Older adult learners in the Ageing Society

A European overview

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Museums and the ageing population

- LEM-work group with around 10 participating institutions
- Mapping national policies and practises
- Policy recommendations to be released during 2012

The Learning Museum
LEM

Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme

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78

55

93

Age is just a number

(and time treats us differently)

82

67

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Third age

the time after gradual or full retirement with potential of leading an active life.

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Fourth age

A growing need for care and a declining (mental and/or physical) health situation.

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Ageing: the European perspective

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Ageing is one of the greatest social and economic challenges of the 21st century for European societies. It will affect all EU countries and most policy areas

European Commission DG
Health and Consumers

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European Year for active ageing and solidarity between generations

Aim: raise awareness of the contribution that older people make to society. Encourage policymakers and relevant stakeholders at all levels to take action and thereby creating better opportunities for active ageing and strengthening solidarity between generations.

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European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing

Aim: *to increase the average healthy lifespan of Europeans by 2 years by 2020*

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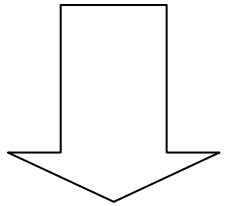
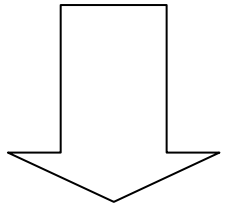
Europe 2020 strategy



European Innovation Partnerships



European Innovation Partnerships on Active and Healthy Ageing

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If cultural participation strongly affects the perception of well-being of the ill and the elderly […] it is possible that through a suitable culturally-oriented prevention strategy […] there could be a huge saving of public resources […]

Sacco, Culture 3.0, 2011

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Ageing: the national perspective

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Does your government have a national policy concerning older people's access to culture in general or heritage in particular?

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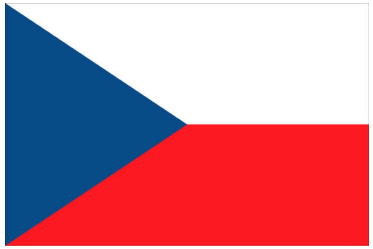
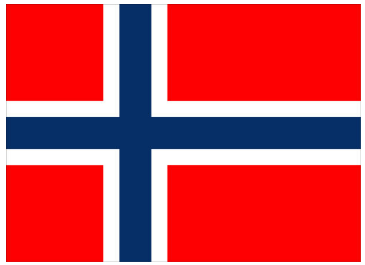
Three national case-studies





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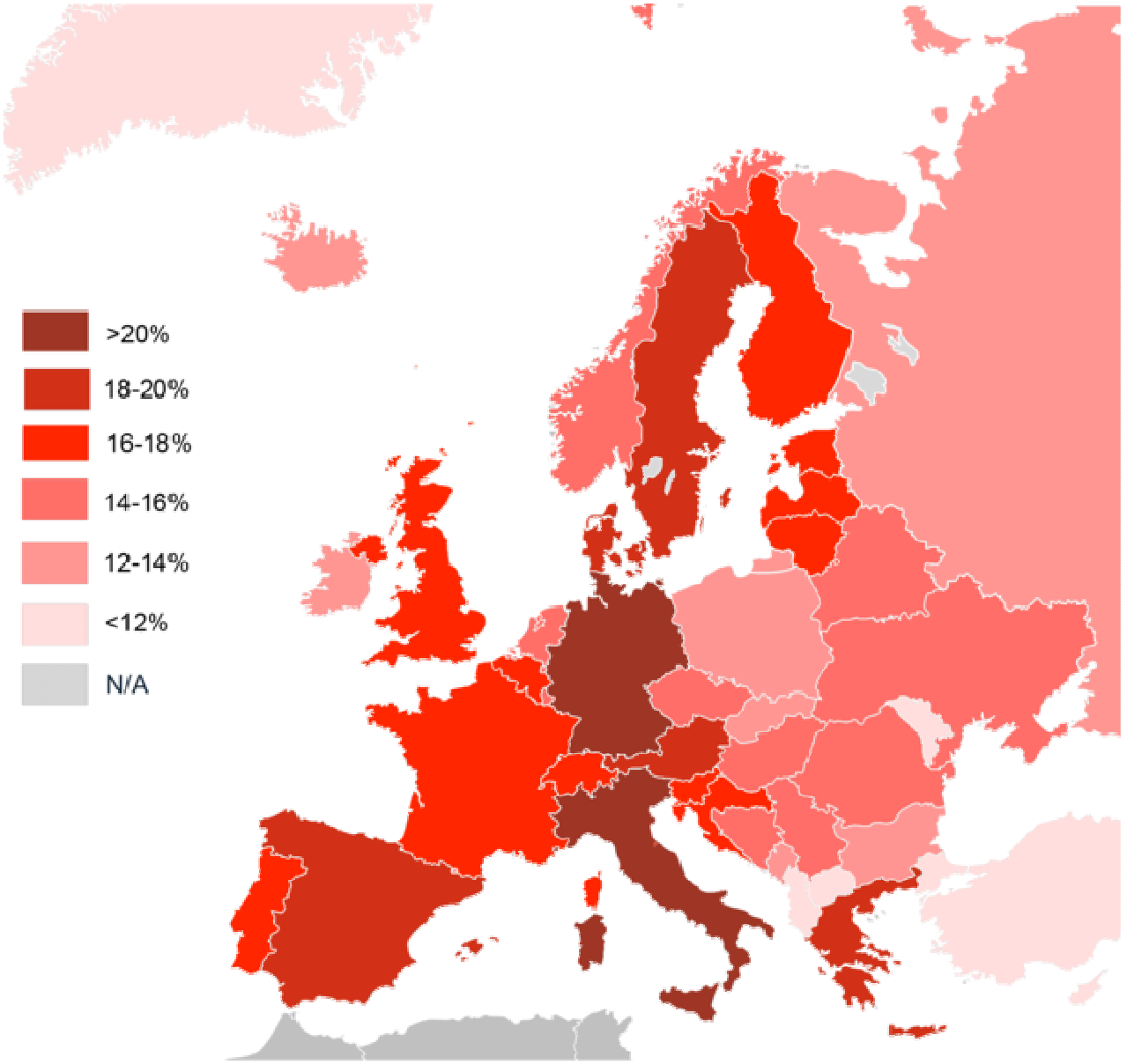

