

El camino al emprendimiento en la educación de personas mayores.

The road to entrepreneurship in older adults education.

María Angustias Hinojo-Lucena
University of Granada
marianhl@ugr.es

Miriam Ágreda-Montoro
University of Jaén
magreda@ujaen.es

Santiago Alonso-García
University of Sevilla
sag@us.es

RESUMEN.

Este artículo tiene como objetivo presentar una visión general sobre la educación de adultos mayores, centrándose principalmente en el llamado envejecimiento activo. Esta perspectiva trae nuevas tendencias a este grupo particular que, debido a la actual realidad sociodemográfica, está en su apogeo.

A la luz de ello, se pueden crear nuevos formatos empresariales, a fin de desarrollar nuevas vías de aprendizaje aplicadas a los adultos mayores. Esto podría contribuir al crecimiento personal de los miembros de este grupo social, así como al crecimiento económico del país. Pueden fundarse nuevas empresas, públicas y privadas, y pueden proporcionar marcos novedosos en los que el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje sería sólo un paso más en la vida de los adultos mayores, porque todavía hay mucho que aprender incluso durante la vejez.

Después de un breve estado de la técnica, el presente artículo proporciona un marco teórico en el que se analizan los aspectos generales, junto con sus principales objetivos, el curso de acción y el impacto del emprendimiento en la educación de adultos mayores.

PALABRAS CLAVE.

Educación personas adultas, envejecimiento activo, emprendimiento, envejecimiento de la población.

ABSTRACT.

This article aims to present an overview about older adults education, mainly focusing on the so-called active ageing.

This perspective brings new trends to this particular group which, due to the present socio-demographic reality, is in its heyday. In light of that, new entrepreneurial formats can be created, in order to develop new learning pathways applied to older adults. These might contribute to this social group's members' personal growth, as well as to the country's economic growth. New companies –both public and private-owned- can be founded, and



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they can provide novel frameworks where the teaching-learning process would be just one more step in older adults' lives, because there is still plenty to learn even during old age. After a brief state of the art, the present article provides a theoretical framework where general aspects are analysed, together with its main objectives, course of action, and the impact of entrepreneurship on older adults education.

KEY WORDS.

Older Adults Education, Active Ageing, Entrepreneurship, Ageing Population.

1. Introduction.

The field of older adults education has awoken the interest of an increasing amount of researchers due to the growing population of this social group. As it will be presented further on this study, demographic pyramids show a trend in society where progressive ageing is changing the average student profile because from 2000 to 2050 the elderly population will increase by 600 million people (World Health Organization, 2017).

Terms such as "autonomy", "independence", "quality of life", "healthy life expectancy" are used more often, and they are earning their place in our daily language. The different implementation of these terms shows, nevertheless, a wide range of distinct approaches when it comes to the understanding of old age (Díaz & Gómez, 2016). Old age has been rediscovered as a stage full of opportunities, as well as a period where positive action linked to the end of each individual's life can be engaged.

Societies have established three main objectives in order to face these new trends in the educational field. These three axes will also help us raise our awareness about the so-called active ageing:

- Improve ageing people's quality of life.
- Create opportunities to develop a healthy, engaged and safe life.
- Consider this stage as part of our personal growth, thus adding "life to years, instead of just years to life".

Apart from that, UNESCO's broad and dynamic perception of adult education has led several Member States to launch a whole plethora of different programs that can be grouped in four specific types:

- Adult school education: aims to provide adults with background knowledge they should have received at school, but they did not get because of different reasons.
- Adult cultural education: it is the oldest form of adult education, as it has been spontaneously carried on by cultured society. It offers a wide range of training programs that allow individuals to complete and broaden their knowledge, as well as to develop their skills and acquire new ones.
- Adult professional education: ranges from vocational training (addressed to unemployed people) to further training (training within the company or for the company).
- Adult social education: deploys measures to take exploited persons out of marginalisation and underdevelopment.



The first three categories are part of the classic understanding we have of adult education, because they are based on intellectual development through knowledge and skill acquisition. These categories consider personality education, and training in social and personal values as secondary elements.

Nowadays, it is important to promote that people of adult age are formed since there is a serious aging of the population.

