

Project title	Active Ageing Communities (AAC)
Duration	01 January 2021 – 31 December 2022 (24 months)
Consortium	<p>EuropeActive - Belgium University of Southern Denmark - Denmark SKY - Finland ANIF - Italy AGAP - Portugal Ireland Active – Ireland SIGA – Greece Czech Chamber of Fitness – Czech Republic</p>
Context	<p>EU citizens are increasingly becoming older. The EU Commission recognises health-enhancing physical activity for older adults as one of the key policies of the Erasmus Plus Projects and of the Silver Economy.</p> <p>There is a strong need and demand of older people to live healthier, longer active and independent lives.</p> <p>Working more with elderlies represents an opportunity for the Fitness Sector.</p> <p><i>88% of physical activity sector employers currently believe that exercise professionals could be better supported to work with older adults, and that a lack of communication and behaviour change skills has been identified as one of the key skills gaps amongst activity professionals in the sector today.</i></p>
Objective	<p>The current level of engagement among older people is far below its potential. The usage rates of those aged over 65 falls even further, accounting for only nine per cent of visits.</p> <p>Even though the message of the importance to maintain a healthy lifestyle is now so widespread it seems to not be enough. AAC proposes a special approach for older people developed by the University of Southern Denmark.</p> <p>AAC will address behavioural/mental and socioeconomics barriers to physical activity by setting-up a community-based programme. AAC project will highlight the social relevance of our sector by building-up active communities (based on the importance of health and active ageing) for elderly people.</p> <p>The programme will be based on existing interventions which has not been already implemented and evaluated on a larger scale (in different cultural contexts).</p> <p>The fitness (and potentially sport clubs) will become the central-point for the implementation of this programme.</p> <p>Fitness and Sport centres have demonstrated to have a social relevance in the local communities especially among the youngest generations (ref. fitness trends)</p> <p>AAC aims to expand this modern trend to elderly people</p> <p>The AAC methodology has the first goal to involve participants through correct messaging (addressing their behaviours, social conditions, mental health, etc...) in joining the active ageing community through social events which then lead to activity interventions. Secondly in the long term maintain correct level of physical activity in the community in the clubs through specially designed memberships.</p> <p>The Consortium is composed by Fitness Associations which will finalise the programme with the University of Southern Denmark in order to implement it in their realities and in the last stage evaluate its impact in the community.</p>

	<p>The project will focus on the so called baby boomers in the age range of (55-70) with a rare/limited commitment to /physical activity.</p> <p>The project will also contribute to develop professional standards for attracting and maintaining elderly people in the clubs. Moreover, the evidences provided by the different NAS on the practical effectiveness of the programme can be used by other fitness and sport centres around the country. The project expects to put in place a multiplier effect among participants which will increase the number of old adult in the active ageing communities and consequently in the fitness and sport centres.</p>
<p>Tasks and Budget</p>	<p>The AAC programme will be focused on social activities leading to promoting the concepts around healthy lifestyles and then to physical activity interventions.</p> <p>After the implementation period, a final report comparing the different outcomes from the different countries and local realities will be drafted. The Report will serve as an evidence base for further policy development on active ageing.</p> <p>AAC will translate repeated lab-based research findings into real world services, with a clear two-way link between academia and frontline practice. We need a constant process of refining the evidence to support practical interventions, which can be realistically implemented and scaled-up if shown to be effective.</p> <p>Each Partner will have to involve 3 clubs (from different local realities: town, city and village) max 50 participants per club over ~ 9-month programme period. In total we will have in the 6 countries = 900 participants which is enough for some good research outcomes. We aim to have ¾ percentage of retention.</p> <p>They will track the participants in the short and in the longer period.</p> <p><i>Each partner will receive budget to involve fitness centres and their employees and moreover to track the participants and implement the programme.</i></p>
<p>AAC National Seminars and Final Conference</p>	<p>The AAC Report will be presented in two different multiplier sport events.</p> <p>1) AAC National Seminars AAC project expects to put in place a multiplier effect among participants which will increase the number of the established Active Ageing Communities in the following years. To achieve so, each Fitness Association will host a seminar to promote the AAC methodology to other club members (and not) but also to other recreational sport centres which are willing to increase the number of older people.</p> <p>2) AAC Final Conference The Final Conference in Brussels will be organised by EuropeActive with the support of the University of Southern Denmark. EuropeActive will be responsible of the invitation of policy makers and sport stakeholders given decennial presence in Brussels, while the University of Southern Denmark will extend the invitation of other research centres active with active ageing projects. The event will be both an informative occasion for the policy makers and a dissemination opportunity for the sport stakeholders and academics.</p>