



Promoting
Third Age
Education



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REPORT ON THE STATE OF ART OF LEARNING IN LATER LIFE

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INTRODUCTION

In 1974, OMS defined aging as a physiological process that starts with birth and that develops through life. This process, affects all people although it presents in different forms and takes different paths and paces. It means slightly losing the physical capacity of adapting; however people continue developing their potential, exercising their rights and living as active citizens in society. Therefore, aging cannot be reason of social exclusion.

According to ONU, in 2050 the number of people older than 60 will reach 2,000 million people, and it is expected that the percentage will also increase significantly, going from 10% to 21%. This considerable increase will force our societies to provide more opportunities this group of people; we will need to make the most of their capacities, taking advantage of their knowledge and experience but allowing at the same time, their participation in all life spheres.

Even though the Spanish Government has formally been working on supporting the older people in the labour market, these steps are directly linked to the pension system, by making reforms and giving financial incentives relating to the payment of social security contributions. In Spain, the Government has also been developing specific plans for entertainment and leisure activities for the third age, aiming mainly at preserving their activity. However, there is this big need for society to show commitment in using all our potential to implement specific programmes focused on older people's learning which contribute to minimise the negative effects of aging.

Younger generations have a limited idea of old people and their life style. The third age is usually stigmatised and are seen as passive and dependent citizens. They are sometimes considerate to be a social and economic burden for society. Few youth seem to be aware of the difficult life conditions of this group of people, which is growing at such a rapid pace; neither their contributions nor support to their families and community is taken into account.

For all the stated above, it seems obvious that education for the third age already has and will continue to have a main role and first need position in nowadays

society. Demographic and social data show that this issue urges to be given bigger attention, research and planning.

At an international level, institutions such as OMS and UNESCO aim at integrating old people in the economic, social and cultural life of the country and prioritising their interests and needs. This sector of the society, which has been for a long time left behind needs to be given more importance and attention by all sectors of the society. This is why, at a national level, IMSERSO claims that, after several years of research, the same old people are urging for a better quality educational offer which allows them to feel useful, valued and fosters their self-esteem and happiness.

THIRD AGE EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SPAIN

1. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1.1. Age structure and population dynamics

Currently, we can consider that Spain counts with a significant number of inhabitants and a high density of population, over 92 inhabitants per Km². In Spain, according to the last census from *Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)* population rose 22.274 people during the first half of the year, and it was of 46.468.102 inhabitants on 1st July 2016.

Population living in Spain	
Total population	46.445.828
Men	22.809.420
Women	23.636.408

Fig 1: Population living in Spain on 01/01/2016 (1).

As we can see, the number of women is significantly greater than men, and this phenomenon is present in all age groups and both in current times and in future projections, as observed in Fig. 3

Reports carried out by the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)* and other statistic centres in Spain, show how Spanish population has increased considerably the last year. This phenomenon differs from the tendency during the last decade and the future projections by other research reports. In June 2016 Spanish population was of 46.468.102 inhabitants, which means a growth of 57.953 people in comparison with the same date the previous year. The demographic tendency in Spain has been a gradual descend of inhabitants from 2012, reaching a loss of a 2.7%, of the population. This phenomenon was due to several reasons, but the decrease in number of immigrants seemed to be the main one. Although this slight rise, and as we can see in Fig. 2., presented by *INE*¹, if the current demographic tendency

continued, the number of inhabitants in Spain would increase in 1 million the next 15 years, but it would start a long decrease, of up to an 11% of the population, during the following 50 years, which would mean 5.6 million people less.

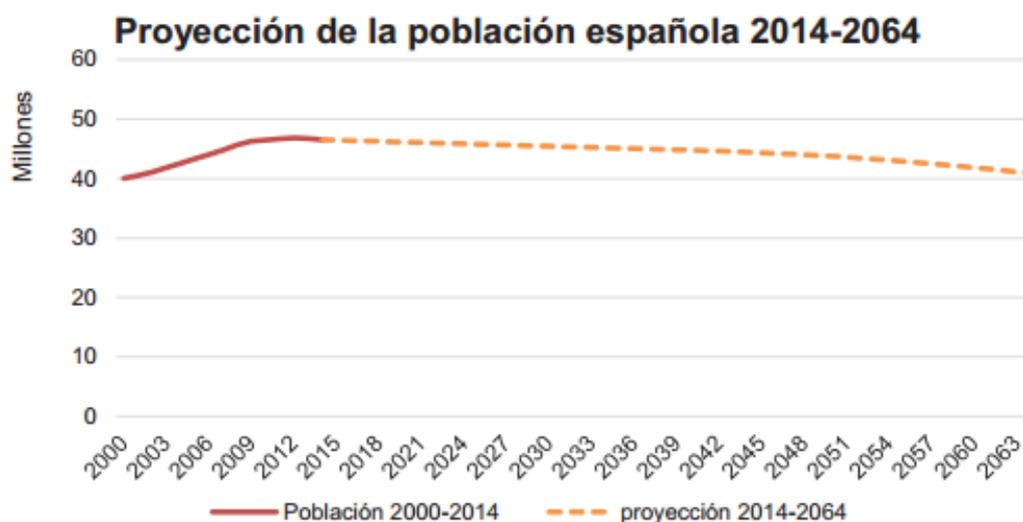


Fig. 2. Projection of Spanish population (2)