One of the reasons that aging has become a key policy issue is that both the proportion and the absolute number of older people are increasing markedly in populations around the world. At present, only one country has a share of more than 30%: Japan. However, in the second half of the century, many countries will have a similar proportion. These are countries in Europe and North America, but also in Chile, China, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Korea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Thailand and Vietnam (WHO, 2015).

2. Older Adults Education Nowadays

As stated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow when talking about the importance of getting by during old age, when everything seems to get even more difficult: *“Look not mournfully into the Past. It comes not back again. Wisely improve the Present. It is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy Future, without fear, and with a manly heart.”* (1851: 232).

Traditionally, old age has been considered a stage where all our physical and intellectual skills wear away. Thanks to social progress and the better quality of life in developed countries, this perspective is changing to cast a more positive light on the concept of old age (Martínez, Escarbajal & Salmerón, 2016).

It is true that science has not been able to prolong the maximum of years a human being can live, although it has been capable of helping more and more people to reach ages that only certain privileged ones used to reach afore. This means our world is ageing.

From our approach, we can consider older adults education as part of adult education or life-long learning. Older adults education is a branch of non-formal education, as showed in the image below, where we can see how older adults education is regulated by each country or region’s own governmental institutions since the State is the one organising and managing the whole process.

EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK

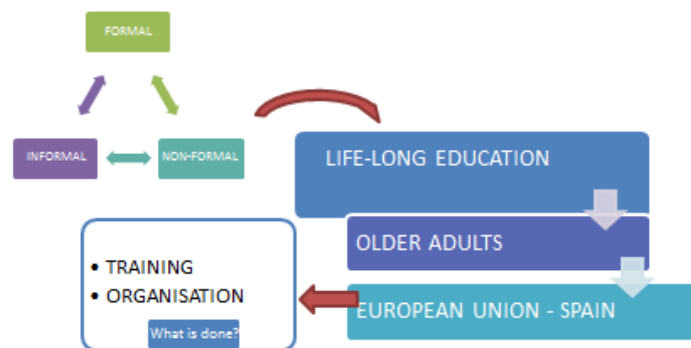


Figure 1. Diagram of the Educational Framework showing where older adults education’s training and organisation stand. Source: own elaboration.

The changes that make up and influence aging are complex. Biologically, aging is associated with the accumulation of a wide variety of molecular and cellular damage. Over time, these damages gradually reduce physiological reserves, increase the risk of many diseases and in general reduce the capacity of the individual. In the long run, death ensues (WHO, 2015). Therefore, from education for the elderly, it is necessary to do all kinds of exercises that favor the cooling of this natural process. Don't add years to life, but life to years.

3. Lines of action

Fifty years ago, most people died before reaching the age of fifty. Since then, thanks to a better nutrition, a better healthcare, and better life conditions, together with the advances in medical science, life expectancy has increased. The main challenge we are going to have to face over the 21st century will be ensuring an optimal quality of life and delaying the onset of age-related disabilities.

Old age has been traditionally linked to disease, dependency and lack of productivity. Nevertheless, our present opinion does not agree with that stereotype anymore. Nowadays, most people adapt to the changes that come with age and become potentially productive elements for their communities through both paid and voluntary activities.

Integration within family and the community, independence, and participation bring health benefits and help reinforce dignity in people of all ages. This is why the European Council, through its Action Plan (2012-2014) and the European Agenda for Adult Learning, has established the following main aims:

- Implement real life-long learning and mobility: demand must be encouraged, together with an improvement in accessibility and a more varied offer –both formal and non-formal.
- Improve the quality and efficacy of education and training: there is a need for efficient accreditation systems, teaching staff training and mobility; there must be economical support for those who need it; education must adapt to the needs of the job market and cooperation must be developed –especially at a regional level.
- Promotion of equality, social cohesion and active citizenship: supporting basic and instrumental skill acquisition, improving the access to education, providing training for disadvantaged groups, better opportunities for older adults education and consolidating inter-generational learning.
- Strengthen creativity and innovation in adults and their learning environments: promoting transversal competences, strengthening the role of cultural organisations regarding both formal and non-formal learning, as well as establishing mechanisms to promote a better use of ICT (distance learning, new tools).

