What Works in Peer Mentoring for people 50+?

A Comparative Study

Peer-Train

50+ PEER TRAIN

What Works in Peer Mentoring for people 50+?
A Comparative Study

Published in November 2022.

AidLearn acts as editor for the Study from the sources available, with feedback and contributions from all the consortium members.

Coordinator

Partners institutions

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

What is the Peer Train Project

Population ageing represents for European Union one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century, which will irreversibly affect all spheres of society. According to the Green Paper on Ageing, in the last five decades, life expectancy at birth has increased by about 10 years for both men and women. Modernization of different services, integration into the digital world, promotion of social involvement are also timely and urging in the field of active ageing. As a result of demographic changes in the 21st century, new needs and demands have appeared, to which it is necessary to react. People remain active longer and workplaces need to adapt to these changes, and the quality of life also needs to be present as much as possible throughout the whole lifespan. For the sake of successful ageing, it is important to maintain a meaningful working activity, physical and mental activity, and nurture social interactions. However, the pandemic has recently established unprecedented, unexpected situations and caused a drastic change in lifestyle. It brought about even more challenges for people 50+.

It is necessary to specialize services, elderly people need an age-friendly approach in counselling, education services and working life, but they have easier access to their peers. Based on the needs analysis implemented in the partner countries, peer-mentors can have an extremely important role in the facilitation of active ageing, in the process of life-long learning, in maintaining employment and in the nurturing of social relationships. Although these people may be similar in terms of their age bracket, some may be better equipped with stronger coping strategies, or even professional experience, thereby they can set an example, inspire, and even help other people to live a meaningful and active life.

Objectives

Through participation in the Peer Mentor Training, based on international experience, peer-mentors can enhance their skills and being capable of mobilising and sharing their experiences in a way that is suitable for people 50+, their peers. They must take into consideration the expectations of the 21st century and use proper methods and techniques. This project is directed both to experts and people 50+ who are interested in becoming a peer mentor or a mentee. To this end, the project will produce 4 results, with this publication being a part of the first result: "What Works in the field of Mentoring Services for People 50+?".

The First Result

To create this first result and to use it as a foundation for the next results, the following was done:

- Firstly, we conducted a literature review, including the partner countries' national policies/strategic documents regarding active ageing;
- Secondly, beneficial/good practices implemented in the partner countries were collected and later critically read according to the model of competencies for active ageing (Antunes et al., 2015);
- A survey by questionnaire, based on the Skills for successful mentoring of Philips-Jones (2003), was applied to establish which skills are particularly valued by stakeholders (e.g., adult educators) and potential learners (i.e., individuals 50+) and compare and contrast them, not only in general, but also according to the sample country.

Introduction

Almost every European country is dealing with population ageing (Eurostat, 2020). In fact, 41.7% of the EU27 population is 50 or older. In the partner countries, the percentage of their population that is 50 or older is (Eurostat, 2022):

- Bulgaria - 42,4%
- Germany - 44.9%
- Hungary - 39.5%
- Poland - 37.7%
- Portugal - 43.5%
- Slovakia - 36.4%

These demographic trends will impact most aspects of society and economy, from housing and healthcare to the demand for goods and services (Eurostat, 2020). Additionally, the elderly are one of the population groups that is more likely to be at risk of poverty and social exclusion partly because of healthcare expenses (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2016). Old-age exclusion "leads to inequities in choice and control, resources and relationships, and power and rights in key domains of neighbourhood and community; services, amenities and mobility; material and financial resources; social relations; socio-cultural aspects of society; and civic participation" and "implicates states, societies, communities and individuals" (Walsh et al., 2016, p. 93). Notwithstanding, it is also true that the number of older people dealing with social exclusion and poverty appears to be decreasing (Eurostat, 2020). Furthermore, when it comes to the elderly, peer mentoring is quite relevant. Indeed, peer mentoring, as all forms of peer learning, prevents program dropout as well as allowing the development of relational competences (Baschiera & De Meyer, 2016). Due to the aforementioned reasons, it is particularly pertinent to identify policies regarding active ageing as well as beneficial/good practices for a broader perspective of what works for people 50+ and how these can be promoted in peer-mentoring programs for this public.

Active Ageing

According to Antunes et al. (2015), the core competencies for active ageing are learning, civic and community, health, emotional, financial/economic, and technological. When it comes to learning, older people tend to participate more in non-formal learning rather than formal learning. Additionally, their participation in learning tends to decrease with age. Third Age Universities play a vital role on keeping older adults involved in learning. Civic and community competencies can be facilitated by "flexible retirement transitions, supporting volunteering opportunities, recognising and rewarding family care, and valuing creative activity" (Antunes et al., 2015, p. 13). Health needs to be promoted but must also consider age and health status diversity. Some older people have, for instance, more mobility issues than others. These people will thus probably not be able to participate in the same activities (e.g., long walks) as others which do not have similar issues. Emotional wellbeing is impacted by changes to the family structure, independence (or lack thereof), feeling of being in control, being autonomous, and participating in other activities that reduce loneliness. This is a particularly important competency as in some countries (e.g., Slovenia) emotional and mental concerns are a frequent reason for older persons to go to their healthcare providers. Financial/economic is mostly impacted by the labour market participation in older adults. This is in turn, impacted by barriers to it such as ageism or even the person's potential health issues. Another particularly relevant negative impact is low pensions after retirement. Finally, technological, digital skills among older adults are paramount because in today's interconnected world, technology allows people to be autonomous, to be socially and even politically active, and to keep contact with loved ones (Antunes et al., 2015).

Peer mentoring

Peer mentoring is distinguishable from traditional mentoring in the regard that there is no hierarchical aspect: the mentor and the learner are equals. This form of mentoring means that peers are able to learn from and aid each other (Holbeche, 1996). Indeed, this builds into Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the proximal development zone which is defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving in collaboration with more capable peers" (p.86). Thus, when it comes to peer mentoring and peer learning, many different proximal development zones intersect and overlap, making peer mentoring a mode of learning that allows for sharing and exchanging knowledge and facilitating skill development, whilst also allowing space for autonomy (Baschiera & De Meyer, 2016).

Furthermore, peer mentoring programs aiming at promoting active ageing do highlight the importance of the following as being core for successful mentoring: the learner's experience, the learners' empowerment, and finally, of the mentor-mentee relationship itself (Baschiera & De Meyer, 2016). Thereby, "peer to peer education becomes, thus, as a social process that sustains a lot of different relationships: cooperation, collaboration, mutual interdependence in contexts of formal learning as well as non-formal and informal learning, according to four direct principles:

- social skills education
- active citizenship education
- cultural education
- empowerment education" (Baschiera & De Meyer, 2016; p. 183).

This means that by default, peer to peer education includes at least three of the previously mentioned competencies for active ageing: learning, civic and community, and emotional. Additionally, health, financial and economic, and technological competencies, can be included when designing the specific peer to peer learning activity.

For a successful mentoring there are skills that a mentor and a mentee need to have. The Mentoring Skills Model (Phillips-Jones, 2003, pp.2) defines the following skills and splits them among (1) 'Mentor-Specific Skills', (2) 'Mentee-Specific Skills', and (3) 'Shared Core Skills' that both mentors and mentees should have (Fig.1).

THE MENTORING SKILLS MODEL

SHARED CORE SKILLS

MENTEE-SPECIFIC SKILLS

Acquiring Mentors

Learning Quickly

Showing Initiative

Following Through

Managing the Relationship

Listening Actively

Building Trust

Encouraging

Identifying Goals & Current Reality

Instructing/ Developing Capabilities

Inspiring

Providing Corrective Feedback

Managing Risks

Opening Doors

MENTOR-SPECIFIC SKILLS
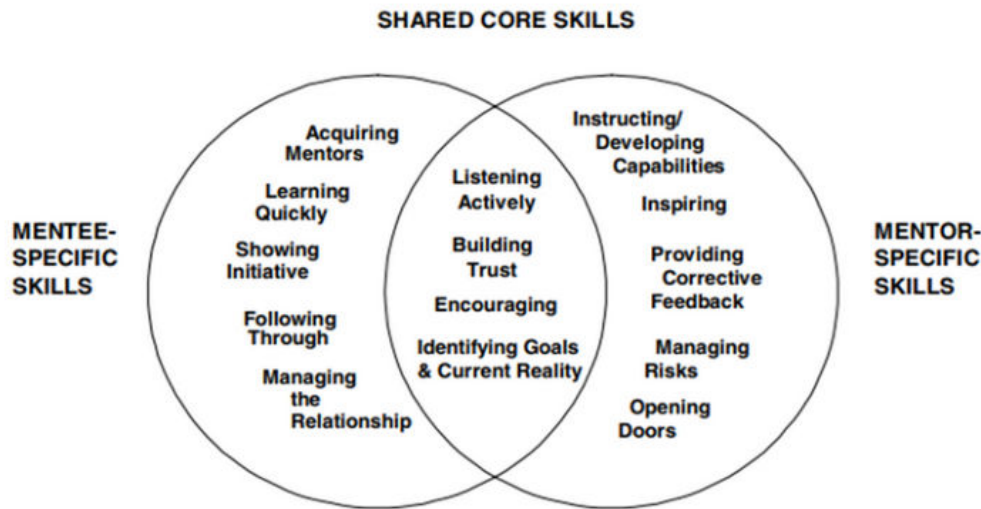
Fig. 1. The Mentoring Skills Model of Philips-Jones (2003)

Concerning the (1) Mentor-Specific Skills – it's important to create settings and use strategies enabling capability development of mentees. To achieve this the mentor has to assist mentees in finding various sources of information (people, books, website, etc.), enable new skills and transmit knowledge, show them new perspectives, demonstrate effective behaviours, and, most importantly, facilitate their learning by living rewarding mentoring processes. Inspiring is a great part of the mentoring process, by proposing stimulating actions or arranging for thrilling experiences, mentors have the challenge "to ensure that your mentees identify and pursue their own form of greatness, not necessarily yours". (Phillips Jones, 2003, p5). Providing mentees with corrective feedback is another way to complement the mentor's list of skills and to do so, mentors should give specific feedback with non-derogatory words and provide some better ways for dealing with certain situations. Another important skill is managing risks – helping the mentees to recognize he risks of projects/actions and help with suggestions, prevention and recovery strategies. Mentors can also open doors to the mentees, in other words, they can provide appropriate opportunities for their mentees for them to show their abilities, as well as introducing them to appropriate contacts – this, when the mentors think the mentee is ready, the mentee's readiness is fundamental for their success.

The (2) Mentee-Specific Skills – covers five skills. To become a successful mentee, it's important to choose the appropriate mentor, meaning that there must be a critical selection based on what the mentees want for themselves, what are their goals/expectations and which mentor meets them. The

mentee should also try to learn quickly, be observant, study and apply their new skills. In the mentoring relationship, the mentees need to show initiative (ask appropriate questions, try to do some things by themselves, etc.), be committed (complete the task on time, be persistent with the difficulties, etc.) and manage the relationship by keeping track how the mentoring is going and making suggestions, when necessary.

The (3) Shared skills are: listening actively, building trust, encouraging and identifying goals & current reality. About the listening actively skill, mentors and mentees need to show if they have understood what was said to feel accepted and for establishing trust. That can be done for example, if they reflect back on what was said (i.e., reformulation), use body language (e.g., nodding) to show they understand, avoid interrupting others, remember and show interest in what everyone says and summarize the key elements of what everyone says. Building trust is the basis for any successful peer-mentoring. To build trust one must respect boundaries, take responsibility for mistakes and correct them, and, if someone disagrees with something, they should be honest and respectfully talk it out. Encouraging is also one of the most valued mentoring skills – giving sincere positive feedback will keep everyone focused and motivated. This can be achieved by offering sincere compliments to mentors and mentees in their accomplishments, talk about positive traits they have, and express appreciation. And for the mentoring to work, both the mentors and mentees need to talk   about their current reality and identify goals in their life. It's important to acknowledge the strengths and the flaws to know the specific assistance you would like to have. To this both of them should set one- to five-year goals and describe the reality of abilities and situations.

European and National Strategies for Active Ageing

The goal of the **European policy on active ageing** is to build a social and physical environment of participation in society, allowing the elderly to have an active, healthy and independent lifestyle. For this to be possible, it is necessary to have access to medical and financial assistance, to prevent poverty, to provide living and housing conditions and access to technologies (Council of the European Union, 2012; European Commission, 2012). The European Union highlights the right to education, training and lifelong learning so that they can continue to be an active part of society and remain present in the labour market. The main areas that the European Union expects that the EU member states pay attention to and develop policies in their countries are: economic activity (pension forms, digital upskilling, safe workplace), social participation (internet access and involvement in society), health and well-being (access to healthcare services and health prevention), long-term care (quality of services) and supportive environments (housing, transportation and financial independence). Following this policy, the partner countries have developed their own National Strategies: Bulgaria's National Strategy for Active Ageing in Bulgaria (2019 – 2030), Germany's National Continuing Education Strategy in the Area of Active Ageing, Hungary's National Strategy on Ageing, Poland's Assumptions of the Long-Term Senior Policy in Poland (2014 – 2020), Portugal's National strategy for an active and healthy ageing (2017 – 2025), and Slovakia's National Program for Active Aging (2021 – 2030).

Bulgaria's National Strategy for Active Ageing (2019 – 2030) is based upon the following values: Independent living; Participation in society; Access to care; Dignity – to guarantee that elderly people live in a secure environment, to protect their human rights, including against age discrimination in society. Its aim is creating the necessary conditions for active and decent living of the elderly people through providing equal opportunities for their full participation in society's economic and social life. The strategic aim is developed in four priorities: (1) Promoting active ageing in the field of employment; (2) Promoting active ageing in the field of participation in society; (3) Promoting active ageing in the field of independent living; and (4) Building capacity and favourable environment for active ageing at national and regional level (Naydenova, 2019).

Germany's National Continuing Education Strategy in the area of active ageing is based on the "2nd UN World Ageing Plan" and the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy "Challenges and Opportunities of Ageing Societies". It forms the basis for implementation of activities, programmes, and projects in this area. Several regional as well as national platforms offer opportunities for engagement and active participation of stakeholders in the area of active ageing to implement the Ageing plan and translate it into action. The focus of the Ageing plan is vocational training which intends to make a significant contribution to individuals and society. The aim is to make further training courses and funding opportunities more transparent and more easily accessible for all in order to provide targeted support for groups of people with previously below-average participation in further training or for small and medium-sized enterprises without large personnel departments.

Hungary's National Strategy on Ageing outlines the current situation of ageing and, starting out of this, sets out a vision (target state) for 2034 and presents the areas for development needed to achieve it. The Strategy provides a realistic and broad overview of the fields related to ageing in order to adjust the directions of development to the real situation, while also listing existing and working good practices. At the core of the Strategy is the adoption and enforcement of a paradigm shift according to which one should think and act in terms of a development model (preservation of existing abilities, retrieval of dormant abilities) instead of the former deficit model (concentrating on losses; OGY Resolution 81/2009).

Poland's Assumptions of the Long-Term Senior Policy in Poland (2014 –2020) states that there are deliberate senior policies that are implemented by the public administration bodies and other organizations or institutions, that carry out initiatives that promote good conditions for active, healthy and dignified aging. In Poland, the goal of the senior policy is to ensure the possibility of the eldery to continue an independent and self-sufficient life even if they have certain functional limitations. Overall, for the purposes of this document, the senior policy is understood as a set of activities throughout a person's life, leading to the provision of conditions for the prolongation of activity, both professional and social, and also an independent, healthy, safe life of the elderly.

Portugal is implementing a national strategy for an active and healthy ageing (2017 – 2025) (Estratégia Nacional para o Envelhecimento Ativo e Saudável; ENEAS; Silva da Costa et al., 2017). Within this strategy, the vision to promote a high quality, dignified, fulfilled, healthy and active ageing of the population is established, and manifests itself in the mission to increase well-being, health, non-discrimination, safety, participation, research and inclusion, so that the life quality, capacity and autonomy of elderly people is enhanced. The ENEAS is in line with the National Health Plan as well as several other plans and programs for ageing as suggested by the WHO, the UN's Agenda 2030 and the EU.