Sources:

(1) Web Instituto Nacional de Estadística: http://www.ine.es/inebaseDYN/cp30321/cp_inicio.htm

(2) Nota de Prensa, 2014 'Proyección de la Población de España 2014-2064' <http://www.ine.es/prensa/np870.pdf>

In addition, Figure 3 shows that apart from the difference between sexes, during the last decades there has been an increased and gradual growth of people of older ages. Currently, and according to the latest data published by Eurostat⁽³⁾, Spanish population age distribution is the following:

0-14 years: 15,2%	50-64 years: 19,2%
15-24 years: 9,6%	65-79 years: 12,6%
25-49 years: 37,59%	over 80 years: 5,9%

However, this figure will vary significantly in the following years, older groups have grown in number and this tendency will continue, with an even higher weight of

However, this same aging tendency will be complemented by a decrease of the birth rate, adding up in the population's fall and causing a drop to 32% of children under 10 in the next 15 years and up to a 48% in the following 50. This way, the upper section of the pyramid, especially those representing people over 70, would undergo a very significant rise. In concrete, as INE indicates, in 15 years' time, in Spain would live 11.3 million people older than 64, figure that would grow up to 15.8, a 87% more, in the next 50 years.

Sources:

(6) Press release, 2014 'Proyección de la Población de España 2014–2064' <http://www.ine.es/prensa/np870.pdf>

(7) Looking Forward to a Dynamic Third Age – España Informe de Mapeo, BALL Project, Universidad Permanente de la Universidad de Alicante, 2015: https://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/60035/2/BALL-Informe_Mapeo_Espa%C3%B1a.pdf

By dependency rate, we understand the existing quotient (calculated in percentage) between the number of people under 16 and the people over 64 all together and the population in between these two sections. According to the projections published by INE, in Spain the dependency rate will increase very significantly in the following years, going from the current 52.1% to almost 60% in 2029 and over 95% in 2064. It is worth pointing out relevant data such as the life expectancy, for if it follows the current tendency, in 50 years, life expectancy will reach 91 years in men and it will overcome 94 years in women, narrowing the gap between sexes. In this same way, life expectancy at 65, will continue rising at a rapid pace: it is forecast that a 65-year-old woman will still live 30.8 years more and a man 27.4 years more, while current figures are less than 23 for a woman and about 20 for a man. Thus, we can state that demographic aging is an undeniable fact in Spain.

Sources:

(8) MACROSAD: <http://macrosad.es/index.php/categoria/230-dentro-de-15-anos-en-espana-residirian-113-millones-de-personas-mayores-de-65-anos-lo-que-supone-29-millones-mas-que-en-la-actualidad>

Following the census from the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (Figure 4), the major working force in Spain are people between 25 and 54, with similar figures between sexes. We can also see how the employment rates drop gradually when people turn 55, with less than a 1% of the population over 65 being employed.

	Percentages	
	Men	Women
16 to 24 years	4.4	4.6
25 to 34 years	21.6	23.9
35 to 44 years	32.0	31.6
45 to 54 years	26.8	25.9
55 to 64 years	14.3	13.2
65 years and over	0.9	0.7

Fig. 4. Percentages of employed people in Spain.

When it comes to employment in the third age, Spanish workers are the ones with the lowest activity after 65 years old in Europe, far from the average 18.7 % of the 28 EU countries, and even below other countries with low active aging rates, such as Hungary (6.6 %) or France and Belgium (8.7 % both). This shows a very poor participation of older people in the Spanish labour market in comparison with other EU countries. As we can see in Figure 5, around a 90% of people aged 65 and over are retired. In January 2017, there were 8.602.601 pensioners in Spain.

	Percentage	
	Men	Women
45 to 54 years	0.8	0.6
55 to 64 years	11.7	9.5
65 and over	87.5	90.0

Fig. 5. Percentages of retired people in Spain.

Source:

(9) http://cincodias.com/cincodias/2017/02/18/economia/1487416037_957185.html

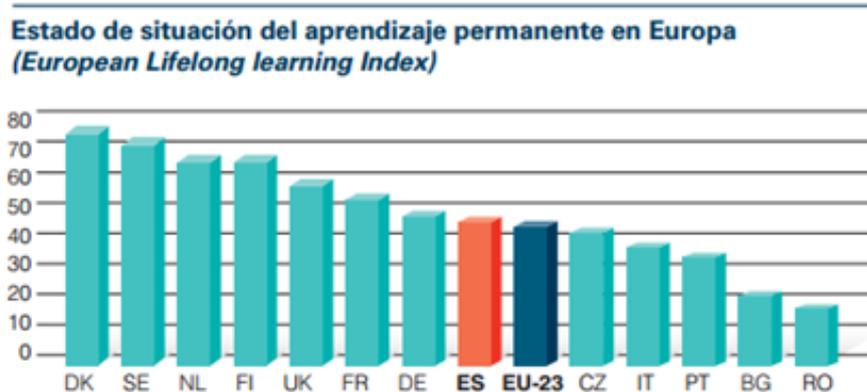
(10) Looking Forward to a Dynamic Third Age – España Informe de Mapeo, BALL Project, Universidad Permanente de la Universidad de Alicante, 2015: https://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/60035/2/BALL-Informe_Mapeo_Espa%C3%B1a.pdf