Active ageing as defined by the World Health Organization (2002: 12) refers to *the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation, and security to enhance quality of life as people age. Active ageing allows people to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well-being throughout the life course and to participate in society. It is focused on elderly people as well as on reflecting a positive image of this social group.*



Research focused on new support systems and the development of new tools that help people to age in an active way, together with the research conducted on new forms of education based on specific strategies designed for this social group has helped to create new disciplines to face these changing trends. This can be seen in ICT applied to ageing – gerontology-, creating the new field of “gerontotechnology”. Gerontotechnology aims to use ICT to prevent, delay or balance age-related cognitive, perception and physical decay while trying to keep the subject in his/her usual environment through support provided directly either to these people or other agents.

Ortega and other colleagues (2008) comment that the life trajectory of adults retains valuable learning and experiences that must be taken into account in the planning processes of continuing education activities. Such an experiential cluster usually generates expectations and needs that the adult hopes to cover and get with the help of education. Behind the concept of necessity are hidden desires and interests to satisfy and that often constitute authentic engines of questioning behavior. The needs and demands with which adults come to the school system of training are:

- A) Personal: Cultural updating, overcoming new illiteracy (computer, technological, visual, legal), artistic education and aesthetics, deepening the study of current issues, achievement of degrees, breaking with the monotony of work in the Home, overcoming loneliness, depression, etc.
- B) Economic-labor: Preparation for the search of employment, attainment of degrees and diplomas that allow them access to new jobs or the attainment of promotion of category, vocational and labor orientation, preparation for the performance of new responsibilities, search for solutions Unemployment, training in the field of social economy and cooperativism, etc.
- C) Community partners: Adapting to changing circumstances, better understanding of the complex problems facing the family and other social spheres, satisfaction of participation concerns and altruistic cooperation, development of personal and social communication skills, critical analysis of the media Communication, education for health, consumption and the environment, community work, local and regional development, etc.

There are several companies working to develop activities to provide with an effective teaching and learning process at every level. These companies focus on training older adults who have reached a stage in their lives that sometimes is seen as unnecessary. Due to this reason, this article hereby presents a line of action to work on educational entrepreneurship. Its aim is the creation of a social company specialised in providing care for the elderly.

3.1. *Business Project.*

The immediate aim is creating a company that delivers professional care at home. Companies specialised in home-delivered care for the elderly focus their activity on providing a comprehensive service: they design a personalised prevention and rehabilitation program structured around specific intervention services and techniques. This program is implemented thanks to professional staff who carries out the personal and domestic care.



They also provide different kinds of support: psychosocial, family-related and help the subject in his/her interaction with the environment. All these services are provided to a dependent elderly person.

Generally speaking, Home Help Services (HHS) is a basic element included both in healthcare programs and social services. HHS might be either an independent department or be part of other healthcare or welfare services.

3.2. Identification Of Potential Entrepreneurs

Potential users of these services require special treatment: they need serious, kind and affectionate workers. Potential entrepreneurs must enjoy working with elderly people and/or people with disabilities, as well as be fully committed to the project. This specific project is addressed to people with experience in caring for the sick. A university degree in Nursing would also be required (EIE, 2011).

3.2.1. Product-Service Description / Market

Product / Service:

Services provided by the company –subdivided in three fields of action:

General care:

Mobility support inside the household.

Monitoring of medication and nutrition.

Food intake help.

Keeping company and home care service.

Household care:

House cleaning.

Laundry and ironing.

Grocery shopping and cooking.

Shopping.

Management of household appliances and heating systems.

Interaction with the environment:

Help with outdoor tasks.

Assistance when going outside the household.

Support to take part in community, social and family activities.

Further services

Respite care: psychosocial support in cases where there is a family life conflict or a broken home.

Socio-educative support to encourage autonomy and independence.

Support to family ties.

The company's activities will take place in the clients' respective households, so the staff members will be always on the move. In order to manage this activity, each office will have a call centre, where one employee will be in charge of noting down clients' requests, as well as of determining the fastest way to get to the client's home using city maps.

Each staff member shall have his/her own vehicle and mobile phone to ensure an efficient service and complete coordination with other teams.





Offices shall register every single request –including eventual unforeseen calls or accidents- so as to being able to know where the staff members are at every moment.