Slovakia's National Program for Active Ageing (2021 – 2030) (NPAA 2021-2030) is a direct follow-up to NPAA 2014 – 2020. The aim of NPAA 2021 –2030 is to support the building of a sustainable society through supporting and enhancing the potential of people of all age categories, especially in the context of their aging process. The strategy document focuses on target groups - all persons actively preparing for aging, or persons in higher age, with special emphasis on persons who are disadvantaged in any way in some area of life and social relations and limited in access to public resources. It includes the following areas to support active ageing: (1) Promoting an active aging in a family perspective; (2) Support of human resources in the life cycle; (3) Healthccare supporting active ageing; (4) Support of economic activity in the perspective of life cycle; (5) Promoting of social participation and inclusion of older people; (6) Assurance of income in older age; (7) Promoting the dignity and quality of life of older people; (8) Active aging policies closer to the citizen and their management; and (9) Awareness raising, data and research. (NPAS, 2021).

Beneficial/Good Practices for Active ageing

To better understand the Active ageing practices in the partner countries, a set of 19 practices were collected. All partners contributed with 3 or 4 practices, building up a sample that allows us to identify the promotion of some competencies for active ageing which were used as indicators for the practices' potential success. We'd like to highlight that some of these practices included mentoring as a strategy for active ageing. However, this is not a comprehensive list, thus the results are not generalisable to partner countries' universe.

Bulgarian partners collected the VAL.oR project; the EUPIN project, and the Easy ways to transfer knowledge project.

The **VAL.oR project** includes a training curriculum for adults engaged in the organisation and management of cultural events, will be designed and implemented with local teams, to strengthen their management skills, and expose them to prospects and strategies that work toward a European vision and framework. Valorising the cultural heritage background of rural communities, the project aims to encourage adults, young and old, who are not generally engaged in lifelong learning, to participate in training, transnational exchanges and a mentoring programme which will see local teams and community leaders sharing their tacit knowledge and competencies. This intergenerational and participatory approach can contribute greatly to community development and well-being. The curriculum, targeted to strengthen the competencies in organising and managing local cultural festivals and events, acts as a 'Trojan horse' in engaging team leaders in further training and the community, as a whole, in a transnational educational experience. The informal learning sessions will be specifically focused on the following key skills: cultural awareness and expression, digital skills, civic and entrepreneurial competencies. The exchange of these competencies are closely linked to the project's other goal; the clarification and recognition of the learners' prior learning. The recognition and valorisation of their tacit knowledge and skills will, hopefully, motivate older members of the community to engage in intergenerational dialogue and focus on the common goal of maintaining and renewing the intangible, cultural heritage of their local area.

The **EUPIN project** was a project including organisations from Bulgaria, Slovakia, Macedonia and Austria, running from 2015-2017, funded by the Erasmus program of the European Commission with the goal of creating actions involving people at risk of exclusion, i.e., elderly (among others). The project focused on problems identified in the guidelines of Europe 2020, the European anti-poverty program as well as the guidelines included in the Strategy of development of the Lodz region 2020. It included collaboration and experience exchange for educators towards sharing creative activities for people at risk of exclusion: senior citizens, disabled people, and addicts; leverage and expansion of professional qualifications of those working with the people at risk of exclusion; skill acquisition and improvement of existing psychological, interpersonal and methodological ones, necessary for the work with target group; dissemination of modern art therapy methods for staff working with people at risk of exclusion; and creation of opportunities for personal development of educators participating in the project, raising self-esteem and reduce the risk of burnout.

The **Easy ways to transfer knowledge project** aimed to develop recommendations for an easy way to transfer knowledge that could be used when working with low-skilled adults, long-term unemployed persons, including seniors, and also refugees and people with language perception difficulties. The project promoted education as teamwork where the majority of the work is done by educators who create a purposeful, systematic and coordinated learning process in using correct training methods. The objective of the project is to enhance educators' knowledge regarding working with low skilled adults by providing support and suggestions in the Handbook – 'Easy ways to transfer knowledge', sharing good practices of creative education, and strengthening cooperation and networking between organizations.

German partners collected the "Healthy and active ageing" project; Service Point "Digitisation and Education for Older People", and KOSIS.

The **Healthy and active ageing" project** aimed for the preservation and support of physical, psychological, and cognitive skills; the preservation and support of an active, autonomous, socially integrated and self-responsible healthy lifestyle; to prolong the lifetime until need for care. It was implemented in 2012 and follows an integrated, multidisciplinary approach. It aimed to serve as an umbrella to facilitate the networking and collaboration of governmental, non-governmental,

academic and private stakeholders in jointly defined key topics of healthy ageing, such as physical activity (incl. fall prevention) and healthy diet; mental health (incl. depression and dementia); substance abuse (alcohol, tobacco, pharmaceuticals); dissemination of information on major diseases, risk factors, prevention opportunities and early diagnosis; and integration, activation and participation of the target group, in this case being people aged 60 or more.

The **service point Digitisation and Education for Older People** supports the willingness of many older people to learn and get to grips with digital media. Getting to grips with new things and learning new things in old age can help people to remain fit and independent for a long time. This also applies to dealing with the rapidly changing digital media. The service center provides information on all questions about education in old age and would like to make it easier for older people to access courses and meeting places. On its website www.wissensdurstig.de, older people can find offers in their vicinity in a nationwide event database. The internet platform wissensdurstig.de also offers tips and materials on education and digitalisation in old age, useful information for education providers and good practice examples. One goal of the service center's work is to make educational offers accessible to people who have not participated so far. Target groups are, for example, older people in care institutions and those with disabilities. With its publications, the Service Agency also addresses older people, those involved in senior education and education providers.

The **KOSIS Active Ageing Community** was founded as an association of municipalities and other public institutions with the aim of conducting standardised empirical surveys on the topic of quality of life of the 55plus generation in the participating institutions on a non-commercial basis at regular intervals, including the development of procedures and the joint development and application of methods for data evaluation, as well as setting up and operating a joint information portal for the publication of corresponding data. It sees itself in the content-related and organisational tradition of the TooLS project, which was funded by the European Union from 2009 to 2013, as a municipal network of knowledge and technology that combines the idea of municipal self-help with the content-related demands of scientifically sound municipal data collection and evaluation as well as the technical possibilities of a hardware and software infrastructure that is also under municipal sovereignty.

Hungarian partners contributed with Age-friendly Municipality Award; Senior Centrum, and Work for yourself from today!

The **Age-friendly Municipality Award** has the objective of contributing to the reinforcement of local-level policy concerning old people, it should recognize the active responsibility of municipalities for old people, and the specific outcomes of local government activities in this field. (Civilek.hu, 2017). By awarding the prize, the founders wish to contribute the fact that the attention of local public service providers be focused as much as possible on supporting sport and nature programmes that contribute to the physical and mental health of old people and/or focus their attention on self-development and education as much as possible, and to enable the elderly people of the municipality to participate in a greater number and more regularly in various educational and training programmes, either free of charge, or at a discount. By awarding the prize, the ministers intend to recognise achievements reached so far, and to draw attention to the fact that it is local governments that can do the most to promote elderly policy at local level by creating information flow and dialogue, by presenting achievements and by promoting the development of communities.

The **Senior Centrum** is an advisory community that supports old people's lifepaths. They provide comprehensive information services on ageing, home care, nursing home care and care for people with dementia. They guide clients through the often emotionally distressing process of choosing the right services, covering personal, interpersonal, health, legal and financial aspects. The centrum includes a space for Dialogue between family members, psychological support for elderly people (led by a mediator); social and market services, choice of institution (led by an elderly care expert); yoga, exercise and lifestyle - group and individual classes (led by a yoga instructor); Insurance services (in cooperation with an independent insurance consultant); and a Senior Blog Café, elaborating on professional topics: using exercise against dementia, Alzheimer's in the family, cooperation between generations, self-determination in old age, internet use in old age, holidays and loneliness, human rights - elderly rights, nutrition, osteoporosis, physiotherapy, choice of a nursing home, learning from the elderly. Additionally, it shares on its website an extensive knowledge base, free for all, with things like the Mini Mental Tests, which are easy-to-use psychological tests.

Work for yourself from today! is an entrepreneurship programme for people over 50, which aims to increase the market presence of this generation by transferring practice-oriented business skills. We often identify the world of innovation with the younger age group, but it is worth paying attention for those masterminds, who already have enough experience due to their age, and who are more purposeful as well. There is a whole series of publications showing that the 50-plus generation has a double chance of building a successful business than the 20-year-old generation. The programme entitled Vállalkozz 50+ (Be an entrepreneur 50+) was launched for innovators over 50 who feel that the experience they have gained over the years is a competitive advantage (Design Terminal, 2022). It welcomed participants every two weeks for three months. Through in-person and online workshops and presentations, tallowing them the opportunity to expand their business and digital skills, meet executives from successful companies and investors. Thematic sessions and personalized mentoring brought them closer to the steps of business development, with a strong emphasis on practical skills. They have learned methods for a successful product or service development, expanded their professional contacts, and built their market entry strategy.

Polish partners collected the Third Age Universities (TAU) and Seniors in Action; EuBiA project; and MATURE project

The **TAU program** was initiated in 2005. It is aimed to promote educational actions that encourage older people to become more active, with emphasis placed on their social activity, and intergenerational relations in particular. The program is carried out mainly by supporting and promoting initiatives taken by seniors themselves, who use their potential, knowledge, experience, and time for the benefit of their own environment and local communities, and by supporting the operations of the Third Age Universities. The "Seniors in Action" competition offers grants and training for people over 60 who wish to carry out social initiatives based on their own ideas, individually or in tandem with a younger person. The competition is addressed to active seniors enrolled into a Third Age University, as well as those cooperating with other organizations and institutions. So far, 398 projects have been financed in the thirteen editions of the "Seniors in Action" competition: intergenerational projects, projects that encourage older people to act for the benefit of their community, and projects promoting volunteer services by the seniors. The fourteenth edition is underway, with 21 projects being implemented.

The **EuBiA project** stands for Getting older people involved in learning. Nine organisations from seven countries discussed important issues and shared their experiences in the field of learning in later life. All EuBiA partners are convinced of the benefits of networking. Therefore, one of EUBIA´s main aims was to establish a European network and to discuss relevant topics concerning networking and learning in later life. The results of discussions during the meetings on different aspects of networking – from advantages to risks - are listed. Each partner organisation presented an example of good practice to the EUBIA group. After discussing the team´s criteria for good practice, all examples that had been presented were checked against the criteria that had been worked out. Keywords in the context of lifelong learning and, indeed, for learning in later life are empowerment, advocacy and participation. These were broadly discussed alongside barriers and obstacles to participation and the means by which the obstacles could be overcome so as to benefit learning in ageing societies. The EuBiA partners developed a Guide as the product of the partnership.

The **MATURE project** stands for Making Adult Teaching Useful, Relevant and Engaging. It is a Grundtvig multilateral project co-funded by the European Commission's Lifelong Learning programme. The project ran from October 2012 to September 2014. It developed training for adult educators on the theme of engaging and motivating older adults who, because of disadvantage, find it difficult to participate in group learning. The MATURE team conducted research; developed and delivered units of training for face-to-face and self-study use; and created a booklet for organisations outside education who act as intermediaries between older adults and the services they need or are entitled to. The MATURE research report is one of a number of activities that the project team has undertaken together in order to create relevant training content for its Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme. In the report the MATURE consortium published information from a number of sources in partner countries and beyond about participation, disadvantage and successful practice. The information contributes to the theoretical basis for MATURE's work; provides the partnership with key messages to be transmitted through training and affords trainees insight into the provenance of their CPD.

Portuguese partners collected 4 good practices: PEER - Dare to be wise, ICTskills4all; FAITh; and Sol Poente.

The **PEER project** was designed to provide elderly learners with new online learning tools by creating an online learning platform for people 50+ to learn new skills. This platform was available in five languages and included some Web 2.0 tools that enable users to share and communicate on the platform. Thereby, older people gained access to a collaborative learning environment that was customized to their needs. This approach helped to overcome the digital divide, enhance technological knowledge and promote social inclusion. Its objectives were empowering people aged 50+ to train their mental abilities and cognitive self-fulfillment, exchange experience and knowledge, participate and interact in social settings; applying participatory methods that allows user involvement to assess and pinpoint older person's usability needs; accommodating freely accessible Web 2.0 tools for 50+ people; creating didactical guidelines in all EU languages, providing guidance on peer-to-peer learning in social platforms; and initiating a network of 50+ platform operators through networking events as well as the mapping of already existing 50+ platforms.

The **ICTskills4all project** aimed to explore and test innovative and efficient practices and methods for the design and delivery of educational programs supporting the acquisition of digital skills in citizens 55+ with limited/no digital knowledge. The ultimate goal is to benefit future attempts and types of training for seniors by improving the digital literacy of seniors. One the one hand, the project promotes 55+ aged people's independence, capability of keeping up with the digitization and life quality through new, high quality offers, while on the other hand contributing and impacting the education sectors, existing offer and the quality of learning opportunities. The project development includes various factors related to the technology and the users, as well as a diversified project consortium and various learning approaches. Training modules as well as a comprehensive tool is implemented and supported through personalized learning ways that are peer-to-peer and intergenerational.

The **FAITh project** aims to enhance digital capacities and confidence in online technologies of adults older than 55 to decrease their digital marginalisation. This will be done through developing a network engaging peers, family, community and the local market to promote older adults to use ICT

in their everyday life. To this end it will do a needs assessment of needs and barriers using the internet/online transaction; train 55+ adults to become digital mentors for peers through a peer-to-peer programme (face-to-face and game-based online course); implement capacity building and training for all target groups involved; and raise awareness towards engaging and sensitizing various groups to promote digital inclusion of elderly.

The **Sol Poente project** depicts a health education program that uses peer-to-peer training and group dynamics as methodologies. It is directed to adults 65+ and intends to make a diagnostic and screening approach to health problems in the elderly, resolving the problems identified and manage health/disease processes. The program includes presentation and ice-breaking exercises, brainstorming activities, group discussions, role plays, interactive games, and Q&A sessions, all of which developed based on the perceptions of the participants. Its objectives were to identify the health care needs of the elderly population of the Municipality of Oliveira do Bairro; promote the health and life quality of elderly; prevent diseases, dependence and inability of self-care; demystify the role of elderly people in society; promote intergenerational experiences; and stimulate cognitive abilities of seniors. It measured its impact on the health of the elderly, using several scales: Barthel Index, Lawton-Brody Index, GDS-15, WHOQOL-BREF, MMSE, Rosenberg. The improvement on these scale results showed that it had a positive impact on autonomy, self-care, self-esteem and cognitive performance.

Slovak partners collected the good practices "Take your chance" project; the Educational programme - Age management counsellor; and the Learning of Seniors in the Digital Society project.

The **"Take your chance" project** was launched on the 1st October 2021, its implementation is with the participation of 46 Offices of labour, social affairs and family, to which applicants can submit their applications for a provision of financial contribution. The project focuses on 3 measures and intends to increase the employment of disadvantaged job seekers, including elderly job seekers. The 3 measures that the project is promoting and supporting are (1) Support for beginning self-employed persons; (2) Financial contributions for training mentors; and (3) Promoting the employment of disadvantaged candidates. The first is aimed at those who wish to start their own business. They can

receive a one-time financial contribution of € 5,600. This activity will then need to last at least 2 years or they will have to return part of this financial contribution. The second supports the training of a new employee from the ranks of disadvantaged job seekers, including citizens over 50 years of age, under the guidance of another employee, the so-called mentor. The last covers part of the wages paid by employers if they hire disadvantaged candidates.

The **Educational programme - Age management counsellor** was created within the international project Erasmus+ "Age Management Uptake", which aims to inform participants with the basic principles of age management, its objectives, tools, implementation opportunities and measuring the ability of employees using the Work Ability Index (WAI). At the same time, it prepares participants for activities in the environment of employers' organizations. Through lectures, practical exercises, group work and their own experience, participants will obtain the basic knowledge, competencies and skills necessary for the activities of an age management counsellor. Emphasis is placed on the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practical situations, work independently and solve problems. (Comenius University, AIVD, 2019).

