



***LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME'S GRUNDTVIG  
PARTNERSHIP PROJECT***

**COMBATING ELDER ABUSE**

**PARTNERSHIP REPORT**

**PROJECT DURATION 1.8.2013 – 31.7.2015**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

# Introduction

---

The partnership of this project was based on European level projects ‘The European Reference Framework Online for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and Neglect’ (2009-2011) and “Wellbeing and Dignity of Older people, WeDO” (2010-2012). Italy, Ireland and Finland participated in one or both of the projects. Romania was a new member of this partnership.

Under-reporting of elder abuse and the insufficient recognition of the issue at a societal level shows the need for increased awareness, training and a change in attitudes towards ageing and older people amongst professionals and those who work in communities outside formal services with and for older people. The latter group of people consists of voluntary workers and informal carers. Raising awareness and knowledge of elder abuse amongst older people themselves and their families is also crucial.

A common need of the partner organizations in this project was to continuously find new knowledge and ways to educate, train and support local and national authorities, informal and professional carers and volunteers to protect older people from abuse and to empower older people themselves to take control their own lives and to create opportunities for their participation in society.

The project included transnational partner meetings, seminars, site visits, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) events and workshops for informal carers for piloting the training material.

Specifically, in the framework of the Combating Elder Abuse partnership four study visits (one per partner country), were organized. During each meeting:

- a seminar or training session were held, aimed to share practices and experiences among partner organizations and organizations active at national level on the topic of elder abuse.
- Site visits were organized in order to learn more about local services providing help, support and empowerment programmes for older persons with different level of dependency.

# Helsinki – Finland – January 2014

---

The first study visit took place in Helsinki (Finland) hosted by partner SUVANTO.

## PUBLIC SEMINAR

The study visit included an open seminar whose topic was **“FINNISH SITUATION IN AGING AND ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION WORK”**. Several Finnish experiences had been presented and shared with those of partner countries. We discussed about:

- Work with elderly people - studies at universities of applied sciences in Finland with Marianne Nylund, Lecturer at the Diaconia – University of Applied Sciences.
- Supporting psycho-social wellbeing in old age – Finnish experiences with PhD (Psychology), Marja Saarenheimo.
- [WeDO \(Wellbeing and Dignity of Older people\) project’s principles and Finnish quality recommendation aiming to guarantee high-quality ageing and improve services \(published 2013\) with researcher Sari Jokinen, National Institute for Health and Welfare, THL.](#)
- Finnish elder abuse prevention at a national level, projects and other acts with Planning Officer Tiina Savola, University of Helsinki/Palmenia Centre for Continuing Education.
- Prevention work of elder abuse and domestic violence in [Suvanto](#) and [Juuri](#) project with Executive Director, Project Manager Leena Serpola-Kaivo-oja, and Project Coordinator Henriikka Laurola, Suvanto – For A Safe Old Age.
- National elder abuse prevention work in a European level:
  - [In Italy](#)– with ANS EU Project Manager Licia Boccaletti
  - [In Romania](#) – with Asociatia HABILITAS CRFP Ioana Caciula
  - [In Ireland](#) – with Age Action Ireland Researcher and Project Coordinator Marita O'Brien
- [Ageing in Finland: African experiences in Helsinki](#) with Hanna Rantala, Project Manager and RuthFranco, Project Worker/Jade Project, Kantti



## SITE VISITS

The site visits were focused on learning more about available services to support social inclusion and care of older persons in the city of Helsinki. We visited:

- **THE HELSINKI ALZHEIMER ASSOCIATION** was founded in 1986 and is a member of the nationwide Alzheimer Society of Finland. Activities of the Helsinki Alzheimer Association aim to develop new and improve current services available to those suffering from memory disorders as well as to their family members, provide information and look after the rights of those suffering from the illnesses and to give guidance on memory disorders and take part in preventative work. The services of Helsinki Alzheimer Association include a Day Care Centre, various group activities and counseling as well as project work.
- **KAMPPI SERVICE CENTRE** is the largest of many Service Centres of the City of Helsinki that offer various activities and services for pensioners as well as for unemployed people. The Kamppi Service Centre provides meal and cafeteria services, library and Internet services and the chance to read the daily newspapers. In addition, various hobby and recreational activities such as physical exercise, handicrafts, language courses, computer classes and peer support groups are organized weekly in the centre. Clients, volunteers and staff plan all activities together.



# Dublin – Ireland – June 2014

---

The second study visit took place in Dublin (Ireland) hosted by partner AGE ACTION.

## PRESENTATIONS AND TRAINING EVENT

The afternoon session of our first day included inputs from a number of organisations.

First, we heard from [Age & Opportunity](#), the national organisation that inspires everyone to reach their full potential as they age. They outlined a number of their programmes dedicated to breaking down stereotypes of older people, along with their personal development programmes aimed at older people.

[An Garda Síochána](#) is the national police service of Ireland. The Mission of An Garda Síochána is Working with Communities to Protect and Serve. Following the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, the Dublin Metropolitan Police merged with the recently established An Garda Síochána in 1925. Today, An

Garda Síochána is a community based organisation with over 14,500 Garda and Civilian employees, who serve all sections of the community. Two gardai gave a presentation on doorstep safety and financial security programme for older people.



called ‘Keep Control’ and was developed with input from older people.

We then received a presentation from the [National Centre for the Protection of Older People](#), who described a new initiative they have developed to empower older people to keep control of their finances and prevent financial abuse. The project is

Each of these presentations offered meaningful insight into the experience of older people in Ireland and helped give shape to our later discussions of training materials and methods.