• **MARKET**

The rapid ageing process of the population is the most determinant socio-demographic factor of the last decades in the developed countries. Population projections show elder social groups presenting a sustained growth over the next fifty years.

Elderly people with fixed incomes, high life expectancy and an important leisure component are one of the emerging markets with a noticeable potential for growth. This social group will become one of the most dynamic markets in the future .

The present market study about the role of elderly people as a consumption group highlights that this sector’s development is tightly linked to the capacity of the private sector to provide them with the appropriate products, goods and services. “Companies must get used to the fact that they will only be able to expand their businesses as long as they take care of this segment of the population. No one –no matter what s/he produces- will be able to make any progress without taking the elderly into account.”

• **CLIENT PORTFOLIO**

Our target clients are elderly people who are not able to meet their personal and social needs by themselves, thus needing special care and support in order to keep living in their familiar environment.

Most elderly people prefer to stay in their habitual residence or stay independent at their own home. Those deciding to keep living at their home realise they are not able to do certain tasks by themselves, hence needing some sort of professional aid.

• **COMPETITION**

Main competition will come from:

- Old people’s homes.
- Elderly people day care centres.
- Companies specialised in comprehensive home care based in the same area.

All of the above are managed either by public or private companies.

Our company’s most direct competitor –apart from companies specialised in providing home care services- are elderly people day care centres. This is due to the fact that their users are given a free pass to go back to their respective homes at night.

These centres’ weak spot is their limited offer of timetables for the services they provide. Day care centres only work for eight hours during daytime: from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday –they are hardly ever open over the weekend.

Our company should be able to provide its services 24/7 in order to be competitive and be able to place itself above its competitors.

BUSINESS AREA	ENTREPRENEURS	SERVICE
HOME HELP SERVICES (HHS)	SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS	PRODUCT
SOCIAL SERVICES		MARKET
		CLIENTS
		COMPETITION

Figure 2. Training tasks carried out within a social company. Source: own elaboration.



4. Analysis of the main reviews and the most important evidence.

There are almost a billion people worldwide who are either 60-year-old or older and this figure is predicted to keep increasing. By 2025, an estimate of 1.2 billion people worldwide will have reached that age. 2/3 of these new elderly people will be living in developing countries –as showed in the figures below. The following figures show the evolution of the population pyramids worldwide and the proportion of people over 60 years old (figures 3 and 4).

Cantidad de personas de 60 años o más de edad:
Todo el mundo, países desarrollados y países en desarrollo, 1950-2050

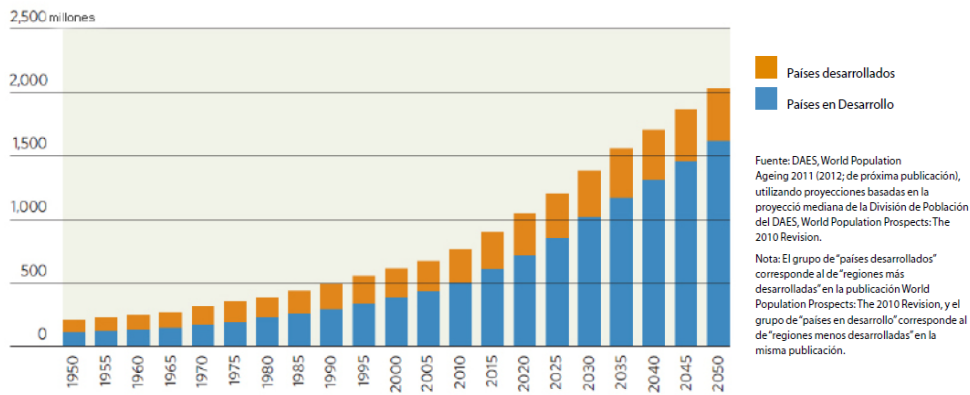


Figure 3. Number of people 60 years and over, worldwide. Source: DAES, World Population Ageing.

