



AGE Platform Europe

The voice of older persons at EU level



"Tackling Ageism After COVID-19"

AGE internal workshop

24 November 2020



House keeping rules

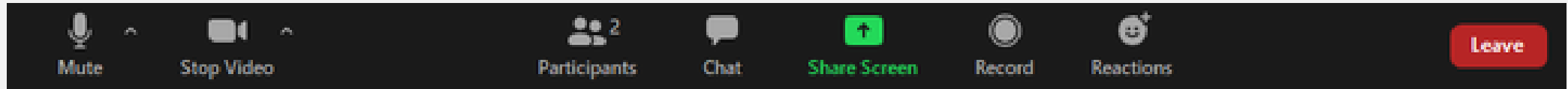
#1 Make yourself comfortable

#2 Mute your mic when not speaking

#3 Mind the oops/ouch rule

#4 Give it a try!

Unmute and chat



Questions?




Objectives

#1 Learn about ageism
before/during COVID-19

#2 Define how to respond
to ageism as self-advocates

#3 Identify support needs
and tools for members



Ageism
as a system

- Ageism means treating people unfairly because of their age (*HelpAge*)
- Most widespread form of discrimination
- Socially accepted



**With
detrimental
impacts**

- Those with negative perceptions of old age have a decreased life expectancy of 7.5 years
- Affects memory, autonomy and self-esteem
- Decreases financial security
- Increased risk of elder abuse
- Drives human rights violations (ex. right to work)
- Less support for age-friendly policies/funding
- Society misses out on experience, knowledge and contributions of older persons → costs

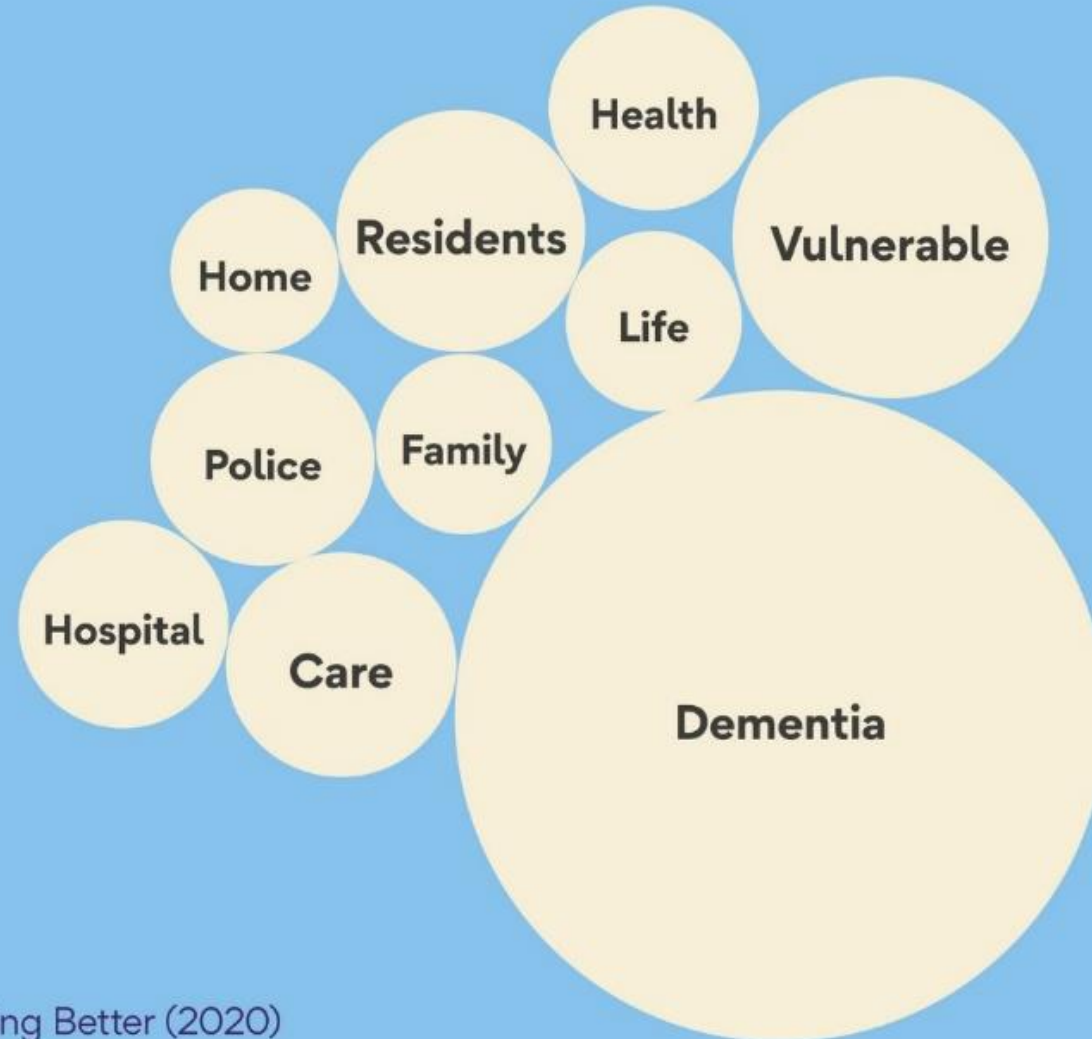


**Incl. during
COVID-19**

- COVID-19 presented as an old-people virus
- All older people considered vulnerable
- Age-specific measures in some countries
- Absence of consultation of older people
- Lack of support and material in long-term care
- De-prioritisation and discrimination of older people for life-saving interventions
- Older people should sacrifice for economy/other generations (ex. older people's tax)

