



The ForAge 2nd Annual Report 2013

What is ForAge?

The project is a European multi-lateral network which aims at communicating the experiences of **later lifelong learning** to create high standards of practice. [*ForAge for later life learning – building on European Experience. 518459-LLP-1-2011-1-UK-GRUNDTVIG-GNW/2011-4919*]

Why have we created ForAge?

Since the first European Year of Older People and Intergenerational Solidarity in 1993 there have been over 1000 pan European exchanges, projects, training events, seminars, programmes and networks concerned with learning in later life.

The numbers increased significantly with the Grundtvig programme providing impetus and funding for imaginative and innovative work across all of Europe. [In 2012 11 of the 61 multilateral projects funded benefited older learners].

However it is difficult to access information about these initiatives once their initial funding has ceased nor to find any comprehensive list of them suggesting that we have not made the best use of all these rich experiences in terms of building upon them, sharing information, analysing and assessing value and impact against education and ageing policies and research evidence and creating networks to do all this. Recent research into the benefits of later life learning does not draw on pan European experience as evidence.

What have we done?

DATABASE

The successful development of the database has allowed ForAge to access, summarise and store data for the use of others. The categories developed - including policy, research evidence, evaluations, statistical surveys, theory and practice, and EU Projects - are intended to make searching and analysis easier.

WEBSITE

The ForAge website allows for homepages for all the partners to place relevant national, regional and European information in their own language. It also provides links to other relevant organisations and areas of likely interest. ForAge also has a presence on social media like FaceBook.

ISSUES OF INTEREST AND CONCERN

The ForAge network has drawn upon its partners' own network of connections to raise questions of concern. This has been to raise greater awareness of these issues but also to create learned debate involving a range of differing areas of expertise. The 2nd pan European ForAge conference and consultation in Budapest in October

2013 created a further opportunity to discuss some of these issues as well as explore in some detail many of the national concerns (policies, research, practice and older people's levels of engagement in learning) impacting on modern day Hungary as signposted by our conference hosts Trebag.

CONSULTATION

The ForAge network is constantly seeking information about issues, policies data and research completed or underway. Partners are in contact with their own relevant national and regional government departments about issues relevant to later life learning and with other pan European networks, projects and programmes to ensure effective collaboration. We have used the online discussion forum and workshops at conferences to raise issues and obtain information.

<http://www.foragenetwork.eu/en/forum/>

In 2013 these issues included the following:

- The educational needs of older people from minority ethnic, Roma and migrant communities
- Intergenerational work
- Active ageing
- Social stereotyping of ageing, cinema, media and the place of learning
- Good practice
- Implementing social software with older learners.
- Review of EU Year of Older People 2012.

The following link will take you to our current survey where we are attempting to gain even more information about key issues impacting on later life learning in Europe.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VQNRJV5>

NEWSLETTER

Nine editions of the ForAge newsletter focussing on our developments and progress have been widely circulated and made available in all partner languages. They have been distributed as paper copies and are accessible from the ForAge website. The most recent editions have focussed on the ForAge 2013 conference in Budapest, Hungary and highlighting issues of concern for older learners and potential learners from minority ethnic, migrant and Roma communities.

What is still to do?

ForAge has some 'unresolved' issues it wishes to continue to pursue in the last months of its current funding.

Data collection and analysis.

It is still difficult to make any real judgements about the extent of older people's participation in later life learning across Europe. The main source of data is Eurostat with many European countries not collecting such data. This makes assessment difficult. Similarly there are issues about compatibility with different countries,

government departments and others who collect data using different age groupings. (In some instances limiting later life data to age 65+ only).

Erasmus +

The new programme does not immediately seem to offer funding opportunities relevant to older learners and potential learners. ForAge will explore how the new programme develops and monitor how and if older learners and their teachers/trainers/facilitators are beneficiaries.

Post conflict learning

ForAge is using its communication channels – website discussion, FaceBook and newsletter – to highlight potential educational and reflective initiatives drawing upon older people's experiences in conflict in their recent lives or formative years. Europe has seen many conflicts over the last 50 years and the experiences of its older people who experienced them are worth recording, researching and learning from.

Health and well-being

The ForAge network is well placed to liaise and collaborate with other networks and initiatives attempting to promote healthy and active ageing. Education and learning are not always viewed as essential elements of work in this area and ForAge is committed to make better connections with such initiatives.

Intergenerational learning

The ForAge discussion Forum is raising questions about the quality of intergenerational learning as a tool to enhance and support active ageing.

Where we want to be next year?

ForAge will still be an active network with the database and website accessible for all those who wish to use.

Alongside this we aspire to: -

- Organise appropriate events – nationally, regionally and across Europe in partnership with other agencies that promote later life learning. Our latest consultation/conference is in Oporto, Portugal between 7th and 8th November 2014. <http://aidlearn.wix.com/forageconference14>
- Raise issues as and when required.
- Liaise and inform appropriate agencies at all levels about relevant later life learning issues.
- Collaborate with other EU wide networks and agencies that promote ageing, older people and educational issues.
- Develop and extend ForAge membership to ease access to information and expertise.
- Organise appropriate training activities such as though currently available through our Cyprus associate. Any interested parties who have secured Erasmus funding should utilise the PIC number.

What we would like you to do?

LEARNING IN LATER LIFE-INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

**WORKING TOWARDS THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL AND VOLUNTEER
STAFF WORKING WITH OLDER AND YOUNG LEARNERS**

Offered in association with the ForAge network

FOR ORGANIZATIONS WORKING WITH OLDER AND YOUNG LEARNERS

FIVE DAYS COURSE

Cyprus 18-23 FEBRUARY 2015

CAEA PIC NUMBER: 947596008

What you can do?

- Join ForAge – provide a link to our website.
- Follow one or more of our current discussions.
- Raise new issues of concern with us.
- Invite ForAge partners to speak at your events.
- Attend any training activities.
- Attend our annual European conferences.
- Complete the current survey.
- Submit data to the data base.
- Disseminate ForAge information to other people and agencies you feel would and should be interested.

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**Lifelong
Learning
Programme**

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