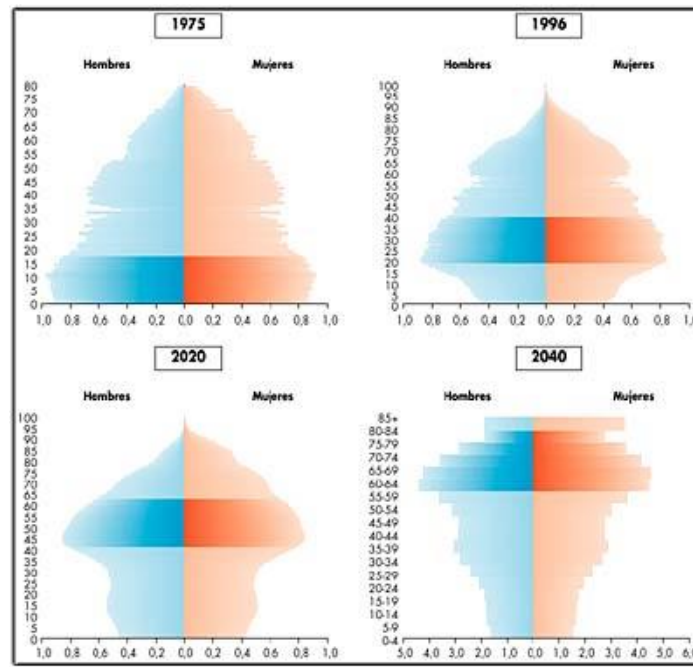


Figure 4. Comparison of four population pyramids analysing different age groups. Source: DAES, World Population Ageing.



Del Valle (2011) analyses the ageing process of the Spanish population in his PhD thesis. The researcher argues that over the last two decades of the 20th century, as well as in the rest of developed countries, Spain has experienced this ageing process due to several factors: 1) declining fertility: in Spain, this phenomenon can be traced back to the late 70s; 2) decreasing mortality; 3) increased life expectancy. All these variables have driven Paul Wallace (2000) to talk about a “demographic earthquake”. This term refers to the changing trend one can notice when analysing population pyramids from developed countries. This phenomenon will eventually lead to a “demographic implosion”, a decline in population that will entail negative socio-economic consequences. This analysis has been quite controversial, although it is obvious that we are facing a period of overwhelming change, sometimes defined as a “new demographic order”.

In light of the above-mentioned factors, education will also change, since the overall population will need new offers to meet their needs. A society with an ageing population focuses its education offer on this social group, providing older adults with complementary training to improve the one received at the already established educational institutions.

5. Encouraging entrepreneurship in elder citizens within the European Union.

The Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission has published a brochure where it analyses the importance of promoting entrepreneurship among the elderly. Here are its key points:

- The European Union’s population is ageing. In 2010, people older than 55 were 30% of the population. By 2030, this percentage is expected to reach 37%. Inactivity among the older social groups increases the pressure over social security systems and pension schemes, although this is not always the case because the elderly nowadays are mostly healthy.
- There are few elderly entrepreneurs, especially women. On top of that, the companies created by elderly citizens are less growth-oriented than the ones established by younger entrepreneurs.
- There is a growing population of healthy elderly citizens who have the skills, the economic resources and the time to actively contribute to the economic activity by expanding their working lives. They could also embark on entrepreneurial initiatives.
- Policies should focus on encouraging entrepreneurial capacities among the elderly by:
 - 1) Creating a positive approach to the advantages of entrepreneurship for the elderly and for society in general;
 - 2) Helping elderly citizens to found companies through the support of key business networks. Policies should also provide appropriate training in order to fill the skill gaps between those who have been employees all their lives and those who have already been entrepreneurs;
 - 3) Providing accessible funding systems for elderly entrepreneurs. A distinction shall be made between those needing up-front financing –such as those entrepreneurs who decide to found a company because they are unemployed-, and those who do not –such as those with higher incomes.



- 4) Highlighting the possibility of acquiring a pre-existent business instead of starting one from the scratch. This might encourage entrepreneurship among elderly citizens, since is a faster way to start a business, and it also might be less risky and can help some other person retire if s/he so wishes.
- 5) Helping elderly people to encourage entrepreneurship among other social groups: they could be seen as angel investors or mentors to young entrepreneurs.
- 6) Making sure that no fiscal nor social security system contains any disincentives for entrepreneurship among the elderly, including to investments in other businesses.

6. Andalusia: an example of ageing within Spain.

Population ageing is becoming an increasingly important social topic nowadays. Several academic fields have begun to take into account this demographical phenomenon when conducting research. This usually focuses on the impact of the population ageing process in most of the developed countries.

