

The background

The “demographic issue” in Europe is more and more a factor that influences political choices, welfare states, social services, health-care systems. The EU population is ageing and the over 65s represent 17% of the total European population with an estimated growth to 44% by 2050. This demographic trend has moved high in the EU's agenda and is included in the EU 2020 proposal from the Commission under the flagship initiative "Innovation Union" that will foster ICT adoption to allow enable older people to live independently and be active in society.

To address the ageing process it is therefore important to recognize the necessity of an integrated approach, not limited to a health or social perspective. Housing policy must be part of this approach and must open itself up even more to the needs of a senior population who, according to all studies in the sector, wishes to live as long as possible in their own homes. (CECODHAS <http://www.housingeurope.eu>).

However, seniors with high dependency are often hosted in institutional housing – almost entirely funded by public resources - with qualified staff for their care, for health, social and psychological support. In a period of Global Economic Crisis the Welfare State and Social Services are one of the most suffering sectors, which has suffered most, risking to be cuts without concerns about social cohesion and the re-inclusion of disadvantaged persons.

At the European level new forms of community living, sharing of common spaces, sharing, community decisions-taking procedures and self-customised services were born have emerged:

Collaborative Housing.

Collaborative housing represents a new economic sector at EU level with a powerful social dimension. It can strengthen social inclusion and cohesion.

The Co-Elderly project aims at:

- encouraging the emancipation of high dependency seniors in terms of skills, decision taking/making;
- improving the quality and the quantity of knowledge and the transfer of good practices among EU Managers (or facilitators/mediators) from Collaborative Housing and Social Services sectors in new forms of housing management and participation for high dependency seniors;
- strengthening adult education through new pedagogical approaches and management for those organizations working in the field of Collaborative housing and seniors' care;
- improving the use of the an intergenerational approach to social services design/provision in the EU.

The expected final result:

The Co-Elderly learning partnership - through mobilities and related desk research - will deliver the following main outcomes: 1) A business plan for Collaborative Housing for high dependency seniors; 2) an EU info-training model for managers/facilitators/leaders of communities for high dependency seniors; 3) a Guidelines for collaborative housing seniors communities start-up. These outcomes will be - shared among and built up by experts into the field of social housing, collaborative housing and social services providers but also by direct beneficiaries (seniors). These outcomes will allow widespread and implementation of a) the skills and competences of "insiders"/managers from the social entrepreneurship and services sectors as well as from collaborative housing communities; and b) ownership processes and reactivation for seniors as final users.

European Added Value

The project is expected to impact on the EU dimension as good practice for seniors' housing and policies as well as social entrepreneurship. Good practice will include in terms of: a) social inclusion and seniors' emancipation, given the primary need for housing as a place for dialogue, exchange, community, emancipation/independence; b) policies for environmental impact and waste reduction, given the need for energy saving, reuse and recycling. Collaborative housing is a key variable for policies aimed at increasing the economic, social and environmental performance of the EU.

The Partnership:

The Co-Elderly Project involves **4 partners** from **4 different European Countries**: Italy, United Kingdom, Poland and Sweden. Among them can be found Co-housing Networks, Social Enterprises, NGOs and Foundations.

The GRUNDTVIG Programme

Launched in 2000, Grundtvig aims to provide adults with more ways to improve their knowledge and skills, facilitate their personal development and boost their employment prospects. It also helps to tackle problems associated with Europe's ageing population.

It covers not only teachers, trainers, staff and organisations working in the sector, but also learners in adult education. These include relevant associations, counselling organisations, information services, policy-making bodies and others such as NGOs, enterprises, voluntary groups and research centres.

The programme funds a range of activities, particularly those supporting adult education staff to travel abroad for learning experiences, through exchanges and various other professional experiences. Other larger scale initiatives involve, for instance, networking and partnerships between organisations in different countries.

More info on <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu>.



What is the Co-EldeRly Project is?

Co-EldeRly Project – Co-Housing and Social housing for Elders' Reactivation - is an EU funded project within the Learning Partnership, a GRUNDTVIG's Sub-Programme. This project is started in 2012.

The main aim is to develop, through a multi-country and multi-skilled partnership, new tools and skills targeting seniors-care social enterprise, managers of seniors-care, collaborative housing insiders and, seniors. This is a scope of a unique model combining both a seniors home-care and a community/social housing dimension. Its approach is- with an intergenerational, based on self-decision-making, and integrated, mutual learning. approach – both seniors home-care and community/social housing dimension.

Through this project, cooperation among European organisations and local public bodies active in seniors' policies and /interventions – in a European dimension - is improved.

The quality and quantity of best practices and information exchanges in the field is increased thanks to the EU approach. The issues under analysis will be the exclusion of seniors, the ageing of society, low social activity of by seniors, low rate numbers of seniors in lifelong learning, and, finally, need of international collaboration towards experiences and good practices exchange.

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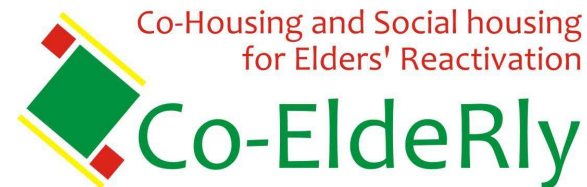
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