Thursday, attendees had an opportunity to participate in the [Health Service Executive Elder Abuse Awareness Training Programme](#) for residential care staff. Sarah Mahon, a HSE officer for the Protection of Older People delivered the workshop. The partners found this extremely helpful.

## SITE VISITS

On Thursday afternoon, the group made a number of site visits.

- We headed to the [Gaiety School of Acting](#) in Temple Bar where we learned about Breathe, a programme designed to raise awareness about the well-being and positive mental health of young people. The group also had an opportunity to visit the Smock Alley Theatre, the oldest in Europe.
- This was followed with a visit to [Third Ages, Senior Help Line office](#). Third Age is a national voluntary organisation celebrating the third age in life when people may no longer be in paid employment, but can remain healthy, fulfilled and continue to contribute to society. **Senior Help Line** - is a confidential listening service for older people by trained older volunteers for the price of a local call anywhere in Ireland. Their vision and mission is that every older person in Ireland would know the Local number, call if they need us and receive an empathic response. The lines are open every day from 10am to 10pm.
- Our last stop on Thursday was at Age Action's offices on Abbey Street, where we introduced our guests to the various services Age Action provides, including advocacy and policy, computer training and digital inclusion, the Care and Repair programme and the information service.



# Bucharest – Romania – October 2014

---

The third study visit took place in Bucharest (Romania) hosted by partner HABILITAS.

## PUBLIC SEMINAR

The public seminar in Romania was focused on the topic of **“PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF ELDER ABUSE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF ELDERLY CARE”**

After an [initial presentation](#) of the project by Asociatia Habilitas CRFP, transnational partners shared with Romanian stakeholders their national experiences on elder abuse prevention:

- Licia Boccaletti from Anziani e Non Solo spoke about [Elder abuse in formal care settings in Italy](#)
- Sarah Mahon from Age Action Ireland made a presentation concerning [Responding to Allegations of Elder Abuse-The Irish Perspective](#)
- Henriikka Laurola from Suvanto spoke about [Abuse in Finnish elderly care](#)



7

Then we learnt more about the Romanian context, thanks to:

- A presentation by the General Department of Social Assistance Sector 3 Bucharest, concerning the community services provided to older persons
- A presentation by Dr. Mihaela Ceuca, The Complex of Socio-Medical Care of Bucharest, Center of care and assistance “Sf. Dimitrie” on the topic of [“Management of elder abuse in Long Term Care facilities in Romania”](#)
- A presentation about [elder abuse in Romania](#), from Alina Letitia Matei– The National Council of Older Persons
- A lecture by Prof. Dr Constantin Bogdan, president of the UNESCO Romanian National Committee of Bioethics

## SITE VISITS

Two site visits had been organized by Habilitas, in order to give us a perspective on the type of public services available for older persons in Romania.

We visited:

- The Center of Care and Assistance “Sf. Elena” (subordinated to the General Department of Social Assistance sector 1) – a public residential facility where a number of 40 elderly women with severe chronic health problems are living and receiving permanent care from professional medical and care staff.
- The Seniors’ Club Sector 1 – a public social service for elderly, where older persons can meet and have different cultural, recreational and educational activities (painting, board games, dance lessons, discussions groups on religious themes, organizing excursions etc.
- The Caraiman Multifunctional Centre - the Center where the project meetings took place – coordinated by the City Hall Sector 1, it is a social service that offers a large number of free medical services especially for older persons who are economically disadvantaged: medical consultations, treatments and medical analysis, psychological, ophthalmological and dental services.



# Carpi – Italy – May 2015

---

The final project meeting was held in Carpi and organized by Anziani e non solo soc. Coop.

## PUBLIC SEMINAR

The public seminar organised in Italy was called “**PREVENTING ELDER ABUSE IN ITALY – GOOD PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES**”. Aim of the workshop was to share with transnational partners some of the most promising Italian practices concerning elder abuse in Italy and to confront them with those from partner countries.

During the workshop we discussed about:

- [Migrant care workers and elder abuse – The Diade research project](#) with Loredana Ligabue (ANS)
- [Elder abuse in hospital setting](#) with Ilaria Goldoni, nurse from the Modena University General Hospital
- [Indicator of abuse towards older women](#) -with Monica Dotti, Sociologist from AUSL Modena
- [Prevention of frauds against older persons](#) – with Susi Tinti Head of District Police Unione delle Terre d’Argine
- [The European project ABUEL](#) with Mirko Di Rosa from INRCA Ancona
- [Elder abuse in Romania](#) with Ioana Caciula – HABILITAS
- [Elder abuse in Finland](#) with Henriikka Laurola – SUVANTO
- [Elder abuse in Ireland](#) with Marita O’ Brian – AGE ACTION



## SITE VISITS AND PRESENTATIONS

- During the meeting in Carpi, the group made a site visit to [Centro Sociale Loris Guerzoni](#)– it’s a social club for older persons completely self-managed by older persons themselves. The Club promotes different kind of recreational and cultural activities as well as proximity support services

for dependent older persons from the neighborhood. It's a very good example of promotion of protective measures such as monitoring, social inclusion and empowerment of older persons. The social dinner was also organized at this social club.

Then we had two presentations from:

- [Difensori dei diritti del malato](#) (Defenders of the rights of patients) - it's a nonprofit association located in Carpi Hospital that has the goal to advocate patients right in case of medical malpractice. The association works as an interface between the public health care service and the patients trying to mediate (whenever possible) or providing legal support to protect the rights of victims.
- Community social services: the partnership met with a community social worker who presented some case-studies of abuse towards older persons, illustrating how they were managed according to the Italian law and social services system. A special focus was given to explain how guardianship can be used as a mean to protect older persons from abuse.