Ageing is a gradual process that affects both individuals and society as a whole. Individuals age when their journey through all life stages adds years, a whole society ages when older cohorts raise their weighting within it.

As is the case in the rest of the Western countries, Spain's population ageing process over the last two decades of the 20th century can be explained by several factors: 1) a dramatic decline in fertility that kicked off in the late 70s; 2) a drop in mortality rates; 3) greater life expectancy. After analysing of these variables, Paul Wallace (2000) uses the term "demographic earthquake" to define the changing trend that developed countries are witnessing: population shrinkage and profound socio-economic consequences. This analysis has been quite controversial, although it is obvious that we are facing a period of overwhelming change, sometimes defined as a "new demographic order".

Andalusia is one of the Autonomous Communities within the Spain that shows a relatively younger population when compared to the national average. There are several explanations to this situation, although one must highlight that Andalusia registers more births than the rest of Spain, and that migratory movements in Andalusia are especially active, since the Autonomous Community is one of the main entry points to the country.

It can be stated that lawmakers take into account these new social demands. These new needs reflect the constant social changes and the existence of new challenges that all legal corpora around the country are confronted with. The following table shows how the elderly and the concept of active ageing are taken care of in every Autonomous Community of Spain through their own laws and sectoral policies.



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Figure 5. Relation of services for elderly people in Spain.

Regional Laws On Social Services	Services Provided (Elderly People And/Or Active Ageing)	Law/Plans/ White Paper On The Elderly / Active Ageing	Participatory Body For Elderly People
Ley 2/1988, de 4 de abril, de servicios sociales de Andalucía (Act nº 2/1988, 4th of April, on Social Services in Andalusia)	Specialised social services: promoting the participation and integration of elderly citizens in society; keeping the elderly in their usual surroundings; fighting against the marginalisation of the elderly.	White Paper on Active Ageing (2010)	Consejo andaluz de personas mayores (Andalusian Council of the Elderly)
Ley 5/2009, de 30 de junio, de servicios sociales de Aragón. (Act nº 5/2009, 30th of June, on Social Services in Aragon)	Aims: - promoting personal, family and group autonomy to develop their skills. - prevention and management of individual or group exclusion; development of inclusion strategies.		Consejo aragonés de personas mayores. (Aragonese Council of the Elderly)
Ley del Principado de Asturias 1/2003, de 24 de febrero, de servicios sociales. (Act nº 1/2003, 24th of February, on Social Services in Asturias)	- preamble: socio-demographic changes & population ageing = long-term care & care of dependent elderly people - services: prevention of social exclusion; promotion of personal and group autonomy.		Consejo personas mayores (Council of the Elderly)
Ley 4/2009, de 11 de junio, de servicios sociales de las Illes Balears. (Act nº 4/2009, 11th of June, on Social Services on the Balearic Islands)	- Aim: ensuring dignity in all life stages. - Detecting situations of urgent need: vulnerability, danger or helplessness of the elderly.	Plan Estratégico de SS.SS 2011-2014 (elaborado diagnóstico. Incluye análisis situación sociodemográfica por envejecimiento población) Social Services Strategic Plan 2011-2014 (includes analysis of the socio-demographic trend due to population ageing)	Consejo social de personas mayores. (Social Council of the Elderly)
Ley 9/1987, de 28 de abril, de servicios sociales de Canarias. (Act nº 9/1987, 28th of April, on Social Services on the Canary Islands)	- Lines of action: care and promotion of old age in order to improve their living conditions. - Specialised Social Services for elderly people.	Ley 3/1996, de participación de las personas mayores y solidaridad entre generaciones. (Act nº 3/1996, on participation of the elderly in society and inter-generational solidarity)	Consejo canario de personas mayores. (Canarian Council of the Elderly)