The Learning of Seniors in the Digital Society project provides information on education opportunities for people over the age of 50, programme innovation and training for adults with a lack of digital skills. The project's priorities are focused on open education and innovative practices in the digital field, focusing on the development of educational opportunities and skills in the use of digital (DT) and information communication technologies (ICT) and equipment to meet the needs of older adults. The project focuses on the education and training of basic ICT skills and on the acquisition and development of key digital competences of older people. Its results will lead to the development of digital literacy and skills of older people who need special courses and training for the flexible use of ICT in daily life for various purposes with the fulfillment of personal needs for active daily life and active citizenship.

Qualitative analysis if the beneficial/good practices

To conduct the qualitative analysis of the good practices, the first step was to identify which of the core competencies for active ageing were being promoted in these good practices. These competencies are Learning, Civic and Community, Health, Emotional, Financial/Economic, and Technological (Antunes et al., 2015). Once again we would like to highlight that as the practices are not comprehensive, the results are not necessarily indicatory of the countries' universe.

On a **first look**, we can see that in one way or another all the practices promoted active ageing. Additionally, we could immediately identify that, even if it wasn't their main focus, nearly all of the good practices (18), directly or indirectly, promoted the Civic and community competencies necessary for active ageing as well as Emotional competencies (17), and Learning (15). Around half the collected good practices promoted Technological competencies (10). The Financial/economic competencies (4) and Health (4) competencies were found less often (Fig.2).
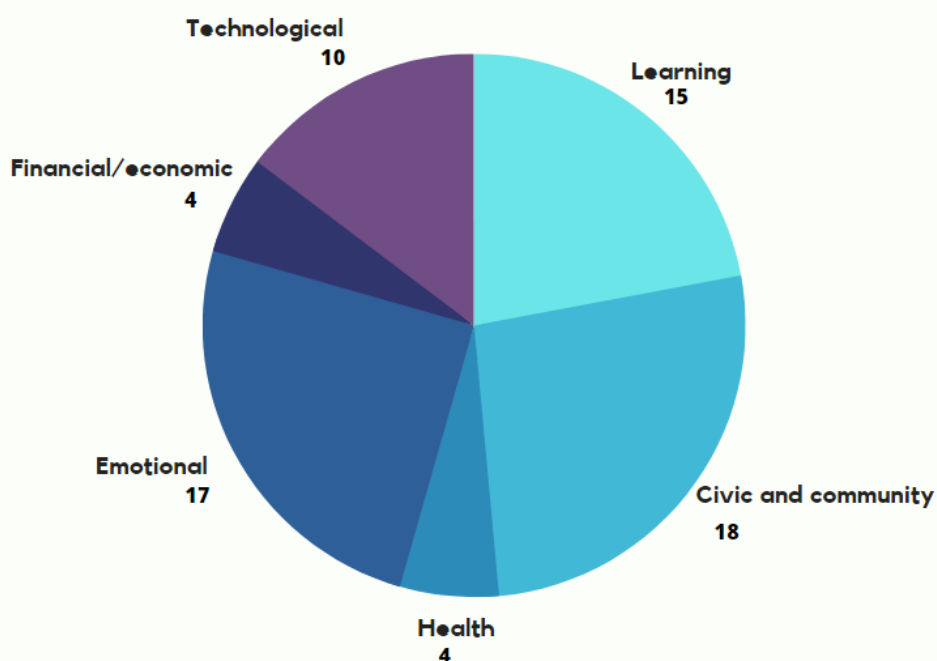

Fig. 2. Promotion of competencies of active ageing in the good practices

	BG	DE	HU	PL	PT	SK	Total
Learning	3	2	2	3	3	2	15
Civic & Community	3	3	3	3	4	2	18
Health	0	1	2	0	1	0	4
Emotional	3	2	3	2	4	3	17
Financial/ economic	0	0	3	0	0	1	4
Technological	1	2	1	1	3	2	10

Table 1. Table of competencies being promoted in the practices collected

When looking at the **practices collected by the partners** (see Table 1), we can underline that all of them promoted more than one of the core competencies for active ageing. Furthermore, the practices respect the adult education principles, and have developed a diversified set of approaches from experience sharing, creative activities (e.g., theatre), and some of them have implemented mentoring approaches, as we illustrate below:

- **VAL.oR** - a mentoring program was used towards encouraging adults, including older adults, to participate in training and international exchanges. This practice thus promoted the following competencies for active ageing: Learning, Civic and community, and Emotional.
- **Work for yourself from today!** - personalised mentoring sessions were used towards promoting entrepreneurship among people over 50. This practice promoted the following competencies of active ageing: Learning, Civic and community, Emotional, Financial/economic, and Technological.
- **PEER** - used peer-to-peer learning in its online learning platform and enabled collaborative learning, thereby promoting Learning, Civic & community, Emotional, and Technological.

- **ICTskills4all** - used intergenerational and peer-to-peer educational programs to improve digital skills in older adults. It promoted Learning, Civic and community, Emotional, and Technological.

- **FAITh** - trained older adult with high digital skills to become peer mentors, therefore promoting Learning, Civic and community, Emotional, and Technological competencies.

- **Sol Poente** - uses peer-to-peer training and group dynamics as methodologies within a health education program, thus promoting Learning, Civic and community, Emotional, and Health competencies for active ageing.

- **"Take your chance"** - supports organisations in the training of a new disadvantaged employee (e.g., an older unemployed person), under a mentoring training. It promoted Learning and Civic and community competencies for active ageing.

We can conclude that many different methodologies can be used and combined towards promoting active ageing competencies. Whilst our sample is not comprehensive and thus not representative, we can, nevertheless, highlight that, the presence of 7 references to mentoring practices in our sample, which was mostly focused on collecting practices for active ageing, highlight the utility and relevance of this project and that mentoring is indeed a good approach to promote active ageing, be it on a more traditional mentoring approach with an older mentor (Aresi & Weaver, 2020), or when the mentor is a more experienced peer (Active Ageing Project, 2018, Baschiera, & De Meyer, 2016).
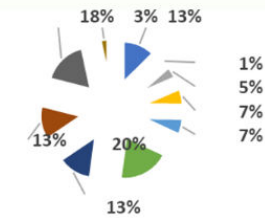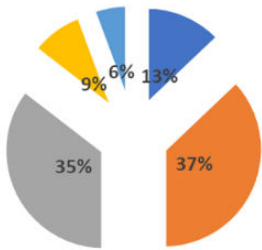
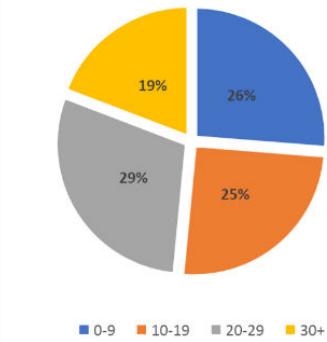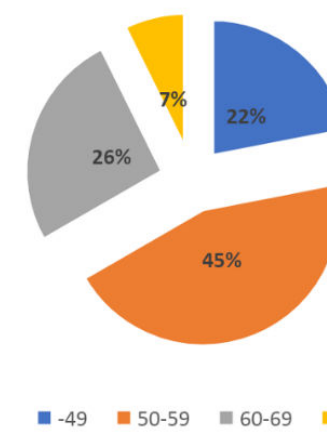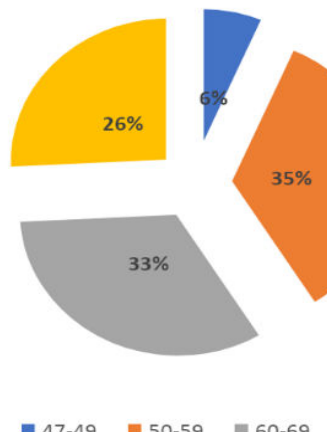# Survey of skills for successful mentoring

In total, 246 people participated in the survey, half being mentors and half being people aged 50 or more. The average age of the experts was around 55 years (M= 54.73, SD=9.95) and of the people aged 50 or more was around 63 (M=62.8, SD=9.25). On average stakeholders had 17 years of experience in working with adults (M=17.49; SD=10.24). Each partner collected 20 to 23 surveys per group (i.e., stakeholders and people 50+). In these surveys the participants had to rate the skills for successful mentoring (Philips-Jones, 2003) on a Likert scale from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Completely). All the samples collected were of convenience and thus might not be representative.
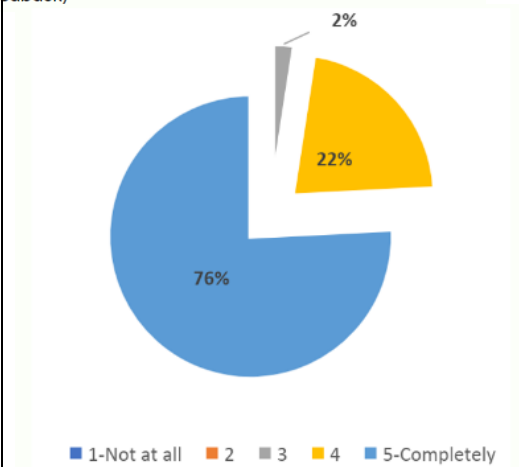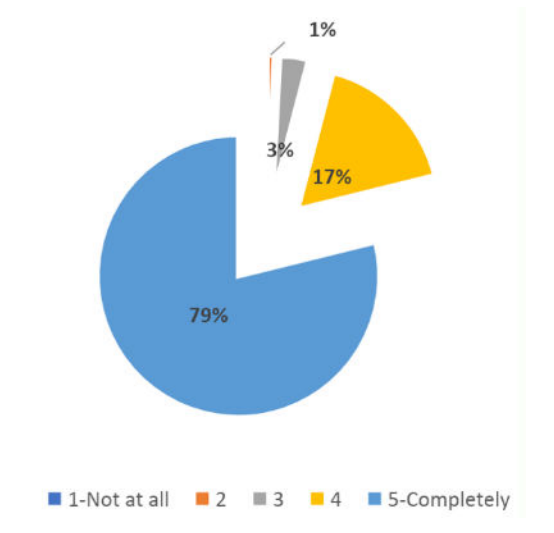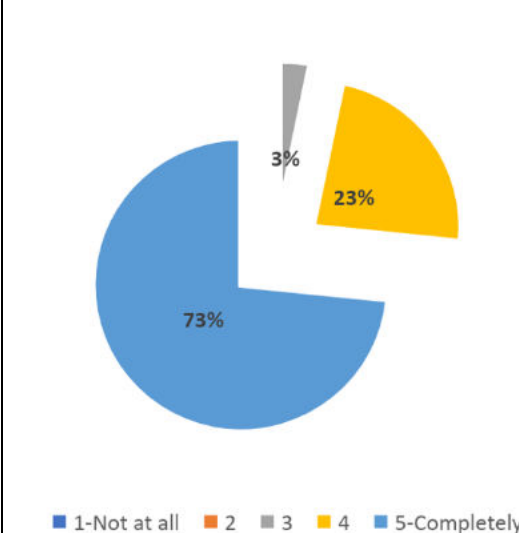
Comparison of Stakeholders and People 50+
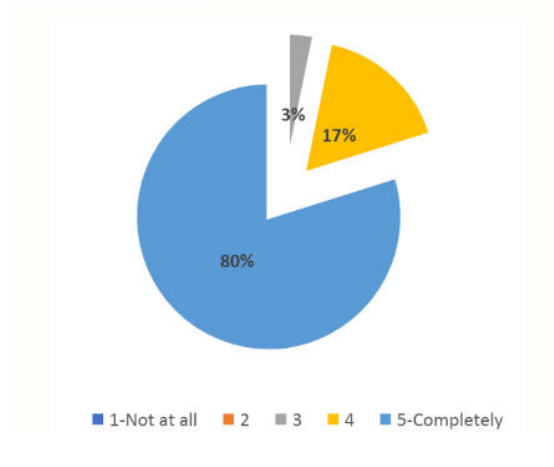
This chapter provides the results obtained, question by question, with the two surveys by questionnaires carried out (Stakeholders and people 50+), having chosen to place the respective results side by side, whenever possible, to facilitate their comparison.

Stakeholders	50+
Your (current/former) profession/job title.	
Examples: social policy andragogist economist carrer consellor social worker mediator psychologist rehabilitation of mentorinf	Examples: teacher/lecturer waiter doctor laywer manager technic assistent economist

All of the Stakeholders respondents have a white-collar job, spread across a range of professional activities, but with some predominance in those related to education and training field	Most participants have a white collar job, spread across a range of professional activities, with a minority working in blue collar
What type of company do you work in (e.g., NGO, Non-profit Organisation, VET...)?	**Your current professional situation (retired, employed etc.)**
Fig. 3. Question to stakeholders "What type of company do you work in?" 18% 3% 13% 1% 5% 7% 7% 18% 13% 20% 13% ■ entrepreneur/SME... ■ Job Center ■ NGO ■ Non-profit Organisation ■ privat sector ■ public sector ■ self-employed ■ University ■ educational organisation	Fig. 4. Question to people 50+ "Your current professional situation" 9% 6% 13% 35% 37% ■ a retired worker ■ employed ■ retired ■ self-employed ■ unemployed
Respondent stakeholders work more in the public sector than in the private sector (20% vs. 7%), with 34% in education and training entities: educational organisation (18%); Universities (13%) and VET (3%). It should be noted that 26% are self-employed (13%) or entrepreneurs/SMEs (13%) The rest are spread across various types of organisations, such as nonprofit organisation (7%), NGO (5%) and job center (1%)	In the People 50+ respondents, it was registered: - 48% of retired people; - 46% of employed and self-employed and - 6% unemployed

Stakeholders	People 50+
How long have you worked with people aged 50+?	
Fig. 5. Question to stakeholders "How long have you worked with people aged 50+?" 26% 0-9 25% 10-19 29% 20-29 19% 30+	
A majority of stakeholders´ respondents have a long experience of working with people aged 50+, with 73% having been doing this work for over 10 years	
Age	
Fig. 6. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about age Stakeholders: 22% -49, 45% 50-59, 26% 60-69, 7% 70+	People 50+: 6% 47-49, 35% 50-59, 33% 60-69, 26% 70+
Both groups (Stakeholders and People 50+) show a majority of respondents aged over 50 years (78% vs. 94%), although with a greater share of older people in people 50+, where 59% of respondents have over 60 years	

Skills for Peer Mentor

Stakeholders	People 50+
Providing Corrective Feedback	

Fig. 7. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentor (Providing Corrective Feedback)

There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as providing "corrective feedback" is considered very important or indispensable by vast majority in both (97% vs. 98%)

Instructing/Developing capabilities

Fig. 8. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentor (Instructing/Developing capabilities)

There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "instructing/developing capabilities" are considered very important or indispensable by vast majority in both (96%)

Identifying goals & current reality

Fig. 9. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentor (Identifying goals & current reality)
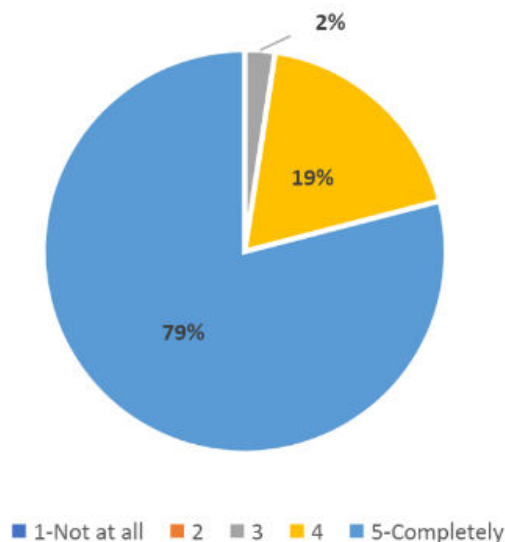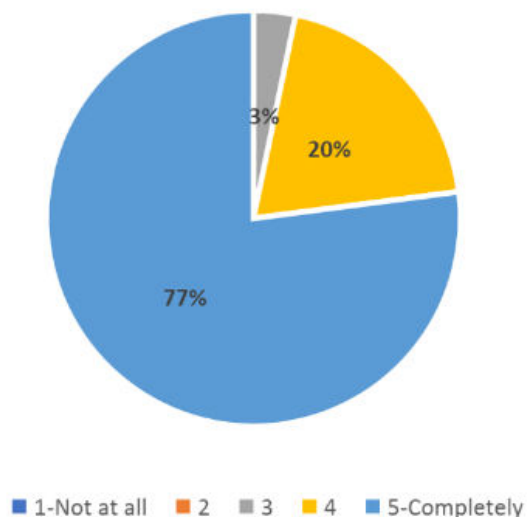
3%
20%
77%