Ageism starts with stereotypes

Top 10 words in news articles that feature ageing and older people



Centre for Ageing Better

Source: 'An old age problem?', Centre for Ageing Better (2020)



Stereotypes

- Stereotypes define what is expected (look, behaviour, preference, etc.).
- Stereotypes influence our cultural norms.
- Stereotypes define what is normal, what is acceptable.

**It frames the way we think, feel, and act.
Towards ourselves, and towards others.**

We're exposed early

Disney's witch



We're exposed throughout life

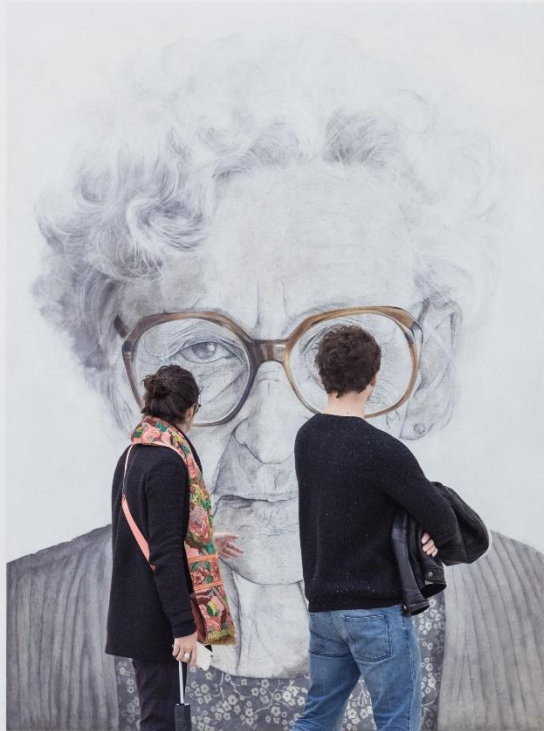


Questions

Do you have questions on these concepts?

Would you add something?

How ageism shapes the way we see ageing and older people?



Us

vs.

Them

Idealised ageing

vs.

Perceived reality

Individualism

vs.

Social justice



COMMUNICATIONS TRAPS AND THEIR UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES



Super “*Senior*”



Zero sum game



Sympathetic “*Senior*”



Stories without solutions



Ageism as a civil rights issue



Demographic disaster

Before COVID-19



VS



Offene Sprechstunde Wohnen im Alter - W...
wohnavielfalt.de



Причины старения - The Jizn
thejizn.com



Kansas and Missouri Estate Planning: Nur...
blog.kylekrull.com



Being An Old...
curranrecruit.com



Honderdduizenden ouderen lopen toeslag...
metronieuws.nl



What Are the Early Signs of Dementia? - R...
reverehealth.com



6 Times People Found Happiness In Unex...
theodysseyonline.com



Savvy Skinca...
leisurefreak.com



During COVID-19



VS



BEHIND THE CURVE

**WHEN COVID-19
HIT, MANY
ELDERLY WERE
LEFT TO DIE**

Captain Tom Moore by Guinness World Records

Christalain nursing home in Brussels by Mauricio Lima



Well, we're old.
We have to pack a lot of ~~shit~~ into a day.

**Are we
(just) old?**



I have good days and bad, but I get up every day knowing that I'm the same person I was 10, 20, 30 years ago, and while my body can sometimes get tired or broken, my spirit, my thoughts, and passions, remain strong and invincible.