Regional Laws On Social Services	Services Provided (Elderly People And/Or Active Ageing)	Law/Plans/ White Paper On The Elderly / Active Ageing	Participatory Body For Elderly People
Ley 27/2007, de 27 de mayo, de derechos y servicios sociales de Cantabria (Act n° 27/2007, 27th of May, on social rights and services in Cantabria)	Specialised social services: meeting specific needs of the population that require from a technique specialisation or concrete resources.		Consejo de personas mayores (Council of the Elderly)
Ley 47/2010, de 16 de diciembre de servicios sociales de Castilla-La Mancha (Act n° 41/2010, 16th of December, on social services in Castilla-La Mancha)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal Autonomy and Social Integration: key elements of the social services system. - Specialised care: specific care depending on family situation and life stage. 	III Plan Atención a personas mayores, horizonte 2011. Publicado en 2008. (3 rd Plan on Care for the Elderly, 2008-2011)	Consejo de personas mayores. (Council of the Elderly)
Ley 16/2010, de 20 de diciembre, de servicios sociales de Castilla y León. (Act n° 16/2010, 20th of December, on social services in Castilla y León)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preamble: highlights the population ageing process. - Aims: dealing with basic personal and social needs; promoting dignity in all life stages. 	Ley 57/2003, de atención y protección a PP.MM (Act n° 57/2003, on the care and protection of Elderly People)	Consejo regional de personas mayores. (Regional Council of the Elderly)
Ley 12/2007, de 11 de octubre, de servicios sociales de Cataluña. (Act n° 12/2007, 11th of October, on social services in Catalonia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preamble: population ageing as a challenge. - Aim: right to dignity at all stages of life. - Situations of urgent need: vulnerability, danger or social problems with a direct impact on elderly citizens. 		Consejo de las personas mayores. (Concil of the Elderly)
Ley 5/1987, de 23 de abril, de servicios sociales de Extremadura. (Act n° 5/1987, 23rd of April, on social services in Extremadura)	Specialised Social Services: care of the elderly (article 13)		Consejo regional de personas mayores. (Regional Concil of the Elderly)





Regional Laws On Social Services	Services Provided (Elderly People And/Or Active Ageing)	Law/Plans/ White Paper On The Elderly / Active Ageing	Participatory Body For Elderly People
Ley 13/2008, de 3 de diciembre, de servicios sociales de Galicia. (Act n° 13/2008, 3rd of December, on social services in Galicia)	Mentions vulnerable groups and groups with specific problems; provides services to deal with these situations within the regional social services and thanks to specialised social services.	Plan gallego de PP.MM: 2010-2013. (Galician Plan on Elderly People: 2010-2013)	
Ley 11/2008, de 27 de marzo, de servicios sociales de la Comunidad de Madrid. (Act n° 11/2008, 27th of March, on social services in the Region of Madrid)	Priority areas: elderly people (article 23)		Consejo regional de mayores (Regional Council of the Elderly)
Ley 3/2003, de 10 de abril, del sistema de servicios sociales de la Región de Murcia. (Act n° 3/2003, 10th of April, on the social services system in Murcia)	Role of the specialised social services regarding elderly people (article 12).		Consejo asesor regional de personas mayores. (Regional Advisory Council on the Elderly)
Ley Foral 15/2006, de 14 de diciembre, de servicios sociales de la Comunidad Foral de Navarra. (Navarrese Regional Act –Ley Foral n° 15/2006, 14th of December, on social services in Navarre)	Specific sectoral plans designed to deal with different social situations.	Plan Estratégico de servicios sociales 2008-2012. Incluye referencias a PP.MM (Social Services Strategic Plan, 2008-2012. Includes a chapter on the elderly)	Consejo navarro de personas mayores. (Navarrese Council of the Elderly)
Ley 7/2009, de 22 de diciembre, de servicios sociales del País Vasco. (Act n° 7/2009, 22nd of December, on social services in the Basque Country)	Sectoral plans: they vary according to specific problems and needs.	Plan de Acción para las PP.MM 2011-2015 (Action Plan for the Elderly, 2011-2015)	Consejo sectorial de personas mayores. (Sectoral Council of the Elderly)