(11) http://www.sepe.es/contenidos/que_es_el_sepe/estadisticas/datos_avance/paro/

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNING IN LATER LIFE

2.1. Learning in later life in Spain

As it has already been mentioned in previous section, according to the latest data, in Spain, people over 65 represent approximately the 17% of the population. Figures also show that the profile of people who enroll courses and programs for the elder are mostly retired women between 55 and 70 years old with a good mental and physical health, which means that a great part of the population does not take part in any education at all. As the Spanish Mapping Report shows (10) the academic level of the third age is increasing at a rapid pace, although training among the eldest is still far below younger groups of people. There is still an 8% of the Spanish population who is illiterate and over a 30% has not finished their primary studies yet. In addition, only an 11% of this group has finished their secondary studies and less than a 7% their superior studies.



Sources:

(12) Looking Forward to a Dynamic Third Age – España Informe de Mapeo, BALL Project, Universidad Permanente de la Universidad de Alicante, 2015:
https://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/60035/2/BALL-Informe_Mapeo_Espa%C3%B1a.pdf

(13) IMSERSO:

http://www.imsero.es/InterPresent1/groups/imsero/documents/binario/idi66_o6ubarcelona.pdf

According to OMS, when thinking about education for the third age in the framework of an active aging, we have to bear in mind five principles: independency, participation, assistance, realization of their own desires and dignity. Active aging in Spain falls onto a political framework with three basic pillars: health, participation, and security. Designing any intervention within this perspective means to address the problems and needs of the elder taking into account their rights and the equality of opportunities. Active aging considers all old people, even those with poorer health.

We can claim that after the Inter-Regional Consultation on Aging of the Population (14) the need for long-life learning for the third age became evident. So far, in Spain, the most typical actions taken in this field have been focused on, mainly, a basic education for literacy, education for culture and leisure time, education for retirement preparation, education for increasing aging awareness and education for personal development (with special attention to new technologies). Therefore, we can divide the challenges that Spanish Educational programmes for the third ages are facing in four fields:

a) *Personal health*: education should try to aim for a decrease of chronic diseases through informative programmes that try to inform, change the understanding, attitudes and action so that old people can have a healthy and productive life, for instance, through providing education in the field of healthy eating or exercising.

b) *Family and Social support and strengthening*: empower old people in the basic principles of childcare so that they can give support and help their relatives and friends. This would help them feel more useful and prevent their isolation from society.

c) *Productive employment*: more and more, older people are being needed in the labour market. High unemployment rates are not currently helping this action plan, but in the long term, it aims to retain old people active in the labour market in order to (1) favour the economic growth, (2) reduce the dependency rates and (3) balance the pensions system.

d) *Personal development*: emotional education can optimise human development, which means both social and personal development. In this way, we can help mental health, people social interaction, and life enrichment in general.

Sources:

(14) INFORMES PORTAL MAYORES. 'La educación de las personas mayores en el marco del envejecimiento activo. Principios y líneas de actuación'. Número 26:

<http://envejecimiento.csic.es/documentos/documentos/sanchez-educacion-01.pdf>

(15) GUERRA GARCÍA, Paz. (2009) MAYORES ¿ACTIVOS Ó PASIVOS? LA IMPORTANCIA DE LA EDUCACIÓN EN LA TERCERA EDAD Elderly , active or pasive people? The importance of getting an instruction in their active behaviour Universidad de Sevilla

<http://institucional.us.es/revistas/cuestiones/19/18Guerra.pdf>

(16) Wolf, L (2000). El aprendizaje para toda la vida para estudiantes de la tercera edad. Inter-Regional Consultation on Aging of the Population, Washington, DC (EEUU)

2.2 *Older people's existential and educational needs and programmes meeting these needs*

In Spain, there have been two main plans or legal documents that have tried to set and define the needs of older people and establish objectives and guidelines to address them:

- 'Plan Gerontológico' which is characterised by its functionality, dynamism, openness to the creation of educational spaces and environments, etc.
- 'El Libro Blanco de la Educación de Adultos', which determines the concept of permanent education and offers the possibility of all people, regardless their age, in all social and educational processes.

However, our current system is mainly based on the 2002 Action Plan, based on the Second World Assembly on Aging, which took place in Madrid in April 2002. This action plan deals with the issue of education for the elder from 5 perspectives, which address what are thought to be their main needs:

1) *Education, activity and participation*: education is the grounds for an active and full life and has consequences on productivity. We need to promote a wider cultural,

social and economic conception of the third age important function and contribution to society. Participation in educational activities contributes to maintaining and improving personal well-being. *Programa 3.0* aims to get older volunteers who can involve themselves through ICT's, cultural and united activities.