■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely

2%
19%
79%

■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely

There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "Identifying goals & current reality" are considered very important or indispensable by vast majority in both (97% vs. 98%)

Inspiring

Fig. 10. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentor (Inspiring)

1%
3%
14%
82%

■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely

1%
10%
22%
67%

■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely
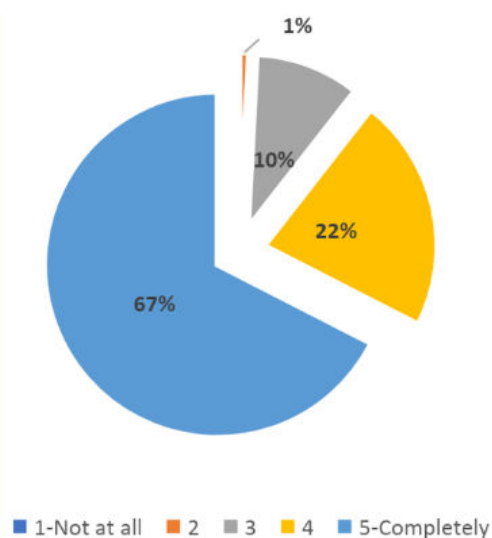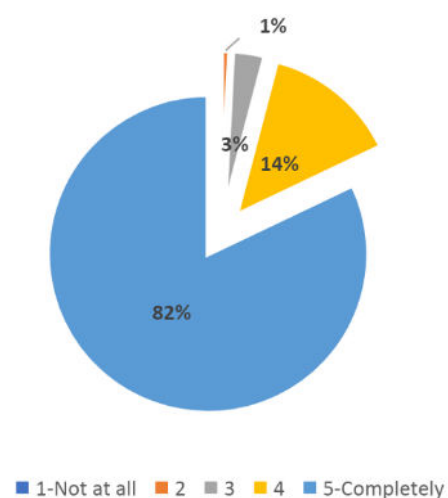
There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "inspiring" is considered very important or indispensable by a vast majority in both (96% vs. 89%)

Managing risks

Fig. 11. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentor (Managing risks)

0% 2% 10%

24%

64%

■ 1 - Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 - Completely

1%2%

7%

19%

70%

■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely
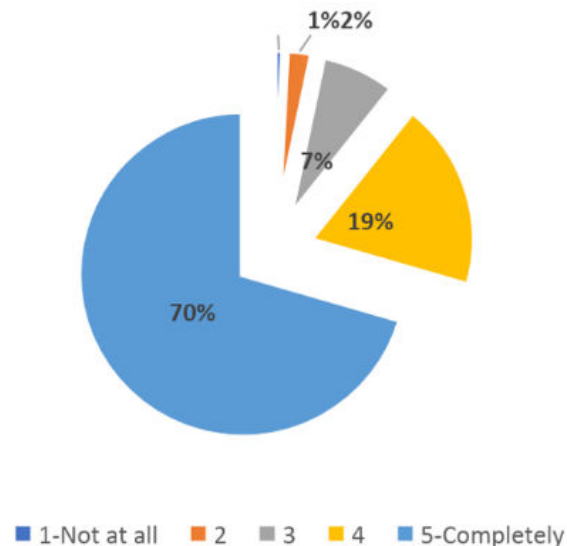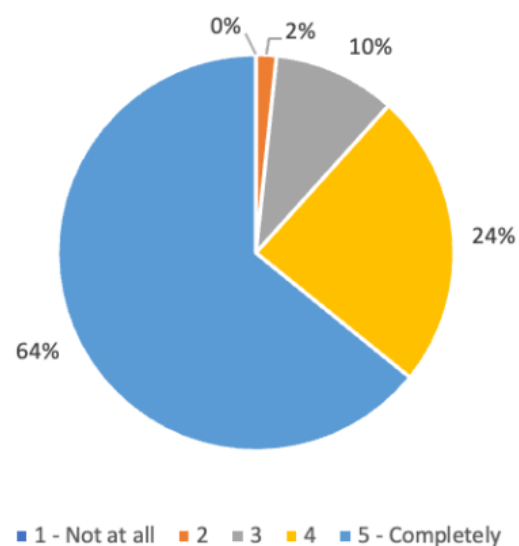
There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+) as "managing skills" are considered very important or indispensable by a majority in both (88% vs. 89%)

Opening doors

Fig. 12. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentor (Opening doors)

1%1%

10%

20%

69%

■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely

2%2%

8%

17%

72%

■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely
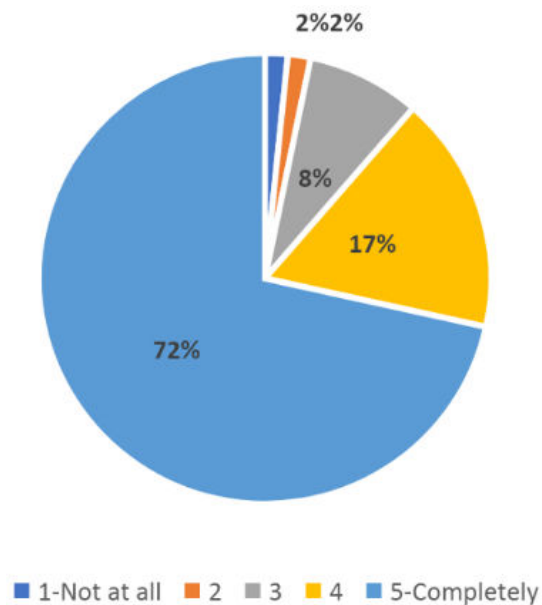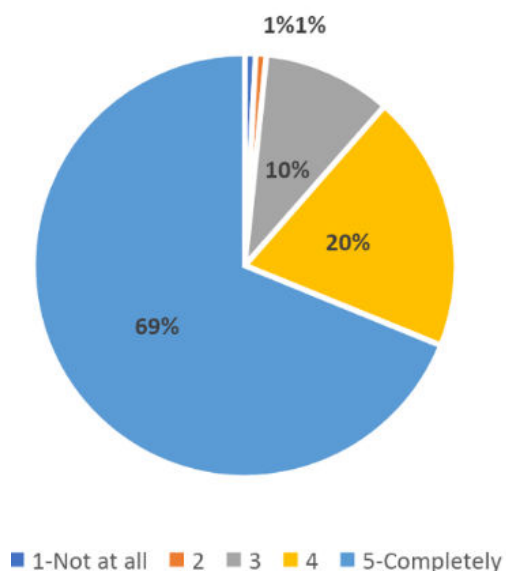
There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "opening doors" are considered very important or indispensable by a majority in both (89%)

Encouraging

Fig. 13. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentor (Encouraging)
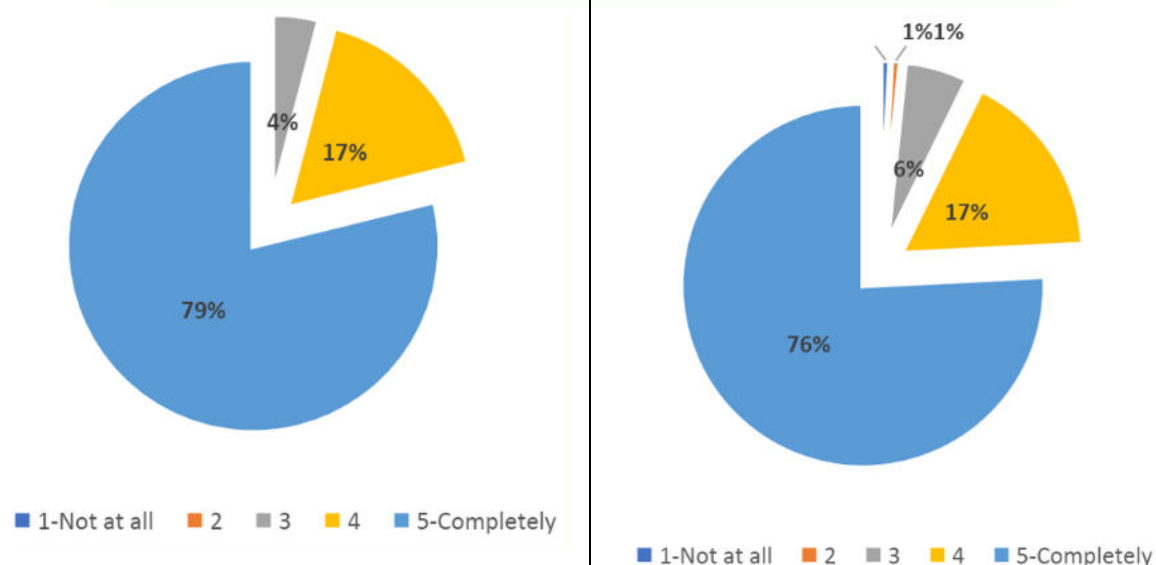
There is no difference between the two types of r respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "encouraging" is considered very important or indispensable by a vast majority in both (96% vs. 93%)

Listening actively

Fig. 14. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentor (Listening actively)
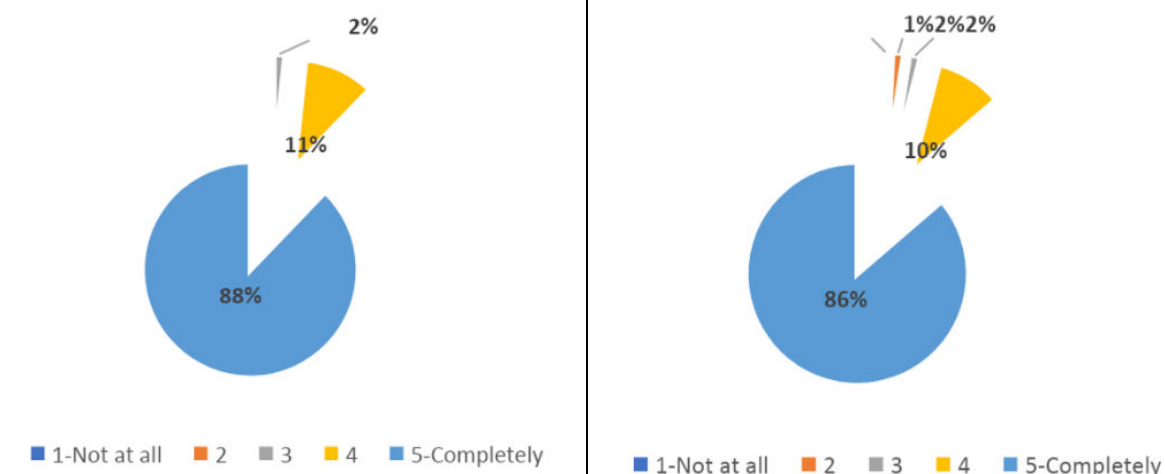
There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "listening actively" is considered very important or indispensable by a vast majority in both (99% vs. 96%)

Building trust

Fig. 15. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentor (Building trust)

There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "building trust" is considered very important or indispensable by a vast majority in both (98% vs. 97%)

Both samples of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), considered the nine soft skills given for their appreciation (providing corrective feedback, instructing/developing capabilities, identifying goals & current reality, Inspiring, managing risks, opening doors, encouraging, listening actively and building trust), as very important or indispensable, for the success of peer mentors in their peer training. in fact, there is a broad agreement on the high relevance of the aforementioned skills, with those who disagree representing a residual value.

When asked about other equally relevant skills for peer mentors, not mentioned in the questionnaires, two long lists of suggestions were obtained (stakeholders - 56; target groups - 49), that were organized by skills categories and examples displayed on the next pages.

Please name any other skills you consider relevant for a Peer Mentor and that were not mentioned

Peer Mentors Skills Categories	Stakeholders sample item examples	People 50+ sample item examples
Problem-Solving Skills Mentors should support mentees to recognize issues and fix them with logical, timely, and appropriate solutions	To be aware of the adult target group profile Achieve common points of interest	Seeing their needs and modifying plans Good estimation of people
Communication Skills Mentors should clearly express what they want to say, while also taking into account the proper tone and delivery.	Assertive communication and behavior Good communication skills,	Creating a friendly, sociable atmosphere Professional communication
Organisational Skills Mentors should be able to coming up with an overall plan to conduct mentoring programs.	To work methodically, the fulfillment of the set goal	System approach Focus on details
Active Listening Skills Active listening allows mentors to pay attention to their mentees, without interrupting them, and to answer their questions more meaningfully.	To give all their energy and attention Showing respect and tolerance	Mentees to feel they are important listening with understanding and compassion
Time Management Skills Time management skill is the ability to spend time properly and productively. This can be accomplished by learning how to improve organization and prioritizing tasks and activities.		Do not save your time and energy if you want to help. It will be appreciated Methodological competences - task and work planning, time management

Design Thinking Skills design thinking helps mentors to develop a deep understanding of the way people think and encourage continuing experimentation. It unlocks mentors' potential to innovate and think outside the box.	Thinking outside the box and working across disciplines Combining experience and knowledge	Broadening the horizons of thought Very good education and multidisciplinary knowledge
Emotional Intelligence (EI) Skills EI Skills relate to the capacity to identify and manage emotions.	Conflict resolution, empathy, respect for cultural diversity	To decrease the stress of the mentee Managing emotions
Sensitivity Skills Mentors should be aware of how to properly interact with different types of mentees, no matter their background or culture	Ability to understand very different people Promote diversity, integration and inclusion, among others	Diversify facilitation strategies To provoke the person to start sharing
Adaptability Skills Mentors with adaptive mindset can easily adjust to changes or unforeseen events	Ability to project labor market developments Understand living conditions other than our own	Flexibility The ability to adapt to the capabilities of the mentees
Personal Skills Also called personal, interpersonal or people skills, are person's attributes or traits that relate to how an individual interacts with other people and the surrounding environment.	Self-discipline, self-efficacy Resilience Empathy	Compassion empathy Patience Humility

Table 2. Table of the question "Please name any other skills you consider relevant for a PEER Mentor and that were not mentioned"

The respondents of the two samples (Stakeholders & People 50+) were in broad agreement that there is a wide range of soft skills relevant to the Peer Mentors, which we can group into categories of skills, such as: problem-solving, communication, organizational, active listening, time management, design thinking, emotional intelligence, sensitive, adaptability and personal. Although, time management skills are only mentioned by People 50+ respondents, who consider them as a methodological competence, and affirm that mentors should not save time and energy if they want to help.

To note a comment made by one of the respondents of the people 50+ sample, who states "In mentoring, especially with peers, we should probably not talk about mentees. Rather, we would assume that, especially in this case, mentoring is a two- way relationship". It is considered that being clearly a two-way relationship, the clarification of the role of each one, as mentor or mentee, at each moment of a mentoring process, should be assumed in a clear and assertive way, in order to enhance the effectiveness of communication. This does not exclude that these roles can be exchanged in other moments/mentoring processes.

