive the recognition and support they deserve.

5. Conclusion

The findings from the desk research, focus groups, and questionnaire surveys conducted across Cyprus, France, Greece, Spain, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic offer a comprehensive overview of the current state of ageing and caregiving within these countries, as part of the "Ageing Well" Erasmus+ project. This report integrates insights from diverse data sources to better understand the challenges, needs, and best practices associated with ageing and caregiving, ultimately guiding the development of a toolkit aimed at supporting elderly well-being and active ageing.

The **desk research** highlighted the varied national and EU-level practices and policies that support positive ageing, such as initiatives aimed at enhancing psychological resilience, promoting physical health, and fostering social engagement among older adults. It also revealed successful practices and support systems for caregivers, highlighting the critical role of comprehensive social welfare systems in ensuring the well-being of both seniors and caregivers. Despite these positive examples, the research underscored significant challenges, including gaps in policy implementation, disparities in access to resources, and the need for more robust support frameworks, particularly in countries with less developed social welfare systems.

Focus groups conducted with older adults provided deeper qualitative insights into the lived experiences of ageing across different cultural contexts. Common themes that emerged include the desire for active lifestyles, the importance of social connections, and the need for greater support in areas such as



healthcare, mobility, and digital literacy. Variations were observed in how ageing is experienced and supported across different countries, influenced by local cultural, social, and policy contexts. The findings underscore the importance of tailored, culturally sensitive approaches to promoting positive ageing and suggest that greater emphasis on community-based programs and social support systems could significantly enhance the quality of life for older adults.

The **questionnaire survey** targeted both informal (family) and formal (professional) caregivers, shedding light on their responsibilities, challenges, and needs. The results highlighted several key issues faced by caregivers, including balancing personal and caregiving duties, managing stress, and accessing adequate support and training. The importance of digital tools in caregiving was also emphasized, with a need for more accessible digital education programs to improve communication and service access for both caregivers and the elderly. Additionally, the survey identified a pressing need for enhanced policy measures and support systems that recognize and address the diverse challenges caregivers face, promoting their well-being and ability to provide high-quality care.

Based on the findings from all three sections of the report, **several recommendations** are proposed to enhance the well-being of older adults and support caregivers more effectively:

1. **Develop Community-Based Programs:** Focus on creating inclusive community programs that encourage physical and mental engagement for seniors, fostering environments that support active and fulfilling lives.
2. **Enhance Support Systems for Caregivers:** Implement targeted policy measures that provide financial, emotional, and practical support to caregivers, ensuring they have the resources needed to perform their roles effectively.
3. **Promote Digital Literacy:** Expand digital education initiatives for both older adults and caregivers to improve access to digital services and enhance communication with family, friends, and healthcare providers.
4. **Foster Collaborative Efforts:** Encourage collaboration among policymakers, healthcare providers, and community organizations to share best practices and develop comprehensive strategies addressing the multifaceted challenges of ageing and caregiving.



- 5. Leverage Technology:** Utilize technological innovations to develop new tools and platforms that facilitate better caregiving practices, improve elderly care management, and enhance overall quality of life for seniors.

This report underscores the critical need for continued investment in strategies that promote positive ageing and support caregivers. By embracing a collaborative, evidence-based approach, countries can better address the complex needs of their ageing populations, turning the challenge of an ageing society into an opportunity for growth, contribution, and enhanced quality of life. The *Ageing Well* project serves as a foundation for these efforts, providing valuable insights and practical tools to support the well-being of older adults and those who care for them across Europe.

The caregiving landscape in Europe is marked by dedication, compassion, and significant challenges. As the population continues to age, the role of caregivers will become increasingly critical. By addressing the common challenges and implementing targeted support measures, we can create a more sustainable and supportive environment for caregivers. This, in turn, will enhance the quality of life for the elderly, ensuring they age with dignity, love, and the best possible care.

APPENDIX 1: Desk research: National reports - [Link](#)

APPENDIX 2: Focus groups: National reports - [Link](#)

APPENDIX 3: Questionnaire survey: National reports - [Link](#)