2) *Education and Social Exclusion*: poverty is directly related to the lack of education, which means that training and permanent capacity are key in fighting social exclusion and dependency as it fosters participation in the working force and allows people to face changes more successfully (especially technological changes). Education in the third age should seek to help people to achieve economic self-sufficiency and promote cultural and civic participation. *Proyecto de envejecimiento activo* (Project of the active ageing) incorporates activities in three wide areas: keeping the physical and cognitive capacities; development of self-care workshops; ICT's trainings and how to benefit the new technologies in their free time. This project is inside the program *Programa 3.0* and provides its services around Catalonia. Nevertheless, there are some similar programs or projects in Spain. *Aulas de la Tercera Edad* (ATE) is a programme organised by *Ministerio de Cultura*. It consists in the creation of different spaces in 55 Universities around Spain where people up of 55 years can join in Universities programs. http://www.imserso.es/InterPresent1/groups/imserso/documents/binario/idi66_o6u_barcelona.pdf

http://www.espaciomayores.es/InterPresent1/groups/imserso/documents/binario/recursos_sociales_2012.pdf

3) *Education and intergeneration*: there is the evident need to take full advantage of old people's potential and knowledge. All society needs to be aware of third age related issues, for it concerns all of us. *Amigos de los Mayores* is a foundation carrying out different activities for older people with some young volunteers of the organisation such as meetings in a social space, chats in their own homes, one day trips, summer vacations all together or parties and celebrations in festivity days. www.amigosdelosmayores.org. In Catalonia, there is a program called *Relleu de vivències* (Showcase of experiences) that pretends to show different experiences of

older people in a platform in order to exchange ideas and share knowledge.

4) *Education and Health*: education should improve, or at least maintain, old people's health: this type of education should address sanitary issues in order to prevent risks and minimize the inadequate use of medicines. *Departament de Benestar, Salut i Família* and *Consell de la gent gran de Catalunya* often cooperate organising different events to promote the healthy habits in older people. *Programa de Termalismo* is organised by IMSERSO (Thermalism Program) aims to promote the wellness where older people can be treated according to their particular needs.

http://www.imserso.es/imserso_01/envejecimiento_activo/termalismo/servicios_programa/index.htm

5) *Education and Training*: continuous education on geriatric and gerontology for people working on social and health services. "La Caixa" is a foundation that sometimes organises trainings for professionals of geriatric, gerontology or social work fields to refresh the competences and knowledge of the students according to the new changes of the society.

Sources:

(17) MINISTERIO DE ASUNTOS SOCIALES. (1992): «Plan Gerontológico», Instituto Nacional de Servicios Sociales, Madrid, p. 143 y ss.

(18) MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN Y CIENCIA. (1986): «Libro Blanco de Educación de Adultos», Dirección General de Promoción Educativa, Madrid, p 307.

(19) GUERRA GARCÍA, Paz. (2009) MAYORES ¿ACTIVOS o PASIVOS? LA IMPORTANCIA DE LA EDUCACIÓN EN LA TERCERA EDAD Elderly , active or pasive people? The importance of getting an instruction in their active behaviour Universidad de Sevilla
<http://institucional.us.es/revistas/cuestiones/19/18Guerra.pdf>

2.3. *Educational providers and provision of older adult education*

In Spain, training and education for older adults is provided in several institutions or entities:

On the first place, there are universities, which offer courses and programmes for older adults (usually starting at 50-55 years of age) which can be totally integrated to existing ones, be specific for this age-groups, or stand outside the university studies:

- Integrated programmes: universities open the doors to older students and enrol them in their regular degree courses. In this way, the third age learners can access university as full right students, although they cannot obtain the certificates and diplomas due to the lack of access requirements, tests or exams.

- Specific programmes: they only accept older adults and are not always part of the formal education system. In general, each university adapts their offer to current demands.

- Expand of the university services by, in collaboration with other educational entities, offering a wide range of activities for the third age at a cultural, healthcare or leisure time level. In these cases, the organisations and associations are the ones responsible for organising and promoting these types of activities.

Apart from regular universities offering such courses and programmes, there also exists The University of the Third Age (U3A), a unique and exciting organisation which provides, through its U3As, life-enhancing and life-changing opportunities. In Spain, there are several of them:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| - U3A Costa Brava | - U3A Marina Baixa |
| - U3A Costa del Sol, Fuengirola | - U3A Torre Vieja |
| - U3A Javea | - U3A Vall del Pop |
| - U3A de Levante en Oliva | - U3A in Marbella and Inland |

And they count with three associated institutions:

- Asociación U3A International - Costa del Sol
- Aula Permanente de Formación Abierta, Universidad de Granada, Granada
- Universidad de Alicante - Universidad Permanente

On the second place, we can find a wide range of activities and educational/cultural programmes and courses organised by 'Clubs of Retired People', 'Social and Civic

Centres', 'Living/Social Harmony Clubs' , etc. There are larger institutions that do not only act on a local level, but that form a wider network of associations, such as OMAM (Oficina Municipal de Atención al Mayor), CEAM (Centros Especializados de Atención al Mayor) and Third Age Classrooms (Aulas de la Tercera Edad), -these names can vary depending on the Spanish Autonomous Community.