Regional Laws On Social Services	Services Provided (Elderly People And/Or Active Ageing)	Law/Plans/ White Paper On The Elderly / Active Ageing	Participatory Body For Elderly People
Ley 7/2009, de 22 de diciembre, de servicios sociales de La Rioja. (Act n° 7/2009, 22nd of December, on social services in La Rioja)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyses demographic trends: population ageing. - Cross-cutting action plans: integration strategies and sectoral approach based on age. - Sectoral plans: sectoral approach to social needs. 	Plan Estratégico de servicios sociales, incluye precisiones con visión sectorial de la población=planes sociales. (Strategic Plan on Social Services: it designs sectoral plans according to socio-demographic factors)	Consejo sectorial de parsonas mayores. (Sectoral Council of the Elderly)
Ley 5/1997, de servicios sociales, de la Generalitat valenciana, por la que se regula el sistema de servicios sociales en el ámbito de la Comunidad Valenciana. (Act n° 5/1997, on Regional Social Services within the Comunidad Valenciana)	Social Services specialised on care for the elderly.		Consejo valenciano de personas mayores. (Valencian Council of the Elderly)

Source: own elaboration.

Castejón (2013) presented a list of suggestions at the International Council on Active Ageing. These proposals try to contribute to the development of policies and measures that support all this participatory potential:

- Inter-generational solidarity and interdependence are key elements for active ageing. Society must get to understand and accept these principles through information campaigns, since this approach will influence the way our children, our grandchildren, and ourselves will live our lives in future years.
- All actions supporting the social acknowledgement of citizens aged from 50 to 69 years old as helpers and economic supporters for their respective families must be encouraged. Their contribution improves the families' welfare and can be considered as a job in the informal sector.
- The above-mentioned generation needs specific care services and these are provided by professionals and helpers who, as a result of this, develop health problems. This is especially acute among female care providers, so the support must take a gender-based approach, in order to balance the gender ratio among these professionals.



- Active ageing should be acknowledged by society as a whole, and not only by elderly people and their specific organisations and associations. We need to launch actions and campaigns about ageing in schools, universities, cultural associations, neighbourhood associations, women associations, etc. These workshops should explain ageing with an inter-generational approach.
- A considerable amount of people need support to engage in voluntary work. Information campaigns should be launched in order to explain all different kinds of voluntary jobs available. Also, new initiatives and programs might be designed to meet the candidates' interests and their social contexts.

It would be foolish not to adapt to these new phenomena. Every second, there are two people around the world who reach the age of 60. Above the 60 year-old mark, we find 84 men every 100 women. Above the 80 year-old mark, we find 61 men every 100 women. By 2050, people older than a hundred years will increase from 320,000 to 3.2 millions. Life expectancy will increase from 78 years to 83 over the next two decades.

But it's very important that innovative population-level efforts are required to address physical inactivity, prevent loss of muscle strength, and maintain balance in older adults. Specific investment in healthy aging requires global policy support from the World Health Organization and is implemented at the national and regional levels, in order to reduce the burden of disease and disability among older adults. (Bauman, 2016)

7. Conclusions.

As it is said in English, "use it or lose it". This idiom expresses the idea of things getting spoilt because of not being used. This can be said in several different scenarios, but normally it is used to refer to the brain: we need to keep and encourage cognitive activity while ageing.

Research on how to reach old age in optimal conditions is becoming an increasingly active field of study. Despite this encouraging trend, there is still a lot more to do.

Active ageing aims to improve the quality of life of people while they age. It aims to provide them with better opportunities to live a healthy, participative and safe life. In light of that, society must ensure this evolution and encourage entrepreneurship among the elderly in order to allow this social group to participate more actively in society.

Thus, following this deep analysis we can emphasize the following conclusions on the active aging:

- It improves the quality of life of people as they age.
- It fosters development opportunities for a healthy, participatory and safe life.
- Promote this stage as a further cycle of personal growth, adding "life to years and not just years to life".
- Defines a broad training offer that allows people to complete and expand their knowledge, develop skills and acquire new skills:
 - school education, access to university,
 - occupational training (for unemployed persons),
 - continuing training (training in the company or for the company)
 - Adult social training (avoid marginalization)





- promotes the participation of people with experience in the promotion and generation of companies.
- It favors the participation of people with experience in the promotion and generation of advisory councils at local and national level.

8. Future lines of research.

At the root of this research can be established possible lines of research for the generation of projects and research with the scientific community:

- Determine the perception of the participation of the elderly as active counselors of young entrepreneurs as the basis of active aging.
- Measure the benefits of continuous training in active aging.
- Establish the degree of benefit of social education in older people at risk of exclusion.

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