Skills for Peer Mentees

Stakeholders	People 50+
Acquiring mentors	

Fig. 16. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentee (Acquiring mentors)
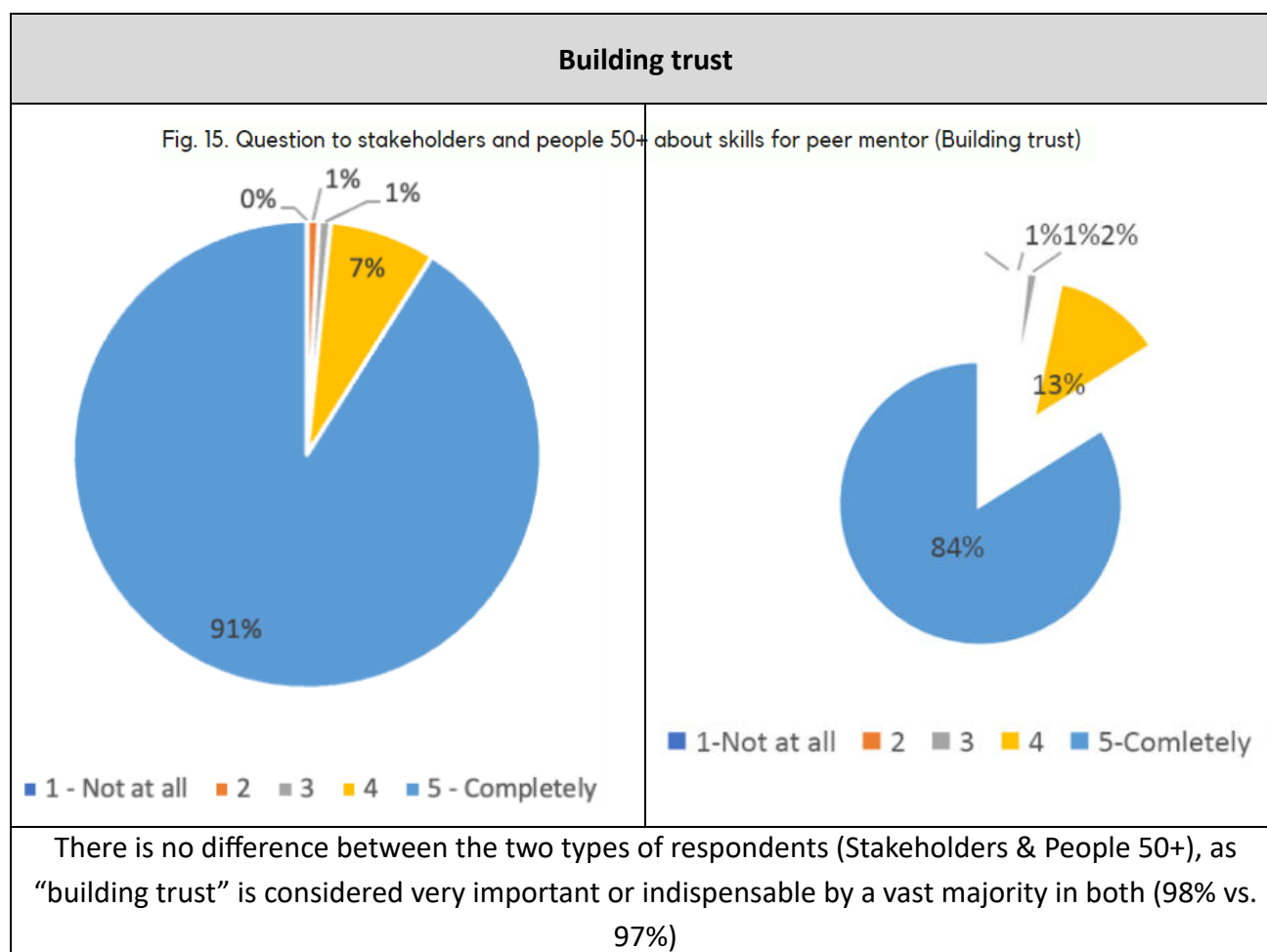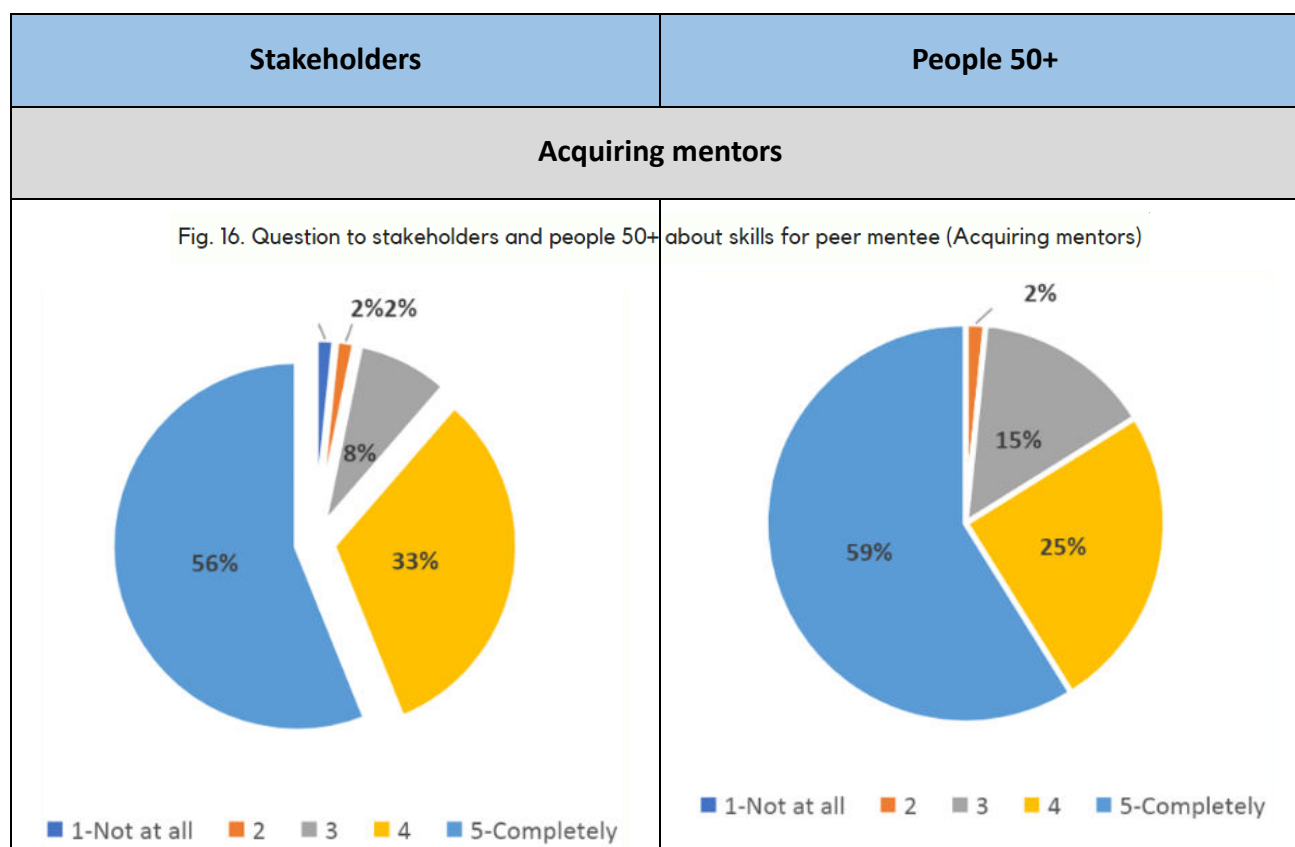
There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "acquiring mentors" is considered very important or indispensable by a majority in both (89% vs. 84%)
Building trust

Fig. 17. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentee (Building trust)

1%3%	2%
23%	7% / 18%
73%	73%

■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "building trust" is considered very important or indispensable by vast majority in both (96% vs. 91%)
Showing initiative
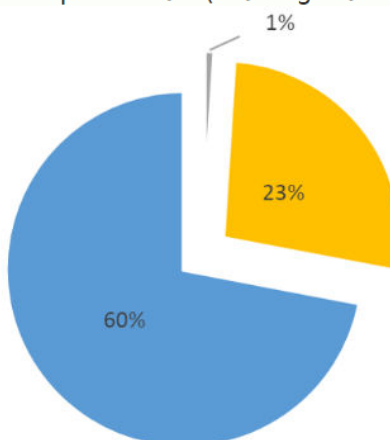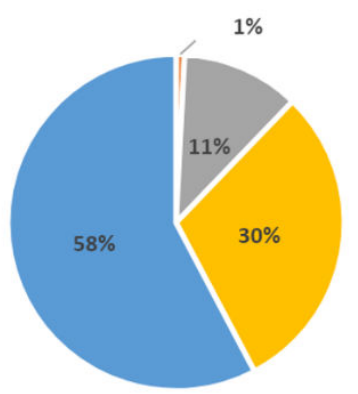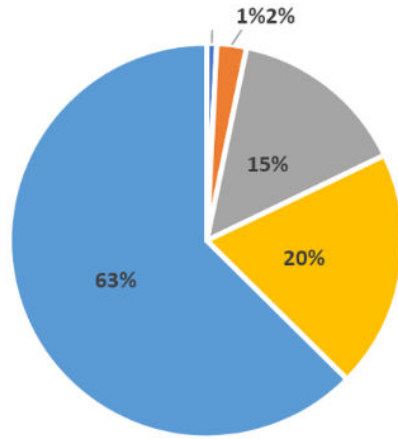
Fig. 18. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentee (Showing initiative)

6% / 21%	1%
73%	6% / 21%
	73%

■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely
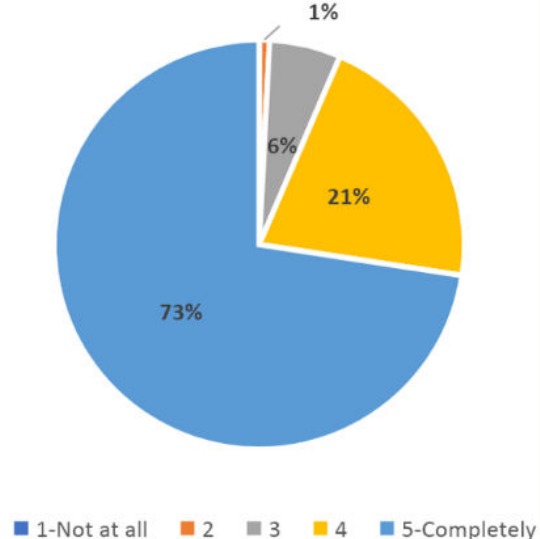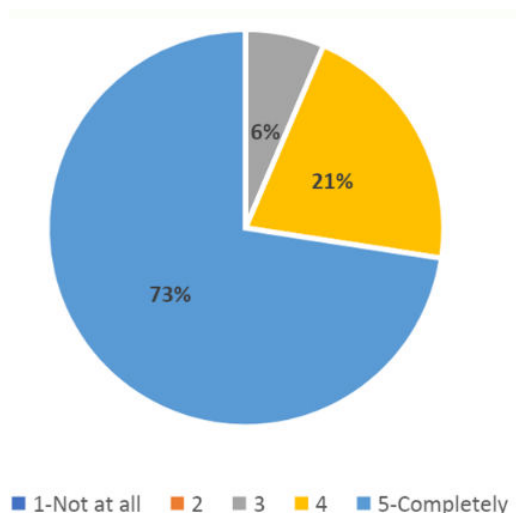
There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "showing initiative" is considered very important or indispensable by vast majority in both (94%)

Learning quickly

Fig. 19. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentee (Learning quickly)

There is a similar trend in both types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), who are more divided on this question than on the previous ones. "Learning quickly" is considered in both important by a majority (53% vs. 61%) and as little or not at all important by some (9% vs.14%)

Following through

Fig. 20. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentee (Following through)

There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "following through" is considered very important or indispensable by majority in both (93% vs. 88%)

Listening actively

Fig. 21. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentee (Listening actively)

There is no substantial difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "listening actively" is considered very important or indispensable by majority in both (96% vs. 83%)

Managing the relationship	Managing risks

Fig. 22. Question to stakeholders about skills for peer mentee (Managing the relationship)

Fig. 23. Question to people 50+ about skills for peer mentee (Managing risks)

| The majority of stakeholders' respondents (88%) considers "managing the relationship" a very important or indispensable skill for a peer mentee to succeed in peer-training. | The majority of People 50+ respondents (83%) considers "managing risks" a very important or indispensable skill for a peer mentee to succeed in peer-training. |

Identifying goals & current reality

Fig. 24. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentee (Identifying goals & current reality)
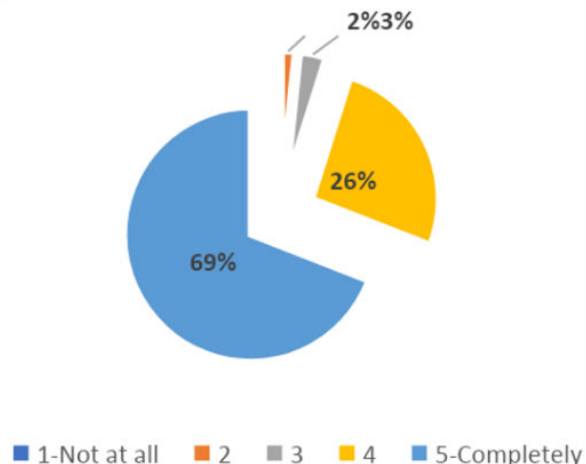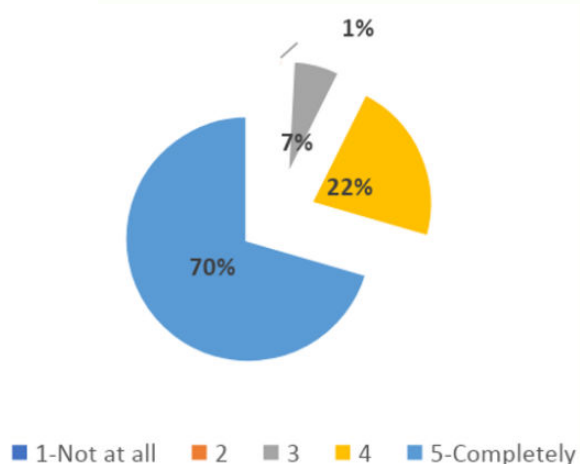
There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "identifying goals & current reality" is considered very important or indispensable by a vast majority in both (92% vs. 95%)

Encouraging

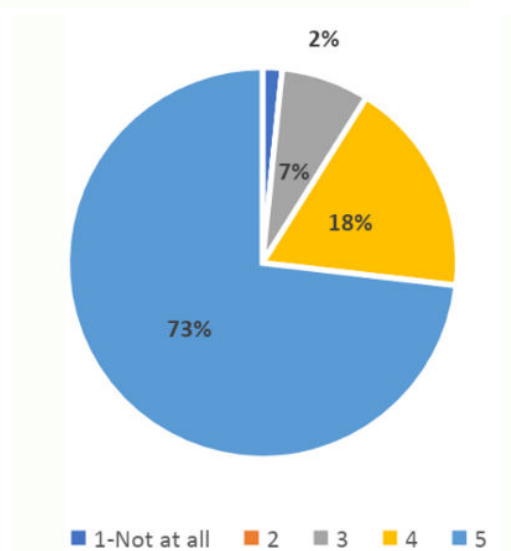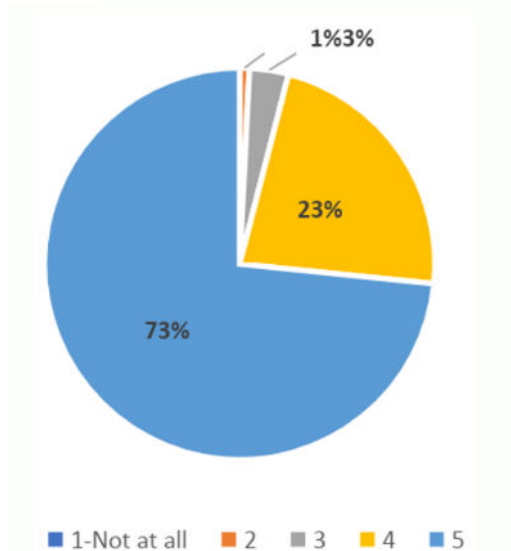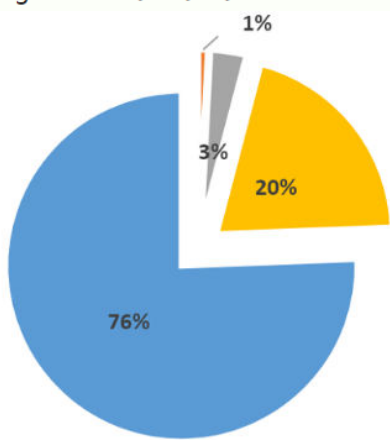Fig. 25. Question to stakeholders and people 50+ about skills for peer mentee (Encouraging)
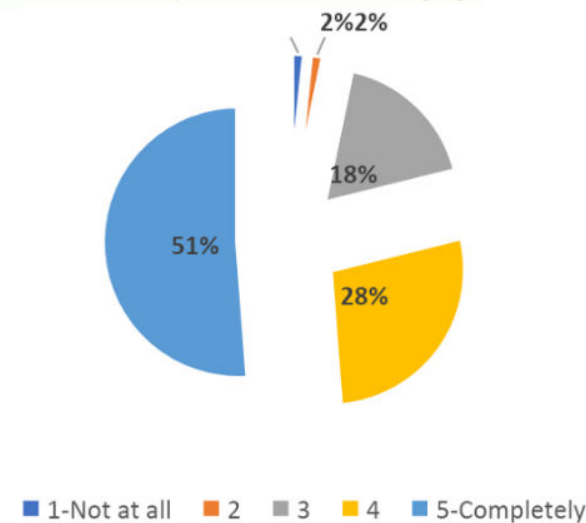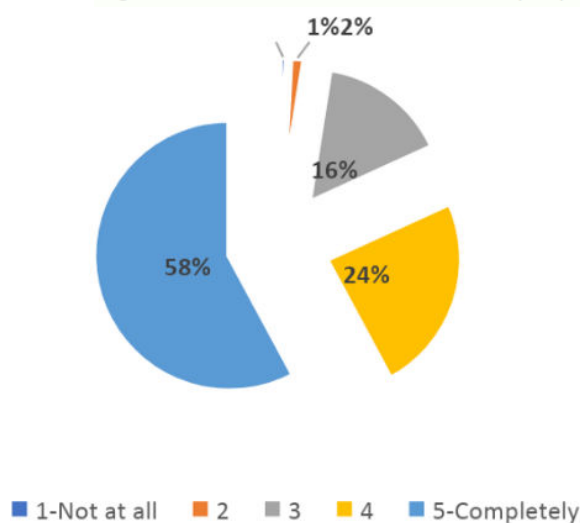
There is no difference between the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), as "encouraging" is considered very important or indispensable by a majority in both (82% vs.79%)

Both samples of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), considered the nine soft skills given for their appreciation (Acquiring mentors, building trust, showing initiative, learning quickly, following through, listening actively, identifying goals & current reality, encouraging) as very important or indispensable, for the success of peer mentees in their peer training. In fact, there is a broad agreement on the high relevance of the aforementioned skills, with those who disagree representing a residual value.