At a national level, AEPUM (Asociación Estatal de Programas Universitarios para Mayores) is the State Association of University Programmes for Old People, formed by public and private universities as well as other legal bodies that offer university training courses for the third age. There are over 45 universities within this association and over 48,818 students enrolled during 2015-16. The members of AEPUM offer university educational programmes for the third age usually between 3 and 5 years for people over 50-55 in a wide range of fields (Humanities, Social Sciences, Legal and Economic Sciences, etc.). (18) They intend to:

- Promote new educational and cultural strategies related to older adults.
- Secure the collaboration and presence of the Association in scientific, academic or cultural university activities.
- Establish ways of collaboration between the Federations and Associations of Senior Students and Universities.
- Convene conferences, national meetings, scientific seminars or other events.
- Organise international conferences, meetings and exchanges.
- Coordinate with public administrations studies and projects that are interesting for lifelong learning within the field of programmes for older adults and lifelong learning.
- Collaborate with public administrations and private entities that have as their aim older adult education.
- Participate in European programmes with objectives that are similar to those of the Association.
- Obtain stable financing procedures for university studies for older adults and for lifelong learning.
- Implement actions aimed at promoting educational innovations in continuous and lifelong learning

- Implement actions designed to increase international collaboration, especially with those European and Latin American countries which have networks or universities offering university studies for older adults.
- Promote activities and networks aimed to favour intergenerational relationships.
- Stimulate the publication of scientific works, studies, monographs and doctoral thesis in the field of older adults.
- Promote the establishment of systems for grants and help.
- Boost and execute publications for their periodic or circumstantial edition concerning topics and matters related to the aims of the Association
- Attend activities which are not specifically mentioned, but implicit within the aims of the entity.

There is also a Spanish confederation of third age classrooms, CEATE, Confederación Española de Aulas de Tercera Edad, which is a pioneer institution in offering different kinds of training. CEATE has been active for over 25 years and has developed more than 200 courses on retirement preparation, called "Vivir nuestro tiempo" (Living Our Time). Their main goal is to prepare old people for their retirement. In their courses, they include topics such as:

1. Preparation for retirement: a right and a necessity.
2. Workers facing retirement.
3. Social stereotypes about retirement and ageing.
4. The third age, a social alienated group.
5. The process of ageing in individuals.
6. Biological, psychological and sociological aspects of retirement.
7. Comprehensive health care and standards of life during retirement.
8. Culture, leisure and free time during retirement. (19)

Another organisation active in this field is CEOMA, Confederación Española de Organizaciones de Mayores (the Spanish Confederation of Elder Organizations). They have created a project called "Madurez Vital" (Vital Maturity) which claims that the third age is a life stage that needs to be open for new healthy and positive

horizons, through which retirees' involvement in their community and society is boosted. This training programme aims to prepare and help elders that are in the retirement age.

ADECCO Foundation is one of the companies that decided to take action on the field of third age and the aging of the population, trying to promote a positive coexistence of generations as part of their strategic plan. Within this framework, they carried out a study on CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), where 150 CSR and Human Resources managers from large national enterprises and companies. Many highlighted their intentions to respond to such ageing process by promoting adequate policies in order to guarantee the sustainability of the pension system.

Another good example of companies involved in this field is Unión Fenosa, a pioneer electrical power company that has been offering for over 30 years courses for the preparation for retirement for their workers and wives. Some of these seminars are organised as discussion sessions and deal with topics such as:

- Health and Active Life
- Retirement and Family
- Ageing Social Reality
- Legal, Economic and Fiscal Issues

At an Autonomous and Regional level, almost all City Councils and Public Administration Institutes provide workshops or courses on preparation for retirement, which aim to facilitate the adaptation of senior citizens, close to the age of retirement, to their new familiar, social and cultural situation. Similarly, it is worth point out that this same Public Administration offers training programmes to their staff in order to train them in a deeper and more practical knowledge among future retirees and partners.

In the Catalanian Autonomous Community, for instance there is the *Federació d'Associacions de Gent Gran de Catalunya*, an association offering, among many other services, short monographics and courses (some as short as 10 hours) on issues such as:

- Retirement: a new stage in your personal project
- Health
- Economic planning during retirement
- Social participation and environment

Sources:

(20) AEPUM: <http://www.aepumayores.org/>

(21) Looking Forward to a Dynamic Third Age – España Informe de Mapeo, BALL Project, Universidad Permanente de la Universidad de Alicante, 2015: https://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/60035/2/BALL-Informe_Mapeo_Espa%C3%B1a.pdf

2.4. *Co-operation of providers*

IMSERSO, *Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales*, (Institute for Senior Citizens and Social Services), is one of the management entities of the Spanish Social Security System. They are responsible for the management of social services complimentary to the Social Security System, of people with disabilities and everything related to the State's General Administration competences in the field of older people. They are the main and major entity to resort to when it comes to legal and administrative issues in this field.

There also exists a National Council of Old People, the *Consejo Estatal de las Personas Mayores*, a counselling body of the State's General Administration, associated to the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, which aims at institutionalising the collaboration and participation of old people when it comes to defining, applying and monitoring of policies such as social inclusion and quality life style.

The two main trade unions in Spain are CC.OO. (*Comisiones Obreras*) and UGT (*Unión General de Trabajadores*), and both of them have always shown interest in the preparation for retirement of the Spanish workers, offering training courses and workshops on the topic.