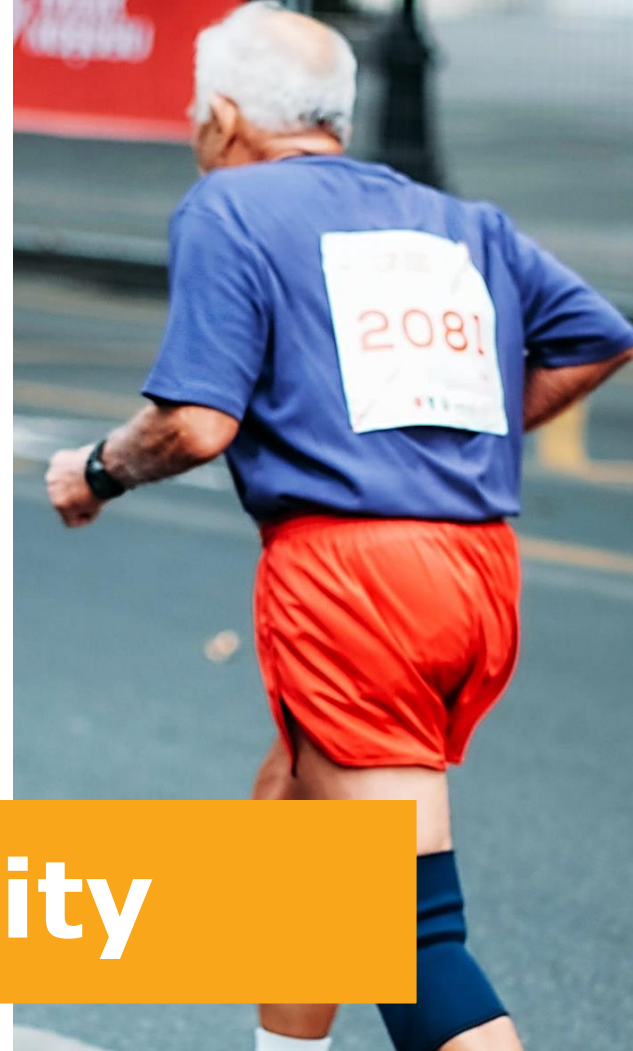
Credit: Age & Opportunity // Extract from the video "I am still me" (by AgeOn and the Institute on Ageing)



Lesbians, esp. older lesbians, want connection in spaces that aren't a pub, aren't about dating: "We are passionate, political and radical. We want to stay that way"

[#lgbtconferenceberlin2020](#)

Print screen of Ailbhe Smyth from Twitter



Diversity

Intersectionality

Certainly there are very real differences between us of race, age, and sex. But it is not those differences between us that are separating us. It is rather our refusal to recognize those differences, and to examine the distortions which result from our misnaming them and their effects upon human behavior and expectation. (...)

My fullest concentration of energy is available to me only when I integrate all the parts of who I am...

Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference

Audre Lorde, 1980

<https://bit.ly/3pS8rP5>



Age equality

Intergenerational solidarity

Credit: Simon Birt on Unsplash

The “every generation for itself” mentality that has been perpetuated in recent months, seriously overlooks many of the similar struggles both young and old face in lockdown.

Ultimately, we all grow up, we all try to find a way into the labour market, we all carry the inequalities we faced in our lifetime with us into old age.

Let's stop playing the Covid-19 generation blame game

European Youth Forum and AGE Platform Europe, 2020

<https://bit.ly/338P8XT>



- Ageing isn't something that happens to us in the second half of our life: it's a lifelong process.
- We age from the moment we are born. In this sense, ageing is another word for living; to be anti-age is to be anti-life.

(Anne Karpf, *How to Age*)

Questions

How do we respond to ageism?

At individual level e.g. *"You're too old for..."*

At societal level e.g. *"Let's confine the elderly"*

A woman with short, light-colored hair and glasses is sitting outdoors, looking towards the right. She is wearing a bright yellow short-sleeved shirt and a dark, floral-patterned skirt. Her hands are resting on her lap. The background is a bright, clear sky and a blue ocean. Two dark blue rectangular boxes with white text are overlaid on the right side of the image.

Comfort break

Please return for 11:05

How do we respond to ageism?

Focus on behavioural change rather than raising awareness

Equality education in schools, in families, etc. For ex. See representation of older age in children's books to address attitudes towards older age

Influence how society sees older people:
Role of media/marketing?

Lifecycle approach

Disability/vulnerability doesn't only come with older age

Show contributions of older people (work, silver economy...)

Ageing = Living
If we don't age, we're dead

Intersectionality to show complexity of living and ageing

Communication/contacts between generations, make visible older people's talents

Individual level: stay in contact with other generations (volunteering, etc.), active engagement in community/society

Evidence?

Reports?

Data?

STEREOTYPE

How we think about older people

S

Humor?

Emotions?

PREJUDICE

How we feel about older people

P

Empathy?

Frustration?

DISCRIMINATION

How we act towards older people

D

Stories?

Training?

Partner?

Action?

Legal?

Credit for the image:

© WHO / Vânia de la Fuente-Núñez

Ultimate objective?

At societal level, **equality** and **social justice**

At community level, **interdependence** and **mutual support**

At individual level, **autonomy** and **freedom**

Would you change something?



What's the path?

HOW DO WE GO FROM INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS TO MOVEMENT BUILDING?





Questions

Do you mobilise against ageism with your organisation?

How do you/would you do it?

What is the role of AGE?

Acting together

Options available...

- **Events** for the release of WHO Report on Ageism
- **#AgeingEqual** platform for older people's voices?
- **Trainings** to/by AGE members (train the trainers)?
- **Toolkits** to run local conversations about ageism?
- **Guides** for a communication free from stereotypes?

Other ideas? Other needs?

Take-Away

What are you taking home?

Did the workshop meet
your expectations?

What should be our next step?



Credit: Sacha Verheij on Unsplash



Want to know more about us?

www.age-platform.eu

info@age-platform.eu



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