Just in one skill "Learning quickly", both samples register less consensual values, but under the same trend, being the perceived importance, albeit with a slight majority, lower than in the other skills mentioned above. "Learning quickly" is considered in both important by a slightly majority (53% vs. 61%) and as little or not at all important by some (9% vs.14%).

To add more two skills: "managing the relationship" and "managing risks", considered very important or even indispensable, respectively by the two types of respondents (Stakeholders & People 50+), for a peer mentee to succeed in peer-training.

It should be noted that the importance perceived by both samples (Stakeholders & People 50+), in relation to four skills (Building Trust | Listening actively| identifying goals & current reality | Encouraging), questioned both in relation to peer mentors and peer mentees, were considered equally very important and even indispensable both for peer mentors and for peer mentees, and relevant to the success of peer training.

When asked about other equally relevant skills for peer mentees, not mentioned in the questionnaires, two lists of suggestions were obtained (stakeholders - 47; people 50+ - 54), that were organized by skills categories and examples displayed on the next pages.

Please name any other skills you consider relevant for a Peer Mentee and that were not mentioned

Peer Mentees Skills Categories	Stakeholders sample item examples	People 50+ sample item examples
Problem-Solving Skills Mentees, with mentors' support, should recognize issues and fix them with logical, timely, and appropriate solutions.	Knowing own limits Active participation in the program	Constructive and critical response to the mentor's commands Intelligence of the recipients, skillful selection of goals
Communication Skills Mentees should clearly express what they want to say, while also taking into account the proper tone and delivery.	Respect other opinions To be good at starting and maintaining conversation	Directness Ability to tell the truth
Organisational Skills Mentees should be able to negotiate a general plan to follow in their mentoring program, and stick to it in terms of time and quality.	To be a good organizer of the process Analysing feedback	A sincere willingness should suffice Ability to accept criticism
Active Listening Skills Mentees should be able to negotiate a general plan to follow in their mentoring program, and stick to it in terms of time and quality.	More to listen than to talk To respect the mentors	Trust To manage to feel important and respected
Design Thinking Skills Design thinking helps mentees to develop a deep understanding of the way people think and work, be empathetic to different parties, and encourage continuing experimentation.	Be open Be interested in different topics Desire to learn	Ability to keep learning Connecting things Be interested in many new topics

Emotional Intelligence Skills Emotional intelligence skills (EI) relate to the capacity to identify and manage emotions and those around you.	Empathic skills Assertive behaviour	The ability to face the changes and challenges of the 21st century Accept change
Sensitivity Skills It's important that mentees are aware of how to properly interact with mentors, even if they have different backgrounds and cultures.	Love working with people, have good psychological skills Building confidence	Respect to human rights Be fair, show you are a human being with own mistakes
Adaptability Skills Mentees may face unexpected challenges and problems during their mentoring programs. But, mentees with adaptive mindset can more easily adjust to changes or unforeseen events.	Be active and curious Flexibility	The ability to face the changes and challenges of the 21st century Accept change
Personal Skills Also called interpersonal or people skills, are a person's attributes or traits that relate to how a person interacts with other people and the surrounding environment.	Resilience Courage, discipline	Patience Commitment

Table 3. Table of the question "Please name any other skills you consider relevant for a Peer Mentee and that were not mentioned"

Once again, the respondents of the two samples (stakeholders and people 50+) were in broad agreement that there is a wide range of soft skills relevant to the Peer Mentees, which we can group into categories of skills, such as: problem-solving, communication, organizational, active listening, design thinking, emotional intelligence, sensitive, adaptability and personal.

Stakeholders sample produced 94 items about what they think mentees need to stay motivated in a peer-mentoring program, which we categorize into dimensions, according to intrinsic and extrinsic conditions, and displayed below, including sample item examples.

What do you think mentees need to stay motivated in a peer-mentoring program?

Dimensions	Stakeholders sample item examples	People 50+ sample item examples
Intrinsic conditions		
Mentees Have proper knowledge, competencies, experience, self-awareness and personal development needs.	Be active, be curious | have perspective| to be open | faith in the meaning of learning	A clear need for knowledge | To believe their status will improve
Extrinsic conditions		
Program Pragmatic, focus on the target, their expectations, interests and needs, and setting personalized goals	Target focus | interests of mentees | setting a clear goal	Receive what they need | Focus and meet their learning needs
Syllabus Programmatic contents with exciting and up-to-date modules, inspiring examples, relevant/useful tasks and enabling tangible useful results	Best practices | good examples | few tangible results	
Mentors Available, persuasive, communicative and open-minded, capable of planning	Availability| permanent monitoring| Motivation/stimulation, physical/technological conditions	Interesting modules| deal with current topics

Mentoring learning methods Establishing clearly the learning objectives, tasks and outcomes to achieve, well as allowing continuous feedback.	Experiences of self-efficacy | Continuous feedback and encouragement | To receive what they need at that time	The methods to be attractive | Interactive and useful methods | Interesting discussions
Conducive Learning environment Generally helpful learning environment	Supportive environment and will to learn | Good atmosphere	Creating a friendly and relaxed atmosphere | Establish a good relationship with the group and mentor
Mentor-mentees relationship A supportive, close and developing relationship, focused on the mentees needs and expectations, and facilitated by exchange of opinions, experiences and problems, enabling the establishment of a relationship of trust and mutual help	Feel no distance with a mentor| To be able to exchange opinions| Feeling support and understanding| willing to follow your mentor	Acknowledgement | personal involvement| To be listened | Sense of security, community and practical learning outcomes

Table 4. Table of the question "What do you think mentees need to stay motivated in a peer-mentoring program?"

The permanence of the mentees' motivation during a peer-mentoring program is facilitated, according to the responses, by intrinsic and extrinsic conditions, where 4 essential dimensions can be highlighted: 1) the mentee, 2) the program & syllabus, 3) the mentor & mentoring learning methods, and 4) a conducive learning environment & mentor-mentees relationship.

Intrinsic conditions

Mentees

<u>Stakeholders</u>: It can be said that mentees' behavior is all the more motivated as their internal desire to do something for its own sake -- for example, their personal enjoyment of an activity, or their desire to learn a skill because they are eager to learn and fulfill their personal development needs.

<u>People 50+</u>: It can be said that mentees' behavior is all the more motivated as they are persevering and resilient, have clear personal development needs and believe in a better future through a necessary and useful mentoring learning.

Extrinsic conditions

Program & Syllabus

<u>Stakeholders</u>: The program has to be very pragmatic, focus on the target, their expectations, interests and needs and setting personalized goals. So that help mentees to improve their lifelong learning practices that promote autonomy, mastery and confidence in their own abilities. The programmatic contents (syllabus) should let mentees know what the peer mentoring program is about, where it is going, and what will be required for them to be successful and achieve their goals. Tasks, responsibilities and benefits should be clear from the start and the activities chosen to provide learning experiences that enable the achievement of the established goals. Must integrate exciting and up-to-date modules, inspiring examples, relevant/useful tasks and enabling tangible useful results.

<u>People 50+</u>:The program has to be action-oriented, focus on responding to the target expectations, capabilities, interests and needs, and setting personalized goals. The programmatic contents (syllabus) must integrate stimulating up-to-date modules and enabling practical applicability.

Mentors & Mentoring learning methods

Stakeholders: The mentor's personality and their mentoring methods, can make learning easier. A mentor´s pleasant and friendly personalities are capable of setting mentee at ease at every point in time. The mentor is expected to be available, persuasive, communicative and open-minded, capable of planning, proposing and implementing exciting, motivating and meaningful activities, under the best physical and technological conditions. it is also expected to be able to encourage mentees to talk about their experiences and aspirations, as well as to show, through permanent monitoring, the progress made towards achieving the goals they have set. The mentor can often be seen as a role model to the mentees, since they expect mentors to help them on achieving significant personal and/or professional goals. Therefore, it is the duty of every mentor to provide an adequate methodological approach in the mentoring learning process, capable of favoring the development of the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve the goals established by the mentees. For this, it is relevant to include the clear establishment of the learning objectives, tasks and outcomes to achieve, well as allowing continuous feedback. Active, participatory, creative and stimulating sessions, facilitating sharing and seeing the potential practical transfer of the meaningful activities undertaken, are aspects that must always be present throughout the monitoring process. And never forget that the mentor and the mentoring methods are necessary conditions that enhance learning.

People 50+: The mentor's personality and their mentoring methods, can make learning easier. A mentor empathetic, persuasive, active listener, professional, capable of planning, organizing time and offer psychological support is desirable. Therefore, it is the duty of every mentor to provide an adequate methodological approach in the mentoring learning process, capable of establishing skilful gradation of difficulties, attractive, pleasant and useful activities, that allow mentees to learn, while enjoying and having fun. Encouragement and favour the joint planning of activities, peer sharing and work, and regular positive feedback. In this way the fruitage of the work developed is recognized once mentees can notice personal effects and progress made.

Conducive Learning environment & Mentor-mentees relationship

<u>Stakeholders</u>: A conducive learning environment is a key factor to consider for effective mentoring to take place. The importance of the environment in learning cannot be underestimated, since learning always takes place in a certain environment. A conducive learning environment can generally be characterized as a supportive environment that facilitates learning and where there is a warm, close and developing mentor-mentees relationship, focused on the mentees needs and expectations, and facilitated by exchange of opinions, experiences and problems, use of appropriate language and respect for each other, enabling the establishment of a relationship based upon trust, mutual help and confidentiality.

<u>People 50+</u>: A conducive learning environment is a key factor to consider for effective mentoring to take place. The importance of the environment in learning cannot be underestimated, since learning always takes place in a certain environment. A conducive learning environment enables a friendly, pleasant, relaxed and reliable atmosphere and building up a mentor-mentees relationship, based on good interpersonal relations, mutual recognition and respect, inducing security and a kind of relaxation, a source of happiness from which mentor and mentees can always draw some energy to move forward.

The results obtained when asking Stakeholders and People 50+ which areas they believed the mentees would be interested:

Respondents	Stakeholders								People 50+							
Countries	SL	HU	BG	DE	PL	PT	Total by Area		SL	HU	BG	DE	PL	PT	Total by Area	
Areas							N	%							N	%
Preparation for the labor market in the 21st century	20	17	10	0	9	6	62	14%	11	16	6	15	5	11	64	14%
Entrepreneurship to prolong working life	20	14	3	13	6	9	53	12%	14	12	1	9	6	11	53	12%
Promoting intergenerational solidariaty	20	17	1	6	10	8	70	16%	14	18	4	8	16	10	70	16%
Healthy lifestyle and meaningful life strategies	20	16	3	17	19	12	95	22%	29	19	9	11	22	15	95	22%
Strengthening finantial literacy in modern era	20	14	2	7	14	6	59	14%	13	14	0	13	8	11	59	14%
Safe use of digital technologies	20	18	1	18	23	19	95	22%	19	20	0	14	22	20	95	22%
							436	100%							436	100%

Table 5. Table of the areas that Stakeholders and People 50+ believe mentees would be interested in"

Overall, responding stakeholders& Target groups highlighted two areas that they believe to be of most interest to mentees – "Safe use of digital technologies" (23%vs.22%) and "Healthy lifestyle and meaningful life strategies" (20% vs. 22%).

However, with regard to countries, there are some differences, which are shown in Table 5A, on the next page.

Stakeholders	People 50+
All the Slovak respondents marked the 6 areas to be interesting, without exception	More than half of the Slovak respondents marked the 6 areas to be interesting
More than half of Hungarian respondents ticked all the areas to be interesting	
Half of the Bulgarian respondents chose the first area: "Preparation for the labour market in the 21st century"	Close to half of Bulgarian respondents consider "Healthy lifestyle and meaningful life strategies" to be interesting
Germans tended to tick 3 areas: "Safe use of digital technologies", "Healthy lifestyle and meaningful life strategies" and "Entrepreneurship to prolong working life";	Germans tended to tick 4 areas: "Preparation for the labour market in the 21st century", "Healthy lifestyle and meaningful life strategies", "Strengthening financial literacy in modern era" and "Safe use of digital technologies"
Polish respondents tended to tick 3 areas: "Safe use of digital technologies", "Healthy lifetime and meaningful life strategies", and "Strengthening financial literacy in modern area"	Polish respondents tended to tick 3 areas: "Promoting intergenerational solidarity", "Healthy lifetime and meaningful life strategies", and "Safe use of digital technologies"
Portuguese respondents pointed out 2 areas: "Safe use of digital technologies" and "Healthy lifestyle and meaningful life strategies"	More than half of the Portuguese respondents pointed out 5 areas: "Preparation for the labour market in the 21st century", "Entrepreneurship to prolong working life", "Healthy lifestyle and meaningful life strategies", "Strengthening financial literacy in modern era" and "Safe use of digital technologies"

Table 5A. Table of the areas that Stakeholders and People 50+ believe mentees would be interested in" by country

Specific Questions for People 50+

People 50+ sample produced 46 items in response to the question: Can you describe a peer-mentoring experience you had in your life? What did you like about it, what could be improved displayed below, including sample item examples

Can you describe a peer-mentoring experience you had in your life? What did you like about it, what could be improved?

Dimensions	People 50+ sample item examples	
	Liked	**To be improved**
Mentors	How to combine the knowledge with the experience | Understand what the mentee needs and their profile of the personality| First make people trust themselves	Definitely health has to be improved Taking care of the health and physical abilities of the participants
Mentees	Mentees have to enjoy time; laugh | Actively participate in various activities	Do not waste time of people. If they cannot learn anything meaningful better to rest at home
Peer Mentoring learning methods	It is appropriate for the more experienced to pass on information to the less experienced, but the less experienced must also be willing to accept, especially when he is over 50 years old and also has experience in the given field, but in a different company Like teamwork and collegiality, mutual benefit	Why is it important to be educated even after 50+ Conducting neighbourhood meetings Unfortunately, the circle of active seniors is not as large as the area of need. It would be necessary to constantly work on widening the circle of people covered by peer learning.
Conducive Learning environment	Informal and friendly environment | The environment is important	Coaching I wish they had been more sincere in some moments

| | | It was more difficult when learning new things, for example, in computer classes, where prejudices and stereotypes like "I certainly won't learn, that's not for me anymore |
| | | |

Table 6. Table of the question for people 50+ " Can you describe a peer-mentoring experience you had in your life? What did you like about it, what could be improved?"