On international level, IMSERSO collaborated with the European Union in those issues related to social protection policies and especially dealing with old people in dependency situations. A very good example of such collaboration is the project called 'European Computer Network – Opening the internet for the elderly Information and Communication Technology' a Grundtvig Learning Partnership where 7 countries from the EU developed learning and teaching methods for seniors and exchanged existing approaches like peer-learning and intergenerational learning. The participants in these specialised courses played an active role by reflecting on their cultural experience of learning and using the Internet, and exploring new ways of using a computer, such as e-learning.

Another example, on international level, is a network of '*Amigos de los Mayores*' centres, expanded in the most of the territory of the country. They belong to a world-wide NGO, with different headquarters in Madrid, Barcelona, and Valencia. It is part of the International Federation of the *petits freres des Pauvres* together with USA, Canada, Ireland, Germany and Poland that was founded firstly as an association (1987) and then as a foundation (1992) and finally as a Federation.

Sources:

(22) IMSERSO: <http://www.imserso.es/>

(23) Looking Forward to a Dynamic Third Age – España Informe de Mapeo, BALL Project, Universidad Permanente de la Universidad de Alicante, 2015: https://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/60035/2/BALL-Informe_Mapeo_Espa%C3%B1a.pdf

(24) www.gemeinsamlernen.de

(25) University of the Third Age: <http://www.worldu3a.org/>

2.5. Older adult education-survey of studies

Many relevant studies and research have been carried out in this field. As the main representative legal body working in the field of the third age, IMSERSO (Institute for Senior Citizens and Social Services, associated to the State's General Administration) annually publishes a report that analyses the development of their strategical pathways aiming at achieving the entity's objectives. In 2008, published

a Guide for Satisfactory Retirement whose main objective was to facilitate the adaptation to retirement. Ministry for Education, Social Policy and Sports, through the IMSERSO (Institute for Senior Citizens and Social Services), published in 2008 a Guide for Satisfactory Retirement whose main objective was to facilitate the adaptation to retirement. This document aimed to provide guidelines for the reflexion upon retirement and to highlight the importance of personal, social and legal resources necessary to face the changed that the third age are experiencing. It pretended to modify some attitudes and behaviours, so that citizens are able to make their own decisions and take their life into their own hands.

Other significant research on the topic was carried out within the BALL Project (Be Active through Long-life Learning), a Mapping Report on the third age education in Spain. Entitles 'Looking Forward to a Dynamic Third Age' and coordinated by the Permanent University of Alicante in 2015, this report used data from obtained from the INE (Spanish initials for National Statistics Institute), on Demography and Population and resorted to the Active Population Survey to publish an in-depth report focusing on the ageing of the population (Population statistics and Trends analysis); on the Senior population labour market and retirement schemes; and on the Initiatives and surveys offering a general vision of the current situation.

Another of the leading research groups in Spain is GIE, el *Grupo de Investigación para el Envejecimiento* (Research Group on Ageing) from the Science Park of the University of Barcelona. For many years, this research group, supervised by Dr. Ricardo Moragas, carried out a study on the preparation for retirement in Spain by means of a semi-closed survey. All the respondents were older than 50 and belonged to the following organizations that collaborate with the GIE: AMMA Relief and Care Resources, FATEC, UDP, and CEOMA.

As regards to other surveys conducted in Spain, during the last three years the company AEGON has been publishing results of fieldwork that focus on Spanish population's attitude towards the preparation for retirement. This research is used to prepare the annual index '*Aegon Retirement Readiness Index*' (ARRI), but it is also

a great source of information in regards to what the role of companies and governments is in the aging process. Over 900 workers and 100 retired people were surveyed in 2014 in order to study the different opinions existing among active and retired citizens.

Sources:

(26) Looking Forward to a Dynamic Third Age – España Informe de Mapeo, BALL Project, Universidad Permanente de la Universidad de Alicante, 2015: https://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/60035/2/BALL-Informe_Mapeo_Espa%C3%B1a.pdf

3. METHODS IN OLDER ADULT EDUCATION

3.1. Key elements involved in the educational process.

To summarize methods and techniques used today in the field of older people education in Spain, first, it should be explored the place that methods and techniques have in this process as well as determine the contribution of educational techniques in the learning experience of the older adult learner by identifying the critical factors that would make such experience a valuable, lasting and effective one.

Four key elements are involved in the educational process and function as an interdependent system: 1) learner, 2) educator, 3) subject-matter, 4) technique.

Educator and learner work as elements taking action in the learning experience while content and delivery methods work as the subject-matter and tools required to make this experience effective.

It is crucial to keep a balance between these four elements of the learning experience. With the changes in the elements, new – adequate - techniques should be selected.

The Educator

Parker J. Palmer (1998) in his book *The Courage to Teach* (1998) argues that self-knowledge determines the very basic building blocks for commitment, love and mastery of teaching. It is not only required that the teacher be proficient in the subjects and techniques about to be shared, but also that a strong inner-sense of self-identity and integrity be present: "...we teach who we are... teaching emerges from one's inwardness"(p.1). Palmer also sees the teacher as the connector of the reality of the subject-matter, himself/herself and his/her students.