Map of Europe showing the percentage of the population over 65 in 2010 for each country

Source: CIA World Factbook

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Case 1: The Czech Republic

National programme of Preparation for Ageing 2008-2012:

- Challenge and change the current stereotypes of ageing and old age and counter prejudices concerning the life, status and significance of older persons in society.
- Culture is a mean to combat social isolation and exclusion but also as a source of self-fulfillment, enjoyment and of relationship building

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Case 2: The Netherlands

The Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

"There is no such a policy, and no plans for this, to increase access to culture or heritage for older people. Elderly are well represented among the visitors to Dutch cultural institutions. Young people are the least represented and thus more of a concern."

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Agenda 2026. Study on the Future of the Dutch Museum Sector

"A growing target group with a large amount of time, money and interest in cultural and museological activities will generate a great degree of potential for the museum sector. Small, medium and large museums will all benefit from this trend."

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Case 3: Norway

The Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services and the Ministry of Culture

- Den kulturelle spaserstokken, 2007 (The cane of culture)
- Strengthen the public health policy through political measures that would reduce inequalities in health between social and ethnic groups and between the sexes.
- Social and cultural activities give us tools to express thoughts and experiences that normally can be hard to express, have therapeutic and preventive effects, strengthen social networks etc.

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Ageing: the museum sector

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We already have lots of old people coming to our museum!

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Who is your typical older adult participant?

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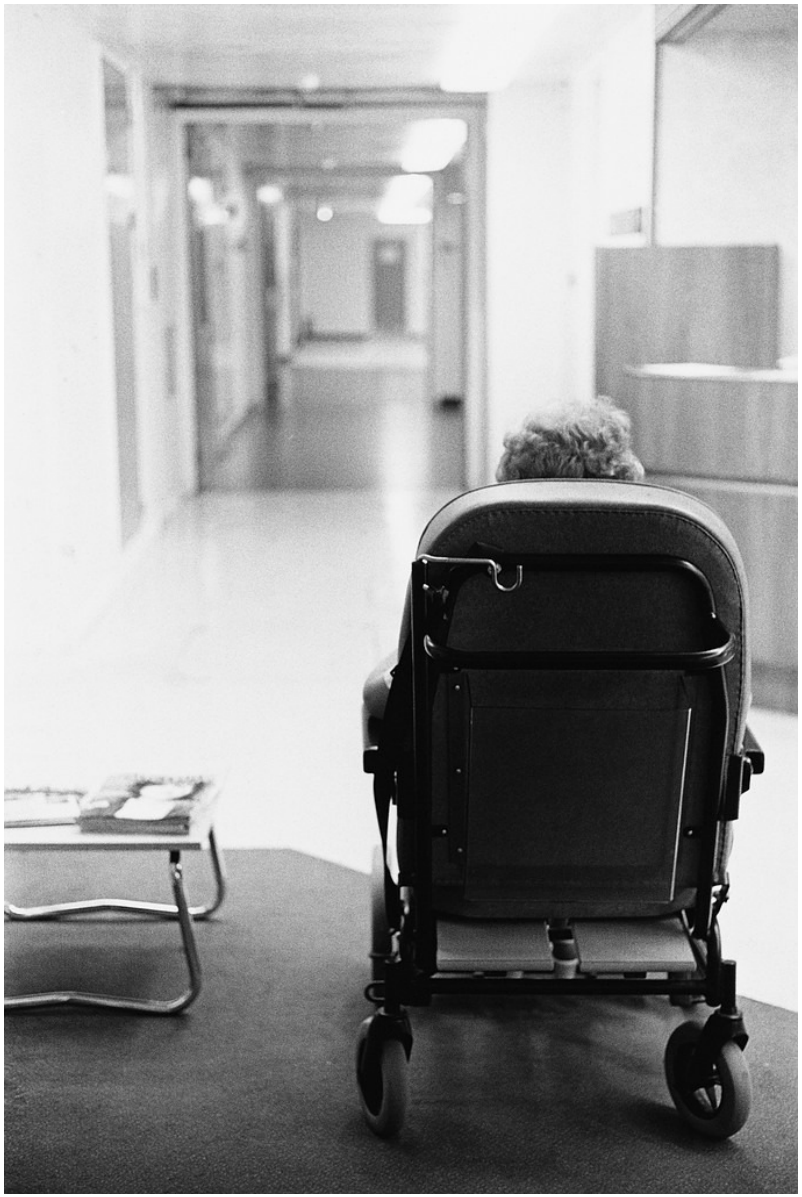

We need to
learn more about
our non-visitors

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Methods for engaging all senses and learning styles

- Lecture series
- Volunteering
- Participatory art
- Object handling
- Reminiscence
- Memory boxes

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Learning THROUGH heritage

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The future for our policy recommendations…

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Many thanks for listening!

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