In general, the people 50+ respondents confirm much of the results already presented previously. They reaffirm that they like knowledge to be combined with experience, that the specific needs of mentees and their own characteristics are taken into account, as well as openness to sharing and learning from each other.   They emphasize that they like unconventional, stimulating, creative and collaborative approaches, within the scope of a conducive learning environment to facilitating learning and establishing friendships and good interpersonal relationships.

On the other hand, they consider that the experience can be improved if more attention is paid to the health and physical abilities of the participants, if time is not wasted learning non-meaningful things and if awareness of the relevance of laterlife learning is reinforced, being necessary to constantly work on widening the circle of people covered by peer learning. Draw also attention to the need to continue fighting age-related stereotypes and prejudices that still exist, namely in terms of digital literacy.

Finally, coaching is noted as a necessary improvement, seeming to indicate that, in addition to the mentoring work, it would also be desirable to strengthen the provision of guidance to the mentees on their goals and helps them reach their full potential.

I am interested in peer-mentoring programs.
Fig. 26. Question to people 50+ "I am interested in peer-mentoring programs" 6% 2% 14% 63% 16% ■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely
The majority of people 50+ respondents (79%) are very interested in peer mentoring programmes.
I have been or am interested in being a peer-mentor.
Fig. 27. Question to people 50+ "I have been or am interested in being a peer-mentor" 11% 6% 15% 57% 11% ■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely
The majority of people 50+ respondents (68%) have been or are interested in being a peer-mentor.
I would like to learn more about tools and methods for peer-mentors
Fig. 28. Question to people 50+ "I would like to learn more about tools and methods for peer-mentors" 6% 1% 9% 18% 66% ■ 1-Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5-Completely
The majority of people 50+ respondents (84%) would like to learn more about tools and methods for peer-mentors, thus being potential candidates for further training in peer-mentoring.
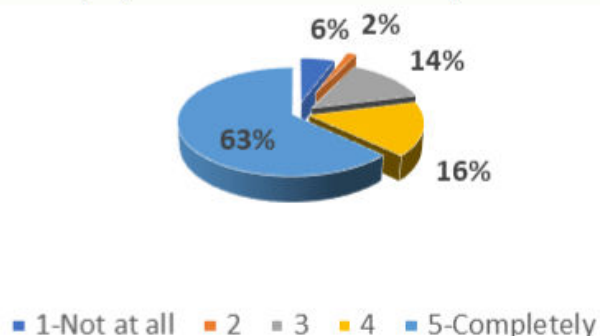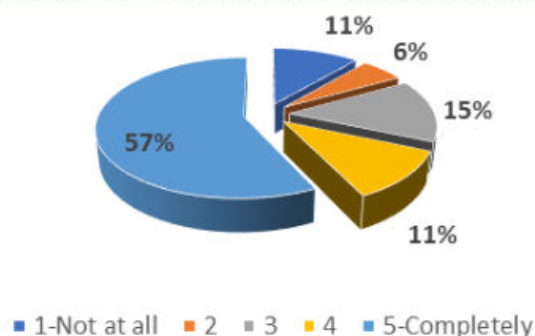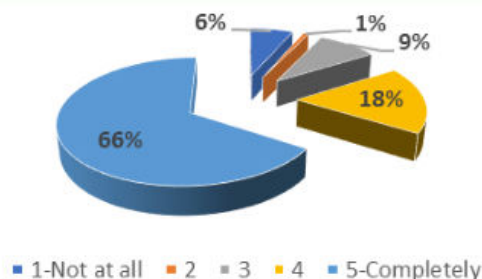
I have had training/classes on how to be a peer-mentor
Fig. 29. Question to people 50+ "I have had training/classes on how to be a peer-mentor"   13%   2%   24%   56%   5%   ■ 1-Not at all   ■ 2   ■ 3   ■ 4   ■ 5-Completely
The majority of people 50+ respondents have not attended classes on how to be a peer-mentor.
I believe that peer-mentoring can be a way to promote active ageing and increase the life quality of people over 50
Fig. 30. Question to people 50+ "I believe that peer-mentoring can be a way to promote active ageing and increase the life quality of people over 50"   1%   6%   2%   23%   69%   ■ 1-Not at all   ■ 2   ■ 3   ■ 4   ■ 5-Completely
The vast majority of people 50+ respondents (92%) believe that peer-mentoring can be a way to promote active ageing and increase the life quality of people 50+.
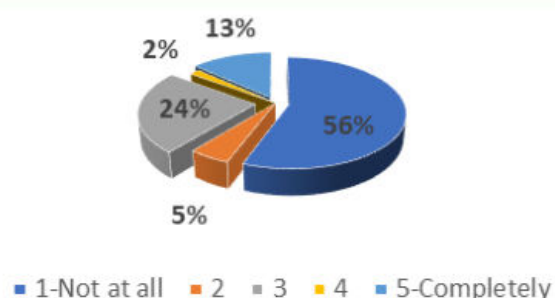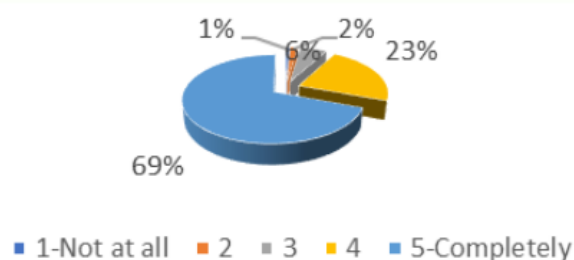
Respondents from people 50+ regarding their interest and experience in Peer Train, responded mostly positively to the five questions they were asked. They are interested in peer-mentoring programs, were/are interested in being a peer-mentor, want to learn more about tools and methods for peer-mentoring, and believe that peer-mentoring can be a way to promote active ageing and improve the quality of life of people over 50. However, most of them were not trained to be peer-mentors.

Specific Questions for Stakeholders

Stakeholders sample produced 86 items about what specific needs do people 50+ have when it comes to peer mentoring, categorized into two dimensions, displayed below with sample item examples.

According to your experiences, what specific needs do people 50+ have when it comes to peer mentoring?

Dimensions	Stakeholders sample item examples
Individual level **Personal** Improve the quality of life	Improve their quality of life| stay active| building self-confidence
Socio-professional Feel socially included, providing opportunities for social engagement (family, communities & professional)	New skills for better life | Intergenerational solidarity | Integration with people of similar age
Peer mentoring process **Targeted programs**, enabling managing change, skills development (for job and for life) and advice on solving precise problems	How to search for information | how not to fall victim to a scam | financial knowledge
Mentoring learning methods, within an active approach, based on needs, motivations and strengths, follow-up and continuing feedback.	Individual approach of a mentor addressing individual needs | have interesting discussions
Pace and rhythm age-appropriate learning pace and rhythm well as flexible schedules	Age-appropriate learning pace | flexibility in terms of schedules | keep up with the times
Mentor-mentees relationship A supportive, sincere and close relationship	very often they need psychological advice | They prefer mentors aged 50+, with whom they can easily identify

Table 7. Table of the question for stakeholders "According to your experiences, what specific needs do people 50+ have when it comes to peer mentoring?"

It can be stated that the stakeholder sample considers that the specific needs that people 50+ have, when it comes to peer mentoring, are focused in two main dimensions: at the individual level (personal and socio-professional) as well as that of the mentoring process itself (programs, mentoring learning methods, pace and rhythm and mentor-mentees relationships).

Fundamentally, an opportunity for personal enrichment and social involvement is expected, capable of expanding knowledge and skills in areas of interest (for job and for life), in a solidary, sincere and close relationship, capable of offering an active and flexible approach, based on needs, motivations and strengths, as well as advice on managing change, solving precise problems and giving continuous feedback, on the way for them to feel socially included and improve their quality of life.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to become a peer mentor?

Dimensions	Stakeholders sample item examples
Prerequisites to be a mentor Combining relevant knowledge and professional experience (at least 2 years as an adult trainer) with a clear commitment to facilitating learning and managing interpersonal relationship.	To have been an adult trainer beforehand at least for 2 years | identify the area in which you would feel comfortable being a mentor, after that, develop your interpersonal and mentoring skills, as it is not enough to have knowledge in an area, it also matters how it is communicated
Mentor personality traits Be understanding and listen to others. Have high levels of empathy, sensitivity, and the ability to support the emotional well-being of others. Work to improve communication, develop and help others achieve their full potential.	Patient, empathic, understanding, kind| high level of responsibility| open-minded, motivated| Have courage, time and love for work
Mentor's daily practice **Meeting other mentors** Establish regular contacts with other mentors **Knowing the mentees needs** Get to know the mentees and their needs well	Establish a contact with the other mentors in order to be able to exchange opinions Pick your mentee wisely | First to understand well the need of the mentee and discuss at least 2 possible strategies

Methods Offer a targeted (personalized) and problem-specific approach. A mentee-centered mentoring	Individual approach to people 50+ | Responsibility towards the mentored person| individual approach to everybody in order to be efficient

Table 8. Table of the question for stakeholders "What advice would you give to someone who wants to become a peer mentor?"

Stakeholder respondents advise those who wish to become a peer mentor that they should fulfill three crucial facets, as follows:

Prerequisites to be a mentor: Combining relevant knowledge and professional experience (at least 2 years as an adult trainer) with a clear commitment to facilitating learning and managing interpersonal relationship;

Mentor personality traits: Be understanding and listen to others. Have high levels of empathy, sensitivity, and the ability to support the emotional well-being of others. Work to improve communication, develop and help others achieve their full potential and

Mentor's daily practice: Establish regular contacts with other mentors, get to know the mentees and their needs well and offer a mentee-centered mentoring, a targeted (personalized) and problem-specific approach.

Findings

Next, the main results obtained with the two surveys by questionnaires carried out (Stakeholders and people 50+), within the scope of the Peer Train Project.

All of the Stakeholders respondents have a white-collar job, spread across a range of professional activities, but with some predominance in those related to education and training field, working above all in the public sector. They have extensive experience working with people aged 50+, with a remarkable majority doing this work for over 10 years.

The people 50+ sample is made up of almost half of retired people, and a slight majority of employed, self-employed and unemployed. Both groups (Stakeholders and People 50+) are mainly made up of respondents aged over 50 years, although with older respondents in the people 50+, where most are over 60 years.

The two samples of respondents had a very similar, consistent behaviour, on a large number of shared topics, throughout the completion of the questionnaires, which allows us to state:

1. <u>High relevance of the soft skills for **Peer Mentors** to succeed in peer-training</u>, namely: providing corrective feedback, instructing & developing capabilities, identifying goals & current reality, Inspiring, managing risks, opening doors, encouraging, listening actively and building trust. To add some more soft skills, as a result of further suggestions made, as: problem-solving, communication, organizational, time management, design thinking, emotional intelligence, sensitive, adaptability and personal.

2. <u>High relevance of the soft skills for **Peer Mentees** to succeed in peer-training</u>, namely: acquiring mentors, building trust, showing initiative, learning quickly, following through, listening actively, identifying goals & current reality, encouraging, managing the relationship and managing risks. To add some more soft skills, as a result of further suggestions made, as: problem-solving, communication, organizational, time management, design thinking, emotional intelligence, sensitive, adaptability and personal.

3. <u>The permanence of the **Mentees'** motivation during a peer-mentoring program is facilitated by intrinsic and extrinsic conditions, where 4 essential dimensions can be highlighted: 1)</u> the mentee, 2) the program & syllabus, 3) the mentor & mentoring learning methods, and 4) a conducive learning environment & mentor-mentees relationship.

Intrinsic conditions

Mentees: mentees' behavior is all the more motivated as their internal desire to do something for its own sake, they are persevering and resilient, they are eager to learn and fulfill their personal development needs. Meaning they have clear personal development needs and believe in a better future through a necessary and useful mentoring learning.

Extrinsic conditions

Program & Syllabus: The program has to be very pragmatic, action-oriented focus on responding to the target expectations, capabilities, interests and needs and setting personalized goals. The programmatic contents (syllabus) should let mentees know what the peer mentoring program is about, where it is going, and what will be required for them to be successful and achieve their goals. Tasks, responsibilities and benefits should be clear from the start and the activities chosen to provide learning experiences that enable the achievement of the established goals. Must integrate exciting and up-to-date modules, inspiring examples, relevant/useful tasks and enabling tangible useful results.

Mentors & Mentoring learning methods: The mentor's personality and their mentoring methods, can make learning easier. A mentor´s pleasant and friendly personalities are capable of setting mentee at ease at every point in time. The mentor is expected to be available, empathetic, persuasive, communicative and open-minded, capable of planning, organizing time, proposing and implementing exciting, motivating and meaningful activities and offer psychological support, under the best physical and technological conditions. it is also expected to be able to encourage mentees to talk about their experiences and aspirations, as well as to show, through permanent monitoring, the progress made towards achieving the goals they have set. The mentor can often be seen as a role model to the mentees, since they expect mentors to help them on achieving significant personal and/or professional goals. Therefore, it is the duty of every mentor to provide an adequate methodological

approach in the mentoring learning process, capable of favoring the development of the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve the goals established by the mentees. For this, it is relevant to include the clear establishment of the learning objectives, tasks and outcomes to achieve, well as allowing continuous feedback. Active, participatory, creative and stimulating sessions, facilitating sharing and seeing the potential practical transfer of the meaningful activities undertaken, are aspects that must always be present throughout the monitoring process. And never forget that the mentor and the mentoring methods are necessary conditions that enhance learning.

Conducive Learning environment & Mentor-mentees relationship: A conducive learning environment is a key factor to consider for effective mentoring to take place. The importance of the environment in learning cannot be underestimated, since learning always takes place in a certain environment. A conducive learning environment can generally be characterized as a supportive environment that facilitates learning and where there is a warm, close and developing mentor-mentees relationship, focused on the mentees needs and expectations, and facilitated by exchange of opinions, experiences and problems, use of appropriate language and respect for each other, enabling the establishment of a relationship based upon trust, mutual help, confidentiality, good interpersonal relations, mutual recognition and respect, inducing security and a kind of relaxation, a source of happiness from which mentor and mentees can always draw some energy to move forward.

4. Areas believed to be of most interest to Mentees: Overall, are highlighted two areas – "Safe use of digital technologies" and "Healthy lifestyle and meaningful life strategies": However, as far as countries are concerned, there are some differences (please see table 6A), that may be relevant for planning the offer of peer mentoring in each of the partner countries.

Finally, it is necessary to mention the findings related to the questions that were asked only to one of the two samples, Stakeholders or 50+s.

Stakeholders sample:

- Consider that the <u>specific needs that people 50+ have, when it comes to peer mentoring</u>, focus, fundamentally, on having an opportunity for personal enrichment and social involvement, capable of expanding knowledge and skills in areas of interest (professional and for life), in a solidary, sincere and close relationship, capable of offering an active and flexible approach, based on needs, motivations and strengths, as well as advice on managing change, solving precise problems and giving continuous feedback, on the way for them to feel socially included and improve their quality of life.

- Advise, those who wish to <u>become a peer mentor</u> that they should fulfill three crucial conditions:1) Combining relevant knowledge and professional experience (at least 2 years as an adult trainer) with a clear commitment to facilitating learning and managing interpersonal relationship; 2) Be understanding and listen to others. Have high levels of empathy, sensitivity, and the ability to support the emotional well-being of others. Work to improve communication, develop and help others achieve their full potential and 3) Establish regular contacts with other mentors, get to know the mentees and their needs well and offer a mentee-centered mentoring, a targeted (personalized) and problem-specific approach.

People 50+s sample:

- <u>Regarding their interest and experience in Peer Train</u>: They are interested in peer-mentoring programs, were/are interested in being a peer-mentor, want to learn more about tools and methods for peer-mentoring, and believe that peer-mentoring can be a way to promote active ageing and improve the quality of life of people over 50. However, most of them were not trained yet to be peer-mentors;

- <u>Regarding peer-mentoring experience had in their life, what they did like about it and what could be improved</u>: They reaffirm that they liked knowledge to be combined with experience, that the specific needs of mentees and their own characteristics were taken into account, as well as openness to sharing and learning from each other. They emphasized that they like unconventional, stimulating, creative and collaborative approaches, within the scope of a conducive learning environment to facilitating learning and establishing friendships and good interpersonal relationships. But the experiences could be improved if more attention is paid to the health and physical abilities of the participants, if time is not wasted in learning non-meaningful things and if awareness of the relevance of laterlife learning is reinforced, being necessary to constantly work on widening the circle of people covered by peer learning. Draw also attention to the need to continue fighting age-related stereotypes and prejudices that still exist, namely in terms of digital literacy. Finally, coaching is noted as a necessary improvement, seeming to indicate that, in addition to the mentoring work, it would also be desirable to strengthen the provision of guidance to the mentees on their goals and helps them reach their full potential.