The educator should have a clear sense of identity with his/her culture, country, family, strengths and weaknesses; be open in the very moments when it is asked to understand, to be patient, to be silent or to talk; be respectful to the students; be able to listen to his/her students and himself/herself; know when to ask the questions (not to do it too soon); take the risk of inviting open dialogue without knowing where it is going to take us, and the knowledge of how to turn the questions into a communal dialogue, trusting that the community can deal with the issue at hand, because "truth is an eternal conversation about things that matter, conducted with passion and discipline" (Palmer, 1998, p. 104).

Older Adult Learner

We should know our students before the first class or even to have some information about them before starting to plan a course. If it is not possible, then, at least, after the first class think who our students are. In general, adult students share some important characteristics: they are active learners responding positively to learning experiences; they like to have their opinions consulted and "enjoy having their talents and experience made use of in the teaching situation" (Mezei, 1991, p.10).

To select an adequate technique, the teacher should take into account (a) the characteristics of the adult learner, as introduced by M. Knowles; and (b) the

learning styles.

Knowles reflected on four key areas where adults display certain characteristics that govern the learning process and help the teacher to choose the appropriate methodologies to adult learners: changes in self-concept, the role of experience, readiness to learn, and orientation to learning.

Beyond the four specific characteristics of adult learners mentioned above, the learning styles (Kolb, 1976) should be taken into consideration Kolb (1976):

1. Accommodator learns by doing.
2. Diverger views concrete situations from many different points of view.
3. Converger is proficient at finding practical uses for ideas and theories.
4. Assimilator is best at understanding a wide range of information and putting into concise logical form.

Content

In recent decades, there have been observed three major tendencies, which have evolved as key influences for determining content in the formal and non-formal adult education:

1. Professional development and training: emphasis on corporate development, automation and training techniques for the professional achievements in the global age.
2. Social Focus: emphasis on social justice, democracy, citizenship, ecology, equal opportunities and non-discrimination issues.
3. Self-actualization and Spiritual Development: emphasis on spiritual development and holistic views of daily life, work and education.

3.2 Techniques used in older people education

The analysis of techniques used in adult education generally divides the strategies in three broad categories: 1) teacher oriented techniques, 2) interactive techniques, 3)

independent techniques.

Teacher Oriented techniques

In the teacher oriented techniques, the lecture and the questioning techniques are the most utilized.

1. Lecture is useful when the subject-matter of study requires specific information and the learning community is large. Ideal lectures give mini-summaries periodically, allowing participants time for reflection and feedback (Humber College, 1996, p. 26). In our adult education centres, we use this technique in the form of an interactive presentation with an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.
2. Questioning techniques: a good way of increasing student participation. The teacher plans them according to a higher or lower level of response, asking for summarizing, understanding, encouraging critical thinking, enhancing problem-solving ability or stimulating creativity.

It is important to create a friendly and open environment so that nobody feels frightened to ask questions. The teacher can: 1) answering the question; 2) redirect the question to the class; 3) help the student to answer his/her own question.

Interactive techniques

The most common interactive techniques used in adult education centres in Spain are guide discussion, role-play, case study, group-work, and cooperative learning.

1. Discussion groups: discussion can target almost any sphere but requires focusing on the subject-matter objectives. Different options are used: "circle responses" giving the opportunity to talk to everyone; "brainstorming" opening up the group imagination; "guided discussions" with facilitation of the teacher to switch the group attention to different participants; "debates" which is a discussion between two opposing sides; "reaction groups", a forum for quick responses.

2. Role-playing: this technique Involving learners in a real life simulation and acting out in front of the group is useful for the development of interpersonal skills. We use it in different formats: spontaneous or guided by the teacher.
3. Case Study: referring to real life problems, it challenges learners to find recommendations and solutions in order to acquire knowledge, values and attitudes. It can be made more appealing using realistic details, descriptive situations.
4. Group work: a task that involves collaboration and self-initiated conversation. It is vital for older learner because it offers an embracing affective climate and promotes learner responsibility and autonomy.
5. Cooperative learning involves a group of techniques to work in small peer learning groups to enhance classroom interaction and achieve learning purposes.
6. Games represent or model a real life situation in a concrete or abstract form and encourage the use of rules, principles, concepts and decision-making inner processes.

Independent Techniques

Among the independent techniques, used in adult education centres in Spain, we find computer assisted techniques, programmed instruction, independent learning packages, and self-directed learning techniques.

- Programmed Instruction: the student works at his/her own pace and receives immediate feedback to his/her questions.
- Independent Learning Packages: independent or prescribed materials selected in consultation with the teacher, according to the student's needs and level, with the curriculum tailor- made for each individual.
- Self-directed learning techniques: learners, in consultation with the teacher, develop a plan for learning that includes learning outcomes, resources, etc. The teacher acts as a facilitator of the process. Both the teacher and the learner ensure that the course requirements are met.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK, STRUCTURES, FUNDING

4.1 Legal framework

The current Social Security General Scheme establishes that the minimum retirement ages is 67 years old, or 65 when it is possible to attest 38 years and 6 months of contribution. However, there are different types of retirement:

1. Regular Retirement: workers subscribed to the Social Security General Scheme, with a minimum period of contribution of 15 years. The benefits of the pension are calculated by adding to the established basic quantity a percentage that varies depending on the number of years of contribution.