Conclusions

All countries have national strategies for active ageing following European policy, however this does not necessarily mean they are promoting active ageing as policy and strategic documents may not end up being applied in reality.

We proceeded to collect beneficial/good practices and, considering effectiveness taking into consideration the tried and tested model of competencies for active ageing by Antunes et al. (2015), we critically read them and identified which core competencies for active ageing they promoted. All the practices promoted more than one competency of active ageing. Furthermore, 7 of our practices used a mentoring approach towards promoting active ageing, which highlights its utility to this end (Active Ageing Project, 2018; Aresi & Weaver, 2020; Baschiera & De Meyer, 2016).

Additionally, the partnership collected surveys by questionnaire aimed at both stakeholders (e.g., adult educators) and people aged 50 or more in which they had to rate, in a Likert scale, the core skills for successful mentoring as per Philips-Jones (2003). The surveys corroborated that these skills are considered very important as they all obtained, overall, scores of 4 or 5, which means they are completely necessary or very necessary for successful peer mentoring.

This not only highlights the relevance of PeerTrain but the project can also learn from the practices and see how these skills were promoted and adapt and implement similar methodologies. Furthermore, it must facilitate the promotion of the aforementioned skills and competencies, which were already theoretical defined as being crucial and which our results corroborated, when developing the project's training modules.

Additionally, individuals 50+ appear to be very interested in what the project is developing. The two topics that seemed to interest people 50+ the most were Healthy lifestyle and meaningful life strategies, and Safe use of digital technologies. We would also highlight that the other topics which seemed to receive less interest from our 50+ samples should perhaps be demystified and promoted as something relevant for people 50+. For instance, it is possible that entrepreneurship is still perceived as something for young persons because of the popular image of the young entrepreneur, but actually 70% of start-ups created by older persons last 3 years or more, compared with 28% for

younger entrepreneurs (Khan, 2013). In regards to the Preparation for the labour market of the 21st century it is possible that some participants didn't say they were interested on the topic due to them being retired. As for the Strengthening financial literacy in the modern era, this might be because financials are often perceived as being hard and time-consuming and, perhaps by using activities that are able to keep mentees motivated, and highlighting their pertinence, this view can be changed.

Finally, to point out that participants on both stakeholder and 50+ survey underscored that frequent feedback, perceived success, visible progress, and considering the program as being valuable, as well as having fun and interesting activities are core for keeping mentees motivated in mentoring programs. PeerTrain should keep this in consideration.

References

1. Active Ageing Project (2018). Volunteer Role Description Senior Peer Mentor. https://www.ageuk.org.uk/bp-assets/globalassets/stockport/original-blocks/get-involved/volunteer/active-ageing-volunteer-peer-mentor-role-description-l5-ser-aa15.pdf

2. Age-friendly Municipality Award (2017). https://www.civilek.hu/palyazatok/idosbarat-onkormanyzat-dij/

3. Antunes, M. H., Valentini, A., Findeisen, D., Tobin, A., Granville, J., & Chinita, F. (2015). CINAGE Guide for educators. https://cinage.aidlearn.pt/fls/docs/package/guide_en.pdf

4. Aresi, G., & Weaver, R. H. (2020). Volunteer and healthy ageing: the case of mentoring disadvantaged youth. https://euspr.hypotheses.org/1438

5. Association of Adult Education Institutions in the Slovak Republic. (2017). Project Age Management Uptake. https://www.agemanagementuptake.eu/

6. Baschiera, B., & De Meyer, W. (2016). Support of active ageing through P2P learning. Journal of Education Culture and Society, 7(1), 180–192. https://doi.org/10.15503/jecs20161.180.192

7. Baláž, V., Feik, M., Gramata, J., Husáriková, V., Jankurová, A., Němec, M., Sollárová, E., Stacho, M., Vaňo B. (2013). STRATÉGIA AKTÍVNEHO STARNUTIA. Centrum vzdelávania MPSVR, Bratislava, Slovakia. https://docplayer.cz/47966376-Strategia-aktivneho-starnutia.html

8. Biuro Analiz, D. i. (2019). Aktywnośc osób starszych/Activities of elderly. https://www.senat.gov.pl/gfx/senat/pl/senatopracowania/170/plik/ot-672.pdf

9. Council of the European Union (2012). Council Declaration on the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012): The Way Forward. Council (EPSCO). https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST%2017468%202012%20INIT/EN/pdf

10. Cpocreativity. (2020). Heutagogy – какво представлява? From website https://cpocreativity.com

11. Cpocreativity.(2020). Андрагогията – науката за обучение на възрастните. From website https://cpocreativity.com

12. Design Terminal (2022): Mától dolgozz magadért! (Work for yourself from today!) https://vallalkozz50.designterminal.org/

13. Dobeš, J., Fornusková, R., Kostelníková, M., Kříž J., Pokorný ,B., Štorová, I., Frevel, A., Szellő, J., Kuijpers, I., Laurier, J., Határ, C., Hrebeňárová, L., Kapucian, B., Hegerová, I., Lőrincz, S., Mindeková, Ľ., Šilhár, K. (2021). Methodology for Managing Work Ability for Employed Persons or Considering a Change of Profession. Erasmus+ partnership. https://www.agemanagement.sk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2022-02-methodology-for-managing-work-ability-A5-WEB-komprese.pdf

14. Dobeš, J., Fornusková, R., Kostelníková, M., Kříž J., Pokorný ,B., Štorová, I., Frevel, A., Szellő, J., Kuijpers, I., Laurier, J., Határ, C., Hrebeňárová, L., Kapucian, B., Hegerová, I., Lőrincz, S., Mindeková, Ľ., Šilhár, K. (2021). Support of active aging at work/Work ability management. Erasmus+ partnership. https://www.agemanagement.sk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Support-of-the-aging_A5_final.pdf

15. EAEA. (2019). European association for the education of adults.Country report on adult education in Germany. From website https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/germany_country-report-on-adult-education-in-germany.pdf

16. European Commission (2012) The EU Contribution to Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. European Commission. https://gddc.ministeriopublico.pt/sites/default/files/emp-11-023-brochureactiveageing_en_webres.pdf

17. Egetenmeyer, R. (2019). Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in Europe and Beyond. Chapter: Adult learning and education policies in Germany, Portugal and Sweden. An analysis of national reports to CONFINTEA VI. From website https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/id/b7b52c8f-35b8-4dfc-8271-e78bd51c2625/1002750.pdf

18. European Commission (2022). EACEA National policies platform. Adult education and training. From website https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/developments-and-current-policy-priorities-30_en

19. Eurostat. (2019). Ageing Europe. Looking at the lives of older people in the EU. From website https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/10166544/KS-02-19%E2%80%91681-EN-N.pdf/c701972f-6b4e-b432-57d2-91898ca94893

20. Eurostat (2020). Ageing Europe : looking at the lives of older people in the EU : 2020 edition, (L,Corselli-Nordblad,editor,H,Strandell,editor) Publications Office. https://doi.org/10.2785/628105

21. Eurostat (2022). Population by age group [Data set]. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00010/default/table?lang=en

22. European Parliament. Annex. Requested by the EMPL committee. PolicyDepartment for Economic, S. a.-G. (n.d.). Ageing policies- access to services in different Member States. AnnexIII- Country Study on Germany.

23. Franz Kolland, F., Ahmadi, P. (2010). Bildung und aktives Altern: Bewegung im Ruhestand. W. Bertelsmann Verlag GmbH & Co. KG Bielefeld.

24. Government of the Hungarian Republic (August 2009): Proposal no. H/10500. for parliamentary resolution about National Strategy on Ageing https://www.parlament.hu/irom38/10500/10500.pdf

25. Grabowska, A. (2020). UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE IN POLAND IN 2018. http://utwpg.gda.pl/2020U3A-Forum/U3A-in-Poland-2018-24-02-2020.pdf

26. Grunwald, K., Hrapková N. (2022). Seniorś Learning in the Digital Society. Comenius University Bratislava, Bratislava, Slovakia. https://selid.efos-europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Booklet-SELID-9-2-2022.pdf

27. Holbeche, L. (1996). Peer mentoring: the challenges and opportunities. Career Development International, 1(7), 24-27.

28. Iqbal, H. (2020). E-mentoring: an effective platform for distance learning. http://www.e-mentor.edu.pl/artykul/index/numer/84/id/1463

29. Käpplinger, B. (2020). Modernisation of organisations due to migration? : Mixed blessings in adult education centres in Germany. From website European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults, 11(3), 293–308

30. Khan, H. (2013). Five hours a day systemic innovation for an ageing population. Nesta. https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/five_hours_a_day_jan13.pdf

31. Konsorcjum Szkoleniowo-Doradcze Gamma. (2020). Czym jest peermentoring. https://www.projektgamma.pl/strefa-wiedzy/wiki/czym-jest-peer-mentoring/

32. MatureProject (2022). matureproject.eu

33. Ministerstvo práce sociálnych vecí a rodiny Slovenskej republiky. (2021). Správa o plnení úloh vyplývajúcich z Národného programu aktívneho starnutia na roky 2014 – 2020. MPSVR SR, Bratislava, Slovakia. Last time downloaded on 11/05/2022 from website https://www.employment.gov.sk/sk/ministerstvo/rada-vlady-sr-prava-seniorov/narodny-program-aktivneho-starnutia.html

34. Ministerstvo práce sociálnych vecí a rodiny. (2021). National project "Chyť sa svojej šance". MPSVR SR, Bratislava, Slovakia. Last time downloaded on 11/05/2022 from website https://www.employment.gov.sk/sk/uvodna-stranka/informacie-media/aktuality/novy-projekt-chyt-svojej-sance-podporuje-vznik-pracovnych-miest-rozbeh-podnikania.html

35. Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny Slovenskej republiky (2014). Národný program aktívneho starnutia na roky 2014 – 2020. MPSVR SR Sekcia sociálneho poistenia a dôchodkového sporenia, ISBN 978-80-89125-18-0, Bratislava, Slovakia. Last time downloaded on 09/05/2022 from website https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/ministerstvo/rada-vlady-sr-prava-seniorov/npas-2014-2020.pdf

36. Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny Slovenskej republiky. (2021). Národný program aktívneho starnutia na roky 2021 – 2030. Inštitút pre výskum práce a rodiny, Bratislava, Slovakia. Last time downloaded on 11/05/2022 from website https://ivpr.gov.sk/narodny-program-aktivneho-starnutia-na-roky-2021-2030-analyticka-cast-kvetoslava-repkova-ed/

37. Ministerstvo školstva vedy výskumu a športu Slovenskej republiky. (2021) Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania a poradenstva na roky 2021 – 2030. MŠVVaŠ SR, Bratislava, Slovakia. Last time downloaded on 11/05/2022 from website https://www.slov-lex.sk/legislativne-procesy/-/SK/dokumenty/LP-2021-604

38. Naydenova, Z. (2019). National Strategy for Active Ageing in Bulgaria (2019 – 2030). https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/WG.12/Presentations/2_National-Strategy-Active-Ageing-Bulgaria.pdf

39. Philips-Jones, L. (2003). Skills for successful mentoring: Competencies of outstanding mentors and mentees [Booklet]. CCC/The Mentoring Group.

40. Polish-American Freedom Foundation. (2022). Third Age Universities (TAU). https://en.pafw.pl/program/initiatives-in-education/third-age-universities-tau/

41. Project, E. (2006). Методическо ръководство за обучение на възрастни - 35 страници. From website http://lll.mon.bg/uploaded_files/Adult_education1.pdf

42. Repková, K., Baláž, V., Bednárik, R., Nemeček, M., Šprocha, B. (2020). Národný program aktívneho starnutia na roky 2021 – 2030 (analytická časť). Inštitút pre výskum práce a rodiny, Bratislava, Slovakia. Last time downloaded on 09/05/2022 from website https://ivpr.gov.sk/narodny-program-aktivneho-starnutia-na-roky-2021-2030-analyticka-cast-kvetoslava-repkova-ed/

43. Research, Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Federal Ministry of Education and. (2019). National Continuing Educational Strategy (Nationale Weiterbildungsstrategie). From website https://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/EN/Topics/Initial-and-Continuing-Training/national-skills-strategy.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=7

44. Richert-Kaźmierska, A. &. (2013). KSZTAŁCENIE OSÓB STARSZYCH W KONCEPCJI AKTYWNEGO STARZENIA SIĘ. From website https://www.ue.katowice.pl/fileadmin/_migrated/content_uploads/13_A.Richert-Kazmierska_M.Forkiewicz_Ksztalcenie....pdf

45. Ring-Dimitriou, S. Dimitriou, M. (2022). Aktives Altern im digitalen Zeitalter: Informations-Kommunikations-Technologie verstehen, nutzen und integrieren. Germany: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.

46. Sagebiel, F. (2010). Flügel wachsen – Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung im Alter zwischen Hochschulreform und demographischem Wandel, (93-122). Berlin: LIT-Verlag. Kolland, F. & Ahmadi, P. Bildung und aktives Altern.

47. Schramek, R. Kricheldorff, C., Schmidt-Hertha, B., Steinfort-Diedenhofen, J. (2018). Alter(n) - Lernen - Bildung: Ein Handbuch. W.Kohlhammer GmbH, Stuttgart.

48. Senior Centrum (2022). https://www.seniorcentrum.hu/

49. Silva da Costa, A., Ribeiro, A., Varela, A., Alves, E. M., Regateiro, F., Elias, I., ... Ferreira, P. S. Estratégia nacional para o envelhecimento ativo e saudável 2017-1025. https://www.sns.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ENEAS.pdf

50. Szatur-Jaworska, B. (2015). Polityka senioralna w Polsce — analiza agendy. From website http://www.problemypolitykispolecznej.pl/pdf-122917-51090?filename=Polityka%20senioralna%20w.pdf

51. UNECE. (2021). UNECE. Mainstreaming Ageing. Germany. From website https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Germany_CN_EN.pdf

52. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2016). Who is being left behind and from what? Patterns of social exclusion. In Report on the World Social Situation 2016 (pp. 55-104). https://doi.org/10.18356/ceb9f6e8-en

53. Vankova, D. (2014). Активно стареене и социален капитал. From website https://conf.uni-ruse.bg/bg/docs/cp14/8.3/8.3-56.pdf
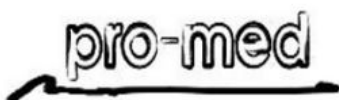
54. Volkshochschule. (2002). Key tasks of German Adult Education Centers. How we must strengthen lifelong learning. From website https://www.volkshochschule.de/verbandswelt/dvv-english/Key-tasks-of-German-Adult-Education-Centers.php

55. Volkshochschule. (2022). Adult Education Centres in Germany. Germany's largest continuing education provider. From website https://www.volkshochschule.de/verbandswelt/dvv-english/adult-education-centres-germany.php

56. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

57. Walsh, K., Scharf, T., & Keating, N. (2016). Social exclusion of older persons: a scoping review and conceptual framework. European journal of ageing, 14(1), 81–98. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10433-016-0398-8

58. World Health Organization. (2002). Active ageing : a policy framework. World Health Organization. https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/67215

59. Илиева, Д. (2021). 6 принципа от обучението на възрастни и как да ги приложим в обученията по безопасност. From website https://otgovori.info/efektivno-obuchenie-bezopasnost/

60. Николаева, С. (2020). Неформално образование. From website Софийски университет;https://unipress.bg/image/catalog/1pdf/0909.pdf

61. ПОЛИТИКА, М. Н. (2019). Национална стратегия за активен живот на възрастните хора в България (2019 – 2030 г.).

Coordinator

EureCons
Förderagentur GmbH

Partner institutions

AidLearn
Consultoria em Recursos Humanos, Lda

BASD

SPOLUPRÁCOU PRE LEPŠIU BUDÚCNOSŤ
VEĽKÝ MEDER
TEAMWORK FOR A BETTER FUTURE

pro-med

human profess
www.humanprofess.hu

https://peer-train.org