2. Early Retirement: pensions are given before the established age. Coefficients are usually reduced in these cases. This typology of retirement is given when:

- a) Early retirement by work termination not caused by the freewill of the worker.
- b) Early retirement caused by the freewill of the worker.
- c) Early retirement caused by disability.

3. Partial Retirement Plan: plan initiated before or after the regular age of retirement, which is combined with a part-time employment contract for:

- a) People younger than 65 or than the retirement age that should be applicable in each case.
- b) People older than 65 or than the retirement age that should be applicable in each case.

4. Flexible Retirement Plans: plan that implies the possibility of combining a retirement pension, already executed, with a part-time job, which does not exceed the working hours established in the Workers' Statute.

However, Spanish workers retire before the age law stipulates. According to the Spanish Ministry of Employment and Social Security, the average retirement age in 2016 was 64.1 years old. Women with shorter contribution careers work more years on average than men, retiring when they are 64.6 years old, in opposition to men,

who retire when they are 63.9 on average.

Sources:

(27) http://cincodias.com/cincodias/2017/02/18/economia/1487416037_957185.html

(28) Kryńska, Elżbieta & Szukalski, Piotr (eds) (2013) 'Active ageing measures in selected European Union countries. Final Report'. Human Resource Development Centre with funds from the European Social Fund, initiated by the Department of Economic Analyses and Forecasts of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, conducted by the University of Lodz.

4.2. Structures

The European Strategy 2020 plan aims to reduce up to 20 million the population with fewer opportunities that are in risk of poverty and social exclusion during 2009-2019. Within this framework, one of the target groups are older people who have some barriers to get involve in a role in the society.

Within this framework, the Spanish law allocates full and exclusive competences to the Autonomous Communities regarding Assistance, Well-being and Social Services (art. 148.1.20 of the Spanish Constitution). According to these premises, each Autonomous Community has been developing their own Laws and Policies on Social Services, which has developed in the current network of principles, actions and services of the Public System of Social Services. This vast network has distributed its competences developing from the Plan Gerontológico Estatal (State's Gerontology Plan). On a national level it includes:

- Actions and Programmes organised by IMSERSO in different sectors.
- Consejo Estatal de Personas Mayores, which deals with economic issues social protection and civic participation.

From an Autonomous point of view, it includes:

- Economic help (grants, loans, incentives, etc.) to non-for-profit institutions in order to give funding for equipment, maintenance and activities for the third Age.
- Individual help for home assistance, housing rehabilitation, special attention

treatments, etc.

- Administration and management centres for old people
- Day Centres and Homes for the Third Age (S.E.D.)

On a local level they include:

- Programmes S.A.D. (Teleassistance, Community Social Services, etc.)
- Los Centros de Convivencia para Personas Mayores.

4.3. Funding

In Spain, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport is the main body in charge of the funding and budget addressed to education for the third age. 0.94 % of the general budget is used for culture and education and 0.59% goes to Social Services. Within the latter fall all those activities related to social inclusion and intergenerational relationships (that is relations between the third age and other sectors of the society).

Most programmes of adult education are financed by this Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, under the concept of long-life learning, depending on the annual budget plan. Those are the programmes, courses or projects that are considered formal education and that are, therefore, long-term financed. However, other activities and programmes are considered to be non-formal/informal and are in need of regular (usually annual) revision and approval to be funded by the government.

While on a national level, the third age education depends on the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, on a regional level, it is each Autonomous Community who makes the decision on the distribution of budget. There is a permanent increase in the amount of money given to Education in general (for example, in 2016, the increase was of 4.5%); however, no specific amount is allocated to the third age education.

On a local level, funding for all those entities that work in the field of non-formal and informal education comes from either County or Local funds, mostly through grants or loans given to NGOs and other non-formal educational service providers. For instance, 'Centres Civics' are Municipal Institutions that offer educational, leisure time and cultural services to citizens. They organise numerous courses, activities and programmes addressed to all people regardless their age, status, religion or social background.

CONCLUSIONS

In the following years, the aging process in Spain will continue increasing due to the interrelation to other phenomena such as the rise of life expectancy and the decrease of immigration. Thus, the adequacy of social policies and the meeting of the current needs of this growing social group should be a priority task.

Although education for the third age seems to have been present in Spain for many years, all parties involved in this issue (old people, educators in the sector, stakeholders, international bodies, etc.) claim that there is still a long way to make the educational offer meet the actual needs and demands of this sector of society has. The new groups of older people are clearly different from those of younger generations that preceded them, as the latter seem, according to data, better prepared in both an academic and a life-updated point of view.

The urgent need to offer more opportunities to participate in social, cultural and educational activities to this increasingly growing sector of the population is an issue that needs to be addressed. This demographically important group in our country has been playing a significant social / family role and needs now for us to listen to their own will to continue being part of it, by being better integrated, better educated and having better quality social assistance and access to new technologies. All these circumstances constitute a great challenge that P3AE will try to address.